



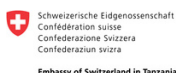
YouLead Summit 2023

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT THROUGH CAPACITY BUILDING
NAIROBI

REPORT



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List of Acronyms

AU- African Union

AYD - Adolescent and Youth Development

COMESA - Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

DRC - Democratic Republic of Congo

EA - East Africa

EAC - East African Community

EU- European Union

FGD - Focused Group Discussions

ICT - Information Communication Technology

MS-TCDC - MS Training Center for Development Cooperation

SADC - Southern African Development Community

SME - Small Medium Enterprises

SSA - Sub Saharan Africa

UN - United Nations

UNDP - United Nations Development Program

UNFPA ESARO - United Nations Population Fund East and Southern Africa
Regional Office

UNITAR - United Nations Institute for Training and Research

YPS - Youth in Peace and Security



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Vote of Thanks

1. Foreword

The Africa Youth Leadership (YouLead) Program's transitional journey signifies instrumental youth engagement in the EAC and beyond, setting precedence for youth platforms and youth engagement in politics and business; the EAC Youth Policy among others, symbolizes the significant achievement of this crucial initiative, of course with non-existence of youth policies in the rest of the regional blocs in the continent.

This was the 7th Annual Youth Leadership Summit, testament of the Program's completeness and fullness, drawing reference from religious perspectives where the number attests to the covenant of sanctification. Hosting the YouLead Summit in Kenya, for the first time since its inauguration in 2017 gave us the pleasure of being welcomed at its doorsteps, and speaks to our commitment to re-enacting the efforts of young people towards socio-economic development, progressives from relevant development partners and stakeholders and strife to meet the path for the African Rebirth.

It goes without saying that most of the information from this convention goes to policy making and reforms to inform meaningful youth inclusion, question and bridge the acute shortage of opportunities for our predominantly young population; and address rapid socioeconomic, technological shifts that are widening existing inequalities.

MS STELLA AGARA

2023 YouLead Summit Director



Picture 1. Ms Stella Agara, YouLead Summit Director, Day 1 of YouLead Summit 2023

2. Introduction

The 2023 edition of the YouLead Summit reinvigorated the force towards strategies for “the Africa We Want.” From the reasoning that the young generation should be equipped with robust and diverse skill sets and knowledge that align and speak to shifting geopolitics, the evolution of commerce, the ongoing digital revolution, and increasingly important capacities like post-conflict reconstruction, climate justice, leadership development, and public policy advocacy; the Summit was themed **Youth Empowerment Through Capacity Building: Revitalizing Youth Voice and Agency towards the Africa We Want.**

Makena Mwobobia, the Executive Director for MS Training Centre for Development Cooperation (MS TCDC) during the opening of the YouLead Summit alluded to the contention that Africa is at the verge of the pathway to realization of a compact integration, socio-economic prosperity and peace and security.

The African Union Agenda 2063 places a premium on youth empowerment in the 50 - year long continent’s development trajectory, strategies to enrich the youth with requisite skills over qualification, intergenerational dialogues over age stereotypes, professionalism over connections, and sustainable learning platforms over short-lived and resource-limited projects; with precedence from the blueprint and master plan, we shall attain our outstretched shared humanity and values.



Photo No. 2 Makena Mwobobia, Executive Director, MS Training Center for Development Cooperation, Day 1 of YouLead Summit 2023

As is the custom, drawing reference from YouLead's key pillars, Youth in Politics, and Youth in Business; with Peace and Security, Gender Equality, and Climate Justice as cross-cutting thematic areas, the 2023 YouLead Summit Edition comprised of the Under 40 Political Leaders Forum which examined the extent to which the existing policy and institutional environment enable youth participation in leadership as well as whether or not current leadership is responsive to youth apparent needs and aspirations and explores what it will take for Africa's youth to become the vanguards for the Africa we want.

The SDG Workshop examined the SDGs, the pace of their implementation and proposed ways in which the youth can influence the implementation of the same. It shall be the platform upon which we showcase youth interventions towards the achievement of SDGs.

The Presidential address which was co-convened by H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and Hon. Dr. Peter Mathuki, Secretary-General of the East African Community.

The Under 40 Business Leaders Forum which gathered young and enterprising leaders in business, policymakers and decision makers in government, and development practitioners to find solutions to pressing issues in the region's business environment. The 2023 Business Leaders Forum was also dedicated to discuss the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA), exploring the Negotiations, Principles, Objectives, Institutional Framework and the place and role of young people in trade inspired by the AU theme of the Year 2023 "Acceleration of the AfCFTA Implementation"

The East Africa Youth Enterprise Awards (YEA) provided an opportunity to recognize youth-led businesses across the East African Community (EAC) Partner States that require startup capital and existing businesses requiring scale up capital. The pitches by young innovators are considered on their resilience, innovativeness, and are simultaneously taking deliberate, innovative actions towards decent livelihoods and youth unemployment.

