



18 November 2006 - Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Youth and Leadership



African Statistics Day

18 November 2006

How many people are we in Africa? Where and what are our living conditions? Do we go to school? Do we work? Are we healthy? Do we love, worship, drink, or play? This year on African Statistics Day, governments are committing to National Statistics Development Strategies. To develop we need evidence – statistics.

RIGHT TO HUMANITY FOR EVERY PEOPLE

By Henry Ekwuruke

Do you understand human right?
It means... it is... it should be...
That each and everyone of us has a right to
We all have the right... The universal declaration of human rights
To be a child
Each and everyone of us.

To be a woman and a person
Right to look the way we want
and to live the way we want
Unbiased right to practice our religion
protection from abuse and violence
Wonderful right to choose representation
The unequalled right to shelter and health
To food and good water
To receive quality education
To live in peace
yet in violence and conflict
A right to live...
History has informed us
that injustice can, and do, occur
but we the children need to build and speak up
on the premise and make sure
all and sundry is aware and listen to this
come to appreciate these injustices,
realize we can make a difference
with our voices.
Right to humanity for every child.

African Youth Charter launched

In a bid to bolster African youth's access to decision making, the African Union on Friday launched the African Youth Charter during ADF V, in Addis Ababa.

"The African Youth Charter is hereby officially launched," said Alpha Konare, Secretary of the African Union.

The charter is designed to guide, inspire and activate youth organizations and actions. It is also to provide AU Member States with a framework for youth development policies and provisions.

Another important aspect of the charter is the empowerment of youth, so that they may take advantage of its provisions.

On the operational side, the charter, said the AU, will guide the development of programmes of action. More importantly, it will provide Member States with a legal framework for supporting Youth organizations and action.

Editorial Board:

Editor (English) Vera Gomane

Editor (French) Ida Mahajery

Reporters:

Ida Mahajery

Natan Tilahun

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Linda Yohannes

Vera Gomane

Aklilu Abate

Kowa Jacqy

Auguste Abiscri

Fenni Nashilundo

Satang Nabaneh

Elizabeth Anyango

Layout:

Miriam Tsegaye



Youth with physical challenges say they are left out

By Elizabeth Anyango

Delegates attending the ADF V were cautioned not to leave out young people with physical disabilities from the development equation.

“Africa has to invest in education for youth with disabilities. Life is hard, but it is worth it, and we are here,” Malcolm Kpana, a 19 year-old blind youth from Sierra Leone told a group of reporters at ADF Today.

Kpana, a student of political science at the University of Freetown, is also a musician. He was blinded by measles at age five. His parents, then living in the rural areas, out of ignorance, did not seek help immediately.

“Traditional medicine failed to restore my sight, and I was sent to Freetown to a school for the blind,” he said.

The greatest challenge for children with disabilities in Africa is the lack of access to education facilities and equipment.

“Blind people want to get into the new era of communication as they can use type-

writers, but they feel like they are not getting enough support from their leaders,” said Kpana.

Kpana participated in the ADF V session on education and skills. He told the panel that in most countries in Africa, students with physical disabilities are barred from attending classes in chemistry, biology and physics because schools require students to see experiments.

“We have very few modern textbooks in Braille, and it is really a challenge to study,” said Kpana, who relies on friends to read and assist him at the university.

It is difficult to estimate the exact number of youth with disabilities in Africa today. Figures vary considerably according to the country’s level of development, and in some countries disabilities largely relate to the high incidence of polio and measles, for example. In other countries disabilities may also relate to injuries acquired from wars.



Singer calls for equal rights

Kerida McDonald

We are living to see a New Africa
It's the dawning of a new day for Africa
Where all nations of the continent come together
Under one, one banner called Africa
From East to West were building a bridge
Reconnecting for Africa
And the links that make up this chain,
will be holding forever

Sowing the seeds for the rebirth of Africa
We're sowing the seeds for the rebirth of Africa
The fire of our youth
Wisdom of our elders
Vision of our artists
We're all gonna sing the same song
We're all gonna sing the same song
We gonna light the flame of freedom

Pictorials



Singer calls for equal rights

By Aklilu Abate

“Most girls and young women are missing education; their voices are not heard by the community or government,” said pop singer Angelique Kidjo, during a session dedicated to women and girls, at ADF V.

