

Press Release

28 September 2020 – Immediate Release

Access to information is key for transparent management and sustainable development of decentralized territorial entities within the region of Timbuktu

The Forum for the Economic and Social Development of Timbuktu FDEST, (www.forumtbk.org) and South Alternatives Research and Empowerment, SARE, (www.thesare.org) take the opportunity of the **2020 International Day of Universal Access to Information (IDUAI)** to encourage the authorities of decentralized territorial entities of the Timbuktu region to bolster citizen's access to information pertaining to the management of these entities in order to (i) ensure transparency and accountability in the management of public resources (ii) encourage citizen participation and (iii) guarantee the economic, social and sustainable development of the region. "The right to information is fundamental for the good management of the communes, circles and the region of Timbuktu," said Sidi Ahmed El Hadj, President of FDEST. Article 41 of the code of territorial entities (2017) makes the publication of the report of the municipal council's deliberations compulsory and also provides for the organization of feedback of the municipal council's deliberations to the inhabitants of the commune by "any means of communication and appropriate information in particular through general assemblies of villages, neighborhoods and fractions".

"The economic and social development of Timbuktu needs a solid partnership between the public authorities and the population, especially in this post crisis situation" underlines President Ahmed El Hadj. Mr. Aboubacrine Cissé, Mayor of the Urban Municipality of Timbuktu, calls for "continuous support from partners to materialize the authorities' duty to organize the populations' access to the information necessary for public accountability on the management of funds allocated to communes".

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the importance of access to public information, particularly through the Sustainable Development Goal - SDG 16 (peace, justice and effective institutions) for the promotion of a peaceful and inclusive society. The FDEST and SARE believe that - in this decade of action to achieve the SDGs - a tripartite synergy of action (local authorities - technical and financial partners - civil society) is the required approach to (i) accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (ii) save lives, build confidence and restore hope and (iii) leave no one behind, particularly in Timbuktu after years of instability.

FDEST and SARE thus call for collaboration with the specialized agencies of the United Nations (notably with UNDP and UNESCO), technical and financial partners as well as authorities of the territorial entities for a pragmatic undertaking in favor of 'access to information as one of the key pillars of economic, social and sustainable development in the Timbuktu region. FDEST and SARE encourage the local authorities of the Timbuktu region to make the deliberations on public management dynamic, particularly at the level of the municipalities.

--END--

Contacts : contact@thesare.org | Tel.: +223 76 20 88 84 (French), +27 67 137 0208 (English)