

YPARD Position Paper

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP30)

**10 November - 21 November 2025
Belém, Brazil**



About YPARD

Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD) is a global network that empowers young farmers, researchers and entrepreneurs to actively contribute to sustainable agriculture, influence policy and drive innovation. It connects youth across regions, disciplines, and sectors, providing a platform for knowledge exchange, capacity building, and advocacy.

Through its regional and thematic working groups, YPARD facilitates collaboration among youth, development actors, and policymakers, ensuring that the perspectives of young stakeholders are integrated into international, national, and local strategies. YPARD also works to strengthen youth leadership, enhance skills, and create opportunities for intergenerational dialogue, mentorship, and peer learning.

YPARD actively contributes to major policy processes, including UNFCCC through and together with YOUNGO, UNCCD Youth Caucus, and the CFS Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples Mechanism, ensuring youth voices shape intergovernmental negotiations.

Executive Summary

At COP30 in Belém, youth demand bold action to transform food systems, strengthen resilience, and secure a just and sustainable future. Young people are among the most affected by climate change, yet remain underrepresented in decision-making and climate finance allocation. YPARD, a global youth-led network, presents this position paper to highlight the priorities and perspectives of young people working in agriculture and rural development. The goal is to ensure that youth leadership, innovations, and lived experiences are meaningfully reflected in UNFCCC processes.

This paper outlines urgent recommendations for integrating youth into climate governance, agriculture, and finance mechanisms. These include formal roles for youth in decision making, greater transparency in financial flows, stronger gender and social inclusion, and secure land rights for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs). It also recognizes climate driven youth migration as both a challenge and a pathway toward just transition.

We encourage Parties to move beyond symbolic gestures and commit to real, lasting reforms that give youth a seat at the table as rights-holders and co-decision makers. COP30 offers a chance to make youth inclusion more than just a promise, but a practice that delivers measurable results.

Key Asks

1. Institutionalize Youth Participation

- Create formal mechanisms for youth co-decision-making across UNFCCC processes, including the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Agriculture.

2. Finance Youth-Led Climate Action

- Establish dedicated, accessible finance windows for youth-led initiatives under the Green Climate Fund and the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG).
- Mandate annual reporting of disaggregated climate finance flows to youth, smallholders, women, and IPLCs.

3. Advance a Just Transition for Rural Youth

- Address climate-induced migration by providing adaptation finance, training, land access, and skills pathways for young farmers and entrepreneurs.
- Support youth mobility as a choice, not a forced necessity.

4. Secure Land and Resource Rights

- Guarantee land tenure and resource rights for youth, women, and Indigenous Peoples as a precondition for climate resilience and food security.

5. Promote Gender-Responsive Climate Action

- Implement the Enhanced Lima Work Programme and Gender Action Plan with youth-specific indicators.
- Address systemic barriers including safety concerns, unpaid care burdens, and limited access to finance for young women in agriculture.

6. Integrate Youth and Indigenous Knowledge

- Recognize youth networks as bridges between traditional knowledge and innovation.
- Support co-design of solutions combining Indigenous knowledge systems and youth-driven technologies.

7. Translate Policy into Practice

- Ensure that all commitments under the Paris Agreement , including adaptation, finance, and agriculture, lead to tangible, measurable outcomes for youth in terms of leadership , livelihoods, and resilience.

Introduction

Young people are essential actors in shaping the future of agriculture, rural development, and climate resilience. They are directly affected by climate change and environmental degradation, which impact food systems, livelihoods, and ecosystems. At the same time, they have the potential to drive innovative and inclusive solutions for sustainable development.

Despite this, youth often face systemic barriers to meaningful participation in decision-making, including limited access to information, financing, technical support, and policy platforms. Their underrepresentation in policymaking further exacerbates challenges such as restricted access to land, resources, markets, and technology, precarious working conditions, income instability, and heightened vulnerability to climate change and conflict ¹.

