

YOUNG LEADERS FORUM ON THE SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY

CONCEPT NOTE

Yamoussoukro, October 29, 30 and 31, 2024

I. CONTEXT

Present today in almost all sectors of activity, the Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) is emerging as a key vector of sustainable development, and more particularly in Africa.

Indeed, by providing innovative solutions to social, economic and environmental problems, it stimulates the creation of sustainable jobs, contributing to the promotion of inclusive economic development and poverty reduction.

Furthermore, young people express a growing desire for social usefulness, according to Hugues Sibille, President of the SSE Lab, emphasizing their aspiration to “be useful” and to seek “self-realization”.

Young people are in a transitional phase, making a series of choices that have an impact on their environment. Through its values, the SSE approach can challenge and encourage today's young people, and tomorrow's adults, to become model citizens, capable of contributing to the construction of a fairer and more solidarity-based society, orienting the economy to serve human needs, and contributing to collective consciousness-raising. In this way, the SSE plays a significant role in empowering young people.

In this perspective, several African countries and local authorities have adopted youth and SSE policies. However, challenges remain, such as access to funding, training and monitoring, cooperation and pooling.

To overcome these constraints to the real emergence of SSE (which are not specific to Africa only), the active lobbying carried out by the various players in the global ecosystem has led several international institutions to position themselves in favor of SSE.. These include :

- ◇ **the International Labor Organization (ILO)**, in June 2022, with [a resolution concerning decent work and the social and solidarity economy, which provides a universal definition of the SSE](#) and recognizes its different forms internationally
- ◇ **the United Nations (UN)** which adopts, in April 2023, [a resolution in the General Assembly which recognizes the essential role of the Social and Solidarity Economy in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)
- ◇ **the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**, with a [recommendation](#) (June 2022) and one [European Social Economy plan](#) (December 2021) to reinforce this dynamic.

As for the continental level, [a ten-year SSE strategy and its implementation plan \(2023-2033\)](#) are currently being adopted by the **African Union (AU)**.

The establishment of a Forum on the social and solidarity economy dedicated to Youth, on a continent where 70% of its population is under 30 years old, offers a real opportunity to strengthen existing initiatives and explore new innovative solutions to socio-economic challenges.

Following the success of the first edition of the event, focused on the partnership between social enterprises and local authorities for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), an in-depth evaluation and reconceptualization were carried out at the request of stakeholders.

Thus, the second edition of this Forum, initiated by the NGO **POJeT**, the Assembly of Regions and Districts of Ivory Coast (**ARDCI**) and the **GSEF**, will be held in the last quarter of 2024 under the theme : « **Cooperative entrepreneurship and social innovation: which policies for a sustainable integration of young people in territories ?** ». It will question public policies on the socio-professional integration of young people, with a view to strengthening existing SSE youth initiatives and meeting the aspirations of the new generation, dynamic and committed to a sustainable Africa by 2063.

These terms of reference define the modalities for the organization of the 2nd edition of this Forum.

II. Objectives

The aim of the forum is to facilitate the emergence of a dynamic and committed community of young players from the Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) in Africa, by promoting knowledge sharing, collaboration, innovation, and catalyzing concrete actions to significantly contribute to sustainable development on the continent.

Specifically, this will concern :

1. **to facilitate the sharing of experiences** : Encourage young people and territories engaged in SSE initiatives to share their experiences, challenges and successes, creating a space for mutual learning;
2. **to strengthen awareness and training** : Inform young people about the opportunities offered by the SSE, with an emphasis on green jobs, digital initiatives, culture, tourism, handicrafts, agribusiness, civic engagement, gender and contribute to expand their understanding of sustainability and empowerment;
3. **to assess the SSE impact** : Carry out an in-depth assessment of the impacts of SSE on Youth and Sustainable Territorial Development, based on the results of the diagnosis « **Youth and SSE policies in the territories** », with valuable information to guide future actions and formulate **advocacy at international, national and local levels**;
4. **to identify and constitute a database** : Reference innovative projects carried out by young leaders in Africa in order to better understand the dynamics and initiatives present in the territories to target and deploy programs following the event;
5. **to mobilize public/private players, the research sector, development agencies and financial institutions** : Obtain the necessary commitments and raise funds from public authorities, donors/impact investors, private companies (CSR, open innovation, etc), experts/academics and development agencies to coach and finance SSE youth initiatives (innovative projects with social and environmental impact).

