

Identification Study

Youth and Climate Action in Pakistan

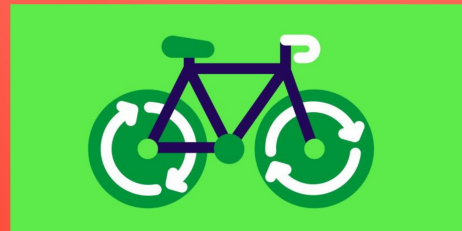
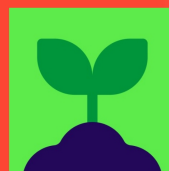
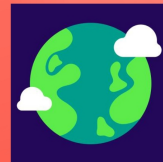
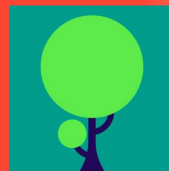


Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	4
BACKGROUND	4
OBJECTIVES OF THE IDENTIFICATION STUDY	4
METHODOLOGY	4
1. CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS	6
1.1. NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY FRAMEWORK	6
1.2. PROVINCIAL CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES	7
1.2.1. Punjab Climate Change Policy and Action Plan 2024	7
1.2.2. Sindh Climate Change Policy (SCCP)	7
1.2.3. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Climate Change Policy	7
1.2.4. Balochistan Climate Change Policy 2024	8
1.3. CROSS-CUTTING YOUTH POLICIES	8
1.3.1. National Adolescent and Youth Policy (NAYP)	8
1.3.2. National Youth Employment Plan.....	9
1.4. YOUTH IN CLIMATE POLICY INTEGRATION	9
1.4.1. Youth Provisions in National Climate Change Policy	9
1.4.2. Integration in National Adolescent and Youth Policy.....	10
1.4.3. Post-18th Amendment Provincial Variations	10
1.4.4. Gaps in Local Government Role	10
1.4.5. Implementations Challenges	11
2. CLIMATE GOVERNANCE & INSTITUTIONAL LANDSCAPE	12
2.1. MINISTRY OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATION (MOCC).....	12
2.2. PAKISTAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (PAK-EPA).....	12
2.3. PAKISTAN METEOROLOGICAL DEPARTMENT.....	12
2.4. CLIMATE DATA PROCESSING CENTRE	12
2.5. THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK IN PAKISTAN	13
2.6. NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT (NIDM)	13
2.7. CLIMATE EMERGENCIES PROTECTION UNIT (CEPU) – NATIONAL POLICE BUREAU	13
2.8. NATIONAL & MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CLIMATE PROGRAMS & PLATFORMS.....	13
2.8.1. Clean Green Pakistan Index	13
2.8.2. Living Indus Initiative	14
2.8.3. The Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change (CSCCC)	14
2.8.4. Pakistan Climate Resilience Research Coordination Network	14
2.8.5. Private Sector Engagement: Green Transition Metrics	14
2.8.6. Technology and Innovation Initiatives	14
2.8.7. Academic & Educational Climate Programs.....	15
3. YOUTH ENGAGEMENT IN CLIMATE ACTION	16
3.1. INSTITUTIONAL & ACADEMIC ENTRY POINTS FOR YOUTH ENGAGEMENT	16
3.1.1. Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agricultural Loan Schemes	16
3.1.2. Green Youth Movement (GYM) under PMYP	16
3.1.3. CM Punjab Climate Leadership Development Internship Program	16
3.1.4. Punjab E-Bike Scheme	16
3.1.5. Sindh Government's Climate Smart Technology Initiative	16
3.1.6. Curriculum Integration in Higher Education	17
3.1.7. HEC Research Priority Areas on Climate	17
3.1.8. University-based Environmental Clubs.....	17
3.1.9. Student Movements & Societies	17

Identification Study

3.2.	YOUTH-FOCUSED CLIMATE ACTION PLATFORMS & NETWORKS	18
3.2.1.	<i>The Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative</i>	18
3.2.2.	<i>The National Youth Volunteer Network (NYVN).....</i>	18
3.2.3.	<i>Bargad Volunteer Network (BVN)</i>	18
3.2.4.	<i>Mahwari Justice.....</i>	18
3.2.5.	<i>Her Climate</i>	19
3.2.6.	<i>Youth Climate Education and Fellowship Program 2025</i>	19
3.2.7.	<i>Youth Climate Activists Pakistan (YCAPK)</i>	19
3.2.8.	<i>Climate Clubs through VOCAL</i>	19
3.2.9.	<i>Climate Action Clubs & Green Campus Initiatives</i>	19
3.2.10.	<i>Youth Development Programme (YDP) by WWF</i>	20
3.2.11.	<i>Booni Environmental Academy (BEA) & Climate Forward Pakistan (CFP)....</i>	20
3.2.12.	<i>Local Conference of Youth (LCOY Pakistan)</i>	20
3.3.	YOUTH, MARKET, AND CLIMATE CHANGE	20
3.3.1.	<i>Youth Entrepreneurship in Green Business</i>	20
3.3.2.	<i>Climate Tech Startups and Innovation.....</i>	21
3.3.3.	<i>CSR and Youth Climate Engagement.....</i>	21
3.4.	YOUTH AGRIBUSINESS CLIMATE INITIATIVES	21
3.4.1.	<i>The Agribusiness Support Fund</i>	21
3.4.2.	<i>Acumen's \$90 Million Commitment for Agribusiness Climate Adaptation</i>	22
3.4.3.	<i>Climate Risk Financing for Pakistan's Agrifood Sector by GIZ and BMZ</i>	22
3.5.	YOUTH IN ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND DATA COLLECTION	22
3.6.	INTERNATIONAL PARTNER PROGRAMS & CBOs	22
3.7.	YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND LOCAL INNOVATION	23
3.7.1.	<i>LCOY Pakistan</i>	23
3.7.2.	<i>Model Conference of Parties (MCOP)</i>	23
3.7.3.	<i>Native Youth Club for Climate Change (NYCCC)</i>	23
3.7.4.	<i>VOCAL Program: Empowering Vulnerable Youth</i>	24
3.7.5.	<i>VGreenO.....</i>	24
3.7.6.	<i>Taqalum</i>	24
4.	PAKISTAN'S GLOBAL CLIMATE COMMITMENTS & YOUTH LINKAGES	25
4.1.	PARIS AGREEMENT ALIGNMENT & NDC ALIGNMENT	25
4.2.	SDG 13 IMPLEMENTATION & REPORTING	25
4.3.	GLOBAL YOUTH MOVEMENTS AND UNFCCC YOUTH FRAMEWORKS	26
4.4.	POLICY ALIGNMENT WITH GLOBAL APPROACHES.....	26
4.5.	INTERNATIONAL FUNDING MECHANISM	26
4.5.1.	<i>Green Climate Fund (GCF)</i>	26
4.5.2.	<i>Global Environment Facility</i>	27
4.6.	YOUTH IN INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS	27
4.7.	THE WAY AHEAD FOR YOUTH CLIMATE LEADERSHIP	27
5.	PERSPECTIVES AND KEY INSIGHTS FROM CLIMATE EXPERTS	29
5.1.	BACKGROUND AND UNDERSTANDING OF CLIMATE CHANGE	29
5.1.1.	<i>Defining Climate Change in the Context of Pakistan</i>	29
5.1.2.	<i>Top Climate Challenges for Youth.....</i>	29
5.1.3.	<i>Youth Climate Awareness</i>	30
5.2.	YOUTH PERCEPTION & PARTICIPATION.....	30
5.2.1.	<i>Youth Roles in Climate Action</i>	30
5.2.2.	<i>The Most Passionate Issues for Youth</i>	30
5.2.3.	<i>Motivators and Barriers for Youth Action</i>	30
5.2.4.	<i>Inspiring Youth-Led Climate Initiatives</i>	31
5.3.	YOUTH IN CLIMATE POLICY & GOVERNANCE	31

Identification Study

5.3.1.	<i>Youth Voices in Policymaking</i>	31
5.3.2.	<i>Skills, Platforms, or Support for Youth Engagement</i>	31
5.4.	STRATEGIC INSIGHTS	31
5.4.1.	<i>Youth Strengths in Climate Action</i>	31
5.4.2.	<i>Priority Themes for Youth-Led Efforts</i>	32
5.4.3.	<i>Keys to Successful Youth Initiatives</i>	32
5.5.	EXISTING OPPORTUNITIES	32
5.6.	PRIORITY PRINCIPLES FOR POLICY	34
5.7.	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	36
6.	PROPOSED THEMES AND GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR YOUTH CONSULTATIONS	37
6.1.	PROPOSED THEMES	37
6.1.1.	<i>Climate Education Reform and Sensitization</i>	37
6.1.2.	<i>Youth Participation, Leadership, and Representation</i>	37
6.1.3.	<i>Skills, Capacity Building, and Practical Training</i>	38
6.1.4.	<i>Priority Climate Action Themes for Consultation</i>	38
6.1.5.	<i>Climate Resilience and Local and Actionable Solutions</i>	38
6.1.6.	<i>Barriers to Youth Engagement</i>	38
6.1.7.	<i>Opportunities, Linkages, and Partnerships</i>	39
6.1.8.	<i>Communication, Media, and Narrative Building</i>	39
6.1.9.	<i>Policy Recommendations from Youth and Stakeholders</i>	39
6.2.	PROPOSED GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR CONSULTATIONS	39
6.3.	THEME-QUESTION MATRIX	40
ANNEXURES		42
ANNEXURE 1:	KEY RESOURCES AND USEFUL WEBLINKS	42
ANNEXURE 2:	EXPERTS ENGAGED IN IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS	44
ANNEXURE 3:	QUESTIONS FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS.....	45

Introduction

Background

Pakistan has one of the largest youth populations in the world, with 64% of its citizens under the age of 30. While the country increasingly acknowledges climate change as a pressing issue, young people—particularly those from rural areas and smaller cities—remain largely excluded from policy dialogue and decision-making processes. To address this gap, Bargad has launched a project titled “Youth Consultations for Policy and Climate Action,” aimed at amplifying youth voices in climate governance. The initiative will organize four provincial policy consultations to: gather youth recommendations; raise awareness of climate-related opportunities for youth; and connect climate change champions with policymakers, and key platforms to advance youth-led climate advocacy and action.

This initiative is a part of the Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative (PYLI)—a three-year national programme led by the British Council Pakistan in collaboration with the Government of Pakistan’s Prime Minister’s Youth Development Programme, Higher Education Commission (HEC), UNDP Pakistan, civil society organizations (CSOs), and public universities. The PYLI aims to empower young women and men across Pakistan to uphold social and ethical values, embrace diversity, and take inclusive, responsible action in advancing the sustainable development agenda, particularly in the area of climate action.

To inform the consultations and ensure a well-grounded dialogue process, Bargad I commissioned a study to identify key climate-related issues affecting youth, assess available programs and policy access, and establish a knowledge base for policy advocacy.

Objectives of the Identification Study

The objective of this research assignment is to conduct an identification study that outlines key policy and practice issues, youth mapping, existing landscape of opportunities, and barriers concerning youth engagement in climate action across Pakistan. The study will inform the upcoming policy consultations and provide recommendations to strengthen youth participation in climate policy and practice.

Methodology

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating primary qualitative interviews with secondary desk research to capture a comprehensive understanding of youth landscape and engagement in climate action.

The research team conducted a comprehensive review of secondary data to inform this report. This included an in-depth analysis of climate change policies, strategic frameworks, and institutional landscapes within Pakistan. The team mapped the structures and networks involved in climate action, highlighting the opportunities, case studies, and linkages of youth in climate action in through governance, academia, civil society, NGOs, and the private sector. This review covered a wide spectrum, from national and provincial initiatives to Pakistan’s international climate commitments, capturing the diverse forms of youth engagement in climate resilience efforts.

