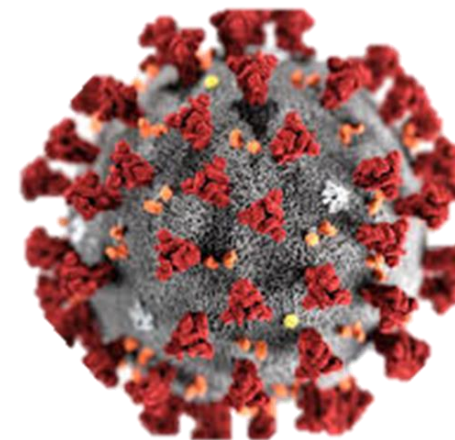


Reflections on COVID-19 and Youth in Africa

Lessons for the Demographic Dividend Youth Initiatives



1. Youth Demographics in Africa
2. African Union Mandate on Youth
3. COVID-19 Pandemic and Youth in Africa
4. Ongoing Initiatives
5. Opportunities and conclusions

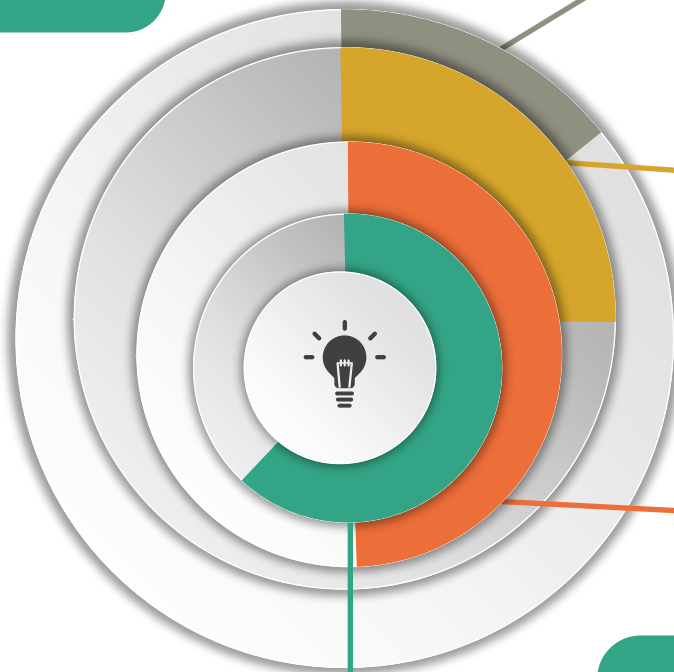


AFRICA'S YOUTH POPULATION

Africa is the most youthful continent with young people age 15 – 35 making up the largest segment of its population (roughly 40% of the total population).

It is estimated that about 46% of the 1.3 billion increases in Africa's labor force over the period between 2015 – 2063 will be made of young people aged 15-34, averaging 12.1 million a year.

The African Youth Charter defines youth as persons aged 15 to 35 years old – who make up roughly 40% of the total population of Africa.



Africa now registers more than 1 billion estimated people of which 60% are under the age of 35.

