



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa



International  
Labour  
Organization



1-4 MARCH 2021  
BRAZZAVILLE, REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Seventh session of the Africa Regional  
Forum on Sustainable Development

## Seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

*“Building forward better: towards a resilient and green Africa to  
achieve the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063”*

1 – 4 MARCH 2021

Brazzaville, Republic of Congo

## Decent work and economic growth

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DECADE  
OF  
ACTION





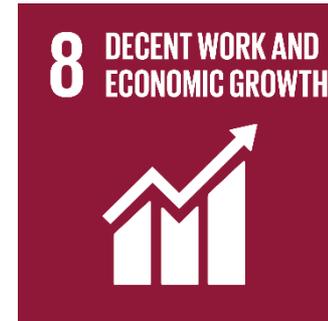
# Introduction

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

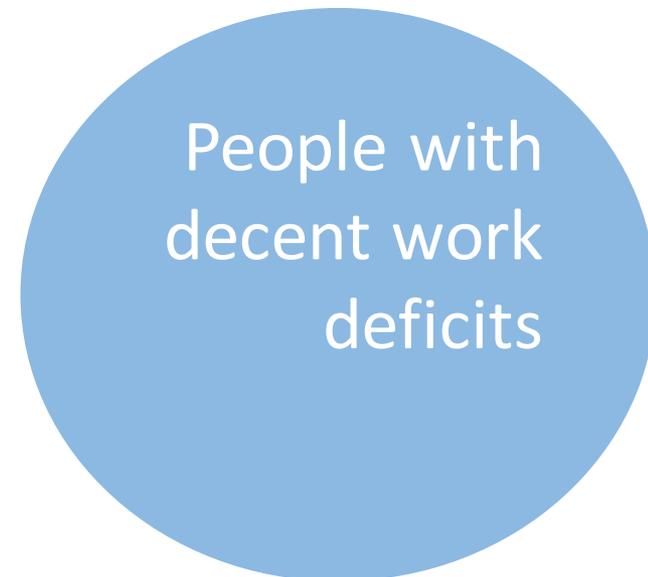
<p><b>1 NO POVERTY</b></p> <p><b>Aspiration:</b> <i>“End poverty in all its forms everywhere”</i></p>	<p><b>2 ZERO HUNGER</b></p>	<p><b>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</b></p>	<p><b>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</b></p>	<p><b>5 GENDER EQUALITY</b></p> <p><b>Aspiration:</b> <i>“Decent Work for All”</i></p>	<p><b>6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</b></p>
<p><b>7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</b></p>	<p><b>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</b></p>	<p><b>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</b></p>	<p><b>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</b></p>	<p><b>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</b></p>	<p><b>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</b></p>
<p><b>13 CLIMATE ACTION</b></p>	<p><b>14 LIFE BELOW WATER</b></p>	<p><b>15 LIFE ON LAND</b></p>	<p><b>16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS</b></p>	<p><b>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</b></p>	



**Aspiration:**  
***“End poverty  
in all its forms everywhere”***



**Aspiration:**  
***“Decent Work for All”***





# People with decent work deficits

- ▶ Reaffirms the mutually inclusive relationship between economic, social and environmental policies, poverty reduction, full employment and decent work.
- ▶ Goal 8 is inextricably linked to other Goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- ▶ **Promoting Decent Work arguably of the most ambitious goals ... even before COVID-19!**

People living  
in poverty

## Progress towards SDG8

(please refer to background paper ECARFSD/2021/8 for full detail)

- ▶ Economic growth in the African continent not inclusive and fast enough to absorb the growing labour force: ***labour demand < labour supply !!!***  
(= there simply are not enough productive jobs and business opportunities)
- ▶ Unemployment *not* the biggest problem. Rather informality, underemployment, and working poverty are. (*Many Africans sadly are “too poor to be unemployed”*)
- ▶ This highlights importance of ***social protection*** to protect the most vulnerable
- ▶ Past economic growth has ***failed*** to result in **structural transformation**.
- ▶ The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly exacerbated the underlying labour market challenges and inequalities. Plus widespread shift into inactivity.
- ▶ ***Women, youth and informal economy*** particularly hard hit by the crisis
- ▶ The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to make economies and labour markets more resilient and sustainable
- ▶ It may also provide an ***opportunity*** for African countries to craft a ***job-rich, inclusive, sustainable and equitable recovery*** through ***social dialogue*** among governments, and also organized business and workers!

