



CONCEPT NOTE FOR THE 3RD AFRICAN YOUTH SDGs SUMMIT

1st-3rd July, 2020
 Accra-Ghana



CONCEPT NOTE FOR THE 3RD AFRICAN YOUTH SDGs SUMMIT

Date:
1-3 July, 2020

Venue:
**Accra International Conference Centre,
Accra, Ghana**

Theme

***Unleashing the
Full Potential of Youth to
Deliver the SDGs in the
next Decade***

Co-organizing Agencies:



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*



INTRODUCTION

The African Youth SDGs Summit is Africa's largest youth gathering on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Summit has witnessed consistent growth of interest and importance since its inception in three years ago among the youth and youth-related organizations, civil society, development partners, the UN entities, state actors, policy makers, local government, and private sector in Africa. This year, the 3rd edition is themed: ***Unleashing the Full Potential of Youth to Deliver the SDGs in the next Decade.***

The summit has evolved to become an important multi-stakeholder platform with focus on young people and their roles in achieving SDG Targets. The Summit has attracted about 2,000 youth and other stakeholders to deliberate on critical issues affecting the achievement of SDGs, while Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG) is committed to pushing further the summit platform towards an ever more inclusive, progressive, thought provoking and critically engaging programme, engaging duty bearers and young people to demonstrate beyond commitment to actions.

The 2020 Summit will coincide with the five-year milestone of the SDGs adoption. The 2020 Summit is necessitated by the fact that this milestone is a critical point of reflection while presenting the opportunity for a turning point towards accelerated progress which young people are leading across Africa. Progress must gain momentum to ensure the targets are met by 2030.





BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) constitute a shared international framework of development priorities to 2030 which aims to bring an end to extreme poverty, promote prosperity and wellbeing for all, protect the environment, address climate change, and encourage good governance and peace at global scale. They apply to all countries, including those in Africa. The core essence of the SDGs is to Leave No One Behind (LNOB) and therefore Africa like all other continents must endeavor to Leave No One Behind in the quest for achieving the SDGs and related targets.

The youth of Africa have a critical stake in ensuring the SDGs are achieved and a vital role to play in contributing towards their achievement. Gifted with innovation, imagination, energy and optimism, they are the key drivers of sustainable development at the local, national and global level. As the present and future inheritors of this planet, young people have the right as well as responsibilities to spearhead the sustainable development agenda and build synergy for a new system of development founded on knowledge sharing, cooperating and the prioritization of issues such as extreme poverty, climate change, increasing inequality, and a growing complexity of governance. Whilst the SDG 2030 Agenda requires African States to develop and implement policies and programmes to meet the challenges confronting Africa's youth, it is important for the youth to recognize they themselves have an active and integral role to play in their own development.

Therefore, the focus of the African Youth SDGs Summit is on the Youth of Africa and the SDGs. Youth development and engagement are cross-cutting issues in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) identified 86 indicators, among the 232 of the SDGs, which are relevant and provide information on the development of youth. The Security Council Resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), acknowledging that young people play an important and positive role in the realization of sustainable development, in the prevention of crises and in the advancement of peace.

The priority areas of this strategy for the youth included Engagement, Participation and Advocacy; Informed and Healthy Foundations; Economic Empowerment through Decent Work; Youth and Human Rights and, Peace and Resilience Building. Similarly, the vision of UN Youth Strategy is a world in which the human rights of every young person are realized; that ensures every young person is empowered to achieve their full potential; and that recognizes young people's agency, resilience and their positive contributions as agents of change. The strategy is based on the fact young people are critical assets for now and in the future and it is crucial to invest in them. The youth are connected to each other and contribute to the development of their countries through innovative solutions, inspiring and driving social and political change.

The African Union Agenda 2063 provides a coordinated framework for the socio-economic transformation of the continent over the next 50 years. It is built on and seeks to accelerate the implementation of past and existing continental initiatives for growth and sustainable development. The strategy has seven (7) major sections identified as "Aspirations". The Sixth Aspiration provides the framework for the development of youth in Africa. Sections 50 to 58 provide specifics on how the strategy intends to create space for youth engagement and development in the affairs of the AU. It is worth noting that Article 11 of the African Youth Charter of AU also provides framework for countries to create space for youth engagement in all activities of the country. It is imperative that countries in Africa comply with the tenets of both SDG 2030 and AU Agenda 2063 as far as the development of youth is concerned.

