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Country scan · 2026

Jobtech in Ethiopia





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What is jobtech?

The jobtech sector comprises digital platforms and tools that connect people to work, help them earn more from it, or prepare them for it.

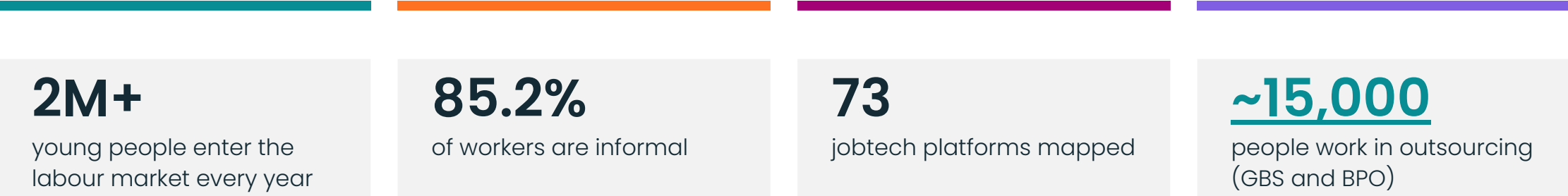
A jobtech platform is a digitally-enabled business or service that helps people find work, increase their income, or learn skills to earn more.

[Learn more about jobtech](#)



Executive summary

Ethiopia has a large, young workforce, some of the fastest growth in Africa, and digital infrastructure that has only recently arrived. Its jobtech sector is still early. The platforms that work start with paying demand and build trust around it.



01	Jobs are the gap.	Growth is strong, but job creation lags. Urban youth unemployment is 25.8%, and 34.3% for young women.
02	The foundations are partly built.	Mobile data is cheap and payments are growing, but only 28% of Ethiopians own a smartphone.
03	The market is concentrated.	63% of mapped platforms work in logistics and mobility, job boards, or online freelancing. About 85% are based in Addis Ababa.
04	Outsourcing matters more than it looks.	<u>About 25 registered GBS and BPO firms employ around 15,000 people,</u> though automation is a real risk.
05	Five traits mark the models that work.	They find paying demand first, start in Addis Ababa, own several layers of the stack, design for inclusion, and mix apps with call centres, Telegram, and agents.



Why Ethiopia, and why now?

Ethiopia is no longer an under digitised market catching up. Digital infrastructure and innovation have arrived and will continue arriving in a large economy where accumulated talent and unmet demand are creating space for distinctly Ethiopian approaches to building jobtech platforms.

The opportunity is catalysed by:

01

Scale without entrenched digital incumbents

Africa's second-largest population, a rapidly expanding workforce, and millions of informal businesses create latent demand for better routes to work, customers, and finance.

02

Market liberalisation

Telecom competition, mobile money, digital identity, and wider economic reforms are connecting a market that was long relatively isolated from global technology, capital, and competition. The Digital Economy 2030 Strategy makes ICT and tech jobs a priority.

03

Existing talent pools

Ethiopia has concentrated pools of technical talent and an institutional base built through decades of investment in universities, TVET, entrepreneurship, digital skills, and industrial productivity. There are still too few pathways for converting those capabilities into sustained earnings.

04

New international relationships

Growing links with China, Japan, and other international partners are bringing new funding, technology, infrastructure, commercial relationships, and innovation.

01

The role of jobtech in a unique country context

Where are the gaps in Ethiopia's labour market and digital infrastructure, and what can jobtech do about them?





A strong job creation imperative

2M+

young people enter the labour market every year

135M

population with median age 19, set to reach 225M by 2050

85.2%

work informally: 87.4% of women and 87.3% of youth

19.3%

of youth not in education, employment or training (2021)

Ethiopia has some of the fastest growth in Africa.

The highest real GDP per capita growth on the continent since 2000, and real GDP up 8.1% in 2023/24. GDP per capita is about USD 1,000, against USD 1,670 for Sub-Saharan Africa.

But job creation is not matching the demands of the labour market.

Over 2M young people enter the labour market every year. Urban youth unemployment is 25.8%, and 34.3% for young women. Over 800,000 Ethiopians moved abroad in five years, pushed out by conflict and lack of work.



