



# Youth4Water *Plus*

NEWSLETTER | VOLUME 8 | APRIL 2025

*"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts." ~ Rachel Carson*





## The Editorial Team

### Prof Anjal Prakash

Research Director,  
Bharti Institute of Public Policy,  
Indian School of Business

### Sahil Sharma

Sr. Manager,  
Communication & Influence,  
Water For People

### Dr. Shakuntala Pratihary

Writer and Founder,  
Center for Research and  
Community Action Trust

### Tript Kaur

Education Officer,  
UNICEF Odisha

### Soumyadip Dewanji

Design Team Lead,  
Youth4Water Plus





### In this Issue

- 02 Cover story:  
Youth4Water  
Plus: Young  
Changemakers  
in Action!
- 03 Driving Change:  
WASH and  
Climate  
Advocacy
- 06 Waves of  
Progress: The  
Ripple Effect of  
Transformation
- 09 Eco Guardians  
Chronicle
- 12 Spotlight:  
Youth4Water  
Plus Youths  
Shine

## Message from Youth4Water Plus

Hello, **Change-Makers!**

What an incredible journey the past few months have been! From coastal cleanups to climate dialogues, from empowering workshops to youth-led innovation, the Youth4Water Plus community has been making waves—literally and figuratively—for a cleaner, greener future. 🌱💙

This edition of the Youth4Water Plus Newsletter is a celebration of all the young changemakers who continue to lead the charge in sustainability. We've seen passionate action across Odisha, whether it was the Forum Odisha 2025, where 500 young leaders united to discuss climate solutions, or the Plastic-Free Future Awareness Campaign, which mobilized college students & communities to rethink their plastic consumption. 🏆💡

We also marked some key moments—like the Youth & Climate Action Dialogue with UNICEF, where young voices shaped discussions on climate resilience, and the World Wetlands Day celebrations, where volunteers planted 500 mangrove saplings to protect fragile ecosystems. Meanwhile, the YCLAP Pitch Day gave young champions a platform to showcase and fund their sustainability-focused projects, and our engagement at Patha Utsav Bhubaneswar brought environmental awareness to the streets through art, street plays, and interactive games. 🌍👏

And of course, a huge shout-out to all our volunteers, partners, and supporters who continue to make this movement stronger every day! Your energy, dedication, and innovative spirit inspire us all. A special thank you to Taksheel Mohanty, our young champion, for meticulously editing this edition, ensuring every story of impact gets the spotlight it deserves. 🙌📖

So, grab a chai, soak in these amazing stories, and get ready to fuel the next wave of action. Together, we are unstoppable! 💪♻️

With gratitude & excitement,  
The Youth4Water Plus Team 💙🌟



## Youth4Water Plus: Young Changemakers in Action!

An inspiring exchange took place at Youth & Climate Action – A Dialogue with UNICEF, in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, where young leaders from the Youth4Water Plus campaign, showcased their groundbreaking efforts in water conservation, biodiversity, and sustainability.

*Soledad Herrero*, Chief of Field Services, UNICEF India, and *William Hanlon Jr*, Chief of Field Office, UNICEF Odisha, engaged in insightful discussions with these passionate youth champions. They emphasized the power of youth leadership in driving climate solutions and explored ways to scale impact, enhance mentorship, and bridge knowledge gaps for a more sustainable future.

From projects on responsible consumption to circular economy startups, the event highlighted how young innovators are shaping a greener tomorrow. Their voices matter, their actions inspire!





# Driving Change – WASH & Climate Advocacy

## Forum Odisha 2025 Youth for a Sustainable Future



Youth4Water Plus, in collaboration with the National Youth Climate Consortium and Sattvic Soul Foundation, successfully organized a two-day conclave dedicated to youth empowerment and climate action. The programme was supported by Yuwaah-UNICEF, the event served as a platform for fostering innovative solutions and engaging young changemakers in sustainability efforts. The programme was a resounding success in Berhampur, bringing together 500 youth from across the country to discuss environmental sustainability and climate action. The day featured inspiring keynote speeches, insightful presentations, group discussions, and interactive workshops focused on addressing key climate challenges. Experts emphasized the ill effects of plastic pollution, highlighting how plastic waste contaminates soil and water, harms biodiversity, and contributes to long-term ecological damage.

