

Youth4Climate: Sparking Solutions

2023 EVENT REPORT



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The Importance of Youth Engagement in Climate Action

- With over **1.8 billion** young people worldwide, youth are critical stakeholders in climate action. However, they often face underrepresentation in decision-making processes due to inadequate technical, political, and financial support.
- Discrimination based on age, gender, experience, and capabilities, along with limited access to information, further hinder meaningful youth engagement and their influence on climate action and development processes. These barriers persist, impeding effective youth participation and impact.
- Young people have the right to participate in public affairs, including on climate, environmental and development issues. Their knowledge, energy and perseverance have spurred a global movement demanding bold climate measures from their leaders, while also leading initiatives in their countries and communities.



- The Nature-Climate crisis, compounded by the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing conflicts and instability, has worsened inequalities and disproportionately impacted young people and their organizations. Despite these challenges, youth continue to make exceptional efforts in responding to this crisis. It is essential for all stakeholders to support youth capacity development, youth-led climate initiatives, and create enabling environments for youth empowerment.



- As articulated in UNDP Strategic Plan 2022-2025, UNDP is committed to promoting the rights of *future generations* and amplifying young people's voices in decisions on climate action and the future of their communities through capacity development, youth political participation and support to young innovators.
- Building on recommendations from the 2021 Youth4Climate Summit and Manifesto, the Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security is committed to supporting and boosting youth-led and youth-inclusive climate action on the ground.
- Joining forces through the Youth4Climate initiative, UNDP and the Government of Italy aim to foster an inclusive, safe and enabling environment for youth to lead and partner with other stakeholders on climate action. Youth4Climate is guided by strategic partners including the United Nations Secretary General's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change (YAG), UNFCCC, and its Official Children and Youth Constituency, YOUNGO.
- It is urgent to act now for youth, and more importantly, with youth in the driving seat. Youth empowerment should be promoted both as a means and an end.

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Youth4Climate has grown significantly and is ready for global expansion with new countries, donors, and partners. Our journey paves the way for enhanced collaboration. Italy is fully committed to boosting meaningful youth engagement and fostering youth-led solutions to address the climate crisis!

Gilberto Pichetto Fratin -

Italian Minister of Environment and Energy Security

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Youth4Climate shines a light on the climate action that is taking place all across the globe, often led by young people. We want to give these solutions the space to grow and to flourish.

Achim Steiner -
UNDP Administrator

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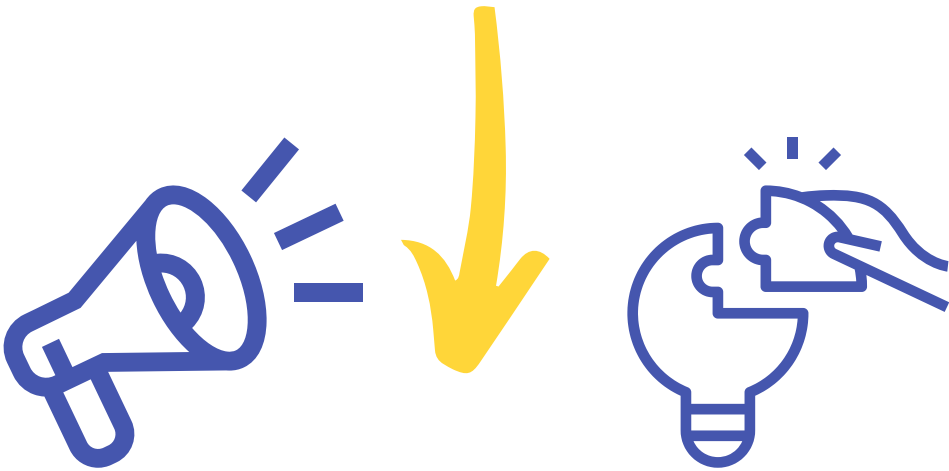
Introducing Youth4Climate



Youth4Climate flagship events provide a space for young climate innovators to connect across regions and learn with partners and from each other's experiences on the ground.



The Youth4Climate Engagement Platform is a go-to online space dedicated to youth and climate, offering a discussion space, innovative and co-shaped capacity building/training programs, webinars, and networking opportunities. The platform already hosts more than 7000 members consisting of young people from all parts of the world.

