



# 8TH FIG YOUNG SURVEYORS CONFERENCE REPORT

18-19 MAY 2024  
ACCRA, GHANA



May 18th - 19th 2024



Our World: Then, Now, Tomorrow



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**2024**

## Introduction

The 8th FIG Young Surveyors Conference was held in Accra, Ghana, from the 18th to the 19th of May 2024, under the compelling theme **"Our World: Then, Now, Tomorrow."** This significant event brought together over 80 young professionals, seasoned experts, and industry leaders from around the globe to engage in meaningful discussions, share insights, and explore the evolving landscape of surveying.

The conference aimed to reflect on the past, evaluate the present, and envision the future of the surveying profession. It provided a dynamic platform for young surveyors to exchange knowledge, network, and collaborate on innovative solutions to contemporary challenges. The diverse program included keynote speeches, technical sessions, interactive workshops, and networking opportunities, all designed to inspire and empower the next generation of surveyors.

This report delves into the conference's key highlights, sessions, and outcomes, encapsulating the vibrant energy and forward-thinking spirit that characterized the event. Through this documentation, we aim to capture the essence of the discussions and the collective aspirations that emerged from this gathering, contributing to the ongoing development and transformation of the surveying profession.



Report written by Shirley Tendai Chapunza

# Day 1: 18 May 2024

## **Opening Session**

The FIG Young Surveyors Conference commenced with an inspiring and invigorating opening session featuring esteemed speakers who set the tone for a memorable event focused on intergenerational collaboration, cultural immersion, and professional growth. The inspiring messages from Diane Dumashie, Winnie Shiu, Bryn Fosburgh, Stephen Djaba, Shirley Chapunza, and Alexander Ayetey set a high standard for the conference. They ignited a sense of purpose and unity among the attendees. As the conference progressed, the young surveyors were poised to embrace the wisdom shared, foster meaningful connections, and shape a future that honors both the past and the promise of tomorrow.

### **Diane Dumashie, President of FIG**



Diane Dumashie kicked off the session with a powerful address emphasizing intergenerational collaboration. She underscored the importance of respecting the seasoned generations' efforts while harnessing the tech-savviness of the younger generation. Her message was clear: the surveying community must leave no one behind. Diane's vision painted a future where the experience of the old and the energy of the young merge to create a dynamic, inclusive profession.

### **Winnie Shiu, Vice-President of FIG**



Echoing Diane's sentiments and joining the meeting remotely, Winnie Shiu highlighted the necessity of fostering harmony between generations. Her address reinforced the idea that the future of surveying depends on both old and young working together seamlessly. Winnie's message was one of unity and mutual respect, inspiring attendees to bridge the generational gap and collaborate effectively.

### **Bryn Fosburgh, President of the FIG Foundation**



Bryn Fosburgh brought a blend of inspiration and wit to the session. Quoting Kwame Nkrumah and adapting his words for surveyors, Bryn declared, "We are not surveyors because we were born surveyors, but we are surveyors because surveying was born in us." He encouraged the young surveyors to embrace their identity and explore life beyond the profession, advocating for a healthy work-life balance. His speech resonated deeply, reminding everyone that their passion for surveying is innate and should be nurtured alongside personal well-being.

## Stephen Djaba, 2024 FIG Working Week Co-Director



Stephen Djaba captivated the audience with his enthusiasm for Ghanaian culture. He urged young surveyors to immerse themselves in the local culture, embrace it, and enjoy their time in Ghana. Stephen's vibrant depiction of the Ghanaian experience served as a reminder to appreciate the present while building a future they could be proud of.

## Shirley Chapunza, Chair, FIG YSN



Shirley Chapunza's address was a call to action. She urged young surveyors to take full advantage of being physically present at the conference, to foster lifelong friendships, and to engage actively in shaping an inclusive future. Shirley highlighted the importance of recognizing generational differences as opportunities for collaboration rather than barriers, inspiring attendees to forge strong, lasting connections.

## Alexander Ayettey, Chair, Ghanaian Young Surveyors Network



Alexander Ayettey concluded the opening session with a rousing emphasis on the spirit of togetherness. He encouraged young surveyors to model the profession and community they envision. Alexander's message of unity and shared purpose resonated strongly, reinforcing the conference's theme and setting a positive tone for the days to come.

## Cemal Özgür Kivılcım's Memorial



John Hohol led a memorial to honour the memory of Cemal, a cherished founding member of the FIG Young Surveyors Network from Turkey. Cemal's vision and dedication were instrumental in shaping the network into what it is today. Though we lost him to a brain tumor, his spirit and contributions continue to inspire us. We celebrate the years we spent with him, remembering his passion, warmth, and enduring legacy in our hearts.

