



**ais** SUSTAINING  
IMPACT  
SUMMIT.

**2026**

**SUMMIT**  
B R I E F

Presented By :  
**ASEW TEAM**

THEME:

# Systems that Sustain:

**Building Impact that lasts in Africa**

## CONCEPT NOTE

Across Africa, social innovators are doing more than responding to challenges. They are building solutions that matter. From healthcare and education to livelihoods and climate resilience, their work is shaping the continent's future.

One question remains clear: ***What does it take to build impact that lasts?***

Social innovation is growing, yet sustaining impact remains a challenge. As highlighted by the World Economic Forum, Africa's 2.18 million social innovators are creating value, but many face limited access to finance, weak support systems, and fragmented ecosystems. Declining aid, tighter funding cycles, and shifting investment priorities often lead to short term solutions that are difficult to sustain or scale. At the same time, new opportunities are emerging. Advances in artificial intelligence are changing how solutions are designed and delivered. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) is opening up regional markets with new potential for innovation and value creation. African diaspora remittances are also growing and are expected to exceed 100 billion dollars, creating new pathways for supporting impact.

These developments are not separate. They are part of wider systems that shape how value is created, how resources move, and who has access within the social innovation ecosystem.

At SIS, we believe that real impact is sustained impact. Sustaining impact requires more than good ideas. It requires the ability to navigate current challenges and take advantage of emerging opportunities, which in turn depends on understanding systems and knowing how to work within and shape them. Funding is not just about availability, but about access. Markets depend on how demand is created and connected. Technology is changing how solutions scale. Policy determines what is enabled or constrained and ecosystems bring these elements together.



KEYNOTES BY  
DISTINGUISHED  
EXPERTS



PANEL  
DISCUSSIONS



MASTERCLASSES  
AND SUSTAINABLE  
BUSINESS MODEL  
CLINIC



AWARDS,  
NETWORKING AND  
MORE



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## Building Impact that lasts in Africa

There is also an often overlooked dimension. The internal systems of the people and organizations driving this work. SIS7 reminded us that African social innovators themselves are a key resource, yet many are operating under intense pressure and navigating complex realities every day. The mental, emotional, and organizational demands of their work are rarely discussed, but they are essential to sustaining impact. Systems therefore include both external and internal forces that shape how impact is built and sustained.

The 8th Sustaining Impact Summit (SIS8) builds on last year's focus on African resourcefulness by going deeper into these systems.

This year's theme: **Systems that Sustain: Building Impact That Lasts in Africa.**

The summit will bring together social enterprises, NGOs, investors, policymakers, intermediaries, and private sector actors to explore how systems influence the way impact is built, sustained, and scaled.

Over three days, we will ask: ***How can African social innovators and ecosystem actors build, navigate and transform systems to create lasting impact?***

Through conversations and practical sessions, we will explore key systems across markets, finance, funding, policy, and internal structures that shape social innovation in Africa. We will share tools and insights to help actors work within and shape them.

This is more than a summit. It is a space to rethink how impact is built and sustained. Join us as we explore the systems that shape our work, challenge those that limit us, and build the ones that carry impact forward. Because impact is not just what we start, it is what we are able to sustain.



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## Who is this for?

01 Social Innovators

02 Ecosystem builders,  
intermediaries, & support  
organizations

03 Non profits & Impact  
oriented organizations

04 Policymakers &  
government actors

05 Funders, investors, &  
philanthropic organizations

06 Researchers & practitioners  
interested in social innovation  
in Africa

## Planned Outcomes

### For social innovators:

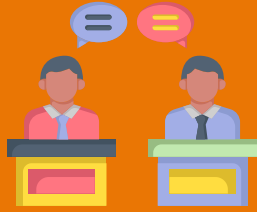
- Better ability to navigate systems and sustain impact
- Hands-on experience in applying design thinking and business model innovation
- Increased access to funding and investment opportunities
- Improved grant writing and impact measurement capability
- Expanded networks to support collaboration and growth.

### Ecosystem actors:

- Deeper understanding of the real challenges and opportunities shaping impact on the ground
- Better insight into funding, finance, and policy to support scalable impact
- Opportunities to identify and connect with high potential social innovators and solutions.



# SUMMIT STRUCTURE



## Keynotes

The keynote sessions will set the foundation for the entire summit by unpacking what “systems” in the African impact context means and how they shape what is possible.



## Panel discussions

The panel discussions will feature experts sharing insights on how to navigate and build systems that sustains impact, offering practical strategies to inspire lasting change across society.



## Masterclasses

The masterclasses will offer hands-on learning experiences, equipping participants with practical tools and system thinking strategies to design and build business models that drive sustainable impact.



## Sustaining Impact Prize

The Sustaining Impact Prize recognises and rewards organizations making meaningful progress toward the UN SDGs, especially those moving beyond donor dependence to build sustainable, self sufficient impact



## Networking and more

The summit will provide attendees with opportunities to connect, engage, and collaborate with like-minded individuals and organizations committed to making a positive difference in Africa.



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