

Youth4Capacity @ Africa Climate Week 2023

6 - 7 September 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya

Summary Report



Introduction

The **Youth4Capacity** programme hosted five sessions at Africa Climate Week 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya. Starting with a high-level opening and intergenerational dialogue kickstarting the Youth Affiliated Event that also featured three sessions that contributed to building the capacities of youth in collaboration with diverse partners (**United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**, **International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)**, **UNU Vice Rectorate in Europe (UNU-VIE)**, **RES4Africa**, **Official Youth Constituency of the UNFCCC (YOUNGO)**, **African Youth Climate Assembly (AYCA)**, **Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth (OSGEY)**, **Climate Investment Funds (CIF)**, **One UN Climate Change Learning Partnership (UN:CC Learn)**, **Green Africa Youth Organization (GAYO)**, and **Care About Climate**). Topics that were addressed ranged from community-led initiatives, policy development and implementation, energy transitions, and systems change. Lastly, a networking session in collaboration with **UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC)**, **YOUNGO**, and the **Action for Climate Empowerment Hub (ACE Hub)**, facilitated the engagement of participants in working together to identify the systems within their daily lives that have contributed to the climate crisis.



Key Messages

“

There's no greater agenda facing humanity today than climate action, climate adaptation, and serving the only planet that we call home

”



Hon. Ababu Namwamba,
Cabinet Secretary
Ministry of Sports,
Culture, and Arts-
Government of Kenya



Simon Stiell, Executive
Secretary of UNFCCC

“

Decisions made today have a direct impact on whether or not young people and future generations inherit a world in which they can thrive, not just survive

”

“

The most important thing when we look at youth inclusion is making sure that we're integrating youth across the full two weeks of COP28, which includes making sure youth perspectives are heard through our main key pillars of Adaptation, Mitigation, Loss and Damage and Finance



Wedad Al Hassan,
Head of Youth and
Education, COP28
Presidency

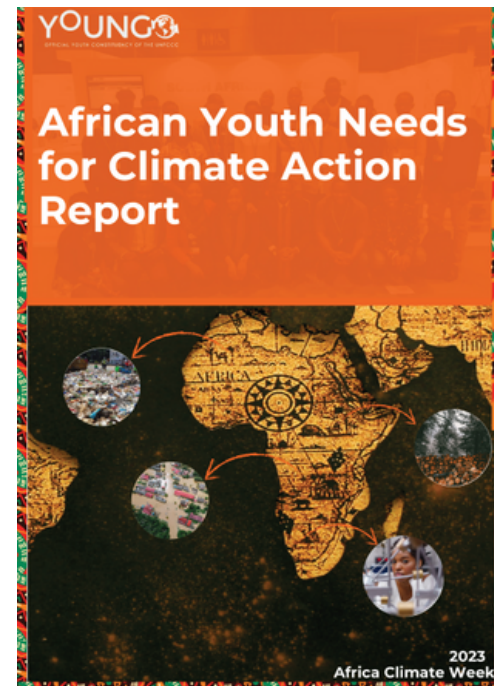
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Launch of Report

The **African Youth Needs for Climate Action Report** by **YOUNGO** was launched at Africa Climate Week 2023. The report contains results of a survey between 1st and 15th August 2023 and attracted over 260 African Youth. Through the survey, the Youth of Africa made a call for increased youth inclusion and intergenerational equity.

Key results include:

- Awareness to climate change which highlighted the need for more multilingual outreach, enhanced education, and promotion of local content.
- Climate governance and African Youth: youth have confidence in global climate agreements but lack the trust in government-led actions due to lack of transparency in decision-making processes and lack of youth involvement in decision-making.
- Challenges facing youth climate actions include financial constraints and lack of access to education on climate change, among others.
- Needs for action and support: educational workshops and materials, funding, networking, and mentorship.

**Intergenerational Dialogue**

The Intergenerational Dialogue was structured around the **African Youth Needs for Climate Action Report** by **YOUNGO**. The dialogue was moderated by Shamiso Mucha, LCOY Liaison and one of the authors of the report. The dialogue invited panelists to discuss the different challenges and needs of African youth in climate action.

Dr. Richard Munang (UNEP) addressed what can be done to bridge the intergenerational gap in climate action by underscoring the central role of young people in climate change discourse. He stressed the need for more efforts to be carried in bringing young people on board and the need for educating young people on climate issues, both formally and informally, to bridge the intergenerational gap.

Dr Eric Ogunleye (African Development Bank Group) discussed the approaches for intergenerational engagement by stressing the biggest asset for young people being their skills. He challenges youth to enrich their skillset and utilize social media positively towards climate action.

