



**From Partnerships to Impact:  
The Africa–Europe Youth Academy as a  
Cross-Sector Collaboration Model**

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# 70%

Sub Saharan Africa's population under the age of 30.

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22,7% of the global world youth population is located in this region

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Projection destined to double by 2050

## Still a number of challenges for the local youth remain

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- high youth unemployment rates
- lack of structured and accessible leadership programmes
- gaps in entrepreneurial education and fundings





Global  
Gateway



# AFRICA-EUROPE YOUTH ACADEMY

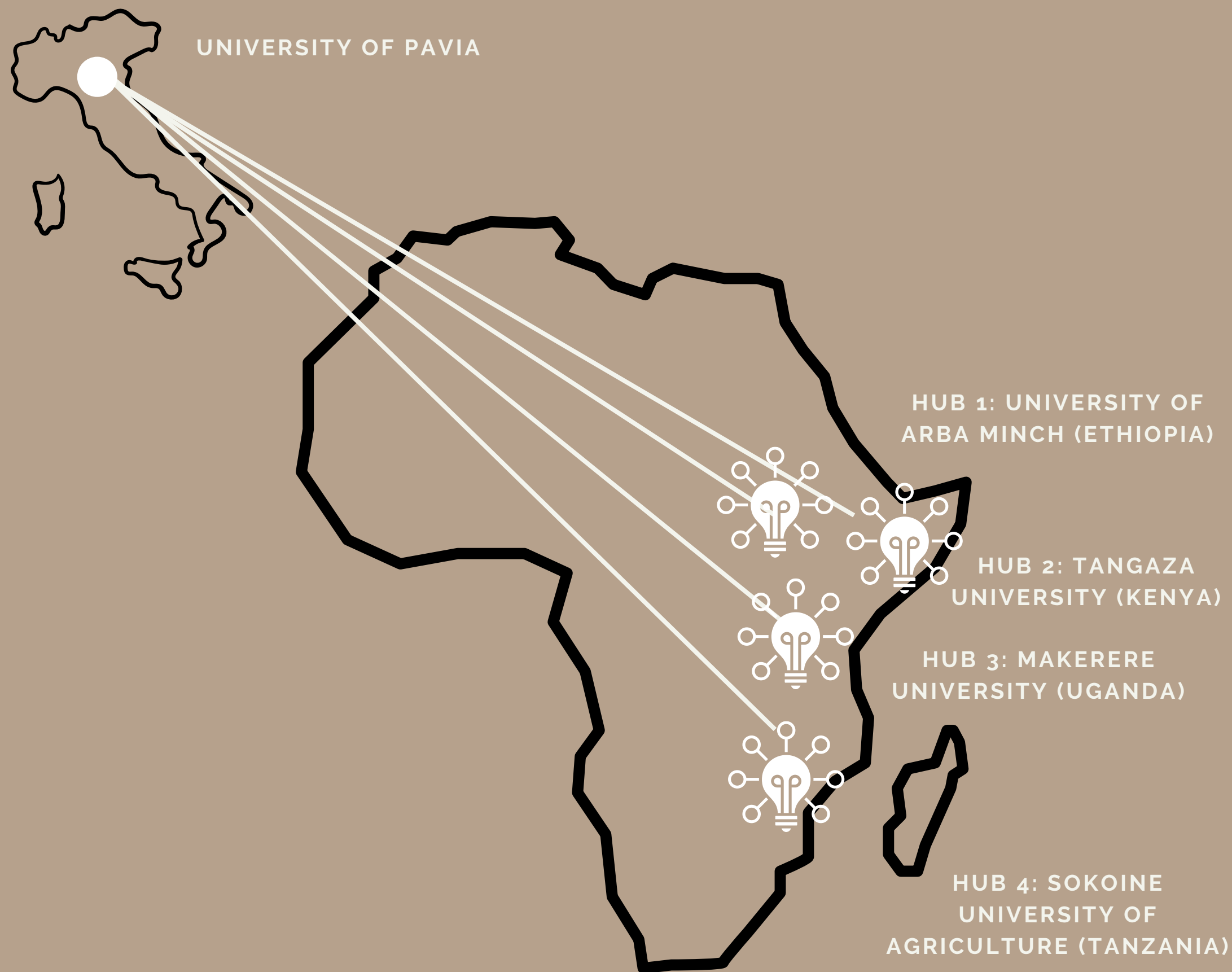
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## THE PROJECT

