



On the margins of the 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), The African Youth and Adolescents Network on Population and Development (AfriYAN) West and Central Africa and the Regional Civil Society Organizations Coalition for Family Planning (CROSCPF), in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), are organising a side event on strategic and sustainable partnerships for youth empowerment to achieve the demographic dividend.

# Investing in Sustainable Partnerships with Youth



## The power of the African young voices

*Africa is the youngest continent. According to the UNFPA State of World Population Report, the number of young people has never been as high in the history of humanity, with 1.2 billion people aged 15–24 years in 2015 and 1.9 billion young people expected to be 15 years of age between 2015 and 2030. The ratio of youth population to overall population is at its highest in Africa, where almost half the population is below 15 years of age and 7 out of 10 people are under 25 years old.*

*This population dynamic is a real asset and, if properly utilized, offers huge potential. As such, significant investment is required in young people and young girls, especially in the health and education sectors, and above all, to create decent and sustainable jobs.*

Thursday, 14 March 2019

10:00 – 12:30 PM

Westin Hotel- Madison Room

212 East 42nd Street – New York

## Background

*Africa's population is young, more than 64 per cent are under the age of 24 in West and Central Africa. Empowerment combined with the right policies and strategic partnerships will provide the youth the opportunity to exploit their full potential.*

Across much of the continent, the remarkable efforts towards stimulating economic growth over the past two decades, which have resulted in growth rates of around 5 per cent per year, have been offset by population growth rates averaging more than 2.5 per cent per year, which are exacerbating poverty levels by reducing per capita income.

Against this backdrop, African Heads of State and Governments have recognized that they need to harness the demographic dividend to ensure sustainable development in Africa. This is also the rationale behind the development and validation of the **African Union roadmap on investments in youth as a principal means of resilience.**

This high-level side event has been organised in accordance with the theme chosen this year by the Commission on the Status of Women: **Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.**

This theme illustrates and corroborates initiatives implemented by UNFPA and its partners, such as the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD) regional project in seven countries.

It will also be an opportunity for AfriYAN to present its three-year progress report, share and raise awareness of the various actions that are taking place in SWEDD countries and beyond, in particular with regard to the project to operationalise the demographic dividend known as Fassin émergent (FassinE) and other initiatives such as Generation Unlimited.

The session will showcase successful initiatives and good practices relating to child marriage, adolescent pregnancy, gender-based violence and, above all, the empowerment of young girls, and will make concrete proposals for scaling these up!

# Agenda

## **Opening ceremony**

- 10:00 - 10:03 Setting the stage by the Moderator
- 10:03 - 10:10 Welcome remarks by the AfriYAN WCA Executive Secretary
- 10:10- 10:15 Statement by the Representative of UNICEF Executive Director
- 10:15 - 10:20 Statement by the UNFPA Executive Director

## **Voice of African First Ladies**

- 10:20 - 10:30 Statement by the First Lady of Sierra Leone, H.E. Ms. Fatima Bio

## **Voice of Youth Special Envoys**

- 10:30 - 10:40 Statement by the UN Youth Envoy
- 10:40 - 10:50 Statement by the UA Youth Envoy

## **Health Break - 5 min**

## **Presentation of the Report of AfriYAN West and Central Africa (WCA)**

- 10:55 - 11:20 Progress; good practices; challenges; scaling up and next steps

## **Panel « Amplifying the Voice of Young People »**

- 11:20 - 11:25 Introductory remarks by the UNFPA Regional Director WCA
- 11:25 - 11:30 AfriYAN
- 11:30 - 11:35 Generation Unlimited
- 11:35 - 11:40 CROSCPF
- 11:40 - 11:45 Social Change Factory
- 11:45 - 11:50 GBHealth
- 11:50 - 11:55 Parliamentary
- 11:55 - 12:00 FORD Foundation
- 12:00 - 12:05 Wrap up of panel interventions by the Moderator
- 12:05 - 12:20 Interactive dialogue with the participants

## **Closing ceremony**

- 12:20 - 12:25 Closing remarks by the UNFPA Executive Director
- 12:25 - 12:30 Declaration of Commitment AfriYAN