The 30th session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP30) represents a pivotal moment for advancing global climate action in agriculture, biodiversity, and rural development. COP30 is expected to accelerate the implementation of the Paris Agreement, strengthen adaptation and mitigation efforts, and mobilize climate finance to address the urgent needs of vulnerable communities. For young people, it is an opportunity to ensure that youth perspectives, innovative approaches, and local knowledge are embedded in climate policies and strategies, translating commitments into tangible action.

COP30 also builds on key developments from COP29 in Baku, including progress on the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), The New collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG) and operationalization of the Sharm-el Sheikh Joint Work. These frameworks now require clear mechanisms for youth inclusion, co-leadership and financing. COP30 must go beyond token participation and take concrete steps to institutionalize youth-led actions in national climate systems.

In preparation for COP30, YPARD facilitated a participatory process to build a youth position on agriculture, rural development, and climate resilience. This included regional consultations with young farmers and entrepreneurs, workshops to co-create actionable recommendations, engagement with policymakers, other stakeholders, with feedback mechanisms to ensure diverse voices are represented.

YPARD comes to COP30 with clear demands: institutionalized youth co-leadership in adaptation and agriculture, youth-specific finance mechanisms, and recognition of youth as rights-holders in climate governance.

¹ Strengthening youth engagement in policy for agrifood systems transformation : <https://www.fao.org/rural-employment/resources/news-and-stories/detail-news/Strengthening-Youth-Engagement-in-Policy-for-Agrifood-Systems-Transformation/en>

YPARD COP30 Youth Recommendations

Adaptation

Recalling Article 7 of the Paris Agreement and Decision 3/CMA.6 (Baku, 2024), which made significant strides in defining indicators for the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), including social inclusion, human rights, gender equality, and the contributions of children and youth;

Noting persistent challenges in accessing adequate, predictable, and appropriate adaptation finance for developing country Parties (Decision 1/CMA.6, para. 3) and;

Acknowledging the foundational work of youth engagement initiatives such as Youth National Climate Councils, Youth-Inclusive NDC Taskforces, and participation of young delegates in UNFCCC negotiations;

It remains critical to move from ad-hoc youth engagement toward systemic, institutionalized, and adequately funded youth co-decision-making in adaptation planning.

Without this deeper integration, adaptation strategies risk being less effective, less innovative, and failing to adequately serve the generation most affected by climate change impacts.

We urge Parties to:

- Strengthen **meaningful youth participation** in all stages of the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) implementation, ensuring young professionals, Indigenous Youth, and youth-led organizations have direct access to contribute to the refinement of indicators, methodologies, and adaptation strategies.
- Integrate **youth-led and indigenous knowledge** systematically into national adaptation plans, ensuring these insights guide decision-making alongside scientific data, and promoting intergenerational equity in climate action.
- Mandate the development of **youth-specific indicators** to measure both the unique vulnerabilities of young people and their contributions to adaptation, with results informing national reporting and adaptation assessments.
- Establish **dedicated, accessible, and adequately resourced financial mechanisms** for youth-led adaptation projects, including grants and innovation funds, particularly targeting smallholder farmers and climate-vulnerable communities.
- Support **capacity-building programs** to equip young people with the skills to navigate climate finance, develop robust adaptation projects, and participate fully in national and international adaptation decision-making processes.
- Promote **transparent and youth-inclusive reporting frameworks**, incentivizing Parties to consistently track, publish, and showcase youth contributions to adaptation efforts without imposing excessive administrative burdens.

- Prioritize **youth-targeted adaptation finance and simplified access**, ensuring that funding mechanisms consider local contexts and the diversity of agricultural systems.
- Ensure youth and local communities have access to loss and damage mechanisms, recognizing the disproportionate impacts on young farmers and rural livelihoods.
- Integrate **youth perspectives in National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)** to address systemic climate shocks across agriculture, value chains, and food systems, safeguarding youth employment, livelihoods, and global food security.

