



FACT-SHEET

WIL, Vocational Training & Entrepreneurship Conference

Theme: JOIN FORCES – Tapping Youth Employability Opportunities

A international conference on how to unleash employability skills to bring young talent, skills and leadership to workplaces - Sharing learnings from WIL, Vocational Training & Entrepreneurship Programmes in Africa and internationally.

Date: 30 October – 02 November 2018

Location: Windhoek, Namibia (Venue TBA)

Introduction

Unemployment of the youth is a concern worldwide. It is estimated that 73 million in the age of 15-24 are globally unemployed. By 2018, this number is expected to increase further by 13%. The highest rates are in Middle East and North Africa but even among advanced economies of the European Union and the US current trends show extended rates of part-erns and temporary employment. As well in Namibia the unemployment rate increased from 28% to 34% in only two years. Among those between 15 to 34 years old the unemployment has arrived at a worry some peak of 43%.

There is a severe mismatch of skill supply and skill demand in the labour market that causes this youth employment crisis. It seems that the system of education and training is not satisfactorily aligned with the skills employers need. Such high rates of underutilised talent have serious implications to a nations' economic growth and to the perspectives of the young generation. Accordingly, we call it the «youth employability opportunity» as we see in these young people enormous potential for a country's national economic growth and productivity, if their employability skills and leadership can be unleashed and brought to the workplaces, communities and families.

How can this youth employability opportunity be tapped successfully? What initiatives, programmes, approaches, processes, modalities, frameworks and quality assurance are needed to raise youth employability? To explore on this question with the various stakeholders involved will be an important milestone on the way to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment



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and decent work for all in Namibia supporting the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Background

A lot of initiatives, projects and programmes have been launched and are running in Universities as well as private and public institutions - such as WIL, vocational training initiatives, and dedicated entrepreneurship and start-up Initiatives. All of them with the same aim to raise employability opportunities of the young generation in European as well as African labor markets. This conference wants to provide a forum to join forces to get a multidisciplinary transcontinental overview on what works and what can we learn from each other. It embraces proposals from different perspectives, institutions, nations to share practical experiences as well as academic research.

Conference Initiators and Sponsors

Increasingly, projects that are bringing industry needs and young talents together allowing to bridge the divide and raise employability and innovation at the same time are coming in focus. Such a project was the four-year project «Voice of Business» (2015-2018) initiated by three universities (Namibia University of Science and Technology, Hochschule Wismar of Applied Sciences and Vaal University of Technology) supported and sponsored by the DAAD (Deutscher akademischer Auslandsdienst). The programme was intensively evaluated, and the project partners agreed to conclude the project by organising and sponsoring this conference to share results and create a platform to discuss and advance the intriguing topic of Youth employability opportunities.

Conference objectives

- **Advance research & practice.** Improve and inform research by establishing a community of practice that shares the latest results and best practices that can assist to develop programmes for the required employability skills.
- **Share & exchange.** Learn, discuss and gain insights about national and international experiences with employability improvement programmes, such as WIL, Vocational Training, and Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Creativity programmes.
- **Inspire to tap opportunities in Europe and Africa.** Exert a knowledge transfer to make recommendations on how the development of employability skills can be best supported by stakeholders, such as industry, education institution, government, students etc., in a sustainable win-win-manner.



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Expected outcomes

Through the sharing and reflection process, participants will have an improved understanding about various graduate, vocational and entrepreneurship programmes to raise employability skills. This will enable the various stakeholders involved to obtain inputs to adapt and develop own initiatives and programmes.

Participants and Contributors

- **Education and governmental institutions**, e.g. members of educational institutions involved in projects, initiatives and programmes to raise youth employability (Namibia, South Africa, internationally), representatives from the local universities (UNAM and IUM), NTA, TVET institutions and colleges representatives, Members of entrepreneurship, initiatives, Government relevant line ministries; Office of the Prime Minister, Higher Education Training and Innovation, Youth and Sports, Labour, local and international Labour Research Organisation and international education institutions.
- **Industry**, e.g. WIL Industry Mentors, employers Federation, Employers in private and public sector relevant, Namibia Chamber of Commerce and Industry .
- **Students and academic researchers**, students involved in employability programmes and beyond, WIL Coordinators/Academic WIL supervisors, national and international academic researchers.