



11ème Conférence Internationale du Réseau NTA / 11th Global Meeting of the NTA Network
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*This summary presents the main points of discussion and recommendations.
It is meant to be indicative and not exhaustive.*

Organizer's Summary

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in collaboration with the Centre for Research in Applied Economics and Finance of the University of Thies (CREFAT) and the Government of the Republic of Senegal, organised a High-level Symposium on Demographic Dividend and Africa's Development on Monday the 20th June 2016 at the King Fahd Palace Hotel in Dakar, Senegal.

The Symposium also served as the opening and the policy making sections of the 11th Global Meeting of the National Transfer Accounts (NTA), a network of researchers on Demography and Economic Development. It is the first of the NTA Global meetings to take place in Africa.

The Symposium brought together high-level opinion leaders and policy makers across Africa, including five former Heads of State and Government (H.E. Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania, H.E. Karl Auguste Offmann of Mauritius, H.E. Armando Emilio Guebuza of Mozambique, H.E. General/Dr. Yakubu Gowon of Nigeria, H.E. Aminata Toure of Senegal), Prime Minister of Senegal (H.E. Mohammad Boune Abdallah Dionne), representative of the President of the Organization of African First Ladies, His Royal Highness (HRH) Yahaya Haliru, the Emir of Shonga (Nigeria) and other religious and traditional leaders. There were many Ministers across Africa (including Ministers of Economics and Development Planning, Ministers of Youth, Ministers of Gender, Children and Social Protection) and a Nobel Peace Laureate (Ms Leymah Ghowee of Liberia).

The President of the Republic of Senegal (H.E. Macky Sall) was represented by the Prime Minister, in addition to his presence in his own capacity. Similarly the Executive Director of UNFPA (Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin) was represented by Mr. Mabingue Ngom, who led the UNFPA WCARO team to organise the highly successful event.

The meeting also brought together representatives of the private sector, parliamentarians, academicians and researchers, technical experts and programme implementers, CSOs and young people. Mr. Arona Pape Traore, Youth Representative and Executive Secretary of African Youth and Adolescents Network (AfriYAN) West and Central Africa delivered a statement on behalf of young people at the opening. There were over two hundred participants at the Symposium.

The symposium provided space to share knowledge and experiences, networking and constructive exchanges among high-level eminent person and opinion leaders, policy makers and the participants. Most noteworthy is the inter-generational dialogue that took place during the symposium between young people and the high-level policy makers and opinion leaders, which allowed them to share their concerns with the eminent personalities who will hopefully influence policies and decisions that will translate to more strategic investments in young people to harness demographic dividend in Africa.

UNFPA's leadership in organising the symposium and getting the participation of the high-level opinion leaders and policy makers, and the other various stakeholders including youth leaders was unanimously acknowledged and praised throughout the symposium. And it was recommended that UNFPA should take the leadership in organising and coordinating stakeholders to support Government and national authorities for follow up at country and regional levels.

The symposium came up with recommendations of concrete measures to promote inclusive and harmonious development of Africa to achieve sustainable development goals and the Africa's Agenda 2063; and, specific recommendations of investing in youth in order to leverage Africa's youthful population for demographic dividend.

While details of the Symposium are in the report, some of the recommendations include:

- The need to Invest in Young People as a firm foundation to prepare them for future life and enable them become competent and productive work force that can develop their societies and the nations sustainably. The investments should prioritize health (including sexual and reproductive health), education, skills development and decent employment creation to avoid mass suffering that may lead to political, social, and economic instability and conflict;
- The centrality of Family Planning to improve women's health and reduce total fertility ratio and the dependent children below the age of 15 years;
- Need for good Governance and Leadership in support of efforts of Africa to fully capture the benefits of the demographic dividend;
- Need for young people to proactively take their seats at the table and help steer their countries and our continent to the 'Greatness We Want Africa to be'. "The Africa we want should be the Africa we build"- Proactive Youth Participation;
- The need for adults/leaders to ensure that African youth are at the table as part of the decision-making processes and not only as a target group of country programmes. This should include promotion of intergenerational dialogue between leaders and young people and also youth mentorship and coaching to be good leaders;
- The high-level eminent persons and the opinion leaders called on UNFPA to work with them more at regional and national levels to ensure promotion of more investments in young people for Demographic Dividend. They are uniquely placed to influence and shape the views of their fellow leaders and communities; and,
- The African Union should continue championing the cause of Africa's young people, by building on its advocacy to protect adolescent girls, strengthen resilience and address the root causes of insecurity, in addition to ensure that these issues are placed at the forefront of discussions of African leaders at the AU Summits.

