

Ministers meet to develop partnership for skills

A high-level workshop on a new "Partnership for Skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology in Africa" began on Friday, 12 July 2013, in Ethiopia. The three-day event organised by the World Bank and the Government of Ethiopia connects Ministers of Education and Training from nine African countries with a wide range of experts from Brazil, China, India and Korea.

Ministers from Ethiopia, Guinea, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan and Tanzania were there to seek systematic collaboration on one of Africa's greatest challenges meeting today's rising demand for cutting-edge, market-relevant skills in a number of rapidly expanding industries.

"Out of this workshop, I hope we can come up with some very strong and practical recommendations to strengthen the collaboration between partner countries and African countries to strengthen the contributions of technical and higher education institutions in the economic development of our nations," said Ato Demeke Mekonnen, Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia.

"The Indian private education sector would be willing to participate in this partnership provided that there is a conducive regulatory environment that makes investment in education a financially viable proposition," said Shobha Ghosh, senior director at the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce. "Africa can leverage the experience of India, particularly in engineering, science and technology."

The World Bank has carried out intensive consultations with several African countries on the proposed partnership with selected emerging economies who are already directly contributing to Africa's development as investors. Many African countries expressed strong interest in the idea.

"Africa is rising. To realise this exciting prospect, the continent needs to invest in skills and higher education, especially science and technology," said Ritva Reinikka, director for Human Development in Africa at the World Bank. "Higher education needs to be much more responsive to the needs of the private sector and I think that a partnership with emerging countries is a step in the right direction."

Source: [APO](#)