



MEDIA RELEASE

STARTUP20 SOUTH AFRICA HANDS OVER FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE G20 PRESIDENCY

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Startup20 South Africa officially handed over the final Startup20 Recommendations to the G20, marking a pivotal milestone in South Africa's leadership of the Startup20 Engagement Group under the G20 process.

The handover, hosted at 22 On Sloane, Africa's largest startup campus, concluded a seven-month policy journey aimed at advancing the global startup and innovation agenda. As the first African nation and only the third globally to lead the Startup20, South Africa has driven a process that placed African entrepreneurs at the centre of global policy discussions.

The recommendations were developed through five taskforces: **Foundation and Alliances, Finance and Investment, Inclusion and Sustainability, Trade and Market Access, and Township and Rural Entrepreneurship**. Each taskforce proposed actionable measures to address real-world challenges faced by startups, including access to early-stage capital, inclusion of women and youth, sustainability, and integration into global markets.

Speaking at the handover, **Minister of Small Business Development, Hon. Stella Ndabeni**, highlighted the significance of Africa leading the global Startup conversation:

"Africa is not the future of innovation, Africa is innovation. These recommendations provide a roadmap to turn entrepreneurship into a systemic engine for economic transformation. They demonstrate that growth, inclusion, and sustainability can advance together."

Minister Ndabeni underscored how the taskforce pillars translate into practical impact:

- **Foundation and Alliances:** Connecting African innovation systems to global networks through initiatives like the Global Ecosystem Exchange (GEX) and Global Entrepreneurial Learning Alliance (GELA).
- **Inclusion and Sustainability:** Integrating ESG principles, green finance, and digital public infrastructure to advance a just transition.
- **Finance and Investment:** Expanding access to capital through frameworks such as the proposed Global Startup Economy Fund and the Global Tax Incentive Framework, prioritising women, youth, and rural entrepreneurs.
- **Trade and Market Access:** Supporting continental trade and export-ready startups via harmonised digital trade frameworks and interoperable regulatory platforms aligned with the AfCFTA.



- **Township and Rural Entrepreneurship:** Unlocking the potential of townships and rural communities through decentralised finance platforms, innovation hubs, and localised entrepreneurial education.

Ms. Salome Baloi, Lead Coordinator for G20 Engagement Groups at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation, reflected on the broader significance:

"The Startup20 process demonstrates South Africa's ability to shape multilateral engagement through inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship. These recommendations ensure that the G20 reflects a truly global voice."

Mr. Vuyani Jarana, Chairperson of Startup20 South Africa, described the handover as a defining moment for African innovation:

"This is a moment of pride and purpose. Africa is not only participating in the global innovation conversation, we are shaping it. These recommendations set out a path for a future where startups drive economic growth, job creation, and digital transformation."

The handover also represents the human side of innovation. As Minister Ndabeni-emphasised, it is the young coder in KwaMashu, the woman agripreneur in Limpopo, the fintech innovator in Lagos, and the energy startup in Kigali who embody the spirit of these recommendations. The work of Startup20 is ultimately about ensuring that no woman, youth, or rural entrepreneur is left behind.

The Startup20 South Africa Recommendations will inform ongoing G20 discussions on global innovation and entrepreneurship policy, bridging the gap between policy formulation and practical impact. As South Africa moves toward the **Startup20 South Africa Summit and Awards**, the handover reinforces the country's commitment to positioning startups and MSMEs as central drivers of inclusive, sustainable growth.

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