

WWF LEADING THE CHANGE AFRICA YOUTH TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME – AFRICA YOUTH THEMATIC HUB (2018-2022)

KEY RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB

African Development Bank

ANYL4PSD

African Network of Young Leaders for
Peace and Sustainable Development

CBNRM

Community-Based Natural Resource Management

COMIFAC

Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale

COP

Conference of the Parties

CYNESA

Catholic Youth Network for Environmental
Sustainability in Africa

ESD

Education for Sustainable Development

GOK

Government of Kenya

ICT

Information and Communication Technology

ISNAD

Africa - International Support Network
for African Development

LtC

Leading the Change

NAYD

The Network of African Youths for Development

AMCEN

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

AYTLP

Africa Youth Transformational Leadership Programme

CEFDHAC

Conference on Central African Moist Forest Ecosystems

CBD

Convention on Biological Diversity

CSO

Civil Society Organisation

DRC

Democratic Republic of Congo

GEEP

Global Environmental Education Partnership

GGASN

Green Growth Africa Sustainability Network

HIV/AIDS

Human Immunodeficiency Virus and
Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

IDP

Internally Displaced Persons

JVE International

Young Volunteers for the Environment

M&E

Monitoring & Evaluation

NGO

Non-Governmental Organisation

PTA

Parent Teacher Association

REMA

Rwanda Environment Management Authority

SNRM

Sustainable Natural Resource Management

UNCCD

UN Convention to Combat Desertification

UN ECA

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

UNEP

UN Environment Program

WEBALEPCO

Western Bakossi Environmental Preservation Cooperative

NEPAD

New Partnership for Africa's Development

OECD

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

REJEFAC

Network of Young Leaders for the Sustainable Management of Central African Forest and Wetland Ecosystems

SDGs

Sustainable Development Goals

TOCODEC

Tombel Conservation and Development Cooperative

UNDP

United Nations Development Programme

UN ECOSOC

UN Economic and Social Council

UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

WWF

World Wide Fund for Nature

A person in a white lab coat is shown from the chest down, holding a pen in their right hand. They are standing over a desk that has several papers and a tablet on it. The papers appear to be medical or scientific documents, with one showing a bar chart. The tablet also displays a bar chart. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

SECTION 01

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Program

African youths are disproportionately affected by the environmental issues plaguing the continent. Desertification, pollution, erosion, overexploitation of natural resources such as forest and water, among others hampers prosperity and economic development. The forest cover in Africa has seen a reduction over the last century due to human activity, culminating in water scarcity and desertification. Addressing the aforementioned challenges requires the involvement of youths. The youthful population in Africa represent a strong force with enormous energy that can be leveraged upon to achieve a transformative change. The mobilization of the youths as part of the civil society in Africa can drive positive change as they engage in policy advocacy and contribute towards influencing policy making, as well as in innovative actions that advance conservation of the environment linked to green entrepreneurship.

However, the youths in Africa are faced with a number of challenges that impede them from playing an active role in addressing the issues faced by the continent. A prominent challenge faced by youths in Africa is related to the lack of capacity and this prevents them from tackling the continent's sustainable development challenges. Other challenges faced by African youths include unemployment and marginalization in decision-making processes that concern them. Consequently, capacity building of the youths is key for enabling the youths to acquire the right skills, knowledge, and tools that will empower them economically and instill the right values for positive societal transformation.

In 2018, WWF Cameroon commenced coordinating the implementation of a regional initiative – the Africa Youth Transformational Leadership Programme (AYTLP) referred to as the Africa Youth Thematic Hub. This Regional Youth initiative is implemented under the Leading the Change; Civil Society, Rights and Environment Programme (LtC) and brings together a coalition of youth interventions from different countries in Africa at national and regional levels, through the Leading the Change Programme. Central to the Project strategy is Capacity Development for Youths in order to empower them to perform their role as advocates and drivers of transformational change for the sustainable management of natural resources and sustainable investments.

Programme Goals

The ultimate outcome of the project reads: *By 2025, innovative youth-led actions drive policies and sustainable practices that enhance the integrity and ecological functionality of critical ecosystems and wildlife, address climate change and improve food, water and energy security in targeted countries.* The key dimensions of the ultimate outcome are civil society developing capacity to exercise their rights, generate benefits to alleviate poverty from a rights perspective and based on capacity and responsibilities to manage natural resources in a sustainable manner. A strong, informed, articulate, and pluralistic civil society is seen as a key element of the project sustainability and reflected in the two medium-term outcomes which the AYTLP seeks to contribute to as part of the wider Leading the Change (LtC) programme:

Medium-term Outcome 1: Civil societies are key actors in influencing planning, decision-making, and good governance of natural resources

Medium-term Outcome 2: Communities influence policy and decision-making processes for improved rights to and management of Natural Resources and optimize the benefits that derive from those resources in a sustainable way.

The aforementioned outcomes are meant to be achieved through four key strategies underpinning the design of the AYTLP:



Capacity Building

this is aimed at ensuring a critical mass of youth is using their technical and leadership skills to drive sustainable transformational change.



Advancing Policy

this is concerned with promoting the adoption of policies that ensure mainstreaming of sustainability, and youth participation in decision-making related to conservation and green growth.



Green Entrepreneurship Development

this is geared towards ensuring that youths in Africa are able to act as green entrepreneurs and create, innovate and develop solutions for sustainable livelihoods and economies.



Networking Platforms

this seeks to ensure that transformational change towards sustainability is brought about by a vibrant coalition of Pan African youth networks.

Through the LtC programme, the AYTLTP initiative is led by WWF Cameroon and delivered across the continent by WWF offices in Africa including: Uganda, Tanzania, Namibia, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Madagascar and Kenya. At the regional level, AYTLTP mobilised five Pan African Youth Networks with outreach in over 34 countries in Africa and these networks are key partners in the delivery of the Youth Hub.

The following sections of this report document key results and lessons learnt in the implementation of the AYTLTP.



Peer to peer learning

A hand holding a pen over a notebook, with a green overlay.

SECTION 02

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Description of the program's strategic engagement areas

Central to the project strategy is capacity development for youths in order to empower them to perform their role as advocates and drivers of transformational change for the sustainable management of natural resources and sustainable investments. The key dimensions of the ultimate outcome are civil society developing capacity to exercise their rights, generate benefits to alleviate poverty from a rights perspective and based on capacity and responsibilities to manage natural resources in a sustainable manner. A strong, informed, articulate, and pluralistic civil society is seen as a key element of the project sustainability and reflected in the two medium-term outcomes which the AYTLP seeks to contribute to as part of the wider Leading the Change (LtC) programme:

Medium-term Outcome 1: Civil societies are key actors in influencing planning, decision-making, and good governance of natural resources

This outcome aims at delivering two short-term outcomes: (i) strengthened capacity of partner Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and coalitions/fora/platform (CFP), to enable them to have a more meaningful impact in the conservation and natural resource management space; and (ii) More effective engagement of civil society in policy dialogues regarding the management of natural resources.

Medium-term Outcome 2: Communities influence policy and decision-making processes for improved rights to and management of Natural Resources and optimize the benefits that derive from those resources in a sustainable way.

2.1. Overview of the implementation period (2018-2022)

The regional results chain (2018-2022) articulates four short-term outcomes if which delivered will contribute to the overall LtC outcomes above. These four outcomes are:

1. A regional youth network is demonstrating improved leadership skills for engagement in policy advocacy and promotion of Environment and Sustainable Development (ESD) and green entrepreneurship;
2. Teaching and learning institutions and Civil Society Organizations have improved access to learning tools and approaches for capacity building related to ESD;
3. Youth entrepreneurs in target countries have improved access to credit facilities for green entrepreneurship through job-for-youth Programmes of financial institutions; and
4. National incubators are linked to regional facilities for sharing experiences and models for green solutions.

By delivering on these outcomes, the programme contributes directly to WWF's 2021-2025 Africa Strategy goals of Greening Development and Having an Engaged Society.



SECTION 03

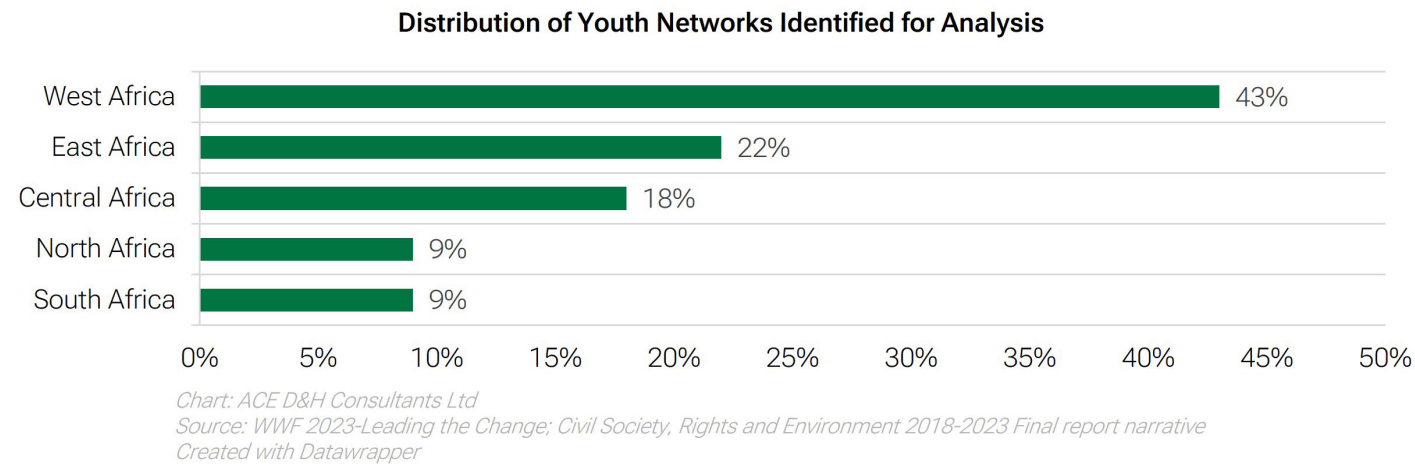
DOCUMENTATION OF KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Medium-term Outcome 1: Civil society are key actors in influencing planning, decision-making, and good governance of natural resources.

