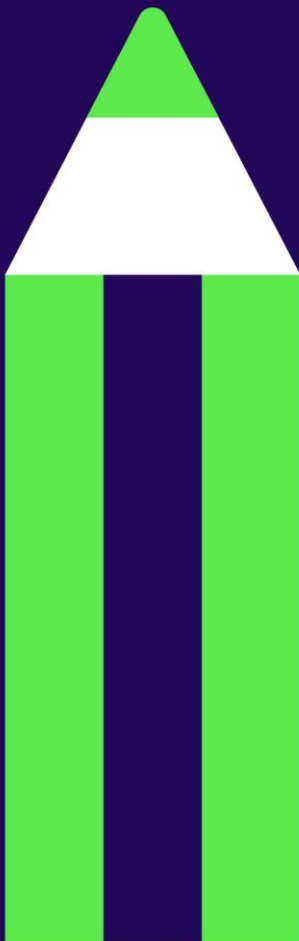
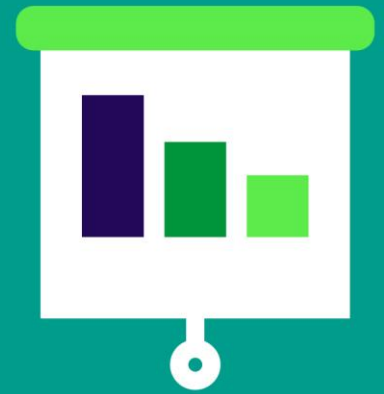


# The Climate Connection

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# Youth Voice on Climate Action

**Nigeria**

#TheClimateConnection  
[www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection](http://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](http://www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection/get-involved/global-youth-letter)

## Nigeria's young people and climate action

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

*It is a collective statement of all those who participated in the Global Youth Letter on Climate Action research in Nigeria 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 Nigeria and beyond to work together to find sustainable solutions to climate action.*



# Dear COP26 leaders,

How far! We, the young people of Nigeria, are here to share our aims and aspirations for the future of our country, and our planet.

We call Nigeria the Giant of Africa, on account of the vastness of its land. From the Adamawa highlands to the Niger Delta, we have diverse people and languages, and our country is home to one of the largest river systems on earth. 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 41 per cent female and 57 per cent male, while two per cent of us don't identify as gender binary. We are a diverse group, with different levels of education and employment. Some of us have disabilities; others represent ethnic minorities.

Yet, 88 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

Across the coastal cities, the northern river basin and the southern rural regions, we are feeling the effects of climate change in our daily lives. A big problem is the burning of fires for heating and cooking, as lots of our homes, especially in rural areas, still use firewood as fuel. This contributes to air pollution, which affects our health, and leads to deforestation and climate change. In cities, pollution caused by vehicles gets worse by the day.

The three main effects of climate change we see are:

1. decreased agriculture productivity
2. increased drought
3. disturbed rainfall patterns.

Climate change has a direct impact on our employment and poverty levels, which exacerbate the other social issues we suffer as young people in Nigeria, including drug abuse, alcoholism, crime and teenage pregnancy.

By participating in this research, we've become more familiar with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and better informed about COP26.

For us, the three most important Sustainable Development Goals are:

1. SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being
2. SDG 4: Quality Education
3. SDG 1: No Poverty

As you can see, we believe health, poverty and education are major problems in our society, and, as a vulnerable population, we are at higher risk of feeling the effects of climate change. So, we are here to show you how we can work together to find solutions.

## Our commitment to climate action

Over 70 per cent of us believe we have the skills to address climate change, and some of us are engaged in community activities to mitigate these impacts. More than 75 per cent of us are willing



to become community leaders on climate action, and to engage with marginalised and vulnerable groups. But, despite our eagerness to participate, just over one-third of us has participated in climate awareness exercises and even less have engaged in mitigation actions.

With escalating social issues and climate change impacting everybody's lives, we are aware that leaders can't deal with the problem alone, but almost all of us feel leaders and policy makers could be doing more.

## What we demand from our leaders

Leaders and policy makers, we are asking you to include us in meaningful ways, so together we can develop sustainable climate solutions! Draw on our agency, passion and readiness to not just mitigate, but to quickly adapt to, the climate threats facing our country.

We need your help to remove hurdles to participation, which include:

- little or no access to knowledge resources
- limited or no youth engagement opportunities offered by government
- insufficient role of the media in creating awareness.

As a diverse group, 95 per cent of us are prepared to act now, but we can't do it alone. Leaders and policymakers, the impetus should come from you. You have the power to 'mainstream' youth climate action and to engage us in meaningful ways. You can better prepare us by giving us broader access to education and skills, by building our capacity to overcome social barriers, by allowing us to contribute to policy making, and by drawing on our potential for climate mitigation and adaptation.

Through social media campaigns and education, you can build momentum for combatting climate change together, and we can become a symbol of hope for our diverse country, but only if you include and consult us in plans and actions to address the major environmental challenges facing our country, and our planet.

## Our voices

*'We, as ambassadors for climate change, know the dangerous effect a neglected climate can have in the near future. We need to create this awareness also in the minds of people around us, so together we can help to protect our environment, and save our lives. We can embark on green life projects, seminars, and publicity in rural and urban areas.'* **Female voice**

*'Non-governmental organisations on climate change should be empowered to teach people how to handle environmental problems.'* **Rural, female, unemployed voice**

## Our parting message

Our country leaders need to step up, focus on climate change and organise education campaigns and initiatives that can raise awareness about the environmental situation, and how we can all adapt to it.

