

Young People and Climate Change: LET'S FOLLOW THEIR LEAD

As world leaders pledge action on climate change, they can support the role of children as leaders for action.

One in four of the world's children live at risk from the impacts of climate change.



Forced Migration

By 2050, there will be 200 million climate refugees worldwide. Children who become separated from their care givers during times of emergency or migration can be extremely vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking. They are also more likely to be forced into child labor.



Natural & Man-Made Disasters

By 2015, natural and man-made disasters are predicted to affect up to 175 million children each year – a 40% increase from those affected between 1995 and 2005.



Poverty

The impacts of climate change threaten to reverse decades worth of human development gains and poverty reduction and also threaten achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. 9 of the 10 countries most affected by climate change are developing nations.



Food Insecurity

More than one third of all child deaths around the world are due to malnutrition. Malnutrition, often caused by lack of clean water and food shortages because of adverse climate conditions, is especially dangerous for children's long-term health.



Flooding and Droughts

530 million children live in areas prone to flooding, mostly in developing countries in Asia. 160 million children live in areas that are suffering from extreme drought, half of those in Africa.



Sources: Global Climate Risk Index, UNICEF, Save the Children, UNSRSG office on violence against children, World Bank

YOUTH AS AGENTS OF CHANGE

Policymakers have an opportunity to protect children from the harm of climate change, while also empowering them to be agents of change.

Mitigation and Protection



INFANT is a youth-led initiative in Peru which empowers children to find their own solutions to challenges in their communities. They have succeeded in becoming national champions for water safety, the preservation of the environment in Amazonian communities, and for ending violence against children.

www.infant.org.pe

Resilience



The Foundation for Youth Development in Uganda supports the youth of rural communities to take the lead on agricultural challenges, making them more resilient to environmental shocks. These youth implement programs for their communities to conserve the local wildlife, diversify their crops, and access clean water.

www.foundationforyouthdevelopment.blogspot.de

Monitoring the Environment



Sandwatch is a UNESCO educational program for coastal regions under which children and youth collaborate with other community members to monitor their coastal environments and develop sustainable solutions to the impacts of climate change.

www.sandwatch.ca

Catalyzing Change



Young people can be good at catalyzing change in the cities they live in and see what adults aren't seeing anymore. The UNICEF program **Voices of Youth Maps** in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil trained 250 young people as city mappers to identify a range of hazards in their communities.

www.voicesofyouth.org

Health



Globally **Child to Child** supports peer-to-peer education among children and youth on different topics, including issues around health such as hygiene, safe use of water, and the prevention of infectious and water-borne diseases.

www.childtochild.org.uk

Policies



Youth and children from all over the world have just drafted a manifesto with their priorities and demands around climate change. Their active involvement in designing environmental policies will add young leaders' valuable perspectives and far-sighted solutions to the debate.

www.coy11.org

Call to Action for Policymakers

Policymakers now have the opportunity to empower children as leaders in the fight against climate change.