The Youth Peace Forum and Nairobi Debates (Gender Equality Forum) graced the 3rd day of the Summit. The former included Youth models that promote the role of youth in peace building and participation in conflict prevention as proactive measures to maintaining peace and security in Africa at the centre of the implementation of UNSCR 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security. The latter discussed ways to dismantle the structural causes at the root of gender inequality and advance the Action Coalition's Commitments, the same was branded 'the Nairobi Debates' in recognition of the location of debates.

Finally, the **Post-Summit Agenda Post-Summit Agenda of Action**, set as a proactive mechanism to ensure that the life of summit discussions go beyond the Summit reports, focused on actively transforming regional business and politics by providing the right environment at both policy and program level, in partnership with the YouLead Network of organisations and formations by advocating for implementation of summit recommendations.



Picture 3. Mr. Lennon Monyae, Governance & Youth Liaison Officer, African Peer Review Mechanism moderating the Under 40 Political Leaders Forum on Day 1 of YouLead Summit 2023.

3.1 Day 01: Youth in Politics

20th November 2023

3.1.1 The Under 40 Political Leaders Forum

Moderator: Mr. Lennon Monyae, Governance & Youth Liaison Officer, African Peer Review Mechanism

Speakers:

1. Mr. Jacob Eyeru, Chairperson, National Youth Council of Uganda
2. Mr. Claude Mbuyi, Executive Secretary, National Youth Council of the Democratic Republic of Congo
3. Dr. Thierry Ingabire, President, National Youth Council of Burundi
4. Ms. Mercy Awino, EAC Youth Leadership Fellow
5. Ms. Stella Nderitu, Emerging Leaders Foundation

The Moderator, Mr. Lennon Monyae set pace for the discussion which was centred on Young Political Leaders Accountability; Young Political Leaders debate on "If you sat where they (the leaders) sit" - inspired by the joint YouLead/APRM Youth Toolkit Roundtable for National Youth Council Representatives and Young Parliamentarians).

Key questions were on how the National Youth Councils (NYCs) can utilize the APRM Youth Toolkit to ensure good democratic governance on the continent; the role of NYCs, youth leaders, and youth-led/youth-serving organisations to bridge the gap between young people, governments and relevant development partners; young leaders accountability and responsibility to the Continent's advancement in the positions entrusted to them.

3. The 2023 YouLead Summit Highlights

The YouLead summit deliberations, aimed to steer strategic youth engagement and build spheres of influence for young people to be at the forefront of the Global, Continental and Regional agenda, are hereunder compiled to give the reader a glimpse of the key priorities, propositions and an analysis of the areas for improvement on the path for the Africa We Want.

This part therefore demystifies issues that transpired from the Forums during the YouLead Summit.

Speakers felt the same way, that despite a growing politically active youth cohort, young people are still constrained by unemployment, insufficient trade opportunities and skills-market mismatch.

Dr. Thierry Ingabire, President, National Youth Council of Burundi proposed that there needs to be more concerted efforts at ensuring that stakeholders work together for a sustainable, inclusive and equitable future for all.



"There is limited youth representation in legislative bodies, and tokenism places genuine representation at risk"

Mr. Jacob Eyeru, the Chairperson of the NYC Uganda

Picture 4. On the left, Mr. Mr. Jacob Eyeru, Chairperson, National Youth Council of Uganda, and on the right, Mr. Claude Mbuyi, Executive Secretary, National Youth Council of the Democratic Republic of Congo

Ms. Stella Nderitu from the Emerging Leaders Foundation asserted that Political participation is highly gendered and ageist and requires systemic, financial and cultural transformation to enable full and sustainable participation of the young people favoured by the demographic dividend.

"NYCs are instrumental from the fact that Political and Business participation are systemic issues, especially for young men and young women. The mindset, perceptions and social norms in the society needs to be transformed to ensure youth inclusion in these processes by the establishment of the NYC to extend the reach to youth in marginalised settings, learning institutions, financing for affirmative action and institutionalised representation."

Ms. Mercy Awino - EAC Youth Fellow 2023 and former EAC Youth Ambassador to Uganda



Picture 5. Group photo of the speakers during the Under 40 political leaders Forum, Day 1 of YouLead Summit 2023. From left to right, Dr. Thierry Ingabire, President, National Youth Council of Burundi, Mr. Jacob Eyeru, Chairperson, National Youth Council of Uganda, Mr. Claude Mbuyi, Executive Secretary, National Youth Council of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mr. Lennon Monyae, Governance & Youth Liaison Officer, African Peer Review Mechanism, Ms. Stella Nderitu, Emerging Leaders Foundation, and Ms. Mercy Awino, EAC Youth Leadership Fellow.