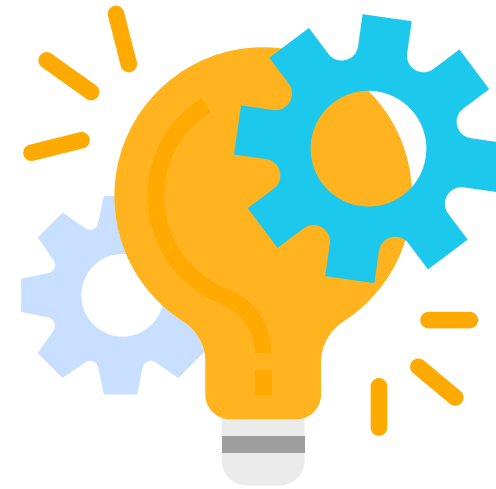


The Youth4Climate Call for Solutions identifies and funds youth-led climate actions with potential for impact. In its first round in 2023, Youth4Climate is funding projects in four areas: Climate Education; Energy; Food and Agriculture; and Urban Sustainability.

Youth4Climate Call For Solutions 2023



4 Thematic Areas



**1,100+ Project
Proposals
Received**



From 120+ Countries



**+90 Hours of
1-to-1 Support
Provided**



100 Projects Shortlisted

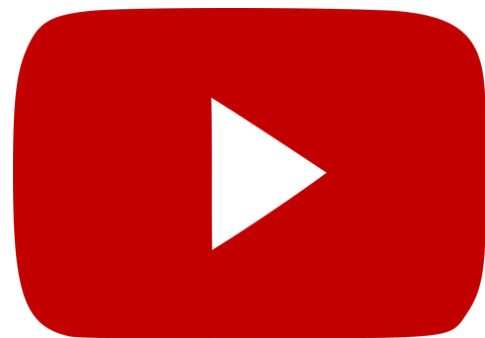
Youth4Climate On Socials (Oct-Nov 2023)



- > 155k impressions
- > 2500 engagements / 86% engagement rate
- 1553 new followers / 3318 followers



- > 22.5k impressions
- > 900 engagements
- 1278 new followers
- 30.8k #Youth4Climate posts



1285 views of the Y4C live-streamings



230 new Y4C platform users

Youth4Climate: Sparking Solutions Flagship Event

October 17-19, 2023

- **Showcase Youth-Led Solutions:** The event aimed to showcase and promote 100 innovative climate solutions led by youth from 63 different countries, selected from over 1,100 project proposals submitted in response to the Youth4Climate Call for Solutions. In this way, the event highlighted the importance of youth-led initiatives in addressing climate challenges.



- **Foster Collaboration and Learning:** The event sought to create a platform for cross-generational learning and collaboration, where young innovators could engage with thematic experts, learn from each other, and receive feedback on their solutions. This objective emphasizes the role of knowledge sharing and mentorship in nurturing innovation in climate action.

- **Disseminate Knowledge and Resources:** The event intended to facilitate the sharing of valuable resources and tools from partner organizations such as the Centre for Public Impact, UNITAR, UNICEF, and more. The event underscored the importance of equipping youth with the necessary tools and knowledge to drive effective climate action.



- **Engage with Key Stakeholders:** Young participants had the opportunity to directly engage with government and UN officials and private sector leaders. The event highlighted the significance of involving key decision-makers in climate action discussions and ensuring that youth voices on critical issues like climate justice and climate finance are heard at the highest levels.



Youth4Climate Solutions

Youth-led solutions were at the heart of the Youth4Climate: Sparking Solutions event that brought together **100 youth-led solutions** from **63 countries** shortlisted from among **1,100+ project proposals** in the Youth4Climate Call for Solutions.

During the first day of the event finalists in each thematic area of the Call for Solutions (**Climate Education, Energy, Food and Agriculture, and Urban Sustainability**) had a chance to pitch their projects to selection panels and fellow participants.

The pitching sessions were incredibly dynamic, conveying the wealth of ideas of the finalists. The sessions were also marked by a remarkable sense of unity among participants: despite their different backgrounds and cultures there was a clear spirit of collaboration as finalists were eager to learn about each other's projects and possible ways to work together in order to reach their common goal of addressing the climate crisis.



