



## African Youth ICT4D Network (AYIN)

# Harnessing Information & Knowledge For Youth Development

*Through Education and skills development*

Training  
Research & Documentation  
Community Information Center  
Multimedia Community Centers  
Community Radio

## Project Document

# African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE)

## PRE-SELECTED PROJECTS

**Target country/ies:** ECA's member States and their Youth-led Organizations

**Leading Implementing Institution:** The African Youth ICT4D Network (AYIN)

**Potential Partners:** The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), African Union (AU), Youth Employment Network (YEN), and Commonwealth

**Project Title:** Harnessing ICTs for Youth Empowerment, Leadership and Employment

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### Programme/Project Focus Areas:

- Legal Environment/Enabling Environment
- Infrastructure and access
- E-Strategies and Policies
- Youth Entrepreneurship and Employment
- Information Society Indicators
- Capacity Building
- Research & Development
- Internet Governance
- Local and rural e-Governance
- National Spatial Data Infrastructure
- Women and the Information Society
- Multi-stakeholders – Parliamentarians, Youth, Media, Local authorities, etc
- African Languages
- Persons with disability
- Harnessing the Digital Diaspora
- Resource Mobilization & partnership
- Other

### **Summary of the project proposal:**

The Project aims to create and support at the national and sub-regional levels, a self-sustaining enabling environment under which young people can act on their own behalf, and on their own terms in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of strategies development efforts. The project also aims to adopt measures to improve access to ICTs and to provide young people with the skills to make use of it.

In addressing youth development challenges, the project – through the promotion of the full participation of young people in decision-making at all levels, including at community, local, provincial, national and sub-regional levels – will look at the **6Es**: Employability, Employment Creation, Equity, Entrepreneurship, Environment Sustainability and Empowerment. It will leverage on information and communication technologies to facilitate capacity development interventions and the transformation of young people, supported by national youth networks towards self sustaining and politically strong youth cooperatives or enterprises engaged in sustainable livelihood.

Specific objectives will include:

- Identify potential youth organization partners and communities where the project can be implemented through the conduction of a *National Youth Campaign* in each participating countries;
- Strengthen the institutional capacity of the African Youth ICT4D Network (AYIN) and national youth networks in participating countries and sub-regions;
- Promote continuous learning through the facilitation of the emergence of a global community of young people working on ICT for development policy and practice, through the development of:
  - o twenty (20) youth training and information centers (YTIC),
  - o fifteen (15) community information centers (CIC), and
  - o support up to three existing training centers for youth e-skill development;

- Other social interventions will operate in youth recreation centers, youth ICT clubs and training centers, and include activities to improve the quality of lives of youth through:
  - o improved sexual and reproductive health,
  - o adoption of positive, uncompromising behavior,
  - o attitude change towards youth (particularly girls) among peers, parents, society, religious and political leaders. This activity will directly benefit uneducated girls and young mothers, through non-formal education by community radio programs and access to community multimedia centers' (CMC) education materials in local languages.

At the end of five years, it is expected that there will be at least a functional AYIN secretariat, 15 fully developed, self sustained and politically strong youth training and information centers (YTICs), 10 fully operational rural information and knowledge centers (CICs), two (2) ICT training centers fully involved in youth e-skills development, and five youth-led community radio development programs. During the same period, it is expected that more than 20,000 young people would have been trained -- 50% of which should get decent job while about 50% will create their own businesses.

**Background:**

The world's largest untapped resource in creating an Information Society is not technology, but young people. Youth constitute more than two-thirds of the population of some developing nations. Yet, these young people have too often been seen as a burden rather than an asset, a group to be taught but not to teach, and to receive but not to give. Eighty-five per cent of these young people live in developing countries where many are especially vulnerable to extreme poverty. The International Labour Organisation estimates that around 88.2 million young women and men are unemployed throughout the world, accounting for 47 per cent of all the 185.9 million unemployed persons globally; and many more young people are working long hours for low pay, struggling to eke out a living in the informal economy. There are an

estimated 59 million young people between 15 and 17 years of age who are engaged in hazardous forms of work

Africa's youth population as a proportion of the total is increasing and projected to be over 50% by 2015, due to the high fertility rate underlying the demographic momentum. Youth currently account for 45% of the total labour force, and unlike other continents, Africa's population is becoming more youthful.

