

## Summary Notes

**AYC participated in the African Youth Consultation on the Job Creation Campaign, held on the Margin of the AU Summit, 7 February at Intercontinental Hotel, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.**

On the sidelines of the African Union Summit, ONE Africa in partnership with the Office of African Union Envoy on Youth brought together young people from nine countries for a one-day African Youth Consultation on Job Creation. The 20 participants discussed how to mobilise young Africans' opinions on key policy commitments and reforms that can enable African countries to create 1 million decent jobs annually by 2021. The meeting set the stage for reaching out to 1 million young Africans to drive the campaign.

**The AYC was represented by Ms. Natalie Sonia Mukundane, Executive Chairperson and Mr. Kawsu Sillah, Executive Secretary.**



## Opening



The opening remark was delivered by Ms. Aya Chebbi, AU Youth Envoy. She thanked the participants for honoring the invitation to attend this important youth consultative meeting. She informed the gathering that the Republic of South Africa is chairing the AU in 2020 and the theme of the year is **“Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa’s Development”**. Ms. Chebbi noted that for younger generation, **“Silencing the Guns in Africa”** means; Silencing Poverty and Hunger, Silencing Youth Unemployment, Silencing Gender Based Violence, Silencing Corruption, Silencing Climate Crisis as these are some of the root causes for conflict and violence on the African continent. She challenged the young people to own this important campaign and create awareness around it.

Aya used the opportunity to introduce the participants to some of the legal instruments adopted by AU such the African Youth Charter and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, Governance Charter, the protocol for free movement of people, goods and services, as well as the structures of the AU, notably the Executive Council (composed of Ministers of Foreign Affairs) responsible for AU agenda setting before the General Assembly, AU Peace and Security Council similar to the UN Security Council, Permanent Representative Council (PRC composed of Ambassadors), Assembly (composed of Head of States and Government) and Specialized Technical Committees (STC on various issues such as Youth, Sports and Culture etc). STC meets every two years.



Ms. Chebbi said the idea of this meeting is to bring the AU closer to the youth, advocate for move the agenda from youth peace and security to youth peace and development, inclusion of youth part of the Government delegation to attend AU's summit (at least 2 representatives from each member state), encourage intergenerational dialogue and collaboration amongst youth-led networks (she applauds the African Youth Commission's work in this area). The envoy noted that youth are not well organized in AU spaces and that need to be improved; youth need to co-lead with current African leaders for mentorship and leadership, need to strength working relationship between pan-African networks and finally encouraged collaboration between youth movement (African Youth Commission – AYC and Afrika Youth Movement - AYM). She thanked everyone for kind attention and wished them fruitful deliberations.

**Edwin Ikhuoria, Interim Executive Director at ONE Africa**, presented the Job creation – what we know from ONE campaign. In his presentation, he noted that youth work should not be done as usual and should be revolutionary, right investment should be done in youth as it's time to empower them.



Mr. Ikhuoria highlighted that the drivers of war are, if the opportunity cost is not higher, then the likelihood of youth involving in conflict will be higher; if young people are not engaged/employment there will be a lot of Peace fund, stand by force and peace keeping missions in Africa. He emphasized that from 2020 the fight has to be an economic fight (job creation, economic empowerment etc); need

to move from rhetoric to action; the rest of the world is getting older and Africa is growing younger (2.5million enter in labor force from now to 2030); 10-12 million young people entering job market, only about 3million gets a job; five countries including South Africa faces youth unemployment with rising unemployment rate to above 40%; Urban youth are disproportionately affected by joblessness; but the real problems is that fewer decent jobs exist across the continent; informal sector creates most of the jobs in Africa (not mere jobs should be created but it should be decent jobs).

He went on further to identify the following 3 broad problems:

- **Low business,**
- **High share of unemployable workforce and youth are not empowered**
- **Access to finance (to expand existing business or start a new one)**

In addition, he revealed that the issue of electricity is also identified by African businesses as major challenge and Africa is most hit by climate change and yet it's the least contributor.



As for “**what policies works**”, Edwin noted, limited evidences; most finding are mostly often specific to their context; access to credit, prioritization of job creation, regulatory frameworks and entrepreneurship education, Infrastructure, youth leadership and digital divide (70% of Africa’s young people are not connected). He raised questions as to where will young people will be living? And the answers revealed that nearly 70% of the 15-24 olds live in rural areas (most of them are farmers); changing nature of work (technology/tech industry i.e Jumia) employed about 3000 people across Africa and almost 100.000 commission affiliates across the globe; sectors of highest potential to absorb Africa’s youth bulge (Agriculture and food system, business process outsourcing, transport and tourism, creative industry and ICT based services), and we should begin to think of exporting/outsourcing our expertise/services to other part of the world and put in place key policy imperatives for job creation in Africa.



**What can donors do? How can Africa create 230 million jobs by 2030? How can we get solutions from 1million African young people?** This discussion centres on the AU 1mBy2021 Initiative: Focus on 2 E's Employment & Entrepreneurship and was facilitated by **Nicholas Omondi Ouma** of AU Youth Division.

Mr. Nicholas mentioned that this initiative is championed by the AU Chairperson to provide one million African youth with opportunities in education, employment, entrepreneurship and engagement.