Climate Education Panelists



Hemavathi S Shekhar

Focal Point, YOUNGO



Angelica Shamerina

GEF Small Grants Programme, UNDP



Emanuela Vignola

Senior Expert, MASE



Alexandra Severino

Online learning and education unit, Division for peace, UNITAR

*MASE: Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security



“

At GEF we read a lot of grant applications, yet the quality of the pitches from young people in the climate education track deeply impressed me.

Angelica Shamerina -
Program Advisor for Climate Change and
Regional Focal Point (Latin America and Caribbean),
GEF Small Grants Programme

”



Snapshot: Climate Education Awarded Projects



12 Projects from 11 Countries

Climate Action and Advocacy

Innovative & Inclusive Capacity Building

Green Jobs

- Curriculum Enhancement
- Services and Resources to Counter Climate Anxiety
- School on Indigenous Youth Rights and Policies

- Educational Workshops and Activities
- Information Products and Podcasts
- Gamification and Specialized Training for Indigenous Communities

- Promoting green jobs among students

Solutions

Urban Sustainability Panelists



Elizabeth Gulugulu

Youth4Climate writer,
former YOUNGO focal point



James Vener

Climate and Cities
Technical Specialist, UNDP



Roberta Ianna

Senior Adviser, MASE



Beatriz Cano Buchholz

Program Manager, Europe,
Centre for Public Impact

*MASE: Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security

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Sparkling Solutions showcased the unwavering dedication of young changemakers in enhancing the safety, resilience, and sustainability of their communities. Presenting a wide array of projects, from repurposing solid waste to enhancing healthcare accessibility, these solutions vividly exemplified the passionate, inventive, and creative methods employed by youth in addressing the challenges posed by the climate crisis.

Persis Ramirez -

Water Professional, Youth Water and Climate Advocate,
Former IWA-Grundfos Youth Action for SDG6 Fellow

”



Snapshot: Urban Sustainability Awarded Projects



12 Projects from 12 Countries

Waste Management

Green Spaces & Composting

Resilience & Disaster risk awareness

- Plastic Waste Management
- Biodegradable Packaging
- Recycling and Reuse of Electronic Materials
- Waste-free Production Systems

- Reforestation
- Training in Compost Production

- Disaster Risk Awareness and Preparedness
- Urban Climate Health Resilience

Solutions

Food & Agriculture Panelists



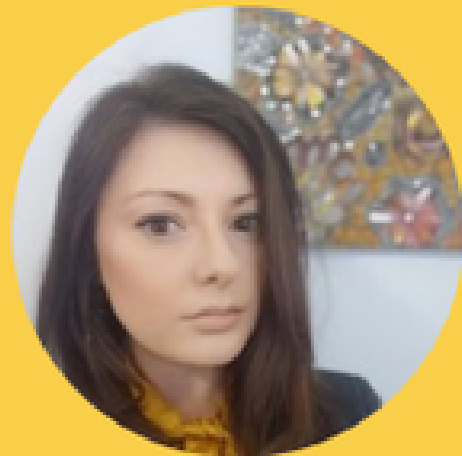
Reem Al Saffar

Co-Founder and Executive
Director of MENA Youth Network



Pascale Bonzom

Food and Agriculture
Commodity Systems, UNDP



Roberta Ronzitti

Director for International
Environmental Cooperation, MASE



Gianpiero Menza

Alliance Bioversity
International-CIAT

*MASE: Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security



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At the CGIAR Accelerate for Impact Platform, we believe in empowering young talented entrepreneurs developing innovative solutions for climate action that could transform food systems. We take pride in our collaboration with UNDP Rome for the Youth4Climate Initiative, as it represents a unique space working to create and nurture a vibrant ecosystem for future youth leaders in climate action through the exchange of knowledge, opportunities, experiences, and resources.

