



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



Wilton Park
Youth Dialogues



Report

Putting African Youth at the Centre of COVID-19 Recovery

Wednesday 18 – Friday 20 November 2020 | WP1847

In partnership with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)
and the African Union Office of the Youth Envoy

African Union  Youth
Union Envoy

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With 60 per cent of its population under the age of 25, Africa is the world's youngest continent. Africa's burgeoning youth hold the vast potential to make a progressive leap into the continent's prosperous future. The African Union's *Roadmap for Realising a Demographic Dividend Through Investments in Youth* highlights the necessary investments in education, employment and entrepreneurship, and empowerment for young people to access the opportunities offered by this unique democratic turning point. However, COVID-19 is threatening to derail progress.

School closures have disrupted the education of an estimated 75 per cent of young people, disproportionately excluding poorer learners that are unable to access remote learning. Restrictions in movement and subsequent economic crises have thrust young workers into greater vulnerability, as 93 per cent of young workers in Africa are in informal employment. Established leaders are often detached from their young populations. Yet the decisions adopted in response to the pandemic have profound impacts on the lives of young people in Africa and will continue to shape whether their futures are characterised by opportunity or vulnerability. In the intersection of crisis and marginality, COVID-19 has acutely and disproportionately impacted Africa's most vulnerable groups.

In the face of challenge and crisis, African youth have rallied to respond to the pandemic's impacts. The African Union's Virtual Youth Consultation Series on COVID-19 recorded the greatest concerns and ideas for solutions of 400 young people from 42 countries across the continent, harvesting their expertise and insights. These initial consultations were followed with inter-generational dialogues with African leaders, and social media dialogue reaching over 9 million people.

The insights are consolidated in the Policy Paper published by the African Union Office of the Youth Envoy on 18 November 2020, *Facts & Figures on Africa Youth Agency, Challenges and Roadmap on COVID-19*. This Policy Paper is the first youth- and Africa-driven report in response to the pandemic of its kind. The findings and recommendations of this bottom-up report, clarifying the concerns and priorities of African youth, set the table with a clear agenda. However, the question of *how* to take these recommendations from paper and into practice remain.

This crucial matter of *how* underpinned the discussion of the most recent set of dialogues in the ongoing Wilton Park Youth Dialogues series. Organised in partnership with the African Union Office of the Youth Envoy and UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, the series of three virtual dialogues took place from 18 November – 20 November 2020. The dialogues brought together into one digital room an expert group of 134 participants representing 26 countries, uniting government policymakers, international civil society organisations, academia, and young changemakers across the African continent. Each day of discussion focused alternately on a theme of key

importance identified in the Roadmap: education, employment and entrepreneurship, and empowerment.

“We need to use the fact that 60% of all Africans are under 25 as an opportunity to overcome the impact of COVID-19 and improve lives, create jobs and empower young people”

Executive Summary

The Wilton Park virtual Dialogues from 18 November – 20 November 2020 each focused on one of the crucial themes of education, employment and entrepreneurship, and empowerment. Across the three days, 26 countries were represented as over 100 experts from across civil society organisations, government ministries and academic institutions contributed their insights. The key objectives of the discussions were to:

- Amplify the outcomes and recommendations from the Policy Paper “Facts & Figures on Africa Youth Agency, Challenges and Roadmap on COVID-19”;
- Hear directly from young people about their experience of the impact of COVID-19;
- Discuss the response to date, sharing successes that can be replicated and identifying gaps where renewed action is required;
- Develop proposals for action from African governments, institutions and development partners, informed by the experiences and aspirations of young people; and
- Foster partnerships and create a network of institutions working together over the long term to help young people recover from the impact of COVID-19 to fulfil their potential and enable their countries to realise demographic dividends.

This report summarises the main points of discussion relating to education, employment and entrepreneurship, and empowerment, in the context of a youth-centred way forward for Africa’s COVID-19 recovery. Each dialogue was initiated by taking stock of the relevant youth concerns, priorities and recommendations identified in the [Africa and youth-led Policy Paper “Facts & Figures of Africa Youth Agency, Challenges and Recovery Roadmap on COVID-19”](#). In the plenary, participants shared examples of successful interventions. The discussions highlighted best practice, signposted gaps, and called for an enhanced focus in underexplored areas of potential. In smaller breakout groups, conversations focused on the scope for action. Participants explored specific innovations, partnerships, and commitments to turn the recommendations of Africa’s young people into their lived reality.

