RESOURCES
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT PLAN
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CONTENTS

I. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN NDC ACTION 1

II. TOOLS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN NDC PROCESSES YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN NDC DEVELOPMENT 3
   - YOUTH-LED NDC IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS 5
   - YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES 7

III. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN KEY THEMATIC AREAS 10
   - EDUCATION AND TRAINING 10
   - DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT 11
   - EQUALITY, GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS 12
   - EMPLOYMENT 13
   - AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND LAND USE 14
   - RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP 15
   - ENERGY AND TRANSPORT 17
I. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN NDC ACTION

The consultations held with young people and Partnership members identified key priorities, focus areas, challenges, and opportunities for youth engagement in NDC action. This document presents consultation results and highlights best practices emerging from the discussions. It is an initial collation of these resources that will be the basis for a web-based resource to help young people and members exchange good practices and useful resources for youth engagement on an ongoing basis.
According to youth consultations, young people can make a bigger impact in NDC implementation and enhancement if: government or international organizations provide support for them to participate in climate processes, they are invited to participate in formal and informal dialogues with government, and they are engaged in creating climate awareness through campaigns or events. Additionally, members indicated that implementing youth-led climate projects can make an important impact in climate action.

Consultations with youth indicated that the biggest barriers for youth engagement in NDC processes are lack of youth participation in decision-making, limited access to information, and youth discrimination based on age. Members identified two additional challenges they confront when engaging youth in climate processes: lack of funding and absence of legal frameworks and national policies to enable countries to engage with youth.

Young people and members recognize youth engagement in NDC action can be strengthened, specifically by:

- Creating opportunities for youth to participate in climate policy development through NDC design and technical consultations;
- Providing access to funding for youth-led projects and programs and space for youth engagement efforts;
- Providing platforms for youth to engage with decision-makers by building capacity (of youth and of decision-makers) and formalizing opportunities for youth to share their perspectives and proposals for consideration at the highest levels;
- Recognizing the importance of engaging youth across sectors by involving them in technical discussions and identifying opportunities for young people to contribute to sector-specific programs, including strengthening efforts on climate change capacity building for youth through education and training.

In terms of thematic priorities, young people identified education (including training and capacity development), disaster risk management and resilience (including nature-based solutions), and equality and human rights as key focus areas for youth engagement in climate action. Members also highlighted employment and research and innovation (including technology) as a relevant focus area for youth engagement. The below overview also includes best practices and tools in the key thematic areas surfaced as priorities for youth engagement.
II. TOOLS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN NDC PROCESSES

YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN NDC DEVELOPMENT

In Cambodia, youth are part of the NDC update process. All line ministries are guided to highlight youth in their sectoral strategy and respective NDC updates.

In Costa Rica, youth organizations are participating in the NDC enhancement process during the general and sectoral consultation processes. The government has identified youth representatives from civil society as well as other institutions and national structures.

In Colombia, youth consultation has helped determine the best way to engage youth in NDC update processes. Given Colombia’s expansive and diverse territory, the Ministry of Environment has garnered support from the National Youth Network, establishing a direct line of communication between national government and youth groups, including in rural areas.

Pakistan is using its NDC revision process as an opportunity to evaluate climate governance structures and frameworks through a youth engagement lens. They aim to better understand enablers and deterrents for effective youth engagement, not only as targeted beneficiaries but also as collaborators and leaders initiating positive climate action at multiple geographical levels. The Ministry of Climate Change is conducting youth consultations and formulating a youth task force at the national and provincial levels to integrate youth and children in the NDC design and implementation processes.

The We Are Tmrw Global Partnership, supported by the Netherlands, helps youth networks worldwide organize national dialogues, formulate their climate ambitions, and encourage their governments to take more climate action and increase the ambition of countries’ NDCs.
Through the Climate Promise, UNDP is taking steps to help countries take climate action that is more ambitious, more youth-responsive, and youth-driven. There is a growing consensus that a key success factor for raising climate ambition is ensuring an inclusive NDC revision process that brings together government at all levels with youth movements, networks, and organizations, as well as other stakeholders and partners. More than 80 countries have prioritized youth in their Climate Promise support.

UNICEF’s Engaged and heard! provides guidelines on adolescent participation and civic engagement. UNICEF also uses a tool called U-Report for empowering and connecting youth around the world to engage with and speak out on issues that matter to them. Various climate and environmental U-report polls have been conducted to date. UNICEF has developed multiple global reports on climate change’s impacts on children and young people and continues to undertake climate landscape analyses for children (CLAC) reports at the country level, which can help inform inclusion of children and youth in NDC processes.

