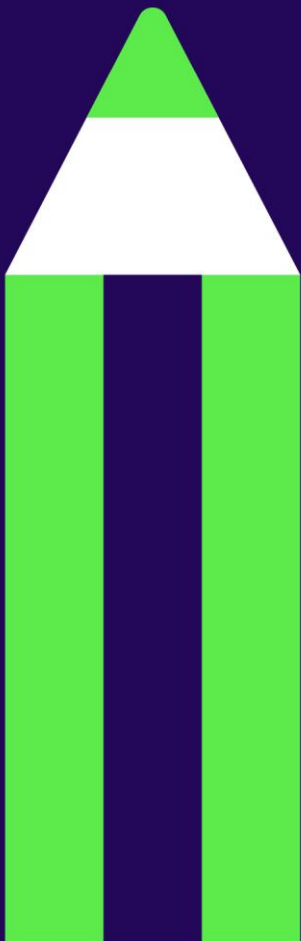
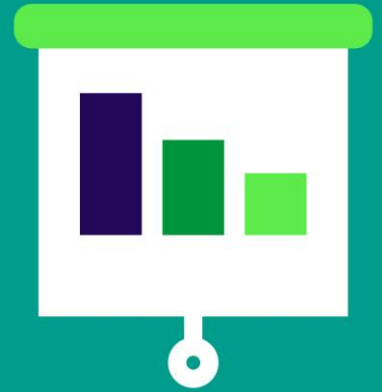


The Climate Connection



Youth Voice on Climate Action

Afghanistan

#TheClimateConnection
www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection

The Global Youth Letter on Climate Action is a call for action from young people globally, directly addressing the leaders attending COP26 – the 26th UN Climate Change Conference, in Glasgow, November 2021.

It is the result of a large-scale research exercise between the British Council and not for profit social enterprise Catalyst in Communities, who used a mixed methodology approach to garner the views, experiences and aspirations of 8,000 young people across 23 countries.

Aiming to be as representative as possible in terms of gender, background, location and socio-economic status, the research team worked through global COVID-19 restrictions to amplify the unheard voice of the climate debate: today's young people. Research for the report was carried out between January and March 2021.

The Global Youth Letter on Climate Action, and accompanying 8,000 Rising campaign, is part of the British Council's [The Climate Connection](#) programme, a global platform for dialogue, cooperation and action, connecting millions of people through shared solutions to the climate crisis.

Read the Global Youth Letter on Climate Action, the research report and join in the 8,000 Rising campaign here:

www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection/get-involved/global-youth-letter

Afghanistan's young people and climate action

The following letter and accompanying data represent the views and perspectives of young people in Afghanistan.

It is a collective statement of all those who participated in the Global Youth Letter on Climate Action research in Afghanistan and can be used as a starting point for leaders and policy makers to understand how to address young people's concerns in relation to climate change, and how they can use this untapped potential in to bring about climate action.

We hope the following letter inspires both young people and decision makers across Afghanistan and beyond to work together to find sustainable solutions to climate action.



Dear COP26 leaders,

Salam alaikum. We, the young people of Afghanistan, are here to share our aims and aspirations for the future of our country, and our planet.

Our nation is rich in traditions and customs, and comprises a multitude of different ethnic groups and cultures. From our deserts to our highland peaks, we are also blessed with wonderful natural habitats. And we want to safeguard this for future generations.

Those who contributed to this collective statement represent the unheard voice in the climate conversation. We are Afghanistan's diverse young people, coming from a host of communities and groups, and including those with disabilities and different ethnic minorities and genders. ¹

Yet, 90 per cent of us are deeply concerned about climate change, and we are here to collectively call for climate action!

How climate change affects us

Many of us have already started to experience the impact of climate change.

The three main effects of climate change we see are:

1. depletion of freshwater resources
2. decreased livestock productivity
3. decreased agricultural productivity.

And we are here to say that these issues need to be addressed now!

Before participating in this research, only 34 per cent of us were familiar with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and we have little knowledge of COP26. But through this process, we have increased our knowledge and had the chance to reflect on our main areas of concern, which are poverty, unemployment and access to education – together with climate change.

We acknowledge that we, young people, are fundamental in driving action on climate change, but we need your support.

Our commitment to climate action!

We are prepared to play our part in tackling climate change, by educating ourselves and becoming aware of the causes and effects and what we can do to stop it. Nearly all of us are

¹ Information and views of young people in this document were garnered from research conducted between January and March 2021



also willing to become politically active, by spreading climate change information via social media or by joining social media campaigns that promote activism.

In addition, half of us believe education is key to positively tackling climate change, and rural young women, in particular, are more likely to consider education as a critical tool. Over 91 per cent of us believe that acquiring knowledge and informing others on climate change is a public responsibility.

However, just 18 per cent of us have participated in climate awareness exercises or engaged in mitigation actions. And that needs to change if we are to reduce the impact of climate change.

What we demand from our leaders

Leaders and policy makers, we need your help to remove hurdles to participation, which include:

- limited or no youth engagement opportunities offered by government
- limited or no access to knowledge resources
- limited or no tutoring at educational institutes.

We are the last generation who can stop climate change, and we are willing to do whatever is necessary to achieve our goal, but we can't do it alone. Leaders and policymakers, most of us feel that you should be doing more to combat climate change. And we believe there is a better chance of success by working together.

We ask you to engage us in meaningful ways. You have the power to 'mainstream' youth climate action. You can better prepare us by giving us broader access to knowledge and skills development, even in remote rural areas, and by allowing us to help spread a positive message through social media, so we can begin to plan a better future.

Only by working together can we effectively reverse the damage we humans have caused, so we are asking you to consult us in plans and actions to address the major environmental challenges facing our planet. Let's save our future, our planet and our species.

Our voices

'The government should provide information about how to deal with such challenges because people don't know and are releasing harmful things into the atmosphere, which causes climate change to get worse and can also spread disease.' **Rural, female voice**

'Organisations like National Environment Protection Agency and others need to facilitate opportunities for young people; they need to send people to different areas, and check on people's problems.' **Rural voice**

'Young people need to have the communication skills for speaking and talking with others, especially when they speak with governmental officials about climate change.' **Rural voice**



'The biggest challenge for youth is the lack of information out there. Illiteracy is the biggest challenge for them. It can cause people to indirectly harm the ecosystem.' **Female voice**

Our parting message

By educating ourselves on the causes and effects of climate change and ways we can tackle it, we can begin to make a difference in Afghanistan. Acquiring knowledge and sharing the message is a public responsibility, and we need the support of our government to open up spaces for all children and young people to learn.