Recommended Follow-up Actions:

- The Outcome of the Symposium should be finalized and shared with the African Union, through the Chairperson of the African Union (President of Chad) and through the African Union Commission Chairperson
- The Outcome should inform the AU Road Map on Demographic Dividend that is currently being developed.
- The Outcome should be shared with UNFPA Country Offices for follow up at country level.

Organizer's/Rapporteur's Summary

1. We thank all the high-level and distinguished participants for their important and strategic contributions, as well as the youth and all the experts for their very important inputs. Their active engagement and commitment going forward will definitely contribute to moving Africa towards the harnessing of a Demographic Dividend and the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the African Union's Agenda 2063 for the Africa We Want.
2. The Symposium on the Demographic Dividend and Africa's Development, held in Dakar, Senegal on June 20th, 2016 under the patronage of H.E Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal brought together high-level and distinguished participants such as the Prime Minister of Senegal; their Excellences the former Heads of state and government of Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal and Tanzania; a Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union (Chad); a Representative of the President of ECOWAS (Liberia); Ministers; a Nobel Peace Laureate; Religious and traditional leaders; parliamentarians; youth leaders and organizations; academicians and researchers; private sector; civil society organizations; international organizations and a large range of other local and global institutions.
3. UNFPA and its leadership was unanimously praised by the speakers throughout the symposium for convening the gathering and promoting the Demographic Dividend.

11th Global Conference of the National Transfer Accounts (NTA) Network

4. The High level symposium was preceded by the opening of this global conference that brought together researchers and research centers around the world, that are at the forefront of research on demographic and economic issues.
5. The Official Opening was graced with speeches from a number of eminent leaders, amongst them Prof. Matar Mour Seck, Rector of the University of Thies; Prof Andrew Mason, co-founder of the NTA Network; and Mr. Mabingue Ngom, the UNFPA Regional Director for West and Central Africa. H.E. Mary Teuw Niane, Minister of Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Senegal officially opened the meeting and this was preceded by keynote remarks provided by H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, former President of the Republic of Tanzania.
6. President Kikwete insisted on the need of **Investing in Young People** as a firm foundation to prepare they journey into their future life and enable them become the competent and productive work force that can develop their societies and the nations sustainably. He also highlighted the centrality of **Family Planning** alongside **Governance and Leadership** in support of efforts of Africa to fully capture the benefits of the demographic dividend. Existing challenges impeding sustainable growth such as government bureaucracy, corruption, lack of infrastructure, abundance of unskilled workforce, persistent fragility, and political instability need to be overcome. He emphasized that both current and former leaders have an important role to play in enabling Africa reap the demographic dividend and realize its fullest growth and development potential. He concluded by stating that we should be working towards African Lions just like we had Asian Tigers who made the right investments to leverage their population dynamics and transform their countries.

7. The UNFPA Regional Director, in his solidarity message, encouraged young people to rise to challenge, take their seats at the table and help steer their countries and our dear continent to the 'Greatness We Want, Africa to be'. He highlighted the need to invest in our future by putting young people first and at the center of all our interventions.

Substantive session - Women's Empowerment and the Demographic Dividend

8. This session followed the formal opening and discussions highlighted emerging theory on demography and economics; and also presented an ongoing flagship regional programme - the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD) Initiative - developed and implemented as a partnership between the World Bank, UNFPA and the governments of six countries in West Africa (Burkina Faso, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger), as well as many other regional and national partners.