Kidjo said that there is very little respect for women and girls in Africa, especially since most leaders are men. And, she said, though many women have become educated, they are still unrepresented in government and society.

“Boys, girls and young women separately can’t bring a solution for society’s problems. They have to be together and strong to ask the community about their ideas about girls and young women. Problems could have a solution when we are all bonding together,” she said.

Kidjo, a French-speaking musician from Benin, whose career began with a self-funded album in 1988 is an advocate of women’s empowerment worldwide.

“Change starts from family and in the community and then it spread to the world,”

said Kidjo. “Women have the responsibility to make awareness and change the community.”

Some of the solutions for including women in African society are improving legislation to protect women against domestic violence, guaranteeing access to education, employment and credit for enterprise development.

Another very important and often overlooked solution is counseling, which can give individual women the self confidence they need to break barriers and move upwards.



Rural youth seek bright city lights

By Natan Tilahun and Fenni Nashilundo

Africa’s rural youth continue to leave the countryside in search of brighter more interesting futures in cities.

Youth leave farms for a number of reasons, said specialists at ADF V. For example, many cultures prohibit women from owning land, causing young women especially to leave their villages for what they think will be educational or job opportunities.

One other problem is that services are often based in cities; this encourages young people to move.

Many never return to their hometowns, and, sadly, join gangs and resort to prostitution.

A quick fix may be to provide rural youth with credit for non-agricultural income generation.

African Statistics Day celebrates development

Across the globe, partners in development have agreed on a common platform of priorities for addressing the many faces of extreme poverty, from hunger, joblessness, disease and lack of housing, to gender inequality and environmental decline.

But to make real change, policy makers and civil society alike require information about the needs of their countries.

“The more statistics we have, the more action we can demand of our policy makers – who in their turn will be able to make informed choices on how to allocate their budgets, for example,” said Dimitri Sanga, who heads the African Centre for Statistics (ACS), at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

The ECA is calling for greater effort on the part of governments to elevate statistics to the top of national development agendas in Africa. To reinforce this idea, on the annual African Statistics Day, it is launching a continent-wide campaign aimed at boosting statistics production through National Statistics Development Strategies (NSDSs).

Despite the enormous challenges, said Sanga, African countries and development partners are recognising the need for better statistics to improve evidence-

based policy design and planning, and to support implementation, monitor progress, and evaluate outcomes and impacts of development initiatives.

“With youth on our side, we are confident more countries will elaborate and implement their NSDSs,” he said.

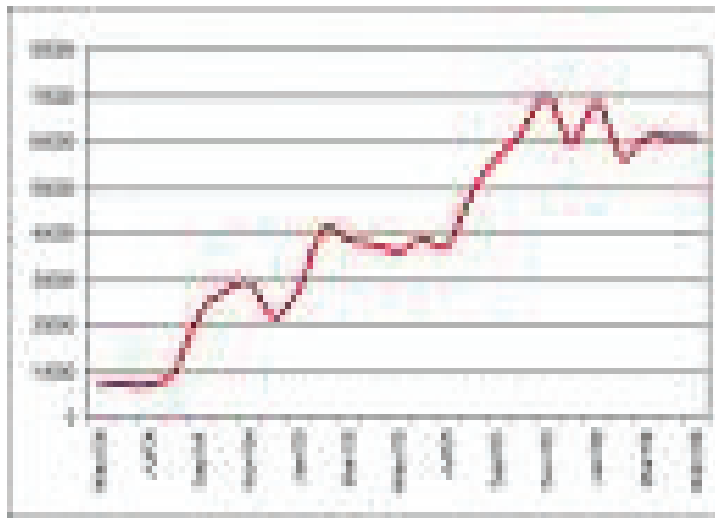
A crucial component of any national strategy will be the formation of partnerships between governments and citizens to increase cooperation for programmes.

