



The

climate

crisis

and

violence

against

children



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON  
**VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN**

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## Key messages

Children – who bear the least responsibility for the climate crisis – are among those hit hardest by its impacts, with around 1 billion of them exposed to its risks.

The climate crisis is a ‘threat multiplier’ for violence against children, exacerbating every challenge – from poverty to displacement and loss of education – that enables such violence to thrive.

While no child is immune to the combined impact of the climate crisis and violence, that impact falls most heavily on the children who are already the most disadvantaged.

We need a paradigm shift as a matter of urgency. This must be based on the inclusion of children as part of the solution, far greater investment in their well-being, and child-sensitive climate laws and policies that are backed by adequate resources and monitoring.



## The challenge

The climate crisis is one of the major global challenges of our time. All of us now face a ‘new normal’ of rising sea levels, devastating floods, cyclones, air pollution, global warming, extreme weather events, desertification, deforestation, catastrophic droughts, fires, storms and loss of biodiversity. *But it is children who are the most vulnerable to climate and environmental shocks, particularly those who are the poorest, the most disadvantaged and those living in high-risk and fragile contexts.*

Around 1 billion children are at extremely high risk of being affected by the climate crisis. Of these, 820 million (over one third of the world’s children) are highly exposed to heatwaves, 400 million (nearly 1 in 6) to cyclones, 330 million (1 in 7) to river flooding, 240 million (1 in 10) to coastal flooding, and 920 million (over one third) to a lack of water.

The cumulative shocks of the climate crisis are exacerbating pre-existing crises, including the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, ongoing financial crises and armed conflicts. Its shocks are aggravating the risk factors for experiencing violence, abuse and exploitation, such as poverty, economic and social inequalities, food insecurity and forced displacement.

Taking these crises and risk factors together, we can see that the

climate crisis is a threat multiplier for violence against children. The Special Representative considers it critical to draw attention to the urgent need to protect children and their rights in response to the climate crisis – protection that is also crucial for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



No country is immune; no region is immune; no child is immune.

The World Bank has estimated that up to 132 million people could be pushed into extreme poverty by 2030 as a result of climate change: 44 million as a result of the impact on health; 33.5 million because of the impact on food prices; and 18.2 million because of the impact of disasters. In sub-Saharan Africa alone, 39.7 million additional people could be pushed into extreme poverty by 2030 as a result of climate change – more people than in any other region worldwide.

## The nexus: the climate crisis and rising levels of violence against children

“Personally, the climate crisis makes me feel unsafe, as if none of my goals will ever be fulfilled. A few months ago I went through a tough time because of this, but now I am learning how to overcome it and face it. Being in touch with other girls who understand me has been critical for this.”

Isidora, 14, Chile

Poorer children and families are less able to obtain access to key resources when crises occur. *This creates a vicious cycle that pushes the most vulnerable children deeper into poverty while increasing their risk of experiencing the worst and most life-threatening effects of climate change.* Under these conditions, children are exposed to a greater risk of violence and exploitation, including as a result of engaging in risky and negative ways

to survive and cope.

Poorer households are less resilient to financial hardships when climate shocks hit, which can increase the risk that their children’s education will be interrupted. Families with no access to affordable credit spend less on their children’s education during crises (for example, on school fees, learning materials or transportation) and are more likely to pull their children out of school temporarily. This, coupled with less time for learning at home, can mean major disruptions in education.

Food shortages and lack of clean water in times of drought and flooding also undermine the daily activities of children and young people. Their household chores increase if they have to, for example, walk further to collect drinking water and firewood or take on extra childcare responsibilities when children are unable to go to school. These extra burdens often fall on the shoulders of girls and young women, cutting into their own time to study and increasing their risk of dropping out of school altogether.

People are being uprooted from their homes and communities on an unprecedented scale. Millions of children around the world are now internally or externally displaced, driven from their homes by the impacts of slow-onset disasters, environmental degradation and sudden-onset disasters exacerbated by climate change.