A rally for environmental awareness energized participants, spreading powerful messages on plastic waste reduction and sustainable practices. A dedicated session on waste segregation educated attendees on properly managing biodegradable and non-biodegradable materials. To take action on the ground, a plogging drive was conducted, where participants cleaned public spaces, collecting plastic waste and promoting responsible disposal. The forum empowered youth with practical solutions to combat pollution and drive change within their communities. It served as a platform for youth leadership, encouraging and enabling participants to take responsibility for a cleaner, greener future. The success of Forum Odisha 2025 reaffirmed the commitment of young changemakers in building an environmentally sustainable world. On the 2nd day, a field visit was organised to Gopalpur Sea Beach, Berhampur, Odisha where participants engaged in hands-on environmental activities, including a clean-up drive, reinforcing their commitment to sustainability.



Experts emphasized the significance of rivers in maintaining ecological biodiversity and ecosystem balance. The event aimed to inspire youth to take proactive steps in environmental conservation through community engagement and advocacy. The orientation concluded with an interactive session, encouraging volunteers to implement conservation practices relevant to their local areas. It greatly stressed on the importance of youth connecting and working together for the common cause of conserving precious water resources. A total of 95 youth participated in the program and made efforts to ensure that similar programs will be conducted in different colleges in the future.

## Youth Orientation on River Regeneration and Biodiversity Conservation

On 9th January, 2025 BGVS organized a Youth Orientation Programme focused on the Regeneration of Rivers and Conservation of River Biodiversity in Kaudiapur, Puri. The session involved young volunteers in discussions on sustainable water conservation, ecological restoration, and the role of youth in protecting river ecosystems.





## A Step Towards Sensible Use of Plastic - Green Campus initiative

Youth4Water Plus, in collaboration with Bakul Foundation under its YCLAP Programme, organized an awareness program and poster making competition on "Solutions to Plastic Pollution" at Government Upper Primary School, Garhamalipada, and Kalingavidyapeetha, Shampur on 8th January, 2025. The initiative aimed to educate students on the destructive effects of plastic waste and promote sustainable alternatives which can be used regularly in daily life.

Through this event, we interacted with 100 students discussing the plastic waste cycle and its harmful impact on biodiversity when dumped in water bodies or landfills stressing the impact of plastics on the health of local flora and fauna. The session included interactive discussions, creative poster-making, and the installation of waste collection dustbins to promote responsible waste disposal, making the school a part of the green initiative and serving as a daily reminder to students of their responsibility to the environment.

Students actively shared ideas on reducing plastic use in daily life, fostering a strong sense of environmental responsibility. They also expressed their commitment to discussing these issues with their parents and siblings, ensuring that awareness spreads beyond the school and into their communities.

The program successfully instilled awareness among young minds, empowering them to take action against plastic pollution. The key learning was the importance of individual and collective efforts in tackling environmental challenges. By involving students, the initiative laid the foundation for a change in the attitude of the youth towards sustainability.

## Youth4Water Plus - 6th Anniversary Celebration

On January 12, 2025, Youth4Water Plus celebrated its 6th anniversary with an orientation event at the BGVS Office, welcoming 30 new volunteers from Odisha. The event aimed to inspire youth to take active leadership roles in addressing environmental challenges and promoting community-based solutions.

Mr. Aravinda Behera, Retd. Chief Secretary, emphasized the importance of youth engagement in tackling critical issues like water conservation, climate change, and environmental sustainability. He encouraged young leaders to identify challenges in their communities and propose tactful solutions to local governance bodies. He encouraged young people to ask questions, write letters, and engage in development dialogues, ensuring their voices shape policies. He also stressed that development should not come at the cost of compromising on the environment, or promoting its degradation.

Mr. Madhu Sudan Das from the National Youth Project motivated the youth by highlighting the spirit of volunteerism and drawing inspiration from trailblazers. Ms. Subhrasima Mohanty introduced the volunteer credit system, where each participant's efforts would be recognized and rewarded.

Ms. Shipra Saxena encouraged volunteers to start small initiatives within their homes and villages while also sharing the inspiring journey of the Youth4Water Plus Campaign. Mr. Dharmananda Sundaray elaborated on the various activities undertaken under the campaign.