Christabelle Kisang (AYM4COP Youth Representative) highlighted what youth can do to have a more meaningful and effective voice by challenging youth to take initiative and learn how to utilize many free learning opportunities online. She shared her experience on how such programs have shaped her perspectives, skills, and experience.

Gauri Singh (IRENA) highlighted the importance of engaging and empowering youth in the complex global discussions surrounding energy transition and the necessity of united youth efforts in comprehending and shaping this transformative process. Many initiatives, such as IRENA Youth Forum and IRENA Global Council on Enabling Youth Action for SDG 7, have been established to educate and articulate the youth on climate change and energy transition issues for the purpose of creating informed youth leaders who can effectively engage with policymakers, bridging the gap between generations in addressing the challenges of energy transition.

Busiswa Dlamini (AU-EU YSB) noted the minimal contribution of youth towards climate change, regardless of being the most affected by it through job losses, unemployment, and poverty. She indicated that the participation of youth is central to drive sustainability and that this is only possible through capacity-building of youth.

Dawda Cham (Intergenerational Youth Climate Delegate) underscored the need of African youth to collaborate to have a meaningful voice in the climate change discourse. He indicated that youth must be willing to build relationships among themselves and their elders to enable the exchange of skills and knowledge.

Closing remarks were by **Francesco Corvaro (Government of Italy's Special Envoy for Climate Change)** emphasized the vital role of youth in addressing the challenges of climate change and acknowledging the efforts of young activists in their fight for a sustainable future.

Youth4Capacity#1: Youth-led Acceleration of Just Energy Transition & Resilience in Africa

 Watch the session [here](#)

During this session, the spotlight was on the crucial role of youth in driving a just energy transition and promoting resilience within the African context. The discussion centered around the initiatives of RES4Africa and I-ACT in the field of energy transition. The event featured an engaging workshop for participants and a panel discussion, emphasizing the significance of empowering young individuals in shaping a sustainable energy future for Africa. The session was organized by **IRENA Youth**, **RES4Africa Foundation**, and **UNDP Youth4Climate**.

Ester Wanza (**RES4Africa** / **I-ACT Kenya Team**) introduced RES4Africa, its goals, partnerships, and different programmes, including the release of the 2023 flagship publication **Africa's Energy Future is Renewable**.

Esther Githinji (**I-ACT Kenya**) presented the Italy & IRENA Action for Climate Toolkit and its six modules working on various topics related to climate action, including SDG7 & 13, adaptation, mitigation, and renewable energy while highlighting the role of youth within the programme.

Youth-led Initiatives Workshop

Samah Elsayed (**IRENA**) gave an overview of some of the key energy issues in the I-ACT toolkit by dispelling common myths about climate action and introduced a workshop for the attendees of the session aiming for breakout groups to develop their own proposals for a youth-led energy initiative and what to consider while developing such a proposal.

A representative of each group presented their proposal. The proposals included a plastic recycling plant, an East and West Africa clean cooking drive, a solar-powered bag to produce clean energy, capacity-building for green infrastructure, and a youth solar energy empowerment initiative.

Youth4Capacity#1: Youth-led Acceleration of Just Energy Transition & Resilience in Africa

Panel discussion

This session brought together panelists who discussed key policy recommendations for accelerating youth participation in the energy transition and resilience. The panel was moderated by **Martin Masiya** (**RES4Africa Youth Task Force**).

Christabel Clotilda Mhiribidi (**IRENA Youth**) brought attention to the indispensable role of young people in shaping the energy transition and resilience by highlighting the unique perspectives and innovative ideas of youth, and their passion for sustainability which can drive transformative change. She highlighted the need for active youth participation in addressing climate change and promoting sustainable energy solutions and raised concerns about the insufficient recognition of youth contributions in the energy transition and resilience efforts.

Elly Kevin Oriko (**RES4Africa / Youth4Climate**) identified challenges faced by young people in advancing the energy transition and resilience including limited access to financing of ideas and initiatives, as well as the lack of expertise in preparing ideas, mitigating risks, and ensuring their readiness for investment. He emphasized the need to leverage opportunities, such as youth climate calls for solutions and entrepreneurship bootcamps, as well as working with banks and industry professionals to ensure the readiness of ideas for investment in order to overcome these challenges. Elly also mentioned some existing opportunities which youth can leverage. These include Solar Asset Management and other areas of innovation in the just energy transition space

Ali Abdulla Alshimmari (**TAQA Youth Parliament**) focused on the role of collaboration and partnerships in advancing youth participation in the energy transition and resilience. He gave examples of successful collaborations and partnerships that have benefited youths such as collaborations made by TAQA youth council. Ali also encouraged regional and global organizations to replicate these collaborative strategies to create an enabling environment for youth participation in the energy transition.

