

# THE NEXT ECONOMY: HOW THE AFRICAN YOUTH MAKES IT WORK

## TERMS OF REFERENCE - MID-TERM EVALUATION (2020-2023)

### DETAILS

|                            |                                         |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| CONTRACTING ORGANISATION   | SOS Children's Villages The Netherlands |
| DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT | 6 Months                                |
| PERIOD                     | April - September 2022                  |
| BUDGET                     | EUR 30.000-45.000                       |

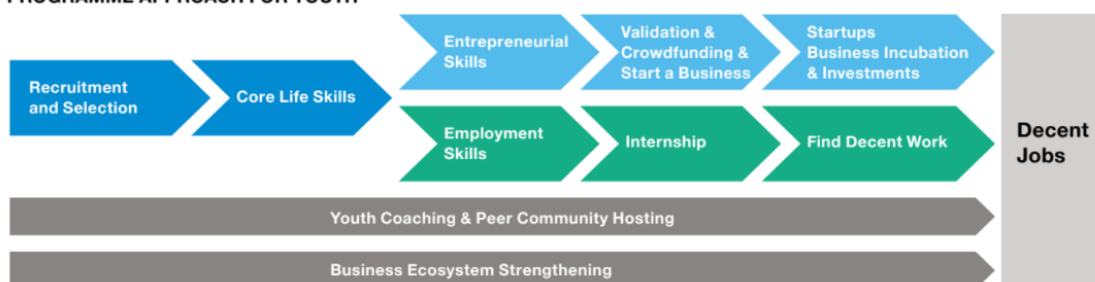
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|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Programme NAME              | The Next Economy – Phase II                                                                                    |
| COLLABORATING ORGANISATIONS | Crosswise Works, (and 8 implementing local hubs) SOS Children's Villages Mali, Nigeria, Somalia and Somaliland |
| Programme LOCATIONS         | Nigeria (Lagos, Abuja, Jos), Mali (Bamako), Somalia (Hargeisa, Mogadishu)                                      |
| Programme DURATION          | 2020 – 2023                                                                                                    |
| TOTAL BUDGET                | 7.255.076 Euros                                                                                                |
| DONOR                       | The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs                                                                    |
| WEBSITE                     | <a href="https://next-economy.com/en/">https://next-economy.com/en/</a>                                        |

### INTRODUCTION OF THE NEXT ECONOMY PROJECT

The Next Economy Programme (TNE) is an established and mature youth employment and entrepreneurship Programme that creates jobs and opportunities for African youth in challenging and fragile contexts. It is led by the consortium of SOS Children's Villages and Crosswise Works, and funded by The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs as part of the LEAD Programme. TNE is in its second phase (2020-2023).

By working with various local business incubation hubs, local SOS offices, the private sector and government, TNE matches the ambitions and career goals of young people with the needs and opportunities in the labour market. TNE aims to support motivated young people lacking access to decent work and opportunities through skills training, on-the-job-support and business incubation coaching. The curriculum consists of Core Life Skills, which funnels through into Employability or Entrepreneurship Training. Ultimately, this aims to generate jobs through internships and supporting start-ups.

#### PROGRAMME APPROACH FOR YOUTH



The focus of the Core Skills training is to help young people get a better understanding of their own skills and interests and to be able to make an informed decision on whether to pursue a career as an entrepreneur or look for employment. After this first phase, the curriculum splits in two tracks:

- The Employability track teaches participants the relevant soft and hard skills that bridge the gap between their education and the needs of employers. After the training phase, young people transition to an internship placement phase that provides them with relevant work experience and helps them develop their professional network. During this track they get access to one-on-one mentoring.
- The Entrepreneurship track focuses more on the development of a business idea in line with the participant's aspirations and skills. The business ideas with the biggest potential will participate in a crowdfunding campaign and take part in an incubation Programme. Businesses that successfully complete the crowdfunding phase receive additional match funding as starting capital to make their ideas become a reality.