*In 2020, disasters – including*



*storms and flooding – triggered three times more internal displacements than violent conflicts. In 2021, natural disasters led to the internal displacement of an additional 7.3 million children. The World Bank estimates that the number of internal climate migrants could surpass 216 million by 2050, with approximately 86 million people displaced within sub-Saharan Africa alone. South Asia could see as many as 40 million internal climate migrants; North Africa, 19 million; and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, 5 million.*

*In Latin America and the Caribbean, more than 4.2 million people in 18 countries have already been internally displaced by climate change. And every year, more than 50,000 people in the Pacific flee their homes to escape the devastating impacts.*

Children who are displaced are far more likely to be victims of various forms of violence at all stages of their journey. In addition, they lack access to humanitarian assistance and services; risk being deprived of liberty because of their or their parents’ migrant status, under policies that criminalize irregular migration; and face discrimination and the possibility of statelessness.

Natural disasters trigger environmentally-driven changes in the supervision and accompaniment of children who have been displaced, as well as their separation from their families. The social fabric and social norms are often shattered by

post-disaster behavior. Families face severe economic stress, as well as insecure shelter and living conditions. *All of these, taken together, constitute significant pathways to violence against children.*

The climate crisis is both strongly intersectional and deeply unequal in its impact. It has a disproportionate impact on communities in hotspots that are both the hardest hit by and least responsible for the crisis. The disruptive effects on the capacities of social services and communities to prevent and respond to violence are felt most keenly in countries that have the fewest resources to adapt and remain resilient. *These countries are already bombarded with other challenges: almost all of the countries at extremely high risk with regard to the climate crisis are also considered to be fragile, and 25 per cent of them have very high levels of displacement, with more than 5 per cent of their populations displaced from their homes.*

The impact is also felt more by some groups of children than others. *Children who are already disadvantaged are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including children deprived of family care; children with disabilities; children living in poverty or in rural areas; children in humanitarian and conflict settings; and those who rely on and have a close relationship with the natural environment and its resources, such as Indigenous children.* Given their strong connection to nature, some 400 million indigenous peoples

Children and young people in the Pacific are at the frontlines of the climate crisis. Being a young person from the Pacific myself, the impacts of climate change threatening to destroy my home is extremely current and dangerous. Sea level rise is so prevalent already in our islands that we are already beginning to experience land loss, extreme forms of erosion and biodiversity loss. This is directly impacting families and communities by destroying our homes and lands. In the current day and age where families' livelihoods are being directly impacted by climate change, this is also causing violence against children. According to Andrew Morley, World Vision International President and CEO, "Climate change leads to food insecurity, displacement and loss of livelihoods. As families struggle to make ends meet, parents often resort to damaging coping mechanisms. For example, children can be forced to take up dangerous labour to contribute to the family finances which puts them at serious risk of exploitation and abuse." Climate change also creates violence against children as it causes conflict and political unrest between governments, directly affecting children. Children and young people are the future of our countries, and the decisions being made by many governments today in which, determine our

approach to the climate crisis, will leave detrimental harm for young people in the future.

Aniva, 16, Fiji

face threats to practicing both their cultural rights and their collective rights.

Girls and young women are also affected disproportionately by climate change. *This is especially true for those in rural areas, who represent up to 70 per cent of the agricultural workforce in some countries, as a result of their social roles and the discrimination they suffer.*

As the climate crisis overlaps with other crises, intersects with other vulnerabilities and exacerbates major risk factors, it magnifies the threat of all forms of violence against children. *These include gender-based violence, child marriage, child labour, abduction, trafficking, sexual violence and recruitment into criminal, armed and/or violent extremist groups.*

Studies in South Asian countries and the Pacific islands, for example, show surges in child marriage following weather-related natural disasters. UNICEF also warns that girls as young as 12 years are being forced into both child marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM) at "alarming rates" in the Horn of Africa, as the most severe drought in 40 years pushes families to the edge.



Recent reports and studies on Africa, Asia and Latin America, including a recent report by the International Labour Organization, indicate that extreme weather phenomena and the loss of income caused by crop damage increase the demand for child labour. The ILO report cites evidence of growing demand for agricultural child labour in Guatemala, Haiti and Madagascar as a result of large tropical storms, hurricanes, cyclones, and the resulting loss of income.

In addition, traffickers, criminal networks and armed and terrorist groups take advantage of the vulnerabilities that are heightened by climate change to sell, exploit and recruit children. A report by the United Nations Environment Programme has highlighted the emergence of organized human trafficking as a serious risk associated with climate-related disasters. Tensions between pastoralists and farmers have been weaponized by armed groups, which take advantage of these tensions to build alliances with and mobilize communities across the Sahel.

