

Summary Report

future of work. She informed that out of 1.5 billion children affected by school closures, 463 million children globally were unable to access remote learning and 17 million children may not return to school. She called on the tech companies to contribute to closing the digital divide by directing their efforts to scale up innovative solutions in order to make digital learning an inclusive right for the most marginalized children across the globe. She indicated that Qatar had been working to develop different financing solutions to meet education needs, including for children in LDCs. Qatar looked forward to working closely with the LDCs, the ILO, and other UN entities to further strengthen their cooperation in the lead up to the LDC5.

H.E. Mr. Perks Ligoya, Permanent Representative of Malawi to the United Nations emphasised that the youth were

the labour market more resilient. It was important to leverage new technologies that could promote education and lifelong learning. The COVID-19 recovery would require targeted and comprehensive policies to support employment globally. Decent jobs, fair pay, basic rights of workers and adequate social protection had to be guaranteed. The ILO was committed to doing its part by proposing policy recommendations and solutions, based on reliable data, and by

It was underscored that the key constraint for LDCs was their limited fiscal space. There was a significant discrepancy between LDCs and other countries; for instance, on average, budget support in low-income countries was 1.4% of the GDP, compared with 3.4% and 7.9% in emerging and advanced economies respectively. The fiscal support for LDCs remained well below the size of the economic shocks affecting households and enterprises. Furthermore, the already limited fiscal space was likely to be shrinking due to declining tax revenues, lower foreign exchange earnings, and high external debt repayments. In order to transition from emergency to recovery it would be necessary to address public health challenges, maintain protection for the most vulnerable, restart the economy and stabilize the labour market.

During the COVID-19 recovery era, governments will have to improve the quality of policy design and implementation, and ensure strong employment policies. National plans to restart the economy and promote a job-rich recovery required closer coordination across different government agencies to create synergies and generate fiscal savings. Social dialogue and a broad and open participatory approach to policy design and implementation, involving social partners and stakeholders, was crucial for improving country policy design and implementation. Moreover, better information and data about the labour market was needed to facilitate monitoring and identify critical areas (notably, women, youth and informal workers). Productive transformation was a critical underpinning, through strategic interactions between public agencies, and the private (formal and informal) sector, with new sets of labour market policies and services.

The current global trends involved a steep fall in demand for low-paid and unskilled labour, for two main reasons. First, the looming global recession was creating a global jobs crisis. Second, structural shifts in production and distribution were compounding those effects (with remote arrangements, e-commerce, automation and artificial intelligence, reshuffling of supply chains). Therefore, adapting to those changes would be particularly challenging for LDCs, but could be an occasion for new drivers of growth and productivity, including by leveraging the potential of digital technologies.

Mr. Boštjan Skalar, CEO, World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA) echoed previous statements highlighting that investment would be crucial to build back better. WAIPA worked with LDCs to help build capacities. He recognized that LDCs had responded fast to COVID-19 by creating digital tools to be in touch with existing investors. The main task of WAIPA, was to support both investors and governments. WAIPA had conducted a survey, which had indicated that 57% of IPAs globally anticipated that there would be budget cuts. IPAs should be put more at the forefront and increase the budgets instead of lowering them. To address capacity building constraints in LDCs, WAIPA had started a master class together with ILO. This included many IPAs from LDCs and aimed at equipping countries with skills to respond to

the creation of special incentives, including work permits to keep foreign workers in the countries, and a focus on youth employment.

Regarding digital tools to build back better, Mr. Skalar stated that it was not just about digital FDI, but also how to use the digital tools to help vulnerable LDCs IPAs to be able to cope with challenges. He stressed the importance of reaching out to investors and highlighted several challenges faced by LDCs including, inadequate technologies and the need for a regulatory framework to be able to use these technologies, for instance to give to investors online registrations.

Ms. Chema Triki, Advisor, Tony Blair Institute for Global Change – Embedded at the Jobs Creation Commission, Ethiopia stated that job creation was a challenge in most Sub-Saharan countries. For instance, in Ethiopia, 2 million people entered the labour market every year,

rights were being undermined, and social protection mechanisms were already stretched before the pandemic.

It was important to focus on a job-rich recovery, especially considering that one of the main causes of informality was

and NGOs to support learners in classrooms. Formal partnerships could also ensure that content was reaching the right learners and targeted vulnerable people and people in need. It could further ensure that the content was providing opportunities to engage with hands-on projects with employers, thereby allowing

the fourth industrial revolution could be a source of economic opportunities for the young population.

H.E. Mr. Nkopane Raseeng Monyane, Permanent Representative of Lesotho to the UN expressed concerns about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in the form of job losses. He called for meaningful investment in productive capacity in LDCs, including investments in technology both capital and human to build back better.

In their closing remarks, panellists affirmed that a sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic would require national plans to promote a job-rich recovery, a whole-of-government approach and policies targeting the quantity and quality of jobs. Efforts should be underpinned by a productive transformation, based on strategic interactions between public agencies and private sectors. It was also essential to have a broad and open participatory approach to policy implementation, involving social dialogue and support from stakeholders. Continued investments in infrastructure, productive capacities and labour market institutions were needed. The LDC5 Conference, provided an opportunity to prioritize policies that foster green, inclusive and equitable growth to help meet the development objectives of LDCs.