Agriculture and Food Security

Recalling Decision 3/CP.27, which established the Sharm el-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security (SSJWA), with objectives to promote holistic approaches, enhance stakeholder coordination, and provide for annual synthesis reports, hybrid workshops, and an online portal;

Noting the outcomes of SB62, which held the first in-session workshop on systemic and holistic approaches to climate action on agriculture and food systems;

Recalling provisions on Means of Implementation in paras. 6 and 13 of Decision 3/CP.27, aimed at mobilizing resources and technical support for Parties;

Acknowledging the vulnerability of smallholder farmers, youth, women, and indigenous peoples to climate change impacts on food security, as well as the critical role of farmers and youth as agents of innovation;

Recognizing that current efforts, while advancing procedural frameworks, require accelerated action to translate policies, scientific knowledge, and financing into tangible, youth-inclusive, and context-specific implementation at national and local levels.

We call on Parties to:

- Ensure youth are **formally recognized** as key stakeholders in the Sharm el-Sheikh joint work, with structured mechanisms for participation, capacity building, and leadership in planning and implementation of climate-resilient agricultural systems.
- Establish dedicated financing windows and **simplified access mechanisms** under the Green Climate Fund and other operating entities of the Financial Mechanism to support small-scale and youth-led agricultural initiatives.
- Integrate youth into national agricultural and food security strategies, moving beyond consultation to co-decision-making and implementation roles.
- Prioritize **long-term investments in sustainable agriculture** for youth, ensuring access to land, climate-smart technologies, and training to secure resilient and inclusive food systems.

- Recognize youth networks as bridges between traditional knowledge and modern innovation, facilitating the adoption of agroecological practices, sustainable soil and water management, and climate-resilient livestock systems.
- Promote a just transition in agrifood systems, addressing climate-induced migration pressures on agrarian youth and ensuring voluntary, dignified choices for those who remain or move.
- Support the creation of youth-led innovation and technology hubs for climate-smart agriculture, agroecology, and digital solutions, enabling young farmers to develop and scale local solutions.
- Develop **tailored capacity-building programs** to help youth organizations and young farmers navigate climate finance mechanisms effectively, including project design, application, management, and reporting.
- Promote youth participation in data-driven evaluation and decision-making within climate-resilient agricultural systems.

Climate Justice and Youth Migration

Recalling Article 2 of the Paris Agreement, which emphasizes the importance of equity and the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), and recognizing the work of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) in advancing protection frameworks for Climate-affected populations;

Acknowledging decision 1/CMA.6 and the outcomes of the Global Stocktake (Baku 2024) which underlines the social dimensions of climate action, including the need to uphold human rights, intergenerational equity and the right to development in all adaptation and resilient efforts;

Noting that climate change is increasingly driving youth migration from rural areas, disrupting agricultural livelihoods, eroding local food systems and amplifying existing inequalities, especially among rural youth and young women;

Recognizing that young migration, when addressed through the lenses of climate justice, can serve as both an adaptation strategy and a pathway for innovation and resilience, yet, it remains misrepresented in national adaptation plans, just transition frameworks and climate finance strategies.

It is critical that youth mobility be addressed not as a symptom of crisis, but as a component of systemic transformation that upholds the rights, dignity and agency of young people. Without this, climate induced migration risks deepening socioeconomic divides and eroding the adaptive capacity of communities most affected by the climate emergency.

We urge Parties to:

- Integrate just transition principles in agricultural and rural climate policies, ensuring safe, voluntary, and dignified youth mobility.
- Provide targeted support to climate-affected youth to access training, land, and finance in both rural and urban contexts.
- Recognize youth migration as both an adaptation strategy and a signal of systemic gaps, requiring cross-sectoral solutions.
- Integrate youth perspectives into National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Just Transition Work Programmes and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), ensuring that climate mobility is informed by the lived experiences of rural youth and local communities.

Finance

Parties must ensure inclusive climate finance for smallholders, youth, women, and Indigenous communities to strengthen resilient food systems.

