



AfricaCDC

Centres for Disease Control  
and Prevention

Safeguarding Africa's Health

# 2024 AFRICA CDC YOUTH PRE-CONFERENCE (YPC2024)

23-24 November, 2024

Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco

On the margins of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual International  
Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA 2024)

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

“Amplifying Youth Voices: Youth Shaping  
Health Policy, Practice and Research in Africa”

## Background

The Africa CDC Youth Pre-Conference (YPC) is an Africa CDC youth initiative held annually at the margins of the International Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA). It brings together young African public health professionals from all over the continent and the diaspora, with the aim of providing a platform to network with young leading health experts, exchange with their peers on existing and emerging health issues on the continent and present their contribution to a continental audience.

Previous editions of the YPC in 2022 and 2023, were held under the theme “Meaningful youth engagement for advancing sustainable health security in Africa” and “Youth Leadership for A Safer and Healthier Africa”, respectively. The most recent edition, YPC 2023, was attended by more than 250 youth delegates from 48 African Union Member States. It provided platforms for engagement with high-level officials and public health experts, small group workshops on selected thematic areas, as well as co-creation sessions for Africa CDC’s Strategy for Youth Engagement and Participation in Global Health and the Bingwa Initiative 2.0.

The Africa CDC is pleased to announce its 2024 Youth Pre-Conference (YPC 2024), to be held, in person from 23-24 November 2024 in Rabat, Morocco, under the theme **“Amplifying Youth Voices: Youth Shaping Health Policy, Practice, and Research in Africa”**. Its aim is to (1) showcase the remarkable contributions young Africans are already making in health policy, practice, and research; and (2) explore how to broaden engagement with and further empower these young leaders to transform the health sector across Africa.

**The YPC 2024 will feature six tracks where youth are already leading the charge (see annex 1 for detailed information on the tracks):**

1. Youth and Digital Health Innovations
2. Empowering Youth: Workforce/Talent Development for Job Opportunities
3. Youth for the Advancement of Local Pharmaceutical Manufacturing
4. Youth Championing Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS
5. Youth Health Advocates supporting CHWs activities and Programmes
6. Youth and One Health for a Healthier Future

## Objectives and Expected Outcomes

### General Objective

As Africa CDC navigates the complex landscape of public health, investing in meaningful Youth engagement emerges as a cornerstone strategy for providing platforms, mentorship, and a voice in shaping policies.

*The 2024 Youth Pre-Conference on Public Health aims at fostering and enhancing advocacy for youth meaningful engagement, active participation, and inclusive leadership in public health in Africa. It also seeks to educate and empower the youth to make informed decisions and contribute to strengthening the continent's health security (UHC). Additionally, it provides a space for young people to present their contributions in health policy, practice, and research.*

### Specific Objectives

#### The aim for YPC 2024 is to:

- Assess current levels, scope, and typologies of youth engagement in policy, practice, and research,
- Provide insights on how to improve current levels and broaden engagement within the framework of the Africa CDC Strategy for Youth Engagement and Participation in Global Health,
- Highlight Africa's youth contribution to public health policy, practice and research and discuss ways to improve their capacities in this regard,
- Showcase youth innovation and contributions to shaping public health policy, practice, and research.
- Underscore the critical importance of increasing the enrollment of the youth in Community Health Workers Programmes as a pathway for responding to disease outbreaks and reducing youth unemployment.
- Identify the aspects and components of Universal Health Coverage and health security in which young people can play a leading role to ensure effective implementation.

### Expected Outcomes

- Opportunities created for young professionals and researchers to present their contribution across the six tracks in Africa.
- Networking opportunities provided for African Youth in public health to engage with each other and leading professionals.
- The contribution of young African professionals to the public health evidence base in Africa showcased and documented.
- Compelling justification of involving youth in community health programmes and benefits to social-political capital established.
- Additional opportunities of youth engagement for health are identified.