## FIG Foundation Young Surveyor Grant Award Ceremony

The FIG Foundation Young Surveyor Grant Award ceremony was a vibrant highlight, celebrating the exceptional talent and dedication of five outstanding young surveyors. These bright minds were honoured for their achievements and granted support to attend the 8th FIG Young Surveyors Conference and the 2024 FIG Working Week. The award handover was a testament to the FIG Foundation's commitment to nurturing the future of the surveying profession, sparking inspiration and camaraderie among attendees. Cheers to the next generation of surveyors who will shape our world with their innovation and passion!



**Angela Omamuyovwi Anyakora**



**Fie Kliving**



**Angie Katherine Melo Wilches**



**Victor Chinedu Okonkwo**



**Farrah Etcheverry**

## The Keynotes

### Delivered by Narelle Underwood and Joseph Owusu Awuah

The session was a highlight of the conference, featuring inspiring talks from Narelle Underwood and Joseph Owusu Awuah, who captivated the audience with their insights, experiences, and calls to action.

#### Joseph Owusu Awuah: Charting New Frontiers



Joseph Owusu Awuah's address was a rousing call to the young surveyors in attendance. With passion and eloquence, Joseph emphasized the pivotal role young surveyors play in shaping the future. He urged them to embrace their pioneering spirit:

***"You are the pioneers of this new frontier in surveying, equipped with the knowledge and tools to make significant contributions to the world. Which road will you take?"***

***The road less travelled? Or the road well-travelled? These are exciting times. These are the best of times and, perhaps, the worst of times. These are the times to take risk as a young person, and as a young surveying engineer. Don't let anything hold you back"***. Joseph's words resonated deeply, encouraging young professionals to seize opportunities, innovate fearlessly, and carve their unique paths in the surveying world. His speech was a powerful reminder that the choices made today will define the landscape of tomorrow.

#### Narelle Underwood: Leading with Technology



Narelle Underwood's journey to becoming the first female Surveyor General of New South Wales is a testament to resilience, determination, and the transformative power of technology. In her engaging presentation, Narelle shared her experiences and the milestones achieved with her team. She highlighted how they have harnessed cutting-edge technology to fulfil the mandates of her office:

***"Together with my team, we've leveraged technology to streamline processes, enhance accuracy, and deliver exceptional results. Our journey has not only been about breaking barriers but also about setting new standards in surveying practices."***

Narelle's story was not just inspiring but also a practical demonstration of how innovation can drive progress in the surveying field. Her achievements serve as a beacon for aspiring surveyors, showing that with vision and teamwork, remarkable goals can be accomplished.

The keynote session was a perfect blend of inspiration, professional insights, and motivational messages. Both speakers left an indelible mark on the audience, encouraging young surveyors to think boldly and act decisively. The session was a testament to the power of leadership, innovation, and the boundless possibilities that lie ahead for the surveying profession.

As we look towards the future, the words of **Joseph Owusu Awuah** and **Narelle Underwood** will undoubtedly echo in the minds of young surveyors, guiding them as they navigate the exciting journey ahead. Their speeches were not just presentations but calls to action, challenging each attendee to contribute to the ever-evolving world of surveying.

## "Chairs' Charming Chat"

Commission chairs made a delightful appearance at the Young Surveyors' event, creating an invigorating atmosphere of inclusion and engagement. They warmly greeted the young surveyors, extending an open invitation to join the various commissions and contribute to their impactful work. This session was a stellar example of fostering diversity of voices within the FIG community, empowering young surveyors to actively shape the profession's future discourse. The interaction underscored the value of integrating fresh perspectives, reinforcing the FIG's commitment to dynamic and inclusive professional growth.



## Meet A SurveyPal



Following an inspiring keynote session at the Young Surveyors Conference, attendees enjoyed a vibrant teabreak aptly named "Meet a SurvPal." This session was a dynamic networking opportunity where young surveyors enthusiastically mingled with peers and engaged in lively discussions. Adding to the excitement, commission chairs made a delightful appearance, warmly inviting the young professionals to join and contribute to the various commission works.



The break not only served as a refreshment pause but also as a platform for building connections, exchanging ideas, and fostering professional growth within the surveying community. It was, indeed, a perfect blend of camaraderie and career development, leaving participants eager for more collaborative engagements.

### **Trends in Geospatial Technology**

The "Trends in Geospatial Technology" session was a thrilling exploration of the cutting-edge advancements reshaping surveying practices today.