3.1.2 The SDGs Workshop

Moderator: Ms. Rina Lauritzen, Beyond 2030

Speakers:

1. Mr. Edgar Mutungisa, East African Community Youth Ambassadors Platform
2. Ms. Lys Esther Karikumutima, East African Community Youth Ambassadors Platform
3. Mr. Julius Emmanuel Muhindi, East African Community Youth Ambassadors Platform
4. Ms. Sarah Mutagoma, East African Community Youth Ambassadors Platform
5. Ms. Florence Syevuo, Country Coordinator, SDGs Kenya Forum

The Sustainable Development Goals Workshop proposed ways in which the youth can influence the implementation of the same. The platform showcased youth interventions towards the achievement of SDGs.

The Moderator set pace for collective responsibility towards the SDGs to ensure their full realization. Heading to the Summit of The Future, we should commit to prepare ourselves towards achieving a sustainable world in partnership via organisation and collective strategy, she insisted.



Picture 6. Ms. Rina Lauritzen, Beyond 2030 moderating the SDGs workshop, Day 1 of YouLead Summit 2023.

Mr. Edgar Mutungisa, East African Community Youth Ambassador to Uganda expressed that there is an urgent need for an integrated approach to ensuring the attainment of the SDGs and sustainable development.

Ms. Lys Esther Karikumutima, East African Community Youth Ambassador to Burundi expounded on the lack of protections around intellectual property being a challenge in terms of the SDGs

Further, Ms. Florence Syevuo, Country Coordinator, SDGs Kenya Forum alluded that there are mixed results in terms of SDG implementation, with different countries taking leadership in terms of different SDGs (Kenya - SDG 13), however, there is a notable trust deficit in democratic leadership and governance on the part of the public with nexus to SDGs implementation.

Mr. Julius Emmanuel Muhindi, Member of the East African Community Youth Ambassadors Platform from Tanzania added that there is a critical need to engage and involve youth in the implementation of the SDGs, especially pertaining to climate justice and action (referencing Tanzania and Kenya).



Picture 7. Ms. Sarah Mutagoma, East African Community Youth Ambassadors Platform during the SDGs Workshop.

"The realisation of diverse goals in the SDGs require substantial funding and sustainable strategies, hence the quest for financing remains imperative for prompt achievement of the same."

Ms. Sarah Mutagoma, East African Community Youth Ambassadors to Rwanda.

3.1.3 Presidential Address

Moderator:

The High-Level presentations were curated to demonstrate strategic mechanisms and commitment by governments and development partners accountability to youth empowerment and inclusion in requisite structures.

Speakers:

1. H. E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Patron of YouLead
2. Hon. Ababu Namwamba, Cabinet Secretary of Youth, Sports and Culture
3. Dr. Irene Isaka, Director - Social Sectors, East African Community
4. H. E. Didier Chassot, Ambassador of Switzerland to Tanzania and EAC
5. Professor Eddy Maloka, Chief Executive Officer, African Peer Review Mechanism Secretariat.

Dr. Isaka in lieu of Dr. Peter Mathuki, the EAC Secretary General, highlighted the hosting of the summit in Nairobi as an illustration of the commitment of EAC Partner States to youth development and capacity building and the amplification of the youth voice, in keeping with the summit theme for this year. She also noted that this was also illustrative of YouLead's shift to becoming truly pan-African in its approach and trajectory under the leadership of the YouLead Patron. In acknowledging strides made in the pursuit of continental development, she encouraged the engagement of youth in this regard through building their capacity within the context of the digital economy and cited the need for knowledge as a critical tool in transforming Africa into a global powerhouse.



Picture 8. Dr. Irene Isaka, Director - Social Sectors, East African Community during the Presidential Address at YouLead Summit 2023, Day 1.

Professor Maloka commended the MS TCDC and the EAC for their leadership in youth engagement through the creation of the YouLead Summit. He then encouraged the capitalisation on the expanding continental youth bulge, noting that this is a joint effort requiring continental and regional partnership.

He also remarked that Africa currently faces the central challenge of not having its sovereignty secured, urging for its assertion in order to capitalise on the increasingly diverse and multipolar international order. He added that there has been a growing de-monopolisation across financial, media and technical spheres that Africa needs to capitalise on to assert itself as a global player.



Picture 9. Professor Eddy Maloka, Chief Executive Officer, African Peer Review Mechanism Secretariat during the Presidential Address at YouLead Summit 2023, Day 1.

Ambassador Chassot remarked that there is a growing interdependence at global level, with a similar interwovenness between Africa and Switzerland proving beneficial for mutual cooperation. He also highlighted the growing importance of the EAC as an advocate for human rights, peace and security and sustainable development, and as an agent of regional integration. To this end, he emphasised the role of youth and the importance of engaging them in the realms of access to education, health and employment in addressing the multiple crises that face the continent.

H.E Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete kicked off his address by highlighting the importance of the youth voice, and the benefits and merits of intergenerational exchange of ideas and experience. He then went on to acknowledge the untapped potential of African youth and its ability to drive the continental movement towards the Africa we want, calling for increased investment in harnessing this potential in the context of the demographic dividend. He also referenced the role of knowledge and investment in collective efforts in marshalling in a common African agenda.

