



NETWORK FOR SOLIDARITY, EMPOWERMENT
AND TRANSFORMATION FOR ALL

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AMPLIFYING VOICES AND ENHANCING CAPACITIES FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION
IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT IN CAMEROON

**CONCEPT NOTE
AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

Application Deadline: 19 JUNE 2022

PISCCA (CIVIL SOCIETY AND COALITION OF ACTORS PROJECT) – French Embassy in Cameroon

PISCCA, which stands for Innovative Projects by Civil Society and Coalitions of Actors, is a funding program set up by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and managed locally by French embassies. The Fund aims to strengthen the role of civil society as a development actor, support innovative projects working for inclusive socio-economic development, and encourage initiatives that strengthen the role of women, young people and persons with disabilities.

Network for Solidarity, Empowerment and Transformation for All – NewSETA (Host)

The Network for Solidarity, Empowerment and Transformation for All (NewSETA) is a private, nonprofit association created in July 2013 in the Republic of Cameroon to strengthen youth and institutional capacities and actively engage communities in initiatives that improve social wellbeing. We strive to achieve this goal through non-partisan research and informational activities, promoting a more stable society by strengthening democracy and peace and empowering youths to be more responsible, creative and actively engaged in nation building.

www.newseta.org

www.facebook.com/newsetacmr

The recent reforms ushered by the adoption of the new Code on Decentralization (Law No 2019/024 of 24th December 2019) marks a watershed moment in Cameroon's governance landscape. A new opportunity and impetus has been offered to amplify citizen (youth) participation in the actions of local Councils and Regions. These new reforms not only underscore (a) the need for competence, and effectiveness at the local level but also (b) the need to mainstream youth priorities in local governance and development.

Subnational organizational capacity is one of the most important factors in the effective functioning of governments across the world. The recent adoption of the Code on political, fiscal, and administrative decentralization in Cameroon has provoked a lively debate about the capacity of local and subnational governments to manage, finance, and plan for their new sets of responsibilities. Despite the generalized understanding of both the importance of institutional capacity and its contributing role in governance effectiveness, the new reforms are occurring in a context of crisis and inadequate preparation of the local workforce of tomorrow. While awaiting the effective implementation of the Presidential Decree creating NASLA (National School of Local Administration) stakeholders have the onus, in the interim, to support and accompany the local governance reforms to help build an effective work force of tomorrow at the local level.

In this context citizen participation is very critical to optimize the outcomes of the decentralization process. Nevertheless, the youth in Cameroon – young people between 15 and 35 years who constitute about 64.3% of the total population – face structural limitations and pervasive stereotypes which impact on the mainstreaming of their priorities and their participation in the political process as voters, candidates or as citizens in local governance. In the 2020 joined Municipal and legislative elections, voter apathy was as prominent as in the 2018 Presidential election. The calls for elections boycott by some opposition parties reinforced political disinterest and compounded the volatile and contrarian climate under which the political process evolved. The voting age in Cameroon is 20 – the highest in sub-Saharan Africa. The age to run for other offices like the Senate is 40 years concretely sealing off any meaningful youth involvement. The legal age of majority is 18 years while the minimum age for criminal responsibility is 10 years, which is below the global average of 12.1 years, and among the lowest in the world. Despite their numerical strength, young people are increasingly losing interest in democratic participation with at least 60% of 20-35 year-olds who do not participate. The reason for this disinterest amongst others includes the absence of political power alternation, poor management of decentralized institutions and frustration over corruption in democratic procedures and governance processes.

The Ibrahim Index of African Governance in the sub-category of Participation further scores Cameroon at 27.5 with a deterioration rate of -2.1 since 2011. The frail participation of youths and women deters the attainment of an inclusive society and has contributed to great social polarization: on the one hand are those who seek the creation of a just, inclusive and sustainable society, and on the other, those who actively fight against such efforts; on one side those who strive to make democracy real, encouraging debate, dialogue and dissent, while on the other, those who seek to manipulate the institutions of democracy to perpetuate their power and advance elite interests. Given the fragile state of youth participation, lack of a sense of involvement and ownership of policy decisions due to the lack of consultation, citizens are increasingly resorting to protest, violence and conflicts as a means to address societal issues. The government itself has also resorted to routine crackdown against dissent, quashing reform-minded citizens, and enveloping the civic space in a constraining gag. All these prompt questions as to what role youths play in national and political life of the country? And how can we shape the mindsets of youth and adults to be champions of inclusive local governance in Cameroon?

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ABOUT AVEC-LOGOV Training

Amplifying voices and enhancing capacities for active participation in local governance and development in Cameroon.