In the first phase (TNE 1: 2016-2019), this integrated programme focused on supply of talented youth, matchmaking and demand leading to 1.584 direct decent jobs and 2.169 indirect jobs for young people. A total of 8.460 young people received training. With €7.26M in new funding for the second phase, the aim is to create and sustain another 2.124 direct decent jobs and train 5.320 young people in life skills, employability, entrepreneurship and incubation.

The second phase of The Next Economy (2020-2023) aims to further strengthen the programme through focusing on:

- Linkages: Increasing the job placement rate and entrepreneurial success through labour market scans and connecting to local growth sectors for services, skills, and business partnerships.
- Equity: Increased emphasis on socially excluded youth and improving gender specific outcomes.
- Sustainability: Supporting alternative ways of delivering the Programme through educational institutions and the model being used by other local and national initiatives in each country.

## WHERE

TNE enables partners in Mali, Nigeria and Somalia in six locations to create opportunities for youth: Bamako, Lagos, Abuja, Jos, Hargeisa and Mogadishu.



## WHY

Matching African youth with jobs or entrepreneurial opportunities is especially important given the relatively rapid economic growth over the past 20 years which has not yet translated into employment opportunities for youth. The large majority of Africa's 226 million working age youth experience great difficulty in transitioning into decent employment - 70% of the youth in Sub-Saharan Africa are thus under-employed and considered to be part of the "working poor."

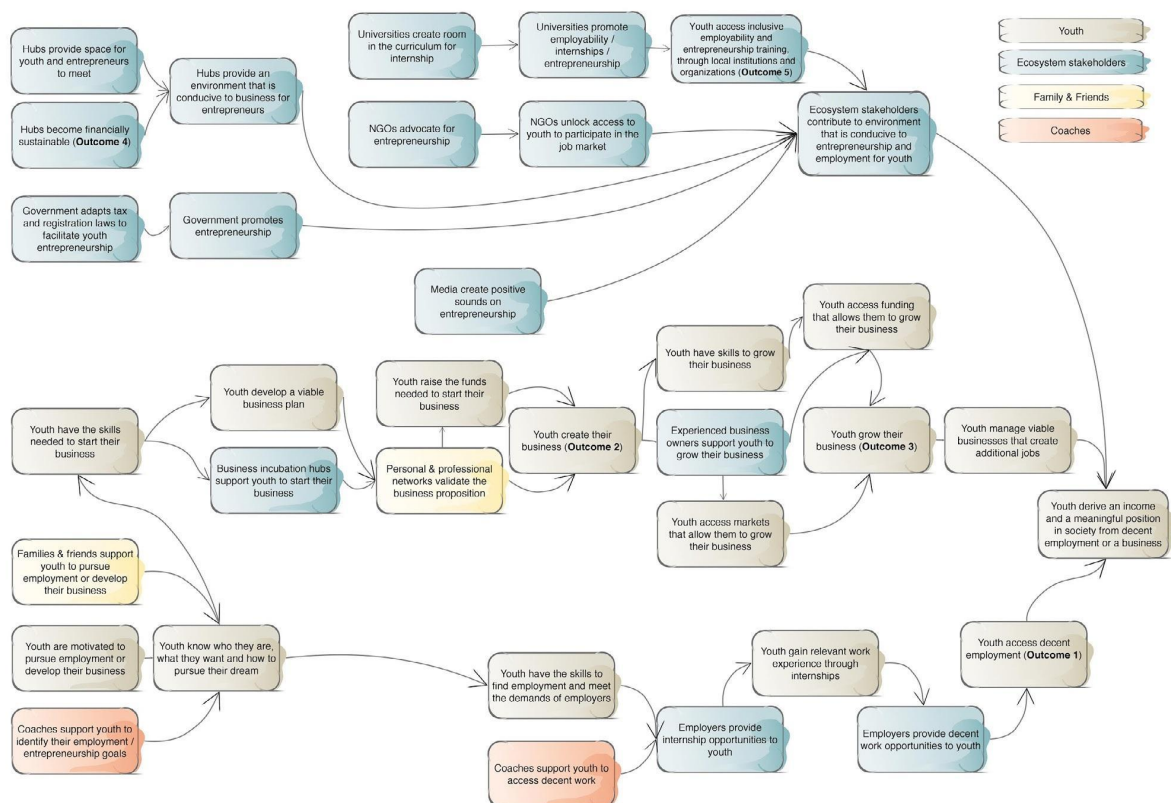
There is a desire to strengthen the business ecosystem in which youth operate, as we are well aware that they do not operate in a vacuum – thus strengthening the crucial business climate for finding work and entrepreneurship support and regulatory environment for setting up or expanding businesses is therefore a focus area of the programme. Through the TNE Connect Programme, we have begun to and will continue to build the physical infrastructure and develop networks through focusing on four pillars: Community Building and Networking with Local Companies and SME's; Media Campaigns; Advocacy; and Strengthening Entrepreneur Support Organizations.