It is therefore crucial that the youth mobilize themselves to engage with their leaders on appropriate strategies to benefit the youth. The youth must demand from their leaders, as duty bearers, a place at the table where critical decisions are made. To achieve this requires capacity development for the youth, including access to information and skills to enable their engagement. With about 11 years to 2030, it is important for all stakeholders working within the SDG framework to accelerate their efforts, including strengthening the capacity of the youth to ensure that No One is Left Behind. This essential agenda will form the focus of the Summit.



PAST SUMMITTS AND TAKEAWAYS

From the Interactions of the past two Summits it was evident that the youth of Africa have become increasingly visible and effectively active in influencing national and continental policies with new ideas, philosophy and technological expertise if the space is created for them. Proactively they are engaging themselves in shaping the development of Africa using new tools of communications. They have the capacity to bring fresh perspectives to the present development approach and through critical thinking, innovation and their own style of communication, they can drive changes in their communities and countries as the future leaders. These are the kind of dynamics the youth are required to exhibit within the context of SDGs in advocating for the climate actions, influencing policymaking on education, health especially for girls, gender and inequalities and introducing new dimensions in the development approach through entrepreneurship, innovation and leadership. However, critical enabling environment needs to be created by State Actors to ensure that youth do not become mere passengers in their own development process. Key takeaways from the Summit are:

- Majority of young Africans continue to keep their innate high hopes and aspirations. There was a great deal of the depth of energy, innovation, creativity, resourcefulness and dynamism among the youth during the summit.
- Despite the above situation, there remain several mismatches between their expectations and the opportunities that are available to them. The youth expressed great distaste for the systemic and growing culture of corruption on the African continent, and how this has consistently frustrated their hopes and aspirations.
- They also expressed how government officials and public office holders continue to pay lip service towards the youth.
- There was inadequate information of the youth on SDG 2030 and AU Agenda 2063 processes and how they can engage on these issues in their respective countries. This will require more education and localization of SDGs.
- Youths were frustrated about inadequate funding opportunities and entrepreneurial capacity to set up their own business. The youth have expressed the desire to set up their own businesses.
- Leaders skills and organizational skills were also lacking among some of the youth participating in the Summit. This prevents them from leading and engaging on issues affecting in their respective countries.
- Lastly, there was evidence that there is inadequate interaction and exchanges between young people across countries in Africa. Many young people do not read or follow development issues happening in their next-door neighborhoods. This lack of interactions and exchanges is due to limited opportunity for exchange programmes, bilateral youth events or programmes within African countries as most government agreements omit components of youth inter-cultural exchanges. Additionally, the cost of Internet and barring Internet regulations in some countries restrict access to information, and to innovation and interactions among young people otherwise which could accelerate delivery of SDGs and development in rural African communities.

SUMMIT OBJECTIVES

The summit is expected to achieve the following objectives:

- o *improve awareness and knowledge among the youth about the SDGs and their roles in the implementation, review and accountability process*
- o *discuss the mechanisms and strategies for localizing the SDGs and ensuring greater ownership by the youth*
- o *develop new and strengthen existing youth networks to engage and monitor the implementation of SDGs*
- o *advocate for effective participation of African Youth in SDG programmes affecting them.*



EXPECTED OUTCOME

The summit will be designed to achieve the following outcomes:

- *Launch **Campus SDG Lab** to stimulate students' solutions on the SDGs across Africa.*
- *Launch **Youth SDGs Action Grant** to award mini financial awards and mentorship support to scale up youth-led actions on the SDGs.*
- *Produce final summit report highlighting key/emerging best practices and outcomes of each session.*
- *Adopt **Summit Call to Actions**- calling for accelerated actions on the SDGs.*
- *Adopt participants/country teams work-plans to localize the summit call to actions and launch national chapters of the summit.*

CONTENT

Within the framework of the theme for the summit ***Unleashing the Full Potential of Youth to Deliver the SDGs in the next Decade*** there will be six (6) sub-thematic areas with each serving as the focal point for grouping presentations and discussions to be made during the Summit. This is to facilitate effective implementation of breakout sessions during the Summit.