Gianpiero Menza -

Senior Manager, Partnerships & Innovative Finance at the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT of CGIAR

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Snapshot: Urban Sustainability Awarded Projects



13 Projects from 12 Countries

Youth and Sustainable Agriculture

Agri-Tech Innovation

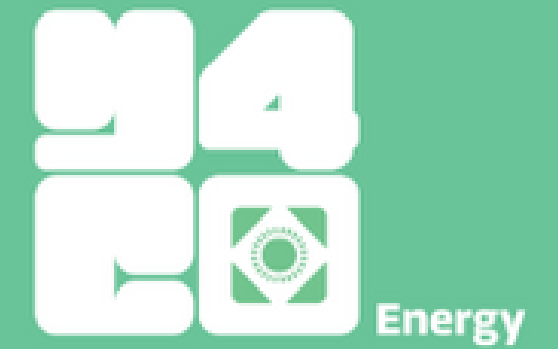
Innovation for Food Security

- Arboriculture
- Agroecology
- Regenerative Agriculture

- Technology and Organic Farming Practices to Increase Production
- Greenhouses with Drip Irrigation Systems
- Identifying Crop Pests and Diseases with Solar-Powered Devices

- Homestead Vegetable Garden & Improved Cooking Stove
- Improving the Resilience of Healthcare Infrastructure in Cities and Towns
- Floating Agriculture

Energy Panelists



Akil Callender

SDG7 Youth Specialist at
Sustainable Energy for All



Riad Meddeb

Director, Sustainable Energy
Hub, UNDP



Alessandro Negrin

Senior Adviser, MASE



Elijah Dietrich

Guided Projects Manager
at Student Energy

*MASE: Italian Ministry of Environment and Energy Security



“

These sessions have been more than just platforms for idea exchange; they have served as inspiration of hope for a more sustainable energy future.

Axell Sutton -

Promoting intergenerational cooperation for the energy transition and climate change mitigation in Latin America through e-learning and 4.0 technologies

”



Snapshot: Energy Awarded Projects



13 Projects from 13 Countries

Clean Energy production and Storage

Access to Clean Energy

Clean Cooking

- Reusable Batteries
- Conversion of Organic Waste into Biogas and Biofertiliser
- Converting Poultry Waste into Biogas and Biofertiliser
- Waste-free Production System

- Solar Energy in Schools and Off-Grid Community Centres
- Energy Efficiency Rating System

- “Pay as You Go” Clean Cooking
- Improving the Resilience of Healthcare Infrastructure in Cities and Towns
- Environmentally Friendly Coal from Agricultural Waste

Solutions



Taking youth-led climate action further through intergenerational collaboration

The solutions presented at the Youth4Climate: Sparking Solutions event showed the vast importance and impact that youth-led solutions play in the fight against climate change. Yet, one of the **key challenges** highlighted by the finalists in all thematic areas was the **lack of funding opportunities for youth-led projects**.

In addition, many of the key recommendations from the judges centred on **the importance of partnerships and collaboration** in order to scale solutions and enhance their effectiveness. Recognizing the importance of partnerships and financing to realize the potential of youth-led action, the event featured several sessions focused on partnerships and private sector engagement.



Private Sector Engagement

Private Sector engagement with young climate leaders is crucial in addressing the pressing environmental challenges of our time. Young climate advocates can provide a new lens to existing issues pairing creative approaches and an inherent understanding of the latest technologies with an unwavering commitment to urgent climate action. The private sector, with its vast resources and influence, can provide the necessary support many youth led projects need and harness their unique expertise to implement innovative solutions.

The Private Sector Engagement session, organized in collaboration with the World Bank Group's Multi-Donor Trust Fund Connect4Climate (C4C), invited private sector partners for a networking-style interaction.

During the 2-hour session, representatives from **Acciona, Armani, AWorld, AXA Climate, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti (CDP), Coldiretti, Earthna, EIT Climate-KIC, Enel Foundation, FS Group, Generali, Goodwall, Iveco, Lavazza, Microlumbia Impact Fund, Startups without Borders, and UNIDO**, had the chance to briefly introduce their organizations and sustainability practices, and to network and engage in a Q&A with young leaders in attendance. During this exchange, several key points were highlighted, emphasizing the critical role of the private sector in championing sustainability practices, fostering diversity, and empowering young people. A report was shared with the group of private sector organizations in attendance, synthesizing the outcomes of the conversation and young people's expectations regarding private sector engagement in driving and facilitating climate action.