Through the AVEC-LOGOV Training, NewSETA envisions improving capacity for local governance in Cameroon by strengthening capacities of youth leaders and elected municipal officials. It also aims to create innovative platforms for citizen participation and collaboration in local governance. The project will build the capacity of youth leaders on local governance policy and project agenda setting, conception, implementation and evaluation and empower them to utilize the online platform www.logov.cm to enhance accountability in local governance and development in Cameroon. It will help local elected officials appropriate the law on decentralization and nurture skills to mobilize local communities for active engagement and increase participation of young people, women and vulnerable groups in every phase of local policy and project cycles; and it will consolidate platforms for dialogue and partnerships amongst community youth leaders and between youth leaders and elected officials.

Thematic Focus – Youth Leaders

The two capacity building workshops for youth leaders shall focus on youth participation in local governance and local policy and project agenda setting, conception, implementation and monitoring. The content of the workshops will also include trainings on themes such as profiling the community to map out priority problems faced by youths, social auditing, community mobilization and resident service, blue ocean strategies etc

Thematic Focus – Councilors

The training for Councilors shall focus on themes such as: community/citizen engagement, policy facilitation and implementation, personal and professional integrity, gender equity and inclusion, public procurement, strategic planning, service delivery, financial management and budgeting, personal resiliency and development, technological literacy, communication and information sharing.

Structure of Training

Part 1- Youth Capacity Building

The first part of the program shall be the training of Youth Leaders from the select municipalities. It will include a 2-day training workshop for 20 youth leaders from the Southwest, West and Littoral Regions, which will be held in the Southwest Region (Limbe); a 2-day training workshop for 20 youth leaders from the Centre, East and Northwest Regions which will be held in the Centre Region (Yaounde). The workshops target municipalities within regions which are affected by Anglophone crisis or are principal destinations of internally displaced people.

Part 2 – Community Mapping

Following the Youth Capacity Building and in Prelude to the Mayor Roundtable, all the Youth Leaders Trained will be obliged to carry out a Community Mapping exercises. All Youth Leaders will be given two (2) months to carry out this exercise and submit a report to the NewSETA team in charge of the AVEC-

LOGOV program. Out of the 40 reports, the best 10 will be selected to present findings at the Mayors' Roundtable, which is will be taking place in Part 3 of the program. Their findings will inform the Municipal Councilors of the major youth priorities and challenges in the targeted municipalities. They will also discuss potential solutions to these challenges and design ways of monitoring the implementation of the remedies implemented. It will be an opportunity for the stakeholders work closely with each other, share experiences, encourage other young leaders to engage and establish relationships for joint youth participation within their local municipalities

Part 3: Mayors' Roundtable

The third part of the program shall involve capacity building workshop for several select Local Councils. This will be a 3-day training workshop for 22 elected local officials from 12 target municipalities of the Southwest, East, Littoral, Northwest, West and Centre Region. This training will be held in Yaounde Centre Region of Cameroon. In addition to the thematic areas mentioned above, we shall also simplify sections/articles from the 2019 code on decentralization in Cameroon which dwell on participation in local governance.

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OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

Main objective

- To improve capacity of local governance institutions, elected local officials and youth civil society leaders to actively participate in local governance and Decentralized Development Cooperation in Cameroon.

Specific objective

- 1- To strengthen participation and mainstream the priorities of 40 young people (20 male and 20 female civil society leaders) in local policy and programs.
- 2- To strengthen the capacity of 22 elected local officials on participatory governance and consolidate platforms for dialogue and partnerships amongst community youth leaders and elected officials.
- 3- To foster the capacity for Decentralized Cooperation by setting up Development and Specialized Cooperation Desks (DSCD) within 3 municipalities in Cameroon.

Expected Outcome

1. Improved capacity at the local councils in diverse aspects of local governance; local policy and project agenda setting, formulation, implementation and monitoring and young people increasingly utilise the logov.cm to monitor and enhance accountability in local governance and development in Cameroon.
2. Greater Mainstreaming of priorities of the local populations by elected municipal officials and increased participation in local governance.
3. Enhanced France-Africa partnerships through mutual rewarding cooperation ties and acquisition of competencies for investment in local development.

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GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICATION

Eligibility *(For the Youth Capacity Building)*

Applicants (male or female) interested in the AVEC-LOGOV Training should:

1. Be a Cameroonian originating and based in either the North West, South West, East, West, Littoral or Centre Region.
2. Be no older than 35 years of age,
3. Demonstrate strong interest in local governance, local development and peace in their respective communities or nationally.
4. Preferably be a youth leader affiliated with a sector civil society organization. While we will consider applicants who are currently employed by a civil society organization or are graduates, we will request additional information to confirm that the individual is acting on their own in regards to their participation, and that their current employer is flexible with their independent role as an AVEC-LOGOV attendee.

