

The [African Movement of Working Children and Youth \(AMWCY\)](#) , is an entirely child-led and managed grass-roots movement, based in 57 towns in 18 African countries with a membership of 20,000 working children and young people. In 2004, ten years after it was formally established Africa-wide, the movement remains one of the most innovative, participatory, rights-based and child-led movements in the world.

The AMWCY aims to better the rights of working children across Africa, providing counselling, running local, national and regional campaigns and managing partnerships with civil society networks and organisations. The working children and young people that make up the movement are often house maids, market-sellers, independent working children and youth in streets and markets as well as apprentices of both sexes. Beyond regular membership, members of the AMWCY have shown their ability to mobilise 40 to 60,000 working children and youth during demonstrations that they have organised. The Movement is made of local groups, national associations and a regional commission. They work together to strengthen solidarity and win respect from local populations and government.

In 1994, the founders of the Movement identified **12 priority rights for the struggle against exploitation and the worst forms of child labour** , and set up a programme for the promotion of these rights. Among them are; The right to be taught a trade, The right to stay in the village (not to migrate), The right to light and limited work, The right to play, The right to learn to read and write and The right to self expression and to form organisations. The AMWCY have identified the links between their 12 rights and the 10 imperatives of the Global Movement for Children and the 'World Fit for Children', as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Progress towards these rights is evaluated regularly by the Movement.

Some **success stories** include employers allowing their female domestic workers to leave earlier in the evening in order to let them go to literacy and numeracy classes run by other young people in the Movement, negotiations with authorities on preferential access to medical facilities, and a growing solidarity of working children across the continent.

The movement is supported with some funding and advice from many organisations, including ENDA, Save the Children, Plan and UNICEF. [Get in contact with the Movement here!](#)

The AMWCY works with other working children around the world, and in 2004 attended the **World Movement of Working Children and Adolescents**

, which was held in Berlin, Germany, from 19th April to 2nd May 2004. Children from 23 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America met to analyse the social, economic and political situation in which millions of children are in, and propose actions and alternatives that help improve their situation and promote dignified work for children.

[Find out more about the meeting here!](#)