

# Youth Parliament 2.0

## Gulf of Guinea Northern Regions Social Cohesion (SOCO) Project

### Ghana SOCO Project Subcomponent 1.3

Subcomponent 1.3—Youth Engagement and Social Cohesion Activities—aims to promote and integrate active youth participation and representation in community-level development efforts and investments. It comprises three thematic areas: (1) youth mobilization, dialogue, and engagement; (2) youth employment referral services; and (3) youth infrastructure investments.

### National Youth Parliament in Ghana

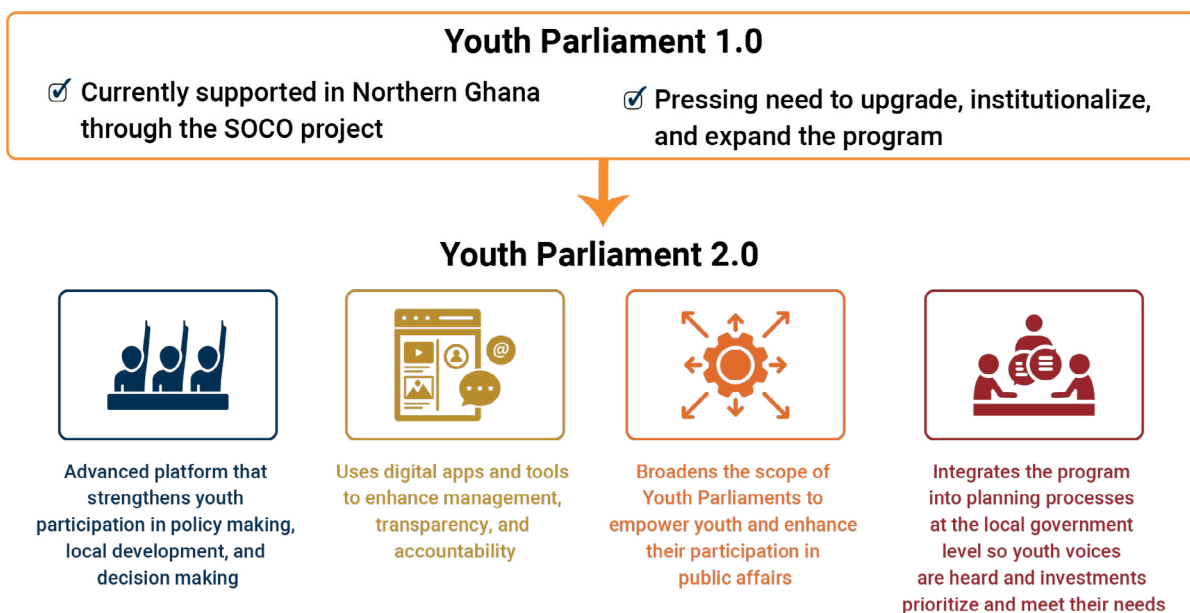
In 2016, the National Youth Authority, under the auspices of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, initiated the National Youth Parliament program. It sought to formalize youth participation in local governance and community development by amplifying youth voices in government decision making. The Youth Parliament concept was designed as a platform where youth could effectively and positively contribute to national legislation and participate in decision making. Its primary objectives are to integrate youth perspectives into socioeconomic discourse, promote youth contributions to democratic governance, and elevate civic responsibility among youth. The National Youth Authority plans to establish Youth Parliaments in each of the 261

metropolitan, municipal, and district assemblies (MMDAs) across Ghana.

### SOCO Project and the Youth Parliament 2.0 Concept

The SOCO project, working through the Youth Parliament initiative, provides a platform, voice, and agency to youth living in SOCO's 48 target districts, including the marginalized and at-risk. The platform offers the opportunity to engage in national discourse while fostering a sense of inclusion in national and local development. In its first year, the SOCO project supported 32 existing Youth Parliaments and identified an opportunity to strengthen the model—culminating in the development of Youth Parliament 2.0.

The new model seeks to catalyze youth participation in policy making, local development, and decision making. It will increase participation levels using technology, by broadening the scope of the effort, and by integrating the program into local planning processes. The Youth Parliament 2.0 concept will be rolled out in two phases. It was piloted in three SOCO districts starting in 2024 and will be scaled and institutionalized across the remaining 45 SOCO-supported districts by the end of 2027.



The Gulf of Guinea Northern Regions Social Cohesion (SOCO) Project seeks to improve regional collaboration and socioeconomic and climate resilience among border-zone communities in the target northern regions of Gulf of Guinea countries exposed to conflict and climate risks. In Ghana, the project operates in 48 districts in the Northern, Upper East, Upper West, North East, Savannah, and Oti regions and is implemented by the Local Government, Chieftaincy and Religious Affairs, with funding from the World Bank.



## Implementing Youth Parliament 2.0

The SOCO project supports the National Youth Authority's implementation of the Youth Parliament 2.0 concept in its districts. Informed by lessons learned from the project's first year of supporting Youth Parliaments, the Youth Parliament 2.0 concept focuses on strengthening four key intervention areas: strengthening youth participation; using technology; broadening scope; and integrating youth into planning processes.

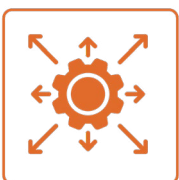
Youth Parliament 2.0 activities intended to address these issues include the following:



- Establish clear guidance on the processes, steps, and requirements involved in establishing a Youth Parliament and conducting a Youth Parliament inauguration and Sitting in a SOCO MMDA.
- To streamline the operational efficiency of Youth Parliaments, standardize the roles and responsibilities of National Youth Authority district directors, district assemblies, and Youth Parliament leadership.



- To increase awareness and transparency, publish information about the district-level progress of Youth Parliaments on the SOCO website, in publicly shared folders, and via social media.
- Utilize a digital application and management information system for accurate, transparent, and interactive monitoring and on Youth Parliament activities.



- Enhance knowledge on issues of concern to youth, their communities, and the larger society so young people can contribute to national development and emerge as the next generation of Ghanaian politicians.
- Foster communication between Youth Parliaments and MMDA officials to encourage knowledge sharing, expand learning opportunities, and promote mutual understanding.



- Facilitate the increased participation of youth in government meetings and the introduction of resolutions and actions developed or proposed by a Youth Parliament into MMDA discussions.
- Align the timing of Youth Parliamentary Sitzings with MMDA meetings to allow youth-identified ideas or concerns to be integrated into official policies and planning, such as for medium-term development plans.

## Learn More About Youth Parliament 2.0

Find more information about Youth Parliaments supported by the SOCO Project, including planned events and Parliamentary Sitzings, meeting minutes, photos, and leadership information, on the SOCO Project website at: <https://soco.gov.gh/youth-parliament>