Please Note: AVEC – LOGOV Training is not an educational program offering academic courses leading toward a degree. It does not provide funds or any other type of financial aid to graduate students, nor is it designed to finance youth projects/organizations. The program cannot support those seeking to complete professional training programs, attend conferences, or pursue internships at other organizations.

How to Apply

Click the link named “Online application” on the call for application webpage. Attach a separate curriculum vitae, and One (1) recommendation letter from one of the two referees who should be mentioned on the Application form. Applicants should only mention the required details of the second referee on the Application form without asking them to write a second recommendation letter for the candidate.

Working Language

A working knowledge of English and French is an important prerequisite for participation in the AVEC-LOGOV Training for general communication purposes. Some facilitators may prefer to use either of the languages. All application materials must be submitted in English or French.

Selection Process

Following the application process, participants will be selected by the AVEC – LOGOV Project Bench at NewSETA. Selection will be based on a set of criteria including:

- demonstrated activism or interest in the advancement of peace, democracy and local governance
- a satisfactory response to the essay question.
- a desire to network with others, and

- a clear explanation of how the program will benefit their own efforts for advancing peace, local governance and Local Development.

Timeline

The deadline for application for the AVEC-LOGOV is June 19, 2022. Four (4) days following the deadline, applicants shall be notified of their status. Selected applicants shall be contacted and provided with further details about the rest of the program.

Dates of the Training Program for Youth Leaders is as follows

- NW, EAST, and CENTRE: **July 2022 (Specific dates will be communicated)**
- LITTORAL, WEST and SW: **July 2022 (Specific Dates will be communicated)**

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LOGISTICS INFORMATION

Accommodation and Meals:

NewSETA shall cover participant accommodation and meals throughout the duration of each workshop.

Transportation and Logistics:

The roundtrip ticket (Economy only) to and from the venue shall be covered by NewSETA. Please take note that this is not calculated to cover airfares. Moreover, all refunds shall only happen at the end of the event before your departure. Each attendee should please bring along their transport tickets to complete this process.

Study Materials

NewSETA shall provide attendees with study materials needed for the workshops and training manuals for further reading.

Certificate

Each attendee who successfully completes the workshop shall be awarded the Youth Envoy for Local Development Certificate.

Sessions

Daily sessions shall commence at 8:30 am (after the Stay Alive activity) and end at 6 pm, while the night sessions shall commence at 8 pm after dinner and end at 10 pm (All sessions are compulsory for participants).

Stay Alive:

As a way of encouraging healthy living among AVEC-LOGOV attendees, they shall participate in the “Stay Alive” daily keep fit sessions. Please note that you are to come along with your sporting kit for the exercises.

This session just like any other session is mandatory for all participants without any exemption. It is usually scheduled for 6:00 am daily.

Participant working groups:

The training workshop is designed to be interactive and participatory, and attendees are encouraged to contribute in their own personal capacity. During the event, participants shall be free to join a service group of their choice. The major task of the service group is to know the needs of the participants and to pass on the information to the organizers for immediate action. This ensures that participants contribute to the success of the event organizing. The available service groups are; Health group, Social group, and Media/Reporting group

Late Coming/Absenteeism:

NewSETA shall not tolerate late coming or absenteeism at the event. Any participant who comes late to, or absents from session(s) for more than three times during the training shall be dismissed from the event.

Smoking/alcohol:

Smoking is not permitted in the event venue. If you wish to smoke, please ensure that you move away from the vicinity. For participants who take alcohol, you are also advised not to take alcohol before or during the sessions or you may be dismissed from the event.

Health and other contingencies:

You are advised to ensure that you are medically fit to embark on any journey or strenuous movement to attend this event. While we may not insist on medical reports from participants, we advise you to inform us in advance of any special health condition peculiar to you.

NewSETA, The French Embassy or the event administrators will not be responsible for any health condition or medical cost that may be incurred during or in the process of attending the workshop. We regret that we cannot provide health insurance cover for our attendees. However, we shall be attentive to administer possible first aid measures and provide information and directives to get necessary medical attention should the need arise.

In addition, participants are encouraged to be very vigilant towards their personal belongings as we shall take no responsibility for any loss of private possessions incurred during or in the process of attending the workshop.

Dress Code:

Dressing could be formal or informal, western or traditional, but we suggest that moderation in dressing should guide participants. We strongly advise against dressing in a manner that unduly exposes sensitive body parts at any level.

We look forward to a fruitful outing with you in Yaoundé, the city of many possibilities!

The NewSETA Team

www.newseta.org