

MAINSTREAMING YOUTH CLIMATE LEADERSHIP INTO POLITICAL PARTY AGENDAS



DEMOCRACY
WORKS
FOUNDATION.



F20

2 December 2025

Co-Hosts:

Venue: Bertha House, 67-69 Main
Road, Mowbray, Cape Town

[Youth20 South Africa \(Y20\)](#)

[Centre on African Philanthropy & Social
Investment \(CAPSI\)](#)

[Foundations 20 \(F20\)](#)

Format: In-person, interactive dialogue

UNIVERSITY OF THE
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Sculpting global leaders

CAPSI
Centre on African Philanthropy
& Social Investment



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Introduction

The G20 moment presents a critical opportunity for African political leadership to shape global governance in ways that reflect its priorities around climate justice, equitable development, and inclusive democracy. South Africa's G20 presidency and the permanent membership of the African Union to the group, presents tangible domestic, regional and international opportunities for youth leadership in the climate and energy democracy space.

For these opportunities to be seized meaningfully, political leadership must be grounded in responsive, future-focused policymaking, and youth leaders have a central role to play in this transformation.

Democracy Works Foundation (DWF) has long invested in strengthening democratic leadership through its Democracy Works Academy (DWA) - a political education programme that equips emerging young leaders (particularly those affiliated with political parties in Africa with the tools to deepen democratic practice, policy innovation, and inter-party collaboration.

As South Africa and the region confront the intersecting crises of climate change, economic inequality, and democratic backsliding, DWF is evolving the Academy's approach to foreground climate governance and energy democracy as essential competencies for democratic leadership in the 21st century.

This workshop forms part of that next step to deepen political literacy around sustainability as a governance challenge and empowering youth leaders to take bold, informed, and collaborative positions on Africa's G20 climate agenda.



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The Youth20 (Y20), as the official youth engagement group of the G20, has developed a comprehensive set of recommendations under its Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Working Group, titled "Green Horizons: Leading a Just Energy Transition". These proposals are ambitious, practical, and deeply aligned with many of Africa's priorities, from localising renewable energy to ensuring justice for youth, women, and workers in the transition.

This event seeks to bridge the Y20's global agenda with the national political sphere, creating space for dialogue, analysis, and joint strategising between youth leaders, civil society, and policy actors.

Objectives of the event

- Raise awareness among youth political leaders about the significance of South Africa's G20 presidency and how Africa can shape global climate and development agendas.
- Showcase key Y20 climate and sustainability recommendations from the Green Horizons agenda and explore their relevance to African realities.
- Enable political party youth structures to begin integrating these ideas into party manifestos, policies, and public-facing campaigns.
- Position climate governance as a critical area of democratic leadership development through the Democracy Works Academy and similar initiatives.





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Format

The event will take the form of an in-person, half-day interactive dialogue, designed to foster exchange, reflection, and collaborative action among a diverse group of participants. Approximately 40 to 50 individuals will be invited to ensure meaningful engagement and cross-sectoral learning.

Participants will include

- Youth formations of political parties, drawing from both the Government of National Unity (GNU) and opposition parties, with a focus on those who hold leadership roles or are actively involved in shaping party policy and public messaging. Their presence is crucial to ensuring that the outcomes of the dialogue have a direct line into political spaces where decisions are made.
- A broad range of civil society organisations working at the intersection of climate and democratic governance will also be invited, particularly those with a focus on youth engagement, participatory policy-making, and environmental justice. Their insights will provide critical context and grounding in local and community-level realities.
- Y20 delegates and DWA alumni will form a core part of the event, sharing their experiences in global youth diplomacy and presenting the Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability Working Group's Green Horizons recommendations. These voices will act as a bridge between global policy processes and national implementation.

In addition, the event will engage representatives from the G20 Sherpa track and related technical advisory bodies, who can provide clarity on South Africa's G20 presidency priorities and offer practical guidance on how youth-led proposals can influence official positions and communiqués.

To enrich the conversation with research and evidence, the dialogue will also include researchers, educators, and think tank representatives with expertise in climate governance, party politics, and democratic development. Their contributions will help translate ideas into actionable strategies. The event will include youth communicators and policy advocates, particularly those skilled in translating complex global frameworks into accessible narratives for public engagement. Their involvement will help ensure that the ideas generated are not only technically sound but also resonate with broader youth constituencies across the country.



AGENDA

TIME	SESSION	Proposed SPEAKERS
09:00 – 09:30	Arrival, registration & networking breakfast	
9:30 – 09:45	Opening remarks by co-hosts: DWF & Y20	Raisa and Moeketsi
09:45 – 10:15	Keynote address x 2: The value of African solidarity in governing sustainability.	
10:15 – 10:45	Africa @ the G20 Toolkit Presentation	Lerato Maloka
10:45 – 11:15	<p>Panel Dialogue: Challenges and Opportunities for youth leadership in multilateral processes.</p> <p><u>Questions for panellists</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kgauelo, • Reon, • Tsega, 	
11:15 – 12:15	<p>Breakout Mapping Exercise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group 1: What are the current avenues/pathways for youth participation in the G20? • Group 2: What role can youth political leadership play in driving climate justice? • Group 3: What tools or partnerships do youth leaders need to meaningfully engage the G20? 	<p>Group 1 Lead -</p> <p>Group 2 Lead -</p> <p>Group 3 Lead -</p>
12:15 – 12:45	Plenary Reflections: Roadmap to Policy Impact	
12:45 – 13:00	Closing remarks	
13h00 – 14h00:	Networking lunch	



PODCAST SERIES

Thought leaders, civil society organisations and political actors are critically engaging with the F20 recommendations, reflecting on their relevance and application within African contexts. Listen to their contributions in the Africa @ the G20 Podcast.

EPISODE 1



In conversation with Malango Mughogho on the F20 recommendations, aimed at elevating the role of philanthropy and civil society in building a just, inclusive, and sustainable global economy.

[CLICK TO LISTEN TO EPISODE 1](#)

EPISODE 2



In conversation with Zarina Moolla, Head of Implementation (Africa), C40 Cities on what the F20 recommendations mean for Africa's urban centres.

[CLICK TO LISTEN TO EPISODE 2](#)



AFRICA @ THE G20
EXPLAINER

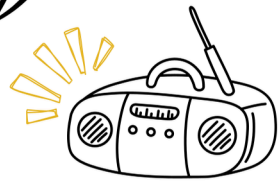
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ONLINE



G20 4 WHAT?

Hey, Siba! Did you hear on the radio something about the G20? What is that thing? A new lotto game?



The G20 is like a big WhatsApp group for the 20 most powerful countries in the world.



"They meet every year to talk about money, climate change, jobs—big stuff that affects all of us!"



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