

IDAY CHARTER

GOAL

The members of IDAY participate in the mobilisation of civil society of their country in order to achieve universal quality basic education for all (QBEFA) the African youth. They engage in collective advocacy with the view to convincing their government and all stakeholders to take their responsibilities so as to effectively enforce this right.

IDAY understands basic education as including at least the following:

- (1) pre-school initiation;
- (2) a complete cycle of official primary education;
- (3) vocational literacy training for the youngsters (15-24) who did not have access to or did not complete a full primary cycle.

IDAY also acknowledges that it is impossible to aim at quality basic education without seeking to tackle all obstacles that stand in the way, be they of cultural, economic, and sanitary or of any other nature.

Hence, IDAY Members strive to achieve QBEFA in their countries within the framework set up by the United Nations in its Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), mainly for Education (SDG n° 4) but considering their close relationship with Ending Poverty (SDG n°1) Health (SDG n° 3, and particularly 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3), Gender equality (SDG n° 5), Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG n°6), Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG n°7), Decent work for all (SDG n°8), climate change (SDG n°13) and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG n° 16).

WHY?

African youth is without doubt the group of persons in the world whose fundamental rights are most massively disregarded and violated. According to UNESCO, today about one African child out of 4 aged between 6 and 12 has still today no access to a full cycle of primary education. According to the International Commission for Education Unless support for basic education changes radically, 69% of the youth in the poorest countries will by 2030 still not have acquired basic primary education skills. Africa also counts 45 million illiterate African youngsters aged 15 to 24. Contrary to the current trend on other continents, their number is increasing in Africa and most international programmes fail to include this lost generation into their financing plans.

Furthermore, these statistics only partly reflect the situation of millions of vulnerable children and youth: child soldiers, child domestic servants (so-called « invisible workers), so-called “witch” children, enslaved or victims of child trafficking, schoolgirls forcibly subjected to early marriage, children deprived of liberty, nomadic children and children from ethnic minority groups, etc.

It is generally admitted that without new and exceptional measures, Africa will once more miss out on the SDG n° 4.

Yet, helping the African youth obtain that their rights be respected is not only a matter of safeguarding their human dignity, but also a key stake to ensure equitable and sustainable development in Africa as well as in the rest of the world.

STATEMENT BY IDAY MEMBERS

IDAY members state that:

1. Education is the very basis of economic development and of a democratic environment enabling peace and the well-being of the people. Education is also an essential condition of sustainable improvement of the general economic and health conditions of the population.
2. All parents consider educating their children as their first priority.
3. Any issue that has an impact on access to, completion and quality of education deserves to be taken into account in the framework of the goals of quality basic education for all.
4. Only a constructive dialogue between government authorities and African civil society to improve the education system will significantly improve trust between these partners and allow achieving the right to quality basic education for all Africa in a sustainable manner. As recommended by the Global Campaign for Education, Human Rights campaigns and advocacy towards governments are to be preferred to direct service delivery, which undermines the latter's responsibility.
5. The active participation of civil society in a country's strategic decisions is an essential condition to improve governance and to achieve sustainable development. Only if African civil society decides to take its future in its own hands will the continent sustain a balanced development process.
6. Education and popular participation are essential for an efficient utilisation of foreign aid. Without a massive mobilisation of the African civil society involved in education projects and its youth, foreign aid in general, and humanitarian aid, including for health in particular, will remain bottomless pits.
7. Foreign aid helps alleviating destitution and inhuman living conditions in specific situations and places. As such it is necessary and ought to be sustained, although in a different way. It is delusional to think that aid under its present form will solve Africa's education challenges. Not to mention that such a system does not contribute to endogenous development and maintains too often its beneficiaries into external dependency.
8. Achieving the right to basic education for all in Africa is a strategic challenge for the whole of humanity, including for the Western World. The future wellbeing of not only the African youth but also of the global youth is here at stake.

HOW?

- Organise and/or take part in collective advocacy activities of local civil society organisations targeting local, national, regional and international authorities. In each country, the issues raised focus on the specific obstacles to achieving the n° 4 and related SDGs, as well as on demands and possible solutions.

In particular, commemorate each year and together the International Day of the African Child around June 16¹, in Africa and elsewhere in the world. The aim is building up massive media impact and encouraging the authorities to increase the means dedicated to achieving quality basic education for all by 2030.

- Foster and participate in close consultation with the local or national authorities in each country, with a view to contributing to good governance. IDAY endeavours to lay stress on the need for African countries to increase their basic education budgets and to see to it that they are spent properly.

- Engage the donors and the international cooperation community into more efficient actions in support to local civil society and into giving priority to programmes focused on basic education.

- Carry out public awareness activities: outside Africa, in order to inform on the deficit of education in Africa, to foster solidarity and citizen mobilisation in favour of aid practices that are more efficient and respectful of the Africans' right to develop themselves; in Africa, in order to highlight the importance of education and generate democratic mobilisation in favour of the right to education for all. In the framework of these activities, the Message of Yaguine and Fodé (see annex) – two Guinean teenagers who were found dead in the landing gear of a plane in Brussels on August 2, 1999 – ought to be read in commemoration of all young Africans who

¹ On June 16, 1976, the Apartheid army massacred an unknown number of young South-Africans as they peacefully manifested to obtain quality education. This day is commemorated annually in Africa as the Day of the African Child.

sacrifice themselves so that the African and European leaders take all required measures to safeguard their fundamental rights, including their right to education.

