



Context and justification

Global demographics indicate that the African continent has a population with a majority of youth. This youth is at the heart of the development dynamics that the continent has experienced in recent years. This continent moves towards an integration thanks to the will of its Member States which have enforce policies including those focusing on the rights of children and youth, both girls and boys.

The protection systems approach developed by these states aims to protect children from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation as well as to ensure the right to special assistance for people with disabilities and marginalized children, who are excluded or vulnerable. Despite the efforts made, the commitment to protect people faces barriers in terms of adequate budget allocations and targeted social policies for the most excluded, including vulnerable children and youth. Also, the offer for protection services remains insufficient both from the point of view of its quality and from the point of view of the package of services offered. As a result, responses to the growing problems of protecting children and youth are the responsibility of small associations, non-governmental organizations and local communities.

In most countries, the regulatory arsenal, both national and international, concerning the rights of children and youth and their protection is ratified but, either it is less enforced or it is inappropriately and sporadically.

So is the fight against child trafficking which has been reduced to a fight against the mobility of minors. However, the mobility of children and youth in Africa is a recurring phenomenon whose amplitude seems to be constantly increasing even if reliable statistics are not always available.

It is therefore noted that, as far as education and training is concerned, a number of documents highlight the willingness of children and youth to access education and training services which are unavailable in their area of origin. This is a reality in many parts of the continent. But the educational public services rarely try to meet this need.

In addition, it has emerged that in our countries there is no clear communication with children and communities about what is being done to respect their rights or what is planned in terms of actions and resources. There is complete lack of information from the administration on rights planning processes. Above all, these rights must be a responsibility of African states and communities.

The child rights monitoring systems also suffer from the recurring weakness of the absence of any structured mechanism for collecting and analyzing cases of exploitation or abuse or the number of children receiving formal and regular social assistance.

The general context is further characterized by many gloomy situations. Thus, it can also be noted with Unicef that violent discipline³¹ is manifest within ECOWAS. Thus 88% of children (2 - 14 years old) living in the ECOWAS member states have experienced violent disciplines (physical and psychological).

As applied in MICS, DHS and the national surveys of some selected countries, violent discipline can take two forms: psychological aggression including howling to the child and addressing the child by offensive names; and physical or bodily punishment that includes actions to cause physical pain to the child without injury. Light physical punishments include shaking the child, tapping or striking the child on the hand, arm, leg or buttocks, while severe physical punishment is: hitting the child on the head, ears, or hit the child hard or repeatedly. In the surveys, mothers and social service workers were asked if their children experienced such violent discipline in the home in the past month.

Similarly, the prevalence of child marriage in ECOWAS is 42% among girls and 3% among boys. The prevalence of child marriage under age 15 averages 15% in the ECOWAS region.

Moreover, the ILO Global Report 2010 on child labor from 2004 to 2008, indicates that worldwide child labor has decreased from 222 million to 215 million among children aged 5 to 17 years. However, regional analyzes of the global trend have indicated that in sub-Saharan Africa child labor numbers have increased rather than decreased from 49 million to 58 million in the same period.

The context of sub-Saharan Africa is also one of extreme poverty that affects all segments of the population, particularly children and youth, forcing them to work because their survival and that of their families depends on it. The 2015 Global Report on Child Labor mentions that some 168 million children are still enrolled in child labor, while at the same time there are 75 million unemployed youth aged 15 to 24 and many more who accept jobs that do not bring them a fair income, job security, social protection or other essential features of decent work.

This poverty is one of the reasons for the enrollment of children in armed conflicts on the continent, which still remains the scene of many conflicts with many of its youth who are recruited at the risk of their lives. The precarious situation easily exposes children and youth to numerous movements where they can easily find themselves enlisted by terrorist and armed groups that can give them "security" and survival.

Despite efforts made by States and their partners, poverty continues to severely affect children and youth, threaten their survival and development and is one of the major obstacles to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

In sum, all children and youth are generally engaged in contemporary issues that undermine individual and collective efforts for their development. Every kind of Migrations, the different identity crises that we observe and the difficulties in facing Africa's development challenges deserve new forms of questioning. IOM estimates that, in 2016 for example, 100,000 migrants from West and Central Africa reached Europe through Italy. In addition, more than 250,000 migrant children make irregular trips to Italy and Greece in 2016. In the case of Italy, among 16,500 migrant children, more than 12,000 (72%) were unaccompanied. And these data, beyond what they call the direction, oblige us to engage in a global approach of the reflection on the constitutive constraints of the malaise of the minor subjects who engage in social mobility downward.

The general objective of this forum for children and youth is to create a forum for dialogue on the progress of children's rights in order to contribute to strengthening the protection of children against violence, abuse, exploitation, child marriage and to further stimulate the political commitment and response capacity for countries. This will involve girls and boys, decision makers and experts in dynamics that can ensure greater consideration of the effectiveness of the enjoyment of rights and provide the necessary guidance in the actions of the movement.