The event also featured the launch of the 2025 Calendar, showcasing youth-led climate initiatives. The celebration concluded with a cake-cutting ceremony, making the occasion a memorable and inspiring milestone for all attendees. Mr. Blorin Mohanty from the Secretariat of Youth4Water Plus appreciated the efforts of the youth and assured continued support for future grassroots initiatives.



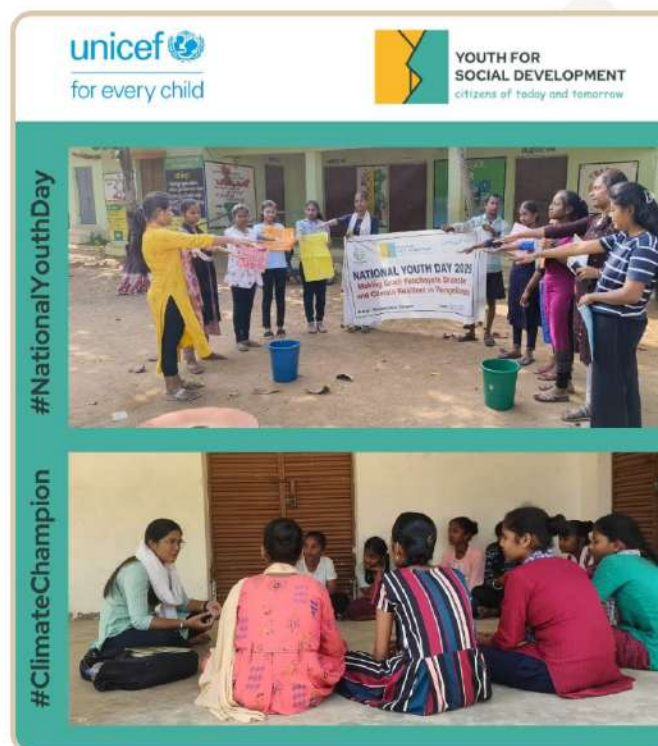


## Celebration of National Youth Day 🎉

Youth4Water Plus Celebrated National Youth Day with a Commitment to Climate Action from January 12 to 15, 2025, across multiple locations, reaffirming its commitment to water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH), and climate action through various engaging activities in different locations.

YAR Organisation conducted a community awareness program, reinforcing efforts toward sustainable water and sanitation practices. Atmashakti Trust and Youth4Water Plus organized a capacity-building session for 30 young changemakers, focusing on climate resilience planning. The event concluded with a waterbody clean-up, where participants pledged to adopt and promote a polythene-free lifestyle.

Youth4Water Plus, in collaboration with Udyama, engaged 50 students from the Vivekananda Institute of Masters in Social Work in discussions on youth-led environmental conservation. Bharatiya Gyan Vigyan Samiti conducted a climate quiz, community awareness programs, and an oath-taking ceremony, inspiring young individuals to take action. Youth for Social Development in Ganjam held engaging sessions with youth and communities as well. Additionally, various activities were held in Keonjhar, Rayagada, and Kandhamal, where youth volunteers led local initiatives for environmental sustainability.





## Waves of Progress: The Ripple Effect of Transformation

### Empowering Youth for Climate Action: A Dialogue on Sustainable Leadership



The Youth4Water Plus team engaged with *Shri Bhaskar Jyoti Sarma*, IAS, Secretary, Sports and Youth Services Department, Odisha, to discuss the campaign's on-ground impact. The interaction focused on youth-led climate action, water conservation, and community engagement. Ms. Shivani Das shared her leadership journey, emphasizing her role in driving climate initiatives and mobilizing young changemakers. Shri Sarma commended the team's efforts and greatly appreciated the youth's continued participation in environmental sustainability. The discussion reinforced the importance of collaborative action, empowering youth to take ownership of climate challenges and integrate sustainable solutions into their communities.

### Plastic-Free Future Awareness Campaign – 17 January 2025

YCLAP member Subhasmita Behera led a plastic-free awareness campaign in Nayagarh, actively engaging 220 youth through college awareness sessions, rallies with NSS volunteers, and community discussions. She emphasized how plastic waste dumped into the environment poses serious health risks and complications along with long-term environmental challenges of degradation and deterioration.



Taking a proactive approach, Subhasmita collaborated with Self-Help Group (SHG) members to introduce leaf plates as a sustainable alternative to plastic. She encouraged local youth to develop an action plan promoting eco-friendly solutions in their daily lives. Additionally, she initiated discussions with community leaders to explore transforming leaf plate production into a sustainable local enterprise, providing an alternative livelihood to SHG members while reducing plastic dependency.

