

Presenting Youth Manifesto on Climate Adaptation

OUR FUTURE, OUR VOICE

The impact of climate change across various geographies and groups will rise exponentially in the future, and the current youth demography will be most affected as they inherit this reality. Despite being excluded from the decision-making processes, young people globally have started fighting back by leading their communities towards climate solutions. This manifesto reflects our call for inclusive, localised approaches to build global climate resilience, and prescribes the necessary changes we as young people would like to see enacted now to ensure that we have a more secure and resilient future.

In the biggest climate crisis, we have the following demands:

YOUTH AS DECISION - MAKERS

Young people and youth organisations should be given opportunities and resources for partaking local-level initiatives. The youth should be mainstreamed into the decision-making process at all levels of governance, and links should be created between the youth and institutionalised community support systems. They should be considered active agents of change who can negotiate directly with decision-makers to share their knowledge, experiences and ideas about sustainable community-level solutions.

COLLABORATIVE MULTI-STAKEHOLDER APPROACH

We emphasise the need for multi-stakeholder partnerships and collaborations at the community, regional, national and global levels. In this effort, it is imperative to create a favourable environment wherein communities, public institutions, academia, and the private sector can effectively collaborate. It is equally important to invest and build neighbourhood-level capacities for climate adaptation. Vulnerable groups and their concerns must be put at the centre of interventions at all levels of climate policy.

MAINSTREAMING CLIMATE ADAPTATION IN EDUCATION

We demand that climate adaptation strategies be imbibed in the “educational conscience” of schools and higher education institutions. Climate adaptation must be incorporated as a cross-disciplinary subject within the educational curricula. Awareness and sensitisation campaigns, training programs and community-based research should be made visible and accessible for students. These measures can foster co-creation of locally-led resilient solutions between students and their local communities.

INTERSECTIONAL AND ACCESSIBLE RESEARCH

Climate adaptation research should be conducted through an intersectional lens of caste, class, gender, power and inequality. Synergy between research on climate adaptation and that on post-COVID-19 recovery needs to be fostered. Finally, the research work by scientists and scholars from diverse disciplines should be shared with local communities in an easily understandable way to enable community-level action.

ACTIVATE THE FAMILY AS A CLIMATE CHANGE-MAKER

Families should be activated as equal stakeholders in contributing to climate adaptation policies. Families need to be sensitised in carrying out climate adaptation initiatives in their local languages. Household-level climate-resilience activities must be highlighted by relevant stakeholders.

INCLUDING THE EXCLUDED FOR RESILIENT SOLUTIONS

Equitable strategies should be integrated into development programmes concerning climate issues. Effective community management should be ensured by providing platforms for vulnerable and indigenous communities and bringing their local knowledge, existing practices, concerns and ideas to the forefront. We desire that climate policies and practices be discussed and disseminated through oral communication in local and regional languages. Local knowledge and cultures of marginalised and indigenous groups must set the direction for exploring resilient solutions for climate adaptation. The knowledge, principles and values that emerge during such processes must be democratised, and the respective communities must be given due credit for the same.

