



2ND AFRICA CENTRES FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (AFRICA CDC) YOUTH PRE-CONFERENCE

UNDER THE THEME
"YOUTH LEADERSHIP FOR A SAFER AND HEALTHIER AFRICA"

A side event at the margins of the
3rd International Conference on Public Health in Africa
(CPHIA 2023)

25th - 26th November 2023

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

OUTCOME STATEMENT



AFRICA CDC
YOUTH PRE-CONFERENCE

2ND YOUTH PRE
CONFERENCE



BACKGROUND

Africa has a high disease burden which not only poses a threat to the health of its people but also impedes its progress towards achieving the Goal 1.3 Healthy and well-nourished citizens of the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063.

Africa is also the youngest continent in terms of population, with approximately 60% of Africans being under the age of 25 and 40% of the population reportedly being aged 15 years and younger. By 2030, up to 42% of the world's youth are projected to be African.

These young Africans are taking up leadership roles in addressing the continent's public health challenges. Involving them not only as partners, but as the drivers of the continental health agenda is a prerequisite for a sustainable health security in Africa.

60%

of Africans
are under the
age of 25

40%

of Africans are
aged 15 and
younger

Acknowledging this, the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) has been engaging African youth through initiatives such as the AU COVID-19 Vaccination Bingwa Initiative and the Africa CDC's inaugural Youth Advisory Team for Health (YAT4H). Another key element of Africa CDC's youth engagement efforts is its Youth Pre-Conference, an annual event that brings together young people from across the African continent to discuss and strategise on issues related to health.

From 25 to 26 November 2023, Africa CDC convened the 2nd Youth Pre-Conference in Lusaka, Zambia, on the margins of the 3rd International Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA 2023). The theme of the Pre-Conference was "Youth Leadership for a Safer and Healthier Africa". Its aim was to continue and intensify the conversation on youth engagement at Africa CDC and in public health on the African continent. It also provided a platform to showcase examples of youth leadership in innovating public health solutions on the continent and to network across countries and regions.

250+ participants were drawn from various state institutions, civil society groups, and networks from national, regional, and continental levels. They included young people with backgrounds and experiences in medical science, public health, health policy, and health technology as well as representatives from youth-led and youth-oriented organisations, networks, associations, and academia.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the fruitful discussions and valuable insights during the Youth Pre-Conference, the following actions for a meaningful engagement of young people are recommended to advance sustainable health security in Africa:

ALL STAKEHOLDERS are called upon to take active actions to promote an inclusive and gender-responsive approach to the implementation of the New Public Health Order for Africa, acknowledging persisting gender and social inequalities in public health.



TO AFRICA CDC

The participants welcome the development of Africa CDC's Youth Engagement Strategy and the engagement of young people in the development process, ensuring it is a strategy by the youth for the youth.

- » Call for the establishment of a dedicated Public/Global Health Programme for Youths at continental level to ensure continued youth mainstreaming in decision-making within Africa CDC on health-related issues in Africa and to drive the implementation and monitoring of the Africa CDC Youth Engagement Strategy (including provision of sufficient human, technical and financial resources).

- » Strengthen multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral collaboration and coordination required to address public health challenges on the continent.
- » Strengthen the leadership capacities of youth advocate, policy makers, innovators, researchers, and entrepreneurs through the establishment of a Young Public Health Leadership Fellowship.
- » Create an innovation hub that fosters investment and connects creative, future-focused youth who are rooted in the pursuit of new ideas that transform health outcomes and wellbeing in the continent (Youth in Digital Health Network).



TO PARTICIPANTS

- » Make use of conferences and other platforms to create a network to bridge sectoral and geographical silos to strengthen regional cooperation.
- » Spread the knowledge and information from discussions and engagements at the YPC through community roundtables, townhalls, step down sessions, blogs, and podcasts amongst others.
- » Move from participation to action: Start immediately by taking charge of your own environment and communities and drive health solutions which are socially responsible and accountable.
- » Ensure inclusion through the development mechanisms that addresses access barriers and fosters involvement of marginalised youth.



TO MEMBER STATES

- » The participants welcome commitment from Member States to replicate the structures that are being created to promote youth engagement by Africa CDC at regional, national, and subnational levels and urge other Member States to follow suit.
- » Create structures which are accessible to young people at national and sub-national levels to contribute to relevant discussions and decisions and provide resources to drive youth engagement in health policy and implementation.
- » Implement the pledge made under the Abuja Declaration to annually allocate 15% of the national budgets to improve national healthcare systems and strengthen domestic resource mobilization strategies for health.

TO PARTNERS

- » Support an inclusive and participatory implementation of Africa CDC's agenda for a New Public Health Order and its Strategic Plan 2023-2027.
- » Support the full implementation of the Africa CDC's Youth Engagement Strategy.
- » Connect the endeavours on promoting youth engagement at continental level with the global level as well as support the development of spaces for young Africans led by young Africans.
- » Scale up the investment in nurturing a new generation of public health experts and professionals.