



Entrepreneurship training session for young students at the American Corner Center in Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire.
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Large-scale mobilization of youth for the SDGs in Côte d'Ivoire

Since the end of the crisis in April 2011, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire has placed the fight against unemployment at the heart of its concerns. Job creation, especially for young people, is at the forefront of action for the country. With a view to contributing to youth empowerment and social cohesion in the north and west of the country, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is technically supporting the implementation of a project entitled "Youth Impact for the SDGs".

"Youth Impact for the SDGs in Côte d'Ivoire" is a US \$118,500 project partially funded by Microsoft and implemented in collaboration with AIESEC, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UNV. The project was developed following a workshop of the UNV Regional Office for West and Central Africa (ROWCA) in Dakar, Senegal, in September 2016 on harnessing the potential of young people to achieve the SDGs through volunteering. It aims to enhance access to training on information and communication technology (ICT), while ensuring the large-scale participation of young people aged 18 to 39 years. The project combines practical training on entrepreneurship with information and communication technology.

Expert trainers from the Ivorian National Commission for UNESCO trained 47 young qualified volunteers as trainers who were then deployed in the six targeted cities (Abidjan, Bouaké, Boundiali, Kolia, Daola and Khorogo) to develop the skills of young people.

UNV's role was to pilot the project in the cities. Celica Koffi, national UN Volunteer with AIESEC Côte d'Ivoire took charge of planning the project, mobilizing the participants, securing funding, arranging the necessary logistics for the training sessions and managing administrative affairs with different city institutions.

“ The biggest challenge for me was youth mobilization. I reached out to heads of high schools and colleges, leaders and youth leaders of each city to talk about this project. I also created events on social networks to call for massive participation. --Celica Koffi, national UN Volunteer Project Manager of Youth Impact Project for the SDGs

In the implementation phase, beneficiaries were trained for 90 days by enlisting their skills in ITCs, coding and entrepreneurship. Since the launch of the project in November 2017, 1,850 young people have received training in four cities, including 225 young people in Abidjan, 476 young people in Kolia, 446 young people in Boundiali and 703 young people in Bouaké. Training will also start in the cities of Daola and Khorogo in the coming weeks and will mobilize more than 2,000 beneficiaries. The goal of this project is to reach 14,000 young Ivorian men and women to obtain ICT training certificates until May 2018.



Proud young participants who benefited from this project in Kolia show their ICT training certificates with a big smile at the training closing ceremony. (AIESEC Côte d'Ivoire)

In the presence of city representatives, teachers, religious leaders and beneficiaries, training closing ceremonies have been held in three cities to date. The trained youth expressed their joy and pride in completing the training challenge.

“ I am a teacher in Boundiali and I participated in the project. I come out very satisfied, delighted and comforted to have learned so much in such a short time. I hope that what I have learned will be renewed so that I can use it to help my community. --Kouakou Raymond, young participant in Boundiali

External partners are also pleased with the initiative taken by UNV in the context of youth development and training.

“ We are fully reassured by the diligence and execution of UNV, which supports us logistically and technically at all times. We congratulate this initiative and encourage continuity. --Maguidi Adama, President of AIESEC in Côte d'Ivoire

The Ivorian population is growing steadily, with a high proportion of young people. The Youth Impact Project for the SDGs is aimed directly at this young generation in order to build their capacity, to enable them to have the tools they need and to be aware of the benefits of volunteering and technology to enter the professional world.



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