A number of points were consistently reiterated across the three virtual dialogues. These are summarised below as recommendations to underpin priorities relating to young people in Africa’s post-pandemic landscape:

Youth Leadership at the Centre

- The starting point is ensuring that meaningful youth participation is at the heart of all initiatives moving forward. Participating organisations must ‘walk the talk’ and lead by example.
- Tokenistic inclusion of youth is not sufficient; the expertise and leadership of young people must be harnessed at all levels of co-design, implementation and evaluation of policy.
- The language we use is important. ‘Youth inclusion’ can fall short of the necessary co-design and co-leadership with young people. ‘Youth empowerment’ can suggest that young people are not already exercising their power as innovators and agents of change. If the narratives we use constitute the world within which we live, young people should consistently be main characters.

Intersectional Understandings of Young People’s Diverse Experiences

- While young people in Africa carry a common burden of uncertainty, sharing many challenges with others in the same generation of ‘waithood’, youth experiences are diverse. ‘Youth’ is not a homogenous grouping, but one aspect of a young person’s unique and multifaceted identity.
- COVID-19 has affected youth in a multitude of different ways, as the African

Union's Policy Paper demonstrates. However, it is clear that the scale of these impacts is not uniform. Young people at the intersection of other existing vulnerabilities - across and within lines of gender, disability, displacement, and locality - feel the pandemic's consequences most severely.

- Initiatives must seek to uncover, understand and address the intersectional vulnerabilities of young people affected by COVID-19. The inclusion of traditionally marginalised young people is critical to a successful youth-centred recovery.

Holistic Approaches to Youth Priorities

- Alongside recognising the intersectional challenges facing young people, proposals for action must appreciate the multidimensional and interrelated nature of African youth's concerns and priorities.
- Interventions must be tailored to specific contexts. For example, access to e-learning technology does not remedy the exclusion of rural learners without a reliable infrastructure of electricity provision. Creating the space for youth-led innovation can harness the expertise of young people on their community's conditions but requires flexible availability of the necessary resources support.
- It is crucial to recognise that COVID-19 has not only disrupted young people's access to material and technical resources but has potentially devastating psychosocial implications. In working towards a more resilient future, the importance of psychological support, community networks, and mentoring cannot be overlooked.

Collaborative Partnerships Within Established Frameworks

- Knowledge should be treated as a common good, not a private possession, to enable all stakeholders working towards a common goal to reap the benefits of sharing expertise, learnings, and insights.
- There is huge potential in leveraging partnerships across sectors to address young people's recommendations. Partnerships across the public sector, private sector and local community can marry contextual knowledge, innovative leadership, and technical solutions.
- The collaborative partnerships of private sector and civil society stakeholders must work alongside established frameworks of the public sector to ensure long-term sustainability and the alignment of interventions across all actors.

The key points of discussion that emerged from the dialogues were accompanied with an enthusiastic interest for continued collaboration within the group, expressed by participants across a range of organisations represented. Following the consolidation of comments and commitments offered during the discussions, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) intends to propose how a core group of representatives can continue to jointly drive forward this youth-centred agenda.

Education

1. Participants outlined the concerns and priorities in relation to education, identified in the youth consultation series and summarised in the Policy Paper. Key areas highlighted included:
 - The marginalisation of learners, due to 'stay at home' policies taken by many governments during the initial outbreak of Covid-19, without access to affordable internet. Particularly affected are youth located in rural areas without the available digital infrastructure, or those from low income areas that cannot access the technology required for online classes.
 - The limited infrastructure, training and support available to teachers that have transitioned to conducting online and blended forms of teaching.
 - The exclusion of disabled youth from inaccessible e-learning spaces that have

"We risk squandering the potential of a whole generation if we don't act now to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on education"

limited capacity for modifications such as sign language or braille.

- The adverse impacts of ‘stay at home’ policies on female learners, who have been especially vulnerable to abuse, gender-based violence, early marriage and pregnancy during this period. Moreover, the lack of access to sanitary products and sexual health care has had further implications. The associated risk is of female learners not returning to education, carrying long-term economic and psychosocial implications.

