

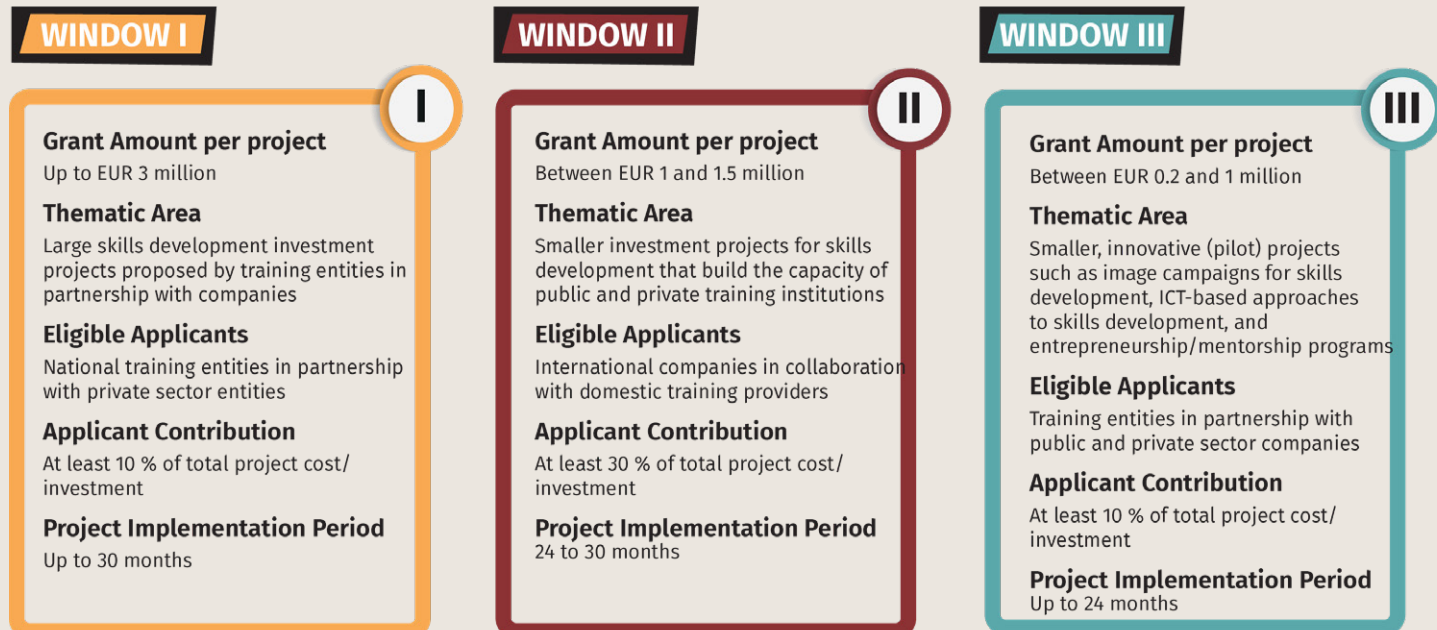
SIFA - Skills Initiative for Africa

Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) is NIRAS's flagship project for Skills Development and Fund Management. SIFA aims to improve employment opportunities for young people in Africa. The program is implemented by the African Union's Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) with financing from KfW, and support from NIRAS – IP Consult as Fund Management Consultant.



