



FACT SHEET

Youth Transformational Empowerment and Mentorship (Y-TEaM) Programme

January 2026

JUSTIFICATION

In 2020, the African Union commissioned an Independent Expert Report on the Roles and Contributions of Youth to Peace and Security. The report stressed that young people contribute in diverse ways to peace and security in the region, from conflict management and resolution to post-conflict reconstruction and development. The report further recommended that to enhance that role, there is the need for youth groups to “focus on enhancing internal capacities in terms of human resources and expertise, and pursue specialization within the broader peace and security sector”. The Continental Framework on Youth, Peace and Security equally identified capacity building and technical skills as enabling factors for youth effective contribution to peacebuilding efforts. Another gap identified on young people’s capacity development is the lack of continuous and sustainable platforms for skills development. Many capacity building programmes have been implemented as a one-off activity and do not give enough opportunities for further learning to capitalize on achievements. Also, there are few opportunities for exposure of the youth, especially fresh graduates, to the peacebuilding environment, which makes it difficult for them to gain practical or hands-on experience from experienced peacebuilding institutions, as part of their grooming process in the field.

The nature and complexity of conflicts in the region require innovative approaches to conflict prevention. Young people can provide critical insights into peacebuilding efforts. Their creativity, energy and vibrancy, if well-resourced, could bring innovative strategies to curve the security trend in the region. Capacity building, leadership development and networking are key to unlocking the potential of young people and preparing them to lead change in their countries and communities. It is against this backdrop that West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) is instituting the Youth Transformational Empowerment and Mentorship (Y-TEaM) Programme as a contribution to addressing the capacity gaps that impede young people’s effective engagement in the promotion of peace, security and governance.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMME

The Y-TEaM Programme is a youth empowerment programme targeting fresh graduates between the ages of 18 and 35 with demonstrated commitment to peace, security, development and community engagement. Each year, a cohort of about 30 youth across West Africa will be selected to embark on a nine-month long programme. Key components of the programme include monthly online training sessions over two -to-three day period, spotlighting of Mentees and six months internship and mentorship programme to support Mentees’ continuous

¹ <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/au-study-youth-africa-web.pdf>, page 164

lifelong learning process. The programme integrates multiple strategies that are transformational, holistic and experiential. This comprehensive approach utilizes skills development, social networking, assigned readings and field trips geared towards enhancing the leadership advancement of the Mentees.

PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

• TRAINING SESSIONS

The programme is designed to respond to the capacity need of the Mentees to improve their knowledge and skills-based ability in conflict prevention and management, leadership, governance and policy influencing, among others. The training component will be scheduled on a monthly basis throughout the nine-month long programme for 2 to 3 days.

• INTERNSHIP

Each Mentee will go through a six-month internship period in WANEP' National Secretariats and will be committed to at least two days per week throughout the internship programme.

• MENTORSHIP

Mentorship is a key component of the Y-TEaM programme. Each Mentee will be assigned to a Mentor who will provide guidance and coaching to support the professional growth of the Mentee on a voluntary basis. Mentors will be identified among inspiring and outstanding peacebuilding practitioners and Institutions across the region. Mentors and Mentees will meet either virtually or physically on a monthly basis. A periodic assessment of the mentorship programme will be conducted by both Mentors and Mentees to document progress in the Mentee's development. An end of programme Certificate will be awarded to the Mentees who successfully complete all the stages of the programme to facilitate their professional insertion.

• VISIBILITY/SPOTLIGHTING

WANEP will create platforms to increase the visibility of the Mentees and promote them as role models for other youth. Mentees will be featured each month on WANEP's website and other online platforms to share their experiences and achievements. Depending on resource availability, some Mentees could be sponsored to attend

regional or international meetings to get the needed exposure for their professional growth and at the same time, advocate for youth inclusive participation in peace, security and governance processes. Other activities could include youth camps and study visits.

PROGRAMME INFORMATION

OBJECTIVES

The mentorship programme is designed to groom a new generation of youth peacebuilders capable of driving transformational change and sustainable peace in their communities and countries.

Specifically, the programme seeks to:

- Engage, equip and inspire young people to become transformative social change agents for peacebuilding;
- Enhance young people's critical thinking, leadership abilities and solution-oriented skills to find innovative solutions to peace, security and governance challenges faced by the region;
- Increase commitment and engagement of the youth towards community resilience to conflict by creating opportunities for exposure to the peacebuilding field;
- Create a network of youth leaders for experience sharing and best practices in peacebuilding.

DURATION

Nine (9) months

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

West African countries

FUNDING PARTNERS

With funding from

 Austrian
Development
Cooperation

 Sweden
Sverige

 EMBASSY OF DENMARK
Abuja

[For more information, please contact the Y-TEaM Coordination Team at the following address:](mailto:yteam@wanep.org)
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Apply for the Y-TEAM Programme

CRITERIA FOR APPLICATION

- Fresh graduate between the ages of 18 to 35, with demonstrated commitment to, or promising leadership in the areas of peace, security, governance and development;
- West African citizen living in the region;
- Available for the nine-month long mentorship period;
- Excellent command of English or French, both written and verbal.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Complete application form, available on <https://arcg.is/Sa15e1>
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) with two references;
- Motivation letter stating why the applicant should be considered and the added value of the programme to his/her personal and career development and
- Proof of a completed university or tertiary degree