



FIRST INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON INNOVATION IN HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Health, Demographic Dividend and Economic Emergence

SUMMARY PRESENTATION OF THE TOPIC

African countries have experienced sustained economic growth over the past decade. Yet, nearly two in three people in Africa still live with less than 2 dollars a day. Experts are unanimous in recognizing that if these countries do not address the problem of very young population structure through family planning, education, and other investments that contribute to smaller size families and better health, they will not reach their full potential for economic growth that passes through a demographic dividend.

According to D. Bloom, the “Asian miracle” is the result of a favorable convergence of demographic, economic and social, including the fastest increase of labor related to population growth, which allowed an increased rates of savings and improved investment in human resources.

The demographic dividend is the acceleration of economic growth resulting from a rapid decline in fertility of a country and the subsequent evolution of the age structure of the population. It occurs when the falling birth rate leads to changes in the age distribution of a population. This means that less investment is necessary to meet the needs of the younger age groups and adults are relatively more numerous in the population of active people.

This creates an opportunity for economic growth and faster human development in a country, knowing that more resources are available to be invested in economic development and family well-being.

To achieve a demographic dividend, countries must make strategic investments in four key areas:

1. ***Accelerate the Demographic Transition:*** *the first step towards a demographic dividend is a rapid decline in fertility through investments in family planning in the health of children and the education of girls;*
2. ***Intensify the efforts to improve the populations' health:*** *the healthy children do better in school and such success contributes to a more skilled workforce. Youth health needs are one thing, while preserving the health of adult workers is essential to economic productivity.*



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3. ***Invest in education:*** *the education systems should aim to ensure that young people complete their education and the skills they are given should be adapted to the labor market changes.*
4. ***Implement economic policies and effective governance:*** *the economic policies and governance must promote job creation and investment in sectors with high labor intensity, promote the expansion of infrastructure and trade to ensure access to international markets, create a safe environment and encourage foreign direct investment.*

Policymakers at all levels should therefore, for this reason, have a better understanding of the relationship between economic development and changes in the age structure resulting from the demographic transition. This transition is also accompanied by a rapid increase in per capita income and thus frees up resources that can be invested to boost the economic emergence.

The partnership between the firm Convergence Health for Development (CSD) and the Institute for Health and Development (ISED), in collaboration with the Senegalese Association of Professional of Public Health (ASPSP), organized within the -7th SISDAK 2015 a forum on "Health, Demographic Dividend and Economic Emergence" . This forum is meant to be a regional or even international platform for sharing experience, expertise of decision makers and actors in the development of different sectors on all matters related to the most promising levers to accelerate the achievement of the demographic dividend, condition of the economic emergence in Senegal and other countries in the sub-region. It is placed under the aegis of the Ministries of Health and Social Action (MSAS) and the permanent sponsorship of the West African Health Organization (WAHO).

The topics to be covered by the forum include health; prioritizing reproductive health and especially family planning; education; particularly girls' education; demographic transition and its consequences; economy; remunerative jobs creation, mostly for youth; good governance, gender; focusing on strengthening women economic and decision-making power. The actors at all levels in these sectors are urged to come and share their experiences, studies and projects in the various selected areas to draw the best practices to follow in that path leading to the demographic dividend for true economic emergence of Senegal and other countries in the sub-region.

The organizing comity

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