Identification Study

The research team conducted nine (9) in-depth interviews with a diverse group of stakeholders, including climate experts, youth climate champions, practitioners, and academics. This selection ensured representation across gender, urban-rural divides, socio-economic backgrounds, and climate vulnerability, including regions affected by floods and droughts. They were asked a set of questions on understanding climate change, youth perception & participation, youth in climate policy & governance, current opportunities, strategic insights, and expert recommendations.

Finally, the consultant synthesized the findings into a proposed themes and guiding questions for the forthcoming youth consultations.

The present report is divided into three sections: (i) desk review, (ii) insights of climate experts, and (iii) proposed themes and guiding questions. It is valuable for policymakers, youth advocates and workers, climate experts, educators, CSOs, and development organizations aiming to enhance youth participation in climate action.

SECTION 1: DESK REVIEW

EXISTING LANDSCAPE OF YOUTH AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN PAKISTAN

This desk review examines climate change work in Pakistan by mapping national policies, major initiatives, and the level of youth participation in climate action. It focuses on identifying the direction of state response, and how young people are contributing to or being involved in climate efforts. The review builds a clear picture of how climate change is being addressed and where youth fit into the broader response.

It provides a comprehensive analysis of the critical elements shaping youth engagement in climate action in Pakistan. It examines the climate change policies and strategic frameworks that guide national and local responses to environmental challenges. Additionally, it maps the key governance structures and institutional landscapes that influence climate decision-making, highlighting the roles of government bodies, NGOs, and community-based organizations.

This review also explores the various platforms and networks dedicated to youth-focused climate action, shedding light on the opportunities for young leaders to contribute to climate resilience and sustainability. By identifying institutional and academic entry points for youth engagement, it underscores the importance of integrating youth voices into policy processes, ensuring that young people are active participants in climate governance.

Moreover, the review assesses the integration of youth perspectives into climate policies, examining the extent to which young people are involved in policy formulation and implementation. It also connects Pakistan's global climate commitments to youth linkages, emphasizing the need for a coordinated, youth-driven response to climate challenges.

The concluding part offers insights into the way forward for youth climate leadership, providing a roadmap for empowering the next generation of climate leaders. This comprehensive approach aims to strengthen youth participation, promote innovation, and build a more resilient future, supported by a curated list of key resources and useful weblinks for further exploration.

1. Climate Change Policies and Strategic Frameworks

1.1. National Climate Change Policy Framework

Pakistan's climate policy framework is anchored in the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP), first introduced in 2012 to address the country's climate vulnerabilities. The policy was updated in 2021 following the Paris Climate Accord, combining adaptation and mitigation strategies with a focus on nature-based solutions. The NCCP 2021 covers key sectors like water management, agriculture, coastal protection, and biodiversity conservation. It promotes ecosystem restoration through initiatives like the Ecosystem

Restoration Initiative (ESRI), which integrates adaptation and mitigation. The framework also includes the Ten Billion Tree Tsunami Programme, targeting 500 MtCO₂e carbon sequestration by 2040 through afforestation, the Urban Forest Project for urban greening, the Clean Green Pakistan Movement for community-led sustainability, and the Protected Areas and National Park Initiatives, which aim to increase protected land to at least 15% of the country's territory to conserve biodiversity. The framework encourages a shift to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and sustainable practices in transport, industry, and agriculture, aligning national goals with global climate targets.

1.2. Provincial Climate Change Policies

1.2.1. Punjab Climate Change Policy and Action Plan 2024

The Punjab Climate Change Policy and Action Plan 2024 aims to build a climate-resilient Punjab through adaptation, mitigation, and cross-cutting measures. It sets baselines for integrating climate adaptation into development, improving air quality, supporting vulnerable populations, and promoting low-emission growth. The policy outlines targets for 2027, 2030, and 2035, focusing on protected areas, disaster management, renewable energy, and carbon trading. It prioritizes water resource management, sustainable agriculture, and urban planning to reduce climate risks. The plan also includes establishing Climate Change Cells in provincial departments to improve policy coordination and knowledge sharing. It integrates climate education into school curricula and higher education programs, promoting youth participation in climate action. The policy encourages young people to engage in climate resilience efforts, supports green skills training, and includes youth in decision-making processes. It also addresses the role of women and vulnerable groups in climate action, aiming for inclusive and equitable outcomes.

1.2.2. Sindh Climate Change Policy (SCCP)

The Sindh Climate Change Policy (SCCP), adopted in 2022, addresses climate challenges like heatwaves, water scarcity, and pollution, aligning with Pakistan's climate commitments under its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the National Climate Change Policy 2021. It supports a 50% reduction in projected emissions by 2030, a shift to 60% renewable energy, 30% electric vehicle adoption, and promotes Nature-Based Solutions. The policy sets sector-specific adaptation measures to improve water, food, and energy security, prioritizing vulnerable groups and local climate resilience. It aims to reduce the impacts of rising temperatures, projected to increase by up to 5°C by the 21st century, and addresses the rising frequency of droughts. The SCCP emphasizes stakeholder collaboration through provincial committees, local government involvement, and community-driven initiatives. It promotes youth participation in climate action, encouraging innovation and leadership in climate resilience efforts. The policy also integrates climate education, awareness, and capacity-building to prepare the next generation for climate challenges.

1.2.3. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Climate Change Policy

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Climate Change Policy, first introduced in 2017 and revised in July 2022, provides a provincial framework for climate action following the 18th

Constitutional Amendment. It aligns with the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) 2021, integrating climate resilience into sectors like agriculture, water resources, energy, and infrastructure. The policy considers regional challenges, including floods, droughts, and locust outbreaks, with the 2022 revision incorporating the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs). The accompanying Climate Change Action Plan identifies 129 climate-impacting factors and proposes 172 environment-friendly practices, categorized into immediate, short-term, medium-term, and long-term measures. It emphasizes linking investments to sustainable infrastructure, disaster resilience, and adaptive planning. A Climate Change Cell within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) coordinates provincial climate efforts, supported by an Implementation Committee that facilitates collaboration among government agencies, civil society, and private sector stakeholders. The policy encourages youth involvement through awareness campaigns, education, and capacity-building programs, aiming to engage young people in climate resilience and adaptation strategies.

1.2.4. Balochistan Climate Change Policy 2024

The Balochistan Climate Change Policy (BCCP) 2024, developed by the Government of Balochistan with UNDP support, aims to tackle climate challenges through adaptation and mitigation strategies that emphasize gender inclusivity. Key vulnerabilities include recurring droughts affecting 1.8 million people due to a 24.4% precipitation decline, 2022 floods causing damages equal to 15% of recovery needs, sea-level rise impacting critical infrastructure along 735 km of coastline, and extreme heatwaves peaking at 52°C in 2017. Objectives focus on building resilience via ecosystem-based adaptation, reducing greenhouse gas emissions in key sectors, ensuring sustainable natural resource management, and enhancing water resource efficiency. The policy aligns with national goals and identifies funding opportunities from sources like the Green Climate Fund. Priority areas include agriculture, water management, coastal ecosystems, disaster risk response, and renewable energy, all underpinned by a governance framework to monitor progress and empower local communities.

1.3. Cross-cutting Youth Policies

1.3.1. National Adolescent and Youth Policy (NAYP)

[The National Adolescent and Youth Policy](#) represents a landmark initiative under development through an extensive nationwide consultation process spanning 25 cities. The National Adolescent and Youth Policy (NAYP) in Pakistan aims to empower youth aged 10 to 29 by promoting inclusivity and accessibility across educational and religious sectors. Spearheaded by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, it emphasises youth-centred policymaking through consultations, engages stakeholders like religious scholars and academic institutions, and utilises digital platforms such as the Digital Youth Hub for skills development. Regional national consultations ensure the policy reflects the diverse needs of young Pakistanis, while endorsements from leaders highlight its potential to serve madrasa students as nation-builders. The NAYP seeks to align with national youth development goals by addressing sexual and reproductive health and life skills-based education, contributing to Pakistani socio-economic progress.

NAYP's development purposefully includes youth from formal educational institutions and madrassas, recognizing the need for policies that cater to all demographic groups. The policy development process connects the Digital Youth Hub to various youth segments, offering opportunities like interest-free loans, skills development, and educational advancement to young people in different communities. This consultative approach shifts from traditional top-down methods, enhancing relevance and adoption among the target demographic.

1.3.2. National Youth Employment Plan

[The National Youth Employment Plan](#), currently in its final stages of completion, is part of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP). It aims to combat unemployment by providing vocational training and job opportunities for 2.4 to 6 million youths over four years, creating 226,000 job opportunities annually. The plan focuses on equipping young people with skills demanded by industries, establishing partnerships with 600 training providers, and developing a comprehensive database to align training with market needs. It aims for inclusivity by supporting marginalised groups and emphasises the integration of a Digital Youth Hub, which has already registered nearly one million youths and lists 1.5 million job opportunities.

1.4. Youth in Climate Policy Integration

Pakistan's efforts to integrate youth in climate policy have expanded in recent years, reflecting a growing recognition of the potential of young people to contribute to climate action. Initiatives like the Green Youth Movement (GYM), launched under the Prime Minister's Youth Program in collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change, aim to engage university students through training, capacity building, and environmental advocacy. However, challenges remain, including variations in training quality, limited input from climate professionals, and uneven alignment with broader climate strategies.

The Ministry of Climate Change has also partnered with UNDP to produce the "Youth and Climate Change Perception" report, which provides insights into the perspectives of Pakistani youth on climate issues. This collaboration highlights a shift towards data-driven policy making, emphasizing the need for structured youth engagement and practical climate education. Moving forward, addressing gaps in technical expertise, consistency in program delivery, and meaningful participation will be critical for effectively integrating youth voices into climate policies.

1.4.1. Youth Provisions in National Climate Change Policy

Pakistan's National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) provides an overarching framework to address current and future climate challenges. The policy's primary goal is "to ensure that climate change is mainstreamed in the economically and socially vulnerable sectors of the economy and to steer Pakistan towards climate compatible development". While the NCCP outlines 14 main objectives, including pursuing sustained economic growth, building climate-resilient infrastructure, and promoting transition to cleaner development, it lacks explicit provisions specifically targeting youth engagement. The policy does include objectives to "enhance the awareness, skill and institutional capacity of relevant

stakeholders" and "to promote tree plantation, conservation of natural resources, nature-based solutions and long term sustainability," which indirectly create pathways for youth participation. Recent revisions to Pakistan's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) have begun to address this gap by including a more targeted plan for incorporating youth and women in greater climate action.

1.4.2. Integration in National Adolescent and Youth Policy

The upcoming National Adolescent and Youth Policy aims to create more inclusive youth engagement in climate action, though specific details are limited in the search results. However, various youth-focused climate initiatives have emerged in recent years. The Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) Pakistan serves as a prime example, providing a platform where young climate activists, students, and entrepreneurs lead discussions around climate action and policymaking ahead of the Conference of Parties (COP). In 2024, LCOY events were held in 115 countries, including Pakistan, where the organizers took an unprecedented approach by conducting province-specific LCOYs – all women-led – to ensure voices from every region were represented at the national conference. Similarly, [the Model Conference of Parties 2025](#) (MCOP 2025) brought together over 400 students and educators from 14 schools across Islamabad to build awareness on youth roles in climate action, governance, and global negotiations.

1.4.3. Post-18th Amendment Provincial Variations

Following Pakistan's 18th Constitutional Amendment, which devolved many environmental responsibilities to provinces, there has been uneven youth engagement in climate policies across different provinces. This provincial variation is evident in climate action initiatives and youth engagement approaches. Balochistan Youth Policy encourages youth to engage in climate action programs and initiatives, including local projects that address climate adaptation and mitigation. KP has received special focus for youth and women development in the formulation of this climate change action plan. Sindh acknowledges the lack of youth representation in combating climate change initiatives and planning in climate policy.