## Dates, Venue and Proposed Framework

The 2024 Africa CDC Youth Pre-Conference will take place in-person from 23-24 November 2024 in Rabat, Morocco.

### It will include:

- Plenary sessions and Keynotes by high-level individuals.
- Parallel sessions and workshops in a range of formats to encourage broad participation.
- Oral and poster presentations of youth-led or youth-focused research and projects.
- Networking opportunities.



## Eligibility and Participant Selection

Applicants must meet all the below criteria to be eligible to apply:

- **Age:** 18 to 35 years
- **Citizenship:** Applicants must be a citizen of an African Union Member State
- **Experience and expertise:** have an educational background (at least enrolled as undergraduate) and first professional experiences in health and health-adjacent disciplines. *Extensive work experience in public health may be used as a supplement by applicants holding degrees unrelated to health sciences or public health.*
- **Leadership and commitment:** participants must demonstrate leadership potential and strong commitment to public health engagement through involvement in youth-led health initiatives, advocacy, or community organising.

**Equity statement:** We recognise the importance of ensuring youth with various marginalised and underserved identities and backgrounds benefit equally from our initiatives. Therefore, gender, geographical balance (representation of all AU Member States), ethnic and social diversity, disability status, etc. will be considered in the final selection of participants.

## How to Apply?

- Please fill out the application form online: <https://tinyurl.com/YPC2024-Call-For-Applications> by **31 August 2024, 17:00 EAT.**
- Submit your CV and a 300-word abstract or article or commentary relating to the track of your choice.

## Guidelines for submission:

### Article/Abstract/Commentary Submission Guidelines:

1. The abstract/article/commentary must be clearly aligned with the track of choice (one among the 6 tracks) and must be related to youth in Africa.
2. The abstract/article/commentary should only be submitted once and only under one of the six tracks. **Submission of the same abstract/article/commentary under multiple tracks will likely result in the rejection of your application.**
3. **The abstract/article/commentary must not exceed 300 words.**
4. **Participants can choose one of following submission options for their application:**

- **Option 1: Policy or implementation project abstract** on the theory of change behind or lessons learnt through policy or programme development, planning, and/or implementation.

#### Submissions under this option must contain:

- Title and list of authors,
  - Background,
  - Description of the project/policy,
  - Theory of change behind policy/programme or lessons learnt during implementation (including best practices), and
  - Conclusion demonstrating the significance for the track of choice.
- **Option 2: Article or commentary** with a title and clear thesis on an issue connecting African youth to the selected track. The article/commentary must demonstrate a nuanced and expert understanding of the topic/track chosen.
- **Option 3: Research abstract** to report research findings.

#### Submissions under this option must contain:

- Title and list of authors,
- Background,
- Research methods,
- Results (disaggregated by age/gender if possible), and
- Conclusions demonstrating the significance of the findings to the track chosen.



## Important dates

- The application for participation shall be opened by **12<sup>th</sup> August 2024**.
- The deadline for application is **31<sup>st</sup> August 2024, 17:00 East Africa Time**.
- The selected applicants will be contacted before the **end of September 2024**.
- Confirmation of attendance deadline: **20 October 2024**.
- Conference dates: **23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2024**.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Will I be able to make changes to my application after submission?

Changes **cannot be made** to applications after submission. In the event that your abstract/article/commentary is selected for an oral or poster presentation and your project or research findings have undergone significant changes after acceptance, those changes should be communicated with the conference organising team immediately.

### Can I save my application and return to it?

No, the application form should be completed in one sitting. To avoid losing responses, the abstract/article/commentary should be written on a separate document and pasted to the application form or uploaded.

### What languages can I submit my abstract in?

All abstracts/articles/commentaries must be submitted in either English or French.

### What are the conference languages?

The conference languages are English, French, and Arabic. Interpretation will be provided for all African Union languages.

### Are sponsorships available for accepted abstract presenters?

Sponsorships are available for accepted abstracts/article/commentary. Only one sponsorship per abstract will be granted. Co-authors and collaborators are not eligible for the sponsorship. Granted sponsorships are non-transferrable.