## Key messages to *build back better*

- 1) ***In response to the COVID-19 crisis, facilitate structural transformation and economic diversification***
  - ▶ enhance the quality/pattern of economic growth through structural transformation, technological upgrading and diversification
  - ▶ shifting resources from low value-added activities to those with high levels of value-added and employment-intensity
  - ▶ AfCFTA as opportunity to drive growth and structural transformation, through greater economic integration in a form that benefits African businesses and workers alike
- 2) ***Integrate pro-employment macroeconomic and sectoral policies with explicit employment creation targets***
  - ▶ to stimulate labour demand and create decent jobs
  - ▶ develop and implement employment policies, integrate employment in all their national and sectoral policies
  - ▶ employment creation targets must be incorporated in national budgets, monetary policies, investment policies, as well as national development strategies
  - ▶ fiscal and monetary incentives are needed to attract investments in productivity-enhancing and employment-intensive sectors
  - ▶ should be complemented with social protection systems to build resilience and address extreme poverty
- 3) ***Effective interventions to facilitate the transition to formality, and support greater human capital accumulation***
  - ▶ effective and comprehensive action to achieve transition to formality in line with ILO Transition to Formality Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)
  - ▶ strengthen work-place based learning systems, and reduce skills mismatch
  - ▶ enhance active labour market programmes and public employment services

## Key messages to *build back better* (cont'd)

### 4) *Achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as equal opportunities for persons with disabilities*

- ▶ policies to encourage more women to enter the formal sector, targeting specific constraints, incl. lower skill/education levels and lack of access to finance
- ▶ equal opportunities, equal participation and equal treatment, including equal remuneration for women and men for work of equal value;
- ▶ enabling a more balanced sharing of family responsibilities;
- ▶ promoting investment in the care economy

### 5) *Implement the ILO Centenary Declaration and Abidjan Declaration for the Future of Work towards a sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis*

- ▶ ILO Centenary Declaration on the Future of Work, and concomitant Abidjan Declaration for Africa, have increased in relevance and should continue to guide Member States work towards SDG 8
- ▶ 4 Pillars of ILO policy framework to tackle COVID-19 crisis provide useful guidance:
  - ▶ Pillar 1: Stimulating the economy and employment.
  - ▶ Pillar 2: Supporting enterprises, jobs and incomes.
  - ▶ Pillar 3: Protecting workers in the workplace.
  - ▶ Pillar 4: Relying on social dialogue for solutions.

▶ The ILO's four-pillar policy framework, based on international labour standards, for tackling the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis

#### Pillar 1

Stimulating the economy and employment

- ▶ Active fiscal policy
- ▶ Accommodative monetary policy
- ▶ Lending and financial support to specific sectors, including the health sector

#### Pillar 2

Supporting enterprises, jobs and incomes

- ▶ Extend social protection for all
- ▶ Implement employment retention measures
- ▶ Provide financial/tax and other relief for enterprises

#### Pillar 3

Protecting workers in the workplace

- ▶ Strengthen OSH measures
- ▶ Adapt work arrangements (e.g. teleworking)
- ▶ Prevent discrimination and exclusion
- ▶ Provide health access for all
- ▶ Expand access to paid leave

#### Pillar 4

Relying on social dialogue for solutions

- ▶ Strengthen the capacity and resilience of employers' and workers' organizations
- ▶ Strengthen the capacity of governments
- ▶ Strengthen social dialogue, collective bargaining and labour relations institutions and processes



# THANK YOU!

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Ideas  
to  
Action