The actions carried out under this outcome were aimed at curving more space for civil society participation as well as more political will to accomodate the voice and choice of civil society. The strategies to achieve these were as follows:

Effective capacity building response built on identified needs

A mapping exercise was undertaken as a first step in the capacity building process. The 26 Pan African youth networks identified by this exercise were subject to further purposeful sampling and analysis. From the 26 identified, 13 civil society platforms were further analysed, and 5 selected as partners in the project.



Following this process, bespoke capacity building programmes were designed and delivered for youth networks to harness innovation and creation of enterprises for the development of green jobs and blue economy, strengthen youth networks leadership in green growth and sustainable development, establish need specific training programmes on thematic green growth and blue economy areas, strengthen youth networks partnership building and networking in green growth and establish a Pan-African youth green growth strategy and forum to explore opportunities for youth within the green economy.



School children mobilised for environmental protection

Massive Open Online Course for Youth Leaders

The Africa Youth Thematic Hub launched a Massive Open Online Course for young leaders - <https://mooc-ccpo.org/>



Over 80 youth enrolled and completed the course. The course is designed to be self-paced, taking about two to three hours of study per week over a three month period. Youth leaders across the content and beyond have a specific training course that addresses their needs and which they can access and learn at all times.

Ecological conscience lessons

JVE - Young Volunteers for the Environment organised over 20 training workshops, webinars, roundtables, exchanges and approximately 600 ecological conscience lessons offered in 11 schools have reached well over 3500 youth across 9 countries in Africa.

The AgroBioCulture Festival

The Festival organised by JVE is an innovative event which seeks to improve the knowledge and skills of young people on climate, ecosystem management and biodiversity through experiential learning while promoting culture and intergenerational knowledge transfer. Since its inception, the ABC Festival hosts about 200 participants from different African countries annually. These events have facilitated intergenerational and intercultural learning and the role that traditional/indigenous knowledge plays in conservation of nature and in the transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next. The festivals are also aimed at showcasing the importance of indigenous people's rights and role in governance through the engagement of local authorities and traditional leaders.



Peer training on traditional methods for cocoa processing

ANYL4PSD capacitates youth for climate and biodiversity action

ANYL4PSD - African Network of Young Leaders for Peace and Sustainable Development through the implementation of regional webinars held in a hybrid format (in presence and online) and local restitutions, and workshops organized both by African Network and the New Deal for Nature and People Coalition members targeted 69, 807 young people from local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), schools, media, local elected, business, indigenous people, refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and startups. Their capacities have been strengthened on the New Deal for Nature and People, green growth, climate change and justice, sustainable land management, education for sustainable development, ecosystems safeguards, conservation and green entrepreneurship, the post 2020 biodiversity framework (including policy dialogues and internal external advocacy towards/with policy makers); Leaders’ Pledge for Nature and the objective “by 2030, preserving no less than 30% of the planet’s natural terrestrial and marine environments, its stakes and challenges”.

Distribution of Stakeholders Capacitated

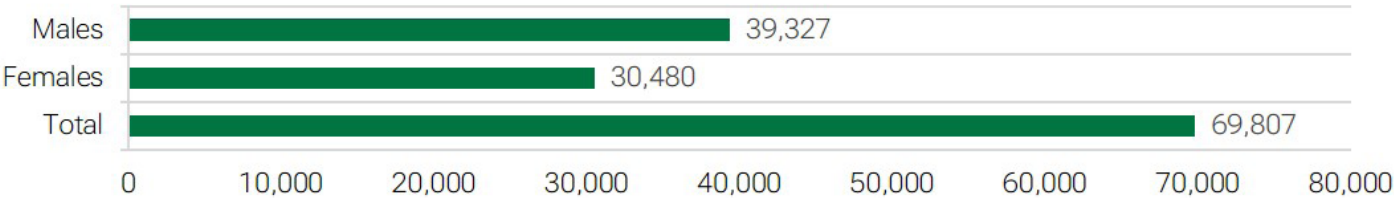


Chart: ACE D&H Consultants Ltd
Source: WWF 2023 End of Project Technical Report
Created with Datawrapper

Capacity building with a futuristic perspective

The programme has been very strategic in strengthening peer learning through leveraging the strengths of various age groups involved in its activities.



It developed a training of trainers programme targeting 755 children as peer educators.

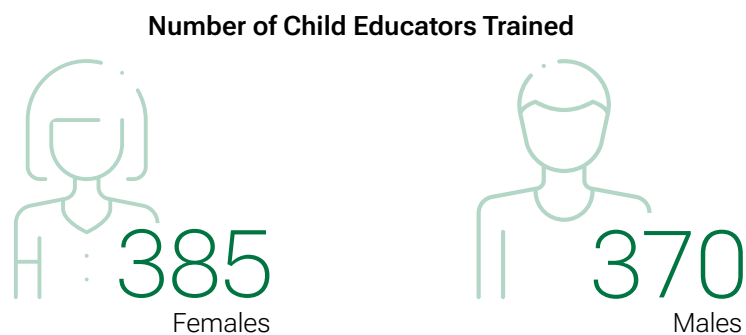


Chart: ACE D&H Consultants Ltd Source: WWF 2023 End of Project Technical Report Created with Datawrapper

Successful delivery of this initiative achieved a multiplier effect with educators, going on to educate 10,865 others/ peers in schools, mosques and churches.

Capacity building at landscape level promotes conservation of endangered species

Youth communities in the Ruvuma landscape in Tanzania now are aware and taking part in the conservation of biodiversity particularly the endangered species (elephants) and the need to protect and conserve these endangered species. Through commemoration of the National Elephant Day in 2019, over 623 youth (259 boys and 806 girls) received the message of elephant conservation.

The purpose of the awareness creation event was to enhance the knowledge of the local youth community including primary and secondary schools students on poaching, natural environmental degradation, human wildlife conflicts, elephant conservation and community ownership of the natural resources. Also youth were sensitized on their rights, access and benefits sharing from natural resources (value of timber and wildlife resources to boost and address poverty through participatory forest management and wildlife management areas) as stipulated in Tanzania Forest and Wildlife policies, importance of village land use plans and procedures on guided by the government.

Strengthening women's engagement in community-based resource management

In Namibia, 170 youth from 10 conservancies in the Kunene region have had their capacity built on knowledge of their conservancy rights. The youth have gained skills on conservancy management and engagement. This will enable them to play a greater role in the conservancy's affairs. They in turn have raised the awareness of their local communities on rhino conservation and wildlife crime through development and dissemination of communication materials. A Women for Conservation group was also formed in order to increase women's involvement in Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) issues. A constitution was drawn and about 120 women from various conservancies in Kunene North were engaged to raise awareness on the constitution. The group aims to empower other women, especially those who are hesitant to vote fellow women in management positions during conservancy elections. The women's group is a platform to advocate for women's involvement in conservancy leadership positions.

Capacity building and awareness raising to fight plastic pollution

In Uganda over 4000 young women and men (2500 university students, 500 scouts, youth's environment groups, conservationists) took part in an advocacy campaign geared towards a ban on single use plastics. The youth engaged in a 5 km march in Kampala to raise awareness on the impact of plastics and polythene bags on nature. As a result; a) Honorable speaker of parliament committed to greater deliberation of the issue of plastic pollution in policies and legislation in the August house; b) The Minister of state for Environment issued a directive to effect the ban on polythene bags.



UCO Country Director, the speaker of parliament and minister of state for environment flagging off the campaign

Other similar campaigns were delivered by CYNESA (Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa) and WWF Cameroon teams working with schools, community leaders and local authorities.



Project partners mobilise against plastics pollution

Capacity building actions to empower youth and improve civic space

Green Growth Africa Sustainability Network (GGASN) created a digital platform that will **strengthen the capacity of CSOs and improve civic space**, known as the **Green Growth DigiHub** - <https://www.thegreengrowth.net/>



A Facebook group- [Green Growth Hub \(#GreenGrowthAfrica\) | Facebook](#) which now comprises of more than 1500 members from across the continent, provides opportunity for knowledge sharing on projects implemented and policy discussions on green growth and sustainable development.