An enabling environment being built

Building block	Status	Evidence
Connectivity and cost	Getting there	Among Africa's ten cheapest markets for mobile data, with internet access growing from 3% in 2012 to 35% in 2023, but actual usage remains well below African and global averages.
Digital payments	Getting there	49% of adults have a bank account, while 19.4% have a mobile money account.
Regulation	Getting there	Uncertainty around taxation, sector-specific licensing, consumer protection, and limited worker protections, including no minimum wage.
Smartphones	Not conducive	Smartphone access remains limited, with only 28% of Ethiopians owning one in 2023.
Digital skills	Not conducive	Only 10% of Ethiopians have computer literacy, and 16% have internet literacy as of 2024.
Venture capital funding	Not conducive	Scarce growth capital: USD 95M raised by 85+ startups in five years.



Unique labour market characteristics impacting jobtech

Political, policy and economic

1. Instability

- High inflation, volatility, and policy uncertainty
- Conflict and political instability

2. Regulatory uncertainty

- Unpredictable taxes and bans (for example, on EV parts importation)
- Delayed licensing, especially payments-related

3. Skilling and education mismatch, information gaps

- Curricula misaligned with market demand
- Weak job-matching mechanisms and career guidance
- Limited professional networks

Startups and investment

1. Constrained access to capital

- Banks reluctant to lend to startups and SMEs, with available SME digital financial products with high interest and short repayment terms
- Underdeveloped VC culture

2. Donor-heavy funding landscape

- Donor funding filling the VC gap (~70% of all funding for incubators) and distorting the market, with some platforms receiving repeated funding
- Limited coordination among donors constraining social return on investment

Demographic and socio-cultural

1. Urbanisation and saturation

- Rapid growth of the working-age population intensifying competition
- Rural-to-urban migration bringing low-skilled youth into saturated urban centres

2. First-time jobseeker bottlenecks

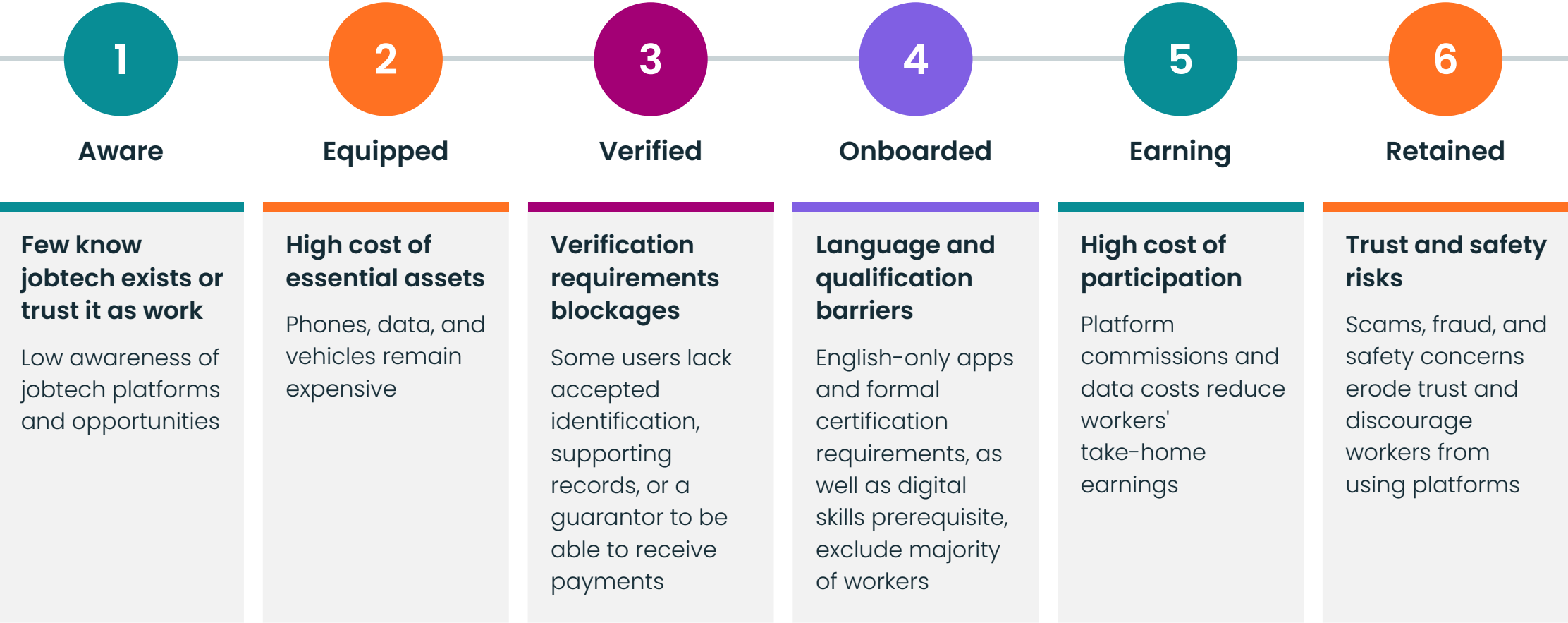
- Unemployment heavily concentrated among youth seeking their first job
- Severe lack of entry-level pathways, internships, and apprenticeships