Client: AUDA-NEPAD
Donor: KfW

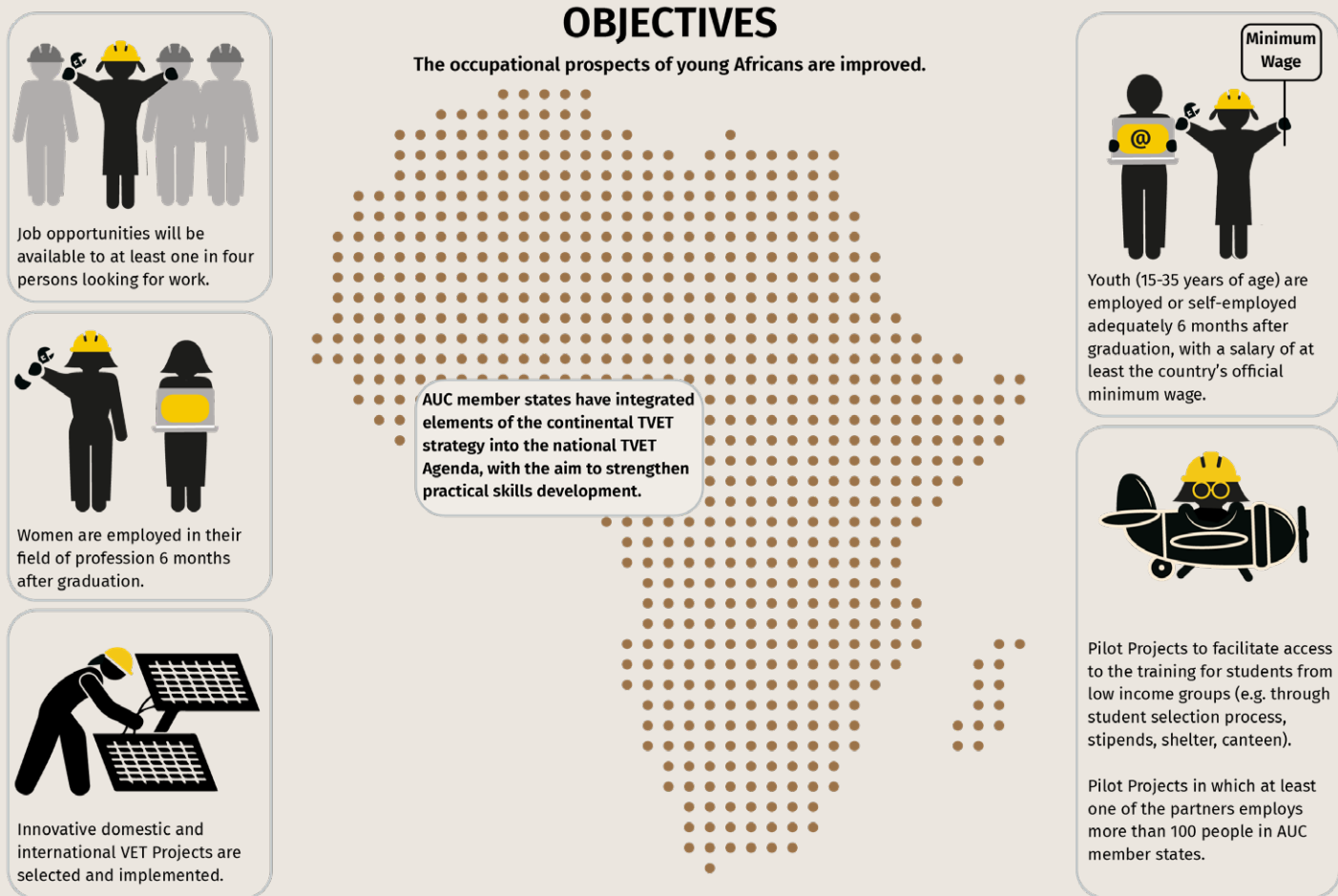
THE PROGRAMME



The three funding windows cater for different strategies: While Funding Windows I and II are designed for large investment projects including construction or rehabilitation of vocational schools and equipment of training facilities, the third Funding Window will support smaller, innovative pilot projects.