## Have more questions?

Please reach out to the Conference organising team:

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### **Dr Chrys Promesse K. Kaniki**

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## Annex 1: Synopsis of the six tracks – YPC 2024

### Track 1: Youth and Digital Health Innovations

African youth, making up over 65% of the continent's population, are at the forefront of digital health innovations, addressing healthcare challenges through policy, advocacy, research, and entrepreneurship. Despite their efforts and contributions, they face barriers like limited access to resources, mentorship, and capacity-building opportunities.

This track will explore how creating supportive ecosystems and dedicated networks can amplify youth voices, promote youth-led innovations, and connect young leaders with established organizations to strengthen Africa's digital health landscape.

### Track 2: Empowering Youth: Workforce/Talent Development for Job Opportunities

With 65% of Africa's population being under 35, empowering youth is central to the continent's growth. Recognizing this, the Africa CDC has placed youth at the center of its workforce development efforts including the Young Fellows Programme and the Africa Epidemic Service. The Young Fellows Programme, which is planned for launch in FY25/26 offers entry-level positions for youth to gain hands-on experience with the multidisciplinary and multicultural team at Africa CDC. In addition to its in-house initiatives, the Africa CDC provides support to member states to train youth through Field Epidemiology Training Programmes (FETPs) and Community Health Worker initiatives.

This track will focus on capacity building initiatives, programmes and policies that aim to build public health capacity and provide meaningful and dignified employment for young Africans. It will discuss strategies for increasing meaningful youth engagement in health systems to create a safer and healthier Africa.

### Track 3: Youth for the Advancement of Local Manufacturing of Health Products

Africa's current situation is dire, with over 70% of its essential pharmaceuticals, 99% of vaccines, and most medical devices being imported. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has starkly exposed our vulnerabilities and underscored the urgent need to produce locally. The African Union's call for a New Public Health Order, with one of its pillars being Expanded Manufacturing of Vaccines, Diagnostics, and Therapeutics, is a clear signal of the gravity of the situation.

Expanding the local manufacturing of health products production goes hand-in-hand with building human capacity in the engineering, analytics, science, regulatory and business skills needed in modern industry. This track will discuss the opportunities and roles of African youth in these efforts. It will cover workforce development, research and development, innovation, entrepreneurship, policy, and advocacy, emphasizing the need to build human capacity in modern industry to secure the continent's health and economic future.





## Track 4: Youth Championing Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS

Achieving reproductive health and rights, including HIV/AIDS prevention, requires youth leadership at all levels. Even though there are different youth-led initiatives, organizations, collectives, and networks that operate at different levels, these initiatives lack a dedicated space for sharing information, collaborating, strategizing, and working together to advance a common goal.

Under the call "Implementing a Youth-Led Vision for Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS", this track aims to address the need for dedicated spaces for knowledge exchange, collaboration and collective strategizing. It will build on the Maputo Plan of Action and the Africa CDC's commitment to youth-leadership in efforts to achieve universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights and securing a healthy generation and future.

## Track 5: Youth Health Advocates Supporting Community Health Workers (CHWs) Activities and Programmes

Involving youth as Community Health Workers (CHWs) can improve healthcare access, community engagement, job creation, capacity building, political legitimacy, and sustainable development. This track will highlight the benefits of engaging youth in Community Health programmes, showcasing successful initiatives like the AU Bingwa Initiative. It will discuss how youth involvement in healthcare can enhance public trust, political legacy, and contribute to long-term health goals in Africa.

## Track 6: Youth and One Health for a Healthier Future

The One Health approach recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health. This track will explore how youth can contribute to this multidisciplinary effort through professional collaboration, advocacy and awareness campaigns, and community engagement. It will spotlight youth-led initiatives in awareness creation, advocacy, sustainability, and climate action, and discuss ways to support young advocates calling for policies that champion health equity and environmental sustainability.