3. Discrimination

- Pronounced age and other discrimination in hiring processes
- Added cultural and social barriers for young women



A worker journey that can be improved at every step



02

The jobtech platform landscape

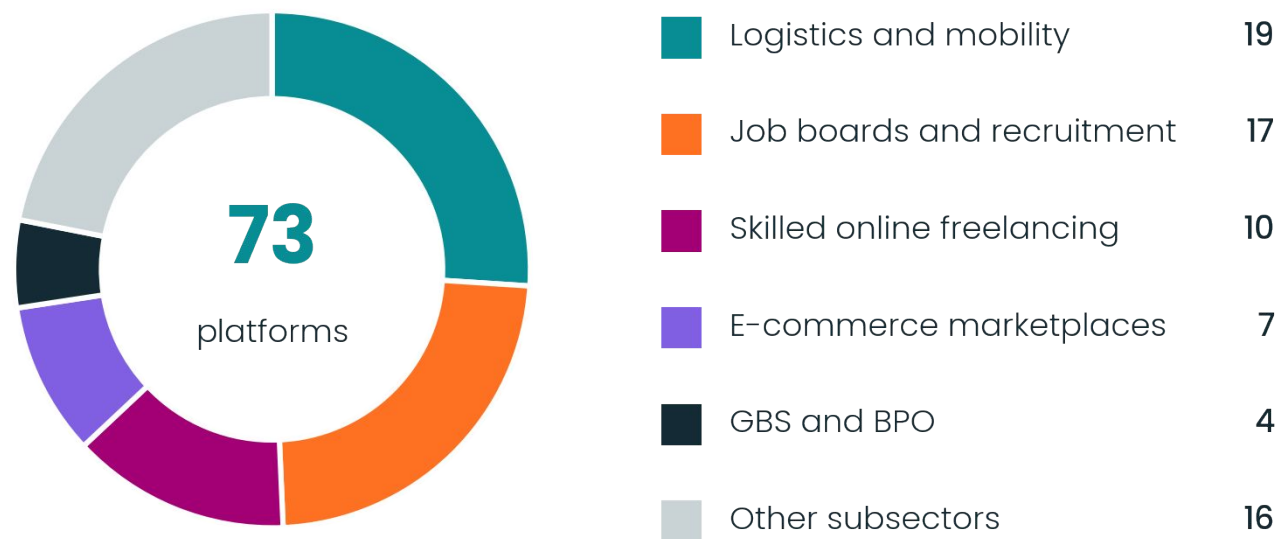
Which platforms exist, where do they cluster, and what are the leading ones doing differently?





Ethiopia's 73 jobtech platforms are concentrated in 3 subsectors

Ethiopia's jobtech ecosystem is still nascent but growing. A handful of established platforms such as RIDE, beU, and Jemla coexist with a much larger group of early-stage ventures across mobility, commerce, recruitment, and digital work.



63%46 of 73 platforms are in logistics and mobility, job boards, and online freelancing

59%of all platforms are for offline work

~85%of platforms are based in Addis Ababa



Ethiopia's jobtech landscape

Platforms for offline work (43)							

Digital services for microenterprises (10)					
Platforms for digitally delivered work (15)					
Tech-enabled skilling (5)					

The map groups all 73 platforms we mapped by the five platform types in the [jobtech taxonomy](#). Offline work dominates, outsourcing forms a distinct cluster within digitally delivered work, and no digital tools for worker enablement were mapped.



