



Demographic Dividend and Improving Health for Women and Youth



African Youth Bulge Presents Opportunities

Africa's population is expected to peak at 1.6 billion by 2030—nearly 70% of which will be working age. The number of youth in Africa will increase by 42% over this period. This youth bulge will no doubt change the economic landscape of the continent. Harnessing this potential into a positive force for development through investments in health, empowerment, education and employment is the greatest challenge of the next 15 years. If successful, African nations will be able to reap significant dividends from this demographic change—known as the demographic dividend.

The Demographic Dividend framework is already having a significant impact through the integration of a variety of strategies and interventions that leads to improved health, increased investments in education and skills development, tailoring economic and governance policies, increased opportunities and investment in entrepreneurship and employment, and meeting family planning needs. Investments also provide impoverished, disenfranchised and unemployed youth with alternatives to migration and discourage extremism.

Improving health is essential to ensuring equitable and sustainable growth in Africa.

Health and the Demographic Dividend

Good health remains a key to reducing youth vulnerability, improving workforce productivity and creating an environment for youth to realize their full potential. Smart investments in key areas like sexual and reproductive health (SRHR) including family planning will have an outsized impact on accelerating the demographic change and driving economic growth. Studies have demonstrated that if just 10% more girls go to school, average GDP increases by 3% and when barriers to work are reduced for women productivity increases by 25%.

Across Africa, barriers limiting young people's access to SRHR information and services persist—particularly for young girls.



GBCHealth is dedicated to leveraging the resources and expertise of the private sector to meet today's most pressing health challenges. Founded in 2001 under the leadership of Ambassador Richard C. Holbrooke, GBCHealth has built a strong track record of mobilizing business action to address workplace and community health issues.

The Role of the Private Sector

The private sector can play an important role in: accelerating progress and removing barriers for women and girls to access SRHR services by helping to generate demand; reinforcing commodity availability and optimizing supply chains; training health workers; advocating for local and national policy; and developing and co-funding innovative financial mechanisms to attract new donors. These interventions ultimately benefit business as they engender a more robust economic environment, provide opportunities for investment in future employees and customers, and reduce systematic risk and volatility.

UNFPA-GBCHealth Partnership

GBCHealth is teaming up with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to encourage smart investments in health, empowerment, education and employment to reduce vulnerability and support young people to reach their full potential. As discussed during the 72nd UN General Assembly at a meeting hosted by His Excellency Prof. Alpha Conde, President of Guinea and Chairperson of the African Union, we strive to achieve the following goals:

- Establishing a space for the private sector to advocate for policies and action that promote, support and expand the demographic dividend agenda;
- Creating awareness, commitment and action within the private sector on health issues critical to realizing the demographic dividend; and
- Providing direct avenues for the private sector to partner to improve SRHR outcomes through integrated programs.



Impact

The private sector can accelerate progress on the achieving the demographic dividend in several ways.

Demand generation and behavior change: Produce tiered-messages and materials to target influencers, youth and other segments of the population with social marketing and mass media.

Financing Empowerment: Share experience structuring financial mechanisms to attract new donor and private capital to development projects.

Regional standardization of registration and quality: Work closely with national governments to enhance security measures to ensure legitimate, high-quality products are reaching users.

Supply chain performance: Provide key insights and tools to improve supply chain efficiency throughout the entire delivery ecosystem to ensure consistent availability of products.

Training: Train health workers to improve quality of care and build innovative business models for delivering health services to households.

Advocacy: Participate in high-level dialogues to shape national and global health policies that empower women and girls

Data collection and monitoring: Share data collection techniques, technology and monitoring capabilities to improve efficiency, bolster project implementation capabilities and augment policies.

Join us

We are building a task force of private sector champions to support this work. We are soliciting your participation in roundtables with other leaders and champions; in partnerships to replicate, expand, scale projects; and with new ideas to address challenges in product and service delivery, capacity building and knowledge.

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