The following specific objectives have been defined by the AMWCY:

- Take stock of the responses given by our states to fight violence against young people
- Dialogue with the States on the measures of popularization and application of texts protecting children from all forms of violence
- Take stock on the progress of our rights, our IGA and our organization;

- Make an assessment of the implementation of the 2017 -2021 strategic plan of the AMWCY;
- Develop new alliances for the protection of children from violence;
- Contribute to awareness and training efforts of African youth on children's rights
- Organize panels on youth entrepreneurship and the fight against poverty,
- Initiate a reflection on the ascending social mobility and the conditions of implementation of the accompaniment of the minor subjects

Expected results

- ✓ Update on the responses given by our states to violence against youth is presented to youth)
- ✓ Launch of a dialogue with the States on the measures of extension and application of the texts protecting children from all forms of violence)
- ✓ Update on the progress of our rights, our IGA and our organization is done)
- ✓ A presentation of the strategic plan of the AMWCY is made with the results it proposes;)
- ✓ The development of new alliances for the protection of children against violence;)
- ✓ A contribution made to the awareness and training of African youth on the rights of the child)
- ✓ Effective organization of panels on youth entrepreneurship and the fight against poverty)
- ✓ The development of new protection tools oriented on the social mobility assumed.)

ORGANIZATIONAL AGENDA OF THE FORUM:

- Africa's Children's Forum in Niamey from September 24th to 29th, 2018.
- **Theme:** Sustainable protection and citizen participation of children
- **Dates**
- **Preparation session:** September 19th to 22nd
- **Africa's Children's Forum:** September 24th to 29th
- **Evaluation session and programming:** October 1st to 3rd

Organizers

The African Movement of Working Children and Youth (AMWCY) is the initiator of the meeting. Its Regional Commission has defined the contents. The AWCY of Niger organizes it in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Niger, ECOWAS, the organizations of GRPE, partner organizations in the host country and Enda Tiers monde which ensures international logistics aspects.

A week before the start of the meeting, the EMG will be present in Niamey to support the AWCY of Niger and local partners and define the final program of the meeting.

Participation

Children:

Delegates from 415 existing AWCY in localities from 27 African countries will be present, as well as observers from several other countries and a number of guests (see below). Delegations from Latin America, Asia and Europe are also expected.

Other children's organizations in Africa and from other continents are also invited.

147¹ children, youth, and their companions and guests from some thirty African countries and other continents are invited to Niamey.

Member countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Chad, Togo and Zimbabwe,.,.
Guest speakers: Latin America, Asia, Europe (Belgium, Finland, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland),

Experts and Academics: Will also be invited to this forum academics and experts from partner organizations that have produced on issues related to the protection of children from violence and on the responses given by our states to deal with these various child rights violations.

Institutions, organizations and networks invited

The African Union and ECOWAS: the AMWCY was invited and actively participated in the work of these two bodies, "African integration" and solidarity across borders is one of their main objective as an African Movement.

The AMWCY is a member of the Regional Child Protection Group (RCPG), which includes Enda TM, Plan, Save the Children, SSI-WA, UNICEF and World Vision.

- **The program and planned activities**

Panels at the "School of Child Participation"

Organization of panels with experts from different institutions: on violence against children, mobility of children and youth, on youth entrepreneurship and the fight against poverty, the contribution of children and young workers to the Alliance 8.7, adapted and quality education. Budgeting that takes into account the rights of the child. These panels will be organized in the form of an exchange of experience from countries on the results of the WCYs' actions, or surveys carried out by them. These country presentations will be followed by discussions with child experts and participants. the discussions will be approved by a global synthesis with orientations and recommendations by field.

- **Activities at Community level**

- They will be in the form of exchange and trimming with the communities identified in relation to specific issues.
- They can also be in the form of introductory workshops and training with the communities
- There will be realization of radio broadcasts to sensitize the populations and to make known the rights of the children
- Visits to authorities and community organizations
- There may also be underground plan activities in targeted neighborhoods.

¹ This figure is indicative, the budget mobilized for the Forum will be decisive in defining the exact level of participation.

The **institutions of the host country**, the **international institutions** and NGOs at the regional level, networks and associations of children and youth will attend the works.

International media including radios will also be invited.

The contact with the population, the national authorities of the host country and the international institutions is also part of the program of the meeting, notably through cultural activities and concert programmed.

Follow-up

The forum will be evaluated by the participants and then by the EMG. The annual meetings of the EMG and the workgroups of the AMWCY are the mechanisms that will allow the monitoring and evaluation of the actions. Enda Tiers Monde, through its program, provides organizational support to the AMWCY to facilitate these mechanisms, and the methodology, communication and lobbying aspects. A new three-year program will be finalized at the end of the meeting.

Funding

The AWCY of Niger, the Authorities and Partners of the country, will mobilize the expenses of hospitality (reception, food and lodging).

AWCY and partner organizations must negotiate a common support plan to support travel and organization costs, and some of the food.

The AMWCY will participate in the organization and travel expenses of EMG delegates.

With the support of its RCPG partners (ILO, Enda TM, Plan, Save the Children, UNICEF, SSI-WA, OAK), including their country offices who will be involved in sponsoring travel costs.

Total budget: 178,285,275 FCFA

Mobilized by the AMWCY (Save the Children support): 19 000 0000 Fcfa

The rest will be brought by the AWCY Niger, its partners, local and international sponsors