1.4.4. Gaps in Local Government Role

Several critical gaps exist in Pakistan's approach to youth involvement in climate action. Most notably, many climate policies lack explicit youth provisions, inadequate resources are allocated for youth climate initiatives, and weak implementation mechanisms. Despite 64% of Pakistan's population being under 30, it remains "alarming that young people aren't more involved in climate policy discussions". The Atlantic Council identified key [recommendations](#) to address these gaps, including empowering grassroots and community leaders, investing in education for sustainable development, partnering with Pakistani universities to fund climate change fellowships, collaborating with the private sector on climate investment opportunities, and strengthening relationships with the Pakistani diaspora. Initiatives like Islamic Relief Pakistan's VOCAL (Voices Organized for Climate Change Advocacy and Lobbying) program are working to fill these gaps by empowering young people, especially girls from disadvantaged areas, through 'climate clubs,' resilience training, and advocacy for sustainable solutions.

1.4.5. Implementations Challenges

Despite national and provincial policy developments, there remains limited integration of youth participation mechanisms at the local government level. While Pakistan has made strides in developing climate change policies, implementation remains a significant challenge due to institutional shortcomings. The federal Ministry of Climate Change has struggled to establish a robust climate change regime, and provincial environmental departments, often staffed with non-technical personnel, have primarily focused on administrative tasks rather than substantive climate action. This institutional weakness mainly affects youth engagement at the grassroots level, where effective climate action requires local governance structures that can meaningfully involve young people in decision-making processes. The LCOY Pakistan event in 2024 highlighted "the need for greater grassroots engagement in climate action, as well as the strengthening of mechanisms to make youth voices heard at the policy level".

2. Climate Governance & Institutional Landscape

2.1. Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC)

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC) is Pakistan's main authority for climate policy and environmental management. It coordinates with specialized agencies to develop climate strategies, including the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), which focuses on mainstreaming adaptation into national planning. The NAP, developed through extensive consultations, includes priorities like agriculture-water management, urban resilience, and disaster preparedness. The MoCC also engages youth through initiatives like the "Youth and Climate Change Perception" report, produced with UNDP in 2021, to incorporate young voices in climate policy.

2.2. Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA)

The Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA), established under the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act of 1997, is responsible for enforcing environmental regulations and promoting sustainable development. It sets National Environmental Quality Standards (NEQS), conducts inspections, and requires environmental impact assessments for projects. Pak-EPA addresses issues like air and water pollution, climate change, and land degradation. It publishes the National Environment Report, tracking key indicators like CO₂ levels. The agency also engages youth through awareness programs and partnerships, promoting public education and environmental responsibility.

2.3. Pakistan Meteorological Department

The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), established in 1947, operates under the Ministry of Defence as the country's National Meteorological and Hydrological Service. It provides weather forecasts, early disaster warnings, and climate data, supporting agriculture, public safety, and disaster risk reduction. Headquartered in Islamabad with a camp office in Karachi, PMD manages 15 meteorological observatories, four major divisions, and regional centres. It also conducts climate research, publishing over 350 scientific papers. PMD data shows a 0.47°C rise in mean annual temperatures from 1960 to 2007, highlighting changing climate patterns.

2.4. Climate Data Processing Centre

The Climate Data Processing Centre (CDPC), established in September 1988, is a specialized unit of the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) located at the Meteorological Complex in Karachi. It manages the storage, processing, retrieval, and distribution of climatological and meteorological data. CDPC supports sectors like water resource management, agriculture, energy, construction, health, and transport by providing accurate climate data for research, planning, and risk management. This data helps minimize the impacts of climate variability and extreme weather events.

2.5. The Disaster Management Framework in Pakistan

[The National Disaster Management Authority](#) serves as the lead federal agency dealing with the entire spectrum of disaster management activities in Pakistan. Established under the National Disaster Management Act of 2010, NDMA functions as the executive arm of the National Disaster Management Commission (NDMC), which operates under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. The authority coordinates emergency response efforts during national disasters through the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), leveraging cutting-edge technology for early warning systems and predictive modelling. NDMA's responsibilities include mapping hazards, developing guidelines, organising training, and coordinating emergency responses at the federal level.

2.6. National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)

The National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) in Pakistan, established on February 10, 2010, operates under the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). Based in Islamabad, it focuses on disaster preparedness, policy development, specialised training, and public awareness. In 2023, it conducted 20 training sessions for over 500 participants and plans 19 seasonal programs for 2024. NIDM collaborates with five international and nine national universities and eight regional NIDMs to support research and innovation. It works with provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs) to implement localized disaster management plans.

2.7. Climate Emergencies Protection Unit (CEPU) – National Police Bureau

[The Climate Emergencies Policing Unit](#) (CEPU) under the National Police Bureau addresses climate-induced crimes and disasters through coordinated law enforcement efforts. It conducts needs assessments, develops SOPs, and formulates policies to improve emergency response. The unit collaborates with government and civil society organisations, integrates technology, and researches environmental crimes. CEPU also trains police forces nationwide to handle climate-related disasters and enforces ecological laws while monitoring the effectiveness of response strategies.

2.8. National & Multi-Stakeholder Climate Programs & Platforms

2.8.1. Clean Green Pakistan Index

[The Clean Green Pakistan Index \(CGPI\)](#) is a performance-based tool that evaluates cities on five key pillars: Liquid Waste Management, Tree Plantation, Solid Waste Management, Total Sanitation, and Safe Drinking Water, each contributing 20% to the overall score. It uses over 35 performance indicators to measure urban environmental performance, supporting evidence-based policymaking. Data is collected over at least three months, with periodic rankings to encourage continuous improvement. The index promotes healthy competition among cities for recognition at provincial and federal levels, motivating local governments to enhance environmental management.

2.8.2. Living Indus Initiative

The Living Indus Initiative (LII), launched in 2021 by the Ministry of Climate Change with UN support, aims to restore over 25 million hectares of the Indus River Basin by 2030. It targets water conservation, pollution reduction, and nature-based agriculture, with 1.3 million hectares restored so far. The initiative plans to create 200,000 green jobs and requires an estimated \$17 billion for 25 priority interventions.

2.8.3. The Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change (CSCCC)

The [Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change \(CSCCC\)](#), is a network of 147 member organisations in Pakistan, working to influence climate policies through technical working groups. Since 2019, it has contributed to 18 [policy amendments](#). CSCCC supports adopting the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan (GAP) to ensure gender-responsive climate action, focusing on capacity building, gender balance, policy coherence, gender-responsive implementation, and effective monitoring and reporting.

2.8.4. Pakistan Climate Resilience Research Coordination Network

The program, [The Pakistan Climate Resilience Research Coordination Network \(RCN\)](#) is part of USAID's \$19 million Higher Education System Strengthening Activity ([HESSA](#)) program. It aims to strengthen climate adaptation and resilience research in Pakistan by building interdisciplinary teams, enhancing faculty research skills, and promoting international collaboration. The RCN supports research coordination, grant writing, and proposal development, with a focus on science-to-action approaches and sustained engagement among higher education institutions.

Grassroots organizations led by young Pakistanis are addressing climate challenges through innovative, community-centered approaches.

2.8.5. Private Sector Engagement: Green Transition Metrics

The Pakistan Green Building Council (PGBC) has certified 4.7 million square feet of LEED-compliant infrastructure, reducing energy consumption by 38–42%. SEED (Sustainability in Energy and Environmental Development) provides guidelines for sustainable building practices, focusing on climate change mitigation. The PGBC's [Net Zero Roadmap](#) aims to cut emissions in the construction sector by 50% by 2035, targeting 27% material efficiency and 58% renewable energy integration. In the energy sector, [Pakistan State Oil](#) is transitioning to renewable energy with solar-powered stations. Marri Petroleum has reduced flare gas emissions and collaborated with CDA to plant over 45,000 trees in Islamabad, supporting both environmental and community development.

2.8.6. Technology and Innovation Initiatives

Technology-focused programs are creating opportunities for Pakistani youth to develop climate solutions. The [Tech Camp 2023](#), organized by the National Incubation Center Peshawar and curated by Code for Pakistan, engaged students from seven Khyber Pakhtunkhwa universities to work on projects targeting net zero emissions. The event

brought together participants from various fields, fostering interdisciplinary solutions. Successful projects received funding from The Asia Foundation for further development. Notably, female participants made up the majority, with twelve out of twenty being women.

2.8.7. Academic & Educational Climate Programs

Several academic programs are equipping Pakistani youth with climate knowledge and leadership skills. One such initiative is the [Youth Climate Education and Fellowship Program 2025](#), launched by Transparency International Pakistan in collaboration with the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore. The program, with an eight-month curriculum, will educate 40 students on climate science, policy, sustainability, and disaster risk management. It concludes with an Innovation Challenge, encouraging participants to develop practical climate solutions, bridging theory and action.

3. Youth Engagement in Climate Action

3.1. Institutional & Academic Entry Points for Youth Engagement

3.1.1. Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agricultural Loan Schemes

Launched on January 24, 2023, by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, this scheme provides loans up to 7.5 million rupees to youth aged 21 to 45 (18 for IT and e-commerce), with micro-financing up to 1.5 million rupees. It supports agricultural innovation, mechanized farming, value chain development, and solar-powered equipment, promoting self-employment and reducing reliance on traditional job markets. The program targets rural youth, encouraging sustainable farming and entrepreneurship.

3.1.2. Green Youth Movement (GYM) under PMYP

The Green Youth Movement is an initiative of the Prime Minister's Youth Program, designed to empower youth to lead sustainable development and green growth. It engages youth in environmental conservation, climate adaptation, and eco-innovation through GYM clubs at 137 public sector universities. GYM supports initiatives in agriculture, waste management, water conservation, renewable energy, and eco-tourism, promoting research, mentorship, and model green campuses to foster best practices and environmental stewardship.

3.1.3. CM Punjab Climate Leadership Development Internship Program

The Punjab government runs the CM Punjab Climate Leadership Development Internship Program as part of the "My Punjab Smog Free" project. It offers internships and engages young graduates in climate action, focusing on smog reduction, waste management, and biodiversity in urban areas like Lahore. The program provides a three-month internship with a monthly stipend of PKR 60,000, up from PKR 25,000 in initial three batches. Interns can work remotely from their hometowns or preferred districts, reducing the need for relocation. The program offers practical experience in addressing environmental challenges.

3.1.4. Punjab E-Bike Scheme

The Punjab E-Bike Scheme, launched by the Punjab Government, provides affordable, eco-friendly transportation for students. In Phase 1, 1,000 electric bikes were distributed (700 for males and 300 for females), followed by Phase 2, targeting 100,000 e-bikes for students through interest-free instalments. Supported by a 1 billion PKR subsidy from the Punjab Government and the Bank of Punjab, the scheme covers over 800,000 students. It seeks to reduce commuting costs, ease traffic congestion, and cut fossil fuel use, addressing the 43% air pollution contribution from the transport sector in Punjab.

3.1.5. Sindh Government's Climate Smart Technology Initiative

Launched in 2025, this initiative by the Sindh government promotes climate-smart agricultural practices to address climate change and enhance food security. It includes water-saving techniques for wheat, double-row planting to reduce seed use, and the introduction of low-water crops like mustard. It also supports tunnel farming, saffron trials,

and disease-free banana production. The initiative collaborates with research institutions and farmers, indirectly benefiting young farmers through innovation and resource efficiency.

3.1.6. Curriculum Integration in Higher Education

Pakistan's national climate policy emphasizes integrating climate change and disaster risk reduction (DRR) into the formal education system, particularly in higher education. It calls for curricula that address environmental planning, gender considerations, and sustainable livestock management. This approach aims to build climate resilience through education, ensuring that future professionals are equipped to address the impacts of climate change.

3.1.7. HEC Research Priority Areas on Climate

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) in Pakistan has identified key research priorities to address climate change, focusing on (i) Sustainable Energy, (ii) Urban Planning, and (iii) Climate Change and Environment. These include developing battery and storage technologies, efficient smart grids, and sustainable energy platforms for urban and rural areas. In urban planning, the focus is on sustainable design, low-cost housing, mobility, and quality of urban life. Climate research emphasizes mitigation, adaptation, pollution reduction, and disaster management, including climate modeling and evidence-based policymaking.