Facts & Figures on Africa Youth Agency, Challenges and Roadmap on COVID-19

Recommendation 4: Increase, urgently and significantly, investments in digital infrastructure and democratize digital access and internet freedom

- Establish African Centres for Innovation and Excellence that can match education with the market needs through training opportunities, digital skills and infrastructure, in both urban and rural areas
- Increase national budgeting for education and accelerate the development of e-learning systems in delivering quality education especially for offline youth in fulfilling the commitment of Continental Education strategy for Africa
- Establish multi-stakeholder partnerships to invest in technologies that facilitate the digital economy and accelerate digital opportunities for youth
- Accelerate digitization to fulfil the commitment of African Strategy for Digital Transformation particularly for rural and vulnerable youth including accessible, affordable and reliable broadband
- Criminalize undue restrictions on internet freedom and internet shutdowns

2. Participants contributed their experiences of ensuring that youth are the forefront of the development of initiatives alleviating educational challenges. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs example of cross-sectoral collaboration, in partnership with Restless Development, demonstrated success in developing a set of principles for youth centrality for the Youth at Heart Forum.
3. The plenary discussion affirmed that the objective of the discussion is not to restore Africa’s educational system to where it was prior to COVID-19. Rather, the whole context has been transformed, and the scale of the solution must reflect a structural shift. Participants affirmed both the opportunity, and the necessity, to reimagine and restructure the educational system, yet ensuring that this not become a business venture as every person has a right to education. They stressed the need for research into what works in the African context, allowing scholars from the continent to drive the research agenda.
 - Successful practice was highlighted in the Aga Khan Foundation’s Scrum workshops, aimed at addressing digital divides and gaps in infrastructure. These workshops create a space for innovation, and a channel for potential solutions to be discussed between stakeholders.
 - The Aga Khan Foundation’s micro-granting scheme was also discussed, giving teachers and students the flexible funds to be innovative and responsive to local needs.
4. Numerous participants stressed links between the education system and other crucial areas of concern for youth, especially employment opportunities and representation. The interlinked nature of the challenges facing youth elucidates the need for synergy in approaches.
5. Participants highlighted a crucial need for soft skills to be incorporated within the conception of education, supporting the psychosocial development and school-to-work transition of young people. One analysis of the negative impacts of the pandemic on mental wellbeing pointed to the need for psychosocial but also sports to improve wellbeing.

“This is the time to reimagine, renovate, reinvent the education system”

6. Issues of data protection and privacy were discussed, and consensus established that new blended spaces for learning and communication among young people must be safeguarded from new forms of exploitation. Youth networks were considered as key channels for communication, engagement, mentoring and support in times of social distance.
7. One challenge raised during discussion was of the collection, analysis and dissemination of accurate data, exacerbated by the disruption of national censuses by the pandemic.
 - The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation’s partnership with the World Bank and UNICEF was offered as an example of the successful identification of focused targets and tracking of data towards those targets.
8. Suggestions from the breakout room conversations placed a focus on the development of macro-level frameworks to ensure clarity and commitment.
 - Contributors recommended that countries develop robust policy frameworks for all levels of education, so that all partnerships and donor-initiated interventions can be knitted sustainably into long-term policy at national levels. This is the time to **reimagine, renovate, reinvent** the education system and include parents as partners in this endeavour.
 - Participants called for greater research into how alternative education providers, including community schools and private schools, can be supported to enable, empower and advocate for young people’s access to education.
 - There was recognition that amid changes in budgets, a coalition of advocates should ensure that corners are not cut from educational priorities. Economic growth is hampered if there is a decrease in education investment

“Young people are saying that they would rather die from COVID than from hunger”