Furthermore, a WhatsApp group created for leaders of CSOs now has 529 members from Civil society organisations in 45 countries within and outside Africa. This enables youth to access and share near real time information on developments in their countries and beyond on matters that concern them.

Strengthening the role of youth through media outreach and engagement

01

The programme delivered various training sessions on the climate negotiation processes prepared young negotiators from 14 countries for the COP 27 conference and ensured that key messages were understood and clear objectives set.



02

Over 10,000 young people have participated in environmental awareness campaigns organised by REJEFAC



03

More than 10,000 local and traditional leaders, students CSOs and community groups being sensitized on climate change issues to include Intergenerational dialogues between traditional leaders, community leaders, youths, children and students' and also engaging in competitions.



04

10,650 African youth leaders (6860 females and 3790 males) received AJVC – REJEFAC information and messages.



05

Over 250,000 online people (governments, officials, private sector, traditional, religious, youths, women) received REJEFAC COP CHEZ NOUS messages prior to and during COP 27 via radio, social networks, and AJVC / REJEFAC platforms.



Youth engagement in media

Empowered youth acting as change agents

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Young Volunteers for the Environment (JVE) affiliates in this project benefited from regular information access through platforms created including messaging groups and networks. ***Now legislators and youth share the possibility to exchange in real time and dialogue on national and regional development trends and policies.*** As a result there is frequent exchange of knowledge and this is used by youth and other CSOs to leverage their actions on the ground and also influences their strategy. This has also enabled access to a rich network of actors favouring collaboration with and without the direct knowledge of JVE. This collaboration also adds to the resilience of these organizations mutually benefiting from shared resources to advance a common mission.

As youth capacities have been strengthened, the level of meaningful contribution to various processes in their countries is emerging through campaigns and position papers that the youth have managed to organize and elaborate reaching out directly to national and regional leaders in 24 countries. JVE National representations are now at a point where they organize workshops and webinars for CSOs on key themes, and are ***regularly invited to media and other platforms to give their opinions and debate over these issues.*** The project has not only strengthened youth capacities, but it has also created the spaces through which their voices can be heard. Engagement of youth through schools has gained momentum in that younger populations are gradually being seen at the forefront of conservation efforts in the regions where JVE works, and in community sensitization through practical efforts and in messaging. Over 5000 students have been equipped with the basic knowledge on environment elements and can respond when questioned on issues related to nature.

The AYLTP enhanced organisational and institutional capacities of youth networks

The programme believes that stronger and more viable youth networks can have even greater impact addressing the global climate and biodiversity emergencies. The programme provided organisational and institutional development support to partner organisations. As a result, CYNESA has now ***mainstreamed financial procedures and processes in the organization and built the capacity of a 7-member team to support with building internal capacity starting at the CYNESA Secretariat level and into the chapters.*** CYNESA has ***strengthened the capacity of over 7 institutions, over 20 youth organisations, and up to 13 women groups at Church and community levels.***

The ***organizational and institutional capacity of REJEFAC - Network of Young Leaders for the Sustainable Management of Central African Forest and Wetland Ecosystems – AJVC Secretariat and focal points, member organizations of the country offices has been strengthened. National CSOs affiliated to REJEFAC have had their capacity strengthened on leadership in conservation and climate change and on organisational development*** and have developed thematic action plans to guide their engagement.

Young people strengthened and engage in international climate processes

The capacity of 40 young people have been strengthened on in nature conservation, communication and leadership from Burundi, Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Congo, RCA, DRC, Rwanda and Chad.

SPOTLIGHT:

On the 23rd of November 2020, Réseau des Jeunes des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (REJEFAC) - Association Jeunesse Verte du Cameroun (AJVC), alongside the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), African Wildlife Foundation, Commission des Forêts d'Afrique (COMIFAC), and Conference on Dense and Moist Forest Ecosystems of Central Africa (CEFDHAC) organised a one-of-a-kind online regional biodiversity youth workshop targeting to build the capacity of over 100 young leaders from francophone Africa. The four-day virtual workshop brought participants from across the continent. Participants were sensitized on progressive conservation policies in Africa and the active roles the youth can take up to advance the former. Other themes covered include reinforcing the capacities of regional networks on communication and advocacy skills, analysing the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, and the New Deal for Nature regional strategy. Additionally, the webinar sought to draft a position paper stating the key biodiversity priorities of the youth from the region.

<https://www.awf.org/pressroom/awf-partners-rejefac-avjc-engage-young-leaders-francophone-africa>

Through REJEFAC's actions, over 500 young people have been trained on international negotiations, principles and practices with 65% of them being young women from various community.



REJEFAC regional youth training

Strengthening more effective engagement in policy dialogues and in influencing decision-making and practices in public and private sector regarding NRM.

The programme has led to more effective youth engagement in policy dialogues and decision making processes that affect them and the sustainable management of natural resources.

Local to national level youth engagements leading to real changes on the ground

JVE has built its credibility as a neutral and highly technically competent organisation in Togo. Through multistakeholder engagement and partnerships struck with, businesses and private sector, governments, and local authorities, traditional leaders, local organizations, community groups, academia among others, it has successfully carved out and created ***space and room for open civic and peaceful dialogue across the board, enabling young people to participate and contribute to decision makings that concern them. For instance,*** through regular dissemination of knowledge and technical advice on environment issues, climate change, and conservation, it has encouraged young people to take up spaces and contribute to these ongoing discussions and bring their own perspectives. For instance, it has led the way in promoting an agro-ecological transition in the country. ***Through the implusion of JVE, communities in 5 regions in Togo, reached a consensus to create ecosystem management committees within five target ecosystems***

Its impact is further evidenced in national and international representations, where it helps to mobilise the voices of youth and bring them to the table. At least 10 national representations were successful in mobilizing support and resources through local partners and networks, to ***participate in regional and international policy processes including the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of Parties (COP), United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity Conference of the Parties, High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and other key thematic meetings. Some also negotiated their way into government delegations as youth representatives to these important events, which shows evidence of growth on the youth side to be considered for such opportunities.***



Awareness raising on agroecology

In Nigeria, GGASN has become a reference point for various media organizations on consultations and interviews as part of public and civic debate on government's intended policies including the review of existing policies. This has availed the network to strengthen civic space and contribute to various policy issues. The engagement of the network with the media has been reported in more than 50 newspaper stories.

CYNESA has expanded its team that is engaging in policy dialogue beyond the scope of the secretariat to include a team of more than 15 young people who engage more effectively in policymaking at the national level in Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa. This was especially escalated by WWF's special interest in biodiversity and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Programme partners shaping international policy dialogues and processes

ANYL4PSD held online and in presence advocacies during several international environmental and climate events such as the Earth Hour, World Day of Water, UNCCD COP, UNFCCC COP and UNEA5. Some of the members engaged conversations with the United Nations Deputy Secretary General Amina J Mohammed over the importance to support the implementation of resolutions in #UNEA5 negotiated under cluster 2 on Nature based solutions and biodiversity as among the key conditions of success of the African Green Wall. Youth and civil society Leaders have also been involved in advocacy and as a result 850 youth, girls and women CSOs, platforms, networks and coalitions (schools, media, indigenous people, refugees, academia, IDPs and startups) are more effectively engaged in policy dialogues regarding the management of natural resources.

The Nigerian based partner, GGASN has engaged in various ***policy dialogues and discussions at the global, continental, regional and national levels.*** At Global level Green Growth Africa's Executive Director co-chaired the launch of the Global Environmental Education Partnership (GEEP) Africa Hub at the UNFCCC COP26 in Glasgow. GEEP is an initiative of the governments of the United States of America (USA) and Taiwan. GGASN is currently being represented in the planning committee for the setting up of the African Regional Hub for the Global Environmental Education Partnership (GEEP).



GGASN was invited by the U.S Secretary of States as one of the networks ***to represent the voices of youth at the President Joe Biden's U.S. – Africa Leaders' Summit in Washington DC in December 2022.*** Based on the engagements at the Summit, propositions are currently being developed by the network to create US-Africa Youth Coalition for Environmental Justice to strengthen civic space for environmental justice in Africa and United States. Leveraging on the outcomes of the Summit, a training was organized for 50 CSO leaders on how to leverage global opportunities.

GGASN was also invited by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to participate in the Italian Government Development and Cooperation Conference as one of the two voices to discuss youth-focused development challenges in Africa. The conference

outcomes helped to ***shape Italy's development cooperation with developing countries. GGASN was able to influence the Italian Government's Development Cooperation Strategy with Africa particularly on the need for human capacity development as the network emphasized the need to raise human capacity for green growth in Africa.*** Consequent to the event, a new Foundation, Italian Higher Education with Africa (IHEA) Foundation was established by six leading public Italian universities. Funded by the Italian Government, the Foundation is implementing a specializing master's program in the Horn of Africa.

Evidence based advocacy approaches leading to better consideration of CSO contributions

GGASN implemented research-based advocacy for the need to rethink, reset and recalibrate humanity interaction with nature and the need to 'build back better' bouncing back from the Covid 19 pandemic . This led to GGASN being requested to contribute to the concept paper for **AMCEN's Green Stimulus Program**. GGASN leveraged the program to **contribute to governmental actions in response to COVID-19 to build back better with focus on recalibrating human interaction with nature and environmental sustainability**.

