

Improving employment services for youth

YouMatch, a global initiative on innovative employment services for youth

The challenge: Bringing young people into employment

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the global youth unemployment rate is three times higher than the adult unemployment rate (13 % versus 4.3 %). The issue is particularly acute in Africa and the MENA region. In North Africa, youth constitute more than 34% of the total unemployed population while representing only 14.6% of the labour force. In the Middle East, the youth unemployment rate reaches 29.7% while Sub-Saharan Africa has the world's second largest official youth unemployment rate in absolute terms with 12 million youth unemployed.

Young people find it particularly difficult to gain a foothold in the labour market. Lacking work experience and without the necessary networks and strategies to support their job search, finding a decent job becomes particularly challenging. Improving the quality of career guidance services, more efficient school-to-work transitions, better vocational preparation, adequate job placement services and robust labour market information systems could significantly improve their prospects for employment.

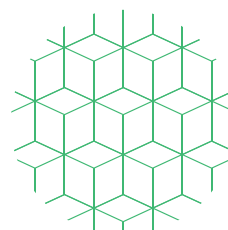
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Commissioned by	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Africa, Middle East
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In Africa and the Middle East, a cross-regional dialogue amongst national practitioners can contribute to the improvement of these “employment services”. Exchanging experiences, technical solutions, good practices and innovative approaches, they can adopt and adapt employment services to local realities and challenges.

Our approach: Improving employment services through multi-stakeholder interregional dialogue

YouMatch's network brings together around 90 employment service practitioners from 25 African and MENA countries within nine interregional Communities of Practice (CoPs).

Endorsing a multi-stakeholder approach, the network is constituted of representatives from over 70 public, private and civil society organisations. As practitioners in the field of employment services, they exchange experiences, share knowledge and expertise, provide feedback, discuss and interact with their fellow CoP members and benefit from tailor-made capacity development measures such as exchanges with international experts, study tours, focused trainings, webinars or peer-to-peer counselling.



YouMatch

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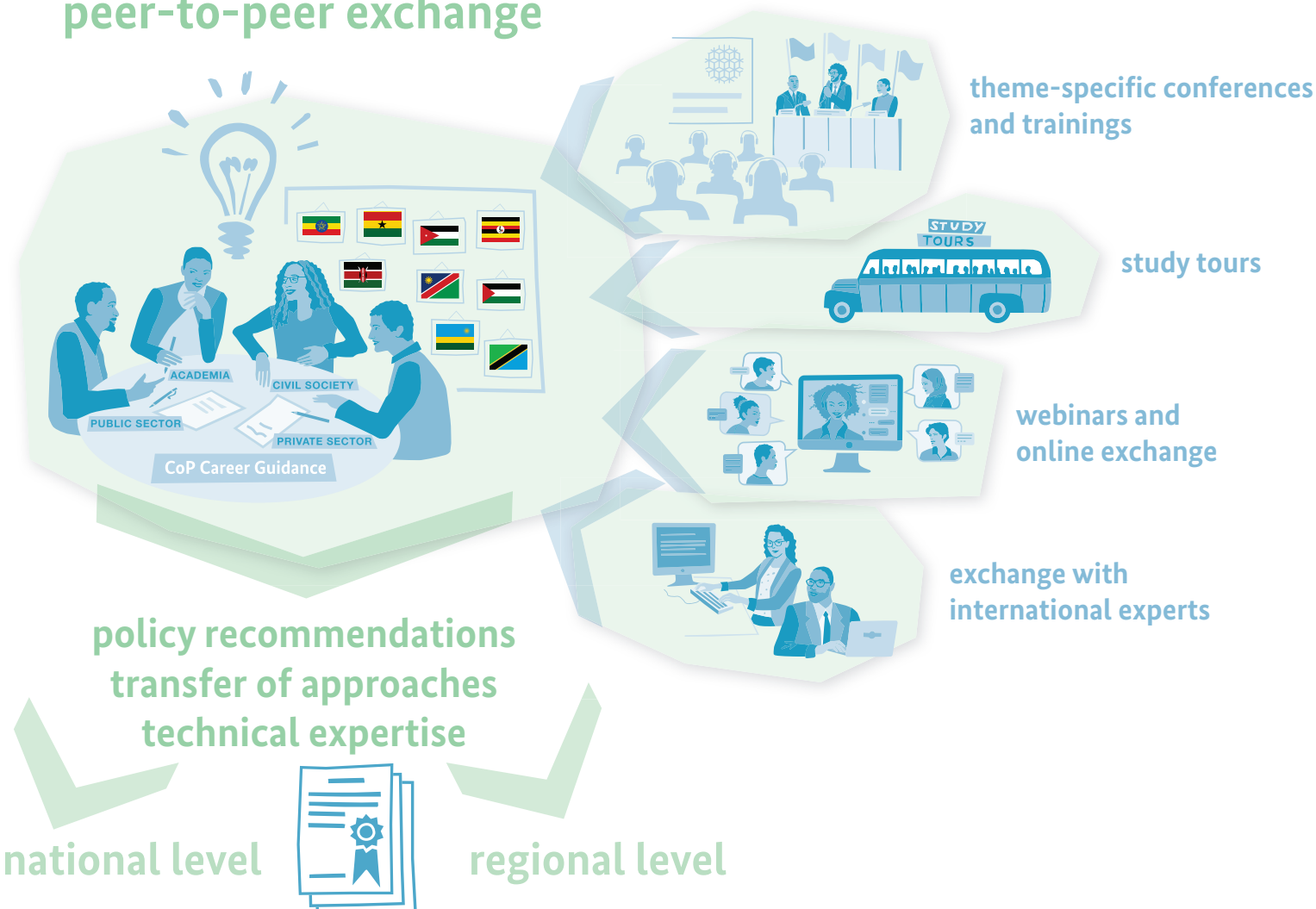
YouMatch's CoPs provide an interregional forum on employment services. The CoPs are theme-specific and address such topics as career guidance and life skills, setting up effective job centres, labour market information systems, public private partnerships and multi-stakeholder approaches in the field of employment services as well as employment services for rural youth. Each CoP is comprised of between seven to fifteen members and is facilitated either in French or in English. The CoPs regularly meet face-to-face as well as online via the African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship (ASPYEE) of the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD).

Facilitators trained by YouMatch provide overall guidance and advisory inputs on the plans, strategies and initiatives of the CoP and moderate the group discussions.

CoPs elaborate their own action plan, detailing the objectives, expected outcomes and respective timeframe of their meetings and activities. They contribute to continental, regional and national reform processes and policy making in the field of employment services through the provision of technical expertise, the elaboration of innovative approaches and policy recommendations.

The YouMatch initiative is implemented in partnership with the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the Union for the Mediterranean Secretariat (UfMS) and the World Association of Public Employment Services (WAPES). YouMatch further collaborates with organisations such as the European Training Foundation (ETF) and the ILO. YouMatch intensively cooperates with WAPES' network partners as well as with relevant regional and bilateral German development cooperation projects in member countries.

peer-to-peer exchange



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