Employment & Entrepreneurship

1. The second dialogue, focusing on employment and entrepreneurship, considered topics of utmost importance to African youth, who responded in consultations that job security is their biggest concern. With 60 per cent of Africans under the age of 25, the continent finds itself at a unique opportunity in its demographic transition. However, without economic opportunities to absorb the growing youth population, this opportune moment risks being squandered, instead leaving a generation in “waithood” with financial and job insecurity.
2. The discussion on employment and entrepreneurship was grounded in an overview of the points voiced by youth during the consultations summarised in the Policy Paper. Young people expressed the following:
 - Drastic impacts of COVID-19 on the livelihoods of young people, exacerbating food insecurity, hunger and poverty.
 - Limited government support and financial support for entrepreneurial opportunities
 - Lack of inclusive government support, such a stimulus packages, accessible to marginalised young people including refugee youth, rural youth, and youth living with disability and HIV/AIDS
 - Expensive and inaccessible internet, exacerbating the challenges facing young people in the labour market due to ‘work at home’ policies, requiring an urgency to address this digital divide
 - Underpaid and insecure jobs in the agricultural and informal sectors, where young people do not have access to social security and health insurance
3. Youth perspectives on access to employment raised the issue of a misalignment

“Sufficient energy to power Africa is vital, you cannot develop a continent on generators”

between skills, technological resources, and jobs or entrepreneurial opportunities.

- Representatives raised the importance of technical training, soft skills development, and mentoring in education.
 - Discussion touched on partnerships between public, private, and community stakeholders to foster the development of resilient Africa-oriented industry.
4. The contributions of young people also highlighted the crucial importance of viewing issues related to employment through an intersectional lens, and of approaching these challenges holistically.
- The promotion of gender equality in Africa is on the decline, and young women continue to be marginalised in the labour market. Social norms, domestic and caring responsibilities create barriers to the entry to work.
 - Young women are overrepresented in the informal economy where they lack access to social protection and are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and harassment.

Facts & Figures on Africa Youth Agency, Challenges and Roadmap on COVID-19

Recommendation 1: Invest in youth-run innovation and Small and Mid-size Enterprises (SMEs) ensuring their sustainability

- Provide immediate stimulus packages to young people who have lost their jobs during the pandemic
- Increase investments in youth entrepreneurship and innovation by financially supporting SMEs, including: grants, loans, tax relief, payroll protection and loans.
- Certify and create legal status for youth innovation during the response to COVID-19
- Develop sustainable public-private partnerships that focus on the creation of digital jobs and enhancement of digital skills for the youth

Recommendation 2: Ensure food security through greater investment in young farmers and traders

- Strengthen higher education in agriculture by reforming curriculums to prepare youth to lead
- agricultural innovation
- Establish private-public partnerships facilitating grants, access to land and low-interest loans for
- young farmers to develop ‘smart’ farming methods to improve the food value chain through agriculture and entrepreneurship
- Create an enabling legal, regulatory and administrative environment for youth to actively participate in trade and opportunities of African Continental Free Trade Area
- Provide immediate financial and administrative support to organisations that fill societal needs during the pandemic, especially for vulnerable and marginalised youth

5. The plenary discussion reflected on the imperative of a specifically youth-centred approach to employment and entrepreneurship. Youth perspectives should be at the forefront of policy following COVID-19, as the pandemic has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of specific groups that must be better understood through meaningful social dialogue. Participants suggested:
- A gap analysis to see where youth leadership is lacking in specific areas of Africa’s response to COVID-19. Young people cannot be side-lined into solely ‘youth’ issues but must be central contributors in all strategic conversations