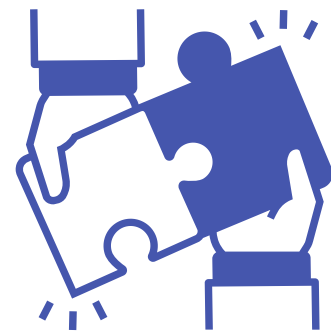


Private Sector Engagement: Key Insights



Support Diversity

Promote diversity as a driving force behind innovation and economic growth.



Strengthen Collaboration Across Sectors

- Encourage collaboration between the private sector, academia, civil society, and young people to address global challenges.
- Raise awareness and enhance education and empowerment opportunities for youth.



Responsibility in Consumer Choices

Understand that the new generation, as the future consumers, plays a pivotal role in shaping the market.



Engage Private Sector and Youth in Innovation

- Recognize that true innovation requires active engagement of both the private sector and the youth.
- Harness the energy and fresh perspectives of the younger generation to drive innovation and sustainability.



Private Sector Engagement: Key Insights



Empower Young Leaders with Access to Funds and Mentorship

- Democratize access to funding, with a particular emphasis on micro-funding, to ensure that young people from diverse backgrounds have equal opportunities.
- Invest in mentorship programs to nurture and transform innovative ideas into tangible realities.



Empower Indigenous Communities in Food Production

- Prioritize the protection and empowerment of indigenous peoples in local food production.
- Ensure that food production is not used as a tool of colonialism, respecting, and preserving indigenous cultures.



Empower Youth Through Access and Training

- Provide young people with access to information, training, and institutional support to make them more effective in their endeavors.
- Foster a nurturing environment for young leaders to thrive and drive positive change.

Supporting Youth-Led Action through Mentorship

Youth4Capacity, a sister initiative of Youth4Climate, is implemented by the UNFCCC with the support of the Italian Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security. At the Youth4Climate: Sparking Solutions event, Youth4Capacity delivered an insightful presentation highlighting a diverse array of capacity development and learning opportunities specifically tailored for young individuals engaged in Climate Action.



During the session, Youth4Climate and Youth4Capacity announced their joint intention to launch a mentorship program that will explore and employ peer-to-peer learning models that enhance community-building by strengthening the capacities of youth to be leaders in their communities. This initiative reflects a concerted effort to empower the next generation with the knowledge and expertise necessary to contribute effectively to climate action.

Takeaways from Youth4Climate: Sparking Solutions

In addition to focusing on solutions and opportunities for intergenerational collaboration, the event opened up spaces for young people and partners to discuss key ideas around the policy dimensions and future horizons of climate action:

- A high-level plenary session organized in collaboration with the COP28 Youth Climate Champion's team allowing for interaction between young participants and high-level guests on young people's priorities ahead of COP28.
- Youth-led discussion groups on the different dimensions of climate justice.
- A session on the critical role of youth engagement in National Determined Contributions (NDCs) processes and UNDP's efforts to this end.
- An interactive workshop led by UNICEF on applying foresight to understanding climate challenges.

Read on for key takeaways from these sessions.



Insights from the High-Level Plenary



Urgent Climate Warning

Heading towards a 2.8-degree temperature rise, leading to a dangerous and unstable world



Call for Action and Justice

Credibility, cooperation, and climate justice are essential for addressing the crisis



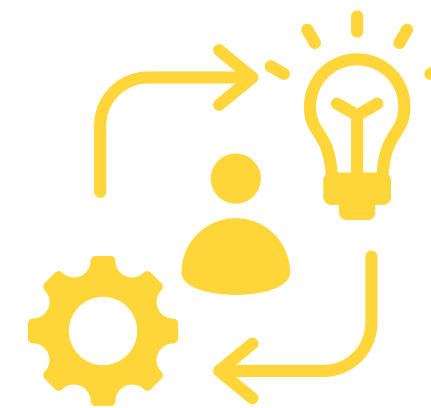
Youth as Climate Champions

Youth, in their diversity, are on the front lines and key to achieving a sustainable future



Immediate Action Required

Every indicator moving in the wrong direction, 1 billion children at extreme risk; decisive action is imperative