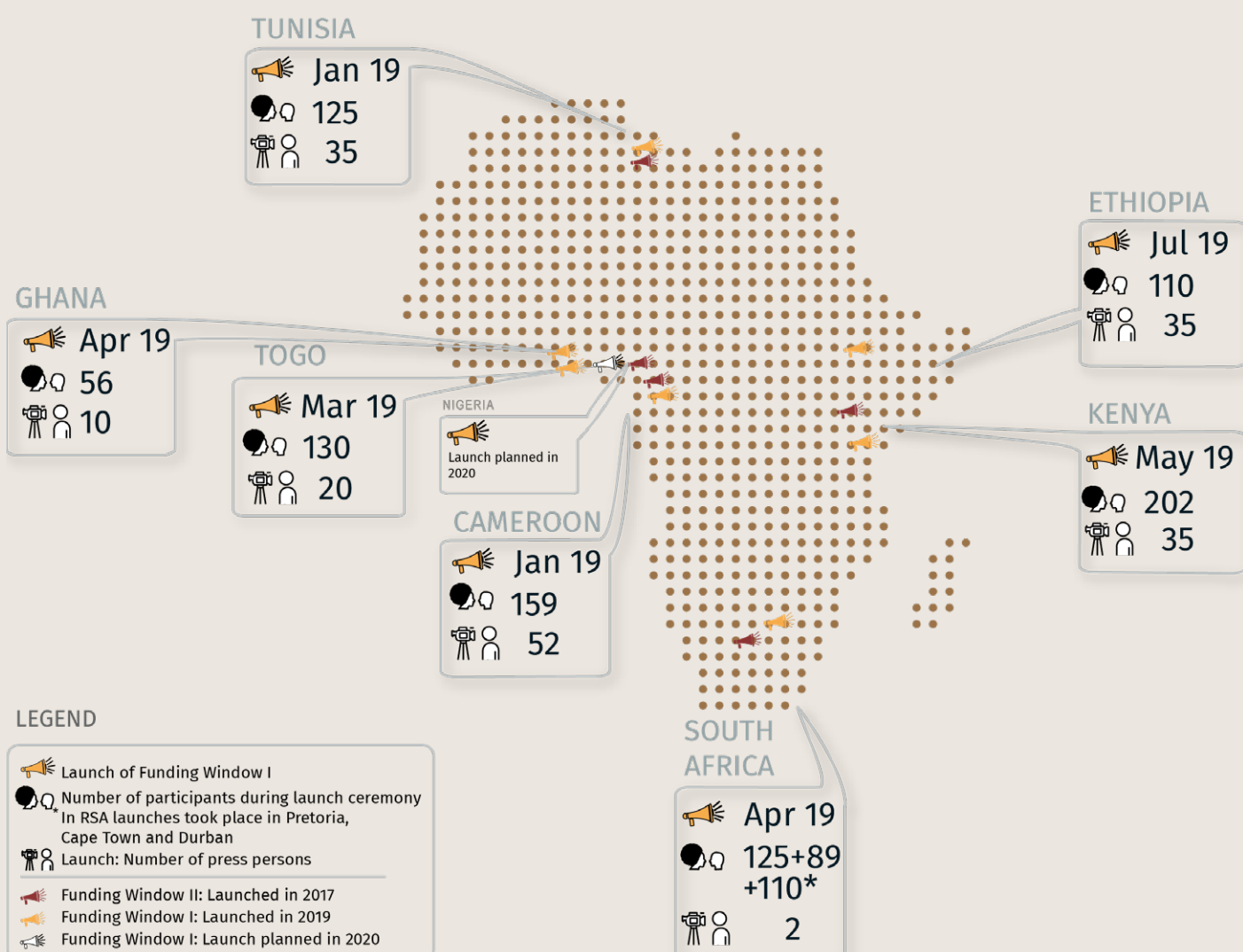
OBJECTIVES

The occupational prospects of young Africans are improved.



Specifically, the objective of the SIFA Financing Facility is to increase quality and innovation in practical, employment-oriented skills development through the implementation of sustainable, nationally and regionally relevant skills development initiatives.

CALLS FOR PROPOSALS LAUNCH OF FUNDING WINDOW I



The SIFA Financing Facility provides funding for skills development projects in several African countries. Currently, these include Cameroon, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Togo, and Tunisia. Grants are allocated on a competitive basis through three different Funding Windows, and selected projects can receive grants between EUR 0.2 to 3 million. In the course of 2019, NIRAS organized launch events and calls for proposals for Funding Window I in seven of these countries, the last one is to follow in 2020.

CURRENT STATE ASSESSMENT FUNDING WINDOW I



Received concept note proposals have been evaluated and, following formal approval, three shortlisted applicants per country will be invited to submit comprehensive Full Proposals. This constitutes the second stage of the selection process. The best proposal in each country will receive funding to implement the project. For Funding Window III, a revised concept is currently under development.

The NIRAS – IP Consult core team is based in Midrand, South Africa, close to the AUDA-NEPAD offices. In addition, a local expert in each of the participating countries is supporting the selection and implementation of the supported projects on the ground.

CHALLENGES

As SIFA is still at a pilot stage, the different Funding Windows will support only few projects. However, in order to benefit from the large number of received Concept Notes and the fact that under Funding Window I, three Applicants from each of the participating countries will develop Full Proposals, additional funding should be pledged to implement more than just one project in each country. This could provide additional credibility to the program.

At present, very little labor market information is available to forecast the future skills gap in the participating countries. However, this information would be highly valuable to ensure that the SIFA funds are invested in the best way. Therefore, the labor market information base is being strengthened by the SIFA Technical Cooperation (TC) component through GIZ, and stronger cooperation with SIFA TC will reinforce the investment strategy of the SIFA Financing Facility.

More on www.skillsafrica.org