

CONCEPT NOTE ON A PANEL DISCUSSION

AFRICAN YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP DIALOGUE

THEME: How entrepreneurship can simultaneously create economic growth and advance social and environmental goals of Africa

Theme Focus:

Pan Africanism and African Integration: Youth inclusion and participation in Africa's integration using AU Agenda 2063 and UN 2030 SDGs as a spring

INTRODUCTION/ RATIONALE

The Gambia Youth Chamber of Commerce (GYCC) is the voice of Young entrepreneurship in the Gambia. We are entrepreneurs that mobilize young African entrepreneurs in the Gambia to improve their lives and give them a voice. We create market space by organizing regional exhibitions, training, mentorship programs and soft skills to get them out of their marginalized position and support them to become successful entrepreneurs.

GYCC will host and moderate a session on ‘‘how entrepreneurship can simultaneously create economic growth and advance social and environmental goals of Africa’’ during the **African Youth Conference on African Unity and Development** from 23rd to 26th March 2019.

There is a growing awareness that change is required to reduce the negative societal and environmental effects generated by unsustainable business practices (Hall et al., 2010; Stiglitz, 2016). Entrepreneurship is proposed as a particularly effective practice to make growth sustainable and more inclusive. However, despite the promise entrepreneurship holds for promoting sustainability goals and addressing climate change challenges, there is still great ambiguity regarding the role and nature of entrepreneurship. Despite the fact that entrepreneurship has been acknowledged as one possible solution for changes toward more sustainable economies, there remain major gaps in our knowledge of how and whether this transition actually takes place in Africa. At the same time the focusing on entrepreneurship does not take into account the other key dimensions of the problem such as the quality of the institution, the level of innovation or the trade openness of the economy. Starting from these considerations, GYCC will host and moderate a session on ‘‘how entrepreneurship can simultaneously create economic growth and advance social and environmental goals of Africa’’ during the **African Youth Conference on African Unity and Development** from 23rd to 26th March 2019

The purpose of the panel discussion is to dialogue on how innovation and institutional quality constitute important factors through which entrepreneurship can simultaneously create economic growth and advance social and environmental goals in Africa.

OBJECTIVES

1. Share experiences and views, learn from best practices and formulate avenues for strengthened cooperation at the regional and continental level.
2. Enhancing the current role of the African Union and NEPAD on entrepreneurship promotion and SMEs development in the continent.

3. Learn about technical aspects of developing and implementing national entrepreneurship policies based on UNCTAD's "Entrepreneurship Policy Framework"(EPF) methodology and existing good practices in Africa, including how to integrate entrepreneurship in the broader sustainable development agenda (SDGs).

METHODOLOGY

Panel Title: African Youth Entrepreneurship Dialogue

How entrepreneurship can simultaneously create economic growth and advance social and environmental goals of Africa.

Moderating Institution: Gambia Youth Chamber of Commerce

Panelist: Ministry of Trade, Regional Integration and Employment (The Gambia)

United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD),

African Union (AU)

Abstracts:

Ministry of Trade, Regional Integration and Employment will present on the National Entrepreneurship policy of the Gambia and its status.

UNCTAD will present on the technical aspects of developing and implementing national entrepreneurship policies based on UNCTAD's "Entrepreneurship Policy Framework"(EPF) methodology and how to integrate entrepreneurship in the broader sustainable development agenda (SDGs).

African Union will present on its current role on entrepreneurship promotion and SMEs development in the continent

These will be followed by an interactive discussion to share and learn best practices that can be adopted to enhance entrepreneurship in Africa.

EXPECTED OUTCOME

1. Delegates will get a clear picture of UNCTAD's "Entrepreneurship Policy Framework"(EPF) methodology
2. An understanding of role of youth in the integration of entrepreneurship in the broader sustainable development agenda (SDGs).
3. Key challenges face by African youth entrepreneurs and possible way to address this challenge are identified and shared with policy makers at National and International levels.
4. Best practices shared and learned to enhance entrepreneurship in the African Continent.