Role of Initiatives and Empowerment

Youth4Climate and similar initiatives serve as vital platforms for partnerships, funding, and an inclusive transition



“

I would like to commend all of you for your unwavering commitment towards climate action. Youth in all their diversity are at the front line of the climate crisis and our main reason to believe in and act for a more sustainable future

Amina Mohamed -
Deputy Secretary General

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“

Youth participation in the climate movement should be credited with much of the momentum we see on the issue today

Simon Stiell -
UNFCCC Executive Secretary

”



Insights from the Climate Justice Session

Youth took part in an open dialogue among participants that reflected on the different meanings of climate justice, from the perspective of indigenous peoples, gender, youth activism, conflict-affected youth, transition to the green economy, and more.

The session focused on how demands for climate justice can be conveyed as policy priorities to the decision makers and how we define a meaningful youth engagement in this process.



Insights from the Climate Justice Session



Achieving climate justice through existing governance mechanisms and new ones, like citizen's assemblies, is crucial for youth engagement



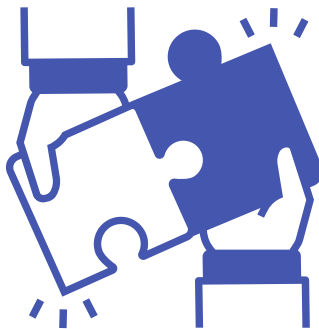
Access to information is key for climate justice and youth engagement, with linguistic barriers and government communication issues posing challenges



Self-organizing has been an effective strategy for advocating and achieving climate justice demands



The importance of funding climate projects, especially considering only 2% of current investments in Africa



Need for collaboration between the global south and global north



Climate change is happening everywhere, but not all communities have the ability to understand this phenomenon

Insights from the NDC session

The participation of young people in climate governance at national level, particularly through drafting and implementation of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement, became one of the key workstreams for the UNDP Climate Promise in recent years.

The objective of the session was to present UNDP's new "Youth-responsive NDC checklist for policymakers" and engage young climate leaders in a discussion about the critical role of youth engagement in NDC processes, from design to implementation and monitoring & evaluation.



Insights from the NDC Checklist session



The "On Equal Terms" Checklist was created to systematize best practices for youth engagement in NDC processes



The checklist serves as a step-by-step guide for governments and practitioners to involve young people throughout the NDC design and implementation



Insights from 335 young people from 78 countries highlight a concerning disconnection between their work and the NDC process



Adaptation, loss and damage, and agriculture were areas of particular interest for youth engagement



Many attendees believe that their countries would benefit from rewriting their NDCs

Insights from UNICEF's Youth Foresight Session

The UNICEF Innocenti - Global Office of Research and Foresight orchestrated a compelling foresight workshop dedicated to exploring the uncertainties of the future, particularly in the wake of the escalating climate crisis. This event wasn't merely a study of the challenges ahead but a deliberate effort to arm the youth with the knowledge and tools essential for them to proactively engage in addressing this global issue.

Through a combination of expert insights, interactive discussions, and innovative activities applying 3 Horizons foresight methodology, participants were able to discuss the future they envision, reimagine the future through their solutions, and articulate the future they prefer.



Insights from UNICEF's Youth Foresight Session



The climate crisis is not a distant future but an urgent matter of today. Despite this, there is a widespread lack of eco literacy across all levels of learning



Traditional governance and policymaking approaches, alongside unchecked capitalism and the lure of short-term gains, hinder young people's sustainable future



Young People want to harness the interplay between traditional practices and modernity, emphasizing the value of convergence in innovation



In addition to the existing innovation, young people want to carry forward the native knowledge and community engagement to their future



The importance of investing in and building agency among young people, through mechanisms such as youth fund, together with UNDP and its partners

Insights from UNICEF's Youth Foresight Session



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There is a clear demand for platforms that support change, that inspire fresh ideas, rethink what's possible, foster dialogue between diverse groups, and offer a feeling of hope and optimism. Y4C does exactly that.

