



YOUTH ADVOCATES GHANA

ORGANIZATIONAL
PROFILE
– 2024 –





About Us

Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG) is a youth-led and youth-driven non-profit organization working to mobilize, empower and advance the participation of children and young people in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ghana with reach across Africa.

Established in 2011, YAG has evolved to become a national organization committed to promoting children's and young people's wellbeing through community engagement, partnership and coalition building, national advocacy, youth-led research and international policy convening.

YAG is the initiator and host of the African Youth SDGs Summit, Africa's largest SDGs youth forum that connects young people to learn about the Sustainable Development Goals and empower them to contribute actively to its implementation, monitoring and accountability. The Africa Youth SDG Summit solidifies the mandate to invest in the power and voice of the youth to push the development of the African continent and improve the lives and future of the youth in the region. Through a country rotational convention, YAG ensures the inclusion of young people and the promotion of grassroots initiatives towards the attainment of SDGs. YAG is registered with statutory agencies in Ghana and holds special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Vision Statement

A society where children and youth influence decisions that affect their lives, enjoy their rights and assume their responsibilities as full citizens.

Mission Statement

To empower youth with essential skills and knowledge to advocate for their rights, influence policies and laws, and actively engage in decision-making processes, fostering an inclusive society where young people actively shape their futures and contribute meaningfully as valued citizens of Ghana.

Strategic goals

Empower Youth Decision-Making

Enable informed decisions on sexual and reproductive health, ensuring the respect, protection, and fulfilment of human rights for young individuals.

Encourage Equitable Services

Promote active youth participation, holding duty-bearers accountable for providing equitable and sustainable services for the well-being of children and youth.

Foster Business and Enterprise-Based Support

Provide business and enterprise-based support to youth SMEs and startups to accelerate job creation and active participation of the youth in economic activities.

Drive Youth-Led Policy Change

Empower young people to take bold actions and lead policy changes addressing critical issues such as climate actions, youth unemployment, and migration.

Partnership and Coalition Building

Forge strategic alliances with like-minded organizations, governmental bodies, and stakeholders to amplify the impact of our initiatives. By cultivating partnerships, we aim to enhance our ability to equip young people with the necessary skills and information for effective advocacy and policy influence.

Focus Areas

- Adolescent and Youth SRHR
- Youth and Climate Action
- Youth Peace, Security and Governance
- Youth and Migration
- Youth Innovation and Enterprise Development

Strategies and Approaches

- Youth-driven Campaigns and Advocacy
- Media and Community Engagement
- Youth-led Convening and Influencing
- Capacity Strengthening and Empowerment
- Partnership and Coalition Building
- Youth-led Research



YAG's Flagship Programmes and Initiatives



African Youth SDGs Summit

YAG is the initiator and host of the African Youth SDGs Summit, Africa's largest SDGs youth forum. African Youth SDGs Summit is a pan African platform that connects young people to learn about the Sustainable Development Goals and empower them to contribute actively to its implementation, monitoring and accountability. The Africa Youth SDG Summit solidifies the mandate to invest in the power and voice of the youth to push the development of the African continent and improve the lives and future of the youth in the region. Through a country rotational convention, YAG ensures the inclusion of young people and the promotion of grassroots initiatives towards the attainment of SDGs.



SDG Youth Platform on Voluntary National Review in Africa

Youth participation and development are crucial to the implementation and achievement of all the SDG targets and indicators. YAG has taken a lead role in facilitating youth-based SDG platforms in Ghana and across Africa. Through YAG's partnership with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), it is working with and mobilizing young people in Ghana and Africa to work in the SDGs' accountability process through capacity building training, networking and knowledge sharing to ensure the voice of young people in the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process in Africa.



Youth for Health (Y4H) Project

YAG, in collaboration with Marie Stopes International, Ghana (MSI), is leading the charge in Ghana to pilot a transformative agenda on social structures and Ghana's education workforce to ensure a safe launch and implementation of Reproductive Health Education in Ghana's education curriculum through the European Commission funded Youth 4 Health programme in Ghana.



Youth for Global Financing Facility (Y4GFF) Project

The project seeks to strengthen the capacity of youth-led organization (YLO) to meaningfully engage in the monitoring of the implementation of Ghana's Global Financing Facility investment case and also, increase evidence-based advocacy around the reproductive, maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health (RMNCAH+N) and NCDs. The project is being funded by the World Bank through PAI.



Free to Flow Programme

Youth Advocates Ghana works to empower adolescent girls and boys between the ages of 10-17 through the Free to Flow Project. Through this project, YAG educates both adolescent girls and boys on menstrual hygiene, sexual and gender-based violence while creating safe spaces to advance children's rights in schools and communities, and tackle the root causes of discrimination especially against girls.

SDG Innovation Challenge

YAG is part of a global consortium implementing the SDG Innovation Challenge. The SDG Innovation Challenge was created as a pan-African ideation space for young people to come together in developing and connecting practical solution ideas for challenges faced by their local communities at the grassroots level. The initiative has grown in capacity and impact since 2020, creating space and opportunity for intersection among youth activism, SDG advocacy, and policy-making. Innovation teams that succeed in the SDG Innovation Challenge will compete for award winning packages, continued support, prize money, global recognition and more. The organizers and partners of the SDG Innovation Challenge 2022 - include Youth Advocates Ghana (YAG), The Melton Foundation, GrassRoots Hub Ghana, TECHFARM Hub, Shibuka, and Spaceship Academy.