Therefore the pace, depth and scope of Africa's development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century would depend on how best the continent's youth resources are nurtured and deployed. This understanding should influence development policy processes and objectives, and should lead to a new partnership among development stakeholders to empower young people in Africa. An area where young people have an edge is the emerging Information Society driven by new technologies. Young people are often the leading innovators in the use and spread of Information and Communications Technologies. They adapt quickly and are generally quite hungry for the great quantities of information, locally and globally, that can be provided through emerging Information and Communication Technologies.

As recognized in the WSIS Declaration, "Young people are the future workforce and leading creators and earliest adopters of ICTs. They must therefore be empowered as learners, developers, contributors, entrepreneurs and decision-makers. We must focus especially on young people who have not yet been able to benefit fully from the opportunities provided by ICTs. We are also committed to ensuring that the development of ICT applications and operation of services respects the rights of children as well as their protection and well-being". Young people shall remain an untapped resource if the mainstream ICT4D community does not integrate their knowledge, vision and experience. Globally, increasing attention is being paid to youth concerns. Within the UN system in 1995 youth issues were debated in the General Assembly leading to the World Programme of Action on Youth. As highlighted by the 2005 World Youth Report: "Measures to improve access to the Internet and to increase information technology literacy at large should be encouraged. The effective use of technology should help to strengthen various forms of youth engagement."

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) since the inception of the African Information Society Initiative (AISI) in 1996, has been building youth association's capacities to ensure their involvement and relevant contribution in building the African Information Society. Therefore, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2004, several African Youths from various countries living in Africa and the Diaspora came together on the African Youth Information Society Initiative discussion list. The Discussion List was an initiative of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in the framework of the African Information Society Initiative (AISI). And on the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, 2005 the African Youth ICT4D Network (AYIN) was inaugurated during the African Regional Conference for the World Summit on the Information Society that took place in Ghana.

Against the above background, the current project aims at harnessing the potential of knowledge and technology, and to find effective and innovative ways to put this potential at the service of African Youth development.

**Alignment with Sub/Regional Strategies:**

The UN General Assembly, the World Youth Report 2005, the Youth Employment Network, the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) Plan of Action and the African Information Society Initiative, along with the outcomes of all the major world and sub-regional conferences called for strategies to be development (and assured implementation) that will give young people everywhere a real chance to find or initiate decent and productive work. Particularly, the UN Secretary-General's Youth Employment Network has identified the four "e" area targets as a response to youth development challenge; these include: employability, equal opportunities, entrepreneurship and employment creation. Harnessing the potential of Information and Communication Technologies for empowering Youth development program constitutes a response to the various internationally agreed youth-led agenda.

The African Youth ICT4D Network (AYIN), which is the leading institution with a structure that has sub-regional representatives and support from multidisciplinary

experts team, constitutes a regional network of its kind. It is expected to work with regional institutions (ECA, ITU, AU) and sub-regional organizations (RECs), national youth-led networks (including youth councils) and thematic networks to deliver its' goals.

**Sub/Regional benefits:**

The rationale for a Sub-regional approach is straightforward. All countries in each sub-region share the fundamentals of youth entrepreneurship, employment and development as a whole since its nature defies the restriction of borders. As such, a sub-regional approach will have clear economies of scale and will allow for strategic and tactical allocation of scarce financial and technical resources. Countries will also benefit from sharing bests practices. An effective regional strategy will add value to national responses and link in-country programs; some issues, such as migration, can be dealt with more effectively at a sub-regional level while successful programs in individual countries can be replicated region-wide. Such an approach will lead to improved co-ordination and collaboration between donors and national organizations.