Honourable Ababu Namwamba representing H.E William Samoei Ruto, the President of the Republic of Kenya, made note of the need to embrace African youth as champions of African solutions to African problems through innovative job creation, climate justice, peace and security and accountable, values-driven governance.

"Youth voices are the benefits and merits of intergenerational exchange of ideas and experience. Acknowledging the untapped potential of African youth, their ability to drive the continental strategies, and the call for investment in harnessing their potential, gives us the vitality to rise and build the Africa we want on the shoulders of the youth."

*H.E Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete,
Former President of The United
Republic of Tanzania.*



Picture 10. H. E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Patron of YouLead during the Presidential Address on Day 1 of YouLead Summit 2023.

He also emphasised their ability and competence in this regard, calling for an assessment of the demographic advantage that the continent currently possesses in order to pursue and provide solutions. He then went on to state that youth-related dialogue cannot take place without youth and needs to be driven by youth if to harness the true potential and myriad opportunities the African continent has to offer. In order to truly succeed in the context of job creation, trade and development, he made the call for increased and sustainable capacity building for the skilling of young people in Africa.

incidents through which young people learnt the dynamics of governance traits, inclusive strategies and decision making.

Key issues from the Fireside chat included;

1. The education crisis in the African continent; out of the Globe's 260 Million young people who are out of school, 100m are in Africa. Studies reveal that in Tanzania, as is the case for most countries in the EAC, only 20 percent of youth can join secondary school, out of those who join school 33 percent do not complete their education. This is referenced from studies conducted by the Global Partnership for Education, to which H.E Jakaya M. Kikwete sits as a Chair of the Board of Directors since September 2021.
2. Domestic finance for education; he further insisted on the low learning outcomes (quality of education in the continent), Students loan at high level or university level studies, the necessity of girl child education and stressed the call for Partners and stakeholders including YouLead to add Education to be a key pillar and priority in their interventions and investment areas.



Picture 11. Hon. Ababu Namwamba, Cabinet Secretary of Youth, Sports and Culture of Kenya, during the Presidential Address on Day 1 of YouLead Summit 2023.

3.1.4 The Fireside Chat

Moderator: Ms. Stella Agara, YouLead Summit Director 2023

Guest Speaker: H.E Dr. Jakaya M. Kikwete, Former President of Tanzania and YouLead Patron

Time: 4.30PM - 6.00PM, EAT.

The session was ushered by personal lived experiences from Dr. Jakaya Kikwete, leadership journey, challenges and critical



Picture 12. On the left, Ms. Stella Agara, YouLead Summit Director 2023 moderating The Fireside Chat with H.E Dr. Jakaya M. Kikwete, Former President of Tanzania and YouLead Patron.

3.2 Day 02: Youth in Business

21st November 2023

3.2.1 Opening Remarks

Speakers:

1. Makena Mwobobia, Executive Director, MS Training Centre for Development Cooperation
2. Stella Agara, YouLead Summit Director 2023

The opening for the youth in business day was invigorated on the essence of commitment to youths' skilling and innovativeness, taking account that the youth in business pillar of youlead plays a key role towards formulation of enabling environment for micro-enterprises and marginalized youth business opportunities.



Picture 13. Ms. Stella Agara, YouLead Summit Director 2023 during the opening session of Day 2 at YouLead Summit 2023.

Ms. Mwobobia expounded that Member States in the EAC, and the African Union have put in place policies and infrastructural frameworks to enable the movements of good and people in the region, to support socioeconomic development and entrepreneurship and to strengthen the

"Youth in business is amongst the key pillars of YouLead that seeks to enhance the capacity of youth in Business and advocates for an enabling policy environment and institutional framework for pursuing economic opportunities and decent work for youth in the region."

Ms. Stella Agara - 2023 YouLead Summit Director

capacity of youth to co-create new ideas or scale up existing solutions that benefit marginalized groups and societies across Africa.

The Africa Continental Free Trade Area has emerged as the continent's priority in the near future. With the low level of intra African trade, standing at just 14.4%, forecasts show the AfCFTA could boost intra Africa trade by about 33% and cut the continent's trade deficit by 51%. It's time to take stock of the same and fast track the primary goal to make Africa great. Let's make the AfCFTA Magic Happen.

3.2.2 The Under 40 Business Leaders Forum

Moderator:

Speakers:

1. Ms. Gonaya Monei E. Sethora - Women and Youth in Trade Expert, AfCFTA Secretariat
2. Mr. Kwame A.A. Opoku - Global Speaker & Innovation Consultant

Ms. Sethora focused her presentation on the AfCFTA and updates on the Protocol on Women and Youth. She highlighted the COVID-19 pandemic as a developmental obstacle in some countries, and inadequate access to local markets as a trade obstacle to young African entrepreneurs. She also alluded to the intersectionality of trade issues faced by entrepreneurs on the premise of age and gender, including smaller market pools; underfinancing and lack of viable trade finance opportunities and instruments and high trade costs due to non-tariff barriers. As part of addressing this, she called for increased financial literacy as an essential tool in harnessing the dividends of the AfCFTA.