Youth for covid-19 Vaccine Uptake Project

YAG is in a new partnership with World Health Organization (WHO) for the Youth for Covid-19 Vaccine Uptake Project in the Bono East, Savannah, Western North and Oti Region. The project seeks to generate demands for Covid-19 vaccination, address myths and misconceptions around vaccination and promote the uptake of Covid-19 vaccination among girls, women and vulnerable groups in districts that have low COVID-19 vaccination rate in Ghana. The project is funded by the Global Affairs Canada through World Health Organization (WHO) Ghana.

Africa-Europe Youth SDGs Cooperation

Following the participation of Emmanuel Aemetepey, the Executive Director of YAG and Convener for the African Youth SDGs Summit in the annual RNE Conference in Berlin, Germany, hosted by the German Council for Sustainable Development, there is an awoken interest and call for collaborations between the youth in Africa and Europe. YAG further hopes to work with other youth groups in Germany (UN Delegate Programme and the German Youth Council) to roll out initiatives to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 17), which seeks to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. The partnership areas identified by the goal include finance, technology, capacity building, trade, and systemic issues such as policy and institutional coherence, multi-stakeholder partnership, data, monitoring and accountability.



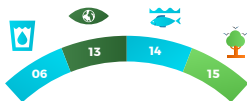
Policy Engagement

YAG sees an evident need not only to engage programmatically 'on the ground', but to work towards greater policy engagement with and on the youth's behalf. Such forums where YAG continues to explore deeper engagement include the African Union Heads of State Summit, COP, UN Commission on Status of Women (CSW), the United Nations General Assembly, the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, as well as the Commonwealth Heads of State Meeting. Limited resources coupled with systemic bureaucracies impede our ability to advance meaningful youth engagement. With this in mind, YAG is seeking partnerships with organizations to mobilize resources, develop capacities and explore joint avenues for regional and global level policy engagement using approaches such as policy briefs development, webinar series, policy roundtables and dialogues and side events, among others. YAG's hope is to leverage these platforms to raise young people's voices, a space for them to discuss their health and well-being, human rights, sexual reproductive health rights, access to education and their rights to have a promising future with dignity, respect, and inclusivity without leaving no one behind.



One Planet Project.

'One Planet' strives to work with youth in schools and wider communities in Accra and across Ghana to raise awareness of what climate change is, existing environmental degradation issues and what can be done to adapt to the situation. The project aims to address existing issues to reach towards meeting SDGs 6, 13, 14 and 15.



Proposals for scaling up

YAG continues to explore collaborations to scale up its activities on the SDGs in Africa. This will allow YAG to further expand on the following activities:



Scale youth engagement and participation on the SDGs through the annual African Youth SDGs Summit.



Initiate and activate youth engagements that galvanize political commitment and influence policy for a people-centered, just and sustainable development by leveraging on the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and Agenda 2063.



Build the capacity of youth leaders and networks to collect quality data needed to capture underlying development realities for youth.



Enhance state's accountability on SDGs through effective youth participation in voluntary national reviews.



Foster peer exchange between youth in Africa and Europe.



Ensure that young people are capacitated to lead and engage in multistakeholder councils and other processes meant to strengthen the implementation of the SDGs post the VNRs



Equip youth with the skills to leverage technology to create opportunities for collaboration and build networks and to also advocate for issues affecting youth.



Create a sense of ownership of the SDGs among young people.



Generate a youth paper position on the SDGs and Agenda 2063

Networks and Coalitions

YAG is a member and actively contributes to the following networks and coalitions: -CSOs Platform on SDGs Ghana, Women's Global Network for Reproductive Health, Technical Working Group on Global Compact on Migration, AfriYAN, International Falcon Movement Socialist Education International, TAPNetwork2030, Ghana CSOs Coalition on Migration, Together2030, Coalition for the UN We Need, IYAFF, 2030 Youth Alliance for Africa, Coalition of NGOs in Health, Global Youth Platform for Global Financing Facility, Global Network of Religion for Children among others.

Geographical Reach

YAG is a Ghanaian national organization with Africa-wide reach. In Ghana, YAG has presence and projects being implemented in Greater Accra Region, Eastern Region, Oti Region, Northern Region, Upper East Region, Western North, Savannah and Bono East region. In Africa, YAG has worked with other local organizations to host African Youth SDGs Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and in Lusaka, Zambia in 2022 and 2023 respectfully has also coordinated other regional events/meetings in Kigali, Rwanda and Niamey in Niger.





International Volunteers

YAG has had the pleasure of inviting numerous international volunteers/interns to work with the organization since its establishment. Whether arriving from a university, through an organization or independently, our international volunteers or interns come with their own individual skillset and expertise. Each visitor has something different to offer of equal value. Over time we have learnt to have an open and warm approach that encourages the visitor to feel comfortable to flourish within their abilities and to also push themselves to develop and get whatever they desire from their experience with us. Hosting international volunteers at YAG is greatly beneficial for the learning and development of both the organization and the individual visiting. It is desired for this mutually beneficial relationship to continue and thrive through an official proposal of a YAG University Partnership.

Working with Partners

YAG is aware of the enormous challenges that affect adolescents and youth, especially young girls in poor and traditional households and communities. YAG is aware that working alone on these challenges will not be easy, and she cannot make any significant dent on the challenge with even if it has all the resources available. However, working together with organizations, both national and international, who share in values and approaches, they could make a significant impact on the challenges, drawing on their areas of strength to complement each other's efforts. To this end, YAG will form strategic partnerships and work in strategic alliances to undertake fundraising through proposal development, organize joint education and advocacy programmes among others, to address challenges adolescents/youth face in this country.

Our Team

YAG works with a dynamic team of young people with different backgrounds and experiences in the area of youth programming, advocacy, social mobilization, digital advocacy, training and policy influencing.



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