- Empowering young africans as local leaders and active citizens
- Providing training and entrepreneurship opportunities to people from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Creating multiplier and spillover effect

# CROSS-SECTORALITY AS PART OF THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



## LOCAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- 1 academic contact point
- 1 administrative contact point
- 1 contact point representing local stakeholders and associations part of the LCC

Purpose: proper management, receiving constant feedback from a stakeholders' representative.

## LOCAL CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

- Local associations
- NGOs
- Youth advocates and youth associations (formally or non-formally established)

Purpose: to anchor the academic framework in community reality, networking among local stakeholders, ensuring the project remains relevant to the local context.

# THE AEYA ECOSYSTEM MODEL & PARADIGM SHIFT

## Traditional HEI approach

**DIMENSION 1:**  
NEED  
ASSESSMENT

Top-down,  
academically assumed  
curriculum design

**DIMENSION 2:**  
TRAINING  
DELIVERY

Academic instructors  
delivering theoretical  
lectures

**DIMENSION 3:**  
FINAL  
OUTPUT

Theoretical exams

## AEYA approach & outreach

Co-designed, ground-truth  
mapping driven by local NGOs, Youth  
associations, and civil society.

Blended training: University  
Professors from Italy & Africa, paired  
with local Business Practitioners.

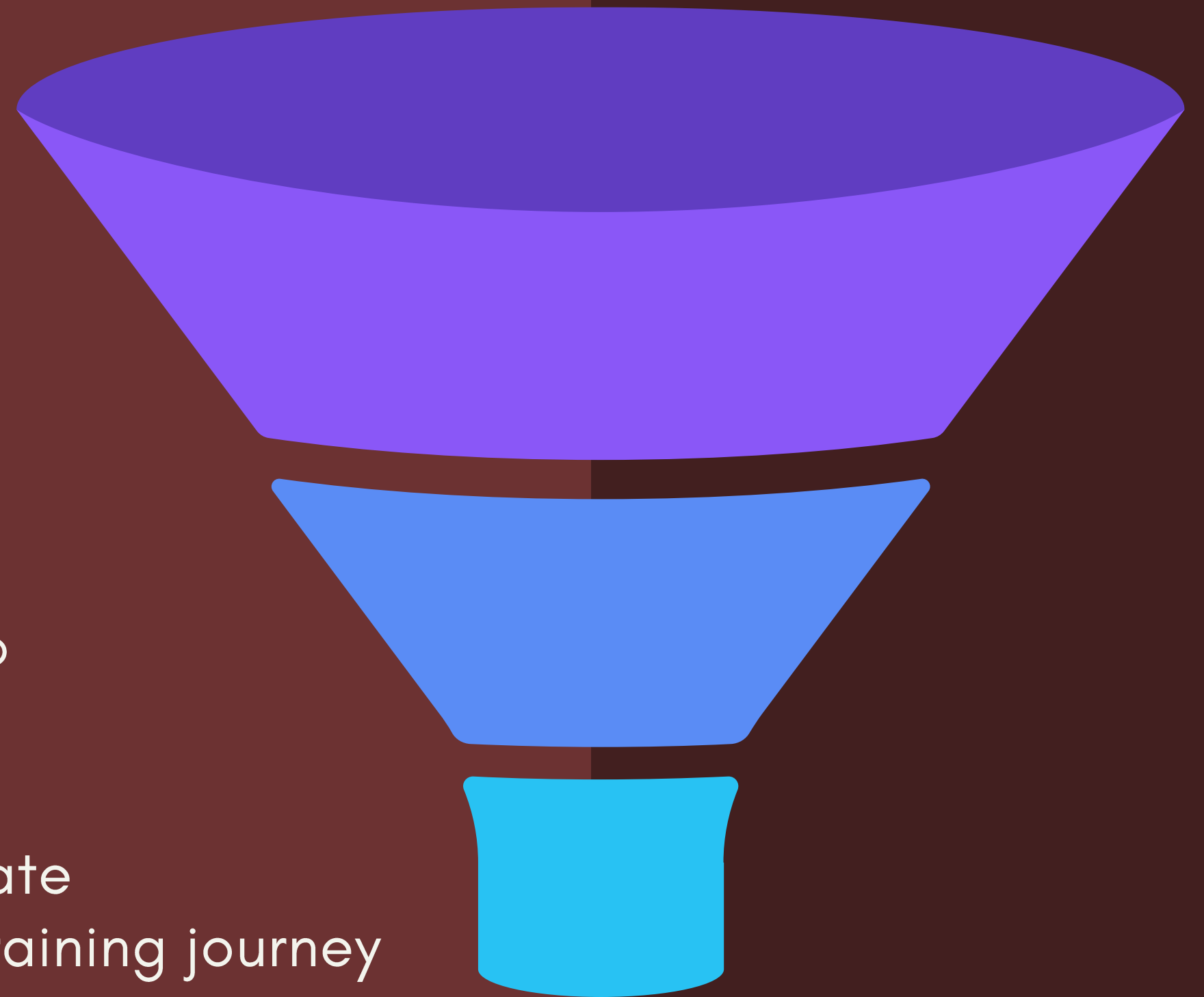
Cross-sector Hackathons  
with tangible seed grants for  
viable social innovations.

