



AFRICAN YOUTH WATER FORUM

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

A continental platform advancing youth leadership for Africa's water future

300+

MEMBERS

36+

AFRICAN COUNTRIES

2021

ESTABLISHED

ONE CONTINENT. ONE VISION. ONE VOICE.

Partner Edition | 2026

Africa's youth, shaping Africa's water future

The African Youth Water Forum (AYWF) is a continental, youth-led and youth-focused platform connecting young people and institutions committed to water security, sustainable water governance, sanitation, climate resilience, environmental sustainability, research, innovation and policy influence across Africa.

VISION	Water Security for All.
MISSION	To empower and unite African youth to drive sustainable water solutions through leadership, innovation, advocacy, research and partnerships.
REACH	300+ members across 36+ African countries, with growing engagement across the African diaspora.
SECRETARIAT	Hosted by Young Visionary Leaders Ghana (YVLG), which founded the initiative in 2021.

Our purpose

AYWF provides a credible, inclusive platform through which African youth can influence policy, generate evidence, develop solutions, build partnerships and translate continental dialogue into practical action. We position young people not only as beneficiaries of water programmes, but as leaders, researchers, innovators, advocates and decision-makers.

“Water security must be built with young people—not simply for them.”

From a Ghanaian initiative to a continental movement

AYWF's journey reflects a deliberate transition from a small youth network into an emerging pan-African platform for cooperation, knowledge and action.

2021**The network begins**

Young Visionary Leaders Ghana established the Global Youth Water Network (GYWN), initially connecting young water professionals, advocates, researchers and students in Ghana and neighbouring African countries.

2023**A continental identity**

The initiative rebranded as the African Youth Water Forum. The change signalled a strategic shift towards a distinctly African platform grounded in the continent's realities, priorities, knowledge, innovations and leadership.

TODAY**An expanding platform**

AYWF connects 300+ members across 36+ African countries through continental, regional and country-level structures, supported by a Continental Coordinating Council and a hosted Secretariat.

Why a continental forum?

Africa's water challenges cross national borders. Water insecurity, inadequate WASH services, pollution, climate shocks, weak governance systems, financing gaps and unequal access demand cooperation across countries and regions. AYWF creates the connective platform that enables young Africans to learn across borders, build common positions and advance locally relevant solutions at continental scale.

Our strategic focus areas

AYWF works across eight connected priorities that combine governance, knowledge, leadership and implementation.

01

Water governance & policy advocacy

Strengthening meaningful youth participation in water policy and decision-making from community to continental level.

02

Water security & sustainable management

Advancing equitable, affordable, resilient and sustainable management of water resources and ecosystems.

03

Water, sanitation & hygiene

Promoting universal WASH access, with attention to schools, health facilities and underserved communities.

04

Climate resilience

Supporting adaptation, disaster preparedness, resilient infrastructure and ecosystem-based responses to droughts and floods.

05

Research, innovation & knowledge

Generating evidence, supporting youth-led research and technology, and documenting solutions that inform decisions.

06

Youth leadership & capacity

Building the technical, leadership and institutional capabilities of emerging African water leaders.

07

Environmental sustainability

Protecting and restoring water bodies, wetlands, forests, watersheds and the ecosystems that sustain water security.

08

Partnerships & resource mobilisation

Connecting government, development partners, academia, civil society, the private sector and youth networks around shared action.

Turning participation into practical influence

Our programmes combine convening, learning, evidence, advocacy and action so that youth participation produces visible value for institutions and communities.

Policy dialogue and advocacy — Creating credible spaces for youth to engage policymakers, public institutions and sector leaders.

Research and evidence generation — Developing youth-led studies, publications, policy briefs and knowledge products.

Capacity development — Delivering training, mentorship, webinars, workshops and leadership-development opportunities.

Campaigns and public engagement — Mobilising youth around water, WASH, climate and environmental priorities.

Summits, conferences and forums — Convening continental and regional platforms for dialogue, networking and cooperation.

Innovation and entrepreneurship — Supporting technologies, enterprises and new approaches that respond to Africa's water challenges.

Community action — Encouraging members and partners to translate knowledge and advocacy into locally relevant initiatives.

Networking and knowledge exchange — Connecting young people with experts, institutions, researchers and decision-makers across Africa.

How we work

- **Youth-led:** young people are central to programme design, delivery and accountability.
- **Evidence-based:** advocacy and interventions are informed by credible research and lived experience.
- **Inclusive:** participation spans gender, geography, language, discipline and socioeconomic background.
- **Partnership-driven:** we connect government, academia, civil society, communities, development partners and business.
- **Regionally owned:** programmes reflect the distinct water priorities of Africa's regions and countries.
- **Community-relevant:** continental engagement must contribute to meaningful, practical outcomes.