- across the political agenda.
 - Countercyclical fiscal policies to stimulate both the supply and demand side of the economy must consider young people as the receivers.
 - Policies aimed at reducing informality must make a strong effort to target young people, ensuring relevant information is reaching youth.
6. An overview of International Labour Organizations' (ILO) data on youth employment in Africa demonstrated that low unemployment rates for youth in the continent mask the real issue of a lack of decent work opportunities for young people. The crucial challenge is not the creation of a quantity of jobs, but rather the quality of dignified work opportunities that afford youth.
 7. Two sectoral areas were emphasised as particularly relevant as focal points for research, investment and development:
 - The digital economy has distinct gaps where a lack of policy and infrastructure usurps the meaningful participation of young people in its labour force. There is scope for the creation of an enabling environment for young people to contribute skills and entrepreneurship.
 - Supporting Africa's young people in the rural economy is important, as more than 60 per cent of the labour force are engaged in agricultural activities. Investment in the agri-food and agricultural sectors are key building blocks to prosperity for Africa's young and rural population.
 8. Alongside the need for decent job opportunities, one key question raised was how to enable young people as 'job-creators'. Discussion highlighted how youth employment and entrepreneurship programmes often exist outside of the sectors where meaningful opportunities for growth exist, such as industrial value chains and public procurement. This policy gap should be addressed to make functioning and fruitful markets accessible to the entrepreneurship of young people.
 9. Participants stressed that the lack of access to finance for youth without traditional collateral is failing young people, usurping opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship. A successful African Development Bank initiative, in collaboration with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was mentioned as an example of partnerships that can challenge task managers and investment officers to design projects using bank resources specifically designed for young people.
 10. Discussions highlighted that material resources must be accompanied with mentoring and coaching, supporting young people as people and not just entrepreneurs. This is especially pertinent for young women, of whom 25 per cent in work experience harassment. Partnerships and resources that equip young women to utilise their voices and networks for decent work environments are essential.
 - The Johannesburg Youth Employment Service (YES)'s example of agile, digital curriculums demonstrated the power of using apps to engage and equip young people. Additional modules in response to the pandemic enabled the quick dissemination of information relating to health and sanitation guidance, alongside meditative and reflective skills to manage the psychosocial impacts of isolation.
 - YES programmes using storytelling to initiate dialogue around sexual harassment at work also demonstrate the wide-reaching potential of using youth-centred platforms to foster healthier work environments.
 11. In smaller breakout group conversations, the question of non-traditional financing and holistic support for young entrepreneurs was further considered. Discussions centred around potential partnerships to support business development. There is scope for networks of youth entrepreneurs to support each other while capitalising on opportunities from aggregating platforms and e-commerce, accessing global markets of suppliers and buyers.

12. The discussions also reasserted that initiatives focused on decent and dignified work for young people must be both youth-led and intersectional at their core, ensuring that marginalised groups of young people are fully included and are not being left behind.
 - Organisations championing young people in Africa should lead the way in setting precedent that every strategy and initiative has passed through a holistic 'youth check' stage.
 - The expertise of youth should be fully respected, and young people should be suitably remunerated for the contributions and insights they bring to the table.
 - Examples of best practice from Solutions for Youth Employment (S4YE) at the World Bank Group were shared, giving insight into how meaningful partnerships with young people across different sectors can be structured. Key elements include a Youth Advisory Group that engage with the full impact portfolio, and intersectional thematic groups that focus on innovative solutions within the youth employment space.

"We need to stop treating young people as a problem but as a major resource for transformative resilience in our societies"

Empowerment

13. The third and final dialogue of this Wilton Park Youth Series focused on empowerment. Discussion opened with an overview of the consultation findings of the Policy Paper, voicing the concerns and perspectives of young people in Africa relating to empowerment. Youth expressed concerns relating to exclusion from decision making:
 - Lack of inclusion of youth in decision-making at national levels
 - Lack of access to engagement spaces with governments and policy makers in refugee camps, rural communities, and for disabled youth.
 - Lack of engagement in consultations on how to address specific issues that youth face
 - Lack of funding and resourcing to active youth-led and community-based organisations.
14. Participants highlighted the gap between Africa's youthful population and the majority of political representatives, leading to a sense of distrust between citizenship and leadership. However, youth representatives suggested scope for intergeneration co-leadership across this dichotomy, so that young people understand and engage with the political challenges of their societies and do not become products of a failing system.
15. The interlinked aspects of empowerment with other topics of discussion throughout the series of dialogues were underlined. Barriers to youth empowerment also exacerbate the effects of inequalities highlighted in the two previous dialogues. The digital divide across rural and urban, vulnerabilities across lines of gender, and educational access across abilities and disabilities are all products of which voices are heard, and which are ignored. There was a clear agreement that true empowerment for youth means that all youth, in their diversity, have a seat at the table.

Recommendation 8: Ensure greater inclusion of African youth in public service and governance

- Lower age requirements for entering government contesting for electoral positions including removal of economic barriers namely high candidacy fees or allow waivers for young electoral candidates
- Introduce and enforce youth quotas at every level of government and public service
- Appoint young technocrats and Special Advisors/Envoys for support at every level of government in order to drive innovation
- Strengthen and democratize National Youth Councils and youth parliaments among other structures to ensure youth contributions across all sectors of government and policies