**Craig Hill**, Vice-President of Survey Solutions at Leica Geosystems, set the tone with his bold assertion that "being a good surveyor is not good enough," and urged the young surveyors to "go out, dare greatly and be more than a good (young) surveyor." Hill encouraged young surveyors to transcend traditional roles by focusing on exceptional service provision while continuously innovating to craft a better surveying world. His message was clear: innovation is not optional but essential in staying ahead in this rapidly evolving field.



**Ben Emunah Aikins**, GIZ's Database and Digitalization Advisory, echoed this sentiment by encouraging surveyors to embrace the geo-information management domain. He highlighted the immense value of geospatial science in broadening the horizons of the surveying profession. Aikins emphasized that mastery of geospatial data not only enhances precision but also empowers surveyors to play a pivotal role in diverse sectors.

Both speakers underscored the importance of adapting to new technologies and methodologies, making this session a beacon of inspiration for young surveyors eager to lead the charge into the future. The dynamic interplay of insights from the industry leaders provided a comprehensive look at the current trends, ensuring that attendees left equipped with the knowledge and motivation to innovate within the geospatial landscape.



## AI Boom and its Impact on the Surveying World

In an illuminating session titled "AI Boom and its Impact on the Surveying World," Peter Bauer, Co-Chair of FIG WG6.3, and Nigel Sellars from RICS Professional Practice delivered compelling presentations on the future of surveying.



**Peter Bauer**, captivated the audience with his insights on immersive technologies, highlighting the transformative potential of VR and AR in engineering surveying. He detailed the pioneering work of his working group in monitoring surveying before construction, and their efforts in cataloguing essential survey equipment. Peter, a rising star in FIG Commission 6, passionately urged young surveyors to engage with the commissions and support these groundbreaking initiatives.



**Nigel Sellars** brought a different yet equally crucial perspective, discussing the pervasive issue of unconscious bias in the professional world. He illuminated how such biases can subtly influence decision-making and urged the profession to adopt more inclusive practices. His presentation underscored the importance of recognizing and mitigating unconscious bias to foster a fair and equitable professional environment.

Together, these presentations not only showcased cutting-edge advancements and ethical considerations but also reinforced the importance of young surveyors' active participation in shaping the future of the profession. The session was a testament to the power of AI and the need for a diverse and inclusive surveying community.



## Green Skills and the Role of Young Surveyors

In the engaging session titled "Green Skills and the Role of Young Surveyors," Angela Anyakora and Angel Collado Murillo showcased the pioneering spirit of next-gen mappers in promoting sustainable practices.



**Angela O. Anyakora**, representing the FIGYSN Volunteer Community Surveyor Program (VCSP) as the Engagement Lead, delivered an inspiring presentation on how VCSP volunteers are championing land rights. Quoting the recent VCSP publication, she highlighted the critical role of young surveyors in advocating for equitable land use and environmental stewardship.



**Angel Collado Murillo**, a young surveyor from FIG Commission 2, complemented this by sharing insights from their ongoing work on the Surveying Education Survey. This initiative aims to reshape the fundamental surveying education offered worldwide, ensuring it incorporates sustainability and innovation.

Together, Angela and Angel painted a vivid picture of young surveyors not just charting lands but planting seeds for a greener, more equitable future. Their presentations underscored the importance of integrating green skills into the profession, demonstrating that today's young surveyors are indeed the torch bearers of sustainable progress

## Sustainable World for Future Prospects

The "Sustainable World for Future Prospects" session was a riveting fusion of innovation and eco-consciousness, offering insights that promise to reshape our approach to sustainability.



**Lidija Spiranec**, Product Manager at Leica Geosystems, captivated the audience with her presentation on the transformative power of monitoring solutions in sustainable development. Highlighting the roles of heritage preservation, disaster risk management, and preparedness, she aptly dubbed monitoring surveyors as the "superheroes of the surveying profession".



Complementing this, **John Brock**, a seasoned Land Surveyor from NSW, took the attendees on a historical journey through the evolution of surveying. His insightful talk, "**Surveying Then**," traced the origins of the profession from ancient civilizations to modern times, even humorously noting how scriptures in the Holy Bible depict God as a surveyor. John showcased the progression of surveying equipment over time, illustrating the profession's dynamic nature and its continuous adaptation to technological advancements.

