

South Africa - January 2017

Co-Willing Economic Development Conference – 20-24 January 2017

Co-Willing* organised a platform for leaders of the following areas: politics, diplomacy, organisations for economic empowerment, business, research, justice, city planning etc. at the Woody Cape Backpackers in the Eastern Cape, South Africa.

Goals:

1. How can the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) of the United Nations be implemented?
2. Renewable energy: production, storage, distribution
3. Waste Management
4. Vocational training for youth

Contents and Outcomes:

1. Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs

Co-Willing considers it crucial that the SDGs are achieved globally, so that also our future generations will have a livable world.

Hans Herren's **iSDG T21 Model** - a computer simulations tool for evaluation, strategic planning, monitoring and reviewing of projects and processes for countries, companies or organisations - raised great interest with leaders from South Africa, Kenya and South Sudan.

The Model makes visible - within seconds - the effects of an intervention on the 17 areas of the SDGs, thus a genius tool for intelligent investment strategies.

There are negotiations about its application with several interested parties: Cities, countries, business.

It would be great, if the iSDG T21 model would be used by as many countries as possible, in order to improve efficiency and coordination and to save time and money.

2. Renewable Energy

Reliable Power Supply – Production, Storage, Distribution

A district in the Eastern Cape and experts from other provinces are very interested and currently are assessing how to collaborate with national organisations for project realisation: production of solar power storage units that provide power also at night and due to an intelligent steering tool can either supply the official grid with overproduction or shut the unit off the official grid in case of load shed in order to use the stored power for own use.

3. Waste Management – ,Waste to Energy' Concept

Many waste dumps in South Africa will reach its maximum capacity very soon and so several cities are interested in modern 'Waste to Energy' solutions.

The political process will require some time. First steps are made, further steps will have to be initiated.

4. Vocational Training

For all projects where production will be involved, vocational training is planned to be included.

It will need the collaboration with the existing institutions and companies willing not offer vocational training.

The Swiss Embassy showed great interest in the vocational training aspect.

5. Accountability and Integrity

Co-Willing's considers it crucial that all collaborations and projects are implemented along its key focus of 'Ethical Governance' with accountability, transparency and integrity.

Following these values forms the base of any sustainable and healthy economy.

What was special about the conference?

Generally there was a spirit of 'Let's not just talk, but really implement the projects!'

Even though the holiday village Woody Cape with its magnificent nature reserve – sand dunes stretching for miles along the shore of the Indian Ocean – invited a very casual atmosphere, there were intense discussions, planning and first steps were initiated.

Several dignitaries extended their participation from initially planned 2 hours to 2 days and requested to be invited in case another such conference would take place.

Special Thanks

- Co-Willing: The members met over a period of two years – physically or via skype – in order to found the association Co-Willing and adopted Rommel's idea of combining the Co-Willing AGM with a 'Co-Willing Economic Development Conference'.
- Rommel Roberts during a year worked almost full time for the realization of such a conference. My collaboration with him was very intense, fruitful and inspiring.
- Robin and Rommel Roberts and their team facilitated the whole conference preparation, accommodation and catering onsite.
- The Swiss Ambassador in Pretoria supported the conference.
- The following partners engage with Co-Willing:
 - The Government Organisations IDC, ECDC und DTI
 - The Mayor of the Buffalo City area
 - Business Community of Dimbaza
- The Kenyan Ambassador in Pretoria wants to support Co-Willing projects in Kenya
- Swiss entrepreneurs collaborate intensely and fruitfully with Co-Willing
- Experts of the Swiss Vocational Training System help create a good vocational training concept.

*The international association Co-Willing – with seat in Geneva, Switzerland - was formed during the international Conference "Freedom – Our Responsibility" 2014 in Bloemfontein South Africa, when leaders from Africa, Europe, America and Asia decided to take responsibility by not just talking about sustainable development and good governance, but rather "Walking the Talk" and taking concrete action on the ground. 13 core members and associate members engage in promoting the key values of Co-Willing in their own countries. see www.cowilling.org