

Africa Skills Week: skills supply needs to match demand

Africa's population is growing rapidly, and so is the quantity of education it receives – but the quality of its education is lagging.

ACCRA, GREATER GHANA , GHANA, October 22, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Africa's population is growing rapidly, and so is the quantity of education it receives – but the quality of its education is lagging. And the skills Africans learn do not always match the skills needed on the continent.



In so doing, SIFA is supporting young Africans to transition from despair at ever finding good work opportunities “to a position of hope”

SIFA team leader, Mr Carlton Aslett

These were central messages coming out of panel discussions at the inaugural Africa Skills Week (ASW), which is taking place in Accra from 14 to 18 October 2024. Its theme is “Skills and jobs for the 21st century: quality skills development for sustainable employability in Africa”, coinciding with the African Union’s Year of Education in

2024.

The conference is being hosted by the Government of Ghana in partnership with the [African Union \(AU\)](#). It is supported by Germany through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ); as well as by the International Labour Organization; UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); World Bank; Ghana’s Commission for TVET (CTVET); and Ghana’s Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration.

In a panel discussion titled “Transforming skills development for the Africa we want by aligning demand and supply”, hosted by the Skills Initiative for Africa ([SIFA](#)) and [AUDA-NEPAD](#), Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) economist Dr Nicolas Friederici unpacked the AU/OECD-commissioned Africa’s Development Dynamics 2024: Skills, Jobs and Productivity report, which he co-authored.

“We estimate that between 2020 and 2040 the [number of African] youth with secondary or tertiary education will double from 103-million to 240-million ... So the quantity of skill supply is clearly rising. However, we need to admit that the quality of skill supply is not always up to international standards,” Dr Friederici said, pointing out that African children on average benefit

only from 5.1 years of schooling, which is more than two years less than in any other world region.

“So quantity of skill supply is increasing fast, and the quality of skill supply is increasing, but not fast enough,” continued Dr Friederici.

In terms of skills demand, however, the report found that “the [African] youth who aspire to work in high-skilled occupations cannot find those jobs. So 80% aspire to work in high-skilled occupations, but only 8% find such jobs.” Roughly 50% of the jobs that have been created on the continent over the past 20 years are in agriculture and retail trade alone, sectors that are dominated by informal employment and self-employment.

This has led to a dual situation where many Africans are not educated enough to take on high-skilled jobs, yet many others are overqualified and cannot find suitable jobs – leading them to “accept whatever is available”, said Dr Friederici.

Two Nigeria-based panellists in this discussion, Mr Benedict Njoagwuani, Deputy General Manager of airline catering firm LSG Sky Chefs, and Ms Rosana Forsuelo, Provost of the Lagos-based, women-only Wavecrest College of Hospitality, emphasised the importance of their organisations’ partnership in balancing the demand for aviation catering professionals with its supply.

Food professionals are frequently not trained in the particular food safety, logistics and culinary design requirements of aviation catering, Mr Njoagwuani said: “It’s important to have people who are skilled in what we do.” For her part, Ms Forsuelo stressed that it was vital to involve the private sector – companies such as Sky Chefs – in developing curricula that meet their needs: “We realised that we have to bring the industry into our compound.”

In a complementary panel discussion later in the day, SIFA team leader Mr Carlton Aslett described how SIFA, a €120-million AU Commission project that is supported by the German government, seeks to address the gap between skills supply and demand through supporting public and private training institutes to offer excellent training using state-of-the-art resources.

In so doing, SIFA is supporting young Africans to transition from despair at ever finding good work opportunities “to a position of hope”, he said.

SIFA is currently engaged in projects in eight African countries: Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo and Tunisia. To illustrate SIFA’s work, the audience was shown two videos, one about industrial maintenance training in Tunisia and the other about water, process control and renewable energy in South Africa.

Ayanda Siswana
Flow Communications
+27 72 597 8219
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/753906377>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.