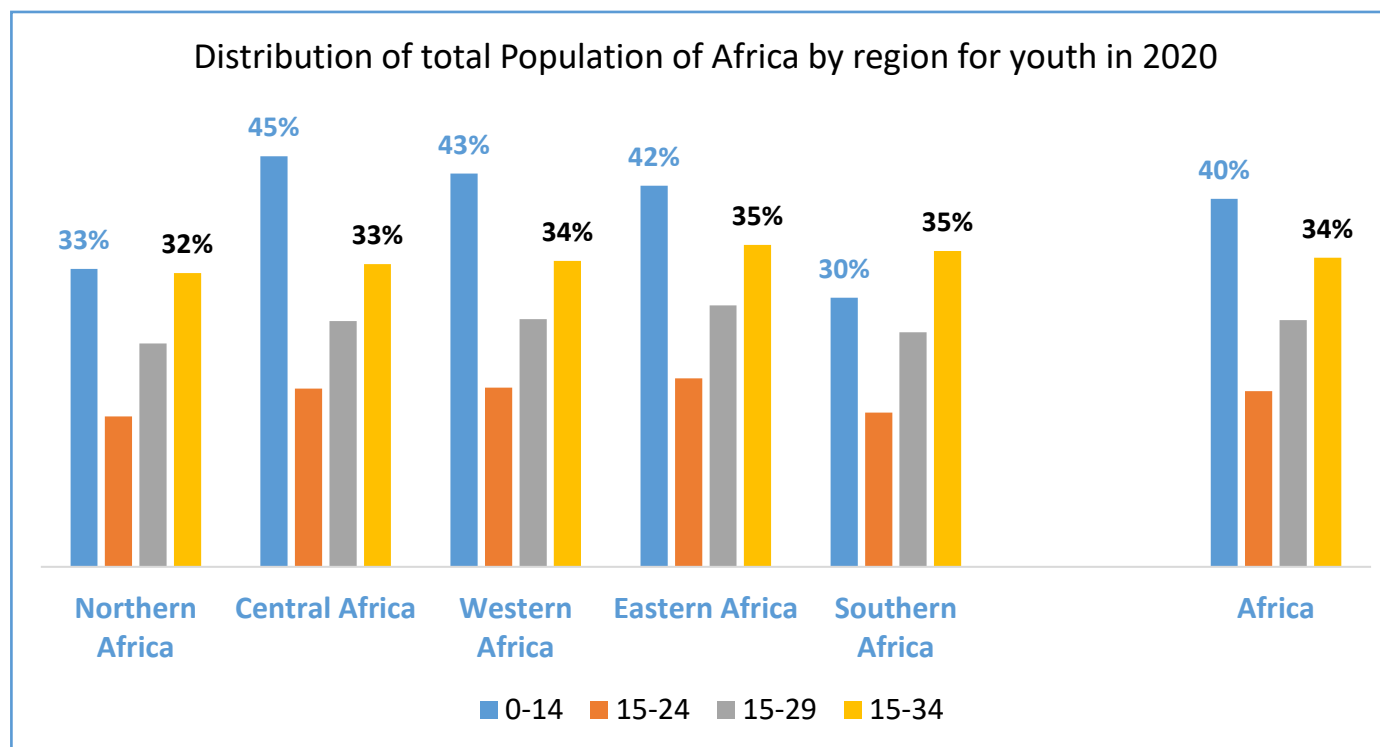
The greater proportion of this percentage does not have the opportunity to fully develop its potential and contribute effectively to the realization of the declared vision and mission of Africa's leaders.

The majority of African youth continue to face; unemployment, underemployment, lack of skills, lack of exposure to relevant education.

If unaddressed, youth are unwittingly exposed to various negative consequences leading them to delinquency, drug abuse, and other risky behavior

Demography of African Youth in 2020

| | 0-14 Years | | 15-24 Years | | 15-29 Years | | 15-34 Years | |
|-----------------|------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | M | F | M | F | M | F | M | F |
| Africa | 50.7% | 49.3% | 50.4% | 49.6% | 50.4% | 49.6% | 50.3% | 49.7% |
| Eastern Africa | 50.5% | 49.5% | 50.1% | 49.9% | 50.0% | 50.0% | 49.8% | 50.2% |
| Southern Africa | 50.5% | 49.5% | 50.3% | 49.7% | 50.3% | 49.7% | 50.3% | 49.7% |
| Western Africa | 50.9% | 49.1% | 50.7% | 49.3% | 50.6% | 49.4% | 50.6% | 49.4% |
| Northern Africa | 51.2% | 48.8% | 51.1% | 48.9% | 50.9% | 49.1% | 50.7% | 49.3% |



Total Population Africa in 2020: **1,340 millions**

Population 15-24 years: **254 millions**

AU MANDATE ON YOUTH

African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (APAYE 2019-2023)

Continental framework & plan of action for implementing the AYC, AU decision on harnessing the demographic dividend, and the targets on youth in Agenda 2063 Ten Year Implementation Plan

AU Assembly Decision on Demographic Dividend

AU Member States adopted “Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in the Youth” as the theme for the year 2017. Roadmap for implementation developed.