The climate crisis is also harming children's mental health. 'Eco-anxiety' refers to the distress caused by climate change, with people becoming very anxious about their future. It is now causing negative emotions in children and young people worldwide. As they are extremely vulnerable to climate change, children face environmental stressors and are rapidly become better able to understand climate change and its anticipated impacts. However, this



"Please take more measures to save children who are at risk. I wish you would listen to our opinions more."  
**Boy, 11, Japan**



"When I was 4 years old in kindergarten, we did a project on heroes. I really fell in love with what Wangari Maathai had done & I started planting trees. One became 10, 10 became 30, 30 became 100. And now I have planted over 1,300,000 trees. I set up Children With Nature to galvanize more children to conservation. A wise African saying goes "you do not inherit the earth from your father's but rather borrow it from your Children " and that is why we as children have decided to take a stance and claim the earth as our own. We need your help as leaders of the world. We need to be included in conversations around climate, for our views to matter when coming up with solutions. We need sensitization of children on climate change and environmentally friendly habits and actions. We also need governments to be held accountable for the implementation of laws and policies around climate change mitigation. And finally, we appeal to countries that contribute the most to climate change to mend their ways and adopt environmentally friendly ways of doing things. My request to you all who are listening to me is to support us children and our project's as we strive to make a better world for children of today, tomorrow and the future generations."

**Ellyanne, 12, Kenya**

## Child-sensitive responses to the climate crisis are needed now more than ever

“Our climate and environment play a very important role in our lives. I want people to understand that the change of climate does not only affect our lives, but our future generations’ too. If you stand up together, and put in the effort to make a change, then the environment will thank you. It promises you the freshest air and the purest water, the tallest mountains and the freshest trees, then we must also show our responsibility and promise the restoration of the environment. If we put the effort into it, we can do it. Anything is possible.”

**Girl, 13, India**

The climate crisis is being addressed at the global, regional and national levels through a wide range of high-level political commitments and multilateral environmental agreements, as well as policy

frameworks at all levels. The private sector is also becoming more engaged on this issue.

### At global level

The international legal and institutional frameworks related to climate change include:

- the Paris Agreement
- the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
- the Task Force on Displacement
- the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030
- the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
- the Children’s Rights and Business Principles
- the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework, and
- the forthcoming general comment No. 26 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on children’s rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has highlighted how climate action must be consistent with existing international human rights obligations, including having the highest possible ambition to prevent a worsening of the harms related to climate change. *These ambitions should also include the building of equitable resilience, the reduction of the risks faced by those facing the greatest threats of climate change, and*

“One of the reasons we live on the streets is the climate crisis, as our homes were washed away when we were living in our rural villages. In the city, we are the ones who always breathe the smoke from cars passing by, almost choking us while we sleep on the pavements. We face terrible heat waves when we cannot even sleep as the pavements heat up. During monsoon, we are forced to stand all night in waterlogged streets, protecting our belongings during rain, storm, and cyclones. We drink and take baths in the hot, muddy water, and we can see factories dumping chemicals in front of us. Every year we miss school as we spend days suffering from fever, due to the increase of malaria mosquitoes during heavy rains that overflow the drains beside us, which are clogged with plastics. This happens every day, now think of the days when fires break out or cyclones uproot trees where we sleep! These are very scary events for us. We feel that there is no one who understands what we have to go through. Thus, we urge the uncle and aunties who are leaders of the world to bring in proper actions for us when planning to build green, clean and child-safe cities. We have already started to tell our friends, families and elected local leaders about how the climate is getting scarier and scarier each year, and how we should plant more trees, use less plastic and ask people to use

less cars so that we can help the environment to calm down. We believe that someday, we will be leaders like you, and help other children from all over the world!”

**Letter from street connected children affiliated to Child in Need Institute (CINI), Kolkata, India**



ensuring accountability and access to effective remedies for those affected.