The Next Economy has the wish to scale up and be replicated across the region and beyond. TNE takes a comprehensive approach towards addressing youth economic empowerment in Sub-Saharan Africa. With its expanded focus on equity and sustainability, it has aspirations to both broaden the benefits as well as sustain the intervention in fragile contexts.

#### **WHEN**

The TNE II project is scheduled to run from 2020-2023. The project is currently 2 years into its implementation.

## THEORY OF CHANGE



The goal of The Next Economy is to provide youth with an income and a meaningful position in society through decent employment and/or business development. This is facilitated through various Programme activities.

A key prerequisite is that youth need to complement their formal education with the needs and demands of the labour market. Youth better understand their skills and interests and will be able to decide on the career that they want through a career oriented life skills training programme. This helps them understand and develop the skills to support them in finding employment, meeting the demands of employers (employability), or deciding to become an entrepreneur. This is supported by coaches who provide personal support and is driven by their own motivations to be successful. Family at this stage is key as they are often required to engage and support young people in their transition. Another prerequisite is that young people know the (potential) economic growth sectors that can absorb labour forces. This contributes to Outcomes 1 and 2:

- Most youth aim to derive an income and a meaningful position in society through decent employment (Outcome 1). For youth to access employers that offer decent jobs, there is a need for soft employability skills as well as entry level work opportunities to gain experience. Employers need to be supported to provide internship opportunities to youth and youth need to be trained to be able to meet employer demands. The programme assumes that the work experience of internships satisfies both youth and employer, and business engagement and training supports this process.
- For youth to establish and sustain viable businesses that create additional jobs, businesses need to be created and grow. This requires support on developing a business plan as well as ways of accessing capital. Youth start their business (Outcome 2).

2) if they have the skills to do so, develop a viable business plan, and raise the funds needed through crowdfunding. They can only do that if business incubation hubs have the skills and competencies to support their efforts.

Youth further grow their business if they access the necessary funding and markets. This happens if they have the right skills and receive support from experienced Hub staff or other business owners. When businesses grow, youth create additional employment for other youth resulting in greater and more inclusive employment.

Business incubation hubs occupy a specific place within the youth employment and entrepreneurship ecosystem. These are emerging actors in delivering support and services to young people, as they are rapidly expanding and increasingly providing opportunities for youth market engagement. They are supported to provide an environment that is conducive to business for entrepreneurs, both existing and start-ups, in a financially sustainable manner (Outcome 3). They provide space for youth and entrepreneurs to meet and engage in training and networking activities. Lastly, if business development hubs are provided with technical support, if there is a public awareness about the economic prospects of young people, then the business climate and opportunities for young people are improved. For the hubs to be able to do so they need to become financially sustainable.

