



Ensuring rights and choices for all

# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON **FAMILY PLANNING**

NEWSLETTER

**YOUTH PRE-CONFERENCE** 10 November 2018







# ALL ABOUT YOUTH AND FAMILY PLANNING

The 5th International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP) is being held in Kigali Rwanda and as slated it is to be held from the 12th to 15th of November.

The conference which is held every two years remains the largest scientific conference on reproductive health and family planning. Its significance stems from its ability to avail opportunities for political leaders, scientists, researchers, policymakers, advocates, and young people to disseminate knowledge, celebrate successes, and identify next steps toward reaching the goal of enabling an additional 120 million women to access voluntary, quality contraception by 2020.

The first day of the conference kicked off with the Youth Pre-conference where young people shared ideas on what is still hindering the use of family planning among young people and what should be done to address them.

Young people's beliefs and decisions about family planning are critical to their sexual and reproductive health and rights yet too often young people face obstacles that limit their access to modern contraceptive methods of their choice.

It is in this line that UNFPA has sought a tight grip on handling these challenges. It has strategized to represent a strong commitment towards supporting human rights of young people such that they realize their full potential. The goal is to ensure that adolescents and youth access rights to sexual and reproductive health.

UNFPA contributes to the advancement of adolescents and youth through enabling evidence-based advocacy for comprehensive policy and programme development, investment and implementation; Promotion of comprehensive sexuality education, building capacity for sexual and reproductive health service delivery among others.

The youth who were part of the ICPF seem to be walking with the tide by making an effort to understand what accessing family planning means to society and most importantly take lead in addressing the challenges obstructing them from accessing the services.

Richard Lusimbo an employee with Right Here Right Now a sexual reproductive health platform for young people in Uganda said it is important that the youth understand that they are part of the conversation on family planning.

“As young people we need to be brought on the table, this is the key thing. The young population is the biggest in Africa and we are going to be responsible for the future which means we need to be able to plan and guide ourselves on how to lead our







lives. Being part of the family planning conversation helps us to really achieve a lot, meaningful engagement supports interventions planned," he said.

Hussein Mulere, Vice President of RPHIA East and Southern Africa said changing the mindset of young people on how best they can use innovation to tackle the challenges of family planning is the way to go.

"We need to move from the conventional ways of doing things into innovation, for example planning on how we can bring reliable information to the youth. So we are here not to just be part of the conference but also to be part of the solution."

Rosemary Nasser a participant from Tanzania said her dream is to see girls who dropped out of school due to pregnancy attain an education.

"In my country when a girl gets pregnant she is kicked out of school and this has happened to my family where my young sister who was 17 years old had to drop out of school after getting pregnant, she never got a chance to get back to school. I feel like I failed her, I feel like the system failed her."

Nasser wants to start an initiative where she will work with the girls alongside the government and ensure that young girls have a chance to attain education regardless of such unfortunate circumstances.

Olga Namukuza a Youth Country Coordinator for sexual and reproductive health rights alliance in Uganda said that the sessions have been inspiring to see the youth strive to voice out their opinions.



She pointed out the issue of teenage pregnancy saying that in Uganda it is still a big challenge yet there is presence of restrictive policies that don't allow access to contraceptive for young people.

"I believe that young people who are sexually active should be given options of the different methods that help them plan for their future and help them safeguard their lives which in the end will help them contribute to national development."

**Sandrine Uwasingize** applauded the conference for availing such a platform for the youth and also providing such important information on contraceptives with the youth.

"Rwanda is now on a good level in regards to family planning and this is because of the continuous sensitization from the government."



**Shori Iradufasha** a girl guide plans to share inspiring stories she got from the conference with those who didn't manage to attend the conference.

"I want to encourage my fellow youth to use and know about family planning."

**Sylvester Nyombi** from Reach a hand Uganda said it is important for the youth to have a say on when they can have children.

"At this stage we as young people have goals and are still just curving out a future for us, this is where family planning comes in. contraception is key, we need to be able to use it, embrace it, change people's mindset and understand the relevance of this."

**Lawrence** from Democratic Republic of Congo said it is very important for young people to know about family planning and have access to these services.

"We need youth friendly services on family planning so that we can address challenges such as teenage pregnancies such that girls can decide when to have children."