### At regional level

Normative standards, multilateral agreements and policy frameworks have also been developed at the regional level to address different dimensions of the climate crisis, including:

- the African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2032)
- the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2022–2027)
- the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement)
- *the recommendations adopted by ASEAN addressing children's right to a healthy environment and child-sensitive climate actions*; and
- the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

### At national level

Initiatives at the national level span major legal reforms and policy frameworks to enhance and highlight the impact of climate change on children. In some countries, environmental rights are guaranteed at the constitutional level. Such

### A call to build a biocentric society.

We are going through a planetary crisis that hosts different contingencies and emergencies around the globe: armed conflicts, famines, wars, poverty, inequality and climate change. All these phenomena have their origin in the way in which society relates to life, due to the priorities of humanity. We privilege certain things over others, we prefer war and not peace, fossil fuels and not green energy, violence and not coexistence. This crisis has a characteristic point in common in each of the above, and that is that they all threaten life in all its forms: This crisis is itself a violent crisis for children and against their possibility of a future. The planetary crisis that we are suffering is the crisis of the non-future that especially affects the children of the planet. As a species we have declared a merciless war against the Earth, exploiting and plundering it, and now the consequences of this war are reverted against children. A population as defenseless and vulnerable as children is not only at the mercy of violence, but additionally there are no institutional policies that claim life. That is why the call to those who make the decisions and who have the future of my generation in their hands is to formulate and execute policies for life that allow us to inhabit a biocentric

society and that puts eco-hope - understood as a hope that combats all threats against life and is full of transformative actions – as a tool that allows us to eliminate violence against children on our planet.

**Francisco, 13, Colombia**



provisions are being used to address the negative impact of climate change, including on children.

In Mexico, for example, the national programme for the protection of children and adolescents for the 2021–2024 aims to protect the rights of children and adolescents by ensuring that they are equipped to face natural disasters and other risks. In its national climate change policy, Ghana recognizes the stronger impact of climate change on women and girls and aims to enhance their resilience through, for example, better access to social protection. The Philippines positioned children within its policy frameworks on climate change, including in its Climate Change Act (Republic Act No. 9729), National Climate Change Action Plan (2011–2028), Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act (Republic Act No. 10821) and Comprehensive Emergency Programme for Children

Other countries acutely affected by climate change are focusing on climate-related displacement. Vanuatu, for example, aims to minimize the impact of displacement and ensure assistance and protection at all stages, in particular for women and children through its 2018 national policy on climate change and disaster-induced displacement. *Fiji enacted the Climate Relocation of Communities Trust Fund Act 2019 to fund and support the planned relocation of communities that are severely affected by climate change and ensure that a clear funding system is in place to help communities when relocation becomes*



necessary. In Antigua and Barbuda, school contingency plans have been developed to map vulnerabilities to the impact of climate change and capacities to respond.

Education, climate literacy and awareness-raising initiatives are also critical components of climate action. Serbia has promoted its national platform, 'Čuvam te', ('I keep you safe'), with educational texts on the prevention of and protection from violence that are uploaded for parents and teachers. In Colombia, the National School of Environmental Training is promoting strategies on environmental culture that have been created with the participation of citizens, including children. *Saint Kitts and Nevis has also announced its commitment to encourage the involvement of children and youth in decision-making processes on climate change.*

### The private sector

Although States are the primary duty bearers of rights, businesses also have a responsibility to respect human rights and do no harm. *In addition, business activity has been the source of significant environmental damage that affects children's living conditions, health, development and well-being.*

In 2021, the business community released a statement on the vital role that businesses play in addressing the devastating impacts of climate change on children's well-being. *In the statement, issued during the*

*International Chamber of Commerce Make Climate Action Everyone's Business Forum, business signatories acknowledge that child rights and the environment are interconnected and that businesses should be part of the solution to address and mitigate the negative consequences of climate change in children's lives worldwide.*

### More must be done

Despite all of these policy frameworks and initiatives, far more needs to be done to ensure child-sensitive responses to the climate crisis. According to UNICEF, only 42 per cent of all nationally determined contributions contain direct references to children or young people, only 20 per cent contain a specific mention of children, and less than 2 per cent mention their rights.

*However, 11 out of 13 national adaptation plans do include explicit references to children or young people, with both viewed as vulnerable groups and as beneficiaries in terms of education and health interventions.* For example, the national adaptation plans of Fiji and Zimbabwe set out specific child-sensitive measures with respect to needs assessments and action plans, as well as health and protection measures in the context of extreme weather events and climate-sensitive diseases.