REJEFAC produced study on the impact of charcoal and firewood production activities on the environment with REJEFAC RCA that has generated interest from FAO and new partners. REJEFAC held its annual event, CoP **Chez Nous** that brought together young leaders and policy makers from the ten countries of the Congo Basin to deliberate to increased commitments to key global conventions like the CBD and UNFCCC.

In partnership with Youth Go-Green the LtC program in Uganda undertook an audit of the draft climate change bill 2020 for Uganda and developed a position paper with recommendations on how to engage the youth in climate change adaptation and mitigation legislation and implementation process. The position paper that was presented at a national scientific conference on youth participation & contribution to the climate change bill 2020 held at Serena Hotel Kampala not only highlighted gaps under different sections of the bill but also proposed recommendations that were adopted by the drafting team. The bill is still under discussion by parliament and is expected to be passed in to law towards end of 2021.



WWF-UCO presented at the scientific conference on youth contribution to the climate change bill

CSOs are engaging with policy makers to improve the enabling conditions for CSO involvement and influence in policy and decision making.

- ▲ The development of the Green Growth DigiHub by GGASN creates a new platform through which CSOs are able to leverage the impact of projects, lessons learnt and make policy suggestions. The network is using the synthesis of the submissions from the CSOs to engage with governments and multilateral organisations to demonstrate and advocate on the relevance of CSOs in policymaking. This is a major improvement from when government would handpick one or two CSOs out of thousands of CSOs for policy engagement.

- ▲ GGASN involving CSOs in Ghana, Liberia, Zambia and Nigeria implement advocacy in parallel with the UNFCCC COP 27 and UNCBD COP 15.2 towards various crucial topics on the implementation of promises made at COP 26 and the adoption of the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework at COP 15.2 in Montreal, Canada. In addition to reaching 1.5 million people during the campaign and influencing relevant stakeholders and international organisation via social media, two position papers were developed for engagement with government to drive the implementation of the outcomes from UNFCCC COP 27 and the Kuning-Montreal agreements. The improvement of civic space, especially for young people, is a key message of the network during their participation at UNFCCC COPs, among other local and international events where GGASN participates. During the project implementation period, CYNESA used her accreditation to UNEP, UNFCCC, UNCCD, UNCBD, and ECOSOC to influence the engagement of CSOs at these platforms and their convenings for policy. Representation has also been enhanced at the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN 18.2) including leading coordination to develop the key messages and statements of the UNEP MGS, Africa.
- ▲ ANYL4PSD has supported 670 youth, girls and women CSOs, platforms, networks and coalitions to engage in policy dialogue and influencing decision-makers among them, 450 CSO initiatives have raised at least one step or equivalent their level of engagement significantly. One of the key outcomes of the mentorship and the accompaniment is the set-up in communities of 498 multi-sectorial advocacy networks made up CSOs, of religious, traditional and political leaders and indigenous people and working together towards ensuring rights-based approaches to nature-based solutions and conserving land, freshwater, and seas..

Medium-term Outcome 2: **Communities influence policy and decision-making processes for improved rights to and NRM and optimize the benefits that derive from those resources in a sustainable way.**

The program set out to ensure that natural resources dependent communities engage with policy makers on decisions that affect their environment. Also, it was envisaged that the voice of these communities is listened to concerning access and benefit sharing from sustainable management of natural resources. The key results achieved under this medium term outcome are as follows:

Communities are engaging with policy makers and decision makers related to improved rights to Natural Resources.

- ▲ GGASN building on the frequent engagement with the media partnered with Nigeria's most referred print media by policymakers, the Guardian newspapers, to conduct an investigative journalistic research on wildlife crime and illegalities in forest ecosystem. The research also involved engagement with local community members i on their experience on wildlife crime and illegal forest operation. Policymakers were also engaged to explore their level of awareness about the level of wildlife crimes in forest reserves and government actions to curb them.
- ▲ CYNESA in Kenya, Rwanda, Ghana, and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has had over 50 young people engage with decision makers and policymakers even at national youth conventions and with state agencies like the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) at policymaking levels. The Government of Rwanda through the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) provided party badges and partially sponsored two CYNESA Rwanda delegates to attend the COP26 in Glasgow while the Government of Kenya and the DRC provided party badges to a CYNESA delegate each for the UNFCCC COP27.

- ▲ ANYL4PSD mobilised 150 community media and engaged with youths in (online and offline) campaign towards the two regional position papers related to COVID19 and pandemics and towards a strong post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework reaching at least 75 525 000 people targeting at local, national, regional level governments, private sector (including oil company), political, traditional and religious leaders in 52 Central, West, North, Eastern, South African Governments. 44 of the targeted relevant government and other key decision makers increased at least 1 level or equivalent their commitment and action taken towards policy frameworks and practices related to sustainable natural resource management.

Communities have increased and equitably distributed benefits from sustainable management/use of Natural Resources

GGASN has had a high share of the community engagement of the network carried out at the high school levels in local communities, through the EcoHeroes Initiative among others initiatives such as the World Wide Teach-In on Climate and Justice, among others. EcoHeroes Initiative (formerly Environmental Education Programme, EEP) educates and empowers students in secondary schools in African countries to identify environmental challenges and needs in their communities, and, develop solutions to the challenges by applying the knowledge they have acquired from science and arts courses in school.

CYNESA rehabilitated the borehole at St. Teresa's Catholic Church, Kiandegwa in Kenya, additionally the County Government added resources to dig the water pan, enabling the community to access the natural resources within their vicinity and that they participate in the sustainable management of natural resources. By working with government-registered agricultural extension officers, youth and women in Rwanda have benefited from government services that they would otherwise not get and learnt how to do more with fewer natural resources.

ANYL4PSD leading the way on green entrepreneurship

ANYL4PSD has set up 350 green entrepreneurship platforms with mentorship on developing solutions for sustainable livelihood and economies; engaging communities in loss and damage debates and to influence policies and decision-making processes for improved rights and management of natural resources. 65 youths and women associations and 15 startups have been accompanied to greening their portfolios through the development of business models to strengthened value chains, promote sustainability and increase income in communities. 350 additional target households perceived an increased benefit from sustainable program business ventures.

Spotlight on youth green entrepreneurship initiatives

Promoting agri-business in Cameroon

In Cameroon after start-up support through the Parent Teacher Association PTA of Lycee Bilingue de Melong, 3 youth in the Bakossi-Banyang-Mbo landscape are each currently making an average monthly profit of SEK 3,076 (XAF 200,000) from their poultry farms, while investing also in other aspects of sustainable agriculture to ensure more productivity and sustainability. For example, their involvement in organic farming and piggery is expected to improve environmental management and provide more alternative livelihoods. The lesson learnt so far is that, everything being equal, each of them can make a profit of up to 250.000 francs a month from running with just 500 chickens. Interestingly, the youth champions, out of their own volition, have been encouraging and supporting other youth to develop interest and gain knowledge and skills in green entrepreneurship for their livelihood. Other successful initiatives in Cameroon include the promotion of piggery, pineapple and honey value chains.



Pineapple and poultry value chains providing employment and income to youth

Tanzanian youth deriving incomes from adopting renewable energy technologies

In Tanzania youth groups have the right skills and equal opportunity to access benefits from the natural resources. This has been achieved through capacity building programs to support youth to understand and exploit the opportunity of using renewable energy for productive use in the Ruvuma Landscape. Access to solar PV technology among youth groups has improved their income of up to TZS 25,000 (US\$ 11) a week and also secured permanent employment opportunity for the youth network. A group network of 40 youth have been mobilized and supported to establish a Barbershop at Miyuyu Village in Mtwara that use renewable energy technology (solar PVs) to support its business energy needs. The group also received training on solar technology and business management skills to ensure sustainability of the business.



A Youth Group Supported to Establish Renewable Energy Powered Business in Ruvuma landscape

Youth and women have improved their income as a result of awareness creation and capacity building on sustainable energy technologies for productive use/ business in the landscape. A total of over 90 youth benefited from the program.

Community empowerment through village savings and loan associations in Uganda

In 2018, the project in Uganda built capacity of 2 community youth groups Rugashari Youth Group (RYG) and Kyaruganda Youth Group (KYG) by training group members in financial management and initiation of financial management procedures within the groups. As a result, group Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) financial management procedures were put in place and the groups have increased their savings

and loan portfolio to UGX 13m (USD 3500) for KYG and UGX 19m (USD 5200) for RYG. The youth members have gone on to acquire some assets including plots of land, motorcycles for business and some investing in goat rearing. The improved financial capacity has further improved the groups opportunities to access additional funding from other government programs. RYG received UGX 7,400,000 million (USD 2,000) from the Youth livelihood improvement program that they have used to invest in green enterprises.



Community savings and credit scheme



SECTION 04

GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The results presented in the preceeding section demonstrates that the Africa Youth Transformational Leadership Programme has achieved significant results across its core strategic areas and countries of intervention. The breath and depth of the achievements, points to significant good practices and lessons that have emerged from the implementation. The good practices and lessons are organised under programmatic, crosscutting issues and management/operational categories.

