



Ushirika wa Maendeleo ya Elimu Barani Afrika
الرابطة لأجل تطوير التربية في إفريقيا
Association for the Development of Education in Africa
Association pour le développement de l'éducation en Afrique
Associação para o Desenvolvimento da Educação em África

Press Release
For immediate release

ADEA organizes its 3rd High-Level Policy Dialogue Forum on Higher Education and Scientific Research in the context of Digitalization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution

Abidjan, March 03, 2022 – The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), in collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and other partners, is organizing the [third high-level policy dialogue forum](#) on the theme of "**Higher Education and Scientific Research in the Light of Digitalization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR).**"

This policy learning event will take place virtually on **Thursday, 10th March 2022** and is the last of the three consecutive forums under the overall theme of "**Rethinking the Role of Skills Development in Future Work and Lifelong Learning in Light of Digitalization and the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR)**". In response to the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, ADEA held the first two of the forums in July and November 2021 focusing on [technical and vocational skills development](#) and [foundational learning](#), respectively.

Africa is currently the youngest continent in the world and will continue to remain so in the coming decades. By 2075, the youth population in Africa will surpass that of India and China combined, and nearly half of the world's youth will be African by 2100. The continent's ongoing efforts to educate its youth will have far-reaching implications for its economic development, stability and prosperity. Africa can either lose or seize the opportunity presented by its youth as a demographic dividend. For the latter, the continent must invest in human capital development, particularly at the higher education level, for its young people to become productive citizens through the acquisition of practical skills and knowledge.

To this end, this high-level policy dialogue forum will showcase, share, and discuss comprehensive and innovative education and training models and programs that prioritize a digital environment to boost the higher education system, place research and innovation at the center of national response to economic and environmental challenges, and leverage quality assurance in promoting inclusive and equitable access to quality higher education. Participants are drawn from African ministers responsible for education, youth and labor; the academia including universities and higher education research institutions; senior government officials; high-level representatives of technical and financial partners, the private sector, civil society; teachers' and parents' associations; youth organizations and the media.

The high-level policy dialogue forums that ADEA organizes facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences to address the skills gap and the critical challenge of reforming education delivery in Africa. In this third forum, stakeholders in the higher education and scientific research domain will share ideas on emerging trends in evidence and best practices on the role of higher education in preparing young people with the skills needed for the future of work. They will also reflect on the role of African research and innovation in responding to national economic and environmental challenges, and how digitalization can act as an enabler in advancing these two aspects.

The forum will also provide an opportunity to take stock of current policies, programs and innovative actions; and to further analyze their implementation in order to make concrete recommendations. In the words of **Albert Nsengiyumva**, the Executive Secretary of ADEA, ***"We all need to look at how to move from research to implementation, guide policy change in different levels of education, and integrate the results and recommendations into national priorities and practices."***

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has important implications for education, employment and the future of work. Digitization and the increased use of digital technologies have led to new jobs, ease of doing business, and improved social interaction. The continent, however, is still behind in 4IR technologies, and many countries remain digitally under-connected. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this reality much faster than expected.

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About ADEA

The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) is a regional organization with a critical voice on education in Africa and beyond. It is a forum for policy dialogue and a partnership that brings African policymakers in charge of education, science, and technology to engage with development partners, researchers and technical experts in the education sector. ADEA contributes to empowering African countries to develop quality education and training systems that meet emerging country needs and promote sustainable social and economic transformation.