Introductory session - Building Political Will for Actions on the Demographic Dividend

9. H.E. Mohamed Ben Abdallah Dione the Prime Minister and representative of the President of the Republic of Senegal graced and formally opened the Symposium, following statements from Mr. Mabingue Ngom, the UNFPA by Regional Director for West and Central Africa; Mrs. Hiroute Guebre Sellassie, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel; and Mr. Arona Pape Traore, Youth Representative and President of African Youth and Adolescents Network (AfriYAN) West and Central Africa.
10. The statements highlighted the need to put young people first alongside: fertility rate decline; access to family planning; the need to reduce the dependency ratio and increase the working age population; importance of investment in young people; increasing employability of young people to ensure that they have the required skills for the job market; employment creation; implementation of sound economic policies; sound governance policies; work towards stability; the role of leaders current and former in creating an enabling environment.
11. The African youth representative highlighted the need to have youth on the table as part of the decision making process, and not under the table as just a target of country programmes. He welcomed the intergenerational dialogue and urged action with the involvement of young people. On behalf of young people, he urged Heads of Governments to undertake concrete actions that take forward the Demographic Dividend rather than making promises, and appealed to former Heads of State to be advocates of putting young people first.
12. Furthermore, the Prime Minister of Senegal highlighted the fact that harnessing the demographic dividend is a priority for his government. He explained that the youth agenda is prioritized by matching labour needs with training skills. The Prime Minister concluded by underlining that the priority of President Macky Sall is investing on human capital through increased investments in health and well-being, job creation and entrepreneurial skills, education and youth empowerment. The Prime Minister emphasized the strong link between the pillars of the Plan for the Emerging Senegal ("Plan de Senegal Emergent") and key pillars for harnessing the Demographic dividend.

13. The UNFPA Regional Director emphasized that our collective response must ensure that structural transformation is in place and future economic policies are translated into equitable human development and improved livelihoods as we cannot continue to have nearly 50 per cent of our brothers and sisters still living in poverty even though our countries are becoming richer. He also highlighted the important dimension of the NTA analysis method, given that it aggregates measures of GDP and other economic indicators by providing estimates, measuring how people at each age, produce, consume, and share resources, and save for their future. The Director further emphasized that it is only by putting young people at the center of our interventions, that we collectively will deliver the New Africa, The Africa We Want.
14. The Deputy Special Representative for the UN Secretary General for West Africa in the Sahel called for stronger political action to overcome temptation of the European Eldorado or the Jihadi Paradise.

Session 1 - Demographic Dividend around the World: Lessons and Perspectives

15. Session 1 started with the elaboration of the National Transfer Accounts (NTA) method, and was followed by a dialogue between policy makers and development actors, who stock of existing initiatives, and explored good practices and successful partnership experiences that have expedited country-led policies and programs aimed at harnessing of the demographic dividend. Discussants included several Ministers and distinguished researchers.
16. The session outlined that the consequences of our failure to create sufficient and stable employment opportunities, translate into an increase in the rate of unemployed inactive youth, an increase in the informal sector with weak productivity, a small number of salaried workers, and heightened very risky migration to Europe which we observe on a daily basis.
17. The session noted that our continent is experiencing an unprecedented phenomenon as never before which is its rapidly growing youth population. The large numbers of adolescents and young adults can pose great risk to social and political stability in societies if we fail to satisfy people's expectations for standards of living, especially in non-democratic settings.

As such, the following recommendations emanated from the discussions:

- Governments and development partners should ensure that all development programmes, especially at national level, integrate the Demographic Dividend and include a focus on youth, adolescents, young girls and women, including mobilization of resources for these targets groups;
- Governments, United Nations agencies and international development banks and intergovernmental organizations should develop more strategic partnerships on the demographic dividend including the extension of programmatic interventions like the SWEDD initiative to other regions African;
- Governments in collaboration with the private sector and other development actors should scale up targeted investments in health, education, skills development as they also lay down the requisite physical capital and infrastructure to support higher employment in an effort to avoid mass suffering and political, social, and economic instability and conflict;

- Development actors should work together and move beyond declarations of intent to consolidate and scale-up existing initiatives and partnerships to generate a critical mass that can transform the continent. Harnessing the demographic dividend is a pathway to achieving sustainable development goals and action on this must start now leading to the Africa we must construct.