Picture 14. Ms. Gonaya Monei E. Sethora - Women and Youth in Trade Expert, AfCFTA Secretariat during the Under 40 Business Leaders Forum, Day 2 of YouLead Summit 2023.

"African youth and entrepreneurs should leverage on the AfCFTA's networking space to widen opportunities for intra- and inter-African trade."

***Ms. Gonaya Monei E. Sethora,
Women and Youth in Trade
Expert, AfCFTA Secretariat***

Mr. Kwame A.A. Opoku provided a Keynote Address on Future of Work and the role of Innovation and Technology in achieving the Implementation of AfCFTA centred on the role of youth and innovation in accelerating its implementation.



Picture 15. Mr. Kwame A.A. Opoku - Global Speaker & Innovation Consultant during the Under 40 Business Leaders Forum, Day 2 of YouLead Summit 2023

3.2.3 Panel Discussion on AfCFTA and the Role of Youth and Innovation in Accelerating its Implementation

Speakers:

1. Mr. Kwame A.A. Opoku, Global Speaker & Innovation Consultant
2. Mr. Nicky Abayo, African Representative, Eshet Eilon Industries Limited
3. Mr. Isaac Gokah, Specialist RFT & Resilience - AGRA
4. Mr. Joram Mwinamo, CEO SandBox International
5. Ms. Brenda Asasira, Bris Agro Safaris (u) Limited

Ms Asasira highlighted the role of agricultural investment as a necessary catalyst for economic development in the EAC Region and beyond. She also called for the convening of youth hubs

for acceleration of youth integration into agribusiness and increased agricultural productivity.



Picture 16. Ms. Brenda Asasira, Founder of Bris Agro Safaris (u) Limited during the Panel Discussion on AfCFTA and the role of youth and innovation in accelerating its implementation on Day 2.

Mr. Mwinamo urged for a more globalist outlook in entrepreneurial thought, stating the importance of expanding one's market beyond one's immediate surroundings and looking towards diversification. He also went into the need for instruments such as the AfCFTA, calling for democratisation of knowledge on it for lowered cost of trade and barriers to entry, notably two of the most pressing obstacles faced by young African entrepreneurs.

Mr. Opoku called for the need to shift gears from local to global action by making the shift from linear to exponential thinking. He also referenced the need for asserting our own continental position in business and development, highlighting the importance of moving beyond the saviour complex and harnessing our own ideas, collective might and strategic value. In addition, he made note of the need for African education to reflect the movement towards promoting autonomy and critical thinking in African children from a young age.

Mr. Abayo noted that there should be a shift in terms of elevating the consumption and trade of domestic products as part of the ideal African market. He referenced the inclination to import goods which can be locally sourced. This, in his view, would be key in harnessing unique comparative domestic advantages through producing goods and services that speak to local business and consumer realities.



Picture 17. Mr. Kwame A.A. Opoku, Global Speaker & Innovation Consultant during the Panel Discussion on AfCFTA and the role of youth and innovation in accelerating its implementation on Day 2.

3.2.4 The East Africa Youth Entreprises Awards: Innovative Youth-led Businesses Pitches (EAC Youth Fellows - Business Cohort)

The session provided an opportunity for young people to pitch their innovative business ideas for potential funding. The process was grounded from the EAC Youth Fellowship - Business Cohort where the Fellows, under the Stewardship of Mr Alfred Opio, Founder & CEO of Kaino Africa, presented their business before a panel.

Amongst the Business Ideas that stood out were **Bris Agro Safaris**, a company that seeks to interest, motivate and train young people,

persons with disabilities and marginalised communities to take on agriculture as a sustainable and profitable business. The same makes use of agrotourism to break the negative stereotypes youth have towards agriculture as a business.



Picture 18. From the left, Mr Alfred Opio, Founder & CEO of Kaino Africa with the EAC Youth Fellowship Participants during the East Africa Youth Enterprise Awards.

Agritech Company seeks to resolve the problem of malnutrition. The same is Climate friendly due to its use of Aeroponic, cultivation in a controlled environment, and uses less water, produces higher every time without depending on seasons.

Centre for Research the Promotion of Scientific Research and Innovation "CERESI"

The project brings new ideas of using nutraceuticals such as Hibiscus Sabdariffa, ginger, soy beans, beetroots, garlic and onions to produce herbal medicines to prevent malnutrition and chronic diseases including blood pressure amongst others. The medicines contribute mostly to human body immunity. To achieve the aim, CERESI intends on buying laboratory equipment in order for testing, analysis and dosing of the products. The products are also assessed by the board of medicines control in the country to follow international standards.

AgriAI; An artificial intelligence innovation that uses computer vision and machine learning to detect crop diseases and send recommendations to farmers on their mobile phones.

