

## Africa's Priorities for COP30: A Youth Perspective Rooted in Intergenerational Dialogue

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25 August - 10 September 2025 marked a pivotal moment for youth climate advocacy across Africa. Supported by ACT Alliance, a youth delegation of four engaged in the Nairobi Summer School on Climate Justice (NSSCJ), the Africa Youth Climate Assembly (AYCA II), Africa Climate Week, and the second Africa Climate Summit (ACS2) in Addis Ababa. These platforms offered more than just participation, they amplified Africa's youth voice and deepened our resolve to influence the continent's priorities ahead of COP30 in Brazil.

### Outcomes from NSSCJ & ACS2: Context That Grounds Our Priorities

At ACS2, African leaders made several significant commitments that align with our calls for climate justice and youth inclusion:

- **Africa Climate Innovation Compact & African Climate Facility:** A pledge to mobilize USD 50 billion annually to support locally led climate solutions, including early adaptation and resilience investments. (Source: [Reuters, September, 2025](#))
- **Climate Justice Impact Fund for Africa (CJIFA):** The launch of CJIFA, which aims to provide flexible, Africa-owned financing mechanisms designed to support locally led adaptation, build the capacity of community-based organizations, and de-risk indigenous innovations. (Source: [PACJA, 2025](#))

- **Mission 300:** An initiative to provide electricity to 300 million Africans by 2030, advancing access to modern energy and supporting green energy employment. (Source: [AFF Forum 2025](#))

At a time when climate disasters intensify across the continent, young Africans are no longer content with being passive observers. We are ready to lead, partner, and demand accountability to ensure that Africa's climate agenda reflects the urgency of our lived realities. Our experience across these convenings reaffirmed one truth: intergenerational dialogue is not symbolic; it is the foundation of Africa's climate leadership.

As youth, below are five key priorities and statements that we believe must anchor Africa's common position at COP30.

- **Unlock Climate Finance for Youth-Led Action:** Africa's youth are already building promising climate solutions: solar irrigation systems in Malawi, reforestation in Uganda, community energy co-ops in Zimbabwe. What holds them back is access to funding that is flexible, timely, and accessible locally.

"Despite ACS2 pledging USD 50 billion a year for African-led climate action, youth-led projects still receive less than 5% of those funds," says Mwayi Butao (Malawi). At COP30, leaders must push for simplified access through youth innovation hubs, community banks, and direct funding windows in global funds.

- **Prioritize Adaptation and Resilience for Communities:** Across the continent, climate shocks are no longer rare events. Crop failures, floods, and water shortages are felt in households. Adaptation must shift from being marginalised to central.

"In our region, adaptation grants from the Climate Justice Impact Fund for Africa (CJIFA), which have already reached Uganda and 16 other countries, are helping communities build climate-resilient crops and water systems," says **Martha Agwang (Uganda)**. "We call for investments that align indigenous practices with modern technology, such as drought-resistant seeds and early warning systems."

- **Institutionalize Youth Inclusion in Climate Decision-Making:** Youth engagement cannot remain performative. Too often, we are invited to speak at conferences but excluded from the rooms where decisions are made.

"We must move from being guests at summits to being part of negotiation delegations," emphasises Ngoni Muchenje (Zimbabwe). COP30 must include mechanisms where youth are part of official climate bodies, ensuring continuous representation.

- **Integrate Climate Education Across All Levels:** Climate literacy is a critical tool for building resilient societies. During the Nairobi Summer School on Climate Justice, it

became clear that many communities lack access to reliable information, making adaptation even harder.

"When school teaches climate justice alongside math or history, we aren't just aware, we are equipping the next generation. So, governments must integrate climate education into schools, technical institutes, and community learning programs," said Rachel Kenny (Tanzania).

Africa must integrate climate education into primary and secondary school curricula, vocational training, and community learning. Knowledge empowers citizens to act, innovate, and hold leaders accountable. An informed generation is a powerful engine for change.

- **Demand transparency and accountability:** Promises made at global climate summits often fade before implementation. To rebuild trust, commitments must be measurable, time-bound, and openly tracked.

"ACS2's announcement of Mission 300 is powerful, but unless there is public reporting on how much has been invested and who benefits, it risks becoming another headline," warns Martha Agwang (Uganda).

We propose the establishment of national climate accountability dashboards to monitor adaptation progress, finance flows, and emission targets. These tools would give citizens, especially young people, the power to track implementation and hold governments accountable. Transparency is not a technicality; it's the cornerstone of climate justice

- **Intergenerational dialogue, a bridge, not a token:** Africa's climate movement is strongest when different generations work together. Veteran negotiators and activists like Dr. Mithika Mwenda reminded us that Africa's climate advocacy has deep roots, built through decades of persistence and solidarity.

"But in the 1990s, youths were fighting just to be heard. Today, we have the microphone. The question is: what will we say, and how will we make it count?" reflects Rachel Kenny (Tanzania).

- **A Collective Vision for COP30:** These five priorities are not optional, they are essential. From farmers in Uganda adapting to unpredictable rainfall, to youth entrepreneurs in Zimbabwe building renewable energy ventures, to mothers in Malawi teaching children about drought resilience, Africa's youth are not waiting for the future. We are already practising.

"Our generation is not waiting for the future because we're building it now, but we need

systems that believe in us, leaders who listen, and spaces that allow us to lead,” affirmed Martha Agwang.

As we head into COP30, Africa must show up not just with promises, but with plans, transparency, youth-led action, and accountability. Our future depends on it, and so does the world’s credibility when it comes to climate justice.

As we head for COP30, Africa is not asking for sympathy; it is demanding justice. Our message to the world ahead of COP30 is that adaptation finance must move from pledges to predictable delivery. Climate justice is not about charity, it is about fairness, reparations, and accountability for historical emissions that continue to undermine our development. We must turn commitments from COP29 into tangible community investments that safeguard food systems, water, and livelihoods.

Africa’s youth are not waiting for permission to lead; they are already driving transformation. What we need from the world is partnership that respects our knowledge, funds our innovation, and amplifies our voices toward a just, resilient future

## Photo Gallery





