



## CONCEPT NOTE





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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2024 November, South Africa will assume the presidency of the G20 (Group of Twenty), a global grouping representing the world's largest economies. As part of this leadership role, South Africa will host various engagement groups, including the Y20—the Youth Engagement Group of the G20.

The Y20 is a vital platform within the G20 framework that empowers youth from across G20 member states to engage in dialogue, share innovative ideas, and propose solutions to critical global challenges. This milestone summit comes as the first Y20 gathering on African soil and aims to include voices from across the continent, amplifying youth perspectives in addressing global and regional challenges. Under the South African G20 Presidency theme of "Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability", the Y20 Summit will gather youth delegates from G20 nations, regional representatives, and additional invited nations. The Y20 Summit will focus on five priority themes aligned with South Africa's national deliverables and the African Union's Agenda 2063 as well as the United Nations 2030 Agenda, all reinforcing South Africa's commitment to social and economic development and climate action.

The South African Y20 Summit will present the communique on youth priorities, providing G20 leaders with direct insights into the aspirations, concerns, and recommendations of the continent's youth. The Summit will balance negotiation forums with cultural immersion, dialogue sessions, and skill-building opportunities to develop a comprehensive outcome document to be presented at the G20 Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg.





## 2. ABOUT Y20 SOUTH AFRICA

### **THEME:**

**Youth Building Bridges: Uniting for Solidarity, Championing Equality, Driving Sustainability**

Y20 South Africa 2025, under the theme "Youth Building Bridges: Uniting for Solidarity, Championing Equality, Driving Sustainability," aims to empower young leaders to shape global policies that reflect the priorities of youth. As the official youth engagement group of the G20, Y20 South Africa will serve as a platform for dialogue, collaboration, and action, ensuring that young voices contribute meaningfully to global decision-making. The summit will focus on five key thematic areas that align with South Africa's G20 Presidency agenda, reinforcing the role of youth in driving sustainable and inclusive global progress.

### **1. Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability – Green Horizons: Leading a Just Energy Transition**

Addressing climate change through youth-driven policies, promoting renewable energy, and advocating for an equitable transition to a green economy.

### **2. Inclusive Economic Growth and Employment – Pathways to Prosperity**

Fostering economic opportunities, entrepreneurship, and job creation for young people to ensure inclusive and sustainable economic development.

### **3. AI, Digital Innovation, Education, and the Future of Work – Innovate to Elevate: Building Skills for Tomorrow**

Exploring the impact of digital transformation, artificial intelligence, and the future of work while enhancing youth skills for a rapidly evolving job market.

### **4. Meaningful Youth Engagement and Reforming Multilateralism for a Just Future**

Strengthening youth participation in global governance and advocating for inclusive and representative decision-making processes.

### **5. Inclusive Social Development and Fighting Inequality – Leaving No One Behind**

Tackling social disparities, advancing gender equality, and ensuring that marginalized communities have access to opportunities for a better future.







Through high-level discussions, policy recommendations, and youth-driven initiatives, Y20 South Africa 2025 will foster cross-border collaboration and actionable solutions that reflect the aspirations of young people. The summit will emphasize the importance of intergenerational partnerships, digital transformation, economic inclusion, climate resilience, and social justice. By bringing together youth delegates, policymakers, experts, and stakeholders, Y20 South Africa will not only shape the G20 youth agenda but also inspire long-term, impactful change within communities and institutions worldwide.

To ensure the long-term impact and continued implementation of the Y20 policy recommendations, Y20 South Africa 2025 will propose the establishment of the Y20 Sherpas Council, or alternatively, the Y20 International Advisory Council. This council would consist of experienced youth leaders, policymakers, and experts from the G20 nations, tasked with overseeing the implementation of agreed-upon recommendations. By providing ongoing strategic advice, facilitating intergovernmental cooperation, and monitoring the progress of initiatives, the council will ensure that the voice of youth remains integral to global policy development, fostering long-term positive change and continued collaboration across the G20 countries. Additionally, we will establish a Y20 Alumni Association to strengthen the Y20 community, fostering long-term connections, knowledge-sharing, and sustained collaboration among past and present Y20 delegates, ensuring that youth engagement remains active beyond the summit.