3.1.8. University-based Environmental Clubs

Several universities in Pakistan have established environmental clubs to promote sustainability and environmental awareness among students. Some examples are given here:

The Environment Society at the University of Peshawar, founded in July 2018 by Dr. Asif Khan Khattak, aims to increase environmental awareness through seminars, workshops, and talks by environmental experts. It focuses on sustainable practices and eco-friendly initiatives within the campus, benefiting students, faculty, and administration.

The Society for Conservation of Environment & Nature (SCEN) at the University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (UVAS) Lahore supports professional development in Environmental Studies and Sciences. It addresses critical issues like pollution, resource overexploitation, and sustainable development through diverse learning approaches, creating a platform for students, faculty, and staff to engage in environmental advocacy.

The Environment Club at the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), active since 2007, focuses on raising awareness and organizing programs to improve environmental practices within and around the university campus.

The NBC Environment Club at the NUST Balochistan Campus encourages students to participate in conservation efforts and sustainable initiatives, promoting a greener campus and community.

3.1.9. Student Movements & Societies

Youth climate activism in Pakistan intensified after the 2022 floods, with young leaders participating in national and international climate forums. At COP28 in Dubai, activists like

Rida Rashid from “**Fridays for Future**” and “**Re-Earth Initiative**” advocated for climate justice and accountability, emphasizing transparency at local, national, and global levels. Hania Imran, head of “**Youth Climate Activists Pakistan**”, highlighted the importance of the Loss and Damage Fund for Pakistan. “**The COP In My City**” initiative enabled eight Pakistani activists to attend COP28 with support from the Ministry of Climate Change, reflecting institutional recognition of youth in climate diplomacy.

3.2. Youth-Focused Climate Action Platforms & Networks

3.2.1. The Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative

Launched in November 2023 by the British Council Pakistan, PYLI empowers youth aged 18-24, focusing on rural areas, to tackle climate change and promote sustainable development. In collaboration with entities like the Prime Minister’s Youth Programme and the UNDP, the initiative trains up to 290,000 youths in areas like tree planting, water conservation, renewable energy, and waste management. It also equips 80 universities and 30 CSOs and provides a Digital Learning Portal to support youth engagement on climate action.

3.2.2. The National Youth Volunteer Network (NYVN)

The National Youth Volunteer Network (NYVN) was established in 2023 by Bargad and VSO Pakistan, bringing together 155 individuals from diverse backgrounds. The network focuses on youth-led community projects. In Lahore, NYVN members led by Hussain Sajjad Hashmi planted 1,000 trees in educational institutions, complemented by climate change awareness sessions for students, as part of a climate action initiative. In Balochistan, the network conducted a training session on gender mainstreaming in climate action. Vice President Muzammil Majeed led a project in Lahore’s Jhugis, raising awareness about menstrual hygiene and producing reusable pads, training six women, and selecting three to continue the effort. Another member, Asma, led the Plastic-Free Market Zone project in Lahore, engaging 219 shopkeepers and 26 customers, promoting fabric bags, and collaborating with waste collectors.

3.2.3. Bargad Volunteer Network (BVN)

Bargad Volunteer Network (BVN) is a youth-led platform in Pakistan. BVN operates in 54 universities and 90 districts, including all provinces, and regions of Pakistan. It promotes volunteerism, youth cooperation, and community engagement through workshops, training sessions, surveys, and awareness campaigns. BVN actively engages youth in climate action. It has collaborated actions with the Ministry of Climate Change and Prime Minister Youth Program. Members have organized COP 29 simulations in Punjab and Balochistan, conducted climate awareness sessions, interfaith green walks, and plantation drives, promoting youth leadership in environmental sustainability.

3.2.4. Mahwari Justice

Mahwari Justice exemplifies how youth-led organizations are addressing intersectional climate impacts. Co-founded by Bushra Mahnoor and Anum Khalid, it has provided

menstrual support during climate disasters. In response to the 2024 monsoon floods, the organization sent dignity kits to Gwadar and prepared 600 more for distribution in Sindh, addressing critical health needs often overlooked in disaster response. This initiative highlights the role of youth in addressing the intersection of gender and climate impacts, ensuring that vulnerable groups receive essential support during crises.

3.2.5. Her Climate

Her Climate, an initiative of the Forum for Human Dignity (FDI), focuses on mobilizing young girls at the local level to raise awareness and develop strategies for reducing climate impacts in their communities. It equips climate champions with knowledge and advocacy skills for meaningful participation in policy-making. The initiative also offers the **Her Climate Fellowship**, providing young women with training in climate education, innovation, policy, and leadership, aiming to build a network of informed youth leaders.

3.2.6. Youth Climate Education and Fellowship Program 2025

Launched by Transparency International Pakistan and the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore, this eight-month fellowship aims to train 40 students on climate change, policy, and disaster risk management. The program culminates in an Innovation Challenge to develop solutions to climate issues. It fosters youth leadership, focusing on sustainable climate action through advocacy and leadership skills, providing students with tools for effective climate policy engagement.

3.2.7. Youth Climate Activists Pakistan (YCAPK)

Founded by Hania Imran, YCAPK is a platform that supports young climate activists with resources, training, and advocacy tools. YCAPK organizes climate camps, teaches advocacy skills, and conducts surveys on climate education gaps. The organization filed a court case on air quality enforcement in Pakistan, pushing for stronger regulations under the National Clean Air Policy. YCAPK empowers youth to engage in climate discourse, particularly in remote areas with limited access to such platforms.

3.2.8. Climate Clubs through VOCAL

Youth-led climate clubs under the Islamic Relief Pakistan's VOCAL ([Voices Organized for Climate Change Advocacy and Lobbying](#)) program address local environmental issues such as tree planting, waste management, and climate education. Supported by Islamic Relief, campaigns like "Adopt a Tree" promote urban forestry. These clubs encourage youth participation in climate action and have become crucial platforms for environmental advocacy, with members engaging in global forums like COP29. The initiative empowers young activists to lead local and international climate change solutions, transforming local ecosystems and community views on sustainability.

3.2.9. Climate Action Clubs & Green Campus Initiatives

University-based climate action clubs and green campus initiatives across Pakistan foster sustainability innovation. The [Green Campus Initiative](#) at the University of Peshawar

integrates waste management and sustainability practices on campus. Similar efforts, like Beaconhouse National University's CCES [Go Green](#) Campaign, engage students in activities such as tree planting and waste reduction. These initiatives promote environmental leadership and provide students with hands-on learning opportunities in project management and sustainability, fostering climate-conscious campuses across the country.

3.2.10. Youth Development Programme (YDP) by WWF

The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF-Pakistan) runs the Youth Development Programme (YDP) for Pakistanis aged 15-30, focusing on environmental education and conservation. The program includes expert-led training on topics like natural resource conservation, climate change, eco-entrepreneurship, and disaster management. Participants engage in community service through the Eco-Internship Programme, developing practical solutions to environmental challenges. Graduates receive formal recognition for their service hours and may qualify to become WWF-Pakistan Student Ambassadors, extending their impact as environmental advocates.

3.2.11. Booni Environmental Academy (BEA) & Climate Forward Pakistan (CFP)

Booni Environmental Academy (BEA) and Climate Forward Pakistan (CFP) are youth-led climate organizations focused on localized climate education and action. BEA hosted a regional climate summit in Chitral in 2022, in collaboration with the Canadian High Commission, engaging over 60 young activists in a five-day residential camp on climate science, regional impacts, and practical solutions. CFP, co-founded by young leaders like Didar Ali from Gilgit-Baltistan, addresses climate knowledge gaps, emphasizing grassroots education. His commitment to climate advocacy and awareness stems from firsthand experiences with environmental impacts, including the 2010 floods.

3.2.12. Local Conference of Youth (LCOY Pakistan)

The Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) Pakistan is a platform for youth engagement in climate action, operating under YOUNGO, the youth constituency of the UNFCCC. The 2023 National LCOY attracted 1,000+ participants, with provincial pre-LCOYs ensuring inclusivity.

3.3. Youth, Market, and Climate Change

3.3.1. Youth Entrepreneurship in Green Business

Innovative youth entrepreneurs across Pakistan are developing innovative business models to tackle environmental challenges while generating economic opportunities. In Gilgit-Baltistan, Zaheer Abbas's [Lokou Trading](#) produces 50,000 nonwoven fabric bags annually, addressing the local plastic waste problem and contributing to emission reductions. [Kamal Energy](#), founded in 2019 by Kamal Uddin, has installed around 700 solar-based energy systems across homes, schools, hospitals, and offices in Pakistan. This initiative promotes clean energy and offers cost-effective solutions as an alternative to expensive grid electricity.

Both ventures showcase how young entrepreneurs are merging commercial interests with environmental sustainability, addressing local climate issues, and contributing to the growing green economy by creating job opportunities and promoting a sustainable future.

3.3.2. Climate Tech Startups and Innovation

Youth in Pakistan are driving climate tech innovation to address critical environmental challenges. [EZ Bikes](#), for example, provides electric scooter services with battery swapping, offering clean transportation alternatives in cities like Lahore, which face severe air quality issues. [Farmdar](#), launched in 2021, uses artificial intelligence to optimize crop productivity, reduce harvest loss, and monitor plant health, supporting sustainable agriculture in one of the world's top agricultural producers. [Greenland Motors](#), Pakistan's first electric vehicle company, manufactures locally designed electric cars, promoting clean transportation and reducing carbon emissions. These startups illustrate how young entrepreneurs are creating market-based solutions to environmental challenges, aligning economic opportunities with climate action and demonstrating the potential for youth-driven businesses to contribute to sustainability and economic growth.

3.3.3. CSR and Youth Climate Engagement

The private sector in Pakistan is increasingly integrating youth into climate action through corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs. Pakistan State Oil (PSO), the country's major energy company, supports environmental sustainability as part of its CSR efforts, focusing on healthcare, education, and community development. This approach creates potential pathways for youth involvement in environmental projects. The collaboration between businesses and youth-led climate initiatives is emerging as a significant trend, linking corporate resources with youth-led innovation for sustainable solutions.

3.4. Youth Agribusiness Climate Initiatives

Pakistan, a country highly vulnerable to climate change, has seen a growing focus on youth engagement in agribusiness and climate initiatives. Both the government and private sectors have launched programs to empower young people to address climate challenges, particularly in agriculture, which employs half of the workforce and drives 77% of exports. Below is a detailed overview of key initiatives involving youth in agribusiness and climate action, supported by factual data and descriptive information.

3.4.1. The Agribusiness Support Fund

The Agribusiness Support Fund (ASF), established in 2005 with assistance from the Asian Development Bank, focuses on enhancing youth engagement in sustainable agriculture. While not exclusively aimed at youth, ASF improves service delivery in agribusiness value chains, fostering opportunities for young entrepreneurs. It supports income-generating activities across the entire value chain—from input supply to marketing—by addressing growth constraints. ASF also facilitates farmer group activities to enhance market access for smallholder farmers, including youth seeking sustainable livelihoods amid climate change challenges.

3.4.2. Acumen's \$90 Million Commitment for Agribusiness Climate Adaptation

On November 14, 2024, at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, Acumen committed \$90 million to promote climate-focused agribusinesses in Pakistan. This initiative targets growth-stage agribusinesses across the value chain, including farmer platforms, financial solutions, smart farming, and post-harvest technologies. It aims to support 12-15 businesses and increase incomes and crop yields for 13 million smallholder farmers by 2035, while also generating opportunities for young entrepreneurs in a sector where 90% of farmers are smallholders amid food insecurity affecting 90 million people.

