

YOUNGO Policy Paper on Action for Climate Empowerment

YOUNGO recently conducted an analysis on the incorporation of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE), as described in Article 6 of the Convention and reiterated in Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, in the NDCs released by the Parties. ACE is integral to accelerating a just climate transition-- a transition that equitably prepares and works alongside young people, workers, and society to shift towards decarbonization. Yet, the majority of Parties fail to include any language on Youth or ACE. Only 32 percent of Parties included any mention of ACE; 18 percent Youth; 12 percent both Youth and ACE in their NDCs.

Considering this lack of focus, local COYs, COY12, party delegations, and YOUNGO collaborated to identify major boundaries in the acknowledgement and accomplishment of ACE, as well as steps to overcome those boundaries. This paper provides recommendations moving forward for all parties to the UNFCCC to actively educate, train, and empower society to take climate action at both the national and international level. The paper outlines five major points for action:

- I. Education as an envoy for change
- II. Development of a platform for Focal Points
- III. Transparency on ACE plans and implementation
- IV. Increased funding and networking opportunities
- V. Enhanced opportunities for meaningful youth participation

I. **Education as an envoy for change:** Within the UNFCCC, ACE has often been considered isolated from other negotiation issues or regarded as an add on, instead of a necessary underlying support structure for change. This has led to a lack of prioritization. The recent intermediate review of the Doha Work Program on Article 6 provides an example of progress, though. The meeting revealed that many Parties have begun to connect the importance of ACE to accomplishing their goals in other components of the Paris Agreement. We recommend that Parties utilize ACE as a tool for an integrated solution in addressing all aspects of the Paris Agreement and that it be emphasized in the Global Climate Action Agenda.

II. **Development of a platform for Focal Points:** Not all Parties have appointed a national Focal Point on ACE. This should be remedied. In the case that one has been appointed, they often do not have enough time, capacity, and/or resources to effectively contribute to their mandate, which also leads to a lack of interaction between ACE focal points. It is crucial that networking and support mechanisms are enabled in order to facilitate meaningful collaboration between Party Focal Points at the UNFCCC level.

III. **Transparency on ACE plans and implementation:** The NDC analysis done by YOUNGO provided that few Parties outlined their plans for ACE implementation. We encourage transparency moving forward so as to comprehend the actionable steps towards a just transition through education, training, and participation to achieve necessary decarbonization.

IV. **Increased funding and networking opportunities:** A majority of the parties, especially from the Global South, lack capacity for education, training, and participation that is also reflective upon local and gendered circumstances. Moreover, even if this first criteria is met, finance is often a limiting factor. We encourage partnerships, networking, and collaboration between governmental bodies and civil society, leveraging existing infrastructure and creating new capacities through the exchange of experiences, resources, and technology.

V. **Enhanced opportunity for meaningful youth participation:** Finally, youth are integral to the implementation of ACE; however, there is a lack of resources, transparency, and youth representation in the UNFCCC process. We recommend parties provide opportunities for meaningful youth participation at all levels of climate change negotiations and decision making processes through the appointment of youth delegates and support for NGO accreditations, ensuring there is a representation balance of both gender and geographic location.