



**AFRICAN YOUTH  
FEDERATION**



**GOVERNMENT OF UGANDA  
MINISTRY OF GENDER,  
LABOUR AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Pan African Youth Festival**

#### **Draft Concept Note**

***Theme: “Youth as key drivers of a peaceful, secure, prosperous and integrated Africa”***

**1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>ND</sup> November 2021, Kampala-Uganda**

#### **1. Introduction and Back ground**

The Pan African Youth Festival is an annual multi-stakeholder youth-led African convening which is inspired by the African Youth Charter (Article 10(1)(2)) to foster youth inclined continental transformation. The festival brings together youth from across the continent and beyond with policy influencers, political and industry leaders, as well as public, private and development sector institutions to explore the living situations and perspectives of the young African generation. The 2020 edition of this convening is the third of its kind building on the previous two successful editions being held in 2018 and 2019.

At the festival, young people (16 to 35) are able to have a live interface and engagement with key policy makers, diplomatic missions, academia, media, the formal and informal private sector actors and civil society actors through a mixture of appealing key-note addresses and panels, customized debates, speeches, exhibitions, interactive workshops and seconded by colorful cultural side-events. The festival activities are centrally convened by African Youth Federation as the lead convener in collaboration with the Government of Uganda through the ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and other youth organizations and key partners.

#### **About the Convener**

**African Youth Federation (AYF)** is a youth consortium of youth organizations in Africa premised on the notion that youth have an integral role to play in the development of their respective nations. AYF aims to see repositioned, redefined and enhanced role of youth in community, national, regional and global developmental processes through Coordination, Advocacy and Capacity building. AYF is determined and committed to provide a space and voice for African youth to propel their interests and aspirations to the key duty bearers in a more social, just, democratic and ecological Africa.

#### **Background:**

With more than 226 million people aged between 15-24, Africa has the youngest population – and the highest youth unemployment rate (60%<sup>2</sup>) – in the world. By 2050, the number of people on the continent is estimated to double to 2.5 billion and its growing number of youth is projected to account for more than 25% of the world’s labour force. Sadly the majority of African youth continue to face unemployment, underemployment, lack of adequate skills and low levels of education, access to capital, unmet needs for health-related information and services, including sexual and reproductive health, as well as those related to diagnosis, treatment, and care of those living with HIV. This situation is even more accentuated among the youth in rural areas, youth living in conflict or post-conflict contexts, and for young women. As a result, the greater proportion of youth in Africa do not have the opportunity to fully develop their potential and contribute effectively to the realization of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena, as envisioned in the African Agenda 2063.

In light of this challenges, the Youth Festival examines the different ways in which youth constructively contribute towards building a culture of peace, supporting good governance and promoting economic opportunity through their participation in governance or in public affairs, through volunteerism and social

entrepreneurship, which strengthen their soft skills and generate benefits for the entire community; through a responsible use of the internet to network, learn, share information and knowledge, involve and sensitize different groups.

The Festival equally examines the challenges facing youth and which impede upon their capacity to contribute to their societies such as unemployment, gender inequality, and lack of access to education, marginalization, poverty, discrimination, limited or no involvement in public affairs. It also examines how these challenges, if not properly addressed, can lead to youth taking on at risk behaviors such as extremism, crime, Gender Based violence among others.

### **Theme; “Youth as drivers of secure, prosperous and integrated Africa”**

An African Youth Conference on Post-2015 Development Agenda that was held at the United Nations Office in Nairobi (UNON) in 2012, resulting in an African Youth Declaration on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Notable areas of concern included the need for improved health services and sexual reproductive health; youth empowerment and employment; equitable access to quality education and enhancing appropriate access to technology; climate change, environmental sustainability and food security; good governance, peace and security; and last but not least, access to social justice and the protection of minorities and vulnerable groups.

With these pressing issues forming the foundation of youth concerns across the continent, the African Union Commission, during its consultations with various stakeholders in the formulation of Agenda 2063, met with the youth of Africa on 1-3 November 2013 in Tunis, Tunisia on the occasion of the 8th Edition of the Africa Youth Day, under the theme “Youth United in Action for Agenda 2063”. Deliberations sought to shed light on the important perspectives of youth in the framing of Agenda 2063, for the next 50 years, bearing in mind that the youth are the main players and partners for an inclusive and sustainable development of the continent. In August 2014, the youth of Africa met during the 6th African Youth and Governance Conference in Lusaka, Zambia, under the theme “Investing in Africa’s human capital for peace and development”, to further consolidate their concerns and positions on pressing matters of concern to them, testifying to their momentum to be heard on matters that affect their lives.

With the current ongoing negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda and the Africa’s development Agenda 2063, it is important that the positions of the African youth are heard loud and clear. Towards this end, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Pan African Youth Festival, with the theme “Youth as drivers of secure, prosperous and integrated Africa”, will create an excellent opportunity to connect with the youth of Africa, coordinate their various activities, and create the space for active youth participation and youth policy formulation at the global arena.

### **Overall Objective**

To unite the young African people for joint development towards a more social and just, democratic and ecological Africa.

### **Specifically**

- a) Convene a unique open platform that brings together youth and key stakeholders in their diversity to share ideas, debate and reflect on current policy issues across the political divide.
- b) To identify and showcase examples of concrete alternatives of engaging youth to lead positive change in their own communities.
- c) To inspire and strengthen youth leadership and cohesiveness as a majority segment of the continent’s population.

