

STREETNET AFRICA YOUTH MANIFESTO



The informal economy is a vital part of our societies. Across Africa, young street and market vendors make up a significant proportion of the workforce. We are not only the future—we are the present, yet we continue to face harassment, exclusion from social protection, limited access to legal information, financial barriers, multiple taxation, and lack of adequate training and education. These challenges threaten our dignity, livelihoods, and opportunities. Through this manifesto, we demand recognition of our contributions and concrete actions to support young informal economy workers.

Physical Harassment

Physical harassment is an unwelcome, intentional act that harms a person or property. It disturbs, violates, lowers self-esteem, and causes injuries and loss of property. It should be addressed by simplifying formal registration and licensing processes and providing decent market spaces

Lack of Funding and Financial Support

Lack of funding excludes young informal workers from financial support. **We call for youth cooperatives for self-financing, increased attention from public and financial institutions, and dedicated funding mechanisms exclusively for youth.**

Multiple Taxation

Multiple taxation discourages young people from starting businesses and leads to high prices. **We call on local governments for lower taxes, unified and digital systems, and exemptions to help young workers thrive.**

Limited Training and Knowledge

Many young workers lack basic knowledge, risking business failure. **We demand more training and awareness initiatives.**

Access to Legal Information

Young workers lack access to legal information and often do not know their rights. Therefore, **we call for simplified legal texts, translations into local languages, and adapted training.** We also call on trade unions to play a stronger and effective role in mobilizing and educating young workers on their rights.

Social Protection

Informal economy workers face major challenges in social protection: lack of access to healthcare and childcare, limited information on social support, and absence of health insurance. **We call for flexible, just and inclusive social protection programs; access to health insurance, pension and paid maternity leave; and increased awareness.**

Conclusion - Our Demands

We demand that our voices be heard, our contributions recognized, and our rights guaranteed.

We demand close collaboration among authorities, union leadership, and youth in the decision-making processes concerning vendors in the informal economy.

We will organize collectively to ensure young workers in the informal economy shape policies that affect our lives.

NOTHING FOR US WITHOUT US!