Spotlight on GBS and BPO

Global business services (GBS) and business process outsourcing (BPO) firms in Addis Ababa deliver customer support, data work, content management, and software for clients in Europe, the US, and the region. The sector is attracting state investment, and it faces a real test from automation.

~15,000

people work in Ethiopia's outsourcing sector

~25

registered firms

~USD 50M

a year in revenue

3,000

seats in a new USD 25.56M state-backed BPO hub

Automation risk

Nearly 40% of tasks in Africa's BPO and IT-enabled services sector could be automated by 2030

For Ethiopian firms built on voice and data-entry work, this is the main risk to plan for.



Platform showcase: GBS and BPO



Africom Technologies

Addis Ababa

africom.et

1,000+ project-based staff (2024)

What it does

Established in 2004, Africom Technologies offers voice and non-voice BPO alongside software development. It exports to the USA, Finland, the Netherlands, and Kenya. In 2021 it had 55 full-time staff, 25 of them women, and revenue of about USD 466,000.

Why it matters for jobs

Africom shows how an outsourcing firm can absorb large numbers of workers on project contracts. In May 2024, Shega reported 45 permanent and more than 1,000 project-based staff.



R&D Group

Addis Ababa, Rotterdam, and Nairobi

randd-group.com

12 years of export experience

What it does

Established in 2010, R&D provides data entry, data analysis, and content management outsourcing, plus HR outsourcing for more than 100 staff of international organisations. It has 12 years' export experience, with clients in the Netherlands, the US, and Mauritius.

Why it matters for jobs

R&D connects Ethiopian workers to international contracts and formal employment. The ITC directory, which lists it as R&D Entrepreneurship & Outsourcing Center, records 128 full-time staff, and its founder told Shega in May 2024 that the team was over 130. Also mapped under managed services: Excellerent Technology Solutions and BeSingularity.



Platform showcase: mobility and last-mile delivery



RIDE

Ethiopia and Djibouti

ride8294.com

30,000+ vehicles on the network

What it does

RIDE is Ethiopia's leading ride-hailing platform, connecting passengers with drivers through a mobile app and a 24/7 call centre, making the service accessible even to users with limited digital access. The platform has built a large mobility network in Addis Ababa, reporting 30,000+ vehicles and more than 3 million customers, while integrating digital payments such as Telebirr and CBE Birr.

Why it matters for jobs

RIDE's model also shows how low-tech and digital channels can work together in Ethiopia: the call centre complements the app, while the company directly employs hundreds of staff, the majority of whom it reports are women.



beU Delivery

Addis Ababa

beudelivery.com

700,000+ customers served

What it does

beU Delivery is one of Ethiopia's leading on-demand delivery platforms, connecting consumers with restaurants, shops, and other merchants through its app, Telegram, call centre, and bicycle-based delivery network. Operating primarily in Addis Ababa, the platform reports serving 700,000+ customers and 500–800+ restaurant partners, while its bicycle-based model helps keep delivery costs and barriers to participation relatively low.

Why it matters for jobs

Its model is particularly relevant in Ethiopia because bicycle delivery reduces the need for expensive assets such as cars or motorcycles, creating more accessible entry-level livelihood opportunities while helping small businesses reach a wider digital customer base.



Platform showcase: job boards



Afriwork
Ethiopia
afriworket.com

30,000 job matches facilitated by 2023

Portfolio company

What it does

Afriwork is an Ethiopian job-matching platform built for small and medium-sized enterprises, which are often priced out of traditional job portals. Founded in 2018 as a Telegram channel connecting businesses with freelancers, it has grown to cover part-time and full-time jobs across Telegram, web, and mobile. It makes money through a freemium model, with free basic job posts for employers and paid premium listings and subscriptions.

Why it matters for jobs

Afriwork improves access to wage and freelance work by making hiring cheaper and faster for SMEs, the main source of new jobs in Ethiopia's private sector. As of 2023, it had onboarded 300,000 users and 15,000 SMEs and facilitated 30,000 job matches.



HaHu Jobs
Ethiopia
hahujobs.io

What it does

HaHu Jobs is an Ethiopian tech-enabled recruitment platform that uses data analytics for job matching. It offers employer dashboards, labour market insights, CV optimisation, and personalised tools for jobseekers. The company is privately held, with backing from MinabTech and a place in RISA Fund's scale-up portfolio.