4.1. Programmatic Level

Component 1: Capacity Building

Building capacity based on need and evidence

The project demonstrated responsiveness to needs of partners and evolving context. The initial mapping and assessment of youth-led CSOs and networks was a very important step in achieving the capacity building objectives for the program ensuring that priorities were addressed over time. The program developed and delivered thematic inputs to address needs and key competencies using a mix of approaches and methodologies. Competencies for green growth action present a new way of looking at key skills and knowledge that enable the youth to effectively implement green growth and ultimately, sustainable development. These entail Transformational, Technical, Management and Participatory competencies at different levels. Some examples of thematic capacity building included CYNESA building the capacity of partners CSOs on financial and project deliverables' requirements and to adhere to the same standards and improving their internal operations. Others targeted leadership in conservation and climate change, international negotiations, principles, and practices, entrepreneurship, agroecology, and in policy processes, evidence based advocacy, social media and use of online platforms, green growth, education for sustainable development, monitoring and evaluation of sustainable development goals amongst many other topics.



Training youth on ecosystem management during an nature excursion at ABC festival

Application of diverse approaches to address various learning needs and styles of actors

The Capacity Building component recorded a lot of successes thanks to the diverse approaches and methodologies implored. This included regular access to information that led to increased knowledge on the themes of environment and sustainable development. As already mentioned the delivery of the MOOC on Youth Leadership was self-paced, enabling learners to engage when convenient. Practical trainings were also organized by the program for specific targets ranging from leadership

and climate change thematic for country focal points, trainings for specific community groups including children educators and also the promotion of peer to peer exchange amongst countries.



Baka children engaged in peer learning

With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, partners such as ANYL4PSD responded through hybrid working. The evidence consequently suggests that though the pandemic was a clear challenge to the project, online working effectively enabled the project to achieve even higher than expected outreach. For instance, workshops organized both by African Network and the New Deal for Nature and People Coalition members, reached over 69 807 African Youths.

Leveraging modern information and community technologies for youth engagement

As a youth focused initiative, the program took advantage of the available technologies and technologically savvy youth leaders to drive achievement of its capacity building goals. For instance, the development and use of digital platforms such as digital hubs, social media pages (WhatsApp group, Facebook pages), information portals and webinars successfully engaged youth across the African continent around issues that concern them. The development of other platforms such as the Green Growth DigiHub by GGASN helped to bridge the gap between government and CSOs. The Hub enables CSOs to engage with government using an evidence based approach to harness and harvest new datasets from CSO led projects to inform policy making in Nigeria. Through the process of developing this platform, GGASN has further strengthened its ICT skills in coding and platform administration, which is the foundation for the platform's sustainability.

Strengthening active media presence enhances participation and voice

The evidence demonstrates that the enhanced capacity of the African youth led to greater participation globally and more solicitation of their voice and choice in issues related to ESD, biodiversity, climate change, fight against plastics, and other policy processes at regional and international levels such as the Conference of Parties on Biodiversity, Climate and Desertification. For example, active media presence and publicity of the innovative initiatives have caught the interest of the larger public and key opinion setters leading to the recognition of JVE Senegal Director as part of the top 10 young opinion leaders in climate issues in Africa. Others in Senegal, Togo, Cameroon and Benin have been awarded for their work. This has propelled them and legitimized their actions granting them credibility in that new partnerships and collaboration in support of the youth work have been established.

Component 2: Advancing Policy

This project demonstrates that youth leaders play a key role in mobilizing national, regional and international awareness and political engagement. Crucial in this role is ***maintaining neutrality, utilizing evidenced based approaches and having a voice at the table.***

The role of political neutrality in partnership building

A key good practice by the youth network across the program was the importance of political neutrality. The neutrality of the Young Volunteers for the Environment (JVE) was ascertained across all the countries and this played to their advantage in their advocacy endeavors. JVE and its representations play a neutral role to share knowledge and technical advice on environment issues, climate change, and conservation, creating awareness and facilitating dialogue. As a result, more young people are taking up spaces to engage and contribute to these ongoing discussions and bring their own perspectives e.g. ***Communities in Togo reached a consensus to create ecosystem management committees within 5 ecosystems and across the 5 target regions.*** By ***maintaining a politically neutral posture in contexts characterized by shrinking civic space, JVE has been able to gain access to leaders of diverse political parties and to pass on their messages.*** Clearly, this process of engagement takes time, requires patience and ability to maneuver power plays amongst actors at national and international levels. Capacity building of youth leaders on leadership and advocacy strategies facilitated the ability of leaders to overcome challenges.

The need for effective representation and seat at the table

Effective presence and representation of youth in major national and international fora was also important in the endeavor to participate in policy dialogue and influence decision-making. The representation of youth leaders was promoted for CBD, UNFCCC, GEEP and many global events on Environment and Sustainable Development, climate change and biodiversity protection. GGASN engaged in various policy dialogues and discussions at the global, continental, regional and national levels. At Global Level Green Growth Africa's Executive Director co-chaired the launch of the Global Environmental Education Partnership (GEEP) Africa Hub. As mentioned earlier, GGASN was invited by the U.S Secretary of States as one of the networks to represent the voices of youth at the President Joe Biden's U.S. – Africa Leaders' Summit in Washington DC in December 2022.

GGASN was invited by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to participate in the Italian Government Development and Cooperation Conference as one of the two voices to discuss youth-focused development challenges in Africa. Working with country focal points and members to develop the road map of African Youth and Civil Society Engagement in Africa's commitment in the building of a Post 2020 Global Diversity Framework enabled youth to voice their views and potential role within the framework. The evidence here also demonstrates that when given the opportunity, youths know how to organize themselves, express their views, and contribute to policy debates that concern them. The project has consequently been successful in creating opportunities and spaces for their engagement. Strengthening the ability of youth leaders is a core pillar of achieving the Africa Union's 2063 objectives through creating the framework required for better governance of Africa's resources as well as ensuring that Africa benefits from its youth dividend.

Evidence-based advocacy is key in influencing decision making

GGASN implemented research-based advocacy for the need to rethink, reset and recalibrate humanity interaction with nature and the need to 'build back better' bouncing back from the Covid 19 pandemic. REJEFAC's summary study on the impact of charcoal and firewood production activities on the environment has generated interest from FAO and new partners. GGASN investigative journalistic research on wildlife crime and illegalities in forest ecosystem in Nigeria was far reaching in awareness raising.

The development of the Green Growth DigiHub by GGASN created a new platform through which CSOs are able to leverage the impact of projects, lessons learnt and make policy suggestions. The network is using the synthesis of the submissions from the CSOs to engage with governments and multilateral organizations to demonstrate and advocate on the relevance of CSOs in policymaking. This is a major improvement from when government would handpick one or two CSOs out of thousands of CSOs for policy engagement.

A mix of online and community engagement leads to optimal outcomes

In addition to using digital platforms, youth networks also utilized position papers as a channel for espousing their views on matters that concern them. WWF Cameroon team also utilized an evidence based approach while working with local and national authorities in the integration of ESD in national curriculum. Local NGO partners as part of the LtC Program in the country, carried out various needs assessments and research activities around project landscapes, which informed the revision of various landscape management plans. Drawing on local knowledge and with project support, community leaders developed community management plans for local resource management such as for fishing and beekeeping. Traditional leaders, park management authorities, local and municipal duty-bearers are more likely to adopt positions from youth networks, when such contributions emerge from documented evidence from practice or quality and well-articulated research and communication.

This was the case in Uganda, whereby the Youth Go-Green in collaboration with the LtC program undertook an audit of the draft climate change bill 2020 and developed a position paper with recommendations on how to engage the youth in climate change adaptation and mitigation legislation and implementation process. The position paper highlighted gaps under different sections of the bill but also proposed recommendations that were adopted by the drafting team. Drawing on this experience, a key lesson is the need for continued capacity strengthening on evidence based advocacy. Such efforts in DRC, have led to youth CSOs being able to produce roadmaps, policy briefs, and position papers targeted at policy decision makers as a result of the program's interventions.

Leveraging existing structures enhances the success of advocacy initiatives

The program also highlights the importance of building advocacy on existing structures at local to international levels. The project focused on existing networks as opposed to creating new ones and consequently benefitted from established social capital. ANYL4PSD affirms that the successes of its activities was because the project was organized around existing structures and it created value added through leadership capacity strengthening. The same applies to working with parent teachers' associations and youth clubs in schools to promote ESD and engagement in climate protection.



Project engagement with local leaders in awareness raising

At regional and international levels, however, the regional work could have been further anchored on pre-identified regional or sub-regional policy processes including stronger links with WWF country offices. This finding from the thematic evaluation of the thematic hubs in 2021, argues that this could further strengthen connectedness in the work of Pan-African networks. It could also ensure that sustained funding is made available for the regional networks to perform their advocacy and outreach work more effectively.

