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**Draft Concept Note on African Youth Forum on SDG's**

**25th September 2015 Venue TBC**

**Theme: "Ensuring Youth Participation and Ownership of the SDG's in Africa"**

**Overview**

The year 2015, will be the peak and turning point in global development trend. This provides an opportunity for African youths to decide the future they want. The Sustainable Development Goals will replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after their expiry in September 2015. The sustainable development goals (SDGs) will include a new set of global goals, targets and indicators to incentivize and measure progress.

While the MDGs prioritized the social dimension of development, the aim is for the SDGs to embody a comprehensive and integrated approach to development. Seek to balance sustained socio-economic growth with the sustainable use of natural resources. In addition, the SDGs will apply to all countries, unlike the MDGs, which served as goals for developing nations only. Building upon the successes and lessons learned from the MDGs, the SDGs are expected to become an important tool for national priority-setting, mobilisation of resources, and the achievement of specific development gains.

It is estimated that there are over 1.5 billion youths all over the world and youths make up over 62% of Africa's population that is a testimony of how great is the number for the target group considering that youths are the power house of every nation. Based on the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, the number of young people aged 15-29 is expected to rise from 2015 to 2030, making youth a critical population for the post-2015 development agenda. With these numbers expected to increase over the next 15 years, ensuring youth participation in Africa becomes more important as enshrined in the African Youth Charter. Providing youth a voice in the post-2015 development agenda, but also a role in it, will be crucial.

The Common African Position on Post2015 Agenda was adopted at the AU Heads of State Summit on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2014 in Addis Ababa African. The African Union High Level Committee on Post2015 Agenda also met in Ndejamena, Chad on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014 to further discuss and 6 key pillars that meet the aspirations of the African people;

*The meeting will discuss the role of African youths in the popularization and implementation of the SDG's. More importantly, to ensure that African youths take ownership of the SDG's at all levels . The meeting will also dilate on lessons learnt from the attainment of MDG's and role of young people in Africa.*

Too long, youth of Africa have not actively participated into MDG discussions both at the local and regional levels but conversely possess enormous capabilities in addressing these challenges. The former is the result of young people being viewed as trouble makers and unaware of finding solutions for situations confronting the entire region. It is on this premise that an African Youth Alliance on Post2015 Agenda (AYAP) was launched in New York during the 68<sup>th</sup> Session UNGA and UN MDG Summit 2013 and an inaugural meeting of alliance members was held in April 2014 in Abuja-Nigeria, with the election of African Youth Panel (AYP) as Chair of the alliance.

The alliance was launched by the UN Youth Envoy and attended by regional and international civil society organization and youth networks. The Alliance is a platform of African regional youth networks and youth-led organizations that have been involved in different development processes relevant to the MDGs and post2015 development process. Youths in Africa needs to participate in all levels of decision making processes and their rights and needs have to be respected as enshrined in the African Youth Charter.

The Youth Alliance on Post-2015 (AYAP) aims to spear-head new innovations, look into new systems of success to share with policy and decision-makers, and generally aim to improve on the current system which is causing long-term and irreversible degradation to our livelihoods as we transit into SDG's. African Youth Panel through AYAP, has been playing a key role in the ongoing and emerging Post- 2015 Agenda on “realizing the future we want for all” at the national, regional and continental level.

AYP is running a small-grants program to support members in 10 African countries (*Gambia, Ghana, Central Africa Republic, Nigeria, Madagascarr, Namibia, Malawi Zambia, Mozambique and Sudan*) to carry out ‘‘*My World Campaign and Survey and Campaigns*’’ to increase votes and gauge the opinion of youth in these countries in relations to SDG's and youth empowerment.

The side event will be an open youth forum for youths and relevant partners. There will be limited spaces for intervention for non-youth participants. The forum will be highly interactive with live-streaming, skype, twitter and sms connections to youth organizations in Africa. The meeting should ideally promote youth power, energy and enthusiasm in championing the SDG's in Africa

### **Objectives**

The overarching meeting objective is to engage, mobilize and mainstream the African youth voices in the SDG popularization and implementation process at the national and regional level. The forum will also provide a platform for coordinated African youth engagement and participation in the SDG discuss at the Global level.

- how youth priorities can be mainstreamed effectively with lessons and best practices from youth engagements in the MDG's.
- Brainstorming on African Youth Engagement Strategy on SDG
- Launch of the "*African Youth SDG Ambassadors Initiative*"

### **Methodology**

The meeting will mainly involve decision makers and experts on post-2015 development process through a panel discussion to trigger genuine dialogue, brainstorming, exchange of knowledge and youth actions on SDG's in Africa.

Discussions and key priority issues from the "panel discussions" will be further debated online to enrich the meeting outcome with the main objective of engaging African youth leaders and organization, UN Agencies, Governments, African Union, Private Sector and relevant stakeholders on how to "**Ensure Youth Participation and Ownership of the SDG's in Africa**"

### **Outcome**

The expected results of the meeting is a clear road-map, for the development of an African youth peer-education, leadership and engagement strategy on SDG.

### **Key Stakeholder and Partners**

- ❖ African Youth Alliance on Post2015 (AYAP) Membership (*Organization of African Youth, Africa 2.0, African Youth Initiative on Climate Change, African Youth With Disability Network, African Youth and Adolescents Network, Youth Hub Africa, Pan African Youth Network for a Culture of Peace, African Artist Peace Initiative, International Youth Council Africa, Network of International Youth Organizations in Africa, Young Volunteers for the Environment and Network of African Youths for Development* )
- ❖ United Nations Millennium Campaign
- ❖ UN Youth Special Envoy's Office
- ❖ African Union Youth Division
- ❖ Pan African Youth Union
- ❖ UN Office of the Special Adviser on Africa
- ❖ Action/2015 Global Movement
- ❖ African Union Mission to New York
- ❖ World Best News
- ❖ UNICEF
- ❖ UN WOMEN
- ❖ UNDP
- ❖ UNFPA
- ❖ DANIDA/MFA of Kingdom of Denmark