The national strategies are expected to address Africa’s statistical needs in relation to programs such as the New Partnership for Africa’s Development

(NEPAD), the Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRSs), and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Through its African Centre for Statistics, UNECA is dedicated to the promotion of statistics compilation, analysis, and dissemination in Africa, enabling policymakers to make informed policy choices.

A major component of the ACS is attracting young people to this important field. To do this, the centre has established a three-month internship programme for young African statisticians, who work on real-life projects as part of graduation programs.



Young people serving as role model 4 children

“Whether or not you have children yourself, you are a parent to the next generation. If we can only stop thinking of children as individual property and think of them as the next generation, then we can realize we all have a role to play.” Davis Kasl, Charlotte

Young people who are sometimes children themselves need to serve as advocates in order to positively contribute to social development of children.

Statistics indicate that African women bear their first child before the age of twenty, and teenage mothers account for about 15-20% of all births; many of whom are unemployed. This may have very negative consequences to a child that is born. Interventions on behalf of pregnant teen girls overlook the fact that they are not only mothers but young people as well.

Mothers serve as role models but it is worth noting that young people influences the attitudes and beliefs of children. Much progress would not be realized if there is no positive influence from young people. In too many cases, young people take care of the younger ones thereby being in a very influential to the children’s development. They do not always have the skills to be positive role models to children, which may

have adverse effect on the way of life of children.

Abused teen mothers must be educated in order to try and instill good positive values that help the child to develop fully.

Job opportunities must be made available for teen mothers to enable them to decently take care of these children and themselves as well. This will prevent them from getting involved in prostitution and other negative means of income to provide for themselves and their children.

Capability of these young people must be tabbed and they need skills that will enable them to relate positively to the children. Young people need to believe in themselves in order to be good role models as there is no generation gap between them and children. A female participant in the ADF V said, “I just know that there are a lot of people out there who are younger than I am, and I wish to be a role model for them. If they have a dream, I want to help them keep that motivation high, so that they can realize their dream. I want to show people that they can have fun in life.” Young people need to take it upon themselves that they too own it to children to add their quota to positively molding and shaping them to be good leaders in the future.

Let's get back to our roots

By Vera Gomane

Sipho Shogwe, from Swaziland, blamed the ‘European-style’ media for taking young Africans away from their reality.

“Reporters and journalists should write positive things about our continent and each country,” said Shogwe, speaking in a panel on culture during ADF V.

African culture, he said, is rich and differs from country to country, but: “we are losing out culture and we need to go back to our roots.”

The panel discussed culture, education, identity and development.

YOUNG REFUGEES

By Auguste Abisai

War and civil strife have been largely responsible for the epidemic of mass migration that has affected almost every region of the world, including Europe.

Tragically, tens of millions of young people around the world have their youth days filled with hopelessness and misery as they witness or experience unspeakable cruelty, heartless exploitation, abuse and deprivation of basic rights. One of the most disadvantaged groups of youth is young refugees whose only crime was perhaps to have been in the wrong place at the wrong time, and who now find themselves uprooted and victims of wars and conflicts.

It is estimated that there are around 38 million refugees, internally displaced persons and other forcibly displaced populations around the world. Africa alone is estimated to have approximately 18 million displaced populations. About half of these populations, some nine million, are youth.

Forced displacement, whether within a country or across national boundaries, disrupts the life and future of youth profoundly. The community and social structure that they depend on for the formation of their personal and socio-economic identity is seriously, and in most cases permanently, upset at a critical stage in their lives.

The question remains, with the future of such a huge number of young people in danger, is the issue of "Youth leadership in the 21st century" merely a grand rhetoric. It urges a strong commitment by leaders to help these people regain their rights to be masters of their destiny.

Of course, solutions are not easy, but individually or collectively we do in fact have the power and means to make a difference.

From job seekers to job creators

By Linda Yohannes

"Instead of being job seekers, we should be job creators", said Alex Maulinga, from Mozambique, during an ADF V panel on employment.