Component 3: Green Entrepreneurship Development

Under this program component, the objective was to establish incubators and link the youth CBOs to already existing enterprise incubators in target countries. To promote startups and scaling of youth initiative, an additional objective was to facilitate linkages between youth CBOs, the national incubators and credit facilities for the creation of green jobs. This was expected to engage institutions like the African Development Bank that have a strong youth program for job creation through providing access to credit for green enterprises. At regional level, the target was to establish a Regional Youth Innovation Scheme at Pan African Level that will bring youth and youth organizations at national level involved in innovative best practices that demonstrate sustainability under one platform.

There is need for youth leadership and mentorship on entrepreneurship

The emerging lesson is that mentorship is vital in promoting green growth across wide ecosystems and communities. *ANYL4PSD has set 350 green entrepreneurship platforms set with mentorship on developing solutions for sustainable livelihood and economies; engaging communities in loss and damage debates and influencing policies and decision-making processes for improved rights and management of NR. 65 youths and women associations and 15 startups have been accompanied to greening their portfolios through the development of business models to strengthened value chains, promote sustainability and increase income in communities. 350 additional target households perceived an increased benefit from sustainable program business ventures. 75 additional target households perceived more equitable distribution of benefits.*

Investing in green enterprises creates the social and economic incentives for sustainable behaviour change

The key lesson results in the fact that *investing in green enterprises not only contributes to address environmental degradation but provides economic and social benefits at the same time. Those engaged in green enterprises at forest landscape levels, are expected to drive change by reducing their personal and community footprint on natural resources.*

Drawing from the Mid Term Review MTR of the AYTLTP in Cameroon, support to beekeeping in the South West Region, led to sustained income generation for local beekeepers and their cooperative called Tombel Conservation and Development Cooperative TOCODEC. Through improved skills, members of the cooperative generated over 4000 USD through provision of services (36 bee veils, 90 beehives, 36 bee suits, and 12 smokers) to other community based organizations. TOCODEC had its honey value chain analyzed with technical and financial support from the project and its technical and institutional



Development of honey value chain and job creation in production of smokers

capacities strengthened. TOCODEC was further supported by the project in establishing partnerships with Plasticam and Novaplast for the supply of bottles and cartons respectively. Through these partnerships, TOCODEC accessed packaging equipment from suppliers at discounted rates. Other partnerships were established with honey distributors from 9 regions.

Some cooperatives in Cameroon were assisted to create bank accounts within financial institutions but accessing credit facilities remains a challenge. Accounts have primarily been used to save project funds or to receive payments from WWF. This ambition in the first instance seems appropriate to enable youth groups to gain the credibility and confidence needed to engage in more formal banking institutions where criteria for borrowing and lending might be more rigorous. This suggests that the desire to engage with the African Development Bank as identified in the funding proposal might have been aspirational. With the experiences, gained future programs could seek to scale up the existing experiences and seek alliances with the African Development Bank AfDB in funding innovative projects. It might also be that future program, provide start-up funding youth-led initiatives that can be effectively delivered as a collaborative effort with financial institutions. This fund could also serve as guarantee to the lenders, enabling them to spread their risk of doing business with youth and their organizations.

Creating incentive structures and leveraging youth champions spearheads positive change

Another key good practice and lesson drawn from this program is on creating incentives for those involved in forest and biodiversity degradation activities to change behaviours. Still drawing on the Cameroonian example, Western Bakossi Environmental Preservation Cooperative WEBALEPCO cooperative expanded its pig farming initiative to target 10 hunters around the Bakossi National Park. The pigs have been raised by the hunters who have in turn passed four piglets to others within their respective communities. It is expected that as the chain expands, more hunters within and around the Bakossi National Park can divert their interest from hunting to more sustainable enterprises. As one of the hunters testified, **now I feel better, healthier since I engaged in this activity compared to when I was involved in hunting. This is a better and more secure livelihood for me and my family.**

Other youth benefiting from organic farming and piggery have started to encourage and support other youth to develop interest and gain knowledge and skills in green entrepreneurship in the Bakossi-Banyang-Mbo landscape.



Beneficiary of piggery business support from the project

Similar experiences from Tanzania from the Ruvuma Landscape and Miyuyu village in Mtwara where communities have benefited from capacity building in renewable energy to power their small business initiatives, while in Uganda, youth investments in tree planting, beekeeping and business development enabled them to earn incomes, increase savings and contributed to the acquisition of production assets such as land, bikes for transportation, and goat rearing. CYNESA's work on plastic pollution also incentivized citizens to stop plastic pollution through recycling and using the materials for urban market gardening. These experiences demonstrate that given adequate economic incentives and alternative livelihoods, communities and youth can adopt livelihoods practices which improve their incomes while reducing their impacts on natural resources and the environment.

Business incubation support is a valuable part of the green entrepreneurship gig-saw.

It must be stated that access to business incubation is very limited in target countries. Consequently, business startup support by development program tends to be challenging without the intervention of business development experts. The program could consequently, have benefitted from dedicated team to push the green entrepreneurship agenda beyond national country offices and to operationalize the vision of a Pan African youth innovation scheme. With high levels of unemployment in target countries, any efforts to promote youth entrepreneurship are likely to be relevant. The future phase could effectively, prioritize operationalization and furtherance of this program's component.

Component 4: Networking Platforms

At design, the objective of the programme was to strengthen pan African networks and their memberships following a needs assessment and mapping of priorities. As mentioned under the capacity building pillar these assessments ensure that project interventions are evidence based, and focused on the real needs of the networks. The objective was to create a wider pan African network, but this has not materialised as capacity strengthening focused and leveraged the existing platforms.

The programme has been highly successful as already discussed earlier in utilising up to date online platforms, social media, digital/ information hubs, and traditional media to reach youth within countries, regionally and internationally. Various programme meetings – face to face and online have created the spaces for peer learning and collective action on areas of common interest amongst African Youth. Networking is important for this program because on the one hand the uniqueness of African countries and Regions warrants continues information exchange and communication, and on the other hand there is need to have African CSOs interact with their peers out of the continent.



JVE youth leaders from 7 countries participate at the COP26

REJEFAC set up the Web TV REJEFAC platform which is now operational and the members of REJEFAC have begun to generate content in furtherance of program objectives. Green Growth Africa Sustainability Network (GGASN) created a digital platform that will strengthen the capacity of CSOs and improve civic space, known as the Green Growth DigiHub.

A Facebook group <https://facebook.com/groups/479464522625568/> was created for leaders and members of Civil society organizations who are active in environment, green growth and sustainable development. It now comprises more than 1500 members from across the continent. A WhatsApp group was created for leaders of CSOs. Altogether, the group has 529 members from Civil society organizations in 45 countries within and outside Africa. Again, this further emphasizes the benefits of leading from the south, whereby the program enabled youth leaders to innovate while responding to the needs of other youth in their countries and beyond.

4.2. Operational Delivery of the program

Flexibility and adaptive management in responding to uncertainty

The project demonstrated flexibility and adaptive management which contributed to successful project implementation in the midst of challenges such as the COVID 19 pandemic. Amid a pandemic, was an opportunity. With the advent of the COVID 19 pandemic, restrictions in the organization of physical meetings were in place in the project countries but the project partners across the project countries were able to reorient their project activities, organizing them virtually. Conducting some of the project activities virtually has enabled the project to reach out to more individuals than would have been if the project activities were otherwise implemented through physical meetings. The COVID pandemic has been beneficial to the project in a way as it has enabled the project to **engage with more youths virtually through digital or virtual platforms. The emerging lesson is that civil society organisations and youth organisations and networks in particular are often under-resourced in terms of communication and ICTs. They lack funding for equipment and sustained access to internet connectivity.** Fortunately, the rate of internet coverage has expanded in the African continent, yet many community-based organisations still struggle to access secured connections.

It is therefore, crucially to prioritize strengthening internal communications resources within youth organisations as well as their technical capacities in the areas of ICT. It does not only allow them to maintain their activities during periods of pandemics such as Covid, but could also be utilised during other future outbreaks such as Ebola and during periods of conflict and war. Technological preparedness should therefore be a central part of future support to youth networks.

Responding to emerging needs and priorities over time

Flexibility was also built into the design of the project allowing national youth organisations and regional platforms, to respond to priorities in their countries, regionally and internationally as they arose. For instance, REJEVAC, JVE, GGSAN have targeted emerging events and policy processes such as the Earth Hour, World Water Day , UNCCD COP, UNFCCC COP, CBD and others to advocate for youth positions.



Project supported participation of youth leaders in various COPs

In Togo, JVE promoted the territorial transition to agroecology with the support of local authorities, leaders and key national stakeholders. CYNESA responded to rising needs of internally displaced populations in Cameroon and in other countries, doubled down on the fight against plastics pollution through promotion of urban agriculture and market gardens. By being flexible and responsive to national needs, youth networks are empowered to innovate as they seek sustainable solutions to the problems facing their communities.

