WHAT'S UP

Make the change – show that you care

CLIMATE CAPITAL COPENHAGEN

unicef

CHILDREN'S CLIMATE FORUM

Nov 28 - Dec 4
Copenhagen 2009

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION TO CCFC 09 03
PERSONAL STORIES FROM COP 15 YOUTH DELEGATION 04
OFFICIAL DECLARATION 09
CONCLUSION 14
CREDITS 15

INTRODUCTION

We, children of the world, should have a strong voice in the international climate change debate because we are the future as well as a big part of the world's population today. Between 28th November and 4th December, 164 children from 44 countries were gathered in Copenhagen for the first Children's Climate Forum (CCF).

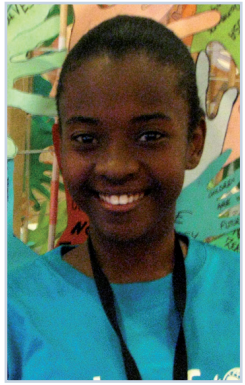
'What's up COP?' addresses all the delegates at COP15 and asks whether COP15 is going to be as inspiring as the CCF 09 in coming up with solutions for change.
For the last 14 years, the world leaders have been debating climate change, but what development can we see?

Children are still losing their home, parents, and their future. We are deeply saddened to see that nobody seems to care. This time we have been given the chance to voice our thoughts and concerns at CCF, and we have come up with a declaration that we urge you to read before deciding our future.

The decisions are from the children, by the children, for the children.
We are the present and we are the future, so listen to our voices today.

PERSONAL STORIES

We believe that it will be best if all of you could feel our pain before you hear our declaration. The following are personal stories of the 8 delegates who are here to witness what you decide to do with our future.



Marie Moïse Louissaint Haiti, Age 16

First of all, in 2008, four hurricanes hit Haiti and in a period of just two months. Because of that all the schools in the country were closed for one month, so I couldn't go to school for a month. But the sad part is that I couldn't study because my home was affected. I was hurting for other kids like those living in Gonaïves City because they couldn't study because of the flooding and many of the schools were ruined. First of all, it is their decision, and the politicians need to take it seriously because they need to reduce their emissions and to help developing countries adapt to climate change. Think about your children!

PERSONAL STORIES

Tarikul Islam Bangladesh, Age 16

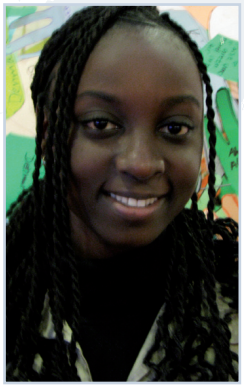
On 25 May 2009 the cyclone Aila hit the coastal area of Bangladesh. My island was waste away by the cyclone. My family went to another place for shelter and protection. Our assets were damaged totally. It is very painful.

Children are affecting on climate change, so save the children right now!

Laurine Millicent Oyodah Kenya, Age 15

In my country in the place I come from we have been affected by drought and famine so there is shortage of food in my country. With the shortage of food in my area the food becomes very expensive and sometimes I fail to go to school because maybe the money that is at home can only be used to buy food so it's either use the money to buy food or use the money for school.
I think the politicians should come to an agreement and the developing countries and the developed countries should come together and find a way to help children who are suffering in these developing countries.

PERSONAL STORIES



Khadidiatou Diop Senegal, Age 17

My country is a very exposed country because Senegal is on the West coast and in front of the ocean. During the rainy season my house and some schools flood because of climate change. The rainy season is 3 months but because of the climate change it's now 4 months and that's why there is flood. The children can't go to school.

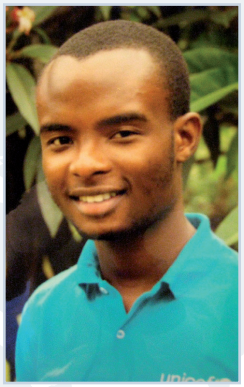
I want you to establish an agreement between the rich and the poor, to make the adaptation better in the African countries. You need to listen to the voice of the children!

Bridgette Cindy Makhubedi Soth Africa, Age 16

Climate change is affecting Africa. One day, 2 weeks before I came to the forum, there were floods. I couldn't go to school and I was writing exams. I couldn't go to school because there were floods everywhere. My school mates couldn't go to school and my house was full of water. We had to move the furniture so that we could stay in a room where there is no water.

I hope you reach an agreement whereby developed countries can help developing countries adapt to climate change.

PERSONAL STORIES



Kondwani Joe Banda Zambia, Age 17

In Zambia where my family lives, floods, high-temperatures and droughts affect me. We can't go to school when the rain is very heavy. The heavy rain also brings floods in our homes. Floods also bring diseases and ruin houses.

The world leaders should let the actions reflect their words.

Darwin Temo Peña Bolivia, Age 17

First of all, in 2008 the region that I live in was flooded for 3 months because of the "El Niño". I worried about the children. They didn't have food and they were leaving their homes. I worried about the health of the children because they become ill. It affected me a lot.