Why it matters for jobs

As a full-stack recruitment service, HaHu Jobs moves beyond listings into matching algorithms and market analytics, where the scan sees the opportunity for job boards shifting, adding Digitalized Job readiness (JR) and career enhancement (CE) trainings to their [Muya platform](https://muyaplatform.com).



Platform showcase: microenterprise and agent models



JEMLA

Jemla

Addis Ababa

jemlaonline.com

Portfolio company

What it does

Jemla is an Ethiopian B2B commerce and distribution platform that connects small informal retailers with FMCG manufacturers and suppliers, combining digital ordering with next-day delivery. The platform is helping shop owners access more reliable inventory, transparent pricing, and a more efficient alternative to sourcing stock from traditional wholesale markets.

Why it matters for jobs

Jemla strengthens existing microenterprise livelihoods rather than creating individual gig work. By using retailers' transaction data to unlock working capital and credit, while reducing stock-outs and sourcing costs, Jemla can help small businesses become more productive, increase revenues, and potentially create additional jobs as they grow.

AXIOM
FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGIES

Axiom

Ethiopia

axiom-ventures.com

13,000+ merchants and agents
recruited since 2023

What it does

Axiom is an Ethiopian super agent and agent aggregation platform that recruits, trains, and supports merchants as digital financial services agents for banks and mobile money providers. Through its m.agents service and a hub and spoke network, it brings cash-in, cash-out, account opening, and bill payment to underserved individuals. The platform has recruited 13,000+ merchants and agents since 2023, with around 2,000+ active.

Why it matters for jobs

This model is relevant for refugee livelihoods because agents earn from a fixed location without needing a vehicle or a licence, and every transaction creates a record of earnings. Axiom has also built solar-powered off-grid kiosks for camp settings and recently partnered with Paycode for offline biometric enrolment, to address the ID and connectivity barriers that stop most platforms from onboarding refugees. Women make up 35% of its agents, with a target of 60%.



Platform showcase: Etalem (domestic work and care economy)



Etalem (by GoodayOn)

Ethiopia

gooday.io

Jobtech Alliance portfolio company

What it does

Etalem is a home care service run by GoodayOn, which connects households with verified workers for cooking, cleaning, and babysitting. After six years of operating a broader marketplace for home repair and maintenance, GoodayOn closed that service to focus entirely on Etalem, offering standardised, quality-guaranteed care packages that families can book online.

Why it matters for jobs

Etalem creates flexible paid work in domestic and care services, a largely informal sector dominated by women. By verifying workers and standardising service quality, it helps professionalise home care work (including higher fees) and gives workers access to a steadier stream of clients.



Spotlight on inclusion: displaced people in online freelancing



Invicta

Ethiopia

invictaorg-2.web.app

2,200+ refugees found online work by 2023

What it does

Invicta is a career development platform that connects refugees and internally displaced youth with remote work opportunities, while helping companies find skilled remote talent. Alongside job matching, the platform offers digital skills training, certifications, mental health counselling, and entrepreneurship support, giving displaced jobseekers a route into the digital economy that does not depend on a local work permit.

Why it matters for jobs

Invicta creates direct employment by opening access to remote and online work for a group largely excluded from formal labour markets. By combining training and certification with job matching and psychosocial support, Invicta helps displaced youth build marketable skills, earn income, and move towards more stable livelihoods. As of 2023, more than 2,200 refugees had found work online through the platform.



Na'amal

Na'amal

Ethiopia

naamal.org

What it does

Na'amal is a nonprofit social enterprise that trains refugees and host community members for remote work and connects them to paid digital opportunities. Its Remote Work Readiness programme combines soft skills training with technical mentorship and team-based projects, delivered in Ethiopia with partners such as Digital Opportunity Trust. Through Na'amal Agency, it also wins enterprise contracts for web development, design, and digital marketing delivered by trained refugee talent, alongside donor funding.

Why it matters for jobs

Na'amal creates direct, project-based work for youth who face barriers to formal employment. By pairing training with mentorship, real client projects, and internship links, it helps participants build portfolios and move into paid remote work.

03

Country investment thesis

What can work best in Ethiopia, and deliver impact for businesses and users, sustainably?





