

AU-EU YOUTH LAB UPDATES

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**AU - EU
YOUTH
LAB**

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AU-EU YOUTH ACTION LAB GRANT APPLICATIONS AT A GLANCE

We have received a great number of applications and we thank all organisations who applied.

Below are some of our numbers at a glance.

Over 8,700 registrations on the ON Grip platform.

1,810 applications received.

High webinar engagement across all consortium partners, with attendance ranging from 100 to 350 participants per session. These sessions were designed to guide applicants, with recordings and materials available on the website for everyone.

Notable regional participation, with particularly strong engagement from Nigeria, Kenya, and Uganda.

1,317 applicants have joined the AU-EU Youth Action Lab Community on the Power to Voices platform.



OUR GRANT APPLICATIONS AT A GLANCE

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#AUEUYouthLab

THE AU-EU YOUTH VOICES LAB FUNDING YOUTH-LED GROUPS

The AU-EU Youth Voices Lab, part of the AU-EU Youth Lab, started its funding scheme called the AU-EU Youth Voices Third-Party-Funding Mechanism.

The grants range from EUR 5,000 to EUR 10,000 are to support the implementation of initiatives by youth-led organisations and groups targeting hard-to-reach young people across the 15 intervention countries of Cameroon, Burundi, South Sudan, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Tunisia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso and Belgium.

In February, a wide-range online campaign about the Mechanism provided instructions on how to apply and timely updates on this opportunity. Digital channels such as social media, newsletters, publications on third-party websites, hosting on partner channels, and more were used to spread this information as much as possible. The call for proposals, the supporting documents, and the promotional material were published in three languages, English, French, and Arabic, to ensure broader access to information and equality for the opportunity.

As a result, **740 applications were received**. Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Cameroon submitted the most applications. As applications are being evaluated, priority will be given to youth-led initiatives that promote inclusion, advocate for policy changes, and strengthen youth civil society across local, national, and continental levels. Selected groups should organize innovative awareness campaigns, amplify marginalised youth voices, engage power holders with specific policy demands, and foster collaboration between African youth and the diaspora.

A committee will select 15 organisations, conduct due diligence, and develop capacity-building plans. Funding will be disbursed in May 2025, with each project running for 12 months.





REFLECTING ON OUR FIRST ANNUAL REVIEW MEETING IN LUSAKA

From January 21 to 23, our Consortium partners gathered in Lusaka, Zambia, for the first Annual Review Meeting. This has been a significant milestone in our journey as it brought together Oxfam, Restless Development, Search for Common Ground, Youthmakers Hub, and ComDev Africa for an intensive three-day session focused on evaluating progress, strengthening collaboration, and shaping the future of the programme. During the meeting, Consortium representatives assessed the impact of the programme to date, examined and restructured key procedures, welcomed new team members, and mapped out the next steps for 2025. This gathering was more than just an evaluation – it was an opportunity to reinforce partnerships and realign strategies to ensure continued success.

A key highlight of the event was the active participation of youth representatives, reinforcing our commitment to youth-led development. Hope Mukwinda, a member of the YVL Youth Advisory Board, played a crucial role in the discussions. Her presence ensured that all decisions aligned with the aspirations and needs of young people across Africa. Speaking at the meeting, she emphasized the importance of youth voices in shaping the programme’s direction, stating: “I’m honored to participate in this meeting as this is a place where young people have a solid voice. And today, I represent all African youth. We all face similar challenges and have similar needs.” Another inspiring youth representative, Mputa Ngalande, also contributed meaningfully to the sessions, further highlighting the significance of youth leadership in the AU-EU Youth Voices Lab.

As we approach the first anniversary of our programme’s implementation, this meeting served as a key moment to celebrate progress and set ambitious goals for the future. The experience of connecting with partners, sharing insights, and collectively planning the next phase of our journey was truly invaluable. The energy, passion, and commitment displayed during these three days reaffirmed our shared dedication to empowering young people across Africa. With strengthened partnerships and a clear roadmap ahead, we are more motivated than ever to drive meaningful change in 2025 and beyond. Stay tuned for more updates as we continue this transformative journey together.



EMPOWERING YOUTH RESEARCHERS: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE AU-EU PARTNERSHIP FOUNDATION TRAINING WORKSHOP IN UGANDA

From February 17 to 21, 2025, our Consortium Partner, Restless Development, hosted in Uganda a transformative Foundation Training Workshop for youth researchers, a key initiative under the Continental Youth-Led Research Project and within the framework of the AU-EU Youth Lab programme activities. This workshop was critical in equipping young African researchers with the skills to drive youth-led accountability, advocacy, and policy influence within the African Union-European Union (AU-EU) partnership.

The Continental Youth-Led Research Project aimed to prioritize youth voices in knowledge production, ensuring their challenges, needs, and aspirations were well represented in policy discussions. By leading research efforts, young Africans contributed valuable insights that could shape continental advocacy strategies and inform intergenerational dialogue. The training workshop was designed to empower these youth researchers with the expertise to conduct independent research, analyse data, and document best practices. This approach ensured that the findings truly reflected the realities of young people across Africa.