**Alignment with MDGs and Poverty Reduction Strategies:**

Adolescence, which may be defined as the transition period between childhood and adulthood, is the stage in which personal- and job-skills are developed such that youth become productive adults who are well-integrated into the economy and society. Events that occur during the formative years may lead to behaviors that impede human and social capital investment during this critical period, thus producing individuals who are not well prepared for the challenges of adulthood. This has clear implications for the individual since an ill-prepared adult will have more difficulty finding a job, will earn lower wages, and will be more likely to face poverty and the attendant social problems (MDG Target 16; Indicator 45).

Additionally, stunted youth development has implications for the economy, society at-large, public expenditures, and future generations since:

- (i) a lack of skills to contribute to the modern economy will impede economic growth and exacerbate income inequality and poverty,

- (ii) a low-skilled work force will not attract foreign investment,
- (iii) a society with high youth crime rates will discourage the socioeconomic development, and crime, and
- (iv) an unemployable labor force, high fertility rates, and violence would divert resources away from productive public investments, the Millennium Development Goal and poverty reduction strategy.

Finally, adults who entered the challenges of adulthood unprepared are more likely to pass on to their children their negative behaviors, thus perpetuating the cycle. Thus, well-developed youths are a public good that create positive externalities, implying a clear role for more involvement of the government (i.e. society at large) and the business sector that benefits from the higher human capital development.

Therefore as for the Millennium Development Goals, this initiative shall substantially contribute to the target of developing and implementing strategies to realize "...decent and productive work for youth" while contributing also to "... integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policies and program and reverse the loss of environmental resources".

Regarding the Poverty Reduction Strategies, let us first quote that the poor are not a homogenous group. Just as the nature of poverty is diverse, so, too, are its causes and victims. The poor may not have acquired essential assets because they live in a remote or resource poor area; or because they are vulnerable on account of age, like young people. They may be denied access to assets because they are female or young. At a broader level, poverty may stem from situations where gross inequality of assets persists because of vested interests and entrenched power structures. Finally, essential assets may not be available to the poor because of the lack of political will, inadequate governance, and inappropriate public policies and programs. The primary responsibility for finding solutions to poverty lies with countries themselves, but success will depend on the united efforts of government and civil society, and on strong and sustained support from the international community. Therefore investments in areas such as education, youth entrepreneurship and employment promotion like the current program not only have an impact on poverty but also stimulate economic growth.

## Detailed Proposed Project Activities, Outputs, Indicators and Means of Verification

Phases	Objectives	Activities	Expected achievements	Indicators	Means of verification
Phase I: Year one – Inception and Partnership Development	To strengthen AYIN and youth organisations in participating countries and at the sub-regional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise a call for country participation</li> <li>- Conduct a national youth campaign</li> <li>- Conduct baseline research and capacity development needs' assessment</li> <li>- Finalise AYIN constitution</li> <li>- Establish AYIN steering committee</li> <li>- Equip youth secretariat</li> <li>- Equip youth organisations</li> <li>- Organise management skill training at sub-regional and national levels</li> <li>- Develop youth-led policy, strategies and plans</li> <li>- Establish a monitoring and evaluation mechanism</li> <li>- Development of youth portal, connecting to national portals</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- AYIN personnel recruited, steering committee established and fully operational</li> <li>- Youth organisations in participating countries equipped</li> <li>- Youth sub-regional policy framework developed</li> <li>- Training organised</li> <li>- National youth policies in participating countries developed</li> <li>- Monitoring and evaluation mechanism established</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of outreach activities undertaken by AYIN</li> <li>- Quality of AYIN website content</li> <li>- Quality of Youth organisations' production at national and sub-regional levels</li> <li>- Number of Youth organisation members able to explain and apply training received</li> <li>- Quality of youth policies</li> <li>- Quality of monitoring and evaluation activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reports</li> <li>- Web statistics</li> </ul>
Phase II: Year two to three -- Implementation	To implement ICT training and establish Youth Knowledge Resources Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undertake comprehensible feasibility studies and cost-benefits analysis for the creation of Youth Training and Information Centre (YTICs), Community Information Centres (CICs), Community Radio Projects for youth development and Community Multimedia Centres (CMCs) based on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- (20) Youth Training and Information Centers (YTICs); fifteen (15) Community Information Centers (CICs) established</li> <li>- Five Community Radio Projects for youth development equipped with material for youth training</li> <li>- Community Multimedia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality of the infrastructure</li> <li>- Quality of the training programmes</li> <li>- Number of managers trained and positive response to knowledge assessment</li> <li>- Number of awareness raising and training activities organised by ICT Clubs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reports</li> </ul>

