

Guharanira uburenganzira  
n'amahitamo ya buri wese

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**UNFPA EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR, MS LYDIA ZIGOMO  
VISIT TO RWANDA DURING THE 2022  
YOUTH CONNEKT AFRICA SUMMIT**

**Connect · Innovate · Invest**

*[This newsletter has interlinked videos]*

# Investing in young people's health: Access to Sexual Reproductive Health and Mental Health

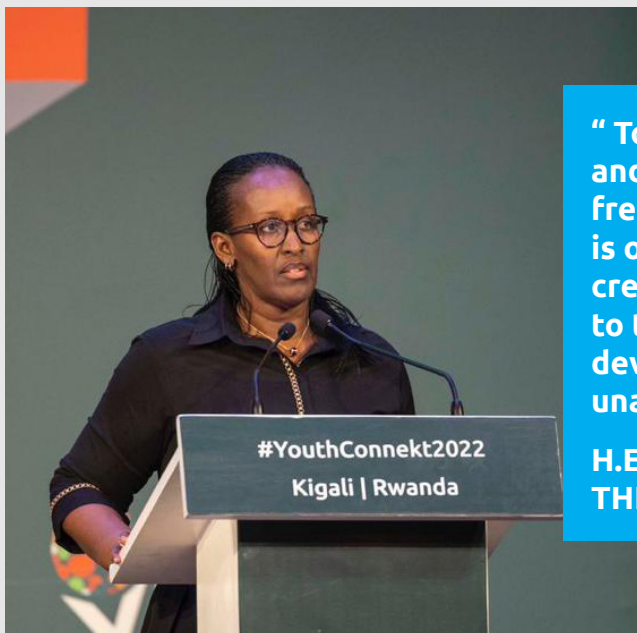


As part of the 2022 Youth Connekt Africa Summit, over 2500 young people from different african countries gathered in Intare Arena Auditorium in Kigali Rwanda, for a high level session on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Mental Health, organized by UNFPA and Imbuto Foundation.

Under the theme : ***“Investing in young people’s health: A call for Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Mental Health”***, this session was officially opened by H.E. Mrs Jeannette Kagame, the First Lady of Rwanda and discussed on investing in young people’s health with a focus on integration of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Mental Health in all approaches for their development as they are essential for the Sustainable Development Goals.







"Today, we connect through addressing sexual and reproductive health, mental health, and how frequently the two interact. The Africa we want is one led by healthy, ambitious, empowered, creative, innovative, educated youth; so to get to this dreamstate, we must look at the full developmental picture, leaving no problem unattended."

**H.E. MRS. JEANNETTE KAGAME,  
THE FIRST LADY OF RWANDA**

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"Scaling up interventions in SRHR and mental health is a necessary bridge to get to the much desired economic empowerment of millions of Africa's young people. We cannot ignore the human natural process of growth, even as we search for the higher ideals outlined in the SDGs, and the Africa We Want of the Agenda 2063"

**MS LYDIA ZIGOMO, UNFPA EAST AND SOUTHERN  
AFRICA REGIONAL DIRECTOR**

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"I learned from this session that we should be monist and not dualist when addressing and advocating for sound mental health and access to SRHR services. The two go hand in hand and are far better solved together."

**MR. RIVALDO KAVANGA,  
A YOUNG PARTICIPANT FROM NAMIBIA**

# A call for prevention of teenage pregnancies and mental health issues among youth

## What do young people think?

"We all have to come together as young people and invest in a broad range of innovations and technologies while tackling the problems around Sexual Reproductive Health and Mental Health. Let us Connect, Innovate and Invest! It starts with us, we are the today and tomorrow of the African Continent."

**MS. CHRISTELLE IGIRANEZA, IACCELERATOR INNOVATOR - URUKUNDO INITIATIVE - RWANDA**



"If the current teenage pregnancy rate is reduced, about half of healthcare expenditure for teenage mothers will be saved for other health related activities."

**MR. CHARLES TUMWEBAZE, CHAIRPERSON - AfriYAN UGANDA**



"What affects the mind affects the physical well-being and what affects mental health affects Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights."

**DR. JEAN PIERRE NDAGIJIMANA, SENIOR CLINICIAN FOR SOLID MINDS- RWANDA**

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## Sharing innovative solutions and strategies



"As we link health and economic opportunities, it is very important that we ensure that girls remain in school because it increases their chances to be economically active and productive citizens. Namibia is putting an effort in ensuring that youth and adolescents, especially girls, remain in school. The Ministry of Education and culture has developed the pregnancy policy that falls under education for all."

**HON. EMMA KANTEMA - GAOMAS, DEPUTY MINISTER OF SPORT, YOUTH AND NATIONAL SERVICE - NAMIBIA**



"Urukundo initiative produced Urukundo Board Game that avails adolescent Sexual Reproductive Health information in a friendly, interactive, and evidence-based way. The game aims to provide friendly, safe, trustful, and evidence-based Sexual and Reproductive Health information to young people in Rwanda. It includes 40 question cards & 40 answer cards on SRHR that can be played by up to 8 people at once at home/school/youth network for a period of more than 3 months."