A diverse and growing African network

AYWF brings together individuals and institutions whose knowledge, influence and local experience can accelerate Africa's water agenda.



Who participates

- Young water professionals and practitioners
- Students, researchers and academics
- Youth advocates, climate activists and environmentalists
- WASH specialists and community leaders
- Civil society and youth-led organizations
- Government institutions and public agencies
- Universities, research institutions and think tanks
- Development organizations and strategic partners

Membership pathways

Individuals. Young professionals, students, researchers, advocates, practitioners, innovators and emerging leaders.

Organizations. Civil society organizations, NGOs, youth networks, foundations and mission-aligned institutions.

Public, educational and research institutions. Government agencies, local authorities, universities, colleges, think tanks and academic networks.

Governance designed for continental coordination

AYWF's governance framework combines strategic continental leadership with regional coordination and country-level participation.

CONTINENTAL COORDINATING COUNCIL	Provides strategic leadership, institutional oversight, regional coordination, partnership direction and accountability. It includes the Convener, Co-Convener, Continental Coordinator, Finance & Administrative Coordinator, Regional Coordinators, Secretariat and Standing Committee leadership.
REGIONAL STRUCTURES	Regional Coordinators support membership, partnerships, programmes, communication and country-level coordination across West, East, Central, Southern and Northern Africa.
COUNTRY CHAPTERS	National structures mobilise members, advance advocacy, deliver programmes, build partnerships and contribute national perspectives to regional and continental priorities.
STANDING COMMITTEES	Technical and programme committees organise expertise, develop workplans and support implementation across AYWF's priority areas.

Institutional hosting and convening

The Continental Secretariat is hosted by Young Visionary Leaders Ghana (YVLG), the organization that initiated AYWF. YVLG provides the administrative and institutional foundation required for day-to-day coordination, communication, financial administration, meetings, documentation and operational support.

AYWF is convened by Young Visionary Leaders Ghana and co-convened by the Foundation for Environmental Watch (FEW). This arrangement provides institutional stewardship while enabling AYWF to operate as a continental platform with its own governance, membership, programmes, partnerships and strategic direction.

A partnership platform for scale and youth leadership

Water security requires collective action. AYWF enables partners to connect continental ambitions with emerging leadership, national experience and community realities.

Why partner with AYWF?

- Reach a diverse network of 300+ young leaders and practitioners across 36+ African countries.
- Co-create youth-led policy dialogues, research, campaigns and knowledge products.
- Build regional and country-level pathways for meaningful youth participation.
- Identify and strengthen emerging African water leaders, innovators and researchers.
- Connect institutional priorities with community perspectives and youth-led solutions.
- Invest in long-term African leadership for water security, WASH and climate resilience.

Who we seek to collaborate with

- African Union institutions and regional economic communities
- National governments, local authorities and water institutions
- United Nations agencies and development partners
- Civil society organizations and professional associations
- Universities, research institutions and think tanks
- Water utilities, private-sector and technology organizations
- Youth networks, foundations and community-based organizations

Partnership with AYWF moves youth engagement from consultation to shared leadership and investment.

Contributing to Africa's development agenda

AYWF aligns youth leadership and water action with continental and global priorities.

Sustainable Development Goals

Our central contribution is to SDG 6—Clean Water and Sanitation—supported by interconnected work on Education, gender equality, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities, climate action, ecosystem protection, effective institutions and partnerships.

SDG 5	SDG 6	SDG 13	SDG 17
Gender Equality	Clean Water & Sanitation	Climate Action	Partnerships

African Union Agenda 2063

AYWF contributes to the vision of a prosperous, integrated, peaceful and people-driven Africa by strengthening youth leadership in water governance, sustainable development, innovation and cross-border cooperation.

Our ambition

AYWF seeks to become a leading continental platform for youth leadership in Africa's water sector recognized for connecting African youth, generating knowledge, influencing policy, promoting innovation and advancing practical solutions to water and climate challenges.

Our ambition is not simply to maintain another youth network. It is to build a strong, credible, inclusive and sustainable movement through which African youth can collectively shape the continent's water future.



BUILDING AFRICA'S WATER FUTURE

through youth leadership, knowledge, innovation and partnership

VISION

Water Security for All.

MOTTO

One Continent. One Vision. One Voice.

AFRICAN YOUTH WATER FORUM

Continental Secretariat hosted by Young Visionary Leaders Ghana (YVLG)

Convened by YVLG | Co-convened by Foundation for Environmental Watch