WHEN?

Collective advocacy activities are conducted throughout the year in order to maximise their impact. All opportunities for the message and the propositions of the network's members to be heard ought to be seized. Around June 16, members are to celebrate the Day of the African Child on education-related issues. This is a landmark event for the network organised each year around this date.

WHO?

IDAY is a network of civil society organisations. It is open to any organisation or person agreeing with its objectives and principles and willing to support them. The coalitions are the effective members of IDAY-International, e.g. the members of IDAY's General Assembly.

Are eligible to become a member of an IDAY coalition:

- Registered civil society organisations involved in the implementation of education projects in Africa, human rights protection – in particular with respects to the right to quality basic education – or the empowerment of African civil society.
- Individuals who are committed to improve basic education in Africa and willing to engage with IDAY to support the network and the actions of its members.

BECOMING A MEMBER OF IDAY IMPLIES

- Accepting to operate in a network with all the other organisations of one's country involved in the sector of education in Sub-Saharan Africa to the extent that they accept the IDAY Charter in its form and spirit;
- Respecting the statutes and internal regulation of IDAY-International;
- Promoting the implementation of objectives of the SDG n° 4 respecting common elements or themes of IDAY celebrations;
- Seeking to transcend the daily issues by impressing upon the African and international authorities the rights of the African youth to receive basic education. With this purpose in mind, local and international authorities will be invited to IDAY commemorations;
- Contributing to the common and collective interest, in particular by co-operating with the other networks of the civil society;
- Applying the IDAY logo to all documents and electronic publications and abstain from using IDAY documents (texts, photos, logo) for commercial or profit seeking purposes.

Only the organisations respecting these rules will be allowed to claim belonging to IDAY and use its logo.

ADMINISTRATION

IDAY is an official international non-profit seeking association since January 2008 with a permanent secretariat. IDAY-International coordinates the network and facilitates collaboration among IDAY national coalitions and members. The secretariat also coordinates the various national activities with the aim to maximise their media and political impact.

At national level, civil society organisations which are members of IDAY determine on their own the organisational structure and legal status of their coalition.

REGISTRATION

To register with IDAY, the official representative of the candidate organisation is required to initial each page of the Charter and sign the last page. The signature must be preceded by the words “Read and approved” and followed by the organisation’s complete contact details.

- If the organisation is from/in a country where an IDAY coalition already exists, the document must register with this coalition in compliance with its own rules and procedures.
- Organisation from countries where no IDAY coalition exists may become members provided that they form a coalition comprising of a minimum number of organisations, as provided for in IDAY-International’s internal regulations. This coalition then registers directly with IDAY-International in accordance with the conditions established in the internal regulations.
- Multinational organisations may register directly with IDAY-International.

Only the organisations registered with an IDAY coalition or with IDAY-International are considered IDAY members.

IDAY seeks to mobilise all interested parties in Africa and elsewhere in world to achieve these objectives. The network does not discriminate on the basis of language, political, national, tribal, or religious affiliation. IDAY is and shall remain strictly neutral politically and religiously.

CONTACT

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NOTE

This fourth version of the Charter (May 2017) is considered adopted automatically by all organisations that have signed the earlier versions unless explicit disagreement with one or more new dispositions. Hence, they do not need to sign once more this version to continue to be considered a member of IDAY.

ANNEX

MESSAGE OF YAGUINE AND FODÉ

Conakry, July 29th, 1999

« Excellences, members and responsible authorities of Europe,

We have the honour and pleasure of writing you this letter to tell you about the purpose of our journey and the sufferings, which we, the children and young people of Africa, experience.

But first may we offer you our most exquisite, adorable and respectful greetings in life. To that effect, be our support and our help. For us in Africa, you are the ones to whom we must turn for help. We beg you to listen to us, for the love of your continent, for the feeling that you have for your people and above all for the attachment and love that you feel for your children, whom you love for live; and also for the love and graciousness of our creator God Almighty, who gave you all the good experiences, wealth and power to develop and organise your continent to be the most beautiful and admirable of them all.

Esteemed members and leaders of Europe, we in Africa appeal to your solidarity and your kindness. Help us, we are suffering terribly in Africa, we have problems and there are gaps in children's rights. Among the problems we face are war, disease and malnutrition. As for children's rights, in Africa and especially in Guinea we have too many schools but not enough education and teaching – except in private schools where you can get a good education and good teaching, but only at great cost. But our parents are poor and they have to feed us. Furthermore, we have no sports schools where we can play soccer, basketball, or tennis.

This is why we, the children and young people in Africa, ask you to embark on a large-scale, efficient organisation for Africa so that our countries can develop.

Hence, if you see that we risk our lives and sacrifice ourselves, it is because there is too much suffering in Africa and because we need you to fight against poverty and to end war there. Nevertheless, we want to study and ask you to help us study to become like you, in Africa.

Finally, we beg you to forgive us for daring to write this letter to you, the great persons to whom we owe respect. Please realise that we have no one else to turn to in order to show how weak we in Africa are.

Written by two Guinean children, Yaguine Koita and Fodé Tounkara » (signatures)

This is the text of the letter found on the body of Yaguine in an envelope tucked under his shirt. The bodies of these two Guinean youngsters of 14 and 15 years old were found in the landing gear of a plane coming from Conakry, on August 2nd, 1999, at Brussels airport.

The authenticity of the letter was confirmed by the discovery of the draft of the letter in one of Yaguine's schoolbooks.