SUB-THEMES	THEMATIC FOCUS AREAS
A	<i>Youth Participation in Decision Making</i>
B	<i>Business, Jobs Creation and Entrepreneurship</i>
C	<i>Youth, Innovation and New Technology</i>
D	<i>Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights</i>
E	<i>Human Rights, Disabilities and Youth</i>
F	<i>Youth, Hunger and Poverty</i>
CROSS-CUTTING THEMES	
A	<i>Financing Youth Development</i>
B	<i>Youth and Climate Actions/Emergency</i>
C	<i>Gender and Youth Development</i>
D	<i>Youth Migration and Regional Integration</i>

FORMAT FOR THE SUMMIT

The Summit has been designed to be interactive and learning event based on the experiences of participants including resources from different countries in Africa. To achieve this target, there will be a combination of high level plenary sessions, workshops, town hall meetings, exhibitions, SDG Youth Fair, open forum for young people to engage, discuss, learn and exchange ideas and establish new contacts and networks that will go a long way to activate the power of the youth to accelerate SDG implementation, monitoring and accountability.

The official opening of the summit will include a key note address by ***the President of Ghana, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo who is also the Co-chair of UN Eminent Group of Advocates for the SDGs.*** Other high-profile dignitaries will also be invited to address and interact with the Summit Participants.

PARTICIPATION

The 3rd African Youth SDGs Summit will bring together about 1,500 delegates from across Africa and beyond representing youth leaders, state actors, experts in fields relevant to the SDGs, local and international organizations, UN entities, development partners, the media and the private sector. Pre-registration is required through www.youthsdgssummit.org.



LANGUAGE

All sessions will be held in English. Simultaneous interpretation in French and Portuguese will be provided in the keynote sessions, high-level sessions and all the parallel sessions held in the main auditorium.

COORDINATION/SECRETARIAT

The Summit shall be jointly organized by Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Ministry of Planning (Ghana) in consultation with other partner organizations, the UN System and the CSO Platform on SDGs Ghana.

SUMMIT PRINCIPLES

The Summit will adopt principles such as gender equality/equal representation (e.g. no male only panels) and environmental considerations for printing of materials or plastic wastes. E.g. carbon off setting for printing and water bottles will be supplied to each delegate. Water dispensers will be available for participants to refill their water bottles.



IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY

The implementation process consists three phases-

- a) Pre-Summit awareness activities
- b) The Summit
- c) Post-Summit follow-up

a) Pre-Summit awareness activities

An action plan would be developed for the pre-summit activities. This will include awareness raising on the SDGs, SDG webinar series and youth consultation to mobilize and inform the youth communities about the upcoming Summit and to solicit their inputs into the summit content and call to actions/outcome declaration.

b) The Summit.

The Summit is proposed to be a 3-day Summit. The Summit will open on **Wednesday 10th to Friday 12th June, 2020 between 7:30am to 7:00pm daily.** The Summit agenda will be developed and shared with partners for inputs before final publication/printing. Partner organization will be invited to apply to host sessions including plenary sessions, parallel sessions, side events and exhibitions.

c) Post-Summit follow-up

The adopted declaration/call to action will be used as the follow-up tool to perceive the High-Level Political Forum 2020. Youth Advocates Ghana in collaboration with partner organizations will facilitate the dissemination and sharing of the outcome in key national, regional and global moments on the SDGs. The final Summit report will also be published highlighting key discussions points during the Summit.

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG) is aiming for a holistic communication approach for the Summit. It will consist three phases of – pre, during and post event – activities. A comprehensive communication and outreach plan for national, regional and global level will be developed. This will include press releases, media briefings, Twitter chats, and monthly newsletter highlighting all the major events leading to the Summit and thereafter.

BUDGET AND FINANCING

Partner organizations will be contacted to take up costs in the Summit budget. Participants will also pay a subsidized fee to meet the cost of operations/mobilization, publicity and media engagements and pre-and post-summit activities. Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG), as the Secretariat of the Summit, will make an effort to raise funds from external sources as appropriate to sustain the Summit.

WORKING TIMELINE


The Summit is planned to be held from Wednesday 10th to Friday 12th June, 2020. The tentative timeline, mentioned below, considered various preparations required for the summit.



Activity	Timeline														
	Jun 2019	Jul 2019	Aug 2019	Sept 2019	Oct 2019	Nov 2019	Dec 2019	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	Mar 2020	Apr 2020	May 2020	June 2020	July 2020	Aug 2020
Conceptualization, mobilization and fund raising for the Summit															
1 ST Stakeholders and partners meeting															
Opening of participants early registration															
Pre-summit communication, publicity and outreach															
2 ND Stakeholders and partners meeting															
Opening of participants late registration															
3 RD Stakeholders and partners meeting															
Media briefing/launch															
The Summit															
Post-summit activities& next step															

CONTACT DETAILS

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