Phases	Objectives	Activities	Expected achievements	Indicators	Means of verification
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>local languages</li> <li>- Organise invitation to bids and select private actors for implementation</li> <li>- Undertake outreach activities</li> <li>- Make a series of 10 movies in several countries in Africa to show youth ict entrepreneurship success stories</li> <li>- Organise various workshops</li> <li>- Create ICT Clubs for young people in participating countries</li> <li>- Undertake project mid-term evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centres (CMCs) to train young journalists implemented</li> <li>- Workshops organised</li> <li>- Number of ICT clubs created in schools</li> <li>- Mid-term evaluation organised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality of the findings and recommendations</li> </ul>	
Phase III: Year two to five -- Development	To train critical mass of youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise an annual African ICT Youth Festival (AIYF)</li> <li>- Establish African Youth ICT day</li> <li>- Organization of annual regional ICT Quiz ,art production and Essay Competitions</li> <li>- Train 500 young people on ICTs per training centre</li> <li>- Organise weekly ICT4All training for the community</li> <li>- Target training on ICTs for Youth Entrepreneurship;</li> <li>- Develop ICT Youth Index</li> <li>- Develop web portal on best practices on ICTs to empower Youth Development/entrepreneurs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Festival organised on year basis</li> <li>- Quiz/Essay organised and awardees celebrated</li> <li>- More than 10,000 youth trained on ICTs</li> <li>- ICTs to empower youth for entrepreneurship, job creation training organised</li> <li>- ICT Youth Index published</li> <li>- Web portal on best practices developed</li> <li>- Project evaluation organised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of participants and number able to explain opportunities to harness ICTs for youth development</li> <li>- Number of Youth able to use easily ICTs for their development</li> <li>- Number of Youth Index documents disseminated and feedback received</li> <li>- Statistics from website</li> <li>- Quality of the evaluation report and recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Report</li> <li>- Questionnaire responses</li> </ul>

Phases	Objectives	Activities	Expected achievements	Indicators	Means of verification
Phase IV: Year two to five -- Consolidation	To promote ICT Youth Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>hip</li> <li>- Project evaluation</li> <li>- Allocate ICT Youth Incubation Funds</li> <li>- Organise a call for incubation initiative</li> <li>- Select youth best projects and provide two to three years support in partnership with Universities or existing incubation centres</li> <li>- Organise Youth net-enterprise AWARD</li> <li>- Make a series of 10 movies to show youth ICT entrepreneurship best projects in AYIN framework</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Call for project organised and youth best projects selected</li> <li>- Partners to host selected Youth project identified</li> <li>- Youth award organised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of ICT Youth led projects selected and supported</li> <li>- Quality of projects selected</li> <li>- Number of awardees and quality of their work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reports</li> </ul>