For most young Africans, finding decent work in the XXI century can be tough. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the total number of young workers living on less than US\$1 per day reached 45 million in 2005.

Young Africans feel that searching for work will be in vain, says the International Labour Organization (ILO), explaining a ten-year 34.2% increase in the rate of youth unemployment in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Lack of training, gender discrimination, low awareness of Youth Employment Networks, labour migration, and brain drain are clear culprits.

"African curriculums train young people for white collar jobs, overlooking the need for agrarian professionals," underscored an East-African delegate.

Solutions may include creating decent jobs in rural areas, stronger private sector support, skills training, and equal job opportunities for young women and men.

L'Union africaine lance la Charte africaine de la jeunesse.

En vue de favoriser la participation de la jeunesse africaine au processus de prise de décision, l'Union africaine a lancé ce vendredi la Charte africaine de la jeunesse, à l'occasion d'ADF V tenu à Addis-Abeba.

«La Charte africaine de la jeunesse est officiellement lancée», a déclaré M. Alpha Konaré, Secrétaire général de l'Union africaine.

La charte est destinée à mobiliser les organisations de jeunes, ainsi qu'à guider et à inspirer leur action. Elle dessine

également pour les États membres le cadre politique et stratégique en faveur du développement de la jeunesse.

Autre aspect important de la Charte: l'émancipation des jeunes afin qu'ils puissent tirer partie de ses dispositions.

Sur le plan opérationnel, la Charte, d'après l'UA, guidera l'élaboration des programmes d'action. Plus important encore, elle offrira aux États membres un cadre légal pour soutenir les organisations de jeunes et les actions de la jeunesse.

L'exclusion sociale et la discrimination à l'égard des femmes

Par Aklilu Abate

La plupart des filles et des femmes sont privées d'éducation, mais ni la collectivité ni l'administration les écoutent, a déclaré la chanteuse pop Angélique Kidjo, lors d'une séance d'ADF V consacrée aux femmes et aux filles.

Selon Kidjo, on montre d'autant moins de respect aux femmes et aux filles en Afrique, que la plupart des dirigeants sont des hommes. Elle a ajouté que même si beaucoup de femmes sont désormais instruites, elles restent cependant sous-représentées au sein du gouvernement et de la société.

Les garçons, les filles et les jeunes femmes ne peuvent, séparément, résoudre les problèmes de la société. Ils doivent s'unir pour être forts et demander à la collectivité son point de vue sur les filles et les femmes. On peut résoudre les problèmes si l'on se serre les coudes, a-t-elle ajouté.



Musicienne francophone originaire du Bénin, Angélique Kidjo, qui a commencé sa carrière par un album qu'elle a financé elle-même en 1988, défend l'émancipation de la femme à travers le monde.

Pour elle, le changement commence au sein de la famille et de la collectivité puis se répand au monde entier. Les femmes ont pour responsabilité de sensibiliser la collectivité et de la changer.

Il faudrait notamment, pour inclure les femmes dans la société africaine, améliorer la législation afin de protéger la femme contre la violence dans la famille et garantir l'accès à l'éducation, à l'emploi et au crédit pour la création d'entreprises.

Les services de conseil constituent également une autre solution très importante, souvent négligée, alors qu'ils permettent de donner aux femmes d'assurance dont elles ont besoin pour franchir les obstacles et gravir les échelons.

Les jeunes souffrant d'un handicap physique se sentent exclus

Par Elizabeth Anyango

Les délégués présents à ADF V ont été mis en garde contre le fait de ne pas exclure les jeunes gens souffrant d'un handicap physique de l'équation du développement.

«L'Afrique doit investir dans l'éducation pour les jeunes handicapés. La vie est difficile mais elle vaut la peine d'être vécue et nous sommes ici», a déclaré aujourd'hui Malcolm Kpana, un jeune aveugle de 19 ans de Sierra Leone, à un groupe de reporters présents à ADF.