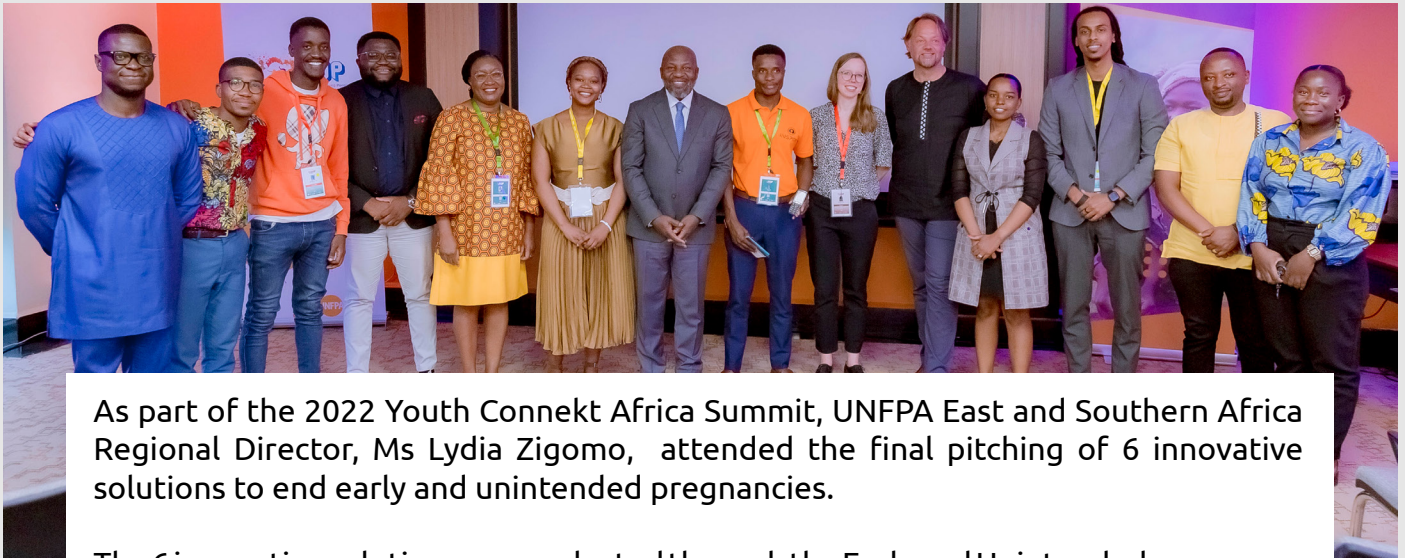
**MS. CHRISTELLE IGIRANEZA, IACCELERATOR INNOVATOR - URUKUNDO INITIATIVE - RWANDA**



"Zanzibar acknowledges the importance of educating young people in most areas where they can be able to stand and defend themselves and make sure that by using different youth agencies and development partners, those young people can be able to create chances to employ themselves so that they can be mentally active and economically well. These areas include Sexual and Reproductive Health."

**HON. TABIA MAULID MWITA, MINISTER OF INFORMATION, YOUTH, CULTURE AND SPORTS FOR ZANZIBAR**

# Regional Director meets young innovators as they pitch their innovative solutions to end early and unintended pregnancy



As part of the 2022 Youth Connekt Africa Summit, UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Director, Ms Lydia Zigomo, attended the final pitching of 6 innovative solutions to end early and unintended pregnancies.

The 6 innovative solutions were selected through the Early and Unintended pregnancy Hacklab, received an online bootcamp in September 2022 and were presented at the final pitching event at Youth Connekt Africa summit.

**FemConnect** by Ms. Asonle Kotu from South Africa and **Inspirelearn** by Mr. Sam Masikini from Malawi, emerged as winners and were awarded USD 10,000 as seed investment for their early stage venture. In addition, they will receive further investment readiness preparations support.

Interacting with young innovators, Ms Zigomo reaffirmed UNFPA's commitment to continue empowering young people with knowledge and skills and linking them to services so as to take ownership of their health and well-being.



**"Your innovative solutions are not only inspiring to us who have seen them today but will undoubtedly make a difference in the lives of young women and girls and the society at large."** She said.

**"Social enterprises like yours, have the potential to create jobs for the innovators but also other young people in your communities. This is the economic empowerment we aim to develop jointly."**

**MS LYDIA ZIGOMO, UNFPA EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL DIRECTOR**







## Regional Director, Ms Lydia Zigomo, welcomed by UNFPA Rwanda Country Office

The UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Director, Ms Lydia Zigomo visited Rwanda country office and interacted with staff members. The Country office presented its achievements and strategic vision for 2022-2023 to achieve the three transformative results focusing on research in addressing teenage pregnancy, innovative financing and data for development as Rwanda is undertaking the 5th Population and Housing census.