## Project Detailed Implementation Strategy and Milestones

Phases	Objectives	Activities
Phase I: Year one - Inception	To strengthen AYIN and youth organisations in participating countries and at sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise a call for country participation</li> <li>- Conduct a national youth compendium</li> <li>- Finalise AYIN constitution</li> <li>- Establish AYIN steering committee</li> <li>- Equip youth secretariat</li> <li>- Equip youth organisations</li> <li>- Organise management skill training at sub-regional and national levels</li> <li>- Develop youth-led policy, strategies and plans</li> </ul>
Phase II: Year two to three – Implementation	To implement ICT training and establish Youth Knowledge resources Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undertake comprehensive feasibility studies and cost-benefits analysis for the creation of strengthening of Youth Training and Information Centres (YTICs), Community Information Centres (CICs), Community Radio projects for youth development and Community Multimedia Centres based on local languages</li> <li>- Organise an invitation to bids and select private actors for implementation</li> <li>- Undertake outreach activities</li> <li>- Organise various workshop</li> <li>- Create ICT Clubs for young people in participating countries</li> <li>- Make a series of 10 movies in several countries in Africa to show youth ict entrepreneurship success stories</li> </ul>
Phase III: Year two to five – Development	To train critical mass of youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise annual African ICT Youth Festivals</li> <li>- Establish African Youth ICT day</li> <li>- Organization of annual regional ICT Quiz and Essay Competitions</li> <li>- Train 500 young people on ICTs per training centre</li> <li>- Organise weekly ICT4All training for the community</li> <li>- Target training on ICT for Youth entrepreneurship;</li> <li>- Develop ICT Youth Index</li> <li>- Develop web portal on best practices on ICT to empower Youth development/entrepreneurship</li> </ul>
Phase IV: Year two to five – Consolidation, monitoring and evaluation	To promote ICT Youth innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allocate ICT Youth Incubation Funds</li> <li>- Organise a call for incubation initiative</li> <li>- Select youth best projects and provide two to three years support in partnership with Universities or existing incubation centres</li> <li>- Organise Youth net-enterprise AWARD</li> <li>- Organise monitoring and evaluation process</li> <li>- Make a series of 10 movies to show youth ICT entrepreneurship best projects in AYIN framework</li> </ul>

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**Management of the Project:**

The project requires efficient and effective project management. A project management infrastructure including project initiation, administration, organisation and technical management, will include:

**Project Steering Committee (PSC)**

The PSC is the formal decision making body of the project and hence only the PSC has the authority to make global decisions within the project.

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the main institution which supported the establishment of the African Youth ICT4D Network, will be the *de facto* Chair of the PSC. AYIN Coordinator will be the representative of the PSC within the Executive Committee. Other members of the PSC will include (upon their agreement), African Union (AU), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), UN Division of Sport, Representative from participant countries and youth reps from five regional Economic Communities

The PSC will meet regularly every six months. Additional meetings may be called by the project coordinator, or at the request of partners. Each of the partners will communicate with the PSC via his own PSC delegate. Associate partners and sub-contractors are fully represented by their respective partners. The PSC makes decisions by voting where each partner has one vote, independent of the number of delegates present at the meeting.

The PSC's primary role is:-

- a. Definition, oversight and re-definition of work-plan, calendar and budget distribution revisions, if necessary.

- b. Setting up of a resource plan for the project and monitoring effort expended. Financial budget control is devolved to the partners.
- c. Setting up efficient partnership communication channels and web-site.
- d. Defining the delegation, reporting and monitoring methodology to ensure efficient execution of work packages on time.
- e. Applying the evaluation criteria to ensure quality of deliverables, meeting of deadlines, attendance at periodical meetings and usefulness of output for workshops.
- f. Drafting of reports to the PSC and ensuring they are delivered on time.

### **Project Executive board (PEB)**

The PEB will consist of AYIN Coordinator, the project coordinator and the project personnel. They are responsible for all aspects of the implementation of the adopted plan of action, recruitment of consultants, and partners in consultation of the PSC President.

### **National Implementation Management**

A multi-stakeholder (government, business and civil society) country youth network shall be built upon the closest existing social structure to act as national implementing mechanisms in participating countries.