3.4.3. Climate Risk Financing for Pakistan's Agrifood Sector by GIZ and BMZ

Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and supported by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, this initiative launched on April 14, 2025, focuses on climate risk financing for agrifood micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). It collaborates with rural financial intermediaries to develop financial solutions, improve climate risk awareness, and enhance risk management. The project employs AI tools like the ImpactSF Analyzer to suggest adaptation measures, aiming to boost resilience, productivity, and provide access to climate-smart finance for young agri-entrepreneurs.

3.5. Youth in Environmental Monitoring and Data Collection

Youth in Pakistan have also contributed to environmental monitoring and data collection through various grassroots and institutional initiatives. WWF-Pakistan's Youth Development Programme trains youth in conservation, while the "Plastic-Free Pakistan" campaign uses technology for local data tracking. The Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency offers internships for skills in research, project management, and sustainability. Youth in climate-vulnerable areas, like those involved in the "Mahwari Justice" initiative, have taken active roles in disaster response, addressing critical needs during the 2022 and 2024 floods. Research in Balochistan have highlighted the economic and health challenges youth face amid environmental degradation, emphasizing the need for their involvement in climate adaptation and resilience programmes.

3.6. International Partner Programs & CBOs

International organizations have been instrumental in creating platforms for youth climate engagement in Pakistan through funding, capacity building, and technical support.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supports the [Local Conference of Youth \(LCOY\)](#) Pakistan, which organized all-women-led provincial conferences in 2024, ensuring regional representation at the national gathering in Islamabad. UNDP also collaborated with Pakistan's Ministry of Climate Change on the ["Youth and Climate Change Perception Report"](#) and launched the Youth4Climate Call for Solutions, offering up to USD 30,000 for youth-led projects.

GIZ supports youth climate action through its ["Strengthening Climate Adaptation and Resilience \(SAR\)"](#) project, which has reached 30,000 beneficiaries through innovative

awareness programs. Additionally, GIZ Pakistan, launched the '[Solar Schools](#)' project to integrate renewable energy education into school curricula, raising awareness among Pakistani youth about sustainable energy solutions.

The British Council has established the "[Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative \(PYLI\)](#)" in collaboration with various organizations including the Higher Education Commission, UNDP Pakistan, and WaterAid Pakistan. It would train 140 facilitators, reaching 16,000 young adults in rural areas across four provinces.

3.7. Youth Leadership and Local Innovation

Across Pakistan, young leaders are rewriting the climate narrative time. This collection of case studies briefly showcases youth-led innovations that are not only raising awareness but building resilient, sustainable responses to climate change. We selected these stories based on three key criteria: (i) each initiative is deeply embedded in its community, demonstrating a strong understanding of local challenges; (ii) they've been recognized by respected national and international institutions, underscoring their credibility and impact; and most importantly, (iii) they have shown clear signs of sustainability over time. Whether it's turning classrooms into climate negotiation arenas, using creative protest to amplify unheard voices, or forming nationwide youth networks, these efforts reflect the power of youth leadership to meaningfully make a contribution in the face of a global crisis.

3.7.1. LCOY Pakistan

The Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) Pakistan has offered a platform for young climate activists, students, and entrepreneurs to engage in climate action and policymaking. In November 2024, the national LCOY event in Islamabad has brought together over 1,000 young participants. It has included all-women-led pre-LCOY events in every province, ensuring diverse representation in national discussions. The conference has concluded with a National Youth Statement presented at the COP.

3.7.2. Model Conference of Parties (MCOP)

In early 2025, Commonwealth Alumnus Manzil e Maqsood has organized the Model Conference of Parties (MCOP 2025), involving over 400 students and educators from 14 schools across Islamabad. This event has provided a hands-on experience of global climate negotiations, resulting in 20 proposed climate resolutions. Ten resolutions have been adopted, and winning teams have received funding and mentorship to implement their projects.

3.7.3. Native Youth Club for Climate Change (NYCCC)

The Native Youth Club for Climate Change (NYCCC) has emerged as Pakistan's largest climate youth organization, with over 2,100 members nationwide. It aims to empower youth as climate advocates, promote sustainability, and support youth-led initiatives.

3.7.4. VOCAL Program: Empowering Vulnerable Youth

Islamic Relief Pakistan's VOCAL (Voices Organised for Climate Change Advocacy and Lobbying) program has established climate clubs and provided training to equip youth with the skills needed for local, national, and global environmental action.

3.7.5. VGreenO

Founded by Muhammad Hammad Abbasi, VGreenO has evolved from a local initiative into a movement, participating in major climate events like LCOY conferences. It has focused on reducing plastic pollution and promoting sustainable alternatives.

3.7.6. Taqalum

Founded in 2023 in Lahore, Taqalum has focused on climate action through education and narrative building. It has launched initiatives like the Green Narrative Fellowship, which trains youth in climate storytelling, and the SDG Enlightenment Series to promote climate education.

4. Pakistan's Global Climate Commitments & Youth Linkages

Pakistan's position as one of the most climate-vulnerable countries despite contributing less than 1% to global emissions presents a critical context for examining youth engagement in climate action.

4.1. Paris Agreement Alignment & NDC Alignment

Pakistan has committed to the Paris Agreement by updating its climate policies. In 2021, the country submitted revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) aiming for a 50% reduction in projected greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Of this target, 15% is to be financed through national resources, while 35% relies on international support, requiring approximately USD 101 billion for energy transition. The goals include achieving 60% renewable energy and a 30% adoption rate of electric vehicles by 2030, alongside a complete ban on imported coal.

Pakistan acknowledges its vulnerability to climate change despite contributing only 0.9% to global greenhouse gas emissions. The country faces challenges such as intense flooding, altered rainfall patterns, melting glaciers, and rising vector-borne diseases. Although youth engagement is included as a guiding principle in the NDCs, the actual participation of youth in the process has been limited. However, emerging studies, such as "Effective Engagement of Youth for Meeting NDC Goals to Address Climate Change," conducted by the Ministry of Climate Change with Islamic Relief Pakistan, aim to enhance youth participation in the formulation and implementation of NDCs. This study highlights the potential contribution of youth to climate action and green growth.

4.2. SDG 13 Implementation & Reporting

Pakistan's progress on SDG 13 (Climate Action) shows a mixed picture regarding youth inclusion. The National SDGs Index improved by 10 percentage points from 2015 to 2020, reflecting Pakistan's commitment to integrating climate action into its development agenda. Projects like the Living Indus illustrate efforts toward ecosystem restoration, pollution reduction, and sustainable water management.

Despite these advancements, significant challenges remain, including inadequate renewable energy infrastructure, deforestation, and governance issues. Youth involvement in SDG 13 initiatives is inconsistent. The Green Youth Movement, for example, targets university students for climate action training. However, concerns about the quality of these programs arise from reliance on non-technical trainers and a lack of climate change professionals, hindering their effectiveness.

Youth participation in the monitoring and reporting of SDGs is also limited. Pakistan submitted its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) in July 2022, but evidence suggests minimal youth engagement in this process. Initiatives aimed at raising awareness, like the Oxfam Pakistan and Human Resource Development Network (HRDN) collaboration, strive to develop human capital by involving youth. However, there remains a gap in their active participation in formal SDG monitoring and reporting, missing critical insights from a demographic significantly affected by climate change.

4.3. Global Youth Movements and UNFCCC Youth Frameworks

Pakistan is experiencing increasing youth activism in climate initiatives, exemplified by LCOY Pakistan's alignment with global youth movements. The Ministry of Youth Affairs, in partnership with the Ministry of Climate Change, established the Green Youth Movement in response to this activism. However, this movement needs more substantial support and recognition. A recent assessment highlighted that following the youth-driven general election, political leaders attempted to channel youth energy towards addressing global challenges. With 69% of the population under 30, the future relies heavily on this demographic. Yet, concerns persist regarding the effectiveness of youth engagement programs due to insufficient training and limited involvement from climate experts.

Youth representation in UNFCCC processes is mainly through YOUNGO, the official youth constituency of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. In Pakistan, this is evident through LCOY, which represents the voice of youth climate activists. LCOY Pakistan has become a crucial platform, uniting over 1,000 young individuals nationwide for climate discussion and policy-making. In 2023, LCOY Pakistan celebrated a pivotal moment in youth empowerment under the theme "Youth Unite for Climate Action," emphasizing the significant role of young Pakistanis in championing a sustainable future. The 2024 LCOY Pakistan innovatively organized all-women provincial conferences, ensuring diverse regional voices were integrated into the National LCOY statement. This grassroots effort, led by youth organizations with limited resources, showcases the potential of youth-driven change in fostering inclusive climate action.

4.4. Policy Alignment with Global Approaches

Pakistan's climate policies show good alignment with global approaches in certain areas while demonstrating weaknesses in others. The National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) addresses emissions reduction through objectives like promoting "the country's transition to cleaner, lower emission and less carbon intensive development". Gender considerations are integrated into the policy through a focus on "pro-poor gender sensitive adaptation". However, while air pollution is acknowledged as a serious vulnerability-"increasing air pollution from agriculture, transport and industry resulting into smog inflicting huge loss to aviation, reduced mobility, loss of lives in accidents due to poor visibility and health hazard"-comprehensive measures to address it appear insufficient. Similarly, youth focus in climate policies remains weak, with youth mentioned primarily in passing rather than as central stakeholders in climate action planning and implementation.

4.5. International Funding Mechanism

4.5.1. Green Climate Fund (GCF)

The Green Climate Fund (GCF), established under the UNFCCC to redistribute resources from developed to developing countries, supports Pakistan's climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts with a portfolio of USD 249 million across seven approved projects. These include the Scaling up of Glacial Lake Outburst Flood Risk Reduction in Northern Pakistan (USD 37.5 million, UNDP), Transforming the Indus Basin with Climate Resilient Agriculture

and Climate Smart Water Management (USD 47 million, FAO), and Recharge Pakistan for ecosystem-based flood risk management (USD 77.8 million, WWF). Governed by a 24-member Board and supported by a Secretariat, the GCF allocates 50% of its resources to adaptation and 50% to mitigation, while also providing readiness and preparatory support to enhance country ownership.

4.5.2. Global Environment Facility

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), a family of funds addressing biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, and land/ocean health, has provided Pakistan with USD 80 million to tackle environmental priorities. Key projects under implementation include Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation through Water Resource Management in Leather Industrial Zones (USD 3.3 million, UNIDO), Addressing Drivers of Deforestation in Chilghoza Pine Forests (USD 4.5 million, FAO), and Combating Land Degradation through Sustainable Range and Livestock Management in Northern Punjab (USD 2.5 million, FAO). With funds replenished every four years via the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR), the GEF has also allocated USD 17.7 million for Pakistan for 2022-2024 to further support sustainable development initiatives.

4.6. Youth in International Partnerships

Pakistan has established collaborations with various international organisations to support climate action, though coordination challenges persist. LCOY Pakistan, for instance, has received support from organisations including the British Council, Islamic Relief, YECAP, Movers, and GIZ. Through the NDC Partnership, Pakistan has received support for activities like the first-ever Blue Carbon potential assessment and mainstreaming of gender into NDCs. Innovative initiatives like the Model Conference of Parties (MCOP) event have been organised to build youth capacity for participation in climate policy discussions. However, coordination among these diverse partnerships remains a challenge, potentially diluting their impact. Additionally, there appears to be limited systematic integration of these international partnerships into a coherent framework for youth engagement in climate action, suggesting the need for a more strategic approach to leveraging international support for youth-led climate initiatives.

4.7. The Way Ahead for Youth Climate Leadership

The assessment of youth involvement in climate action in Pakistan reveals a landscape of emerging opportunities amid persistent challenges. While frameworks like LCOY and the Green Youth Movement provide platforms for youth engagement, more substantive integration of youth perspectives into official climate policies, NDCs, and SDG processes is needed. Pakistan's climate vulnerability makes youth participation not just beneficial but essential for developing sustainable and inclusive approaches to climate resilience. Strengthening youth climate leaders' capacity, enhancing youth engagement programs' quality, and systematically integrating youth perspectives into climate policy frameworks will be critical for maximizing the potential of Pakistan's youth demographic dividend in addressing the climate crisis.