III. EXPECTED RESULTS

At the end of the Forum, the following results are expected :

1. An active platform of young people and territories engaged in the SSE in Africa will be created and promote continuous collaboration, exchanges and solidarity.
2. Young people are widely informed and aware of the opportunities offered by the SSE, with a broader understanding of green jobs, digital initiatives, culture, tourism, agribusiness, and better knowledge of sustainability principles.
3. An in-depth assessment of the impact of SSE on youth and the sustainable development of territories, based on the results of the diagnosis « **Youth and SSE policies of the territories**», is finalized => data and information provided are used to guide future actions and formulate **advocacy at international, national and local levels**.
4. Innovative projects carried out by young SSE players in Africa are known, referenced and a coaching program is deployed following the event.
5. Commitments are obtained from public authorities, funders/impact investors, private companies (CSR, open innovation, etc.), experts/academics and development agencies/financial institutions for coaching and financing SSE youth initiatives (projects innovative with social and environmental impacts).

IV. METHODOLOGY

The organization of the Forum adopts a methodological approach which is divided into three (3) stages.

- 1) **Pre-Forum stage**: it consists of identifying SSE youth initiatives (call for projects), identifying model territories in terms of Youth and SSE policies (City'SSE) and collecting data to analyze through the study on Youth and SSE territories policies.
- 2) **Forum stage** : it will include scientific work, a fundraising round table, a cultural evening and a tourist visit. Activities will take the shape of presentations, experience sharing and workshops. The choice of methods will be based on active and participative facilitation with a range of pedagogical supports (conferences, brainstorming, plenary sessions, workshops, pitch competition, round table, etc) which allow exchanges.
- 3) **Forum post stage** : it will focus on the implementation of a roadmap: monitoring of recommendations, submission of the Diagnosis Report / White Paper to local/national authorities and support for innovative projects selected with social and environmental impacts (coaching program).

V. TARGET

Expected participants are mainly stakeholders in the SSE Young Leaders Forum in Africa (including delegations led by the co-pilots from the other continents of the GSEF SSE Youth Hub => Asia, Europe, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean) :

- the technical ministries of the SSE ecosystem,
- elected representatives of local authorities and their executives,
- diplomatic missions,
- Private sectors and corporate foundations,
- Civil society (community groups, youth associations, women's organizations and disabled people's networks),
- international and sub-regional organizations,
- development agencies, financial institutions and donors
- universities, research centers and institutes specializing in SSE issues,
- mass media.

VI. DATE AND PLACE

The second edition of the SSE Young Leaders Forum will take place from October 29 to 31, 2024, in Yamoussoukro, in the Autonomous District of Yamoussoukro. Before and after the event itself, several activities will be carried out following the indicative program below :

1. **April 2024** : Opening the online call for projects : **SSE Youth initiative**. For this edition, the focus will be on cooperative/inclusive businesses of young people and women.
2. **June 2024** : Start of the diagnosis « **Youth and SSE territories policies**»
3. **October 2024**: Scientific work, cultural evening and tourist visit in the Autonomous District of Yamoussoukro
4. **November 2024** : Start of the coaching program for the SSE Youth initiatives and City'SSE online/face-to-face.

VII. PARTNERS

The partners identified and/or involved in the organization of the Forum are as follows :

❑ **Institutional partners :**

Ministry in charge of the Social and Solidarity Economy, Ministry for Youth Promotion, Public/Private Sector Concertation Committee (CCESP), United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG-Africa) / Local Authorities networks, African Network for Social and Solidarity Economy (RAESS) / National SSE Network.

❑ **Strategic partners :**

Youth project funding agencies, Oukaley, ABEWE,

❑ **Technical and financial partners :**

International Labor Office (ILO), United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Africa Cooperative Institute of South Africa (ACI SA), International Association of Social Economy Investors (INAISE), France Volunteers, Corporate Foundations

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