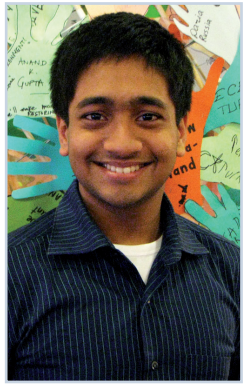
I want to make an agreement between the developed countries and the developing countries. They should economically help the poor, especially so they can preserve the forest.

PERSONAL STORIES

Ivalu Christensen Greenland, Age 14

In 2001 when I started school the sea ice used to freeze over to the next island, maybe for 2 km. My family and I used to walk to that island but now, 8 years later, the sea ice is only frozen for 500m and it is unstable so we, even the great hunters, don't know when it's safe.

I don't want the ice to disappear because most of the Greenlandic culture is on ice, especially sea ice. If all the ice disappears you can say the Greenlandic culture disappears too.



Mohammed Axam Maumoon Maldives, Age 15

My parents talk about the beautiful country that we live in. Now I only see small pieces of it, which is enough to make me happy, but because the climate is changing I won't have anything to show my children. They have the right to live the wonderful life that I am lucky to live before our beautiful country finally becomes no more.

The damage, you are doing right now, is making our life unbearable. Politicians, would you commit murder, when you know it is wrong? Can't you just sacrifice a little for the greater good?

OUR WORLD, OUR FUTURE

Children's Climate Forum Declaration 2009

Climate change threatens our lives, our families and our future. We, the youth delegates from 44 countries attending the Children's Climate Forum 2009, will not sit back and watch. We already face the effects of climate change. Our communities are deprived of clean drinking water, denied access to education and vulnerable to disease every time it floods. Our plates are empty due to drought. Our future is at risk, and we demand that something be done. The youth in the world are ready to take action, and we request the same of governments worldwide. The time for talk is over. Now, we hold you accountable for your commitments.

The challenges may appear insurmountable, yet as stakeholders, our generation is ready to collaborate in this cause.

We commit to personal lifestyle changes that place the common good above our individual desires and current way of life.

OUR WORLD, OUR FUTURE
Children's Climate Forum Declaration 2009

We commit to educate and empower ourselves and our communities to adapt to and mitigate the changing climate.
We commit to engage and actively cooperate with all generations and governments in combating climate change.

As our efforts alone will not be enough, we expect our leaders and fellow citizens to cooperate. The following actions need to be taken:

Recommendations for Adaptation

- Governments of industrialized countries should contribute more, through finan cial and technological support, to the adaptation of developing countries to climate change.
- We want cities to be well-planned and sustainable, with clean drinking water, many green spaces and efficient transport networks. Governments should take more proactive efforts to prevent uncontrolled urban growth and strengthen rural communities by creating sustainable employment, quality education and entertainment.
- Regulations, safety standards and standard emergency protocol, consistently centered on and informed by children, need to be established to prepare for climate induced disasters.
- As lack of water is already causing drought and desertification in many areas, goverments must work towards water conservation and provide clean water sources for areas in need.

Recommendations for Mitigation

- Research, development and sharing of green and energy-efficient technologies, especially renewable energy production, must occur between industrialized and developing countries to ensure sustainable development globally.
- Investments should be made in sustainable transport infrastructure, such as train and

bus networks, cycling lanes and environmentally friendly fuel.

- An international carbon trading system should be introduced. All transactions within the market should be taxed and the revenue generated should be used for an adaptation fund.
- We propose a new classification where countries are divided into three annexes – the industrialized countries, the developing countries which pollute heavily and the less polluting developing countries – to distribute responsibilities fairly among nations.
- Governments should establish and develop recycling systems on a national level. We demand that our authorities provide accessible recycling facilities in all communities.
- Climate change education should be a mandatory and substantial area of the school curriculum. Governments should also support organizations which already educate youth on climate issues.

OUR WORLD, OUR FUTURE
Children's Climate Forum Declaration 2009

The battle against climate change is upon all of us. We are ready to act and we invite you to join us. Climate change is affecting our lives, our families and our future. We must act immediately and we are ready to fulfill our commitments. We are prepared to give all we have as long as there is the possibility of saving our planet.

We expect the same courage from you.

CONCLUSION

Children from 44 countries came together in Copenhagen for the Children's Climate Forum (CCF) 2009 and spent a week working together to create a declaration representing the youth of the world. Not only did we share experiences, we also created strong friendships across borders. We sincerely hope that our opinions, ideas and solutions will be heard and acted on.

164 children from all over the world were appointed Climate Ambassadors for our countries. All of us will return home to start many inspiring projects on climate change at both the local and international level. We are also ready to lead the youth's contribution to the international climate debate.

We hope our declaration will motivate our governments and the international community to take real actions, and contribute to a sustainable agreement in Copenhagen. The CCF09 has proven that children from all over the world can unite and work together across nations, cultures and languages, to reach an agreement. Now we expect the participants of the COP 15 to do the same.

CREDITS

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