The involvement of Pakistani youth in climate action represents a critical opportunity for the country to address its environmental challenges effectively. With climate change disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations, including youth, their active participation in policy formulation and implementation is not merely beneficial but essential. Pakistan's experience demonstrates that while policy frameworks are gradually evolving to include youth perspectives, significant work remains to translate these into meaningful engagements at all governance levels. For Pakistan to build climate resilience and achieve sustainable development goals, investing in youth capacity, creating inclusive participation mechanisms, and addressing implementation gaps must become priorities in climate governance.

SECTION 2:

PERSPECTIVES & KEY INSIGHTS FROM CLIMATE EXPERTS

5. Perspectives and Key Insights from Climate Experts

5.1. Background and Understanding of Climate Change

5.1.1. Defining Climate Change in the Context of Pakistan

Experts consistently defined climate change in Pakistan as a lived, urgent reality marked by extreme weather events, unpredictable rainfall, prolonged droughts, heatwaves, and new patterns of disease.

- In Balochistan, Mr. Jahangir Bazai described climate change as a cycle of unseasonal rains, heatwaves, and cold spells that have devastated agriculture, forced people to abandon traditional crops, and even pushed some toward illicit alternatives like cocaine cultivation due to repeated crop failures.
- Mr. Yousuf Nasar from Quetta added that climate change is evident in phenomena like snowfall in April and the increasing adoption of solar energy, yet the region's vast renewable energy potential remains untapped due to lack of awareness and government support.
- In Punjab, Mr. Waqar Butt and Ms. Bakhtawar Ahmad highlighted the intersection of climate change with urban issues such as smog, heatwaves, and floods, noting that while Pakistan is not a major emitter, its diverse geography-mountains, plains, deserts-makes it acutely vulnerable, and its people suffer the consequences of global emissions.
- Ms. Roshni Anwar from Sindh emphasized that climate change is not abstract but a daily, lived experience, especially as floods and heatwaves disrupt lives and livelihoods.

Across all regions, experts agreed that climate change is both an environmental and social crisis, deeply intertwined with economic insecurity, migration, and health.

5.1.2. Top Climate Challenges for Youth

The most pressing climate challenges for youth vary by region but share common threads. In Punjab and Sindh, urban youth face severe health impacts from smog and air pollution, leading to school closures, reduced productivity, and mental health stress. Water scarcity and drought are critical in Balochistan and rural Sindh, driving migration, agricultural decline, and food insecurity. Economic insecurity is a recurring theme: crop failures and livestock losses push rural youth into precarious urban jobs, while a lack of green skills limits employment in emerging sectors like renewables. Migration due to climate-induced disasters is noted as a major challenge, with entire communities relocating from villages to cities, often ending up in informal labor or small businesses. The cumulative effect is a sense

of vulnerability and frustration among youth, especially when their traditional sources of livelihood are eroded.

5.1.3. Youth Climate Awareness

Awareness among youth is growing but remains largely superficial and uneven. In urban centers, youth are mildly aware-often associating climate action with tree planting and recycling-while lacking deeper understanding of climate science or policy. Social media platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp are primary sources for quick updates, while university seminars and Google News provide more detailed information. In rural areas, direct engagement through colleges, community meetings, and agricultural extension services is more effective due to limited internet access and parental restrictions on mobile phone use. Experts noted that the curriculum is outdated and does not address current climate realities, leading to a lack of interest and understanding among both students and teachers. Misinformation spreads easily, and many youth rely on short videos or reels rather than in-depth articles or books. Overall, while some youth-led organizations and individuals are well-informed, the majority lack comprehensive climate literacy.

5.2. Youth Perception & Participation

5.2.1. Youth Roles in Climate Action

Youth see themselves as agents of change but often feel limited to small-scale or superficial actions. In Balochistan, initial enthusiasm for plantation drives has waned due to repeated droughts and lack of visible results, leading to a sense of resignation and “immunity” to climate issues among many young people. In Punjab and Sindh, youth are active in digital campaigns, tree plantations, and community projects, but their involvement is often voluntary, reactionary, and rarely structured or policy-driven. Ms. Roshni Anwar noted that while youth are eager to participate, they are seldom seen as decision-makers and are usually relegated to the role of responders during disasters. There is frustration over tokenistic inclusion in policy forums and a desire for more meaningful engagement and leadership opportunities.

5.2.2. The Most Passionate Issues for Youth

Youth are most passionate about issues that directly affect their lives: floods, water scarcity, urban pollution, and waste management. In Punjab, smog and air pollution are top concerns, while in Balochistan and Sindh, water management, agriculture, and disaster response are more pressing. Renewable energy, especially solar power, is gaining interest among youth in regions like Balochistan, where natural resources are abundant but underutilized. Gender and climate, disaster risk reduction, and climate justice are emerging themes among more engaged youth and advocacy groups.

5.2.3. Motivators and Barriers for Youth Action

Motivators include a sense of responsibility for future generations, exposure to role models, social media influence, and the desire for recognition and immediate results. Barriers are

significant: lack of funding, technical training, and accessible platforms, as well as a perception that individual actions have limited impact. Rural youth face additional challenges of internet gaps, patriarchal resistance, and limited institutional support. The absence of structured leadership pathways and the prevalence of tokenism in youth engagement further dampen motivation.

5.2.4. Inspiring Youth-Led Climate Initiatives

Numerous examples illustrate youth creativity and impact.

- In Balochistan, youth groups in Pishin and Muslimbagh have formed committees to protect wildlife, leading to the revival of endangered species like the Markhor.
- The Green and Blue Quetta project involved planting 50,000–60,000 trees in urban forests, maintained by youth volunteers who regularly visit and document their progress.
- In Punjab, the Medical Students Association (MSA) works at the intersection of health and climate, while the MOVERS project focuses on SDGs and climate action.
- In Sindh, organizations like Taj conduct solid waste management and tree plantation drives, and youth-led fitness centers have been established with support from the Kamyab Nojawan Initiative.
- Innovative tech projects, such as a young man in Loralai electrifying his village through hydropower, showcase the potential for grassroots innovation.

5.3. Youth in Climate Policy & Governance

5.3.1. Youth Voices in Policymaking

Across all interviews, experts agreed that youth participation in climate policymaking is minimal and often tokenistic. Consultations are typically led by NGOs or international donors, with little government follow-up or meaningful inclusion. Policy committees rarely include young representatives, and most youth engagement is passive or limited to urban, well-connected individuals. Even when youth chapters or fellowships exist, implementation is weak and access is limited, especially for marginalized or rural youth.

5.3.2. Skills, Platforms, or Support for Youth Engagement

Experts emphasize the need for climate education, campaign design, communication, digital literacy, technical skills (e.g., renewable energy installation), and policy literacy. Effective platforms include youth councils, university clubs, digital forums, and government-supported community centers. Support in the form of funding, mentorship, and practical opportunities for policy involvement is essential. There is a call for more inclusive and accessible processes to ensure diverse youth participation.

5.4. Strategic Insights

5.4.1. Youth Strengths in Climate Action

Pakistani youth bring innovation, energy, digital skills, and strong peer networks to climate action. They are adept at mobilizing communities, leveraging social media, and introducing

new ideas, especially in digital advocacy and grassroots initiatives. Youth can bridge traditional knowledge with modern solutions and are willing to experiment with new approaches, provided they receive adequate support and platforms.

5.4.2. Priority Themes for Youth-Led Efforts

Experts prioritize climate education and awareness, water management and conservation, and renewable energy as top themes for youth-led action. Other important areas include sustainable agriculture, urban planning, waste management, gender-climate intersections, and disaster risk reduction.

5.4.3. Keys to Successful Youth Initiatives

Success factors include clear goals, community relevance, sustainability, visible impact, inclusivity, adequate resources, mentorship, and strong networks. Projects that move beyond awareness-raising to offer practical, scalable solutions and adapt to local needs tend to have the greatest impact.

5.5. Existing Opportunities

Experts highlighted diverse youth opportunities in climate action across Pakistan, noting challenges like limited resources, bureaucratic barriers, and uneven access. While some promising initiatives exist, broader support, technical training, and simplified funding mechanisms are essential to fully engage youth as climate leaders and bridge gaps in participation.

Opportunities exist but are unevenly distributed and often difficult to access. University-level fellowships, internships, and innovation grants are available through organizations like the British Council, GIZ, UNDP, and Kamyab Nojawan Initiative. Government and donor-funded projects support agriculture, renewable energy, and capacity building, such as solar panel subsidies, drip irrigation, and climate-resilient agriculture. The private sector and CSR initiatives offer some opportunities, but these are often limited in scope and accessibility, with funding typically requiring collateral or prior business experience. Youth-led organizations and digital movements provide additional avenues for engagement, but grassroots youth, especially in rural areas, remain underserved.

Mr. Yousuf Nasar from Balochistan reflected on the evolving opportunities for youth in climate action within his province. The government had supported farmers by distributing subsidized solar panels and introducing drip irrigation systems, making agriculture more climate-resilient and water-efficient. Olive cultivation projects were also incentivized through government subsidies, allowing youth and small farmers to access olive saplings at reduced rates. However, these opportunities mainly reached those already engaged in agriculture or with some resources. Microfinance options like Akhuwat loans existed for business or entrepreneurship, but they were limited in scope and outreach. Technical universities such as BUIEMS had innovation departments that occasionally funded student-led climate tech ideas, including renewable energy solutions and eco-friendly motorcycles, but these were sporadic and not widely scaled. Community-level volunteer groups, like the Ashar Tanzeem, promoted environmental awareness and practical actions like tree

plantation and wildlife protection but operated without formal government backing. Overall, while youth showed willingness and ingenuity – for example, a young man in Loralai electrifying his village with hydropower – there was no structured government platform for youth climate action, and most initiatives relied on community self-organization and occasional university support.

Mr. Gul Buledi from Sindh described a more structured but still challenging landscape for youth engagement. His organization, SHIFA, had implemented the British Council's Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative (PYLI) in Jacobabad, which identified and trained youth to develop social action plans for climate resilience. WaterAid's Water Rights and Climate Resilience project operated in Jacobabad and Shikarpur, focusing on legislative advocacy, capacity building, and youth engagement in water management. The Start Network, in partnership with Radio Pakistan, funded anticipatory action for heatwaves in Jaffarabad, establishing cooling centers and training healthcare staff. Grants from international donors like GIZ and UNDP, as well as the Sindh Education Foundation, were available for youth-led projects but often required existing businesses or networks. The Kamyab Nojawan Initiative enabled youth to start climate-friendly businesses, such as eco-conscious fitness centers, but many grants required collateral or prior business experience, limiting access for marginalized or new entrants. University-level fellowships and innovation grants (e.g., from British Council, GIZ, UNDP) supported research and social action, but these opportunities were not yet widespread in rural or underserved communities.

Ms. Bakhtawar Ahmad from Punjab focused on the variety of opportunities available to youth in urban centers. University-level fellowships, workshops, and innovation grants were common, often supported by international organizations like the British Council, GIZ, and UNDP. Environmental societies and student groups were active in organizing seminars, recycling drives, and awareness campaigns. Notable youth-led startups included ReLife, which produced eco-friendly products, and various university environmental clubs focusing on recycling and climate education. The Punjab government had launched initiatives like the Clean Green School Programme and electric bus projects, although access for youth was limited and often bureaucratic. The Bank of Punjab financed electric bikes for youth, facilitating green mobility. However, most government engagement with youth remained limited to token participation in public events or through formal applications to ministries, making it difficult for youth to access decision-making spaces. While international exposure and conferences were available to some, provincial and federal government platforms for youth engagement in climate action remained scarce, and community centers or youth-friendly spaces for policy dialogue were largely absent.