At the village level, a local youth organization, preferable a network or coalition of various smaller community-based groups shall be identified through the initial phase of the project to be frontline implementers and beneficiaries of the project. They shall be governed by a structure and mechanism that they themselves have identified and institutionalized.

## **Risk Assessment:**

Project failure causes may include:

- Lack of funds: Insufficient budget can be the major hindrance of the project success
- Lack of political support: The project can face difficulties if there's lack of political support at sub-regional and national levels
- Insufficient project staffing: The lack of experienced staff - trained and skilled - to develop and deliver what the project needs is another cause of project failure
- Lack of senior management/PSC involvement: When management oversight is insufficient, PSC does not organize its periodic meeting and course corrections happen too late
- Poor performance or "hype" by hardware/software suppliers: Vendor hype - over-promising and under-delivering - adds more difficulty to achieving success.
- Project outcomes are not fully specified and measurable: The project team must be doing "the right things" but, just as importantly, they must be "getting them done right"
- Lack of risk management: Only few project teams take the time to understand the potential risks and define plans to mitigate these risks
- Inadequate communication skills: Weak interpersonal skills result in poor communication channels, which tend to instigate internal and external problems for any project.
- Risk of interaction with others similar activities lead by international organization

## Long-term Sustainability:

The AYIN Secretariat will enhance, enrich, educate and equip Youth Associations in ICT4D. Not only will it lead Youth into organizational sustainability, it will ultimately provide the missing (and needed) balancing interface for sustainable involvement of Youth in the process.

Through a comprehensible sustainability business model, involved partners will be able to establish sustainability strategy at the beginning of the project.

## Detailed Budget:

### Detailed Budget

Phases	Objectives	Activities	Budget US \$
Phase I: Year one – Inception and Partnership Development	To strengthen AYIN and youth organisations in participating countries and at sub-region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organise a call for country participation</li> <li>- Conduct a national youth compendium</li> <li>- Conduct of baseline research and capacity development needs assessment</li> <li>- Finalise AYIN constitution</li> <li>- Establish AYIN steering committee</li> <li>- Equip youth secretariat</li> <li>- Equip youth organisations</li> <li>- Organise management skill training at sub-regional and national levels</li> <li>- Develop youth-led policy, strategies and plans</li> <li>- Establish a monitoring and evaluation mechanism</li> </ul>	200,000.00
Phase II: Year two to three : Implementation	To implement ICT Training and establish Youth Knowledge resources Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undertake comprehensive feasibility studies and cost-benefits analysis for the creation of strengthening of Youth Information centre, Community Information centres, community radio for youth development and community multimedia centres based on local languages</li> <li>- Organise an invitation to bids and select private actors for implementation</li> <li>- Undertake outreach activities</li> <li>- Organise various</li> </ul>	30x 10,000.00 = 300,000.00

<b>Phases</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Budget US \$</b>
		workshop - Create ICT Clubs for young people in participating countries - Undertake project mid-term evaluation	
Phase III: Year two to five -- Development	To train critical mass of youth	- Organise a year African ICT Youth festival - African youth ICT day - Organization of a regional ICT Quiz Competition/ ICT youth essay per year - Train 500 young people on ICT per training centre - Organise weekly ICT4All training to the community - Target training on ICT for Youth entrepreneurship; - Develop ICT Youth Index - Develop webportal on best practices on ICT to empower Youth development/entrepreneurship - Project evaluation	200,000.00
Phase IV: Year two to five : Consolidation	To promote ICT Youth innovation	- Allocate ICT-Youth incubation funds - Organise a call for incubation initiative - Select youth best projects and provide two to three years support in partnership with Universities or existing incubation centres - Organise Youth net-enterprise AWARD - Make a series of 10 movies to show youth ICT entrepreneurship best projects in AYIN framework -	170,000.00 Partnership development

