

AFRICAN YOUTH DECLARATION FOR CLIMATE MOBILITY

Developed by African Youth.

Facilitated by the African Union Youth Envoy, YOUNGO, Migration Youth & Children Platform, and Resilient 40 Africa, enabled by the Global Centre for Climate Mobility and UNICEF, and supported by the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

10 November 2022, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt



Introduction

We, the youth of Africa, declare a humanitarian crisis induced by climate change on our continent. While African countries historically contribute less than 4% of global emissions, our most vulnerable communities are facing the brutal impacts of both slow and rapid onset extreme weather events such as heat waves, droughts, floods, storms and landslides, forcing the urban, rural and island communities to move. In response to this emergency, and building on the [East and Horn of Africa Youth Key Messages](#) to the '[Kampala Ministerial Declaration on Migration, Environment & Climate Change](#)', this declaration articulates our collective views on key recommendations, demands and commitments to address climate change and its impact on human mobility (climate mobility).

We cannot stress enough that climate change and human mobility are inextricably linked on our continent. According to a ReliefWeb 2022 report, 36.1 million people have been affected by droughts in the Horn of Africa and famine in Somalia.¹ Similarly, the prolonged droughts in East Africa are causing famine, food insecurity and starvation in North-eastern Uganda and Eastern Kenya. The recent 2022 floods in Nigeria have displaced more than 1.3 million people and killed over 600.² Similar events are occurring in other parts of Africa and without proactive measures to prepare, we will witness increasing pressure on families and young people to move. For example, the World Bank projects that there will be about 19.3 million climate migrants in North Africa by 2050.³

1 ReliefWeb, <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/horn-africa-drought-regional-humanitarian-overview-call-action-revised-24-august-2022>
2 ReliefWeb, <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/fl-2022-000271-nga>
3 World Bank, <https://olc.worldbank.org/system/files/GroundswellPN-MNA.pdf>

Introduction

Given that youth account for about 60% of Africa's population, and climate disasters disproportionately affect children, young people and women, it is imperative that action is taken to address the impacts of climate change and mobility on youth and other vulnerable groups, and build the resilience of those at risk and protect those already on the move in the face of climate change.

Thus, we call upon all parties, governments, the United Nations (UN), the African Union, financial institutions, all decision-makers and other relevant stakeholders to take the following demands and recommendations into utmost consideration, and work with African youth as partners to address the climate change and human mobility nexus, harness the transformative potential of human mobility and deliver on Agenda 2030 in a changing climate.

This declaration is divided into three sections; urgent demands requiring immediate response, our wider demands divided thematically, and our commitments as African youth.

Urgent Demands & Recommendations

The following are our priority demands and recommendations to all parties, the UN, the African Union and other relevant stakeholders to be implemented by 2024:

- We demand that climate mobility is **reflected in decisions made at COP27, COP28 and beyond - and that migration is recognized as an adaptation strategy and coping mechanism for youth in climate policies**, finance and governance structures going forward.
- We strongly urge decision-makers, the UN, the African Union and other stakeholders to **meaningfully include African youth in climate change and mobility-related decision-making and policy implementation**.
- We demand that a **well-coordinated and accessible African Youth Climate Fund** is established and operational at local, national and regional levels to support African youth to address the climate crisis and human mobility nexus.
- We demand all Parties together with the UN **establish and facilitate National Youth Climate Envoys and Regional Youth Advisory Groups on Climate Mobility** with one of their key roles being to spearhead the protection of vulnerable communities and those on the move due to the climate crisis.
- We urge all Parties to **collaborate through cross-border and city-to-city partnerships** to enable **safe, dignified and transformative** human mobility, planned relocation, and build **social cohesion** and **peace** in the face of climate change, through **child-sensitive, gender transformative** and **human rights-based approaches**.

Urgent Demands & Recommendations

- We demand that Parties, civil society organisations (CSOs), and relevant partners carry out **detailed assessments for hazard hotspots in local communities and invest in early-warning and preparedness systems** with robust infrastructures to forecast extreme weather events and provide timely and accurate information, such as hazard maps, evacuation centres, and safety nets to reduce displacement of people, loss and damage.
- We demand that Parties **integrate climate education in school curricula and build the capacity** of youth, women, girls, indigenous populations, people with disabilities, migrants, refugees and IDPs through skills development, education, coaching and engagement in policy development and implementation processes on climate change and the human mobility nexus.
- We call for the urgent establishment and operationalisation of the **loss and damage finance facility by COP28**.
- We demand that high income countries (Global North) urgently deliver the **\$100B annual climate finance pledge as grants**, not loans, and with additional financing to address loss and damage.
- We call for the establishment of **participatory monitoring, evaluation, accountability and review systems**, including an independent accountability body that includes CSOs to ensure transparency in the implementation of climate and human mobility nexus initiatives.

Build the Resilience & Capacity of Youth & Communities

- We urge all governments and stakeholders to invest in climate education for children and youth at all levels - in the curriculum of elementary, primary, secondary and tertiary education. Content should be contextualised to local climate issues and climate mobility in different countries and regions.
- We ask parties to facilitate knowledge exchange and capacity building for youth, particularly youth on the move, women and girls and those at risk or affected by climate-induced mobility, on Disaster Risk, Reduction and Management (DRRM), climate change and mobility. This means supporting fellowship programs, boot camps, hackathons, innovation challenges and other opportunities to empower youth and build their knowledge and skills.
- We urge all parties to invest in green skills, green jobs and innovation opportunities for youth affected by climate mobility. This is essential to tackle the drivers of climate-induced migration, such as poverty, famine, and gender inequality, and equip youth on the move with the skills to support the transition to a low carbon economy.
- We demand all government institutions and bodies working in disaster-prone areas integrate Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) in all existing and new programmes and projects, with a focus on inclusion of the most vulnerable at the local level, by 2024.
- We demand all governments appoint National Youth Climate Envoys, building on and consolidating the mandate of the UN Secretary General's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change, with one of their key roles being to spearhead the protection of communities at risk of climate-related disasters and those on the move.
- We call upon Parties and relevant stakeholders to partner with youth and local communities. Multi-stakeholder platforms can ensure meaningful, informed and effective participation and leadership of climate migrants, refugees, IDPs and host communities, taking into account age, gender, ethnicity and other diversity considerations.

