

ALL-AFRICA STUDENTS UNION
ASYS 2020
9TH AFRICA STUDENTS
AND YOUTH
SUMMIT



**“THE GLOBAL YOUTH
COMPACT TO BUILD BACK
BETTER POST-COVID-19”**

THEME:

**“Building Back Better in a connected World,
Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic and the Critical
Role of Young People and Global Solidarity.”**



9TH AFRICA STUDENTS AND YOUTH SUMMIT

“THE GLOBAL YOUTH COMPACT TO BUILD BACK BETTER POST-COVID-19”

3 DECEMBER 2020

We, students and youth leaders, meeting at the 9th Africa Students and Youth Summit on 2nd and 3rd December 2020, reaffirm our commitment to the world’s direction to Build Back Better and to the cause of making our voices heard, and to taking the necessary steps to ensure that, post-COVID-19, we truly rebuild a world of equity and justice for **ALL**.

PREAMBLE

1. This compact is inspired by the great work youth and student activists have done to support initiatives that are committed to averting the ravaging effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This compact is a key outcome of the 9th Africa Students and Youth Summit deliberations;
2. This compact also draws inspiration from very key documents that have been launched or shared in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the “Fair Share for Children Report” launched by the 100 Million Campaign and its partners, the outcome documents from the AASU situation room meetings and webinars, and the UNESCO Guidelines on Education in Emergencies (COVID-19);
3. We are truly indebted to the many youths and student leaders who have, at the risk of their own lives and safety, volunteered in several capacities to alleviate the toll of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable communities, as well as UNESCO, the 100 Million Campaign, the Association of African Universities (AAU), the Global Students Forum (GSF), and the Laureates and Leaders for Children, and in particular, Kailash Satyarthi (Nobel Peace Laureate);
4. This Global Youth Compact presents a non-legally binding collaborative process that tries to solidify the efforts of youth and student leaders in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This compact also places a demand on the world’s youth and student leaders to engage their local and national decision-makers and encourage them to act in a concerted manner that will yield the results needed to attain the Sustainable Development Goals and deliver justice for all.

OUR COMMON UNDERSTANDING

We believe that a post-COVID-19 era, if not planned for properly, could be more devastating than the pandemic itself, undoing all the gains we have made in the past and risking the loss of an entire generation. The global COVID-19 pandemic has taught us that none of us is safe until we all are; therefore, to truly Build Back Better post-COVID-19, the needs of the world’s most marginalised and deprived groups must not be left out.



This compact sets out our thoughts as youths, students, and leaders of our representative organisations about how a post-COVID era could look if we are all united in action to create a fairer, more equal future. We know that for the world to truly witness a come-back from the catastrophic effects of such a crisis, we would need to work together in solidarity and partnership to achieve the targets that we are setting for ourselves.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Our collective responsibility is hinged on the assumption that no country has been spared from the impact of COVID-19. However, despite facing a common enemy like never before, the world has not responded in unity. The Coronavirus pandemic, like so many of the greatest challenges facing our generation, cannot be solved without joining hands beyond borders, continents, and ages.

Recognising the above reality, we commit to:

- working closely with partners to develop swift and timely responses to the humanitarian crisis imposed by the pandemic.
- contributing to decision-making and system-building geared towards peaceful, prosperous and progressive societies.
- empowering young people to actively take up leadership roles in government and civil society.
- creating a coalition of State and Non-State actors to advance the cause of students and the youth.
- developing resilient strategies for vulnerable groups, especially in low-income countries.

UNITY OF PURPOSE

Our duty of ensuring that we Build Back Better rests on our abilities to work together towards shared goals, as outlined in this Compact. Our ability to work together in trust, determination, respect for each other, and solidarity will determine whether we can attain the objectives outlined in this Global Youth Compact. We have come together through shared values and mutually beneficial cooperation to support each other and work together towards a better world for **ALL**.

This compact is hinged on the principles of:

1. Respect for human rights
2. Gender-responsiveness
3. Holistic engagement
4. Sustainable development
5. Youth-leadership
6. Fairness and equality
7. Solidarity



Our ability to sustain and put the right mechanisms in place that support this process is very key to ensure that academic institutions; still learn from one another, promote the equitable distribution of quality academics, and commit to not truncate the education of students who are on the move.