3.3 Youth in Peace and Security & Youth in Gender Equality

22nd November 2023

3.3.1 Day 03 The Under 40 Peace and Security Forum

Moderator: Mr. Robert Muhangi, Board Member, Recreation for Development and Peace Uganda

Speakers:

1. Dr. Samuel Olamide, Track II Diplomat in Arms Control and International Security
2. Mr. Steven Malaki, Steering Committee of the East African Youth Peace Network Member
3. Mr. Stephen Wani, Founder - African Democracy and Resilient Network South Sudan and YouLead Alumnus
4. Ms. Jessica Nyai, Save the Children - Senegal
5. Ms. Mahlet Sebsibe, Lead(H)er Fellow 2023

The gist of the session was the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on youth, peace and security, which urges Member States to give youth a greater voice in decision-making at the local, national, regional and international levels and to consider setting up mechanisms that would enable young people to participate meaningfully in peace processes.

Dr. Olamide cited the African Union's Silencing the Guns campaign, which did not meet its

2020 deadline, and the externalised nature of weapons proliferation on African soil as two of the most pressing issues pertaining to peace and security on the continent to date. He also highlighted the long road ahead in terms of successfully silencing the guns by 2030, noting its importance for continental development. He further referenced the necessity of accountability in weapons proliferation, in particular, by those contributing to the process in terms of manufacturing, impact assessment, as well as disposition of said weapons.



Picture 19. Dr. Samuel Olamide, Track II Diplomat in Arms Control and International Security delivering his remarks during the Under 40 Peace and Security Forum.

Mr. Malaki noted the commitment of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to ensuring the visibility of youth in continental peace and security, highlighting the development of the national Action Plan on UN Resolution 2250. Additionally referencing the young population of the DRC, he called for the elevation of youth in national peace processes, particularly in transitional democratic contexts, such as the imminent general election and urged for increased commitment to substantive democratisation through youth integration.

Mr. Muhangi referenced the role of youth organisations such as the East African Community Youth Peace Network in advancing



Picture 20. Mr. Steven Malaki, Steering Committee of the East African Youth Peace Network Member delivering his remarks during the Under 40 Peace and Security Forum.

the youth voice in peace processes at regional level and commended their action in ensuring commitment to Resolution 2250. Further, he noted that youth organisations are a pivotal tool in bridging the gap in terms of peace discourse and youth in the realms of disengagement, reintegration, partnership and protection among others.

Ms. Nyai stated that there is a documented uptick in sexual and gender based violence orchestrated as war crimes during times of conflict. She also noted a similar increase in terms of the Sahel region and increased collective vulnerability to conflict. She then urged for increased advocacy for awareness around conflict-induced sexual and gender-based violence and other war crimes.

Mr Wani highlighted the importance of youth participation in the pursuit of African development, noting peace and security and gender equality amongst a host of developmental priorities. Capacity building in the context of peaceful co-existence and social cohesion, he added, would be critical in supporting knowledge exposition to youth and enhancing their role as key peace advocates.

Ms. Sebsibe noted the uneven implementation of continental and global aspirations as an obstacle to continental peace and security, stating that 70 percent of the most fragile countries in the world are found in Africa. She urged for necessary actions to be taken by states and relevant actors alike in addressing this implementation gap, with the incorporation of a keen youth lens in decision making as a catalyst to successful achievement of these aspirations.



Picture 21. Ms. Jessica Nyai, Save the Children, Senegal delivering her remarks during the Under 40 Peace and Security Forum.

3.3.2 Session on Alternative Climate Solutions and Addressing Targeted Climate Finance towards Youth Driven Local Solutions

The session set priority on climate justice as we seek to construct alternative climate solutions and targeting climate financing for youth driven local solutions which remain a practical construct for youth inclusion in climate action and sustainability of propositions for key climate justice actions.

Speakers:

1. Ms. Mercy Gichengi, Programme Coordinator, Youth and Governance, ActionAid Kenya
2. Mr. Emmanuel Dennis Ngongo, Senior Manager: Policy and Partnership, Evidence Action, East & Southern Africa - Swedish Institute for Public Administration
3. Mr. Julius Muhindi, East African Community Youth Ambassadors Platform
4. Ms. Charlene Ruto, Founder and Executive Director, Charlene Ruto Foundation
5. Ms. Eunice Anyango Oyule, Young Women Representative, National Women Steering Committee

Mr. Ngongo made note of the dire implications of water scarcity at global level with a quarter of the global population having no access to clean and safe water. He also referred to the ravages of climate change as a contributing factor to the water scarcity-waterborne disease nexus. He also emphasised the role of youth as climate advocates in relation to the water-climate nexus, noting their role in bringing about dialogue and placing this nexus on the global agenda.

Ms. Gichengi noted that the scale of challenges we face in the context of climate change and action demand resources, accountability, and commitment. Noting the role of Action Aid Kenya in furthering discussions around climate change and justice in Africa, she also called for the necessity of collaboration and dialogue.