A new added outcome, since the previous programme, is focused on sustainability. As such, the Programme seeks to improve the business environment as well as the position of other local, national and international actors to improve services and programmes offered to youth. This includes providing capacity, content, as well as formal learning opportunities to other organisations and institutions engaged and involved with the programme. In particular, the focus will be on local vocational training institutes, universities, NGOs, and other government training providers. (Outcome 4)

Preconditions for all of this are that youth are motivated to develop their employment prospects, business opportunities, and that families and friends support them in this endeavour. Another precondition is that the ecosystem stakeholders contribute to an environment that is conducive to entrepreneurship and employment for youth. This means that:

- NGOs unlock access for youth to participate in the job market and advocate for entrepreneurship
- Media create positive sounds on employability and entrepreneurship
- Women have additional support to allow for improved access to jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities
- Universities promote employability. internship opportunities and entrepreneurship skills
- Government promotes entrepreneurship and adapts tax and registration laws to facilitate youth entrepreneurship
- Personal & professional networks validate the business proposition by contributing to crowdfunding actions, purchasing products and services and providing general support
- Coaches support youth to identify their employment / entrepreneurship goals and support youth to access decent work Overall, it seeks to provide direct support to young people through learning and coaching, nurture the social and network connections of the youth, as well as improve the business environment to allow young people to succeed.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE EVALUATION

The overall objective of the mid-term evaluation is to determine how The Next Economy can be adjusted in its last two years to maximise the impact on the lives and livelihood of programme participants. The evaluation will also consider the lasting impact on ecosystems. Next to an analysis, the evaluation will make specific recommendations and suggest tools for programme improvement, hand-over strategies and sustaining results.

The mid-term evaluation will allow us to answer the following question:

*“What can be done in the remaining time of the programme to maximize the impact on the lives of Nigerian, Malian and Somalian youth participating in the programme up to the end of the programme and beyond?”*

The set of sub-questions below indicate the desired build-up of the evaluation. It reflects the core topics that we would like to see evaluated. The reflection however is not limited to these questions alone.

### 1. What impact does the TNE programme have on participating young people?

1.a Is the TNE programme achieving its intended impact (allowing young people to earn a decent income through employability or entrepreneurship)?

1.b Which skills are required for youth to enter the labour market? Which are and which are not included in the TNE training programme?

1.c To what extent has TNE been able to alleviate the Covid-19 issues for young people, and what more could it do to help youth overcome the impact of the pandemic?

1.d Is the programme a good fit for both women and men from different social/economic/educational backgrounds? (how equitable is the programme?)

1.e What unforeseen/additional impact is achieved by the programme among young people?

### 2. Does the TNE programme influence external actors in the ecosystem and if so, how?

2.a What impact does the TNE programme have on parties who influence the employment of youth? (including but not limited to TVETs, alumni, companies who employ youth/internship providers, governments).

2.b What impact does the TNE programme have on the start-up and entrepreneurship ecosystem? (including but not limited to governments, coaching programmes, mentoring companies, investors, alumni).

2.c In which ways have TNE initiatives on partnership building been perceived/appreciated by companies/stakeholders?

3. What improvements can be made within the current project period to have a greater impact on the lives of youth? (specific components and suggestions for improvement on questions 1a to 2b).

4. In which ways can we build tools into the programme that will maximise sustainability beyond 2023?

4.a Which steps should be taken to hand over (parts of) the programme to capable partners (exit strategy)?

4.b Which specific partnerships could be strengthened/formed to facilitate TNE components after 2023?

4.c Which TNE programme components are relevant for which external educational facilities (TVETs, universities) to incorporate into their existing curricula or programme?

4.d Which other suggestions on sustaining the programme after 2023 are advised and brought forward by implementing partners (hubs and SOS offices)?

## METHODOLOGY

The mid-term evaluation should take place during March 21st and August 30th 2022. The research should be done in cooperation with staff from all six locations of The Next Economy programme (Mali: Bamako, Nigeria: Lagos, Abuja, Jos, Somalia: Hargeisa and Mogadishu). The evaluation methodology is open to be proposed by the consultant. The involvement of TNE implementing partners and TNE alumni is highly valued. The evaluation should not make general statements but include the perspectives of the 6 programme locations. Different contexts are to be reflected in the responses.