16. The plenary discussed the imperative placement of young people at the centre of decision making. Government and inter-governmental organisations were encouraged to be the pioneers of youth inclusion, where young people are enabled and trusted to co-lead.
 - The partnership between Restless Development the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs was noted as an example of successfully creating a space for co-leadership between young people, civil society and government. The youth-led research approach, which reached young people across marginalised groups, culminated in the principles from the Dutch MFA's Youth at Heart forum. These principles have since been endorsed by actors including the World Bank and the Unilever Foundation, pledging to put young people at heart of action moving forward.
 - Sierra Leone's government was also explored as an example of youth-centred leadership within governmental institutions. Leadership is reflective of the country's youthful population and adopts a bottom-up approach to channel young people into decision-making at all levels of governance.
17. Existing power dynamics can be reproduced through channels of youth participation, and discussion explored how the entrenchment of established power in youth councils can hinder participation. Instead of exalting the insights of young people, they may be used to manipulate support or suppress the power of youth. Participants raised the question of how monitoring mechanisms can be used, in order to make sure donors are not propping up manipulative mechanisms.
18. Participants explored the capacity of language to empower or disempower. Youth representatives voiced unease with the language of 'inclusion' which negates youth-led approaches. Conversely, 'partnership' gives ownership to young people as expert stakeholders and not solely beneficiaries, transferring power back to youth. Alongside this, it was stressed that there needs to be an end to securitising the challenges impacting Africa's youth population. Instead young people should be treated as a major resource for transformative resilience in our societies.
19. Discussion turned to consider concrete suggestions for strengthening and financing youth leadership, including partnerships and strategies. Suggestions to innovate alternatives to colonial grant-based funding streams were forwarded. Innovative practice was demonstrated in the example of the USAID Global Leadership and Education Advancing Development (Global LEAD) Initiative, which supports the capacity and commitment of emerging young leaders to become partners in building self-reliant communities.
20. The breakout room discussions allowed participants to further discuss scope for

concrete action towards youth empowerment across stakeholders. The importance of ensuring that the diverse perspectives of youth across Africa are meaningfully fed into the development of bottom-up solutions was continually stressed. Including those youth who lack access and agency, but who may have extraordinary insights, such as those in prisons or in gangs, was also highlighted.

- Conversation highlighted that organisations need to share resources and platforms with youth leaders, but also ensure that policy-heavy language within these resources is made fully accessible to young people.
- The point was made to build on what exists already and to not reinvent the wheel; there are already a great many successful initiatives that should be adopted or scaled up- in particular building on the recommendations of '[The Missing Peace: Independent Progress Study on Youth, Peace and Security](#)'. COVID 19's impact mirrors the structural violence of exclusion that young women and men describe in the report. Many of the solutions put forward in the Youth ,Peace and Security space with strategies around inclusion, investment in resilience and partnerships alongside supporting , financing and protecting youth leadership, offer unique and powerful solutions for sustaining peace and empowering young people in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Rather than adopting a siloed approach, participants suggested the value of mapping existing initiatives across different stakeholders in order to build upon existing youth initiatives and networks in partnership.

Conclusion

COVID-19 has accelerated the urgency with which a youth-centred structural change across African institutions is needed. While the diverse experiences of young people have been united under a common uncertainty, the pandemic's impacts have been felt most harshly by those at the intersection of existing vulnerabilities. However, youth-led initiatives in response to a need for data have already demonstrated the insight, resilience, and expertise that African youth have to offer.

This series of three dialogues focused on education, employment and entrepreneurship, and empowerment. Informed by the youth perspectives summarised in the African Union Office of the Youth Envoy's Policy Paper, the discussions stressed that holistic and meaningful co-leadership with young people must be urgently adopted. There was a call for greater integration, sharing and partnerships across all relevant stakeholders to drive forward a youth-centred agenda for Africa's COVID-19 recovery.

These dialogues scratched the surface of how the recommendations of African youth can be put into practice. However, along with the sharing of ideas and examples, from these discussions emerged a strong commitment from a variety of organisations across governments, civil society, and academia to continue these conversations. Moving forward, the FCDO will consider how this core group of youth champions can most meaningfully work together to support, engage, and partner with African youth.

The transformative resilience of young people is the most powerful tool with which to confront the pandemic's challenges. The commitment to put that recognition at the heart of initiatives oriented towards Africa's recovery will remain crucial. Only then will the continent be able to fully reap the opportunities of a demographic dividend.

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Wilton Park | November 2020

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