"Recommendations from this year's summit will be more influential in terms of decision making processes, policy proposals and key actions by relevant actors for a climate resilient and inclusive future"

Ms. Mercy Gichengi, Programme Coordinator, Youth and Governance, ActionAid Kenya



Picture 22. Ms. Mercy Gichengi, Programme Coordinator, Youth and Governance, ActionAid Kenya during the session on Session on Alternative Climate Solutions and Addressing Targeted Climate Finance towards Youth Driven Local Solutions

Dr. Hussain noted the need for alternate climate solutions and targeted financing, emphasising its importance in just climate actions. Youth-driven climate action, she added, needed to be localised and these measures should be part and parcel of ensuring this.

Ms. Charlene Ruto referenced the need for the capturing and incorporating indigenous women's perspectives in the generation of effective, sustainable and localised climate adaptation solutions. Additionally, she emphasised the importance of the participation and inclusion of marginalised communities in climate change dialogue, citing their position as co-creators of knowledge. To this end, she called for increased investment in research and documenting these knowledge frameworks, as well as increased protection of intellectual property of marginalised communities.

3.3.3 Gender Equality Forum (Nairobi Debates)

The Gender Equality Forum, held on Day 3 of the Summit, was co-convened by Plan International, the African Union Office of the Youth Envoy and Danida Fellowship Centre.



Picture 23. Ms. Charlene Ruto, Founder and Executive Director, Charlene Ruto Foundation during the session on Session on Alternative Climate Solutions and Addressing Targeted Climate Finance towards Youth Driven Local Solutions

Earmarked by the revamped Nairobi Debates as a continuation of the Arusha Debates, as well as the graduation of the Lead(H)er Fellowship's second cohort, this year's edition had a twist in its format, as panellists were split into two teams in the course of the dialogue. Discussing the role of young African women in and the contribution of researchers to the implementation of the Action Coalition Commitments, a specific focus was placed on gender-based violence, economic justice and rights and peace security, the panel ultimately came to the consensus that gender equality and peace and security are not debatable, requiring joint effort in order to be achieved.

The second cohort of the pan-African feminist Lead(H)er Fellowship graduated this year, with 23 young women across the fields of Peace and Security, Business, Trade and Entrepreneurship and Politics and Governance from Eastern and Southern Africa joining the ever growing family of Lead(H)er alumni. Three Fellows joined us physically this year, and highlighted their experience during their time in the Fellowship.



Picture 24. Makena Mwobobia, Executive Director, MS Training Center for Development Cooperation and MS Stella Agara, YouLead Summit Director.

Alumna Dr. Glory Florentine Kimario was also highlighted as one of the Fellowship's success stories, following the creation of the Minova Mental Health Fellowship, a program that seeks to engage the GBV-mental health nexus in Tanzania. The Fellowship mainly targeted young women and girls, but has come to expand itself to include men through virtual, university and community workshops. Its first cohort graduated this year and also seeks to expand beyond the EAC and enter other regions in future. Glory's work with the Fellowship has also been recognised nationally, having been introduced to the Tanzanian health ministry earlier this year. This program is one of four projects supported through seed grants issued by Plan International MEESA, with the remaining projects covering media, skills development and sports.

3.3.3.1 Welcome Remarks

Mr. Samuel Musyoki, Regional Programme and Influencing Director, Plan International

Mr. Musyoki's submission was centred on the reflections on how best to bridge the gap on gender equality;



Picture 25. Mr. Samuel Musyoki, Regional Programme and Influencing Director, Plan International delivering the welcome remarks on Day 3 of YouLead Summit 2023.

priorities at Plan international in as far as commitment to gender equality, education for women and access to opportunities are concerned, as well as their excitement to co-convene the Gender Equality with YouLead Africa, the EAC and relevant stakeholders.

3.3.3.2 Nairobi Debates

Dialogue on tracking the implementation of the Action Coalitions Commitments (gender-based violence, economic justice and rights, and peace and security), and the contribution from researchers.

Moderator: Ms Chipso Muchabaiwa, Regional Youth Engagement Specialist, Plan International, Office of the African Union Youth Envoy, MS Training Centre for Development Cooperation and Plan International

Speakers:

1. Dr. Samuel Olamide, Track II Diplomat in Arms Control and International Security Dr. Agatha Alidri, PhD, Lecturer, Gulu University, Uganda
2. Dr. Re'em Syeda Hussain, Programs Director, Afresist
3. Dr. Suzan Mlangwa, Sociologist, St August University, Tanzania (virtual) Mr. Charles Nyukuri, Regional Policy Advocacy and Research Advisory, Plan International
4. Ms. Hlenga Siyongwana, Lead(H)er Fellowship Coordinator
5. Ms. Mahlet Sebsibe, Lead(H)er Fellow 2023
6. Ms. Eunice Anyango Oyule, Young Women Representative, National Women Steering Committee

Key issues that emerged from the debate included;

- Investment in localized approaches to gender equality and access to opportunities for women and girls, especially those at the grassroots levels and local communities where resources are scarce, access to opportunities is limited and information is moderately adequate.
- Fortification of research on gender equality to inform evidence-based approaches, strategies and interventions to help address the question of inequality and fight gender imbalances via home-grown solutions.



