

17th Regional Seminar for Labour-based Practitioners and Policy Makers

ADDIS STATEMENT BY PARTICIPANTS

Preamble

The 17th Regional Seminar with the theme “*Delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): The Employment-intensive Investment Approach*”, hosted by the Ethiopian Road Authority, Ministry of Transport, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization (ILO), was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from the 13th - 17th November, 2017.

The Seminar attracted 450 participants from 26 countries in Africa, Asia and Europe, including 14 Ministers and their representatives. A total of seventeen (17) high level papers were presented on the following sub themes:

- i. Conducive investment and infrastructure development policies for job-rich & inclusive growth
- ii. Technology options and innovations for pro-employment and sustainable infrastructure delivery
- iii. Job creation and resilience through infrastructure development in fragile situations
- iv. Enhancing local capacity building initiatives through South-South collaboration

The Ministers held a parallel Ministerial Meeting from 13th - 14th November, 2017 and reflected on the commitment made at and the progress made since the 16th Regional Seminar held in Cotonou, Benin, from 26th - 30th October 2015. The Ministers also noted with satisfaction the encouraging progress made in most participating countries and issued a Statement that reaffirmed their commitment to promoting employment-intensive approaches in infrastructure and other sectors as one of the key instrument in achieving SDGs and addressing the teething challenges of poverty, inequality and underdevelopment.

The seminar delegates visited the Addis Ababa - Adama Express Road, Metal and Engineering Corporation (METEC) at Bishoftu as well as the Integrated Housing Development (condominium) Programme and a Sewage Treatment plant at Bole Arabsa, to appreciate few among many employment-intensive programmes being carried out in Ethiopia and demonstrated use of appropriate technologies in various sectors.

We the Delegates at the 17th Regional Seminar,

Noting, with concern, the effects of the growing social, economic and environmental challenges and their attendant effects on the livelihood of our

people, in terms of rising unemployment, inequality, displacement, underdevelopment and poverty, despite the continues economic growth recorded in many countries in the region;

Further Noting that national governments have committed to all Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and recognising the important role the EII approach can play in addressing most of the root causes for sustainability and development, building peace & national resilience as well as creating sustainable infrastructure;

Observing that the sustainable development agenda offer conditions for generating more opportunities for decent employment, optimizing the use of local resources and expertise as well as strengthening the skills of local businesses in the form of SMEs;

Mindful of the highest priority being given by our governments to addressing unemployment, particularly of the youth, women and people with disabilities, which poses a major threat to social cohesion, peace and stability of our region and require urgent joint action by all partners;

Recognizing the need to collect accurate input data in order to carry out reliable and realistic assessment of impact of public employment programmes as well as achievement of SDGs;

Cognisant of the negative impact that climate change will have on our countries' growth and employment strategies and the opportunity it provides in creating more, better and green jobs;

Having noted the positive impacts of Employment-intensive technology in infrastructure and other sectors and its added social benefit in improving the livelihood of the disadvantaged groups in society and the need to further diversify the EII approach into job rich-sectors;

Recognizing, the progress made by countries in Africa and beyond in promoting and mainstreaming innovative employment-intensive technologies, funding mechanisms and work organizations (sound practices), aimed at maximizing employment and addressing the backlog of physical, social, administrative infrastructure; and

Drawing inspiration from the Addis Ababa, Ministerial Statement, the field visits that demonstrated the achievement of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's successive development programmes as well as the open and frank discussions that took place over the last five days of the seminar;

We hereby resolve to:

Call for realignment of all employment-intensive investment programmes to SDGs and the relevant national, regional and global short, medium and long-term goals;

Call for the creation of an enabling policy environment for the adoption or expansion of employment-intensive investment programmes in our countries, targeting job-rich sectors funded by both the public and private sectors as well as civic organization;

Promote employment-intensive approach as a vehicle for promoting the Decent Work Agenda, aimed at improving working conditions, employability, strengthen social dialogue and fostering public-private and public-community partnerships, and facilitate the entry of youth, women and people with disabilities into the labour market and give them skills to lead productive and dignified lives;

Increase the cooperation and networking among countries in the region and beyond, in the spirit of south-south cooperation and international solidarity;

Continue to promote the active participation of communities and vulnerable groups including youth, women and people with disabilities in the decisions that affect their livelihood; including in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of public investment programmes;

Support the increasingly important role of local governments in the decentralisation process and the management of assets and service delivery through capacity building, skills development and knowledge sharing;

Improve data collection, reporting, monitoring, and evaluation in order to, measure the employment impact of development interventions with the view to broadening the knowledge base and facilitate informed decision making;

Mainstream employment-intensive investment approach into the national educational system in order to regularise accreditation, testing and certification processes as well as improving portability of skills.

Encourage the academia and research institutions to focus on applied research that uses innovative technologies and work methods and offer local solutions for local challenges and learning from regional and global best practices, and promote employment-intensive approach;

Intensify the mainstreaming of cross-cutting social and environmental issues such as gender, safety and health at the workplace, HIV and AIDS prevention

and control, and environmental stewardship in all employment-intensive investment programmes; and

Commit ourselves to provide regular updates of national achievements and proven good practices at the Regional Seminars for Labour-based Practitioners and similar forums.

We request:

Our governments to fast track the pace of mainstreaming employment-intensive approach and decent work in the infrastructure and other job-rich sectors across all spheres of government through the adoption of appropriate policies;

Our governments to review procurement policies, laws and procedures in order to build the local capacity and increase the participation of local service providers, especially the youth, women and people with disabilities, in the delivery of employment-intensive investment programmes;

Our governments to link employment-intensive programme to national planning and budgeting processes and put appropriate incentives in place for implementing bodies to reach set employment targets;

Our governments to initiate and ring fence the necessary funding for long-term and integrated employment-intensive investment programmes to optimise employment creation and the use of local resources;

Our governments to facilitate public-private and public-community partnership to broaden the implementation of employment-intensive investment programme, and

Universities and other Tertiary institutions to lead applied research and development on employment-intensive technology and incorporate it in their regular teaching programme.