

Marrakech, July 2, 2022

## Scoping note for the third youth university

### African civil society leaders -2022

#### Theme: "Energy, food and health resilience for Africa: What role for civil society?"

With 1.4 billion inhabitants in 2022, Africa is the second most populated continent after Asia and represents 18% of the world population. It is the region of the world where the population is the youngest. While it is endowed with considerable wealth. In addition to the quality of its demography and its young population, with arable land still unexploited and a subsoil that conceals abundant mineral resources very diversified, despite these assets, paradoxically, Africa is considered the poorest continent in the world with endemic youth unemployment and under-equipment in basic infrastructure.

Beyond the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic from an economic and social point of view (economic recession, increase in public debt, job losses, inequalities in access to education, etc.), the crisis has exposed Africa's vulnerability in terms of health and health protection. First of all, it is the state of the health infrastructure in African countries that is the problem. Indeed, a large number of the population has no access to medical care and social coverage remains insufficient despite the efforts made.

In East Africa in particular, nearly one-third of the population (30.8%) is undernourished. In addition to climate and conflict, periods of recession and economic crisis are at the root of this increase. The question of the resilience of the most fragile populations is therefore raised.

While most African countries have weathered the economic crisis triggered by the coronavirus quite well, what reforms, public policies and investments should they prioritize to consolidate economic recovery? In Africa, as in the rest of the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the importance of digital technologies to accelerate the continent's recovery. (Digital development not only improves the productivity of existing jobs but also creates new ones, both skilled and unskilled.) What will tomorrow's world of work look like? How to include African youth, a real engine of innovation and incubator of talent?

The health crisis has revealed the dysfunctions and fragilities of urban spaces, thus working towards the emergence of a new awareness in the field of habitat and urban management. It is necessary to design sustainable African cities that are open to all, safe, efficient and resilient. Cities that ensure equity of access to essential services, to low-cost and efficient means of transport, to jobs, and that reduce the insecurity and vulnerability of their inhabitants, particularly in the face of the impacts of climate change.

The Covid-19 pandemic combined with the war in Ukraine has also revealed the continent's food and energy dependence, so Africa needs more than ever to strengthen its health, food and energy resilience and to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change. For this, it is urgent that all actors (public authorities, civil society and private sector) mobilize and combine their efforts in the hope of achieving these objectives.

In this impetus, Moroccan civil society has committed itself alongside other actors to strengthen our country's ties with the rest of the continent. The Development Center of the Tensift Region (CDRT), an association recognized as being of public utility since 2006, was a precursor in its commitment to Africa. For example, its involvement in Morocco in a project funded by the African Development Bank (ADB) since 2010, its participation in various forums of African civil society, the organization of two universities of young civil society in the Maghreb countries respectively in 2012 and 2013 and finally the organization of two African universities in 2018 and 2019 with the support of several partners including the Office Chérifien des Phosphates (OCP), the city council of Marrakech, the ADB, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Cadi Ayyad University and the University Mohamed VI Polytechnic (UM6P). The CDRT's efforts, leadership, social involvement and expertise have been recognized by the AfDB, which has selected it as a representative of civil society in the North Africa region from 2018 to 2020, and by the UN, which has granted it observer status in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change since 2010.

The first African University of Young Civil Society Leaders organized by the CDRT in 2018 was a great success with the participation of 120 young people from more than twenty French and English-speaking African countries. It was an opportunity for young people to debate in the presence of African, French and Canadian experts, the top five developed by AfDB experts, namely, **feed, enlighten, educate, integrate** and **improve the quality of life of Africans**. Afterwards, the young people exchanged on the possibilities offered to them to fully play their role as young people. A second African University of Young Civil Society Leaders was held in July 2019 at the Mohamed VI Polytechnic University (Marrakech region). The theme chosen was: **Youth, innovation and development of Africa**.

Building on the success of these two events, the CDRT with the support of its partners will organize the third university of young leaders of African civil society on 20, 21 and 22 October 2022 in Marrakech. The theme chosen is: **After Covid and the war in Ukraine, what levers of action for the development of Africa?**

The work of this edition will be spread over 3 days and will include plenary lectures, oral communications, workshops as well as testimonies and exchanges of good experiences. These activities will be supervised by a pleiad of university professors, international experts and financial and administrative managers and economic actors. Cultural and artistic activities reflecting the richness and diversity of African cultural heritages will also be organized on the sidelines of this meeting.

The axes that will be explored during the debates and activities scheduled for this university are

- Access to sustainable and intelligent African territories,
- Africa's energy, food and health resilience,
- Acceleration to the knowledge society.
- Peace and good governance in Africa.
- Good education and applied scientific research.
- The drama of African immigration.
- The role of African civil society in achieving the MDGs for Africa.

**Note prepared by Prof. Benlahcen, member of the organizing committee of the  
3rd Africa-CDRT University.**