Picture 26. From the left is Ms. Mahlet Sebsibe, Lead(H)er Fellow 2023, Ms. Eunice Anyango Oyule, Young Women Representative, National Women Steering Committee, Ms. Hlenga Siyongwana, Lead(H)er Fellowship Coordinator, and Mr. Charles Nyukuri - Regional Policy Advocacy Research, Plan International.



Picture 27. EAC Youth Fellows at YouLead summit 2023

3.4 Day 04: Post Summit Agenda

23rd November 2023

The final day of the summit was marked by the development of the post-Summit agenda, a critical part of the summit which seeks to garner contributions from delegates for future incorporation in operational and decision making contexts within the EAC and YouLead spaces. Making their presentation in national and pan-African blocs, the delegates' interventions covered four thematic areas - Gender Equality, Climate Justice, Business and Politics. A salient theme of these presentations and the summit overall was the need to move from policy creation to policy implementation.

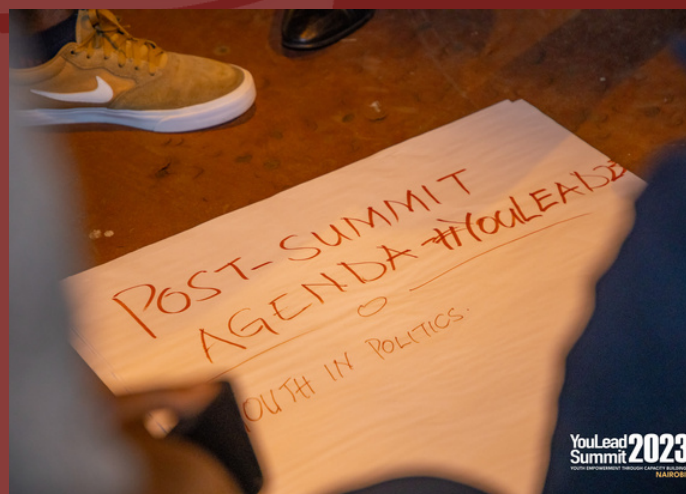


Picture 28. Delegates during Post Summit Agenda group discussions on Day 4 of YouLead Summit 2023.

In the thematic area of Climate Action, a host of recommendations were delivered pertaining to climate financing advocacy directed towards supporting grassroots organisations. Disaster risk reduction, climate adaptation and mitigation capacity building was a pressing issue as well, citing the continental vulnerability to disaster due to climate change. On the education front, the incorporation of green skills was a subject that was also recommended

in order to truly adapt to climate change. In continuation of the pursuit of accessible climate financing and referencing the Loss and Damage Fund, it was recommended that barriers to accessing the fund be removed. Indigenous knowledge frameworks and intellectual property protections were also raised as part of the drive towards creating localised climate solutions, recognising their importance in driving technological innovation. Citing the disproportionate impact of climate change on women and girls in Africa, gender mainstreaming in the context of climate action and justice was also brought to the fore.

Pertaining to Gender Equality, it was advised that there be an increased commitment to gender mainstreaming in the education sector in the context of curriculum. In the spirit of the Summit theme, capacity building of women and girls was a pressing issue, especially in the areas of business, politics and climate action. Delegates also called for renewed commitment to the localisation of gender-related UN and AU resolutions, instruments and strategies.



Picture 29. Post Summit Agenda drafting with delegates at YouLead Summit 2023.

In the field of Youth in Politics, capacity building through mentorship and partnership arose as a proposed enabler of increased youth participation in political activities.

Delegates also called for increased lobbying for youth interests, especially in multilateral fora. Political literacy has also emerged as a pressing issue in order to create and develop a highly skilled, active and well-read political population.

Pertaining to Youth in Business, there were increased calls for more accessible youth-centred funding to support business scaling. A move towards evidence-based programmatic interventions was also called for, noting the role of research in driving transformation in business.

5. Vote of thanks

Convening the YouLead Summit for the first time in Kenya would not have been at grasp without the devoted commitment of the East African Community, the Government of the Republic of Kenya, Ministry of EAC Affairs, Youth, Sports and culture of Burundi, the Swiss Embassy, Action Aid International, Plan International, the Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete Foundation, the Emerging Leaders Foundation Kenya, Julius Nyerere Leadership Centre, Action Aid Uganda, National Youth Council Uganda, National Youth Council Burundi, Motion Youth Hub, Youth Line Forum, Action Aid Tanzania, Action Aid Kenya, Nairobits kenya, Voice of Youth Tanzania, Burundi Business Incubator, CIAD Burundi and RDP Uganda amongst others.

We believe in forging partnerships towards meaningful youth inclusion and strategic plans for the Africa we Want, henceforth, we reiterate this precious token of appreciation to our partners and look forward to more sustainable approaches to development.



Picture 30. YouLead Summit Delegates during Day 1 of YouLead Summit 2023



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