There is also a pressing need for far more investment in adaptation and resilience, in addition to a stronger focus on children and their rights in



legal frameworks and action plans. Investment in cross-sectoral child-sensitive climate policies that address the specific risks to and vulnerabilities of children, as well as the drivers of violence linked to climate change, is

essential for sustainable solutions to the current global and negative trends.

Investment in children's services can reduce the overall climate risk for children worldwide – and reduce it considerably. *UNICEF estimates that investments that improve access to health and nutrition services can reduce overall climate risk for 460 million children; those that improve educational outcomes can reduce the risk for 275 million children; and those that improve access to social protection and reduce poverty can reduce the risk for 310 million children.*

As noted, developing countries are hit hardest by the impacts of climate change because they are more vulnerable to the damaging effects of hazardous phenomena, have less capacity to cope and need more time to rebuild and recover. *According to the Global Climate Risk Index 2021, 8 of the 10 countries most affected by the quantified impacts of extreme weather events in 2019 are low- to lower-middle-income. Half of them are least-developed countries. Yet countries at extremely high risk of the experiencing the negative impacts of climate change received only \$9.8 billion in global financial flows that year, mostly in the form of official development assistance.* Cooperation, multilateralism and international solidarity must, therefore, be strengthened to fortify the resilience of the countries that are most vulnerable to climate crisis.

## Children must be part of the solution

“We, the children, demand for urgent action and solutions to climate change. We are the most affected yet least responsible for climate change. We also need to be included or consulted when coming up with the solutions. When we are included, we learn more and in our own small way are able to take action and engage in activities that address climate change like proper disposal of garbage and planting trees.”

**Michelle, 13, Kenya**

Investing in children also means involving, empowering and listening to them as part of the solution to tackling the climate crisis. Children are increasingly making their voices heard and are often leading climate action worldwide through social media, community and civic engagement, participation in climate negotiations, child-led strikes, peaceful protests and social mobilization movements, despite the barriers they face.

In Peru, for example, a seven-year-old boy created the first bank for children in 2012, the *Eco Banco del Estudiante*. The bank turns trash that

children find on the streets into money, which is then uploaded into their accounts. The bank helps to protect the environment, build children’s capacities and reduce child poverty, child labour and school dropout rates.

*In South Africa, Scouts have filled trucks with rubbish from Durban harbour; in Greece, they have cleaned beaches; and in Croatia, they have planted more than 65,000 trees. In the United Arab Emirates, two adolescent siblings started the “Papers, E-wastes, Plastics and Cans” campaign, and mobilized their school, peers and parents to collect around 15,000 kg of waste each month. In Uganda, children and young people repurpose used water bottles as containers for home-made*



*liquid soap, which they sell to help to support their families.*

*In 16 countries across the Latin America and Caribbean region, the ‘Tremendas’ network, led by adolescent girls, has launched the Academia Climáticas platform to deliver climate education to girls and young women*

*and build a network to identify local needs and solutions to the climate crisis.*

*As environmental and human rights defenders, children are also increasingly using the justice system as a strong and powerful tool to demand climate justice. Young activists across various regions have been involved in legal proceedings to demand more ambitious emissions cuts to safeguard their future; to require an assessment of the impact of fossil fuel extraction on children; and to stop deforestation, among other examples.*

Despite these and many other examples of child participation, the barriers to that participation remain considerable. Acting as environmental and human rights defenders carries risks for children, such as being criminalized, silenced, threatened and stigmatized. Negative cultural and social norms remain widespread around their right to have a voice in the decisions that affect them, as well as attitudes that limit their ability.

These challenges underscore the need to redouble efforts to ensure that children have safe pathways to find information, express themselves and become involved in climate action and decision-making processes.

“Our planet is crying for help. It is our common ethical responsibility to protect nature and then nature will protect us too.”

**Tudor, 16, Romania**

## The way forward

Too many children worldwide are still left behind. More children than ever are facing extreme poverty, discrimination and social inequalities. More children than ever are forcibly displaced, fleeing conflicts, widespread violence and food insecurity. The climate crisis has aggravated all of these risks. Taken together, these multiple crises are exacerbating children's vulnerabilities to violence. No country – and no child – is immune.

Exposure to the climate crisis, to violence and to stress causes immediate and long-term physiological and psychological damage. And the consequences can last a lifetime.