This campaign has sparked awareness across Nayagarh, reaching colleges, youth clubs, and women's groups. More young people are now committed to reducing plastic use, and local vendors have shown interest in adopting biodegradable alternatives. The initiative has become a stepping stone toward a plastic-free future, inspiring more community-driven efforts for environmental sustainability.



### Youth4Water Plus at Patha Utsav Bhubaneswar 2025 - Fostering Environmental Awareness and Community Engagement

On January 19, 2025, Youth4Water Plus actively participated in Patha Utsav Bhubaneswar 2025, a vibrant street festival organized in collaboration with the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). The event aimed to promote environmental sustainability and community involvement through various interactive activities. The objectives of the festival were to raise awareness about environmental issues, particularly plastic pollution, engage youth in activities promoting sustainability and eco-friendly practices and foster community participation in environmental conservation efforts.

Youth volunteers performed engaging street plays highlighting the adverse effects of plastic pollution on health and the environment, aiming to sensitize the public to problems surrounding the environment and to encourage behavioural change. A creative drawing competition was organized for children and young adults, encouraging them to express their ideas on environmental conservation and the importance of reducing plastic usage. Interactive games with themes centred around sustainability and environmental protection were conducted to educate participants in a fun and engaging manner.



In collaboration with BMC, a plantation drive was initiated, with designated land allocated for planting saplings. This effort aimed to enhance urban greenery and promote the importance of trees in maintaining ecological balance. Combining jogging with litter collection, youth volunteers led a plogging drive along the event route, emphasizing the significance of maintaining clean public spaces and promoting physical fitness.

### YCLAP Pitch Day: Empowering Young Climate Innovators

On January 29, 2025, Bakul Foundation hosted the YCLAP Pitch Day, bringing together young climate leaders from diverse backgrounds to present their sustainability-focused startup projects. Organized under the Youth4Water Plus Campaign, the event provided a platform for youth to showcase innovative solutions to environmental challenges and seek funding support for their initiatives.



Eight passionate members presented their projects, outlining their strategies, expected impact, and implementation plans. Each group aimed to address pressing environmental issues such as waste management, plastic reduction, renewable energy, and climate-resilient agriculture. The panel of experts, mentors, and investors carefully evaluated the presentations based on their innovation, feasibility, and sustainability impact. Following a rigorous selection process, three outstanding teams were chosen as winners. They received financial grants and mentorship support to turn their ideas into actionable projects that will drive positive change in their communities.

The event not only recognized youth-led climate solutions but also encouraged collaborative efforts to build a more sustainable future. Through this initiative, YCLAP continues to empower young leaders, fostering a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and environmental responsibility.



### YOUTH CLIMATE LENS 📷 WALK

Youth4Water Plus, in collaboration with Grey Picture, organized the Climate Lens Walk, a unique virtual event providing an opportunity for young nature photographers to create environmental awareness through powerful imagery.

With the tagline "Pic Speaks", the event featured a 24-hour Environmental Photography Competition, where youth participants captured and shared thought-provoking images highlighting climate change, water conservation, and the beauty of nature. The initiative aimed to encourage young minds to analyse and their surroundings through a perspective that is observant of un-natural change and variations in the climate and use visual storytelling to inspire change.

The event saw enthusiastic participation, with compelling and thought-provoking photographs shared across virtual platforms, amplifying the message of sustainability. The collaborative effort not only showcased young talent but also reinforced the power of visual media in driving environmental awareness.

This initiative successfully engaged youth in climate action, proving that pictures can speak louder than words in advocating for a greener future.



## Meraki Workshop Series – 12th Session: Designing a Client Feedback System

On January 30, 2025, Youth4Water Plus, under its Meraki Workshop Series, conducted its 12th session on "Designing a Client Feedback System." The session was facilitated by Jonathan Mendonca, who provided participants with essential skills to transform client insights into meaningful, data-driven narratives.



The workshop emphasized the importance of collecting, analysing, and utilizing feedback to improve services and enhance user experiences. Participants learned strategies for designing effective feedback mechanisms, ensuring that client perspectives translate into actionable improvements. Jonathan guided them on structuring narratives based on feedback data, helping them understand how to use responses for organizational growth and decision-making.

