



CONCLUSION

The World Youth Report: Youth Social Entrepreneurship and the 2030 Agenda explores the role youth social entrepreneurship can play in addressing the unmet economic and social needs and demands of young people across the globe. While not a panacea for youth development, youth social entrepreneurship represents one complementary pathway. The *Report* emphasizes that the successful pursuit of youth social entrepreneurship is based on an accurate assessment of its merits, opportunities and challenges and is facilitated by an enabling entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Youth social entrepreneurship has the potential to mobilize young people as agents of change. The *Report* acknowledges that youth development is predicated on youth engagement. Youth social entrepreneurship represents an inclusive form of development in that it both empowers youth through employment and leverages their talents and capacities in the service of social good. It can contribute directly to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 through employment creation and indirectly to the achievement of several other Goals through its social impact mission.

A number of factors predispose youth to social entrepreneurship. Research shows that their age and stage of development are associated with certain attitudinal and behavioural characteristics such as creativity, risk-taking, resilience, adaptation and inquisitiveness (the desire to learn). Expectations of a relatively long life span give youth a vested interest in the future. The life experience of youth presupposes a level of technological familiarity. All of this renders young people particularly well suited for social entrepreneurship.

Activating the potential of youth social entrepreneurship is not synonymous with releasing policymakers at the local, regional, national and international levels from their obligations with regard



CONCLUSION

to youth. Youth social entrepreneurship is not a catch-all solution; rather, it plays a critical role within a larger network of interlinked public policies addressing youth development. Even under the best conditions, youth social entrepreneurship is challenging, but it can be especially difficult when it is driven by a truly innovative idea. Beyond the conception of an innovative idea, successful entrepreneurship is dependent on a conducive economic, financial, technological and cultural environment.

Young people are better able to overcome challenges and engage in impactful youth social entrepreneurship when they are fully supported within an enabling entrepreneurship ecosystem. Technology education and training are particularly important within this context, as part of the success of youth social entrepreneurship in the present era is premised on the ability to adapt to new technological realities.

This *Report* offers specific recommendations for establishing and maintaining an entrepreneurship ecosystem conducive to youth social entrepreneurship. These are grouped under the following broad and mutually

reinforcing categories: optimizing the overall business environment; strengthening entrepreneurial education and training; adapting support networks; ensuring access to financial services and products; transforming innovation systems; and changing the narrative.

One of the common denominators among these recommendations is that they need to be developed, refined, implemented and evaluated in collaboration with young people. Youth development efforts (including those relating to youth social entrepreneurship) will not bear fruit unless they are based on the meaningful engagement of young people in policymaking and in the design and evaluation of interventions.

The other common element is that policies and interventions need to be based on evidence. The collection and analysis of relevant data are essential for ensuring that youth social entrepreneurship ecosystems effectively respond to the real needs of young people and propel them towards their full agency as social entrepreneurs supporting the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Photo: ILO / Marcel Crozet