## 3. Y20 SOUTH AFRICA THEMES



### *1. Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability - Green Horizons: Leading a Just Energy Transition*

South Africa's G20 Presidency in 2025 offers a pivotal moment to reinforce the country's legacy of global climate leadership, established during COP17 in Durban in 2011. That conference marked a critical step toward the Paris Agreement by introducing the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action, setting a global precedent for unified climate action. With climate change and environmental sustainability as a focal theme for the Y20 Summit, South Africa aims to build on this foundation, advancing a Just Energy Transition and prioritising climate resilience across the African continent.

South Africa's unique role as a biodiversity hotspot and a nation heavily reliant on natural resources makes climate change a pressing issue, especially for the youth. As they face the realities of rising temperatures, drought, and ecological strain, young Africans are acutely aware of the need for balanced solutions that protect the environment while supporting socio-economic growth. This theme addresses both global and regional environmental challenges by placing African needs and perspectives at the centre of the climate dialogue.

The Y20 theme of Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability will provide youth delegates with a platform to advocate for and champion equitable climate policies that recognise Africa's limited contribution to global emissions and its disproportionate vulnerability to climate impacts. Focusing on sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, and conservation, the theme aims to generate actionable, youth-led recommendations for resilience-building across Africa.





Youth delegates will bring fresh insights to the Y20 agenda, advocating for resource equity, biodiversity preservation, and an inclusive Just Energy Transition that ensures energy access and economic stability. This approach aligns with South Africa's G20 presidency priorities and positions African youth as essential voices in global climate action, reinforcing the continent's role as a key stakeholder in the pursuit of a sustainable, inclusive future.

## OBJECTIVES:

- Promote youth-led initiatives for sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, climate change risk mitigation and adaptation and ecosystem conservation.
- Advance dialogue on Africa's Just Energy Transition from coal dependency to renewable sources, supporting equitable resource distribution.
- Develop resilience strategies that consider local ecological, economic, and social conditions, and align with the African Union's Agenda 2063 goals for sustainable development.



## *2. Inclusive Economic Growth and Employment - Pathways to Prosperity*

Economic disparities and youth unemployment remain pressing global challenges. The Y20 will advocate for policies that create decent work, foster innovation, and ensure that economic opportunities are accessible to all, particularly in underrepresented regions and communities. The focus will be on supporting job creation in emerging industries, such as technology, manufacturing, and the green and blue economies, while equipping young people with future-ready skills. Addressing wage disparities, systemic inequalities, and barriers to entrepreneurship will be central to achieving truly inclusive economic growth. It also aligns with the South Africa's G20 presidency priority to drive equitable development and improve regional employment outcomes.

## OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage policies that promote job creation through innovation and entrepreneurship, especially within emerging industries and sectors like technology, manufacturing, and the green and blue economy.
- Support skills development programmes focused on building future-ready competencies among youth, especially in under-resourced areas.
- Provide frameworks for reducing wage disparities and creating career pathways for African youth, addressing systemic inequalities in labour market





### ***3. AI, Digital Innovation, Skills Development, and the Future of Work - Innovate to Elevate: Building Skills for Tomorrow***

This theme reflects the South Africa G20 presidency priority emphasis on Artificial Intelligence (AI), Innovation, and the future workforce, focusing on bridging digital divides, fostering AI education, and preparing youth for future jobs. The rapid advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital technology is reshaping the global economy. The Y20 will highlight the importance of equipping youth with digital literacy, fostering AI education, and addressing the ethical challenges of emerging technologies. By ensuring inclusive access to technological advancements, young people can drive innovation while mitigating risks such as job displacement, digital divides, and ethical concerns in AI. A human-centered approach to AI development and governance will be prioritized.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Promote digital literacy and AI skills as essential for youth to thrive in the global economy, ensuring accessible education and technological training.
- Address ethical considerations of AI, including privacy, equity, and inclusivity, by developing a youth-centred code of conduct informed by the United Nations Global Digital Compact.
- Equip youth with the skills to contribute to a technologically evolving workplace, fostering innovation and adaptability across industries.



### ***4. Meaningful Youth Engagement and Reforming Multilateralism for a Just Future***

Youth engagement in multilateralism, including global economic reform and financial equity will drive South Africa's advocacy for a fairer international system, in line with the aspirations agreed to within the United Nations Pact for the Future and annexed Declaration on Future Generation. This theme centres on providing youth a platform to voice needs, expectations and perspectives on international development, cooperation and economic policy.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Highlight challenges youth face in accessing and participating in multilateral processes and financial systems.