This need recalls Decision 3/CP.27 on the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance and related provisions under the Paris Agreement (Articles 2 and 9), which emphasize equity, country-driven approaches, and the importance of scaling up finance for both adaptation and mitigation.

It also builds on decisions 1/CP.21, 14/CMA.1, 9/CMA.3, 5/CMA.4, and 8/CMA.5, which recognize the persistent finance gaps, particularly for adaptation in vulnerable countries, and call for innovative, accessible, and transparent financing instruments. Despite these commitments, less than 2% of global climate finance currently reaches smallholder farmers and local youth-led initiatives², highlighting the urgent need for targeted financial mechanisms, capacity building, and support for locally driven, gender-responsive, and youth-inclusive climate action.

We call on Parties to:

- Create dedicated finance windows for youth, women, Indigenous communities, and smallholder farmers via local authorities, cooperatives, and producer organizations.
- Scale up diversified financing modalities, including public, private, philanthropic, blended finance mechanisms, and public-private partnerships, to support adaptation, resilience, and food system transformation.
- Develop de-risking mechanisms and incentive structures to support regenerative and agroecological practices (e.g., agroforestry, zero-tillage, crop rotation, soil restoration), especially youth-led initiatives.

- Introduce innovative financial instruments that avoid dependency on capital-intensive or input-heavy models, ensuring economic viability, sustainability, and long-term climate resilience.
- Embed participatory governance in finance initiatives to ensure meaningful community and youth representation in decision-making, prioritizing investments that directly enhance adaptive capacity and livelihoods.
- Establish capacity-building programs at local, national, and international levels to empower youth and farmers to access, manage, and leverage climate finance effectively for adaptation and mitigation.
- Conduct annual, disaggregated assessments of climate finance flows to track access among youth, women, IPLC, smallholders, and other vulnerable communities, identifying systemic barriers and opportunities.
- Require all financial entities and constituted bodies to provide regular, detailed, and transparent reporting on financial flows, access barriers, and solutions for small-scale farmers, youth, and vulnerable groups, in line with Decision 3/CP.27 and related guidance.
- Mobilize dedicated funds for youth-led and locally driven initiatives, including grants, and innovative guarantee instruments, to support inclusive, climate-resilient agriculture and community projects.
- Simplify access to climate finance for youth and vulnerable communities, providing technical support, capacity building, and mentoring to maximize effectiveness and local impact.
- Implement safeguards in blended finance to prevent disproportionate risks on vulnerable groups and ensure alignment with social, environmental, and human rights standards under the Paris Agreement.
- Ensure transparency and accountability of financial flows to youth, incorporating specific indicators on participation, co-benefits, and project outcomes.
- Engage youth as co-designers and decision-makers in the implementation of the multilateral programs, ensuring financing addresses local priorities and fosters innovation.
- The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) must integrate youth-specific targets and transparent indicators to ensure equitable access to finance for youth-led climate action

²The \$75 Billion Climate Finance Gap: An imperfect but important figure for small scale farmers <https://www.fao.org/rural-employment/resources/news-and-stories/detail-news/Strengthening-Youth-Engagement-in-Policy-for-Agrifood-Systems-Transformation/en>
<https://www.ifad.org/en/w/opinions/the-75-billion-climate-finance-gap-an-imperfect-but-important-figure-for-small-scale-farmers>

Gender and Inclusion

Gender-responsive climate action is essential to achieving equitable and effective outcomes under the UNFCCC. Despite progress made through the Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender (ELWP-G) and its Gender Action Plan (GAP), women remain underrepresented in climate negotiations, policymaking, and access to climate finance.

Historical gender inequalities exacerbate climate vulnerabilities, and women often face multidimensional barriers to participation, leadership, and resources. Key COP decisions, including 36/CP.7, 1/CP.16, 23/CP.18, 24/CP.27, and 15/CP.28, emphasize the need for gender mainstreaming across all targets and goals, enhanced participation of women in UNFCCC processes, and strengthened access to gender-responsive climate finance.

Achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement requires ensuring that climate action is inclusive, empowering women and girls, integrating gender- and age-disaggregated data, and promoting intergenerational equity.

We urge parties to:

- **Ensure full and meaningful participation of women and girls** in climate decision-making at all levels, including in national adaptation planning, mitigation strategies, and UNFCCC negotiations, with special attention to women in agriculture.
- **Strengthen gender-responsive climate finance** by simplifying access for grassroots women's organizations, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, providing capacity-building support, and ensuring funding prioritizes adaptation, agroecology, and food system resilience initiatives led by women.
- **Enhance reporting, monitoring, and accountability** by requiring all constituted bodies and financial entities to regularly report on gender integration, access to finance, and leadership representation, in line with ELWP-G and the Gender Action Plan.
- **Invest in capacity-building and knowledge sharing** for national gender and climate change focal points, local women's groups, and youth, ensuring technical, financial, and institutional support to design and implement gender-responsive climate strategies.
- **Promote inclusive engagement of men and boys** as allies in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment within climate action frameworks, ensuring systemic transformation across communities and institutions.
- Ensure gender action plans also address the specific needs of young women and girls in agriculture and climate decision-making.
- **Address systemic barriers faced by women**, including safety in rural and urban contexts, which limit participation and leadership in climate action.

- Ensure climate policies explicitly address women's safety in both rural and urban contexts, particularly in agricultural fields and value chains. This includes integrating gender sensitive agriculture, social protection systems and access to legal support within climate resilient rural development plans.

Indigenous People and Local Communities

Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) are critical actors in climate action, nature stewardship, and the protection of biodiversity. The Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) under the UNFCCC aims to strengthen their participation and ensure that their knowledge systems, rights, and priorities are fully integrated into climate policy and implementation.

This demand recalls decisions 1/CP.21, 2/CP.23, 2/CP.24, and 16/CP.26, as well as the Paris Agreement and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which emphasize the need for meaningful participation, social dialogue, and the protection of human rights, gender equality, and intergenerational equity.

Despite these commitments, youth and young IPLC leaders often face barriers to full engagement in decision-making processes, limiting intergenerational knowledge transfer and innovative climate solutions.

We urge parties to;

- **Ensure inclusive participation:** Parties should guarantee the full, meaningful, and equitable participation of youth, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities in the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP), including in the Facilitative Working Group, workshops, and thematic events.
- **Support youth representation:** Parties are urged to create dedicated youth seats and mentorship opportunities within the LCIPP structures to strengthen intergenerational leadership and knowledge transfer.
- **Enhance accessibility and capacity:** Parties should facilitate youth engagement by providing multilingual and digital tools, capacity-building programs, and technical support to enable active participation in intergovernmental processes and reporting.
- **Integrate knowledge systems:** Parties are encouraged to support co-design of climate actions that combine Indigenous knowledge systems with youth-driven innovations to strengthen local and regional climate resilience.
- **Provide financial and technical support:** Parties should allocate dedicated resources and funding to enable youth-led initiatives and participation in LCIPP events, including grants, training, and logistical support.
- **Secure land tenure and resource rights** for Indigenous youth and communities as a precondition for effective climate adaptation and resilience.

- **Ensure monitoring and accountability:** Parties should require reporting on youth and IPLC engagement in LCIPP activities, including outcomes, challenges, and recommendations, to inform the development of future workplans and ensure transparency, intergenerational equity, and effective implementation of the Platform's mandate.

YPARD urges Parties to COP30 to adopt inclusive, youth- and gender-responsive climate actions that strengthen resilience, empower rural communities, and ensure sustainable food systems. Rural youth, together with IPLCs, should be at the center of climate solutions, bridging science, innovation, and traditional knowledge to achieve global climate and development goals.

Contributors : Edoardo Corriere (Italy); Michelle Bidima (Burkina Faso); Manuel Olmos (Colombia); Jane Otieno (Kenya); Irwan Sutisna (Indonesia); Rosmery Báez Lizarazo (Colombia); YPARD PWG members.