

FOREWORD

The articles presented in this volume are the first part of the results of the “Leaders for Justice Workshop” which took place in Dakar, Senegal, from the 31st July to 03rd August 2025.

The workshop, which was organised by the Rule of Law Program for Sub-Saharan Africa of Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, brought together lawyers from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote D’Ivoire, DR Congo, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo, to discuss current legal issues in Africa.

The workshop focused on the "Legal framework for youth participation in politics and the economy in French-speaking Sub-Saharan Africa".

In this "Leaders for Justice Workshop" the importance of a reliable legal framework for youth participation in Africa was debated.

Most of the participants have professional experience as advocates in private practice, in companies and institutions or as judges and lecturers. Very vivid debates between participants from different West African and Central African countries helped to identify challenges, possible solutions and best practices.

The discussion that was based on presentations by all the participants and which subsequently enriched the articles herein, sought

- to identify best practices and to learn from different national experiences with youth participation in Africa;
- to encourage the search for African solutions and to profit from lessons learnt in different African regions towards the attainment of a better framework for youth participation;
- to discuss measures to strengthen youth participation in politics and the economy in French speaking Africa .

This volume presents the first part of the participants' insights in written form either as articles or as reports.

Romuald A. Coffi Dekoun, Benin, presented on "Youth political monitoring on social media in Benin: what impacts and what results?" – The article highlights the importance of monitoring in managing political risk, emphasizing the need for both long-term anticipation and immediate responsiveness to institutional and discursive shifts.

Dre. Samiratou Dipama, Burkina Faso, analyses "Challenges and Opportunities for Youth Political Participation in African Countries in Crisis: The Case of Burkina Faso"- This article addresses the central research question: To what extent can crisis, far from merely representing impediments, serve as catalysts for redefining the relationship between youth and political power in Burkina Faso ?

Dakpoulé Da, Burkina Faso, examines "The role of the legal and institutional framework in addressing the economic challenges of young people in Burkina Faso"- This paper uses Vector Error Correction Models (VECM) on annual data from 1991 to 2024,

to investigate that improvements in the rule of law, stronger control of corruption and government effectiveness are associated with a decline in youth unemployment, with a more pronounced effect on young women.

Abba Mamadou Ari, Niger, shared insights in "Reflection on the legal framework for youth participation in local governance in Niger". – In Niger, youth participation in political life is generally addressed at the national level. This contribution therefore aims to understand the legal framework governing youth participation in local public affairs in Niger.

Akodah Ayewouadan, Togo, presented on "Supervision of youth participation in politics" -The article finds that despite the existence of a legal framework, its application is limited by the absence of specific provisions for youth, a high eligibility age, the ineffectiveness of established bodies, the lack of quotas, and poor representation in institutions.

Dr Laciné Diomande, Ivory Coast, wrote an article titled "Public procurement, a powerful lever for the economic integration of young people in West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU)" – The author explores the critical role of public procurement as a mechanism for promoting economic inclusion among the youth in the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA).

Godfree Khonde Khonde, RDC, gave his presentation on "Youth work experience and employability: Impacts on the economic development of the Democratic Republic of the Congo" – This study aims to demonstrate the role that youth employment can play in economic development and attempts to find solutions that could enable young people to enter the world of work by breaking down the barrier of professional experience and meeting the 2030 Agenda, more specifically Sustainable Development Goal 8.

Benoit K. ABIKO, Togo, writes on "Optimisation fiscale et inclusion économique des jeunes entrepreneurs au Togo" – This article analyzes current tax mechanisms and their impact on the economic inclusion of young people. It highlights the limitations of existing measures and proposes reform strategies for a simpler, more inclusive, and incentive-based tax framework.

Kassaye Oumarou Faran Maiga, Niger, examines "The legal framework for the involvement of young girls in citizenship issues in Niger" – She argues that, despite significant legal progress, the effective involvement of girls in public life remains hindered by structural, institutional, and socio-cultural barriers.

All articles published in this first volume covering the workshop in Dakar demonstrate the willingness of a young generation of African lawyers to share their thoughts and to engage in the future of their continent. Their contributions reflect a strong commitment to advancing economic inclusion and promoting sustainable development across Africa. At the same time, the authors emphasize the importance of political participation and the rule of law as foundations for democratic governance and long-term stability.

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