

# The Farmers' Chronicles

BLOG

17 November 2025



## Young People Take the Reins: World Food Forum Launches the South African Youth Chapter

From 4 to 5 November 2025, in Johannesburg, over 90 young leaders from different parts of the country joined forces to officially launch the World Food Forum (WFF) South African Youth Chapter, a unique platform that places youth at the centre of creating a food system that is more equitable, just and sustainable for everyone. Over the course of two days, the national Department of Agriculture in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) co-hosted the launch under the theme, "Empowering youth to contribute to meaningful participation and prosperity in the agrifood systems".

Young people, youth organisations and key stakeholders involved in agriculture all came together with a single objective, to ensure that young people in South Africa have a genuine voice in determining what the country's food future should be. The World Food Forum was created by FAO in 2021 as a global youth-led initiative aimed at driving positive changes in the world's agrifood systems. The primary purpose of the WFF is to empower and provide young people with the tools they need to create innovative and

practical solutions to problems associated with unsustainable and inequitable food systems. The launch of the WFF South African Youth Chapter is a significant step in this direction. By establishing a national platform for young people to come together, share experiences, collaborate and actively engage in the decision-making process related to agriculture and food systems, the South African Youth Chapter allows young people to engage in global dialogue and develop homegrown solutions to address issues like food insecurity, unemployment and the negative impacts of climate change.

This national platform for young people to work towards positive change through the WFF was developed following a number of workshops that took place earlier in the year, during which young people and stakeholders in the agricultural sector laid the foundation for the launch event. These workshops assisted in the development of the terms of reference, nomination procedures and action plans for the chapter. As a result, the structure of the forum truly reflects the ideas and priorities of the youth it aims to represent.





## Young People Take the Reins: World Food Forum Launches the South African Youth Chapter

At the launch event, participants participated in robust and engaging discussions regarding youth empowerment, innovation in food systems and sustainable agricultural practices. The participants identified ways to attract and increase access to young people to agriculture, particularly in rural areas where opportunities are typically limited. Another highly anticipated moment of the launch was the nomination and election of the first WFF South African Youth Chapter Committee, which will direct the activities of the chapter and act as the voice of young people in agriculture nationally and internationally.

Following a democratic and energetic election process, Thabo Makoa was elected as Chairperson, while Othusitse Sebogodi was elected as Deputy Chairperson. Thabo Phasha was appointed as Secretary, while Siyasanga Bangani was appointed as Deputy Secretary. Sememo Nkosi was elected as Resource Mobiliser, while Thabo Moshodi was elected as Policy and Strategy leader. Kitso Monyadi was elected as leader of Innovation, Science and Technology, while Lesedi Gaabue was elected as leader of Education, Research and Training. Paballo Mokatsane was elected as Marketing and Communication leader.

The election of the new committee was welcomed with loud applause and a celebratory atmosphere. These young leaders bring with them fresh perspectives, optimism and commitment to their new roles. Their election signifies not only a milestone for the chapter, but also a pledge of youth-driven leadership that will influence the future of South Africa's agrifood systems. The newly elected committee will collectively guide the implementation of the chapter's action plan, facilitate youth initiatives throughout the country, and ensure that the voices of South African youth are heard and represented within the global World Food

Forum network. The launch of the WFF South African Youth Chapter is aligned with the goals of the National Youth Policy 2030 and the Agriculture and Agro-processing Master Plan (AAMP). Both policy documents recognise the importance of providing young people with the skills and resources needed to participate in the economy and act as agents of change in their communities.

This platform will offer opportunities for youth to design and implement projects that improve productivity, enhance sustainability and promote innovation in the agrifood sector. In addition, the chapter will function as a hub for mentorship, learning and collaboration among Government, the private sector and youth-led organisations. Throughout the event, speakers from Government, FAO and the youth sector emphasised that the future of agriculture is dependent upon the energy, creativity and leadership of young people and encouraged the participants to take full advantage of this new platform and utilise it as a catalyst for practical action in their respective communities.

The message is very clear: It is now time for youth to define their role in shaping the agrifood systems of their country. Young people can create a sector that will feed the country; generate employment opportunities; protect the environment; and contribute to the development of rural communities by working together. There was an atmosphere of optimism and determination as the curtains were drawn at the end of the two-day conference. The World Food Forum (WFF) South African Youth Chapter is more than a platform, it represents a promise of inclusiveness, innovation and collective advancement. With a new committee and a clear plan of action in place, South African youth are now poised to take the lead in creating a more sustainable and inclusive food



## Young People Take the Reins: World Food Forum Launches the South African Youth Chapter

system. The launch is complete, but the real work has just begun.

**LEADERSHIP OF THE WFF SA YOUTH CHAPTER**

 <b>Thabo Makoa</b> Chairperson	 <b>Othusitse Sebogodi</b> Deputy Chairperson	 <b>Thabo Phasha</b> Secretary	 <b>Siyasanga Bangani</b> Deputy Secretary	 <b>Sememo Nkosi</b> Resource Mobiliser
 <b>Lesedi Gaabue</b> Education, Research and Training	 <b>Thabo Moshodi</b> Policy & Strategy	 <b>Kitso Monyadi</b> Innovation, Science & Tech	 <b>Paballo Mokatsane</b> Marketing & Comms	