

Online discussion to look into how innovation by Africa's youth can transform the Continent

Addis Ababa, 20 February 2014 (ECA) - The UN Economic Commission for Africa will be hosting a moderated online discussion on *“Youth and Innovation in Africa: Harnessing the possibilities of Africa’s youth for the transformation of the continent”* from 20 February to 12 March 2014.

The discussions will aim to elicit ideas on how innovation and technology can be used to harness the possibilities presented by Africa’s very young population to advance the African development agenda and to stem steadily rising youth unemployment rates.

Africa is growing at a time of very rapid developments in technology and innovations. At a time when technology has permeated all aspects of life, where advances in ICTs have created global inter-connectedness, creating opportunities for self-actualization of African youth through engagement in technology and innovation should be a priority. However, not very much is known about how this can be done, where efforts have been made in countries, and about the outcome of such policy experiments.

Against this background, a synthesis paper on the outcomes of the discussions will feed into a jointly organized ECA/Federal Government of Nigeria High Level Policy Dialogue on *“Science, Technologies and Innovation and the African Transformation Agenda: Making New Technologies and Innovation work for Africa’s Transformation”* to take place in Abuja, Nigeria from 24- 25 March 2014.

The discussions will focus on answering the overarching question of how innovations in science and technology can serve to build on the momentum of Africa’s economic growth by removing barriers and increasing the relevant skill acquisition through academic, technical and vocational training for increased youth employability.

Concept Note [1]

To participate, contact the moderators: [mseck AT uneca.org](mailto:mseck@uneca.org) [2] and [tbelai AT uneca.org](mailto:tbelai@uneca.org) [3]

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