What business models work best in Ethiopia

Durable models bundle services around the worker and earn through transactions and finance.

1 Tackling demand Platforms that find, grow, and convert organised, recurring demand into sustained work and earnings. In practice Africom and R&D Group have built teams around years of export contracts with clients in the US, Europe, and the region. See GBS and BPO.	2 Based in Addis Ababa The capital has the strongest concentration of customers, workers, connectivity, and digital payments. In practice RIDE reports 30,000+ vehicles and more than 3 million customers, built in Addis Ababa first. See mobility.	3 Vertically integrated Platforms that excel own several layers of the stack, not one transaction. They solve capital, supply, and trust together. In practice Jemla combines digital ordering, next-day delivery, and working capital for informal retailers. See microenterprise.	4 Inclusive, focused on retention Intentional design includes low-tech onboarding, trusted community referrals, local languages, skills development, access to productive assets, worker protections, and enablements, such as flexible hours. In practice Etalem verifies workers and standardises care packages, giving them a steadier stream of clients. See care economy.	5 Hybrid and adaptable Limited internet use, digital literacy, and smartphone access restrict app-only models. In practice RIDE pairs its app with a 24/7 call centre, and Afriwork started as a Telegram channel. See job boards.
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Our country investment thesis

Ethiopia has abundant labour and growing digital infrastructure. The country could well produce unique business models unlike those copied from more mature African technology markets. The durable models we found bundle services around the worker and earn through transactions and finance, rather than solely through subscriptions.

We believe the best jobtech investment opportunities in Ethiopia fall under five categories:

01

Managed marketplaces for essential offline services

Platforms that combine technology with verification, customer support, quality control, and trusted local operations. RIDE, which pairs its app with a 24/7 call centre and reports 30,000+ vehicles, shows the model at scale.

02

Recruitment infrastructure beyond listings

Platforms that add assessment, verification, employer workflow, performance data, and retention. With 17 job boards competing for the same listings, value is moving to what happens after the match.

03

Digitally delivered work with contracted demand first

Remote-work and refugee programmes that begin with credible buyers and repeatable work pipelines, rather than training people in anticipation that demand will emerge. Invicta reports more than 2,200 refugees finding online work by 2023.

04

GBS and BPO that move up the value chain

According to the [Ethiopian Outsourcing Association](#), about 15,000 people work across roughly 25 registered firms, four of which we mapped. In March 2026, Ethiopian Investment Holdings, the state's investment arm, [announced a USD 25.56M outsourcing project](#) that includes a 3,000-seat facility. With nearly [40% of tasks](#) in Africa's BPO and IT-enabled services at risk of automation by 2030, the opportunity lies with firms that shift towards higher-value data, software, and specialist services.

05

Labour mobility

An estimated 839,000 Ethiopians migrated abroad in the five years to 2021, according to an [IOM and Central Statistical Agency survey](#). Labour mobility platforms that connect workers to vetted international employers, and focus on driving global demand, have room to emerge and capture value.



What next for the ecosystem?

Funders and investors

- Back platforms with repeat customers, credible economics, and measurable worker earnings.
- Finance inclusion costs such as devices, onboarding, and safeguards without permanently subsidising weak demand.
- Coordinate funding and reduce duplication, particularly in standalone training programmes.

Government

- Publish clear rules and timelines for licensing, taxation, and proposed sector changes.
- Ensure Fayda, recognised refugee IDs and work permits work across platform onboarding, payments, and financial services.
- Connect public skilling programmes to employer demand and publish completion, placement, and earnings results.
-

Platforms

- Combine digital products with Telegram, call centres, agents, skilling integration (e.g., JRT) and local-language support.
- Address the constraints surrounding the transaction, including verification, payment, safety, assets, and finance.
- Track active earners, repeat customers, retention, and net earnings, disaggregated by sex and age.

Jobtech Alliance and partners

- Establish shared definitions and performance measures for platform traction and job quality.
- Broker demand from employers, distributors, public procurement, and international buyers.
- Test inclusive onboarding and secondary-city expansion with partners, then publish the results.

Backing the startups building Africa's future of work

Jobtech Alliance is the ecosystem builder for African jobtech, an initiative led by Prosper Global and BFA Global that supports platforms, founders, investors and policymakers here in Africa.

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