

1 The challenge: providing African entrepreneurs with the resources to grow their businesses and contribute to economic development and panafrikan integration

All across the African continent, a growing wave of grassroots self-starters are taking risks contribute significantly to the job creation, Gross Domestic Product and social welfare of the economies they are involved in. This momentum is on the increase as result of its booming economies, which are moving to opportunity entrepreneurship rather than, necessity entrepreneurship. **Even though SMEs represent an exceptional vector of social and political stability, as well as a powerful driver for growth, only 30% of them survive the three first years after their incorporation.**

Indeed, African SMEs suffer from many deprivations, including lack of technical assistance, lack of quality professional training both for the entrepreneurs and their teams, and lack of visibility as their achievements are seldom promoted and encouraged. One of the major issues that they face has to do with isolation as it can be quite difficult to find peers to discuss and share best practices with, in their countries, in their regions and on a continental scale.

2 The solution: promote the role of entrepreneurship in Africa's growth through a platform of peer to peer exchanges gathering talented and committed entrepreneurs

The African Club of Entrepreneurs is a pan-African organization that gathers female and male entrepreneurs who are committed to contributing to a sustainable and responsible development process in Africa. Sparked by the impact investment fund family Investisseurs & Partenaires (I&P), its mission is to plea the cause of African entrepreneurship and develop business opportunities between and for its members.

The Club is an association under Ivorian law (60-315 Act related to associations, September 21st 1960) and its **60 members, former and current I&P partner companies are based in West Africa, Central Africa and the Indian Ocean.**

The four cornerstones of the Club's services offer

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Technical assistance fund creation
- Services mutualisation
- Sector specific clusters
- Member's directory

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- Top management training session
- Middle management training session
- Online training session
- Online access to training material

ADVOCACY

- Promotion of female leadership in the economic sector
- Promotion of youth entrepreneurship
- Promotion of entrepreneurship in Africa
- Report member's concerns to the law-makers

PEER TO PEER EXCHANGE OF BEST PRACTICES

- National meetings organisation
- Regional meetings organisation
- Yearly panafrikan general assembly
- Monthly newsletter

3 The Club's assets to fulfill its mission and achieve its impact

1- STRONGLY COMMITTED MEMBERS

- The current Club members have discussed the Club's objectives for four years before creating it. This extensive project genesis allowed them to think this project through in detail by looking back on their experiences and assessing their needs, in order to develop an offer that is in line with their realities, but also, one that also reflects widespread challenges for entrepreneurs in Africa

2- A DEDICATED ENTREPRENEURS MANAGEMENT TEAM

- The Club members, through its general assembly, has elected a Bureau that is composed of 5 African entrepreneurs. In addition to this dedicated management team, a Network Manager works full time with the Executive Bureau in order to implement the Club's general policy

3- A PARTNERSHIP WITH I&P and ITS NETWORK

- The Club is currently being supported by I&P's who has over fifteen years of experience in supporting African SMEs and answer their needs through various programs including technical assistance assignments and organizing training sessions

4 Our main achievements in 2016

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Created the members' online directory
- Created clusters per business sector to discuss and address members' issues with regional/sectorial decision-makers
- Supported members when identifying quality HR profiles



ADVOCACY

- Organized one event aimed at promoting entrepreneurship in collaboration - with the AfDB with strong media coverage
- Discussed member's concerns with Ivorian Ministry of Trade
- Published articles and arranged for members to be interviewed by various media outlets



PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

- Negotiated with Lead Campus (Sciences Po Paris/ Dakar ISM and Cape Town University) so that 5 members could take part in this training with a €9000 scholarship (€12,000 program)
- Organized a top management training session on communication and marketing with 35 members from 11 countries



PEER TO PEER EXCHANGE OF BEST PRACTICES

- Organized four national meetings (Ivory Coast * 2, Burkina Faso, Senegal)
- Organized one panafrikan meeting and one general assembly
- Organized one Executive Bureau meeting in Abidjan
- Sent out 5 newsletters



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