## Phase 1: Need Assessment

**NGOs, Youth Organizations (formally established or not), and Civil Society** gather qualitative and quantitative data on real community deficits.

**Local Consultative Committees (LCCs)** synthesize these raw inputs into actionable capability gaps.

**Universities** translate these gaps into a training journey



## Phase 2: The Leadership Lab (Co-Created Curriculum)

### The Structure:

An agile, cohort-based approach targeting **20-30 young participants** per country, ensuring 50% female participation and inclusion of vulnerable groups (30-day cycle over 3-4 months)

## STEP 1: Transversal Skills training

Delivered predominantly by African lecturers and local experts (soft skills, team building, active citizenship).



## STEP 2: Thematic Training

Delivered by EU/African academics and business practitioners (social enterprise, food security, climate mitigation).

## Phase 3: The Hackathon

### The Fuel:

Real-world community challenges.  
Supplied by **NGOs and Civil Society**.

### The Engine:

Entrepreneurship and technical mentorship.  
Supplied by **Business Practitioners and Private Enterprise**.

### The Steering:

Methodological framework and academic support.  
Supplied by **HEI Tutors** (Local Universities + International Mentors – including from the **European Alliance**).

5-DAY  
HACKATHO  
N

### The Output:

Multiplier Teams equipped with viable social innovations, backed by tangible seed grants (ranging from €500 to €1,500).

# REPLICABILITY

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## From Projects to Multipliers