This session was a perfect blend of historical reverence and forward-thinking, underscoring the enduring significance of surveying in shaping a sustainable and resilient future. Both speakers left an indelible mark, inspiring attendees to embrace their roles in creating a sustainable world



### **FIG Foundation Young Surveyor Grant Recipient**

In an inspiring session dedicated to the remarkable achievements of the FIG Foundation Young Surveyor Grant recipients, five exceptional individuals took the stage to share their unique journeys. **Farrah Etcheverry**, who started her career assisting her father before returning to school to earn her degree, captivated the audience with her story of balancing roles as a mom, co-business owner, and surveyor. **Victor Chinedu Okonkwo** brought laughter with his mother's proud declaration, "blessed is she among women that her baby was chosen for the grant." **Angie Katherine MELO WILCHES** shared her experiences as a surveyor in Colombia, while **Fie Kliving** from Denmark expressed hopes that this opportunity would enhance her skills upon her return home. **Angela Anyakora**, 2023 grant recipient, recounted her impactful work supporting FIG YSN in West Africa. This session was a testament to the diversity and dedication within the surveying profession, highlighting how the FIG Foundation Young Surveyor Grants Awards empower young surveyors to shape the industry's future. The event celebrated not just individual achievements, but the collective advancement of the global surveying community.



*Congratulations to the FIG Foundation Young Surveyor  
FIG Working Week 2024 Grant Recipients!*



*Angie*  
Colombia



*Farrah*  
USA



*Fie*  
Denmark



*Victor*  
Nigeria

### **Updates from Regional/National YSN**

In this engaging session, leaders from various Young Surveyors Networks (YSN) shared inspiring success stories and key updates, showcasing the dynamic growth and impact of the YSN community globally.

**David Elegbede**, the FIG YSN Africa Chair, highlighted the fruitful collaboration between the African Network and the Volunteer Community Surveyor Program (VCSP). His narrative of establishing national YSN chapters during VCSP engagements painted a vivid picture of grassroots mobilization and capacity building across Africa.

**Marcus Schmitt**, representing FIG YSN Americas, delivered a vibrant account of the network's activities, including a notable meeting in Puerto Rico. He emphasized the surge in engagements within the Caribbean and Latin American young surveyors communities, reflecting a strong and growing connection across the region.

**Iaroslav Zifceac** from YSN Romania impressed the audience with tales of young surveyors' active involvement in policymaking. Their collaborative efforts have paved the way for significant contributions to national policies. He also extended a warm invitation to the upcoming Young Surveyors European Meeting in Romania this October, promising an enriching experience for all attendees.

This session was a testament to the YSN's commitment to fostering inclusion and amplifying diverse voices within the FIG community, enabling young surveyors to shape the profession's future discourse.

## Closing Remarks



In a session aptly marked by appreciation and foresight, Shirley Chapunza, FIG YSN Chair, delivered the closing remarks with a blend of wit and gratitude that left attendees inspired. Summarizing key insights from the day's sessions, Shirley highlighted the innovative ideas and collaborative spirit that permeated the event. She expressed heartfelt thanks to all participants, sponsors, and speakers, acknowledging their crucial roles in the conference's success.

Shirley also encouraged attendees to continue networking, emphasizing the importance of building lasting professional relationships. Adding a delightful twist, she extended a warm invitation to the FIG YSN-Leica Social Event, promising an evening of fun and further connection. Shirley's remarks were a perfect endnote, encapsulating the essence of community and forward-thinking that defines the FIG Young Surveyors Network.

## Day 2: 19 May 2024

Day 2 of the 8th Young Surveyors Conference was a dynamic half-day event packed with enriching activities following the unforgettable FIG YSN-Leica Social Event. The day kicked off with engaging breakout sessions that allowed participants to delve into specialized topics, followed by an insightful technical session. A stimulating roundtable discussion brought diverse perspectives to the fore, setting the stage for an inspiring dialogue about the future of the Young Surveyors Network. The day concluded on a high note with the FIG YSN Charity Event, generously sponsored by Trimble and Leica, fostering a spirit of community and giving back. The combination of technical learning, strategic discussions, and social engagement made it an impactful day for all attendees.



## Mapping Tomorrow: A Round Table with Surveying's Future Knights

In this session, Shirley took on the role of a modern-day King Arthur, leading a vibrant round table discussion with an assembly of young and seasoned surveyors. This lively panel explored the future landscape of surveying, delving into emerging technologies, trends, and the challenges that lie ahead. Shirley's insightful prompts guided the discourse, particularly her poignant question to the young surveyors: "What does a meaningful partnership look like?" The consensus was clear—

***“True partnerships transcend business value, fostering sustainable friendships and social benefits.”***

The discussion also highlighted the paramount importance of safety in surveying. The panelists, both young and veteran, echoed a shared sentiment: surveyors must champion safety, advocating for solutions that protect not only themselves but also their peers. This session not only showcased the bright minds envisioning a sustainable future but also reinforced the idea that today's young surveyors are the torchbearers of tomorrow's innovations and ethical standards. It was a meeting of minds that promised a bright, inclusive, and secure future for the surveying profession.