Fisayo Oyewale
UNICEF Youth Foresight Fellow

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In Closing

The final day of the event witnessed the Youth4Climate Sparking Solutions award ceremony, which was a momentous occasion, emphasizing the significance of youth engagement in addressing climate change. The Youth4Climate: Sparking Solutions Award Ceremony began with a warm and encouraging speech from the Minister of Environment Gilberto Pichetto Fratin, who stressed the importance of spreading the experiences gained at the event within their communities and countries. UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner expressed sincere appreciation for Italy's partnership and pledged to match the resources allocated by Italy in support of youth-led solutions under the Youth4Climate initiative. Antonio Tajani, Italy's Vice-Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs, highlighted the essential role of young people in addressing climate change. He emphasized that supporting young people was not just a token gesture but a crucial step in paving the way for a better future.



Awarded Solutions



The Award Ceremony announced the allocation of financial awards of up to USD 20,000 each to 50 projects across 40 countries and 4 thematics.



Conclusion and What's Next



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What's Next? The Next Call for Solutions


The Youth4Climate: Sparking Solutions event has truly underscored the pivotal role of youth-led solutions in the ongoing battle against climate change. It was a unique opportunity to witness the innovation, dedication, and vision that young individuals from around the world bring to the forefront of climate action. As we reflect on the incredible ideas and projects presented at the event, we are eagerly looking forward to following the implementation of the awarded projects. These projects represent tangible steps towards a more sustainable and climate-resilient future driven by a new generation of climate leaders.



Moving forward, the UNDP Rome Center aims to support all the awardees through a mentorship and capacity building program to ensure the success and sustainability of the youth-led projects. We are also in the process of preparing the second Youth4Climate Call for Solutions which will be launched in the upcoming months. We highly anticipate the positive impact these and future projects will have on our environment, communities, and societies at large.

List of Resources from the Event

 [Youth4Climate Sparking Solutions Photo Album](#)

 [Youth4Climate Knowledge and Engagement Platform](#) - Register today to connect with 7,000+ young climate leaders and partners and receive the monthly Y4C newsletter!


 [Livestream recordings](#) - Catch up on four live-streamed sessions from the event, including the Award Ceremony!

 [Illustrations from the sessions](#) - with thanks to graphic recorder Alessandra Zaffiro!


Session Resources:

 [UNDP Equator initiative's video on Climate Justice](#)

 [UNFCCC Youth4Capacity presentation slides](#) and [Youth4Capacity website](#) 

 [Slides - UNDP Session on "Empowering Youth in NDC Processes: A Deep Dive into the Youth-Responsive NDC Checklist for Policymakers and Practitioners"](#)

 [UNICEF's Future Pledge Toolkit](#)

 The COP28 Youth Climate Champion Team is partnering with Coursera - a global e-learning platform - to offer young people everywhere a collection of capacity-building courses from leading universities and organizations focused on key UNFCCC thematics: adaptation, mitigation, finance, and loss and damage. [Learn more here.](#)

 [NDC Checklist](#) - A Checklist for Decision Makers and Practitioners on a Youth-Inclusive NDC Process

Youth4Climate Sparking Solutions was brought to you by:

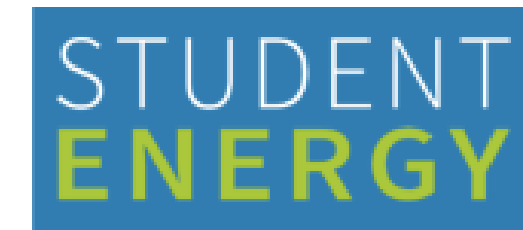


MINISTERO DELL'AMBIENTE
E DELLA SICUREZZA ENERGETICA

In collaboration with:



A Warm Thank You to all our Partners



Acknowledgments

The End of Event report was coordinated by **Roxani Roushas** and authored by **Olle Mjengwa, Vladislav Kaim, Saher Rashid** and **Elizabeth Gulugulu**. The report also benefited in its drafting stage from valuable inputs from **Louise Mabulo, Axell Sutton** and **Connect4Climate**. Design work on this report was completed and led by **Malak Chabar**.



Roxani Roushas



Elizabeth Gulugulu



Axell Sutton



Vladislav Kaim



Louise Mabulo



Olle Mjengwa



Saher Rashid



Malak Chabar

