

COP28 YOUTH ADVOCACY GROUP: POLICY SUGGESTIONS

“As the climate crisis escalates, people are losing their lives, people are losing their livelihoods, people are losing their cultures – so there really is a need to put the people on the agenda.” – Vanessa Nakate, Uganda

We agree: climate change is causing inevitable loss and damage and this requires putting the needs of the people in the centre of the climate discussion. Hazardous events and slow onset changes affect most vulnerable people, who are unable to meet the effects. Close to half the world’s population (3.6 billion people) live in highly vulnerable areas that are impacted by colonialism, marginalization and unstable socio-economic development. In addition, extreme weather phenomena threaten different livelihoods in different ways which weakens gender equality.

Climate change affects young people in many ways. The effects are gravid, including death, malnutrition, displacement and loss of education. It is estimated that climate change will push an additional 135 million people into poverty by 2030. This calls for climate action to incorporate human rights and especially young people and girls’ rights. If children are not considered in climate decisions, the measures themselves can violate their rights. Especially girls’ right to go to school must be protected because climate change causes girls dropping out of the school. Correspondingly, supporting girls’ studying climate action is supported as well. Also it is vital that the youth are heard and presented in the decision making.

The upcoming COP28 meeting will have discussion about a new funding mechanism to offset the loss and damage that climate change is causing. Here are our policy recommendations to consider in decision making:

1. **The Loss and Damage Fund should be operationalised during COP28**, not later. There is no time to wait as loss and damage is happening and worsening every day.
2. **The funding has to be new and additional** to Official Development Assistance and available Climate Finance. Loss and damage discussion includes both immaterial and material things, and the funding is necessary to protect both of them. Particularly the visible damage needs a funding to be built up. Without safe material environment it is difficult to protect an immaterial life either. Loss and damage must be included in the New Collective Quantified Goal for climate finance and the Global Stock Take with targets and predictability of finance. The base of the funding must be the known needs and predictable risks of loss and damage.

3. **The funding must be based on grants.** It is known that loss and damage has already increased the debt burden in some nations and this unjust development is not acceptable. The fund must be based on the idea of compensation.
4. **The funding has to address human rights losses and all the other value based Loss&Damage.**
5. **The emitters have to pay for the losses caused.** This is a great question about justice. "Between 1990 and 2015, the richest one percent of the world's population were responsible for 92% of historical greenhouse gas emissions, more than twice as much carbon pollution as the poorest 50 percent, or 3.1 billion people." It has to be noticed that the emitters also consist of companies and taxing the windfall profits or forming levies or other taxes would be a way to follow "polluter pays" -principle.
6. **The funding has to be accessible and easy to apply** also to local communities. The delivery system has to deliver fast, be accessible and flexible to meet the needs of the recipients.

In the COP28 meeting, there is now a great chance to put people at the center of the climate discussion. Loss and damage has to be seen as an important third pillar of the climate discussion on the side of mitigation and adaptation. It is important to see that while the mitigation actions are on their way and in many ways decades too late, we won't be letting people down while building the green shift. Human rights based climate policy has to take care about everyone's human rights and bring fairness and justice globally.