AU Agenda 2063 (2013 – 2063)

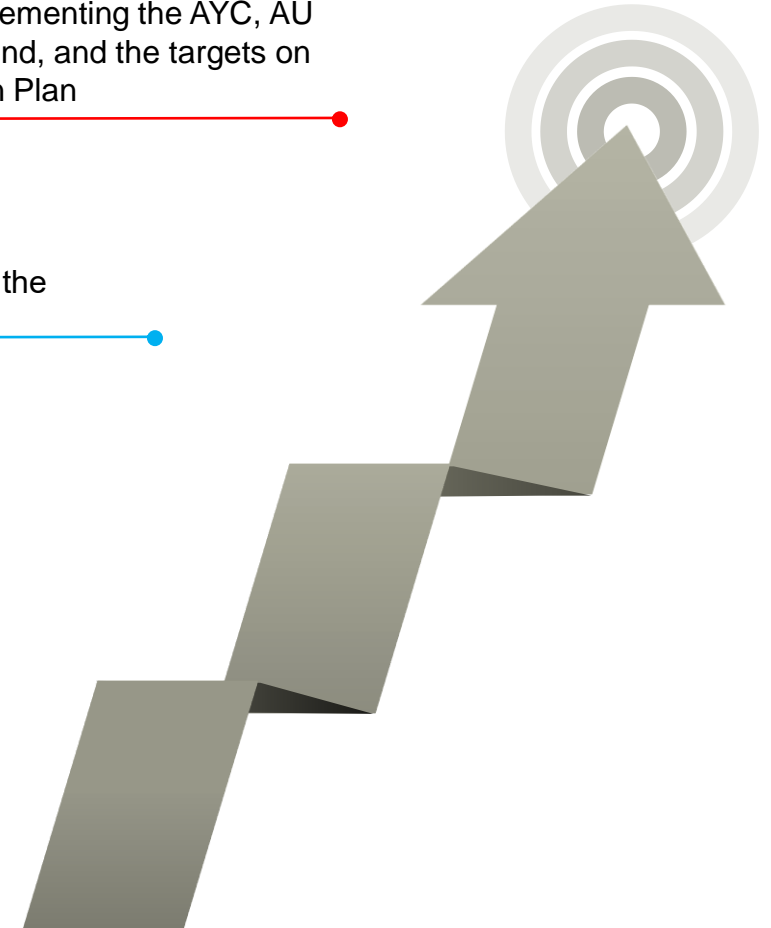
The continent’s strategic framework for the socio-economic transformation of the continent within 50 years where the full potential of women and youth are realized.

The African Youth Decade Plan of Action (DPoA) 2009-2018

A framework for multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional engagement of all stakeholders towards the achievement of the goals and objectives of the African Youth Charter.

African Youth Charter (AYC) 2006

a political and legal document which serves as the strategic framework that gives direction for youth empowerment and development at continental, regional and national levels.



African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (APAYE) - Key strategic actions and deliverables

- Mechanisms, platforms, policy and programmatic frameworks and guidelines for the delivery of continental flagships.
- Implement the "1 Million by 2021 Initiative..."

Strengthen foundations of youth programming

Catalyze action at Member State level

Implementation of continental flagship programmes

- Framework and strategy to accelerate youth programming in Member States (Country Acceleration Strategy).
- Multi-sectoral technical support team to support Member States, AUC Departments, AU Organs and RECs to mainstream the youth agenda across sectors.

- Alternative pathways/models for learning and skills development, work-based learning opportunities, scholarships
- Nurturing entrepreneurs, leadership programmes, mentorship
- Campaigns on mental health

The One Million by 2021 Initiative

Provide **One million African Youth** with opportunities in **Education, Entrepreneurship, Employment and Engagement** by 2021

Out of school & skills mismatch

Access, quality, relevant education as well as options to build skills are lacking for young people. There is often reported mismatch between education and labour market needs.

