



Organisation of African First Ladies
Against HIV/AIDS (OAFLA)

Organisation des Premières Dames
D'Afrique contre le VIH/SIDA (OPDAS)

Concept Note

OAFLA event in the margins of the 72nd UNGA

Background

Established in 2002, OAFLA has evolved from a forum of ideas into an institution capable to lead continent wide advocacy movement to bring about changes in the lives of the African people. Over the last 15 years, African First Ladies members of OAFLA have been advocating for increased awareness on the prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS, improved attention to maternal, neonatal and child health and enhanced capacity of health facilities with cervical cancer prevention equipment and skills. In addition to addressing issues related to the diseases, African First Ladies have opted to address the root causes of poverty and inequality of women in the continent.

In line with its mission, which states *First Ladies of Africa advocate for effective policies and strategies towards the elimination of HIV and AIDS, reduction of maternal and child mortality and the empowerment of women and children, through strategic partnerships in the spirit of solidarity*, OAFLA has been working with a number of like-minded organizations, including UN agencies, the private sector and various philanthropic organizations to widen its partnership base. These stakeholders operate at national, regional, continental and global levels.

Over the years, OAFLA has been using the opportunity of a large number of countries and institutions represented during the United Nations General Assembly to advance its causes. OAFLA has seen its collaborators growth particularly in the private sector over the years since this platform has been utilized. OAFLA has also managed to find collaborators in First Ladies from other continents who joined their voices in advocating for improved policy frameworks with OAFLA members.

The 2017 OAFLA theme is *“Building on 15 years of engagement to harness the demographic dividend of Africa through promoting the needs of adolescents and their access to youth-friendly*

health services". This theme compliments the Africa Union 2017 theme "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth" and is in line with the 2016 OAFLA endorsed Campaign, All In.

In line with these themes, OAFLA together with its key partners is planning to organize an advocacy event in the margins of the 72nd United Nations General Assembly under the theme "Global Partnership towards Harnessing the Demographic Dividend in Africa".

Objectives and Rationale

The event is an opportunity for First Ladies to call for action among development partners and donors, the private sector and UN Agencies to insure adequate financial and technical support to the implementation of the Africa Union Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through investments in Youth (AU Roadmap). The event will provide an opportunity to:

- Establish a global partnership to implement the AU Roadmap

African First Ladies will use their platform to forge a partnership and to mobilize commitments (policy, service delivery, financial, etc) in support of the implementation of the AU Roadmap. The purpose of this global partnership is to ensure high-level, strategic, actions and results to ensure adolescent and young people's health and wellbeing so that they can support and lead efforts to harness the demographic dividend in Africa. The First Ladies will initiate the discussion with a joint commitment to support the establishment and promotion of integrated adolescent and youth friendly health services in health and education facilities across Africa, a key action of the AU Roadmap.

- Renew vows to ending AIDS by 2030

African First Ladies will champion communities' access to an integrated package of preventive and curative services that address the needs of adolescent girls, including immunization, nutrition, sexual and reproductive health and rights, education and livelihood generation. Thereby helping to ensure that, adolescent girls and young women particularly are engaged and empowered to be part of the change and accountability mechanisms, such as the All In Campaign.

Event Format

The event is expected to last two hours. It will include two panel discussions of 45 minutes each in which African First Ladies and other panelists will announce their commitments in support of a thematic pillar of the AU Roadmap, and in particular pillar 3 which addresses ensuring the Health and Wellbeing of youth, including through youth friendly health facilities for adolescents. High level announcements can be included from the floor.

A moderator will facilitate the panel discussions to insure an action-oriented, interactive and dynamic dialogue between panelists, discussants and participants present at the event.

Outcomes

The panel discussion will have the following outcomes:

- A commitment detailing actions to insure improvement in the mobilization of global partnership in sustaining the effort to Ending AIDS by 2030.
- Enhanced understanding of the content of the AU Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic dividend and advocacy, service delivery and financial commitments to ensure the AU Roadmap implementation.
- A publication outlined all the commitments made during the event that will be showcased through the OAFLA website and by email to all participants.

Participants

Participants expected at the event are:

- African First Ladies
- First Ladies from other continents
- Heads of UN agencies
- Representatives of the development partners and donors
- Representatives from the Private sector
- Representatives of philanthropic organizations and others
- Representatives from the media and communication/ PR specialists