Flexibility also drives innovative partnerships and promotes ownership

It also creates the incentive to explore wider partnerships that promote sustainability. *CYNESA demonstrated this through partnerships with Caritas office of the Catholic diocese of Muranga to scale up community water harvesting and management. In Cameroon, REJEVAC established MoUs with the government Ministry of forest to strengthen the role and participation of youth in forest and conservation processes and led the development of its TV -Web TV. In the same vain, ISNAD-Africa - International Support Network for African Development / Green Growth Africa set up an online platform targeting youth, professionals, policy makers across the continent and beyond. Evidently, the project demonstrated leading from the south enabling the agenda of the program to be co-constructed and delivered with youth leadership from target countries.*

Monitoring and evaluation

Delivering on such a comprehensive multi-country and multi partner programme, spread across different landscapes requires an effective system for monitoring and evaluation. Such a system enables implementing stakeholders to keep track of progress, creating opportunities for learning, adjustment and of course corrections where needed. The programme used an evidence based approach, implementing baseline reviews on gender and conflict, needs assessments, mid-term reviews of the programme and regular partner meetings. These learning opportunities have been highly valued by implementing partners, creating a sense of ownership and cohesion amongst team members. Regular monitoring also enabled the program team to spot a case of wrongdoing with an implementing partner, and immediate robust action was taken and the partner was suspended. Regular programme meetings and open transparent communication between WWF and implementing partners have been highly appreciated. Partners were able to adjust their work plans and budgets over the implementation period to address the impacts of Covid 19 but also to take advantage of emerging opportunities in their countries, region and internationally. This has also been made possible through the flexibility from the donor side and the openness for partners to innovate, co-create and co-deliver on this programme. A combination of these factors has led to the widespread achievements and progress reported by the programme.

Partnerships and multi-stakeholder approach built on strong allies

Addressing the systematic drivers which perpetuate inequality, limited engagement of youth in decision making processes that concern them, as well as environmental degradation requires *a multi-stakeholder approach built on partnerships with allies. The success of the program so far has been significantly driven by the partnerships created and nurtured from community to national, regional and international levels.* Bringing together university students, scouts, youth's environment groups, conservationists in an advocacy campaign on the ban on plastics in Uganda led to the Minister of State for Environment to issue a directive to effect a ban on polythene bags. Similarly, engagement with private sector companies in Uganda including Coca Cola, Fair Ventures Worldwide, Barclays Bank, NTV, Capital FM and Jude Color Solutions sponsored the Earth Hour University challenge, as part of the Earth Hour campaign of 2019.

Successful advocacy is based on clearly identified needs and influencing strategies

A key lesson emerging from this programme, relates to the *need for mapping critical stakeholders and for identifying targeted advocacy and influence strategies*. Quick gains can be achieved at local levels where local communities and local officials buy into the programme's agenda. This also leads to cost savings in delivery, allows the programme to leverage expertise but also existing social capital of partners. In Cameroon, the WWF team identified the key stakeholders that could promote the development of ESD nationally. Consequently, *advocacy actions were undertaken towards school officials, parents' teachers associations, regional inspectorates of basic and secondary education, and the ministry. The concerted efforts led to quick gains in schools and in the regional delegations compared to the national level* where it has taken years for an MoU to be signed to create a more enabling environment for influencing policy and practice within the national educational system.

The key lesson is that working at decentralised level tends to achieve quick gains when local officials buy into the objectives of the advocacy campaign. This is also evidenced in Togo where JVE noted a greater impact in working with local government and authorities especially where there is a decentralized system of government. The local and traditional leaders' engagement sets a good foundation for community reception but also as a link to higher authorities. It is vital to ensure acceptance and ownership of initiatives at the local level and to set up strategies that will ensure the organization has solid backing. In their work in Cameroon, Kenya, and Rwanda, CYNESA further notes that partners/networks-in-kind are crucial. For example, the support from local churches in Cameroon and Kenya provided safe havens for the storage of project materials without incurring any security costs, while in Rwanda, quick gains were achieved through leveraging existing church structures leading to great outreach and impact on the ground.

4.3. Cross Cutting issues

Gender, intersectionality and rights based approach

Gender is one of the essential pillars of the Global Green Growth Framework, as a result, the major section of the platform was dedicated to gender-based and gender-focused green growth projects to draw policy implications of gender issues within the effort towards green growth. The project demonstrated the benefits of adopting a gender and intersectionality perspective focusing on women, youth and strengthening intergenerational working. Gender was a key objective of the project and not an add on to please donors or stakeholders. It did commendably well to ensure that it was mainstreamed through out with gender disaggregated information presented in reports.



Nature experiential training for youth

Specifically, this strategy defines the roles, rights, and benefits in this area, so that the particular attention of stakeholders is drawn to the issue of the effective involvement of all social strata, especially women who are among the most dependent on natural resources, and unfortunately the most vulnerable to climate change.

Using a Rights Based Approach

The LtC project in Uganda strived to mainstream gender and having a rights based approach through its programme on sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) in partnership with Reproductive Health Uganda (RHU) engaging the youth. 24 youth members of 6 CBOs have been trained to become champions of sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) in their groups. The champions have continued to mobilize fellow youth and other community members to access Integrated outreaches to enable access to reproductive health and rights services e.g Family Planning, Antenatal care, Immunization, Post Abortion Care, Screening and Sexually Transmissible Infections management, Infertility management, screening for cervical cancer, Laboratory services, Condom distribution, and Youth friendly services. Rugashari youth group has further formed a drama group that continues to create community awareness on sexual, reproductive and health rights.

Intergenerational and cultural sensitive approach

To enhance its impact on the ground, the program also took an intergenerational perspective and a culture-based focus to ensure that project activities were culturally sensitive and adapted to local contexts. It is important to consider and be aware of cultural norms of a target group during the elaboration and implementation of activities. This avoids cases of shock to the target group due to foreign ideas and prejudices and also ensures ease of integration and continuity of the activities long after the project is done.



Intergenerational dialogue on conservation and engagement of youth and children_Danyi Togo



symbolic tree planting to cement the agreement for inclusion and collaboration between youth_ elders and authorities

Integrating culture in education for sustainable development

WWF Cameroon has also engaged in Innovative Pedagogy and African Culture-based ESD teaching exercises with the PTA of Nsong, Cameroon. The acknowledgement of the need for a culture based approach further reinforces the role culture plays in the adoption of environmental behaviour.



Messaging Through Art



Using song and music for pupil's engagement

The programme has also worked with teachers, school authorities and sector specialists, to develop teaching manuals which draw on the culture and lived experiences of communities. The manual produced in French and English ensures inclusivity and goes a long way to build cohesion amongst French and English stakeholders involved in the project.

In Uganda, the LtC project supported four ESD school clubs under the KCSO hub including S.T Francis SS, Muruha P.S, Rugashari Public P.S and Rugashari Community SS in conducting school debates, composing songs with messages for embracing collaborative conservation for sustainable benefit of forest resources and management of school eco-gardens. Using song and music by pupils and students provides a culturally acceptable medium for transmission of learning and awareness raising.

Levels of youth participation were much higher in activities related to music dance and drama, sports, arts, culture and entrepreneurship as they capture their attention and interest. The emerging evidence shows that in addition to raising awareness, interventions such as culturally targeted initiatives have been cascaded to household levels where behavioural changes are being registered and exemplified by more tree planting especially of indigenous species, adoption of clean cooking technologies, solid waste management by adopting the reduce, reuse, recycle approach. Similar results have been achieved in Ruvuma landscape in Tanzania and Kunene region in Namibia as youth and communities adopt more environmental sustainable behaviours.



Bilingual Training Manual Based on African Learning Culture

Intergenerational learning

Intergenerational learning is linked to the cultural perspectives discussed here. The program also engaged traditional leaders and students' dialogue around the Grand Kloté natural resources which saw the participation of 72 local and traditional leaders, students CSOs and community groups in Togo. The intergenerational dialogues created bridges between the young and the

old, facilitating knowledge transfer and learning, but also the enabling environment for children and youth to communicate their views and visions of the future.



Courtesy visit by Susie and Zipporah of WWF



Dialogue between a Local chief and youth from different regions

Real impacts on gender using local solutions

The impacts of the program on gender are beginning to emerge as youth, schools and communities adopt environmental beneficial practices promoted by the Program. The key lesson is that addressing the underlying drivers of environmental degradation using a gender based and culturally sensitive approach that is rooted in peoples' lived experiences, can generate immediate impacts through strengthening the willingness to engage in collective actions to address issues facing their communities, while drawing on local knowledge and experiences.



Support to women's tree planting initiatives and cooperatives

In Tanzania school communities have improved health as a results of access to safe and clean cooking environment with students enjoying enough time for school learning programs. The school communities have also reduced the cost for school meal preparation because of reducing consumption of firewood. In the Mholela Secondary School in Lindi, access to institutional firewood Improved Cook Stove (ICS) reduced the burden on school pupils collecting firewood every day, and availed them with more hours for classroom work. The support significantly reduced fuel wood consumption by more than 70% from the previous consumption before the project support. Community forest monitoring by young women and girls from Kagadi in Uganda, resulted in enhanced partnership with National Forestry Administration in Bugoma Central Forest Reserve

(CFR). The reserve has since registered conservation impact through regeneration of the previously degraded part of the forest adjacent their community. This further shows that in addition to economic incentives discussed earlier, strengthening social capital through trainings and partnerships can also go a long way to improve outcomes for women and girls, but also the natural environment as demonstrated in the case of the Bugoma reserve.