Unemployment

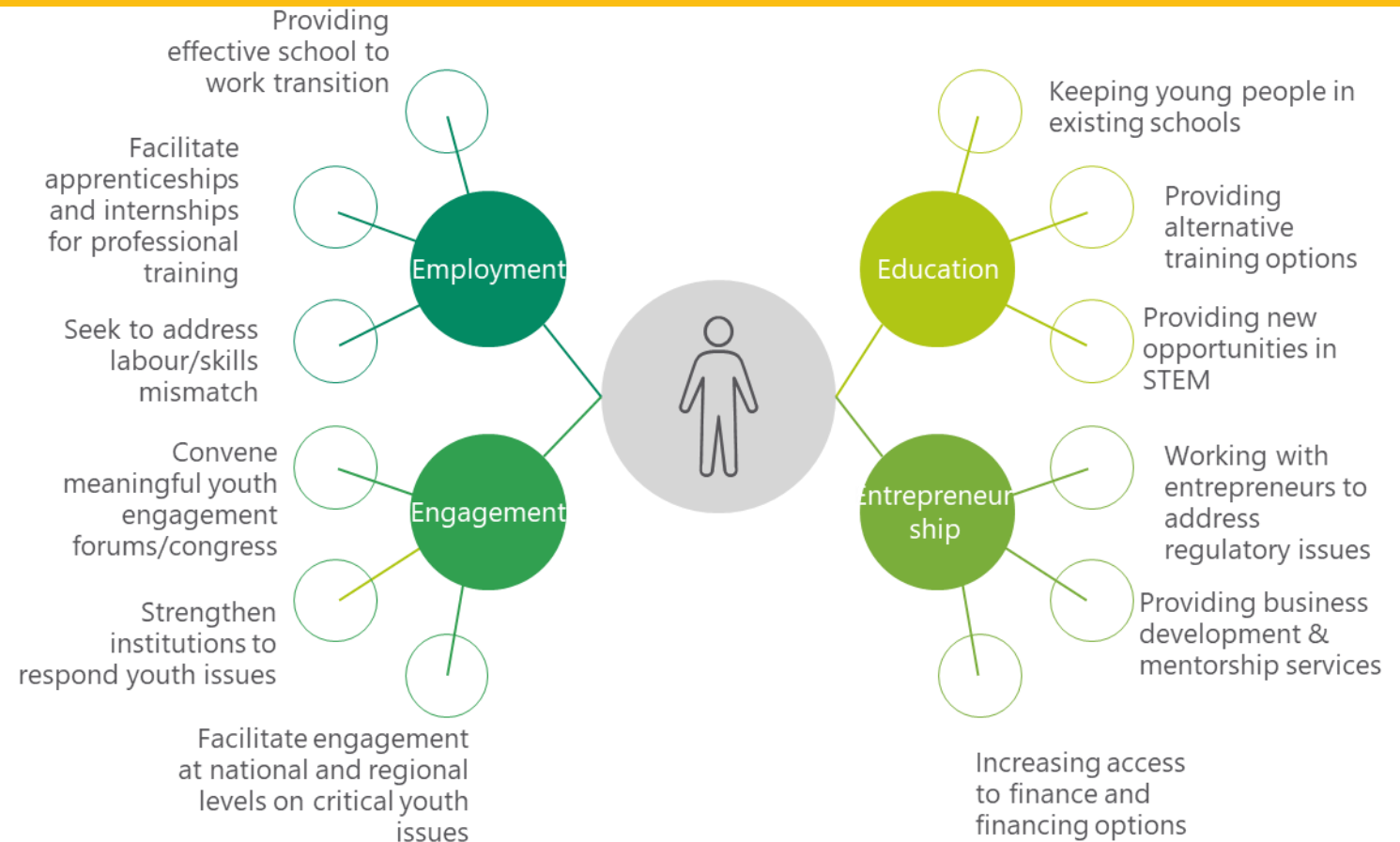
In most African countries, unemployment is especially high among young people. A lot of interventions around jobs are often not co-designed with employers of labour in the private sector.