Policy-making, Negotiations & Implementation

- We strongly urge Parties, decision-makers, the UN and African Union to meaningfully include African youth in climate change and mobility-related negotiations, decision-making and policy implementation.
- We call for human mobility to be integrated in global, regional, national and local climate change and environmental disaster risk reduction policy frameworks and strategies, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).
- We demand that the design, implementation and evaluation of policies, programmes and strategies on climate mobility, are child and youth-centred, gender transformative and human rights-based. Efforts to address the disproportionate and heightened vulnerabilities that children, youth, women and girls face, must be prioritised.
- We demand that climate mobility is reflected in decisions made at COP27, COP28 and beyond - and that migration is recognized as an adaptation strategy and coping mechanism for youth in climate policies, finance and governance structures going forward.
- We urge Parties to establish and strengthen local, national, regional and global policies, strategies and frameworks related to climate mobility, as well as strong mechanisms to implement, monitor and evaluate them by 2024.
- We urge all Parties to take collaborative action to build cross-border and city to city partnerships to enable transformative human mobility, planned relocation, peace-building programmes, and portable services to reach communities and youth on the move.

Research & Evidence

- We urge leaders, researchers and decision-makers to address the existing evidence gaps on children and youth affected by climate mobility. This means investing in substantive data collection - including age and gender disaggregation - and combining scientific and indigenous knowledge to better understand vulnerability and shape community solutions.
- We demand that Parties carry out detailed assessments for hazard hotspots in local communities and invest in early-warning and preparedness systems with robust infrastructures to forecast extreme weather events and provide timely and accurate information, such as hazard maps, evacuation centres, and safety nets to local communities.
- We urge Parties to track and make migration flows and climate mobility databases accessible to the relevant stakeholders (including researchers, students and development partners), and to decolonise climate change knowledge by simplifying and translating all technical information and climate change and mobility policies into African dialects to foster greater public understanding.
- We urge all policymakers to better use available data and evidence to inform policies and responses on climate mobility across the continent.

Finance for Adaptation and Loss & Damage

- We demand all Parties and stakeholders set up an African Youth Climate Fund at the continental, regional, national, local and grassroots levels, to support youth climate action, facilitate capacity building, technology development, research and innovation to address climate mobility.
- We call for the urgent establishment of the Loss and Damage Finance Facility to be finalised and operational by COP28.
- We urge all Parties to eliminate bureaucratic processes, discrimination and other barriers to the access of climate funds and implore stakeholders to ensure they are distributed equitably.
- We call for the establishment of participatory monitoring, evaluation, accountability and review systems, including an independent accountability body to ensure transparency in the distribution and use of climate finance for climate mobility initiatives.

To deliver on the demands above, we call for the establishment of strong partnerships at local, national, regional and global levels, that prioritise African youth and those on the move in the context of climate change. This means integrating climate mobility and including youth on the move in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the AU Agenda 2063, the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM), and the work of the Task Force on Displacement (TFD).

Our Commitments

As African youth, we recognise the role we have to play in responding to the climate crisis, protecting vulnerable communities, children and youth and advocating for transformative climate mobility. We are committed to:

- Support climate action and empowerment of youth through climate education, campaigns, activism, social movements, innovation and resilience projects at the global, regional, national and local levels.
- Address the knowledge gap through capacity building on policy and advocacy, research, data collection and telling our stories on the climate change and human mobility nexus in Africa – including through the YOUNGO Climate Change and Migration Working Group and Africa Climate Mobility Initiative Youth Forum.
- Continue to hold decision-makers and high-income nations accountable to keeping temperature rise below 1.5°C, delivering ambitious adaptation initiatives and addressing loss and damage.
- Stand in solidarity with every vulnerable person on the African continent and in the Global South in general, particularly children, girls, women, indigenous people, the disabled and youth at risk of displacement or on the move due to climate impacts.
- Provide avenues for collaboration, round tables and intergenerational dialogues with Parties and relevant stakeholders to facilitate meaningful participation of affected populations (e.g. youth, children and women on the move and marginalised communities) in decision-making processes on mobility, relocation, climate action, climate policy, implementation and evaluation at the local, national, regional and global levels.

Acknowledgements

This declaration is the product of a collective effort and consultation with youth across the continent. Key contributors include Rose Kobusinge - Uganda, Krystel Sil Sikana - Cameroon, Lukmon Akintola - Nigeria, Euphemia Uwandu - Nigeria, Percy Darlyn Reynolds - Ghana, and Dr. Rufaro Mushonga - Zimbabwe.

The African Youth Declaration for Climate Mobility was initiated under the auspice of the Africa Climate Mobility Initiative's Youth Forum. The Youth Forum is organized by the African Union Youth Envoy, UNICEF, YOUNGO, the Migration Youth and Children's Platform, and the Resilient40 Africa, enabled by the Global Centre for Climate Mobility, and supported by the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

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