This session empowered young professionals and social entrepreneurs with practical tools to enhance their projects, making them more impact-driven and client-centric. The interactive nature of the workshop encouraged collaborative discussions and real-world applications, reinforcing the significance of feedback in building sustainable and responsive initiatives.





# Eco Guardians Chronicle

**Workshop on WASH, Climate Change & Environmental Sustainability empowers NSS Volunteers in Odisha**

A one-day workshop on Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), Climate Change, and Environmental Sustainability was successfully conducted at Gita Govinda Sadan, Unit 4, Bhubaneswar on 1st February, 2025. The event was organized by Youth4Water Plus in collaboration with the National Service Scheme (NSS), BGVS, and UNICEF Odisha, aimed to strengthen the role of NSS Programme Officers in community-driven environmental interventions.



The workshop was attended by 60 NSS Programme Officers and 25 active NSS volunteers from 4 districts of Odisha. The objective was to enhance their capacities and empower 500 NSS volunteers across various districts to drive awareness and action on WASH and climate sustainability in their respective colleges, communities, and adopted villages. The workshop featured expert-led thematic sessions to provide practical and detail-oriented knowledge on WASH and climate resilience.

Ms. Barnali Ghosh, National Sanitation Expert, UNICEF Delhi, discussed sanitation, elimination of public defecation, toilet maintenance, waste segregation, and the health impacts of poor hygiene practices. Participants were divided into three groups to draft annual action plans focusing on water conservation, sanitation, and climate resilience. These plans were tailored to suit local challenges and seasonal variations in their respective areas. After a collaborative discussion, a unified annual action plan was finalized for implementation across NSS colleges and their adopted villages.

## Celebrating World Wetlands Day 2025

On 2nd February 2025, Youth4Water Plus, in collaboration with Jeevan Rekha Parishad, Seacology, and Earth Guardians, celebrated World Wetlands Day with the Island youth and women communities of Sipakuda, Chilika!

500 mangrove saplings were planted to restore and protect the fragile coastal ecosystem. An awareness drive in nearby villages engaged communities in understanding the vital role of wetlands in biodiversity conservation and climate resilience and emphasized on their importance. This initiative is a step towards safeguarding our wetlands, protecting livelihoods, and building a sustainable future. Women groups and youth together discussed they will prepare a Panchayat level action plan for protecting the Island and wetlands.

As Renubala, a young changemaker, rightly said, "This movement is not just about planting trees; it's about growing a generation of changemakers."





## Youth4Water Plus at URJAMELA Dhenkanal!

Youth4Water Plus proudly participated in Urjamela, a flagship initiative by Tata Power and TPCODL under the Club Enerji Program. The event gathered 200 students from 35 schools, who showcased their creativity through painting, slogan writing, "Waste to Best" competitions, and science exhibitions focused on energy conservation.

Our team extended the learning experience by educating both students and teachers on crucial topics such as water conservation and climate change and how to involve themselves. This engagement aimed to empower the next generation to become proactive climate champions!



## Inspiring Youth for Sustainability: Workshop & Volunteers

On February 7, 2025, Youth4Water Plus organized an engaging Workshop & Volunteer Rising session at UN Autonomous College, Adaspur, Niali, Cuttack, in collaboration with the Department of MSW. The session brought together 35-40 passionate youth, sparking discussions on sustainability and the power of youth-driven change. The interactive workshop aimed to motivate students to embrace eco-conscious lifestyles and become changemakers in their communities. Through insightful conversations and hands-on activities, participants explored ways to contribute to environmental conservation. This initiative reinforced the belief that small actions by dedicated individuals can lead to significant societal impact.

## Webinar on Climate-Resilient WASH Facilities for Institutions in Odisha

On February 15, 2025, Odisha State Open University (OSOU), Sambalpur, in collaboration with Youth4Water Plus, successfully conducted a webinar on "Climate Resilient WASH Facilities for Institutions in Odisha."

The webinar featured a key session led by Mr. M. S. Khan, Senior Consultant, WASH in Institutions, UNICEF Odisha. He shared valuable insights on sustainable WASH solutions and the need for climate-resilient infrastructure in educational and institutional spaces.

His presentation addressed challenges like water scarcity, sanitation infrastructure vulnerabilities, and climate-induced risks, along with strategies for mitigation and adaptation.

