

Govt told to plan for youth

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LIRA. The country director of Advance Afrika, Mr Ronald Rwankangi, has appealed to government and partners to create economic opportunities for young people because they are the "present and the future" of this country.

Mr Rwankangi warned that if government does not plan for young people, it would impact negatively on the country's development.

Advance Afrika is a northern Uganda-based non-government organisation, with its primary role being reintegrating convicts in communities.

According to the 2014 national population census, about half the population is under the age of 15. According to National Population Council Secretariat, the young age structure has important population and development implications.

It creates a high child dependency ratio that places a heavy burden on the working age population and constrains the provision of basic needs and social services.

"Imagine more than 55 per cent of the population [in Uganda] is below the age of 18. More than 78 per cent of the population is below the age of 30. Only two per cent is below the age of 60," Mr Rwankangi said.

"It means the country belongs to young people. It is the youth that will take care of this country. And I think it is important that we empower those young people because we believe they are the present and the future," he added.

Mr Rwankangi was speaking at a skills development and market access study validation and planning meeting in Lira Town on Wednesday.

Advance Afrika, in partnership with other organisations, conducted a study between June and July in the districts of Abim, Lira and Soroti, to assess the capacity and support available to farmers with special emphasis on cassava, maize and millet value chains.

The objective of the validation meeting was to share the research findings with stakeholders to, among others, identify capacity gaps and constraints for the stakeholders.

The meeting was attended by representatives from Advance Afrika and officials from Abim, Lira and Soroti districts.

The average age of Uganda population is 16 years.



Made call. Mr Ronald Rwankangi