Mr. Waqar-ud-din Butt noted that youth engagement in climate action was mostly voluntary or reactionary rather than structured. He highlighted government initiatives like the Punjab Environmental Protection Department's climate volunteer projects and the Chief Minister's climate board, which offered stipends for participation. However, the effectiveness of these programs was unclear, and most youth engagement occurred through university societies or informal networks. He emphasized the need for technical training in agriculture, waste management, and sustainable construction materials, but noted that such training was not widely available. Private sector involvement was limited, with some banks, like the Bank of Punjab, financing electric bikes, but broader corporate engagement in climate action was

lacking. He also pointed out that youth-led cycling and waste management initiatives had mobilized young people, but leadership and visibility remained barriers.

Ms. Roshni Anwar from Sindh reflected on her work with HerSpace, an initiative focused on empowering young women in climate action. She noted the existence of the Green Youth Movement (GYM) clubs, which had reached some universities in Sindh but were not yet widespread. Digital platforms like the Digital Youth Movement and events such as 'COP in My City' provided opportunities for youth to engage in climate dialogue and policy simulation. International initiatives like the Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative (PYLI) and Global Youth Mobilization offered funding and mentorship for youth-led projects, but the application processes were often complex and discouraging for grassroots youth. Her own project, Otaq 4 Climate, funded by the European Union, engaged youth in participatory research on gendered climate impacts, using storytelling, community mapping, and theatre as tools. She emphasized the need for more inclusive, simplified funding mechanisms to reach marginalized groups.

Mr. Jahangir Bazai from Balochistan described a scarcity of formal platforms and support for youth climate action. Most youth engagement occurred through small-scale, community-driven projects like the Green and Blue Quetta initiative, which planted tens of thousands of trees with youth volunteers. He noted that the lack of awareness and sensitization was a major barrier, and that government and private sector support was minimal. While the army and a few local companies conducted tree plantation drives, there was no significant corporate or NGO presence to support youth at scale. He proposed larger projects, such as creating national parks and water ponds, but observed that youth lacked both resources and institutional backing to scale up their efforts.

5.6. Priority Principles for Policy

The priority principles for youth climate policy, as following, reflect diverse perspectives from experts across Pakistan, emphasizing practical engagement, resource access, and inclusive participation.

Mr. Yousuf Nasar strongly prioritized direct youth participation in climate policy, arguing that young people should have had a seat at decision-making tables. He highlighted the need for practical engagement, suggesting that youth be supported with resources like internet access, travel support, and technical tools for climate action in their communities. He emphasized technical training, particularly in renewable energy, urging hands-on exposure to successful models in other provinces to enable youth to replicate these in Balochistan.

Mr. Gul Buledi similarly focused on youth capacity building but emphasized the foundational role of climate education. He believed that youth needed a deep understanding of climate issues to take informed action. He advocated for resource availability, including funding, technical training, and platforms for youth-led initiatives in areas like tree plantation, waste management, and renewable energy. Buledi also stressed the importance of creating linkages between youth, government departments, and civil society to provide mentorship and support. He called for small grants to encourage innovative solutions from youth, especially in agriculture and renewable energy.

Ms. Bakhtawar Ahmad highlighted agriculture and food security as critical priorities. She argued for modernizing and climate-proofing Pakistan's agriculture sector, with a focus on youth skills in sustainable farming and entrepreneurship. She saw agriculture as a viable, innovative career for rural youth. Ahmad also emphasized the urgency of water conservation, advocating for youth-led projects in water management and recycling. She stressed the importance of practical, impactful activities over superficial or trendy projects.

Jahangir Bazai, in contrast, emphasized integrating climate education into school and university curricula, tailored to both urban and rural contexts. He highlighted air pollution and industrial emissions as critical issues, calling for stricter regulation and relocation of polluting factories. Bazai also prioritized water access, recycling, and tree plantation, recommending community-driven projects like urban forests and water ponds. He stressed the importance of soft skills for youth, including campaign design, community engagement, and problem-solving.

Ms. Roshni Anwar advocated for inclusive and participatory approaches, integrating climate education and critical thinking into school curricula. She called for youth leadership through climate councils in schools and local governments, ensuring youth voices were included in policy and disaster response. Anwar emphasized gender and climate justice, stressing the need to address the differentiated impacts of climate change on women and marginalized groups. She also recommended simplifying funding processes for youth-led projects and ensuring local realities were reflected in national policy frameworks.

Ms. Mehak Masood highlighted the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement and localized, innovative solutions. She emphasized the need to balance climate action with economic development, tailoring interventions to local needs, particularly for vulnerable communities. Masood called for youth training in green skills like solar installation and water management and supported tech innovation and green entrepreneurship. She also advocated for inclusive policies that addressed the needs of marginalized youth, including indigenous, transgender, and differently-abled individuals.

Rafay Alam took a governance-focused approach, calling for the formation of a representative youth council with real power, including a formal seat on the Pakistan Climate Change Council. He argued for mainstreaming climate concerns across all ministries, not just limiting it to one department, and proposed a high-level cabinet committee on climate change to ensure political commitment. Alam also emphasized the need for contextual, practical climate education for youth, tailored to different age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Waqar-ud-din Butt emphasized intersectional sensitivity in climate policies, ensuring they addressed gender, class, and regional disparities. He called for practical skills training in areas like agriculture, waste management, and sustainable construction, focusing on emissions reduction and climate resilience. Butt also highlighted the importance of youth mobilization through universities and community groups, advocating for youth-sensitive government budgets to support these initiatives.

Finally, **Mr. Zubair Murshid** underscored the importance of grassroots initiatives, like tree plantation and water conservation. He believed small-scale community actions, such as

school tree-planting competitions and water conservation drives, could have a significant impact. Murshid pointed to successful models like the Gobi Desert afforestation efforts as inspiration for localized environmental stewardship in Pakistan.

5.7. Key Recommendations

- **Balochistan:** Jahangir Bazai emphasized sensitization over awareness, advocating for climate education in curricula and youth-led campaigns addressing local issues like brick kiln pollution.
- **Sindh:** Gul Buledi stressed integrating climate education with vocational training (e.g., water management) and simplifying funding access for grassroots projects.
- **Punjab:** Rafay Alam called for elected youth councils to secure seats in federal climate bodies, moving beyond tokenism. Bakhtawar Ahmad highlighted the need to bridge urban policy discussions with rural realities.
- **General:** Roshni Anwar urged inclusive consultations prioritizing gender-climate intersections and mental health, while Mehak Masood advocated for tech-driven solutions and corporate accountability.
- **Role Models and Inspiration:** Stories of successful youth-led initiatives and prominent figures, both local and international, are important motivators for youth engagement and should be highlighted in outreach and education efforts.
- **Encouraging grassroots innovation** - Youth demonstrates creativity in community-driven projects. Example: such as a young man in Loralai (Balochistan) electrifying his village via micro-hydropower without government support. Similarly, urban forests in Quetta engaged youth in planting 60,000 trees.
- **Leveraging digital advocacy:** for awareness campaigns and digital storytelling, influencing local behavior. Platforms like Climate Forward Pakistan and Dawn Breathe
- **Traditional-Modern Synergy:** Reviving indigenous practices.
- **Stronger partnerships between young and older generations** for climate action, we should create spaces for talking, learning and working together, ie., forums, mentorship & reverse learning, vocational training, leadership roles, storytelling and art, and joint initiatives like tree plantation, disaster preparedness, etc.
- **Private Sector and CSR** such as the Kamyab Nojawan Initiative enabled eco-friendly startups, such as climate-conscious fitness centers in Jacobabad. Punjab's Bank of Punjab financed electric bikes, though accessibility remained limited.

SECTION 3: PROPOSED THEMES AND GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR YOUTH CONSULTATIONS

6. Proposed Themes and Guiding Questions for Youth Consultations

6.1. Proposed Themes

The key themes identified by experts for youth consultations focus on addressing curriculum gaps in climate education, building youth leadership, and promoting grassroots innovation. Experts emphasized the need for updated, localized education that connects youth to climate realities, as well as inclusive platforms for meaningful participation in decision-making. They highlighted practical skills training, local action, and intergenerational collaboration as essential for building climate resilience. The discussions will also consider barriers like funding gaps, digital access, and policy disconnects, aiming to empower youth as climate leaders through targeted support and streamlined opportunities. Details of desired key themes, according to experts, include:

6.1.1. Climate Education Reform and Sensitization

- **Curriculum Gaps and Modernization:** Across interviews, climate experts like Roshni Anwar and Jahangir Bazai noted that climate education in schools and universities was outdated, superficial, or missing. Youth and teachers often found the subject dry or irrelevant, and modern climate realities (like heatwaves, droughts, and gendered impacts) were not addressed. There was a strong call for integrating climate change into curricula at all levels, using localized, practical, and age-appropriate content.
- **Teacher and Parent Engagement:** Teachers' reluctance and lack of training were major barriers. Building their capacity and involving parents and community leaders is essential for effective climate education.
- **Sensitization vs. Awareness:** Mr. Jahangir Bazai emphasized that awareness (knowing about climate change) is not enough; youth need to be sensitized-emotionally and socially connected to the issue-through participatory discussions, storytelling, and real-life examples.

6.1.2. Youth Participation, Leadership, and Representation

- **From Tokenism to Co-creation:** Youth are often seen as responders or volunteers, not as decision-makers. Experts stressed the need for meaningful youth participation in policy design, monitoring, and implementation-not just symbolic inclusion.
- **Platforms and Pathways:** There is a lack of accessible and youth-friendly platforms, especially at the provincial and local levels, for youth to engage with government and

policy processes. Suggestions included youth climate councils, climate clubs in schools/universities, and digital platforms for dialogue and advocacy.

- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Consultations must intentionally include marginalized youth-girls, transgender youth, persons with disabilities, and minorities-whose perspectives and needs are often overlooked.

6.1.3. Skills, Capacity Building, and Practical Training

- **Beyond Plantation Drives:** Youth engagement needs to move beyond surface-level activities like tree planting to include practical skills in water management, climate-resilient agriculture, renewable energy, disaster risk reduction, and campaign design.
- **Innovation and Leadership:** There is a need to foster youth leadership and innovation through mentorship, small grants, and opportunities for youth-led research and entrepreneurship.
- **Technical and Soft Skills:** Soft skills (like campaign design, community engagement, and critical thinking) and technical skills (like renewable energy installation or data analysis) should be prioritized in training programs.

6.1.4. Priority Climate Action Themes for Consultation

- **Water Management and Agriculture:** Water scarcity, sustainable agriculture, and food security were repeatedly cited as urgent issues, especially in rural and climate-vulnerable areas.
- **Urban Issues:** Air pollution, waste management, and urban planning are critical for youth in cities like Lahore and Karachi.
- **Gender and Climate Justice:** The intersection of gender and climate, climate justice, and differentiated impacts on women, girls, and marginalized groups should be central themes.
- **Mental Health:** The link between climate change and youth mental health is emerging as an important but under-discussed theme.

6.1.5. Climate Resilience and Local and Actionable Solutions

- Role of small-scale, community-led conservation projects
- Importance of tree plantation and afforestation
- Local food sources and reducing desertification
- Creating a culture of sustainability through community-driven projects
- The importance of local wisdom and traditional ecological knowledge
- Engaging schools and local institutions in environmental education

Building climate resilience would involve engaging schools and communities to create a lasting culture of sustainability, turning small steps into giant leaps for our planet. It would also imply planting trees, reducing desertification, promoting local food systems, and tapping into traditional knowledge - all that is locally relevant.

6.1.6. Barriers to Youth Engagement

- **Access and Outreach:** Urban-rural divides, lack of internet, and limited outreach to grassroots communities prevent many youth from accessing opportunities and platforms.

- **Resource and Funding Gaps:** Grants and programs often require collateral or prior experience, excluding marginalized and grassroots youth.
- **Policy-Implementation Gaps:** Existing policies are often generic, poorly implemented, and disconnected from local realities and youth needs.