Session 2 - Demographic Dividend in Africa: Policies and Interventions

18. The main focus of the session was to analyse, review and share the perspectives on what is happening and/or should happen in the continent to enable Africa to quickly reap the Demographic Dividend and make it the most important tool for its transformative agenda to become fully people-centred and youth focused.
19. This high level panel brought together policy decision makers at the Ministerial level, including the Representative of the Chairperson of the Union; representative of the President of the Organization of African First Ladies (OAFLA); the Emir of Shonga representing religious and traditional leaders; as well as representatives of the private sector and civil society. The rich deliberations, completed by important contributions from the debate on the importance of policies and the need of target interventions to harness the Demographic Dividend in Africa.
20. As such, the following key messages and recommendations emerged from the session:
 - African governments should strengthen partnerships with institutions like the Organization of African First Ladies (OAFLA), youth networks, faith leaders, women’s groups, media and other stakeholder communities to address issues related to youth empowerment, child marriage and other harmful practices in order to harness demographic dividend;
 - The unique contribution of faith-based and community-leaders to drive change and contribute to the elimination of harmful practices, mainly early marriage was emphasized, including their important advocacy to reduce high fertility especially in Sahel countries.
 - Access to services such as Sexual and Reproductive Health and key information.
 - Encouragement to the Chairperson of the Africa Union, to continue championing the cause of Africa’s young people, and by building on his advocacy to protect adolescent girls, strengthen resilience and address the root causes of insecurity, in addition to ensuring that these issues are placed at the forefront of discussions amongst leaders at the African Union.
 - Investment and empowerment of young people should be increased while ensuring inclusion of young people in the social and development agenda of the continent.
 - The private sector should expand its support for skills development, job creation and build on its experience in building partnership and entrepreneurship. UNFPA was further invited to put in place a proper plan of action to harness Demographic Dividend.
 - An invitation to UNFPA to put in place a proper plan of action to harness Demographic Dividend.
 - Given the hierarchical nature of Religious and traditional systems, we need to tap into them from the top-- bring them on board, as they are an incredible channel for reaching the wider community. We also need to map and build the capacity, of the network of community leaders, to get their buy-in and commitment for the success of a demographic dividend.

Session 3 – Sustainable Development in Africa: Perspectives of Eminent Persons/Elders

21. The session aimed at harnessing the wealth of experience from leaders-- obtaining their opinions and recommendations to support the implementation of large-scale interventions on the Demographic Dividend and the achievement of both the 2030 and 2063 Agendas. The session benefitted in hearing from the experiences and perspectives of Eminent Persons [former Heads of States of Mauritius, Nigeria, Mozambique, Tanzania, the former Prime Minister of Senegal and the 2011 Nobel Peace Laureate], on what needs to be done to get Africa on the pathway to sustainable development. Overall the leaders acknowledged the importance for international financial institutions being aligned to national programmes; avoidance of piece-meal plans; and the need to prioritize the youth agenda and increase investments on youth. Also noted was the fact that there's no way we can harness the Demographic Dividend without peace and security, and that it is critical that we get young people to love peace and understand its importance.

Key recommendations included the following:

- Governments should put in place sound macro and micro economic policies, that will be conducive to promoting and accelerating economic growth and rapid job creation, and which create a healthier balance between human resources and the environment.
- For Africa to fully capture the benefits of the demographic dividend, good leadership and good governance are critical factors. Existing challenges impeding sustainable growth such as government bureaucracy, corruption, and lack of infrastructure, abundance of unskilled workforce, fragility and political instability need to be overcome.
- Leaders both current and former have an important role to play in enabling Africa reap the demographic dividend and realize its fullest growth and development potential. They are uniquely placed to influence and shape views of their fellow leaders and communities. As powerful change agents they need to guide societies and nations on to the right pathways of sustainable development. They should rise to challenge and steer their countries and our dear continent to the 'Greatness We Want, Africa to be'

A Call to Action to Put Young People First

The symposium ended with the Chief Rapporteur handing over his summary statement to the Youth Leaders present. The Youth Leaders, in turn, accepted the statement and combined this with their Put Young People First Call to Action.

They then took the opportunity of the presence of the special representatives of the Chair of the African Union and the President of the African Union Commission to call upon President Idriss Deby of Chad, Chair of the AU, to rally his Peers with the support of Her Excellency Dlamini Zuma, to support the plea of the Young People.

The leaders of the continent are invited to take forward recommendations of this symposium in their upcoming deliberations in Kigali (July 2016) and Addis Ababa (January 2017), particularly issues pertaining to young people -- A call to action for: young people to be considered as partners and not simply targets of development agenda; a call for increased investment in young people; a call for involvement and protection of young people; and a call to put young people at the forefront of development."