UNEP supports countries with improving multi-stakeholder consultation mechanisms for NDC implementation, where youth groups are among the targeted stakeholders. For example, resource efficiency, or circularity, made by individual efforts can make a positive impact on climate change. To change people’s behaviors, youth can enhance societal awareness through communication campaigns and participation in stakeholder meetings on NDCs.

Based on evidence from working for more than 30 years on youth-led development, Restless Development’s short piece on Meaningful Youth Engagement Made Simple outlines how to make meaningful youth engagement practical, especially for development practitioners, and highlights common misperceptions.
In Armenia, the government is working with start-ups, NGOs, and universities on climate change policy development, monitoring, and implementation. Collaboration with youth around innovation and providing support for implementation of ideas and projects is considered particularly important, as well as continuity of actions instead of fragmentation.

The Government of South Africa set up “Driving Force for Change” in 2020, a pilot support initiative to provide project preparation development support. It challenges the youth of South Africa to design programs contributing to the country’s development goals (addressing unemployment and tackling the climate crisis) and supports youth as they translate their ideas into bankable proposals. Youth and youth-led organizations can now apply for funding for projects in areas of climate change, waste, and biodiversity, contributing to the NDC and SDGs.

Through its embassies, France is financially supporting local youth-led NGOs that work on climate action across 20 countries in Africa and the Asia-Pacific region, focusing on capacity building, training, advocacy, and awareness raising. For example, the program supports an NGO in Viet Nam that promotes eco-responsible lifestyles through nationwide iChange movements, encouraging companies to use greener products and sustainable practices.

GGGi’s Greenpreneurs program consists of a global competition open to youth aged 18-35, as well as national programs through which GGGi collaborates with national business incubators or universities. Aiming to promote green growth among youth start-ups, the program provides resources and support (e.g., seed capital) needed so youth can take their green growth solution from idea to business plan. It is an initiative developed for youth with youth, illustrating the importance of youth engagement in program design. In 2018, this program resulted in projects on green tech for agroecology, organic fertilizers and pesticides, grassroots waste to energy solutions, and solar dehydrators to fight food waste.
In **Jamaica**, the Climate Change Division works closely with youth and provides support to **youth-led climate awareness activities and action projects**. Through a Youth Consultation Series, Jamaica has collaborated directly with youth to conceptualize and lead events, sharing information on NDC processes and opportunities for involvement in climate action to youth audiences. The Consultation Series also facilitated youth creative expression on NDC and climate change issues through visual and performing arts.

Under UNDP’s NDC Support Programme, **Uganda** issued a **call for proposals for innovative women and youth-led climate projects** to obtain small grants of $8,000 to $10,000. Proposals were asked to be in line with Uganda’s NDC priority sectors and priority was given to projects that contribute to NDC implementation and are led by women or youth.

In **Zimbabwe**, youth NGOs focused on climate change, environmental sustainability, and sustainable development are implementing green projects and supporting the government in developing an NDC communications strategy for information sharing and awareness raising.
In Grenada, students are part of the SDG Council, which reviewed the country’s NDC Partnership Plan as well as other key climate change and sustainable development documents.

In Jamaica, a youth representative sits on the Advisory Board, overseeing climate-related projects, programs, and initiatives, and youth are actively involved in environment and climate change related work. The Jamaican government has also found that providing employment opportunities in fields of work where mitigation and adaptation initiatives are critical are particularly important for youth engagement in climate action.

Kenya organized a youth climate change art and essay competition with 4,000 submissions and showcased the winners as part of an NDC Partnership event in 2018.
In the Marshall Islands, students from all grade levels were the majority during the National Climate Change Dialogue in Ebeye in 2019, showcasing their ideas and solutions, including through art and poetry. A **youth representative position** has been formalized as part of the adaptation working group, embedding a youth perspective in government-led processes.

In Pakistan, the launch of the **Pakistan Citizen Portal** by the Prime Minister’s Office shifted NDC implementation from a government-only effort to a process that allows anyone in the country (especially youth) to reach out with suggestions to tackle climate change and NDC implementation. The **Clean Green Pakistan Index** (CGPI) is a cities competition aiming to strengthen municipal service delivery by local governments. The **Clean Green Champions** (CGC) is an interactive portal developed to record and acknowledge the contributions of all citizens of Pakistan towards the CGPI, including young people.

The Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark and several other countries have **National Youth Councils** that work closely with governments on youth-related projects and programs and provide a platform for dialogue between government and youth, including on climate change. The governments highlight the importance of an **institutional process** to manifest the commitment to inclusive and accountable democratic processes and longstanding working relationships with youth networks, as elaborated in **Meaningful Youth Participation towards 2030 and Beyond**.

In the **Swedish legislative process**, youth organizations are included in both the inquiry and the referral stages. Denmark’s **Youth Climate Council** is an independent youth-led advisory board to the climate minister. It gathers input from young people all over the country and formulates **concrete policy proposals to the minister** to be included in the policy processes. The Danish MFA has also developed a **tool for youth mainstreaming**.
UNESCAP’s Youth Voices in Climate Action aims to share views on how climate change is impacting young people’s lives; showcase grassroots youth initiatives making a positive impact for all; and make decision-makers aware of young people’s need for urgent climate action.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands and Ireland championed the Kwon-Gesh Climate Pledge (“solemn promise”) at the 2019 UN Climate Action Summit, acknowledging that signatories should respect, promote, and consider their respective obligations on youth, as well as intergenerational equity, when taking action to address climate change. Signatories have committed to involving their youth in the implementation of the Paris Agreement and achievement of its goals, including when:

- Putting in place climate adaptation or mitigation measures;
- Communicating or updating nationally determined contributions;
- Submitting or updating national adaptation communications or plans; and
- Communicating long-term greenhouse gas emission development strategies.

**EXAMPLES OF YOUTH REQUESTS SURFACED THROUGH NDC PARTNERSHIP PROCESSES**

- **Argentina** has requested support for awareness raising events, including for the general public, students, media, and private sector on the long-term strategy process, climate change scenarios, impacts, and needs.
- The **Dominican Republic** has included a key performance indicator in their NDC Partnership Plan that tracks the number of youth involved in the climate change policy and processes.
- **Jordan** engages youth in the transition to a low carbon economy, including by requesting support to inform the general student population about climate change mitigation and adaptation action in their Partnership Plan.
- The **Marshall Islands** wants to ensure the integration of climate change curricula at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels and has included this in their Partnership Plan.
- In their NDC Partnership Plan, **Mozambique** aims to increase employment opportunities for young people throughout the agrarian chain and is tracking the number of youth beneficiaries.
- **Namibia** requested support from the Partnership to undertake youth consultations on climate change.
YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN KEY THEMATIC AREAS

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In Antigua and Barbuda, the government works with schools and school administrators on educating and involving youth to meet its NDC targets. The government also works with NGOs and secondary/tertiary level institutions in climate change decision-making processes.

With the support of Sweden, FAO has developed the Youth and United Nations Global Alliance (YUNGA), a consortium of UN agencies and youth organizations such as Scouts and Guides which have a membership of more than 60 million people. YUNGA seeks to empower children and youth to have a greater role in society, raise awareness, and become active agents of change, including through developing formal and informal technical education resources and initiatives on climate smart agriculture such as the challenge badges on climate change and disaster risk reduction.

The Government of Panama developed a Leadership Academy for young people that allows them to sensitize youth to climate change science and policy to encourage and improve their public participation.

The Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre’s Y-Adapt (Youth-Adapt) is an interactive curriculum for youth to learn about climate change and develop adaptation options for their own communities. It culminates in students taking an action that they develop together.

Scholarships for youth to build their knowledge and skills on climate action are available through the Climate Reality Leadership Corps Scholarship, Education for Sustainable Energy Development Scholarship Program, International Climate Protection Fellowship, Earthwatch Girls in Science Fellowship, and, for PhD students, the IPCC Scholarship Program.
Following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN launched the World's Largest Lesson, which includes learning for climate action. For youth in grade 3-12 (8-18 years old), the Climate Generation offers curriculum resources and guides. The Youth X Change Climate Change and Lifestyles Guidebook offers informal education resources.

UN CC:Learn are a series of resource guides for advanced learning on climate change, aiming to facilitate access to existing learning materials. The UNDP Climate Box is a learning toolkit for school children and includes interactive materials with information related to climate change in an interesting, attractive and entertaining way. The Mission1.5 game and campaign encourages young people around the world to learn about climate solutions and take action.

UNESCO launched a guide to support countries in achieving the Paris Agreement goals through Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) and integrating education in NDCs.

WWF's Panda Ambassador Program supports young people in taking environmental action, leading their communities to engage the public and inspire change.

DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre’s “serious games” help young people understand climate and disaster issues, such as early warning and early action.

The GADRRRES Comprehensive School Safety Framework includes Risk Reduction and Resilience Education.