Kpana, étudiant en sciences politiques à l'université de Freetown, est également musicien. Il est devenu aveugle à l'âge de 5 ans après avoir contracté la rougeole. Ses parents, qui habitaient alors dans des zones rurales n'ont pas cherché à le faire soigner immédiatement par simple ignorance.

«La médecine traditionnelle n'a pas pu me rendre la vue et j'ai été envoyé à Freetown dans une école pour aveugles», a-t-il ajouté.

Le plus grand problème qui se pose aux enfants handicapés en Afrique est le manque d'accès aux instituts et aux équipements permettant d'acquérir une éducation.

«Les aveugles veulent entrer dans la nouvelle ère de communication vu qu'ils peuvent utiliser des machines à écrire mais ils ont l'impression qu'ils ne sont pas suffisamment soutenus par leurs dirigeants», a dit Knapa.

Knapa a participé à la séance d'ADF V consacrée à l'éducation et aux compétences et il a indiqué à cette occasion que dans la plupart des pays africains les étudiants souffrant d'un handicap n'ont pas la possibilité de participer aux cours de chimie, de biologie et de physique parce que les écoles exigent que les étudiants voient les expériences.

«Nous avons très peu de manuels modernes en braille et il est très difficile d'étudier» a poursuivi Knapa qui compte sur ses amis pour lui faire la lecture et l'aider à l'université.

Il est difficile d'estimer le nombre exact de jeunes souffrant d'un handicap en Afrique aujourd'hui. Les chiffres varient considérablement selon le niveau de développement des pays, et dans certains, les handicaps sont liés à l'incidence élevée de la poliomyélite et à la rougeole. Dans d'autres pays, les handicaps sont parfois dus à des blessures de guerre.

Humeur

Afrique: nouvelle génération pour nouveau départ

Par MAHAJERY Ida.

La jeunesse africaine - 60 % de la population du continent – occupe une place fondamentale dans la société du 21ème siècle. Problème majeur : elle se sent exclue des grands débats centrés sur les futures priorités sociales. Question: sans véritable consultation et participation de cette jeunesse, peut-on vraiment parler d'un développement qui se veut durable?

« Les jeunes ont besoin de se sentir concernés par les décisions. De plus, ils sont faciles à mobiliser », a-t-on pu entendre lors des sessions consacrées à la participation des jeunes au forum de développement africain.

Pour la nouvelle génération, cette transformation doit passer par «un changement de processus, de comportements culturels, qu'on écoute les plus jeunes au niveau des familles ».

« La population africaine est en majorité jeune...mais je crois que le problème de notre société est que la plupart des dirigeants ne sont pas jeunes » avait lancé le Premier ministre éthiopien Meles Zenawi en ouverture du Forum.

Les jeunes africains veulent adopter une attitude positive, constructive tout en réclamant de meilleures conditions de vie et davantage d'implication dans la conception et la mise en œuvre des programmes de société, selon les participants.



« En Algérie, le gouvernement a créé un réseau spécialement pour jeunes et on assiste également au développement du sport pour les jeunes handicapés », ont reconnu de jeunes partici-

pants venus d'Algérie.

« Dans notre pays, on crée des centres de formations de jeunes pairs éducateurs pour les plus jeunes », a confié un jeune Swazilandais.

Mais tant que les conflits persisteront en Afrique, ce nouveau départ restera compromis, avait estimé le Président Alpha Oumar Konaré en appelant à une union sociale.

Les statistiques contribuent au développement de l'Afrique



La Journée Africaine de la Statistique

18 Novembre 2006

Combien sommes-nous en Afrique ? Où vivons-nous et dans quelles conditions ? Allons-nous à l'école ? Allons-nous travailler ? Sommes-nous en bonne santé ? Est-ce que nous aimons, prions, buvons ? Est-ce que nous nous amusons ? Cette année, à l'occasion de la Journée africaine de la statistique, les gouvernements s'engagent à mettre en oeuvre des stratégies nationales de développement des statistiques. Pour nous développer, nous avons besoin de données probantes - de statistiques.