- Discuss pathways for reforming multilateralism and global economic institutions to redevelop trust and better serve the needs of developing nations and support sustainable development.
- Mobilise youth for meaningful youth engagement in foreign and financial policy dialogues, focusing on transparency, inclusion, and the equitable allocation of resources.



## ***5. Inclusive Social Development and Fighting Inequality - Leaving no one behind***

Building on South Africa's G20 presidency priorities of food security, health, and inequality reduction, this theme aims to tackle intersectional social disparities such as, poverty, healthcare accessibility and gender equality within African contexts, promoting community-driven social development and inclusive policies. With the United Nations hosting the second World Summit for Social Development in November 2025, it is imperative that young people from Africa and the Global South, in particular, have their voices and perspectives elevated through the Y20 focus within this theme and the expected outcome document. In addition, 2025 marks 30 years since the adoption of the Beijing declaration and programme of action, a historical moment for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The Y20 programme will develop a cohesive strategy to align and support the W20 engagement group to ensure the voices and perspectives of young women and girls in their diversity are amplified through both of these engagement groups.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- Strengthen youth engagement in co-creating solutions for poverty, public health, and food security.
- Advocate for prioritised policy and financing frameworks to reduce health inequalities through the implementation of universal health coverage (UHC) and enhance access to essential services, emphasising mental health and well-being of adolescents and young people in their diversity. This will also serve as a platform to position President Ramaphosa's leadership of the Global Leaders Network on Women, Children and Adolescent Health which seeks to drive political action and investment for adolescent and youth health in particular.
- Develop youth leadership initiatives to lead social behavioural change initiatives and foster a sense of community responsibility and participation.





## 4. SUMMIT STRUCTURE AND TIMELINES

The Y20 South Africa 2025 will be a multi-day event comprising:

1. **Plenary Sessions:** Where all youth delegates engage with high-level speakers, experts, and policymakers on the main theme and focus areas.
2. **Working Groups:** Delegates will be divided into thematic working groups to deliberate on specific issues, brainstorm solutions, and develop policy recommendations.
3. **Panel Discussions:** Featuring industry leaders, policymakers, and young innovators sharing insights and inspiring actions around key focus areas.
4. **Cultural and Networking Events:** Cultural exchange programs, site visits, and networking events designed to promote understanding, collaboration, and lasting connections.
5. **Final Communiqué:** Delegates will present their policy recommendations to G20 leaders through a Y20 Communiqué, drafted and adopted by consensus during the Summit.

### Y20 SOUTH AFRICA – TIMELINE & KEY MILESTONES

#### November 2024 – February 2025

- Establish Organizing Committee & Task Teams
- Develop Budget & Fundraising Strategy
- Engage Government, Diplomatic Missions & Stakeholders
- Draft Conference Theme & Key Discussion Topics
- Launch the Y20 South Africa Website
- Official Launch for Y20 South Africa





## **March – April 2025**

- Launch Call for Applications for Delegates
- Close Delegate Applications & Confirm Selections
- Confirm High-Level Speakers & Moderators
- Secure Sponsorships & Finalize Funding
- Secure Venue & Accommodation
- Develop Marketing & Communications Plan
- Start Logistics Planning (Visas, Transport, Security)

## **May – June 2025**

- Begin Pre-Event Workshops & Online Engagements
- Finalize Summit Agenda & Session Topics
- Confirm Media Partnerships & Press Strategy
- Start Branding, Merchandise & Print Material Production
- Conduct Pre-Summit dialogues.

## **July 2025**

- Confirm Final Logistics, Security & Accommodation Arrangements
- Conduct Technical Site Inspections & AV Setup
- Prepare & Distribute Conference Materials & Welcome Packs
- Hold Pre-Summit Training for Volunteers & Event Staff

## **August 2025 (18-22 August 2025)**

- Day 1: Opening Ceremony, Keynote Speeches, and Welcome Reception, Cultural Activities
- Day 2-4: Thematic Panels, Workshops, and Breakout Discussions
- Day 5: Closing Ceremony, Y20 Declaration, and Networking, Cultural Activities

## **September – November 2025**

- Publish Y20 South Africa Declaration & Recommendations
- Participate in the G20 Social Summit
- Distribute Reports to key international and domestic Stakeholders
- Conduct Media & Impact Assessments
- Follow-up on Commitments & Action Plans
- Hand over to the United States of America





# 5. Y20 SOUTH AFRICA DELGATION COMPOSITION

## I. Delegation

Total delegation of 6 configured as follows.

- Sherpa and Head of delegation
- 5 thematic delegates