Hadiza Abdulmumini (**SDG7 Youth Constituency**) presented key policy recommendations to accelerate youth participation in the energy transition and resilience, such as policy "quick-wins" that are currently underutilized but could be leveraged. She also encouraged youth in Africa to engage in policy advocacy to advance the energy transition and resilience.

Youth4Capacity #2: A Pathway to Meaningful Youth Engagement in Policy-making

Watch the session [here](#)

This session moderated by **Omnia El Omrani (COP27 Presidency Climate Champion)** marked the launch of the report **Youth Needs Analysis for Capacity Building towards UNFCCC Work Programmes** conducted by **YOUNGO** and brought together panelists to discuss the different initiatives that aim to build the capacities of youth on the local, regional, and global level. The session was organized by **YOUNGO, AYCA, OSGEY, CIF, and UN:CC Learn.**

Ashu Hailshamy (Special Coordinator for Development in the Sahel) delivered the opening remarks, emphasizing the crucial role of youth engagement in policy-making. He highlighted the significance of actively involving young people in shaping policies. Hailshamy underscored the impact of building pathways and stressed that making a difference in policy-making often involves engaging at the grassroots level. He emphasized the importance of youth participation in communities, local organizations, and through

Launch of Report

The **Youth Needs Analysis for Capacity Building towards UNFCCC Work Programmes** by **YOUNGO** was launched at Africa Climate Week 2023. The report contains results of a survey focused on how capacity-building is shaped and on the needs of youth on the global level. The report is meant to inform policy-makers on the gaps which hinder the involvement of youth in climate action. The report calls for more studies to be conducted on the capacity-building efforts on the regional and global levels.

Key results include:

- Youth lack the understanding of the COP processes, showing need for capacity-building of youth
- Youth want to be better informed on how to participate at COP
- Youth want to increase their engagement and advocacy within their communities
- Youth require financial support to conduct research on capacity-building needs
- Initiatives and organizations need to explore synergies to maximize efforts



Youth4Capacity #2: A Pathway to Meaningful Youth Engagement in Policy-making

Panel discussion

This session included a panel discussion moderated by **Omnia El Omrani (COP27 Presidency Climate Champion)**. The panelists shared examples of the efforts being carried on the local, regional, and global levels in building the capacity of young people as well as discussed the different and the diverse initiatives that are taking place in the capacity-building field.

Teddy P Taylor (ACE Focal Point Liberia) emphasized the importance of meaningful youth participation in the policy-making process, giving them control over resources that impact their lives. He mentions the Liberian National Youth and Civil Society Environmental Secretariat as an example, illustrating the initiatives governments can implement to enhance youth engagement in climate policy processes and build their capacities.

Wedad Al Hassan (Head of Youth and Education, COP28 Presidency) stressed the importance of building the capacities of youth to enable them to take part in discussions and negotiations at COP. She mentions the International Youth Delegates Programme, organized in collaboration with YOUNGO, as an example of how the COP Presidency is working on capacitating 100 youth delegates by involving them in COP, Regional Climate Weeks, and General Assembly. She also mentions the Youth Climate Champion as an example increased youth involvement in the climate conversations.

Katia Mahery Rakotonirina (National focal point of AIKA Malagasy youth coalition on biodiversity climate change and desertification) mentions that the gap of building the capacities of youth does not lie in the technical knowledge of youth, but in the lack of mentorship, evaluation, and efficiency after the technical training. She stressed that bridging this gap can be done through consultations by allowing youth to address their needs, being more inclusive, and taking information from grassroots communities.

Brenda Mwale (YOUNGO) stressed the imperative of involving youth in the policy-making process, emphasizing that it's not merely about including a specific demographic group but ensuring their representation because they are the most affected.

Youth4Capacity #2: A Pathway to Meaningful Youth Engagement in Policy-making


This session continued with **Lisa Maina (UNITAR)** introducing UN CC:Learn and the process of developing policies. She gives an overview of the planning instrument National Climate Change Learning Strategies and mentions the case studies of Ethiopia, Zambia, Kenya, and Ghana.

Breakout Groups

Participants were divided into groups to engage in an exercise centered around a hypothetical scenario. In this scenario, a country aims to establish agriculture as its primary economic source, but it is challenged by the adverse effects of climate change. Each group assumed the role of the Ministry of Environment and was tasked with developing a comprehensive strategy intended to address the challenges posed by climate change while simultaneously enhancing capacities and raising awareness about this critical issue.

The results of this exercise involved stakeholder analysis and background report, strengthening knowledge about and advocacy for climate action, improving the soil fertility by planting crops that minimize erosion as well as minimizing farming techniques that encourage soil pollution by using organic techniques. Other strategies were to incorporate new technologies like AI, have access to assessment and report writing, database mapping, capacity training, bridging the information gaps, especially those of political leaders, involve all relevant stakeholders in the process, and have training workshops and raise the financial awareness of various stakeholders.

