



# “High-level Dialogue on Strengthening Partnership to Accelerate Africa’s Demographic Dividend”

UNFPA and World Bank host an interactive high level dialogue with world leaders. Join the conversation by using [#PutYoungPeopleFirst](#) on 19 September 2016, 3 - 5pm EDT!



The landmark High-level Dialogue was hosted by the President of Burkina Faso and co-organised by UNFPA and the World Bank during the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly.

As acknowledged in the keynote statement from the UN Secretary-General delivered by the UNFPA Executive Director, the event celebrated the promising **Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend** initiative and the role of key leaders, institutions and partners in its execution.

The event helped reinforce political commitment and collective action as part of the African Union’s effort to advance *a continental initiative on the demographic dividend accompanied by a roadmap for the 2017 ordinary assemblies of Heads of State and Government*.

The significant commitment demonstrated by several African leaders must be highlighted. Not only did President Kabore of Burkina Faso help convene a number of his peers, he also illustrated his commitment for young people and women in his interventions. Of note is his embracing and amplification of the call from

youth leaders for appropriate budgetary allocations for education, health and employment/economic opportunities.

President Idriss Deby of Chad and Chair of the African Union also joined President Mutharika of Malawi, President Kagame of Rwanda, President Talon of Benin, President Touadera (Central African Republic), Vice President Saidu of The Gambia, and Former President Kikwete of Tanzania reiterated the need for collaborative actions to ensure the potential of every young person is fulfilled.

They all pointed to the interventions they are undertaking to empower women and young people in their countries and called for support for the continental initiative on the demographic dividend. This was backed by the Ministers who attended and spoke from Côte d'Ivoire (Foreign Affairs), Kenya (Devolution and Planning), Liberia (Youth), Mauritania (Economy and Finance), Niger (Population), Senegal (Health), and Uganda (Director of Population).

Development partners also conveyed their support for UNFPA the effort to transform the lives of young people and women in Africa.

Prime Minister Solberg of Norway graced the event, and Development Vice Ministers from Spain and France were speakers.

African institutions also conveyed their firm commitment to work towards delivering the agreed upon African Union roadmap leading to the harnessing of the demographic dividend. Speakers from African intergovernmental agencies included Commissioner Maruping (AUC Economic Affairs and Planning), CEO Mayaki (NEPAD Agency), Vice President Kacou (African Development Bank), and President Soumare (UEMOA Commission).

UN partners in attendance included Director General Irina Bokova of UNESCO, Ahmad Alhendawi (Envoy for Youth) and Toby Lanzer (Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel).

Young people were not only in the room but were also at the table. Youth leaders from AfriYAN and ROJALNU called on leaders and partners to #PutYoungPeopleFirst and ensure they are empowered, educated and employed. The private sector through Susan Mboya (Coca-Cola Foundation) also pointed to the importance of empowerment and economic opportunities for young people.

We now hope to continue to work in a collaborative manner to build on the commitments and accompany African counties to implement their continental initiative on the demographic dividend.

*As part of the push to #PutYoungPeopleFirst, UNFPA's flagship State of World Population report will be launched in Guinea on 20 September 2016 with the title: 10 - How our future depends on a girls at the **decisive** age.*



In order to harness the Demographic Dividend, we must empower, educate and employ! The time to invest in youth is NOW...



More empowered and skilled young people joining the workforce contributes to economic growth and family wellbeing = Demographic Dividend

Let's #PutYoungPeopleFirst



Watch: <https://youtu.be/XaVXbrlpbYs>