### 1. NEEDS

NGOs, associations inputs

### 1. SKILLS

HEIs + Business co-creation

### 1. SOLUTIONS

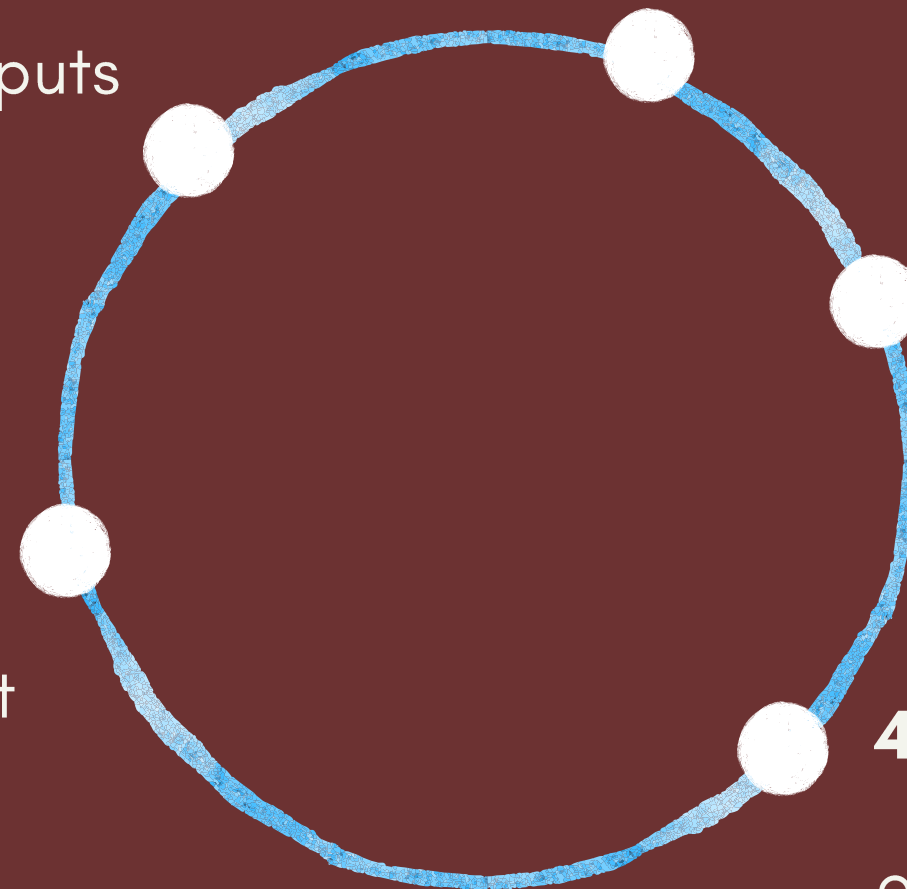
the Hackathon  
HEIs + Business

### 5. Re-investment (The Feedback)

Empowered multipliers reach out to 2,400 indirect beneficiaries. Continuation of projects with local NGOs & associations.

### 4. Multipliers (The Output)

240 direct youth trained.  
36 community projects funded.



# CHALLENGES

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- INSTITUTIONAL VELOCITIES
- MOTIVATION DROP-OFF
- INSTITUTIONAL OWNERSHIP

# CHALLENGES

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- **INSTITUTIONAL VELOCITIES**
- MOTIVATION DROP-OFF
- INSTITUTIONAL OWNERSHIP

## Challenge:

- Universities, agile NGOs, and formal/informal associations operate on vastly different administrative speeds and planning cycles.

## Adaptation:

- Establishing agile Local Management Committees meeting monthly to rapidly align expectations and bypass bureaucratic bottlenecks.
- Ensuring the presence of contact points for and between stakeholders and HEIs

# CHALLENGES

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- INSTITUTIONAL VELOCITIES
- **MOTIVATION DROP-OFF**
- INSTITUTIONAL OWNERSHIP

## Challenge:

- Risk of participant disengagement

## Adaptation:

- Coverage of expenses, adaptable schedule
- Structuring the hackathon seed grants to incentivize continuous participation, long-term community implementation and local multiplier effects.

# CHALLENGES

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- INSTITUTIONAL VELOCITIES
- MOTIVATION DROP-OFF
- **INSTITUTIONAL OWNERSHIP**

## Challenge:

- risk of partner dropping out of the consortium; lack of understanding of the programme

## Adaptation:

- scientific contact point + administrative contact points

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

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- How can universities structure sustainable a cross-sector cooperation model to contribute to societal development?
- Could an initiative like AEYA be the key to bring European Alliances to work with African partners?
- Which elements of AEYA's approach can be most effectively transferred to other geographic regions or institutional contexts?





# CONTACT INFORMATION

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