Health & Wellbeing

Young people continue to face unique challenges health and well being, particularly mental health, SRHR, substance abuse, etc

Inequality & Disempowerment

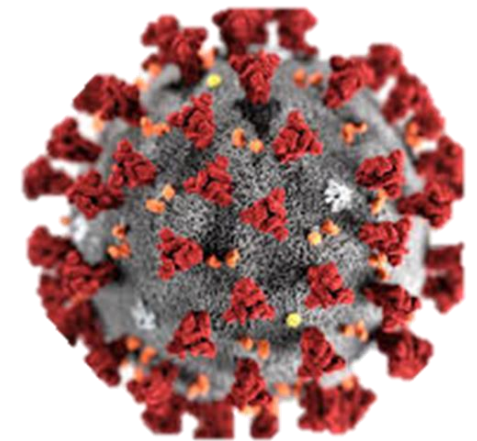
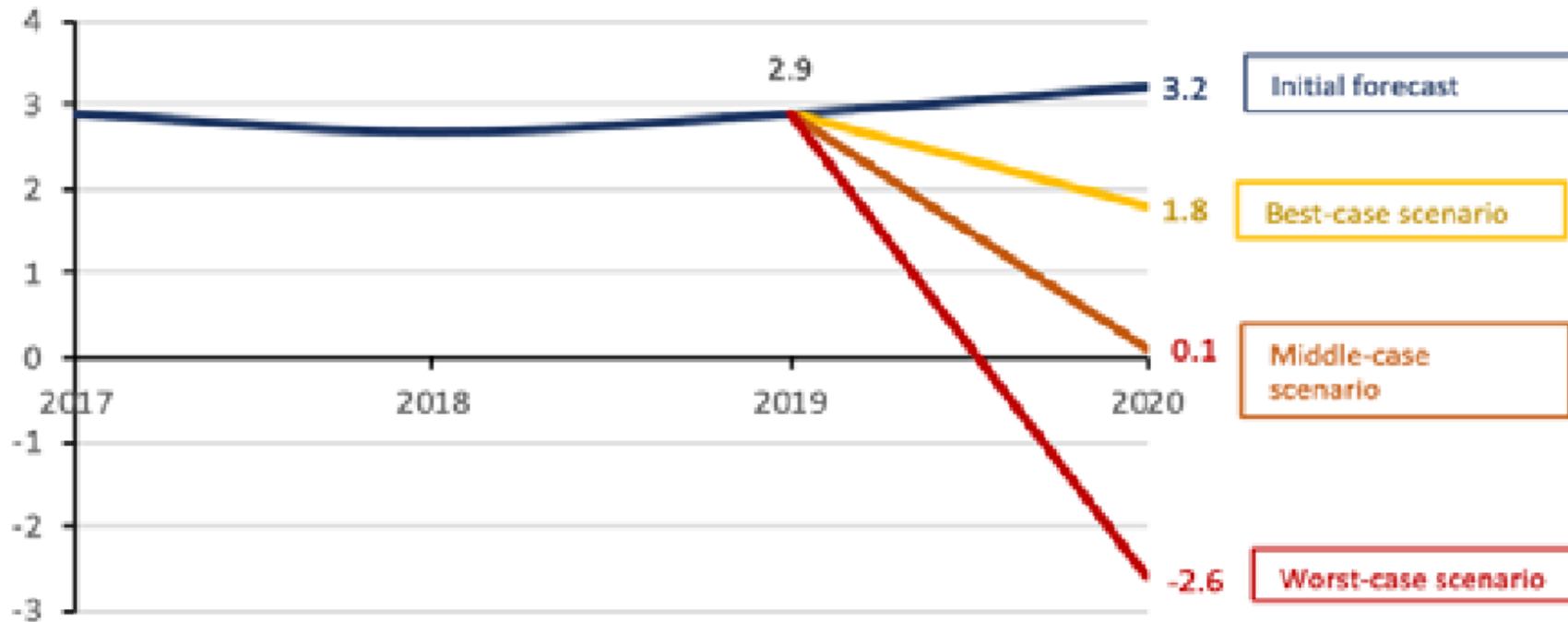
Young people continue to face unique challenges health and well being, particularly mental health, SRHR, substance abuse, etc



COVID-19 Pandemic and Youth in Africa

- With reduction in Africa's 2020 GDP growth to 1.8% and up to 2.6% contraction, there's grave potential to erode gains made in various facets of youth development across Member States.
- The disruption of the supply chains and the lockdowns are resulting to huge unemployment and revenue losses and worsening poverty and inequality, with young people being the most affected.

Expected drop in growth from COVID-19 impact, ECA estimates



COVID-19 has affected the lives, livelihoods and lifestyles of young people in specific ways.