The session provided a platform for participants to engage in discussions, explore innovative approaches, and understand the role of institutions in implementing climate-resilient WASH solutions. The event successfully raised awareness and encouraged stakeholders to take proactive steps in strengthening WASH infrastructure across Odisha.

Looking ahead, the session explored Future Plans, providing recommendations for strengthening institutional WASH facilities in Odisha. The Role of Stakeholders, including government bodies, NGOs, academic institutions, and local communities, was emphasized as a key driver for success.





## Youth4Water Plus *inspires* Youth for Climate Action through Art

Youth4Water Plus, in collaboration with Utkal University of Culture and Livelihood Alternative, organized a theme-based poster competition. A total of 50 young artists participated in the event. At the beginning, team members from Youth4Water Plus gave an introduction on climate change and its six key themes: water conservation, biodiversity, green skilling, disaster resilience, renewable energy, and responsible consumption.

After the discussion, students were asked to choose one theme that resonates with them. They then used their creativity and artistic skills to express their ideas through posters. The participants showed great talent and enthusiasm in their work.

Along with the poster competition, a logo design contest was also held for the Odisha Conference of Youth. This gave students another opportunity to think deeply about climate change and represent their ideas through art. They spent four hours designing unique and meaningful logos.

At the end of the event, the students presented inspiring and thought-provoking designs. Their enthusiasm and creativity made the competition a success. The event not only showcased their artistic abilities but also helped spread awareness about climate issues in a unique and engaging way.





## SPOTLIGHT: YOUTH4WATER PLUS YOUTHS SHINE ✨

### Youth4Water Plus Volunteers honoured for Environmental Leadership

On February 16, 2025, Youth4Water Plus volunteers and team members were felicitated at the District Seminar on "Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG-SA)", organized by Rotary International District 3262 at Vivekananda Yuva Kendra, Bhubaneswar.

The event served as a dynamic platform, bringing together environmental advocates, experts, and organizations dedicated to sustainability. The recognition highlights the tireless efforts of our youth volunteers in water conservation, climate action, and community-driven initiatives.

A special moment of pride for Youth4Water Plus was the felicitation of three outstanding youth volunteers—Sudipta Kumar Sahoo, Deepan Digal, and DipsaBehura—who were awarded by Rotary International for their continuous contributions toward building a climate-resilient society. Their dedication and leadership inspire many young changemakers to take action for a sustainable future.

This honour is a testament to the unwavering commitment of our team to create impactful change for a greener future. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Rotary International District 3262 for this recognition and look forward to strengthening our collaborative efforts toward environmental sustainability.









# #together we hustle!



"My journey with Youth4Water Plus in the year 2024-2025 has been an inspiring and transformative experience. Over the past year, I have visited more than 100 colleges, youth organizations, and networks across Odisha and India. Being part of this movement has been a privilege, allowing me to address more than 10,000 young volunteers about their crucial role in massive plantation drives and water preservation efforts. I am deeply grateful to the entire Youth4Water Plus team for including NYP as a partner in this incredible journey. Together, we march forward for a greater cause—building a sustainable future for generations to come."

~ Madhusudan Das, State Coordinator, National Youth Project

"At UDYAMA, we believe that addressing the Triple Planetary Crisis—climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution—requires local action, collaboration, and systemic change. Our partnership with Youth4Water Plus, under UNICEF's leadership, is a testament to the power of collective efforts in driving climate resilience, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development. From mass plantation drives to youth-led plastic pollution cleanups, we are working to strengthen frontline communities and foster a circular economy. Together, through nature-based solutions and adaptive strategies, we are paving the way for a more resilient and sustainable future."

~ Pradeep Mohapatra, Secretary & Team Leader, UDYAMA



## Calling all youth champions!

Are you, or someone you know, actively working on issues related to water, the environment, or climate change?

We want to hear from you! Share your details with us at [youth4watercampaign@gmail.com](mailto:youth4watercampaign@gmail.com), and you could be featured in our next edition as a contributor!



LEARN MORE ABOUT US: [WWW.YOUTH4WATER.ORG](http://WWW.YOUTH4WATER.ORG)

Designed by

अष्टि CRAFTING CONNECTIONS  
THROUGH VISUALS  
A Youthful Graphic Design Agency