The Global Center on Adaptation has established two programs for university graduates and young professionals: the Young Leaders Program and the 20/20 Adaptation Professionals Program. The Center is also setting up a Youth Adaptation Network.
Locality-specific training modules, such as the "Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management’s Role of Youth & Volunteers in Disaster Risk Management" are valuable in high risk areas.

The International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies’ Road Map to Community Resilience includes youth as key stakeholders in the process.

UNDRR’s Words into Action Guide supports engaging children and youth in Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building.

UNICEF has developed children and youth specific climate vulnerability assessments that can feed into countries’ disaster risk reduction planning.

- Guide for Governments: Actions for children and youth resilience
- Guidance for Risk-informed Programming
- Guidance Note on Risk-informed Education Program for Resilience

Costa Rica promotes integrating youth and children into public policies under the umbrella of its commitment to the rights of children and young people, paving the way for the creation of national policies, such as the Young Person’s Public Policy 2020-2024. Approved in 2020 by Executive Decree and co-developed between youth groups and high-level decision-makers, these legal instruments enable national government institutions to prioritize young people and ensure their involvement is mainstreamed across sectors.

A group of governments signed the Intergovernmental Declaration on Children, Youth and Climate Action based directly on inputs from young people from around the world. It commits signatory governments to accelerate inclusive child and youth-responsive climate policies. The twelve champion governments that have signed include: Chile, Costa Rica, Fiji, Luxembourg, Sweden, Slovenia, Spain, Uruguay, Mexico, Monaco, Nigeria, and Peru.
UN-Habitat’s Advancing Youth Civic Engagement and Human Rights provides information on youth civic engagement and human rights, which can be applied to the NDC processes.

The UN Human Rights Council recognizes that youth participation in public decision-making is a realization of human rights by youth. Youth face discrimination and obstacles, which impede their participation in decision-making processes, and taking a human rights approach can reaffirm the need for youth participation.

The World Health Organization’s Advocating for Change for Adolescents is a practical toolkit for young people to advocate for improved adolescent health and well-being. Developed by and for young people, it is to be used by networks of youth-led and -serving organizations working to bring about positive policy change to improve the health and well-being of adolescents.

UN Women’s Pacific Gender and Climate Change Toolkit is designed to support climate change practitioners in the Pacific Islands region to integrate gender into their programs and projects. It includes several examples of linkages with youth engagement.

EMPLOYMENT

ILO’s Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth includes a dedicated workstream on green jobs for youth. ILO is also supporting various relevant green jobs projects, such as:

- The Green EnterPrize project being implemented in Zimbabwe, focusing on youth and supporting the development of green-oriented enterprises in various areas of relevance to NDC implementation, including renewable energy.

- The Green Jobs project focusing on the youth of Zambia supported business development in sustainable construction.

- Bringing green energy and green jobs to Bangladesh provided technical training and business development support to youth to deploy decentralised energy systems.
SNV implements several projects related to **Opportunities for Youth Employment**, largely focused on sustainable energy and agriculture.

The UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC) through the **Green Jobs Campaign** has been raising awareness of what green jobs are through outreach activities in schools and online communications. Young perspectives provide valuable input in helping shape the green economy, and the UKYCC has been facilitating these voices by delivering workshops to empower young people to campaign for green jobs in their local communities and nationally.

The **World Bank** has developed a **Framework to Guide Youth Employment Interventions**.

**AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND LAND USE**

**Ethiopia**, in collaboration with **UNICEF** and **UNEP**, involved school children in **planting tens of thousands of trees** as part of a national effort.

**FAO** works on ensuring that youth are fully included in programs, the agriculture value chain, rural development and policy decisions, and support for proactive youth initiatives related to agriculture and climate change (see [youth and agriculture](#) and this [compilation of youth initiatives in agriculture](#)). FAO is developing a Youth Action Plan in 2020 to ensure a coordinated response on issues related to youth and children that have been identified by regional and country offices. They are collaborating with partners under the **UN Decade on Ecosystem Degradation** (2021-2030) to use citizen science for rural landscapes and adaptation, involving young people in research and monitoring and evaluation through an app.
In Myanmar, the government is working from different line ministries with civil society organizations to include constituencies, including youth and over 30 different ethnic minorities, in climate action. Considering 70 percent of the population lives in rural areas, Myanmar has tried to identify activities that are especially suitable for youth to create enabling conditions for youth engagement in priority sectors of forestry and energy. Forestry has been an especially engaging sector for youth, with youth supporting project implementation and tree planting activities.