- d) To amplify youth voices and explore ways of strengthening their engagements in the AU policies, protocols and frame works
- e) To discuss the state of youth, their contribution and emerging opportunities that can be harnessed in the African Union

## **THEMATIC FOCUS**

The agenda of the Festival involves discussion and educational formats which are highly topical, developed considering the AU Agenda 2063 and Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations and have the potential to generate dynamic exchange and concrete ideas. The unifying thread is the recognition of the importance of democratic values for youth. Among the themes of the discussion program will be: **Governance, Rights and Empowerment; Peace and Security; Climate change: Environmental conservation and governance: The future of work and education; Economy, Entrepreneurship and employment; Emerging technologies and innovation; Health and economic wellbeing; Agriculture & Food security, Migration, Gender & Equality, Civil Development Platform; Young cinematographers, artists, designers will present the results of their work in various formats.**

## **2. 2020 Festival Edition**

### **FORMAT AND DURATION**

The festival employs participatory, interactive and youth friendly content delivery approaches that suit various needs of youth participants and stakeholders. The official program will open with a plenary session that introduces participants to the entire festival program and includes a youth panel discussion to provide context and set the tone for the other discussions that will happen throughout the day.

After the opening plenary, partners and various youth groups will take lead in convening customized open discussions, conferences, workshops and live events that run simultaneously. Youth participants and stakeholders will be free to explore and attend events and discussions of their choice aligned to the broader theme and goals of the festival. On average each event/discussion is designed to reach out to 50 – 100 participants. The last segment of the festival will be an evening of entertainment from young upcoming artists. it is proposed that the Youth Festival runs for 2-3 days and that shall be inclusive of:

- ▶ **Plenary Sessions:** The main plenary will feature high level sessions where all delegates will have the chance to engage with government officials, business leaders, youth entrepreneurs and policy experts on key issues. The main plenary will also feature ‘spotlight’ sessions where notable champions of the youth will engage in one on one interviews & in-depth interactive sessions with the audience, including opening, closing and thematic sessions
- ▶ **Self-organized Convenings;** The festival features multi-stakeholder convenings on the given thematic areas or topical youth issues. The aim for these Convenings is to provide a multi sectoral platform for cross-border and/or collective action. Young people’s initiatives and issues take center stage in each of the convenings however the lead conveners for each of the convenings come up with aligned sub themes. These convenings generate recommendations and feedback which is followed up through post festival engagements with relevant stakeholders;

### **Through the convenings, African Youth Federation and partners will;**

- a) Showcase and launch new youth-led advocacy interventions and innovations in each of the selected self-organized convenings.
- b) Showcase good case practices and success stories in the youth development spectrum.
- c) Provide break through opportunities for upcoming youth organizations to meet and interact with key stakeholders including potential partners and policy makers.

- ▶ **Capacity- Building Sessions**, the Youth Festival will include workshops on capacity-building for the youth delegates, so they can acquire or strengthen personal skills and competencies, particularly advocacy and “soft” skills that would enhance their employability. Key global partners will be invited to organize such sessions and share their “know-how” with the participants.
- ▶ **The “Afro-Youth Exhibition”**, running parallel to the working sessions will provide space for participants to exhibit their work and exchange knowledge and information with the youth delegates. This space will also provide the opportunity to host café discussions on topical issues relating to the Youth Festival’s theme.
- ▶ **Art Performances (Sponsored by partners)**; Art and culture are proven potent media for transformation and revolutionary economic change. This is also a great cultural melting pot, where diverse cultures are eloquently demonstrated through dance and songs, poetry, open mic and spoken word. Dance and songs have been and still remain powerful media tools for change in Africa. The Pan African Youth Festival particularly promotes conscious music and this has become an important space for the emerging artists with conscious music. The Festival will however be open to all other forms of art and music as well in celebration of African diversity.
- ▶ **Solidarity Processions**; These will be an integral part of the Pan African Youth Festival. They are a form of outreach with the aim of stirring interest and engaging with ordinary youth citizens in the streets on specific aspects of the pan-African unity/cohesion process.
- ▶ **A “Media Hub”**, run by the young journalists and media professionals who will provide live feed reports on the proceedings through blogs and online uploads of the Festival. The media center would ideally host media groups covering the Youth Festival and would provide a space for interviews, and press conferences.

Youth Caravan

Change makers challenge, mentorship, masterclasses

### 3.Participants

Students and young professionals from different spheres from African Union member states will become participants of the Festival. Age of participants – from 18 to 35 years. The most active young people, leaders in their fields from across the African Continent. The festival aims to bring together over 1500 young people, who will successfully pass the stages of selection. The image of the future developed by young people from African Continent will become the result of work at the Festival.

More specifically, the following categories of youth and youth focused stakeholders are expected to be part of the festival: youth delegates from AU Member States, representatives from the United Nations Agencies, youth representatives from CSOs or youth-led/youth-organizations and movements and from National Youth Councils, representatives of regional youth organizations, multilateral organizations. Other participants will include academia, media and NGOs. A selected number of youth participants will be invited to share with the festival the concrete actions they have taken to spur the social economic political welfare in their respective communities and how these actions will be tracked.

#### Expected Outcomes;

- Deepened youth policy dialogue thanks to more youth participation and engagement
- Strategic alliances forged for transformative change and advocacy
- Strengthened youth capacities through knowledge sharing and transfer of good practice
- Expanded influence of youth social movements
- Innovations promoted for greater effectiveness
- Enhancement of youth civic awareness, participation, engagement and competence

- Enhanced advocacy leading to higher effectiveness of youth organizations and movements
- Publish the “status of youth in Africa” report on youth participation and representation in leadership and development in Africa
- Establish the first ever “Africa Under 40 Youth Business forum”, based on the African Continental Free Trade Area to examine the helping and hindering factors affecting young people’s cross-border business initiatives
- Establish a flagship African Youth Leadership Mentorship Program and fellowship Fund
- Craft the flagship “African Youth Manifesto” based on the “status of youth in Africa” report, to influence political debate and campaigns