Throughout the five-day activity, participants engaged in intensive sessions focused on strengthening their research skills. They received research design and management training, equipping them with the knowledge needed to create and oversee independent research projects. They also learned how to develop effective reporting systems to ensure their findings accurately captured the experiences and challenges of youth-led initiatives. The workshop provided tools for data analysis and documentation of best practices, enabling young researchers to assess and share successful strategies that could be replicated in different regions. Additionally, the event encouraged collaboration and networking among participants, creating a support system for inclusive and participatory research.

The workshop combined theoretical discussions with practical exercises, ensuring participants gained hands-on experience in different research methodologies. A key focus was setting the research framework helping them define objectives, purpose, and scope. They also practiced designing practical research questions that aligned with youth-led initiatives. Training in data collection methods, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups, allowed them to develop comprehensive approaches to gathering valuable information. By the end of the workshop, participants had developed structured research frameworks, formulated targeted research questions, and prepared data collection plans that would guide their work moving forward. These concrete outputs laid the foundation for evidence-based advocacy, positioning youth researchers as key contributors to policy discussions within the AU-EU framework.

The workshop included thirty-five participants and marked an important step toward youth-driven advocacy and policy engagement by strengthening youth researchers' capacity. The insights gathered from these research projects will be a powerful tool in shaping youth-focused policies within the AU-EU partnership. This initiative reaffirmed the significance of centering youth leadership in decision-making processes, ensuring that young Africans actively contribute to shaping their future.

EMPOWERING YOUTH VOICES IN KENYA: A RECAP OF THE COMMON GROUND ADVOCACY AND PROTECTION TRAINING IN KENYA



From February 24 to 27, 2025, young leaders from diverse and hard-to-reach communities gathered in Nairobi, Kenya, for an intensive four-day training session designed to strengthen their advocacy and risk mitigation skills. Organized by Search for Common Ground under the AU-EU Youth Voices Lab – Power of the Collective initiative, the training equipped participants with tools to navigate challenges in their advocacy work and amplify their voices collaboratively and solution-oriented. The workshop focused on two key methodologies: Participatory Protection Analysis

(PPA) and the Common Ground Approach to Advocacy (CGA2A). Through PPA, participants identified key risks affecting youth protection, well-being, and inclusion. They mapped available resources and developed strategies to mitigate these risks. The CGA2A methodology introduced a collaborative and non-adversarial approach to advocacy, enabling young leaders to identify priorities, design effective strategies, and engage constructively with decision-makers.

Throughout the workshop, participants participated in interactive discussions, real-world case studies, and hands-on exercises that enhanced their ability to lead advocacy initiatives. The training highlighted the importance of inclusive and ethical engagement, ensuring that all voices, especially those from marginalized communities, were represented and heard. By the end of the event, participants had not only bolstered their capacity for collaborative advocacy but also gained a deeper understanding of the potential risks affecting their involvement in decision-making processes. They collaborated to develop practical solutions and strategies for effectively managing these risks.

The impact of this training extended beyond the event itself. The activity equipped young advocates with the skills to lead peer-to-peer training, enabling knowledge-sharing within their respective communities. This action further reinforced the AU-EU Youth Voices Lab's broader mission to support youth-driven advocacy and policy influence as young leaders emerged more confident and prepared to engage with stakeholders on critical issues affecting their communities.

The training followed strict guidelines to ensure ethical storytelling and safeguarding while underscoring the power of youth-led, solution-oriented advocacy and reinforcing the importance of collaboration in addressing pressing social issues. These young leaders now carry new skills, strategies, and a strengthened network of like-minded advocates working toward a common goal. The AU-EU Youth Voices Lab remains committed to supporting these efforts and ensuring that youth voices continue to shape policies and solutions for a more inclusive future.



SENSE ACT WORKSHOP EMPOWERS YOUTH IN SIERRA LEONE

The Sense Act Workshop recently took place across three major cities in Sierra Leone: Freetown, Makeni, and Kambia. The workshop brought together 100 participants, including youth representatives, youth organizations, and key stakeholders. The event, organized by ComDev Africa's country manager Melvin Koroma, ambassadors, mobilizers, and volunteers, provided young leaders with the necessary tools to initiate meaningful projects within their communities.



The workshop focused on equipping participants with practical skills to take concrete action and implement local initiatives. Through interactive group sessions, attendees shared ideas on community challenges and collaborated on finding effective solutions. The event fostered teamwork and encouraged young changemakers to take ownership of social development in their respective regions.

Following the workshop, participants are now skilled in organizing themselves and launching local projects with support from community stakeholders. Through the activity, they're expected to create a lasting impact in different regions, empowering youth to lead and manage activities that address pressing social issues. This way, the Sense Act Workshop has set the stage for sustainable community-driven change in Sierra Leone by fostering independent leadership and grassroots action.



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