Youth4Capacity #3: Facilitating Community-led Climate Initiatives

 Watch the session [here](#)

This session focused on facilitating youth-led initiatives and on empowering young people on how to make effective grant proposals. The session was moderated **Margaret Impraim (GAYO)** and organized by **GAYO**, **AYM4COP**, and **Care about Climate**.

The session started with showing a video from **GAYO** on some of the initiatives and adaptation projects they have implemented in Ghana.

A representative from **The GEF Small Grants Programme** presented the programme, lessons learned, and best practices from having projects around the world while also presenting some case studies from various African countries. The programme has completed over 400 projects with youth either as leaders or supporters, and has launched the Green Wall Initiative with CSOs to implement National Action Plans for the Green Wall Initiative. As an advice to youth to advance their grant proposal writing skills, she mentions that each target country has a national focal point who shares grant templates to the youth and provide them support and that some private sector and public organizations are willing to work with the youth to implement their innovative ideas.

Mujida Agebola (Care about Climate) presented the different projects that Care about Climate is implementing in regards to climate policies. These consist of the NDC Project, COP Training, and CAC Clubs.

Panel discussion

The session included a panel discussion aimed to address certain questions regarding funding of youth-led initiatives.

Mujida Agebola (Care about Climate) emphasized the need to align policy advocacy efforts with scientific research by identifying common goals between organizations. She stressed the importance of inclusion, focusing on regional, gender, and disability aspects. Cooperate governance is crucial, as funders criticize how an organization is being run. To effectively communicate scientific knowledge, Mujida stressed the necessity of simplifying complex information. Different approaches and languages are needed for diverse audiences, such as young people and indigenous communities. Utilizing platforms like PowerPoints, TikTok, music, and Facebook, information should be presented in easily understandable formats, tailored to the specific needs and preferences of the audience.


Youth4Capacity #3: Facilitating Community-led Climate Initiatives

Panel discussion

Agostino Inguscio (UNDP) stressed that the African Continent issues a strong call to participate in the climate challenge, emphasizing the necessity for this involvement to be established as a policy mechanism. Youth4Climate pledges up to US\$1.4 million for projects in areas like CE and Agriculture, requiring projects to have innovation yet remain realistic. He also stresses that project leaders must ensure visibility which is a critical criterion. Online volunteers collaborate with applicants even before the funding window opens, facilitated by UNDP's commitment to young financial portfolios. Lastly, effective communication of ongoing projects is emphasized, with an emphasis on framing climate change not merely as a problem but as a challenge to be addressed collaboratively.

Dawda Cham (AYM4COP) mentions that to ensure the long-term sustainability of youth-led climate projects, the AYM4COP initiative has tailored packages with specific numbers of trees for various organizations to engage in. He emphasizes community involvement, by saying that community members should not be passive recipients but active stakeholders in project development and implementation. Collaboration with other project implementers is encouraged to achieve synergistic goals, promoting shared efforts. Proper monitoring and evaluation are deemed crucial to track progress and effectiveness. In terms of facilitating their work, young individuals are advised to join networks to enhance their capacity and use social media platforms as effective tools for outreach and communication. Mutual support among young people is emphasized, promoting collaboration over competition to foster a supportive ecosystem for climate initiatives.

Richard Matey (GAYO) highlighted various youth-led initiatives and projects that GAYO is implementing as examples of how youth can engage with their communities. He specifically mentions The Africa Climate Innovative Challenge, SCP project and Zero Waste Project, and GAYO's Water 4 Adaptation project. On how the organization supports youth in approaching funding entities, Richard explained that GAYO conducts assessment and capacity-building for youth as well as link them to technical support. He also stressed the need for young people to share their initiatives with their communities to ensure inclusivity and responsiveness.

 Watch the session [here](#)

The **Youth4Capacity** programme in collaboration with the **UK Youth Climate Coalition**, **YOUNGO** and the **ACE Hub**, delivered a networking session on 'Gamifying Systems Change.' Anchored in the concept of systems change rather than climate change, this collaborative game engaged participants in working together to identify the systems within their daily lives that have contributed to the climate crisis. Participants collaborated to identify power structures, winners, and losers across a variety of systems, subsequently constructing an interconnected network between each one.

Key objectives include:

- Foster a systems thinking approach to understanding the climate crisis and interconnections between the different systems.
- Enhance participants' understanding and capacities of systems, power dynamics, and interconnections.
- Provide a platform for participants to connect, exchange ideas, build relationships and facilitate mutual learning.