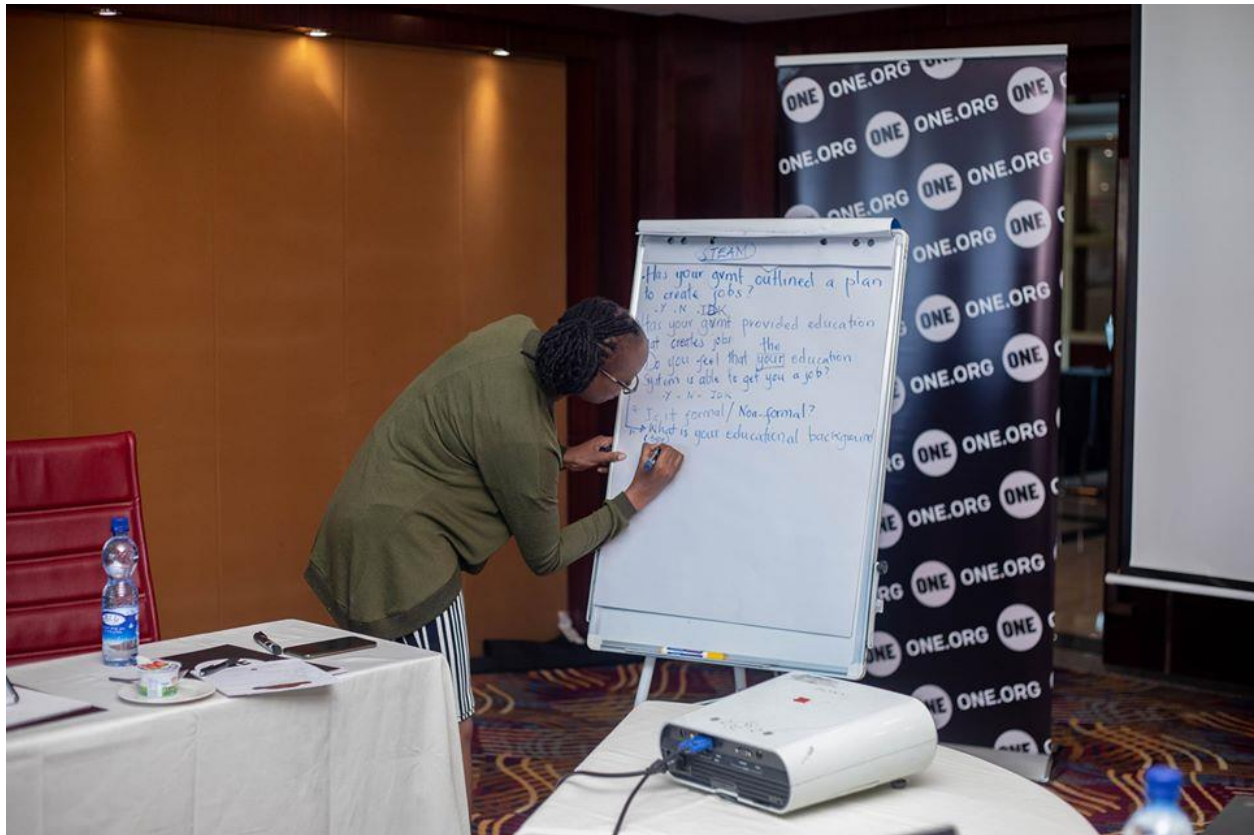
**Why the initiative?** He said it is to accelerate what is been done and AUC is mandated through the Agenda 2063, and other frameworks to provide the following services to African youth:

- **Education: scholarship, alternative pathways and models for teachers development**
- **Employment: skills transfer hubs, digital skills, job centres, internship and apprenticeship**
- **Entrepreneurship: Providing growth capital to SMEs, and nurturing startups**
- **Engagement: leadership programmes, exchange and volunteer programmes and youth engagement platforms**

Following his presentation, participants recommended that the advocacy around the labour laws and minimum wages especially at member state levels should be intensified by the African Union Commission in collaboration with labour ministries.



**Presentation: Transforming education for youth employment, Viridiana Wasike, CEO Accelevate Leads, Kenya**



Ms. Viridiana said the Accelevate Leads focus on high growth and high value areas in Africa and increase number of young people in skills development in Africa. She noted most educated African youth are the most unemployed, and asked what are we not doing right?

She concluded that there is need to see how young people are consistent and committed to building their own development or network.



The last presenter was **Ms. Sonia Kwami, Campaigns Director at ONE Africa**. Her presentation focuses on ONE Africa's youth campaign called **"Youth manifesto on job creation"**. She took the participants through the campaign strategy on job creation and entrepreneurship. In the end, the participants shared their ideas on how the following key questions could be tackled:

- **How can we reach the youth voices?**
- **And how can we engage them?**
- **How can we hold duty bearers to account?**



The ideas shared will be developed further to form part of the **"1million job creation campaign"** to be championed by African youth with support of ONE Africa. For this drive, the AYC committed to mobilise 300,000 youth voices through its national consortiums spread across 46 African countries to participate in the campaign as soon as it's launched.

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