As a result of the climate crisis, children who are already disadvantaged may not reach their full potential in terms of their health and education. They include the poorest, those deprived of family care, displaced children, those living in rural and remote areas, indigenous children, children with disabilities, children from minority groups, children living in conflict areas and in humanitarian settings and – very often – girls. This will, in turn, limit their future income and productivity and affect the development of the world's human capital. In addition to the heavy human cost, a huge financial

### Climate is changing, why aren't we?

"Every year, States deliver a new set of speeches on climate change, without mentioning children. 1 billion children are affected by climate change so far. So, what are we doing? The UN, civil society organisations and NGOs have been pushing action plans for years with the exact same goal: no child should be affected by climate change. One goal, more than 100 organisations. But, what are we up against? 1 in 3 children have experienced the effects of climate change and 850 million more are at risk. Climate change has a characteristic that is rare in the world. Climate change does not discriminate. Rising sea levels bring much loss to families who live on the coast. Children lose their homes, their education, their connections. They lose the sense of stability. Their roots are moved out in a matter of hours. This leaves major psychosocial consequences on them. So, while talking about climate change and VAC, we are talking about the future boom of psychological support to children after the immediate effects of climate change. All governments should be recognising and including every child's story. Listening to what we are saying. THIS is what we are up against. 100 voices, one goal."

**Tin, 14, Bosnia and Herzegovina (#Covidunder19)**



toll is paid by entire societies.

Climate change and development are inextricably linked. Action on climate change is essential for the achievement of all of the Sustainable Development Goals and requires integrated action across social, economic and environmental spheres.

This demands a paradigm shift.

"Duty bearers at all levels must address violence against children in the context of the climate crisis by systematically integrating human rights into their work. This is an obligation, not an option. At the highest level, the recently recognized right to a healthy environment should guide planning, decision-making and action. Legal and policy frameworks must make the best interests of the child a primary consideration and provide for their active and meaningful participation in decision-making processes. Acknowledging the distinct situations that girls and boys face as well as safeguarding their rights when they act as environmental human rights defenders is key in catalyzing sustainability transformations. A human rights-based approach can contribute to the kinds of global societal transformations we must achieve in order to survive and thrive."

**Morten Kjaerum**  
 Director, Raoul Wallenberg  
 Institute of Human Rights and  
 Humanitarian Law

The Special Representative welcomes the recent adoption of resolution 76/300, in which the General Assembly recognized the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, as a means to help to reduce environmental injustices, close protection gaps and empower people, especially those that are in vulnerable situations, including environmental human rights defenders, children, youth, women and indigenous peoples.

Spending on integrated and cross-sectoral child- and gender-sensitive services must be seen as an investment and an essential step to ensuring the adaptation and resilience of social services in the face of the climate crisis. These include social welfare, protection and care services; safe and inclusive education, including digital learning; physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health services; justice; and support and sustainable social protection for vulnerable families and communities.

This investment is not only the foundation for global efforts to build back better in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the other crises outlined in this brief. It is crucial for the building of safe, just, inclusive and resilient societies, for and with children. Increased pressure on public finances cannot be used to justify a lack of investment in children. Given the overwhelming



evidence on the dangers and causes of climate crisis, failing to take action is an injustice to all children.

To address this injustice, governments, the business sector and the international community must adopt and implement child-sensitive climate laws and policies, with dedicated resources and robust monitoring and accountability mechanisms. Children and young people must be involved in the implementation and development of those policies, including those who are the most vulnerable to, and most affected by, the climate crisis. Ensuring sustainable solutions means strengthening the capacities of children and young people, investing in their education on climate change and environmental issues, and equipping them to be part of the solution in disaster risk reduction and climate mitigation efforts.

With less than eight years remaining to keep the promise of the 2030 Agenda, the clock is ticking. All stakeholders must work together in coordination and use an integrated approach to tackle climate change to prevent and reduce its impact on children. Cooperation and multilateralism must be strengthened, based on mutual partnerships and accountability, as most of the countries at greatest risk are those that are also the least responsible for the climate crisis. Climate justice and social justice are needed more than ever, for all children, leaving no one behind.



“The time for meaningful climate action is now. We have talked and discussed, we know what needs to be done and the solutions are there. It is now time to act, we need your help and likewise, you need our help. We must do this together.”

**Girl, 15, Trinidad and Tobago**

Let's act now!



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