## ESRI Technical Session

The ESRI Technical Session, led by the charismatic Pauline Okoye, Senior Solutions Engineer at ESRI, was a highlight of the Young Surveyors' training workshops. The session was a masterclass in leveraging the Africa GeoPortal for sustainable development. Pauline expertly guided participants through the intricacies of using ESRI's cutting-edge data, mapping tools, and apps to identify optimal sites for high-efficiency wind turbines. ized the role of geospatial technology in advancing renewable energy initiatives across Africa.



## Future of YSN

The FIG Young Surveyors Network (YSN) embarked on an inspiring journey to envision the network's future. This interactive session, brimming with enthusiasm and innovation, explored strategies, initiatives, and collaborations aimed at empowering young surveyors globally. The discussion engaged the entire FIG YSN community, focusing on the vision for the upcoming year, leadership transition, and change management.

The session kicked off with a compelling presentation outlining YSN's current position, setting the stage for productive group discussions. Participants then broke into smaller groups to brainstorm and share ideas, fostering a dynamic exchange of insights across the room. The collaborative atmosphere highlighted the community's commitment to shaping a vibrant and inclusive future.



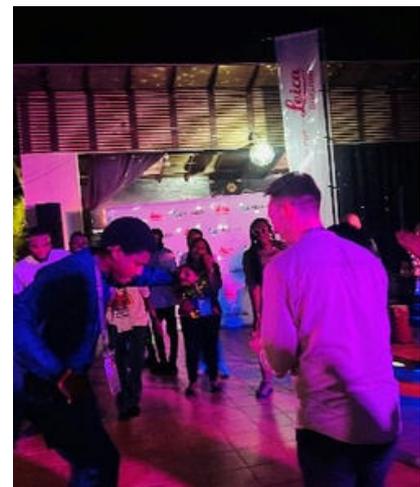
Speakers were nothing short of stellar, presenting their insights with wit and professionalism, making complex topics accessible and engaging. Their guidance and encouragement not only inspired confidence but also underscored the importance of collective effort in driving the YSN forward. This session was a testament to the power of diverse voices coming together to craft a shared vision, ensuring that young surveyors are well-equipped to influence the profession's global discourse.

### **FIG YSN-Leica Social Event**

The FIG YSN-Leica Social Event, hosted at the Gold Coast Restaurant and generously sponsored by Leica, was a night to remember for nearly 100 young surveyors. The event was a vibrant mix of cultural and modern festivities, featuring captivating cultural dances and music from a local Ghanaian group of traditional dancers. The evening was complemented by a lavish buffet and a diverse playlist that spanned house, Naija, pop, and contemporary rock music, ensuring everyone found their rhythm.



The atmosphere was electric from the onset, with young surveyors dancing and networking with seasoned professionals. Leica's sponsorship truly inspired the participants, making the event an unforgettable highlight of the conference. A heartfelt thank you to Leica for their unwavering support and commitment to the surveying community.



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## FIG YSN Charity Event

The FIG Young Surveyors Network (YSN) hosted an unforgettable charity event, generously sponsored by Trimble and Leica, at the scenic La Palm Royal Beach Hotel's beach. The event was a delightful blend of fun and philanthropy, featuring beach volleyball competitions and engaging board games on the hotel's lush lawn. The highlight of the evening was Leica's award ceremony, where the winning team was gifted five exquisite Swiss watches. Proceeds from this spirited gathering went to support the invaluable work of the Volunteer Community Surveyor Program (VCSP) and the FIG Foundation.



***Many thanks to Trimble and Leica for their generous support, making this event a memorable success for all participants and beneficiaries.***



## Special Shout Out to John Brock



A heartfelt shout-out to John Brock for his incredible generosity and support at the Young Surveyors Conference. John sponsored the attendance of two young surveyors, James and Patience from Ghana by covering their registration fees, ensuring they could benefit from the event's enriching experiences. Additionally, he went above and beyond by bringing them special gifts, adding a personal touch to his already remarkable contribution. John's commitment to fostering the next generation of surveyors exemplifies the spirit of mentorship and community within our profession. Thank you, John, for your unwavering support and dedication!



**8th YSC Speakers**

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