Pakistan’s Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Program (10BTTP) encourages different members of society (especially youth) to plant trees and implement NDCs across the country. The program is an effective way to engage youth in decision-making, raise awareness, and make decisions that are environmentally friendly. The Prime Minister approved the ‘Green Stimulus’ package (GSP) proposed by the Ministry of Climate Change to extend green cover in the country in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. Launched under the 10BTTP umbrella, GSP is an innovative livelihood creation initiative aiming to increase the opportunities of daily wage jobs for youth. Between 2019-20, the 10BTTP has generated at least 65,000 jobs, which will be scaled up to 200,000 by December 2020.

Wetlands International’s Power of Wetlands digital campaign engages young people who are studying, working with, or restoring wetlands and are interested in how wetlands can play a role in climate action.

The Young Professionals for Agricultural Development and Climate Smart Agriculture Youth Network are established networks of youth and young professionals working in the AFOLU sector and on climate-smart agriculture.

RESEARCH, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The African Development Bank’s Jobs for Youth in Africa Strategy (2016-2025) aims to support African countries on scaling up responses to the youth un- and under-employment crisis through practical, high-impact solutions that create opportunities via education and training, transformative jobs, and business environments conducive to entrepreneurial activities. An Entrepreneurship and Innovation Lab has been set up to nurture a new generation of innovators, empowering young African entrepreneurs to secure funding.
Cambodia supports youth entrepreneurship through the National Youth Development Plan, which has established six youth centers in six provinces that are providing training programs to improve social entrepreneurship and skills among youth in rural areas.

Fiji’s Young Entrepreneurship Scheme enables youth to become job creators by providing grant assistance to youth entrepreneurs with innovative and unique business ideas. Fiji has also created a Young Entrepreneurs Council made up of young entrepreneurs.

The GEF Small Grants Program (GEF-SGP) is a resource that gives special consideration to youth and which youth organizations can leverage as civil society organizations (CSOs). It provides grants of up to $50,000 to CSOs and community-based organizations to undertake local environmental projects that support sustainable livelihoods. Some examples include:

- México’s youth-led NDC Youth Consultation Process where youth collaborate with government on dialogues to develop the youth component in NDC implementation.

- Ecuador has collaborative and participatory design methodologies to consult youth for NDC implementation. By co-producing projects, youth can progress their project to completion, while at the same time developing technical skills.

ILO’s Youth Entrepreneurship Facility, implemented in East Africa, trained and supported business development by youth entrepreneurs in bioenergy development, waste management, and ecosystems management.

Through hackathons, LEDS-GP engages youth in Latin America and the Caribbean to contribute to climate solutions in sectors such as transport and energy. Hackathons have resulted in incubation of new ideas, including an app for behavioral change. Thirteen university students participated in the hackathon in Costa Rica ahead of COP25, with the objective to redesign the experience of urban mobility users in a world where the carbon footprint increases every day. Participants contributed from different academic backgrounds such as environmental engineering, psychology, sociology, computing, architecture, and civil engineering.
The Philippines’ Youth Entrepreneurship Act provides entrepreneurship and financial literacy training as mechanisms to facilitate youth entrepreneurship.

UNDP and ILO are exploring a partnership to build strong links between climate and youth employment. For example, UNDP’s NDC Support Program, in collaboration with ILO, is piloting a project to measure social and employment impacts of NDC policies in Zimbabwe and Nigeria. Youth representatives have been actively involved in this process.

ENERGY AND TRANSPORT

In Barbados, a secondary school with 1,100 students implemented a biodiesel project to raise awareness among youth about the use of biodiesel as an environmentally-friendly alternative fuel for diesel vehicles. The school club collected used vegetable oil from homes and handed these over to the Sole Proprietorship, who produced biodiesel and glycerin from the oil and paid the school club for each bottle sold.

Machakos Clean Energy Revolution is a clean energy project implemented by 60 parents and graduates of the Jitegemee Children’s Program in Kenya.

Guides Solar Power and Sustainable Development is a GEF-funded project focused on providing renewable energy to the Girl Guides Association, an organization servicing female youths in the Bahamas.

The group Student Energy is developing a Global Youth Energy Outlook for launch in 2021 in an entirely youth-led research project.

ENDNOTES

1 Are you engaged in your community in the fight against climate change? July 2020; Standing up for climate change at #COP24, November 2018; Youth voices on environmental issues for Aarhus Convention June 2018; Climate change for UN Committee on the Rights of the Child September 2016.

2 Including Unless we act now, An Environment Fit for Children, Are Climate Change Policies Child- Sensitive?
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