## DELIVERABLES AND TIMEFRAME

The deliverables of the evaluation will be:

- An inception workshop with report
- An evaluation methodology/proposal, including a detailed work plan and detailed timeline (to be approved by SOS CV before travel to programme locations commences).
- Data collection / field visit reports and presentation of the data collection process to The Next Economy team in The Netherlands.
- Intermediate reporting on findings and suggestions.
- An evaluation report with a global set of recommendations for the TNE2 Project Management team to sustain and increase impact, as well as a narrative that describes the process, outcomes, and next steps.
- Presentation of the findings to the LEAD / The Next Economy staff during a half-day workshop focussing on programme improvements and sustainability of the The Next Economy concept.
- Suggested tools for sustainability.

The timeframe for the implementation is to be proposed by the consultant, but should not exceed a total duration of 5 months.

| <b>Stages</b>                                                                                       | <b>Deliverables</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inception<br/>(total 1 month)</b><br><br><u>April</u>                                            | Initial review of documents, introductions to teams, finalise questions, inception workshop and report                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Implementation<br/>(total 3 months)</b><br><br><u>May, June, July</u>                            | Collecting and analysing data<br><br>Regular communication with intermediate findings (adaptive activities and outputs, strategic learning, debriefs, pause and reflect sessions, adaptive checklists, producing outputs as agreed during inception stage) |
| <b>Writing, Wrap up, Reviews and Revisions<br/>(total 2 months)</b><br><br><u>August, September</u> | A road map for implementation of adaptations; knowledge management systems; transitioning key tasks and processes; simple toolkit for use in future activities or processes; final report and presentation                                                 |

## REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCES

The evaluation should be conducted by a team of (international and national) consultants combining at least the following set of qualifications:

- Adequate experience in conducting evaluations of multi-country and multi-partner development Programmes
- Technical expertise in the field of youth employment and business development Programmes
- Experience with quantitative, qualitative, and participatory methods of data collection and analysis
- Excellent complimentary research skills such as respect for local stakeholders and partners, ethical research, flexibility, energy, humility, willingness to learn on the go, and ability to resolve conflicts;
- Knowledge of and experience in the cultural, political, and economic contexts of the different Programme locations of The Next Economy Programme
- Report writing (and editing) skills meeting high quality standards for reports to be published
- Fluency in English and French

## PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS / LOGISTICS

Considering the complex multi-partner structure of The Next Economy programme, the following (logistical) support can be expected to be provided by the consortium to the consultant upon assignment:

- Project orientation and documentation as available (proposal, reports, collected reporting data etc.)
- Data from participants' databases and research conducted.
- Contact and required time of staff from all consortium partners (SOS Children's Villages and Crosswise Works) and local implementing partners.
- Provision of the local network for logistical support and bringing together project stakeholders for focus group meetings.

## BUDGET AND PROPOSAL

The total budget for the evaluation ranges between EUR 30,000 and EUR 45.000. The requested budget will be part of the evaluation criteria of research proposals and should be in line with the proposed activities of the evaluation.

Interested consultants are expected to submit a proposal which should include the following elements:

- Understanding of the assignment (including remarks related to the terms of reference)
- Proposed research methodology
- Draft work plan with timeline
- Proposed composition of the research team, including CV's of all the team members (including consultants from the TNE Programme countries)
- Financial proposal (including VAT) which specifies consultancy fees and own logistical costs
- Examples of prior work (Programme evaluations) including contact details of references

For further information and questions about the assignment and The Next Economy Programme the manager of the programme, Marjolein van der Boon, can be contacted at: [marjoleinvanderboon@soskinderdorpen.nl](mailto:marjoleinvanderboon@soskinderdorpen.nl)

**Questions can be submitted before Friday the 4th of February, 2022**

**Proposals should be submitted before Friday the 18th of February, 2022**