With the inception of the Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications (GCRHEQ), student unions around the world have been working together to gather thoughts on what the impact of the GCRHEQ will be in diverse sectors. Regional student unions are also coming together to build a coalition of students to ask governments to ratify this convention through the “**Student-led Global Ratification Campaign.**”

Action Points on Education Post COVID-19:

We are asking governments to:

- Increase their domestic budget allocation to education and for richer countries to sustain, or increase, their Overseas Development Aid to low-income countries for education.
- Outline clear and precise strategies to tackle the anticipated disruptions to education.
- Prioritize domestic means of financing education, such as closing taxation loopholes to increase available capital or redirecting existing resources to replenish the education budget.
- Indulge educational institutions to adopt quality assurance mechanisms for Online Learning.
- Encourage education stakeholders to take action that ends the digital divide in relation to online learning, including ensuring access to enabling technologies where they are currently missing.
- Consider student organizations as key partners in Building Back plans.

We are asking student and youth leaders to:

- Engage their constituents to find out their challenges and how these can be incorporated into national and regional plans for education reconfiguration.

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FUTURE OF WORK AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated strongly that the future of work is digital. It has indeed indicated that every employee or employer, as well as State institutions, has to reimagine approaches to resolving employment-related issues. The future of work will not be the same as we know it, especially with the revelations of COVID-19, both in terms of restrictions and possibilities. Young people who will live the future of work need to be given the right resources and skills to survive in this new future of work.

- Commit to formally listening to and learning from students and young people who have been mobilizing at the grassroots level, prior to and throughout the pandemic, to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable citizens are heard.

We as students and youth leaders to commit to ensuring that:

- Student and youth organizations are willing and able to collaborate globally and act on issues both at the global and local levels.
- Student and youth groups collaborate more effectively across borders in times of crises.
- Young people become more aware of their rights and the need to assert the same.
- Student and youth groups lend their voices to campaigns by peers wherever in the world.
- Students are democratically represented at the national, regional, and global levels.
- We join hands to address the issues that concern any student or young person in any part of the world.

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FINDING OUR VOICES: YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE FOREFRONT OF BUILDING BACK BETTER

The challenges and ravages caused by the novel COVID-19 require that young people around the globe take an important role in the Building Back Better agenda. Although the world continues to suffer the herculean effects of the pandemic, young people stand to be the most disadvantaged in the medium and long term.

Despite people aged 30 years or younger comprising almost half the world’s population, we remain significantly politically unrepresented; the majority of our demography is below the legal voting age, and just 2% of Parliamentarians in the world are under 30. This leaves our voices unheard and experiences sidelined in critical decision-making spaces whose outcomes have a direct and significant impact on our lives. If we are to truly build back better, this gap must be acknowledged and rectified. For example, with the global economy contracted, coupled with severe losses of income and opportunities, the future of young people will be significantly harder if they are left behind in the resuscitation of the global economy. Therefore, we must be consulted on how to prevent or mitigate this impact.

Action Points on Finding Our Voices: Young People at the Forefront of Building Back Better

We are asking governments to:

- Formally consult with and place value on the input of students, young people and their elected representative unions on their COVID-19 response planning.
- Create space for the meaningful participation of young people in high-level policy discussions.
- Actively collect and disaggregate data by age and gender to ensure the realities of young people and women are correctly understood and evidenced.

REVIEW

1. This compact will be reviewed twice before the next Africa Students and Youth Summit while considering the contextual complexities and peculiarities of the countries we represent.
2. The first review will be conducted six months after the promulgation of this compact.
3. The review of this compact will be done by a selected committee of youth and student leaders who represent the five regions of the world.
4. The reviews will be focused on five key areas – relevance, contextual analysis, representation of the most marginalized groups, responses to our demands and the lessons learnt from actions being taken to achieve the objects outlined in this compact.
5. The reviews will be submitted to the LOC of the 9th Africa Students and Youth Summit to be incorporated and disseminated to other partners.

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