Disrupted Education

- Deepening poverty & inequality gap
- Exacerbate teenage pregnancy and dropouts
- Situation worse for vulnerable groups, PWD, refugees...

Unemployment

- Youth are in sectors most affected by lockdowns e.g hospitality
- Risk of poverty and attendant social ills

Health Challenges

- Toll on mental health
- Increase in domestic violence

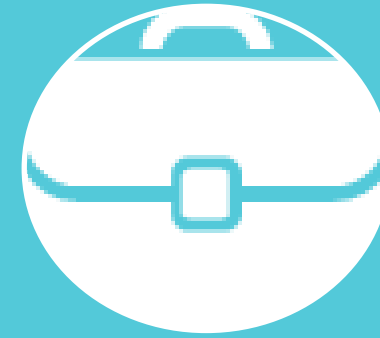


Scope of the Youth Response

It is critical to have intergenerational solidarity and collective responsibility as key to containing & responding to COVID-19.



Reducing health risk of COVID-19 among young people



Minimising the Impact of COVID on Young people

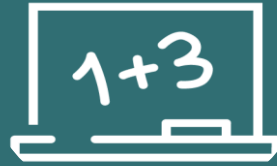


Mobilizing and engaging Youth to be responders





Scope of Education Sector Response



Ensure continuity of learning based on DOTSS:

Digital connectivity, Online and offline learning, Teachers as facilitators and motivators of learning, Safety online and in schools and Skills focused learning.



Documenting good practices and monitoring learning engagement and outcomes.

(Knowledge and experience sharing)



Plans to re-open schools, launch back-to-school campaigns when appropriate, and implementing education strategies to catch-up on the lost period of learning.



Ministerial Decisions on Education Sector Response: Virtual STC-EST 3



Continue Learning

Urged Member States to take advantage of the opportunity for online teaching and learning to ensure: continuity of education on the continent; improvement of education systems and robust e-learning infrastructure; ensuring quality and integrating lessons learnt and good practices from COVID-19 response as espoused by the DOTSS approach; and conceiving a model roadmap for post COVID-19 which integrates continuity of education in the different regional and national responses.

Plan for Reopening

Agreed to Plan for re-opening schools with appropriate strategies to catch-up on the lost period of learning by identifying time periods for catching-up on work and implement back to school campaigns and measures to curb further infections in educational institutions including schools, universities and colleges. To this end, Ministries of Education should work closely with ministries of finance to safeguard the education sector funding including establishing a Contingency Fund for Education in emergencies.

Monitor, Learn, Improve

Agreed to Document the impact of school closures on children, girls, disabled persons and vulnerable populations, including those living in vulnerable conditions such as refugees, migrants, IDPs and asylum seekers. Member states should also document good practices, and monitor learning engagement with support from local and international partners, and with the view of sharing information with AUC to facilitate inter-country learning and up scaling of good practices.

AUC Ongoing Initiatives

Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA)

- Aims at strengthening occupational prospects of young people in Africa by financing skills development projects. (Grants between 0.2 – 3 Million Euros)
- Development of African Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF).
- Strengthening Skills anticipation and Labour Market Information Systems

AU Young Professionals Programme

- Aimed at Providing meaningful opportunities for young Africans to engage with the AU and gain crucial professional and leadership skills
- Comprises African Union Youth Volunteer Corps (AUYVC), Junior Professional programme, internships, Fellowships, Exchange Programmes and Leadership & Mentorship programmes

