

Youth forum concludes with recommendations for governments

Addis Ababa, 26 September 2013 (ECA) - The Youth Pre-event of the ICPD Beyond 2014 African Regional Conference on Population and Development which took place on 24 -25 September concluded with the adoption of various recommendations. The event deliberated on sexual and reproductive health, education, employment and inclusive participation, security and governance. More than 150 young people were in attendance.

The youth called on governments to accelerate the implementation of the Abuja declaration on allocating 15 percent of national budgets to health, with specific attention on sexual and reproductive health programming for all young people. They agreed on the need to participate actively in planning, implementation and tracking the progress of national health budgets.

Agreement was also reached on the need to scale up a skill-based, age appropriate, gender-sensitive and quality comprehensive sexuality education for both in-and-out- of school youth. The youth also recommended the strengthening of male involvement on sexual and reproductive health and rights and called for ensuring young peoples' universal access to high quality comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services in line with the Maputo Plan of Action and the African Youth Charter. The youth also passed recommendations on education, employment and inclusive participation, security and governance.

The recommendations of the Youth Pre-event are expected to contribute to the deliberations of the main event of the ICPD Beyond 2014 African Regional Conference on Population and Development which will be held 30 September to 04 October under the theme *Harnessing the Demographic Dividend: the Future we want for Africa*. Representatives of governments, experts, research and training institutions, Members of Parliament, Regional Economic Communities, UN Agencies, international organizations, civil society organizations, and the youth from across the continent will be attending the conference. The conference has the aim of achieving an African Common position in relation to taking forward the agenda of the ICPD in the 21st Century.

As part of ICPD beyond 2014 review, all the regions of the world are holding regional conferences to review the status of implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action with a focus on remaining gaps and

challenges and barriers and facilitators for achieving full implementation. The review process will also help identify strategic priorities with regard to population and development on the African Continent and will define the ICPD agenda post 2014, and contribute to the continent's position on the United Nations Post-2015 development agenda.

The outcomes of the regional conference will contribute to the global review reports and to the 2014 CPD and Special Session of General Assembly. They will also serve as a major reference for population and development policies and programmes beyond 2014 and inform the post-2015 development agenda in Africa.

The ICPD Beyond 2014 African Regional Conference on Population and Development is jointly organized by the African Union Commission, the UN Economic Commission for Africa and UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund.

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