

Health and environmental integration in Africa and the Arab world requires effective human resource development !

Since its establishment in 2016, YENDA-AFRICA NGO's strategy has been to mobilise intellectual and professional expertise in Health and Environment through social networks as well as participate in various exchanges and sharing of scientific knowledge and management policies related to Health and Environment issues on the African continent.

With all the rewarding experiences acquired, YENDA-AFRICA NGO is currently at a crucial stage. It now wants to take concrete steps in the reflection and execution of a series of projects that will focus on :

- Nurturing and developing ideas on innovation and modernisation of health and environment policies in Africa;
- Developing and organising a range of concrete actions around environmental and health security, with the objective of fostering the development of health systems and environmental and other related areas in Africa;
- The definition of a development framework that gives hope to a real social transformation that values the voice of African youth and the enormous human potential of African communities.

Given this context, YENDA-AFRICA NGO adopted an audacious agenda in support of an ambitious and productive projection for this current decade. Thus, a global and collective ten-year strategy, with a horizon of 2030, where potentials and professional destinies will be combined, should be binding on all of us in a perfect logic of international collaboration, and also towards pragmatic policies, proposals and commitments, of public-private partnerships.

YENDA-AFRICA NGO, based in Morocco, therefore carries the ambition and the immeasurable challenge of promoting policies on Public-Private Partnerships diplomatically among the different African countries. It believes in the promise and capacity of this governance and operational model for health and environmental structures to serve as a lever for modernisation and innovation in the area of health and environmental development in Africa.

The Moroccan and particularly the Marrakech experience will be the launching pad for the implementation of this pioneering policy, as well as a model for reflection, development and application in the various countries of the continent.

YENDA-AFRICA NGO is equally committed to gaining visibility, which is both legitimate and productive in terms of the sincerity of its commitment to health and the environment, among the political authorities and major strategic decision-makers for the continent. It is committed, through its humanism and open-mindedness, to be a public voice combining and harmonising the various intelligences and potentials of the continent's health and environment actors. It carries a determined, courageous and energetic ideology, but also modern and full of hope in the emergence of a real African policy which takes into account

the realities of the continent, while keeping up with the speed of the world's development processes.

In order to take up these great challenges and to be up to par with the immense stakes which YENDA AFRICA NGO will be confronted with in the coming decades, an ambitious African and Arab forum on innovation and investment in the fields of health and the environment was organised in Morocco, at the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy of Marrakech, from 25th to 28th May 2022, on the theme: the stakes of health sovereignty in Africa and in the Arab world in the face of the security, environmental and social challenges caused by health crises, AAFII 2022, Marrakech.

The Forum's objective was to federate and guide the academic, scientific, professional and social reflections and resources of the continental and international actors working in the health sector, as well as in the related fields of sustainable development, global warming and environmental preservation.

This international event, organised in the city of Marrakech, a major meeting place for international policies that have given impetus to new global crisis management strategies, was an opportunity to bring together, harmonise and support ideas, reflections and questions on approaches to the organisation and management of health systems that will open up beneficial prospects for health and environmental issues on our continent.

The issue of environmental and health sovereignty in Africa and the Arab world was a great conceptual challenge for us, for two major reasons:

1. Why and how to contextualise these fundamental issues of health and environment in settings that may seem different, such as the African continent and the Arab world?
2. How to create a technical environmental and health debate between two professional worlds that rarely meet and to place it in its holistic context with a real impact on sustainable development?

This challenge was all the more difficult for us to take up by placing the question of innovation and investment in the fields of health and environment in the African and Arab contexts, where the indicators of innovation and investment remain quite critical.

Our objective is to raise awareness among African and Arab governments of the urgent need to place these issues high on the social agenda. We saw the organisation of this Forum as a serious opportunity to build an African and Arab coalition on these key issues for the development of our societies.

Several lessons were drawn from this first session :

- 1) The major health and environmental challenges facing the world are still too rarely addressed by the Southern countries, whether in relation to vaccines and pharmaceuticals, the effects of climate change, or the provision of consistent health services (in the private sector in particular), to name but a few examples;
- 2) The need to involve intellectuals, investors and decision-makers from the African and Arab Diaspora in the reflection and actions for health development through a

serious and genuine international cooperation strategy beneficial to all as well as the exploitation of niches presented by public-private partnerships for health and environmental development that are still insufficiently exploited in an efficient and sustainable manner.

3) Addressing the major challenges, particularly those related to training, employability and employment, which African youth are facing in a rapidly changing environment.

Following the great success of the first AAFII 2022 edition in Marrakech, a second AAFII 2023 edition will be organised in Dakar.

The nature of the second edition, AAFII 2023 in Dakar, will be different from the first edition. Our ambition is to make this second edition in Dakar a real platform of concrete projects proposing solutions adapted to the specificity of the problems raised during the Marrakech edition.

The issue of human resources is a pressing one. The health and environment sectors on the African continent suffer from significant quantitative and qualitative shortages of skills capable of addressing the major challenges facing our continent.

The central theme of the second edition of AAFII 2023 in Dakar will thus focus on the following issue :

How to accelerate policies for the development of Human Resources to ensure real health and environmental security in the African and Arab countries ?

Human resource issues, already highlighted in the WHO's annual World Health Report since 2006, headline the challenges of global health systems and the environment. These challenges revolve around the scarcity of qualified resources, the brain drain from developing countries to the better-equipped and more attractive countries of the North, the under-utilisation of existing resources in the public sector, the influx of health professionals to urban areas, etc.

This situation is quite significant in developing countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, while there is a critical shortage of human resources for health, underemployment persists. The economic and social fabric is not able to absorb the large number of doctors graduating from the continent's growing number of medical schools.

More and more young doctors are choosing the private sector not so much out of vocation but rather because of social and economic constraints.

However, the private sector, with all its largely under-exploited potential, is capable of stimulating health development, with very interesting knock-on effects on socio-economic development in general.

With real potential for developing secondary and tertiary care in Africa, young doctors are today forced to migrate to the countries of the North (after significant investments made by

their home countries in their training). Paradoxically, they are forced into exile, as they do not find the appropriate frameworks and conditions to integrate the economic fabric of their countries of origin. However, the needs in these countries are enormous, and the states spend huge financial resources on medical evacuations to countries with better technical facilities.

The ambition of the second edition of AAFII 2023 in Dakar is to identify, with all the public and private partners of this great African forum, the real pathways for the development of human resources necessary for health and environmental security in our African continent and in the Arab states.

Marrakech, 5th October 2022

Prof. Mohamed Khaled CHOULLI
Founder and President
AAFII