Education for sustainable development

The effectiveness of the implementation of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and other climate related activities in schools is greatly dependent on strict adherence to the school calendar. It is important to engage schools and management in the planning at initial stage of the project to ensure that needs are identified, and work plans aligned with school calendars. Evidence suggests that stronger engagement of the pupils enhanced their participation in decision making through “the Pupil Government” Approach.

Furthermore, the provision of teaching materials in local languages can further strengthen appropriation of learning on ESD and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). In addition to dedicated heads of the schools, self-motivated teachers are useful and a guarantee for effective implementation of ESD in schools. The self-motivated teachers take it upon themselves to organize their respective schools and jumpstart all possible ESD projects ensuring timely support and follow up of the pupils and projects. Ensuring that these teachers are trained and supported to own the ESD process from the initiation of schools’ engagement is key for a successful ESD project implementation in schools.



The Pupil Government, Nsoun Primary School



Teacher training on ESD methodologies in Ngoyla village

Participating schools such as Nsoun Primary School, have also become models within their communities, which encouraged other non-participating schools to seek opportunities to engage with the project.



Nsoun Primary School board – ESD model school

At local level, development of the ESD exit strategy for the parent-teacher-association of Nsoun primary school as well as the Youth exit strategy for the parent-teacher-association of Bilingual High School Melong is good practice. Such strategies demonstrate ownership not only of the parent-teacher-associations but also of partner schools and the youth network, educational authorities, local governments and parents, and proactiveness of the project teams, which collectively promotes the continuation of practices and knowledge gained through the project intervention.

A woman with long dark hair is looking down at a tablet device. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The text 'SECTION 05' is positioned to the left of a horizontal line, and 'RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING' is in a large white box on the right.

SECTION 05

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING

The report demonstrates that this program has been highly successful in achieving its results at different levels. It is replete with good practices and lessons that should be replicated and inform the next phase of the program. Considering that the next phase of the program funding has already been secured, this report should be disseminated and shared with implementing partners. This will enable them to have a comprehensive view of the good practices, tips, and tactics that other partners have utilized in their own contexts and landscapes to achieve results. Obviously, there is no one size fits all. Partners must appraise the practices and proactively decide and trial what would work well in their own context. It is expected that the accompanying video documentary, will also contribute to facilitating the learning process.

Civil society is one of three key agents for change – governments, private sector and civil society – to be engaged in order to bring about sustainable development, equitable governance of common public goods and respect for human rights. By continuing and deepening the engagement with civil society as a key driver for change, ***the LtC program will be more effective in promoting the democratic, transparent, accountable and environmental governance systems and practices that are essential to achieve conservation and sustainable development goals.*** This report has demonstrated that ***when youth are capacitated and empowered, they can be effective as agents of change in their own homes, communities, national and international levels.*** Consequently, the program remains relevant in continuing to tackle the challenges faced by African youth and the underlying drivers of environmental and biodiversity degradation.

The program ***should also acknowledge that advocacy and change takes time.*** Even when behaviors change for the better, ***continuous work is required to embed and reinforce them in order to ensure continuity beyond program support.*** ***Additional support is also needed to scale up initiatives to achieve wider societal impact.*** This is the case in this program whether considering development of green entrepreneurship, policy advocacy and capacity building.

The AYTL ***strategy on entrepreneurship is very relevant for Africa due to the youth unemployment problem and the climate emergency. It is critical to mobilize adequate and targeted funding to deliver on this ambition. Future programming needs to build on existing successes in enterprise creation, and now move towards facilitating access to professional business incubation and access to financial markets.*** Support to income generating projects in such projects tends to be implemented by staff who do not have business development expertise themselves, and therefore it limits their ability to encourage and drive growth. Existing examples of opportunities in the renewable energy sector, forestry, plastics recycling, urban gardens and tree planting need support to expand. The program should also seek to reinforce startup funding for innovative businesses through facilitating linkages with formal banking institutions, but also explore other climate finance opportunities as demonstrated by the experience with Ecotrust in Uganda.



Earth hour marked with the promotion of renewable energy

Regarding capacity building, ***strengthening internal and external communications as well as investment in communication platforms and equipment will be crucial for youth networks going forward.*** The experience of the Covid-19 pandemic has emphasized this need and funding should be allocated to prepare and future-proof youth networks. ***Strengthened communication resources could also be utilized in the event of future pandemics, epidemics of conflict.*** Continuous strengthening of youth networks in this area to ***improve analytical capacities, writing and communication for impact are likely to contribute to better integration of their contributions to decision making processes on topics that concern them.*** By supporting platforms in this way, it also facilitates cross-border, regional and international linkages between African youth and their peers internationally.

The evidence so far has also demonstrated that by applying gender, intersectionality, conflict and culturally sensitive approaches enhances impact on the ground. Youth and children serve as conduits for knowledge transfer and community engagement. Crucially, this report showed that ***the use of theatre, art and music is attractive to youth and should be increasingly promoted as part of the program's outreach approach.***



Youth participate in cultural dance at the ABC festival in Togo

In other areas such as ESD, it appears that significant progress has been made in Cameroon compared to other countries. Even in Cameroon, work seems to have focused on the South West Region while the target to sign MoUs with the Ministries of Education has stalled for years. Expanding the efforts to other landscapes and investing in this high-level commitment would add significant value to the efforts of WWF in Cameroon. This very important work also needs to be continued and reinforced in other countries. It is important for WWF to expand this work to other countries in furtherance of outcomes 6 and 7 of its 2021-2025 strategic plan.

In terms of advocacy, this report has demonstrated that project partners have achieved progress on the ground when they engage with traditional and local authorities compared to national levels. This is understandable as most of the actions implemented have been at specific landscape level. It appears beneficial that partners continue this practice in the next phase of the program. ***They can then leverage their national chapters and branches as well as engage with other national-level youth platforms when needed for national level advocacy work. Creating stronger links between national implementing partners and national-level youth networks can help leverage their expertise in advocating for national-level changes.***

There is ***scope for more coordinated regional advocacy work to be done by the project.*** The program could identify specific regional and/or international policy processes and initiatives, and develop collective regional advocacy/engagement strategies. These regional ***strategies could also focus on entrepreneurship and fundraising; capacity support of youth CSOs across Africa towards long-term entrepreneurial activities and access to the financial system as discussed earlier. A regional advocacy strategy will strengthen cohesion and collective action amongst different country partners and networks to work on common topics.*** It could also drive more coordination between WWF focal points and country offices, to support regionally-based initiatives.

A hand holding a pen over a notebook, with a green overlay. The text 'SECTION 06' is written in white, uppercase letters, followed by a horizontal line.

SECTION 06

CONCLUSION

Having identified a prominent challenge faced by youths in Africa related to the lack of capacity and how this prevents them from tackling the continent's sustainable development challenges, the AYTLP sought out to make contributions to reverse the trend. There have been successful actions carried out to create more space for civil society participation as well as more political will to accommodate the voice and choice of civil society. Much has also been done by the program to ensure that natural resource dependent communities and youth engage with policy makers on decisions that affect their environment, and that the voice of these communities is listened to concerning access and benefit sharing from sustainable management of natural resources.

In the area of capacity building, the key lessons learnt is that enhanced capacity of the African youth led to greater participation globally and more solicitation of their voice and choice in issues related to ESD, climate change, prevention of plastics pollution, biodiversity conservation amongst others. This has propelled them and legitimized their actions granting them credibility as they foster new partnerships and collaborations, thereby leading to more support for youth work in the continent. Another key lesson is that evidence-based advocacy is central in influencing decision-making. This is further enhanced by political neutrality. Also, building community initiatives for ESD on existing institutional structures contributes significantly not only to improved livelihoods, but also the sustainability of actions. Finally, networking is important for this program because on the one hand the uniqueness of African countries and Regions warrants continuous information exchange and communication, and on the other hand there is need to have African CSOs interact with their peers out of the continent.

Flexibility was also built into the design of the project allowing national youth organisations and regional platforms, to respond to priorities in their countries, regionally and internationally as they arose. As such, adaptive management contributed to successful project implementation in the midst of challenges such as the Covid 19 pandemic. Also, delivering on such a comprehensive multi-country and multi partner programme, spread across different landscapes required an effective system for monitoring and evaluation. This was enhanced by the evidence based approach, involving baseline reviews on gender and conflict, needs assessments, mid-term reviews of the programme and regular partner meetings. The success of the programme so far has been significantly driven by the partnerships created and nurtured from community to national, regional and international levels.

This project demonstrated the benefits of adopting a gender and intersectionality perspective focusing on women, youth and strengthening intergenerational working. Gender was a key objective of the project and not an add on to please donors or stakeholders. It did commendably well to ensure that it was mainstreamed through out with gender disaggregated information presented in reports. The effectiveness of the implementation of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and other climate related activities in schools was ensured through stronger engagement of schools and management in the planning at initial stage of the project to ensure that needs are identified and work plans aligned with school calendars.

Overall, there is scope to scale up the lessons learned from the implementation of this program with cross-country and cross-regional exchanges and mentorship on achievements as well as challenges faced in the program cycle.

THANK YOU

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