

South-South and Triangular Skills Fair

Knowledge, skills and technology sharing and exchange for participants around the globe

Metadata

Regions involved: Global

Nominated by: International Labour Organization (ILO)

Primary SDG: 8 **SDG target:** 8.2

Secondary SDG: 4 **SDG target:** 4.3

Supported by: ILO HQ, ILO's Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training (CINTERFOR), African Union, African Development Bank (AfDB), International Telecommunications Union (ITU)

Implementing entities: International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO)

Project status: Completed

Project period: March 2020 – May 2021

URL of the practice: www.ilo.org/skills; www.southsouthpoint.net

The challenges

To transition to a digital economy and create opportunities for jobs-rich growth around the world requires the availability of skilled workforces, efficient labour market facilitation and enabling business environments. However, many of the developing world's young people lack the skills most in demand in the digital economy and are unable to access suitable training opportunities and job matching services. Meanwhile, job creation in the private sector is insufficient and decent entrepreneurial opportunities can be hard to find.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the pace of digital transition and its impact on national labour markets. Strengthening recovery processes after the current crisis requires governments, employers and workers to find and create opportunities for innovative approaches to learning and training under a "new normal" scenario.

In Africa, in particular, young people do not lack the capacities and talents to engage with the digital world, but lack access to digital equipment. During COVID-19, this particular challenge became more apparent, with social partners facing challenges adapting to greater virtual reality needs, due to the price of equipment.

Towards a solution

Contributing to the global response to this rapid change toward a digital economy, the International Labour Organization (ILO) organized a South-South and Triangular Skills Fair to identify and promote innovative approaches to real-world skills and lifelong learning challenges and build partnerships across the global South with a focus on Africa, the Americas and Arab States. The Virtual Skills Fair enhanced participants' creative capacity to find solutions to the specific development needs of the participating regions.

Given COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the Skills Fair was necessarily conducted virtually on the V-fairs platform, using Augmented Reality and 3D features. Using the virtual infrastructure, on-line summits were organized with exhibition booths (market fairs, knowledge fairs) for large

audiences. Over 1,000 people attended the V-Fair. The virtual format allowed a broad range of participants from around the world to engage with experts and to network around the themes of the forum. To adapt for some sub-regions, due to the need for a basic level of internet connectivity and computer literacy, pre-training sessions were necessary.

The Virtual Skills Fair promoted and strengthened the exchange of experiences, encouraged the pooling, sharing and use of technical and other resources and supported capacity building for partnership negotiation of participant countries and institutions. The Virtual Skills Fair identified innovative solutions for specific skills development challenges exacerbated by the COVID- 19 pandemic, such as a skills development simulator created by the Skolkovo Innovation Center of Russia.

The Virtual Skills Fair integrated a Technology Fair, as a contribution to driving innovation, technology development and transfer, especially in overcoming the impact of COVID-19 on skills development. Participants had the opportunity to present innovations and engage and exchange knowledge and experiences directly with others to broaden their networks and build partnerships.

A series of webinars under the Skills Fair highlighted the thematic areas of skills need anticipation, quality apprenticeships and vocational training. Webinars also addressed sectoral approaches to skills development, focusing on agro-processing, agriculture, construction, infrastructure, oil and gas, textile and garments and tourism and hospitality.

- The virtual reality and 3D technology used for the Virtual Skills Fair has been positively piloted and can now be brought to scale in the next biennia and replicated in future training. While this fair became virtual due to the sanitary requirements of the global pandemic, the virtual nature of such fairs allows for broader and more cost-effective participation than might be possible with in-real-life events. However, it is important to adapt online events to the varied digital capacities of participants.

As a direct and positive result of the Virtual Skills Fair event, six new partnerships were developed across thematic areas (apprenticeships, the rural economy and competency-based standards) among partners from Brazil, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam. Additional results included the collection in one location of good practices on skills development with a focus on the Americas, Africa and Arab States.

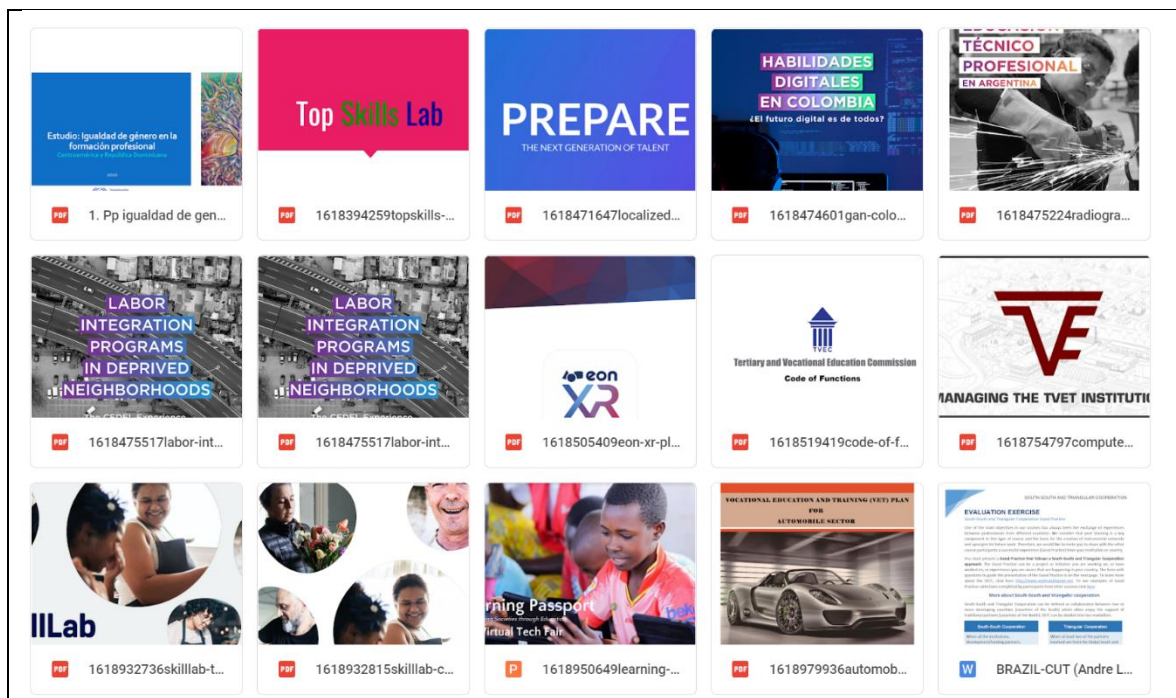
The South-South and Triangular Skills Fair reaffirmed that partnerships are fundamental to strengthening the capabilities of societies and addressing the skills needed for the future of work.

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Photos of the initiative



Related resources

- [Lifelong learning is key to development and resilience in the Global South](#)
- [Skills Virtual Fair: South-south and triangular cooperation](#)
- [Skills Tech-fair](#)
- [South-south point - SKILLS](#)
- Collection of good practices:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1MCZqJAFcGQNRIjIFYbciYH4epcdiWvfU>