

African CSOs praise governments, seek more action on women's rights

Addis Ababa, 26 September 2013 (ECA) – Civil society organizations in Africa commended governments on the continent for the progress made in improving socio-economic conditions of Africans, but urged them to do more to enhance women's rights.

Progress has been made in improving food security, basic education, child survival, health status of people living with HIV, access to contraception and other reproductive health services, according to a position paper of the CSOs at the start of a two-day meeting today in Addis Ababa. The group's recommendations are to be presented to African ministers responsible for population matters at the Regional Population Conference in the Ethiopian capital from Oct. 3 to October 4. The ministers are expected to approve a common position on the review of the programme of action adopted during the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo.

“Some governments have demonstrated high-level leadership, committed considerable resources, and adopted innovative strategies towards the realization of the ICPD programme of action,” the CSOs declared. “Progress has also been made in reducing HIV/AIDS prevalence and promoting gender equality, equity, and women's empowerment.”

On the flip side, they observed that unacceptably high proportions of people in Africa still live in abject poverty and bear high disease burdens. They blame this on poor sexual and reproductive health, other infectious diseases, and increasingly non-communicable diseases that remain prevalent in Africa.

“The continent harbors a disproportionately high share of maternal and child deaths, the HIV/AIDS burden, teenage pregnancy, and general poverty,” according to the CSOs. They group is therefore urging governments and development partners to increase funds allocated to tackling these challenges and to make a more effective use of available resources. For instance, they want African states to ensure that not less than 15 percent of their budgets are devoted to the health sector as agreed by the governments themselves.

Issued by:

ECA External Communications and Media Relations Section

PO Box 3001

Addis Ababa

Ethiopia

Tel: +251 11 551 5826

E-mail: ecainfo@uneca.org [1]

www.uneca.org [2]

Source URL: <http://www.uneca.org/media-centre/stories/african-csos-praise-governments-seek-more-action-womens-rights>

Links:

[1] <http://www.uneca.org/contact/ecainfo/uneca/org>

[2] <http://www.uneca.org>