



The Virtual Third Pan-African Youth Forum for TVET Students

Theme: “Building Bridges between TVET and the Workplaces in Africa”

Date: August 24 – 25, 2021

CONCEPT NOTE

I. Background

The Association of Technical Universities and Polytechnics in Africa (ATUPA), hitherto known as the *Commonwealth Association of Technical Universities and Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA)* is a Pan-African organization created out of a decision taken on August 29, 2019 at the CAPA General Assembly of Heads of Member Institutions in Kigali, Rwanda. This decision was ratified by the Ministers of Education from AU member states at the *Third Ordinary Session of the Specialized Committee on Education, Science and Technology (STC – EST III)* on December 13, 2019 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which resolved to “TAKE NOTE of the rebranding of the CAPA to the Association of Technical Universities and Polytechnics in Africa (ATUPA), and to encourage Technical Universities and Polytechnics in their countries to join this continental Association”.

The Covid-19 global pandemic notwithstanding, ATUPA and Partners plan to virtually bring together the student leadership from training institutions across Africa, in the Third Pan-African Youth Forum for TVET Students on August 25, 2021. The youth leaders shall get a platform to exchange ideas on how TVET skills could be innovatively deployed to provide meaningful jobs and solve other contemporary challenges facing young people in the continent. The forum shall give opportunity to the youth themselves to discuss and speak on how their concerns can be addressed by governments and TVET institutional leadership. Participants shall majorly come from the well-integrated mix of TVET colleges, technical training institutes, colleges of technology, polytechnics and universities of technology in African.

II. Rationale

Young people and their parents consider TVET as a second-class education; employers believe that new graduates are not adequately prepared for entry-level positions in the vocational sector but rarely invest in TVET; TVET providers state that the new graduates are ready to work although they know that curriculum and school equipment most often differ a lot from the world of work.

While vocational education appears to be a good solution as it gives knowledge and develops skills in specific field, it has low or lesser perceived value among students. Some countries, especially in Africa, value academic education over vocational education. Others invest a lot in the vocational sector and make efforts to bring business to it.

In the developing countries, of the young people who are in the labour force, more than 150 million live in extreme poverty, the result of low- skill low-productivity work and of risky employment in seasonal farm work or self-employment in the informal urban economy. They often lack good quality primary education that would open the door to TVET and better jobs.

In Africa, the proportion of young people in temporary or involuntary part-time jobs has increased alarmingly, a trend that also contributes to discouragement and detachment from the labour market. This aspect is further compounded by internal and regional conflict, challenges of climate change, calamities such as the current Covid-19 pandemic and lack of reliable labour market information systems (LMIS).

III. Overall Objectives

The Third Pan-African Youth Forum for TVET Students aims to provide a continental platform for youth representatives in TVET institutions from Africa to build their leadership and social skills, and strengthen their capacity to contribute to the African community now and in the future. The forum shall be held in partnership with the African Union Commission and Start-Up-Africa with the aim to:

1. Develop future African TVET champions through engagement with present leaders and with continental leadership, with a focus on good governance and strategic thinking
2. Foster an understanding of the importance of TVET Career pathways for the youth to make informed choices that lead to fulfilling jobs and successful entrepreneurship
3. Enhance youth representatives' understanding of globalization and develop future thought leaders for a prosperous Africa
4. Provide a space for youth representatives to discuss the transition from a training institution to the work place and to voice their views on its challenges

IV. Methodology

The forum will be participatory to bring awareness, stimulate creativity, and increase the appeal of vocational training by engaging participants. Activities will include keynotes, panels, and panel discussions. Moderators and speakers will offer informed perspectives on the place of TVET for future jobs in Africa and in the world. Sessions will also encourage participants to share viewpoints on transition from college environment to the work place, career guidance, and labour market intelligence while interaction with speakers and with each other.

V. Highlights of the Youth Forum

The Virtual Third Pan-African Youth Forum for TVET Students is organized as part of the August 2021 Virtual CAPA-ATUPA International Conference. The Conference is organized to include:

- i. The main conference featuring keynote addresses, panel discussions and podium sessions on the Conference theme and other cross-cutting issues.
- ii. Virtual launch of the Association of Technical Universities and Polytechnics in Africa (ATUPA)
- iii. The Third Pan-African Youth Forum for TVET Students, hosted in partnership with the Africa Union Commission, on the theme: “Building Bridges between TVET and the Workplaces in Africa”.
- iv. Finals for the Pitch-Africa 2021 Talent & Innovation Competition for TVET Students
- v. A virtual Careers fair / exhibition showcasing TVET jobs, industrial technologies and R&D innovations by sponsors and industry/private sector partners, training institutions and research institutes.
- vi. The General Assembly of heads of ATUPA member institutions and elections of a new Executive Board

V. Target Participants

Two or more participants of mixed gender from each TVET institution drawn from the student’s guilds and student’s council leaders will be welcome to join the Third Pan-African Forum Youth in TVETs. Organizers will also accept and encourage participation of participants from civil organizations working with the youth and women and staff of government ministries engaged with matters youth and TVET community of practice.

When making nominations for participation at Third Pan-African Forum for Youth in TVET, preference should be given to individuals who have demonstrated strong leadership characteristics and passion while in school or their communities. Youth from a cross-section of different programmes / career fields such as engineering, building and construction, applied sciences, the arts, media, medical sciences, hospitality etc. will be expected in the forum.

VI. Expected Outcomes

The Youth Forum expects to have such outcomes as:

1. better understanding of leadership, and of global issues among youth
2. better awareness of the importance of TVET career pathways for informed choices
3. develop skills, knowledge and attitudes which support development in Africa
4. create a platform to discover their voice and to positively contribute in society
5. exchange of ideas and reflections that address local needs and global issues
6. better appreciation of the African Union’s diversity, of Africa’s development issues and of the African Unions’ Agenda 2063

For more information:

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