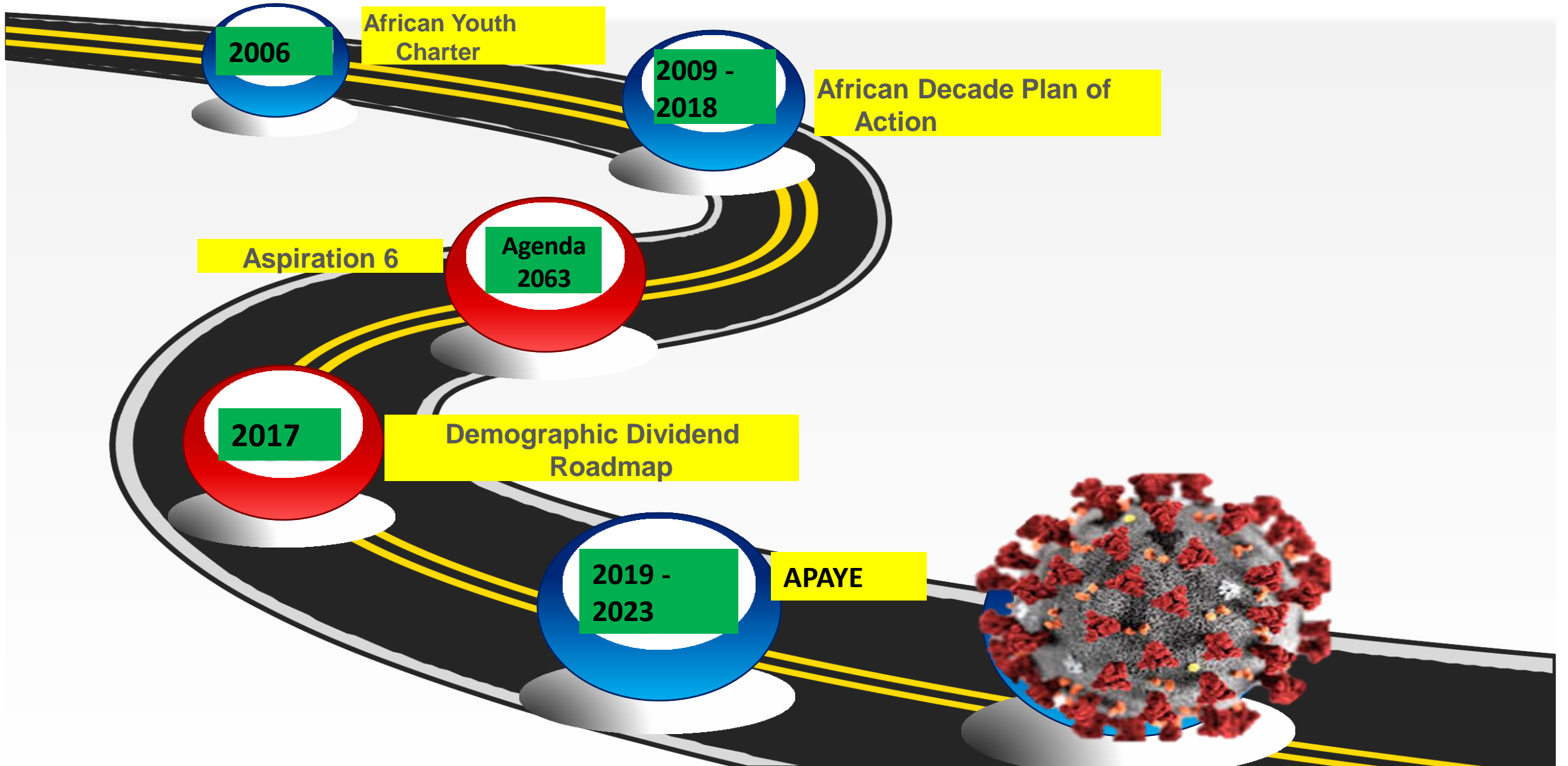
Youth Engagement

- Developing a framework, toolbox and methodology to provide guidance and standards for youth engagement in Africa. (Ongoing Africa Youth Month activities)
- Virtual engagement with young people across Africa, leveraging youth and partner networks

Opportunities and Conclusions

- Africa's youth are pivotal to its growth and sustainable development. It is important that a wholistic and integrated approach is adopted to build resilience.
- To fully exploit the potential demographic dividend, Governments need to increase investments in Education, Employment creation, Engagement, Health, among other key enablers eg infrastructure.
- Strengthening coordination mechanisms that ensures mutual accountability and strong alignment of key stakeholder efforts on continental youth priorities.
- It is critical to foster innovation, entrepreneurship and technology to transform challenges of COVID-19 into opportunities.
- Working with stakeholders in building an evidence base on progress and what works to inform policy and programmatic imperatives.

Journey ahead





THANK YOU