The interaction touched on staff career development and creating an enabling psychological safety environment.

In her remarks, Ms. Lydia Zigomo indicated that despite the perception around the UNFPA mandate, we remain patient, work hard together towards advocacy until the dream to achieve zero unmet need for family planning, zero preventable maternal deaths, and zero harmful practices and gender-based violence are met. Just as a pregnant woman waits for 9 months to have her long awaited child.



I am grateful to the UNFPA Rwanda office staff. I thank the government of Rwanda for its efforts in supporting the UNFPA mandate. Rwanda is a developing country with a good vision and good leadership. I thank each of you for your continued contribution in advancing CPD. Let's continue to strive for the development of the people of Rwanda and achieve the UNFPA 3 zeros transformative results.



# Regional Director's engagements on the sideline of the Youth Connekt Africa Summit

On the margins of the 2022 Youth Connekt Africa Summit held in Kigali, UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional Director, Ms Lydia Zigomo accompanied by the UNFPA Rwanda Representative Kwabena Asante-Ntiamoah, carried bilateral meetings with different leaders in Rwanda including the First Lady of Rwanda H.E. Mrs Jeannette Kagame, the Minister of Health Hon. Dr. Daniel Ngamije, and Minister of Youth and Culture Hon. Rosemary Mbabazi. She thanked them for the collaboration and great support to UNFPA work in Rwanda and appreciated their commitment to the UNFPA mandate.



*H.E. Mrs Jeannette Kagame (4<sup>th</sup> from the right), Ms Lydia Zigomo (5<sup>th</sup> from the right), Mr. Kwabena Asante-Ntiamoah (3<sup>rd</sup> from the right)*

## Meeting with the First Lady of Rwanda

**H.E. Mrs Jeannette Kagame**

Focus of the meeting:

- UNFPA appreciation to first lady in advancing the ICPD program of action
- Reaffirmed the partnership between Imbutu Foundation and UNFPA in addressing SRHR and Mental Health among young people.
- Working at strategic level to address teenage



*Hon. Dr. Daniel Ngamije (1<sup>st</sup> from the right), Ms Lydia Zigomo (Middle), Mr. Kwabena Asante-Ntiamoah (1<sup>st</sup> from the left)*

## Meeting with the Minister of Health/ Rwanda

**Hon. Dr. Daniel Ngamije**

Focus of the meeting:

- MoH support to achieving universal health coverage through innovative financing with UN partners.
- MoH leadership and support in monitoring the ICPD25 commitments.



*Hon. Rosemary Mbabazi (2<sup>nd</sup> from the right), Ms Lydia Zigomo (3<sup>rd</sup> from the right), Mr. Kwabena Asante-Ntiamoah (1<sup>st</sup> from the left)*

## Meeting with the Minister of Youth and Culture/Rwanda

**Hon. Rosemary Mbabazi**

Focus of the meeting:

- Reaffirmed the partnership between Ministry of Youth and UNFPA in youth innovation.
- Addressing teenage pregnancy

[Watch here](#)





## Meeting with the Executive Director of Youth Connekt Africa

UNFPA has been engaging in the Youth Connekt Africa initiative since 2017. At a time when the African Union declared 2017 the year of the Demographic Dividend and investing in young people that facilitated the development and launch of the AU road map.

As of today, with support from UNFPA West and Central Africa Regional Office, UNFPA Rwanda, the UNFPA East and Southern Africa Regional office has not only ensured presence of UNFPA in the continental platform that operationalized the demographic dividend and investing in young people but has expanded its footprint serving as member of the YCA Hub Steering Committee chaired by the UNDP Regional Director for Africa and the Rwanda Minister of Youth and Culture.

In that line, the Regional Director Ms Zigomo had a bilateral with the Executive Director of Youth Connekt Africa Ms Oulie Keita to discuss more on how to strengthen the UNFPA-Youth Connekt Africa partnership.







## Meeting the Tanzanian delegation

Ms Lydia Zigomo accompanied by the UNFPA Tanzania Representative Mr Mark Bryan Schreiner met Hon. Tabia Maulid Mwita, Minister of Information, Youth, Culture and sports in Zanzibar-Tanzania, who acknowledged with appreciation the great support that UNFPA is providing on youth development programmes across the United Republic of Tanzania.

The Regional Director and UNFPA Tanzania Representative discussed with Minister Tabia Maulid Mwita, the preparations of the ICPD secretariat and the High-Level Commission meeting, that will take place in Zanzibar from 10 to 11 November 2022.

the High-Level Commission meeting was established in September 2020, and is charged with keeping the 1,250 commitments to women's health and rights made at the 2019 Nairobi Summit on ICPD25.





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**Watch the full  
highlight video  
here**





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Sexual Reproductive Health  
and Rights Agency.**

**Delivering a world where  
every pregnancy is wanted  
every childbirth is safe and  
every young person's  
potentials is fulfilled**

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