6.1.7. Opportunities, Linkages, and Partnerships

- **Grassroots Innovation:** Youth are already leading innovative projects in renewable energy, waste management, and community conservation, but need more support and visibility.
- **Intergenerational Collaboration:** Bridging the gap between traditional knowledge (elders) and modern innovation (youth) can create more resilient and context-appropriate solutions.
- **Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue:** Consultations should bring together government, civil society, private sector, and youth to co-create solutions, ensuring local realities and diverse voices are reflected.

6.1.8. Communication, Media, and Narrative Building

- **Digital and Traditional Media:** Youth use social media for information and advocacy, but there is a need to ensure accuracy, fight misinformation, and use storytelling, art, and local languages to reach broader audiences.
- **Highlighting Local Champions:** Sharing success stories and positive examples of youth-led climate action can inspire more engagement and build momentum.

6.1.9. Policy Recommendations from Youth and Stakeholders

- **Youth Quotas and Representation:** Mandate youth seats in climate policy bodies and ensure their voices are included in all stages of policy development and implementation.
- **Dedicated Funding and Simplified Access:** Create dedicated, accessible funding windows for youth-led projects, with simplified application processes.
- **Localized, Inclusive Policy Design:** Policies must be grounded in local realities, address the needs of vulnerable groups, and be developed through participatory, inclusive processes.

6.2. Proposed Guiding Questions for Consultations

Based on findings from an extensive desk and literature review, as well as in-depth interviews with climate experts, proposed guiding questions for youth consultations capture diverse youth perspectives on climate awareness, access to programs, and policy inclusion, including the barriers marginalized groups face and the need for accessible platforms, relevant training, and effective communication channels. The consultations aim to improve youth representation in decision-making, promote multi-stakeholder collaboration, and leverage digital tools for advocacy, ensuring that youth are empowered as active agents of climate action. A set of indicative questions proposed for youth consultations are as following:

6.3. Theme-Question Matrix

Theme	Questions
1) Climate Education Reform and Sensitization	• Where do you currently learn about climate change (e.g., educational institute, online, family, peers)? • Does your educational institute curriculum include climate issues? What's missing? • How should climate education be improved to better prepare young people for climate challenges? • What role can teachers and schools play in raising awareness?
2) Youth Participation, Leadership, and Representation	• Are youth included in climate decisions by government or community in your area? • Have you ever joined a youth-led campaign or activity? • What structures (youth councils, climate boards) are needed to ensure youth representation? • What support would help you lead climate efforts in your community?
3) Skills, Capacity Building, and Practical Training	• Have you received any climate or green skills training? • What practical skills do youth need most for climate action? • How should institutions offer training to reach more diverse youth? • What skills have you learned informally (from community or peers)?
4) Priority Climate Action Themes for Consultation	• Which climate issues affect your area the most: water scarcity, pollution, agriculture, heat stress, urban flooding? • Do you think climate change affects girls or other marginalized youth differently? How? • Have you or your peers faced mental health challenges related to climate worries or disasters? •
5) Climate Resilience and Local, Actionable Solutions	• What local or indigenous climate solutions have you seen or practiced? • Which project you would like to lead if given mentorship and small funding? • How can your community be made more climate-resilient (e.g., tree planting, better drainage)? • What challenges do you face in starting climate action at the local level?
6) Barriers to Youth Engagement	• What stops youth from participating in climate action (e.g., financial limits, lack of awareness, cultural barriers)? • Do girls, persons with disabilities, and minority youth face specific obstacles? What are they? • Have you ever been discouraged or excluded from a climate-related initiative? Why?

Identification Study

	• How can these barriers be removed or reduced?
7) Opportunities, Linkages, and Partnerships	• Do you know of any youth climate programs, internships, or funding opportunities? • Have you worked with any NGOs, educational institute, or government bodies on climate activities? • How can organizations/educational institutes better support youth through mentorship, grants, or internships? • What kind of partnerships would make youth-led projects more successful?
8) Communication, Media, and Narrative Building	• What role does social media play in your understanding or action on climate change? • Have you ever created or followed a climate campaign online? • Are youth stories and voices reflected in the media? How can this be improved? • What tools (videos, podcasts, blogs) do you find most effective to raise climate awareness?
9) Policy Recommendations from Youth and Stakeholders	• What mechanisms should be introduced for regular youth input into policymaking? • How can climate policy be more inclusive and youth-friendly? • What role should local governments or the Ministry of Climate Change play in youth engagement? • If you could suggest one change in your province's climate policy, what would it be?

Annexures

Annexure 1: Key Resources and Useful Weblinks

- National Climate Change Policy Framework: <https://tinyurl.com/4596m5jb>
- Punjab Climate Change Policy and Action Plan: <https://tinyurl.com/yumrr992>
- Sindh Climate Change Policy: <https://tinyurl.com/2s3nd5ek>
- Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Climate Change Policy: <https://tinyurl.com/crkbappf>
- Balochistan Climate Change Policy: <https://tinyurl.com/bccp2022>
- National Adolescent and Youth Policy (NAYP): <https://tinyurl.com/2cv79vj6>
- National Youth Employment Plan: <https://tinyurl.com/5n7vskxe>
- Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC): <https://tinyurl.com/moccpak>
- Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency (Pak-EPA): <https://tinyurl.com/Pak-EPA1997>
- Pakistan Meteorological Department: <https://www.pmd.gov.pk/en/>
- Climate Data Processing Centre: <https://cdpc.pmd.gov.pk/>
- The Disaster Management Framework in Pakistan: <https://www.ndma.gov.pk/about>
- National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM): <https://www.ndma.gov.pk/nidm>
- Climate Emergencies Protection Unit (CEPU) – National Police Bureau: <https://tinyurl.com/CEPU-NPB>
- Clean Green Pakistan Index: <https://tinyurl.com/CGPIndex>
- Living Indus Initiative: <https://livingindus.org.pk/>
- The Civil Society Coalition for Climate Change (CSCCC): <https://www.cscgcc.org.pk/>
- Pakistan Climate Resilience Research Coordination Network: <https://hessa.utah.edu/rcn/>
- Technology and Innovation Initiatives: <https://tinyurl.com/7x2mecb5>
- Academic & Educational Climate Programs: <https://tinyurl.com/yukn4c6c>
- Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative (PYLI): <https://tinyurl.com/PYLI2024>
- Bargad: <https://www.bargad.org.pk>
- Forum for Dignity Initiatives: <https://fdipak.org/>
- Mawari Justice: <https://tinyurl.com/mahwari>
- Youth Climate Education and Fellowship Program 2025: <https://tinyurl.com/UEtycf2025>
- Youth Climate Activists Pakistan (YCAPK): <https://ycapk.org/>
- Climate Clubs through VOCAL: <https://tinyurl.com/VOCALPakistan>
- Youth Climate Education and Fellowship Program 2025: <https://tinyurl.com/UEtycf2025>
- Climate Action Clubs & Green Campus Initiatives: <https://greencampus.pk/>
- Youth Development Programme (YDP) by WWF: <https://tinyurl.com/WWF-YDP>

- Booni Environmental Academy (BEA) & Climate Forward Pakistan (CFP): <https://tinyurl.com/2zczue8c>
- Local Conference of Youth (LCOY Pakistan): <https://tinyurl.com/LCOYPakistan>
- Prime Minister's Youth Programme - Green Youth Movement (GYM): <https://tinyurl.com/GYM-PMYP>
- Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agricultural Loan Schemes: <https://tinyurl.com/4uwcryue>
- CM Punjab Climate Leadership Development Internship Program: <https://epd.punjab.gov.pk/node/3123>
- Punjab e-bike Scheme: <https://bikes.punjab.gov.pk/>
- Sindh Government's Climate Smart Technology Initiative: <https://tinyurl.com/3x7mr7t5>
- HEC Research Priority Areas on Climate: <https://tinyurl.com/5y3387mz>
- Environment Society, University of Peshawar: <http://www.uop.edu.pk/envsoc/>
- SCEN, UVAS Lahore: <https://tinyurl.com/SCEN-UVAS>
- Environment Club, IIUI: <https://tinyurl.com/EC-IIUI>
- NBC Environment Club: <https://tinyurl.com/Nust-EC>
- Youth Entrepreneurship in Green Business: <https://tinyurl.com/43dym3pc>
- Climate Tech Startups & Innovation: <https://tinyurl.com/26zpxp7m>
- CSR and Youth Climate Engagement: <https://psopk.com/en/sustainability/csr>
- Youth Agribusiness Climate Initiatives: <https://www.sbp.org.pk/Incen-others/PMYBALS.asp>
- The Agribusiness Support Fund: <https://agribusiness.org.pk/>
- Acumen's \$90 Million Commitment : <https://tinyurl.com/2ff4vy9z>
- Climate Risk Financing for Pakistan's Agrifood Sector by GIZ and BMZ: www.giz.de/en/worldwide/144483.html
- International Partner Programs & CBOs: <https://tinyurl.com/3w9wbb79>
- Model Conference of Parties (MCOP): <https://tinyurl.com/MCOP2025>
- Native Youth Club for Climate Change (NYCCC): <https://nyccc.pk/>
- VOCAL Program: <https://tinyurl.com/VOCALPakistan>
- VGreenO: <https://vgreeno.org/>
- Taqalum: <https://taqalum.com/>
- Gaps in Local Government Role: <https://tinyurl.com/mrshshht>
- Paris Agreement & NDC Alignment: <https://tinyurl.com/NDCs2021>
- SDG 13 Implementation and Reporting: <https://tinyurl.com/UNAR-SDGs>
- Global Youth Movements and UNFCCC Youth Frameworks: <https://tinyurl.com/r55ntfws>
- International Funding Mechanisms: <https://tinyurl.com/bd7a75tk>

** Weblinks have been shortened here.

Annexure 2: Experts Engaged in In-Depth Interviews

#	Name	Designation/Expertise	Organization / Affiliation	Region
1	Mehak Masood	ESG Strategist, Climate-Migration researcher	International Organization for Migration (IOM)	ICT
2	Waqar-ud-Din Butt	Corporate lawyer, policy advisor, green development expert	Ex-World Bank, ADB	Punjab
3	Ahmad Rafay Alam	Environmental lawyer, policy advocate	Independent	Punjab
4	Bakhtawar Ahmad	Youth empowerment leader, policy activist	YGA Climate Forum, WDD	Punjab
5	Yousuf Nasar	Lecturer, Educationist	Bureau of Curriculum and Extension Centre	Balochistan
6	Jahangir Bazai	Public Health	Independent/ Acasus	Balochistan
7	Zubair Murshid	International expert on DRM & post-crisis recovery	Former UN, MENA, South Asia	KP
8	Gul Buledi	Executive Director, Community Development Specialist	SHIFA Foundation	Sindh
9	Roshni Anwar	Climate activist, Founder of HerSpace	HerSpace, Youth Advisor (WB)	Sindh

Annexure 3: Questions for In-depth Interviews

Section A: Understanding Climate Change
1. How do you define climate change in Pakistan’s context? 2. What are the top 2–3 climate challenges affecting youth in your area? 3. How well do you think young people understand climate change, and where do they usually get their information?
Section B: Youth Perception & Participation
4. How do young people see their role in tackling climate change? 5. What climate issues are youth most passionate about (e.g., floods, water scarcity, pollution)? 6. What motivates youth to act — and what holds them back? 7. Can you share an example of a successful youth-led climate initiative you know?
Section C: Youth in Climate Policy & Governance
8. Are youth meaningfully included in climate policymaking at any level (local, provincial, national)? 9. What skills, platforms, or support would help youth engage better in climate governance?
Section D: Current Opportunities
10. What programs, projects, or funding options exist for youth in climate action — in education, civil society, government, or business?
Section E: Strategic Insights
11. What strengths do Pakistani youth bring to climate action? 12. If you had to prioritize, what 2–3 themes (like renewable energy, water management, or climate education) should youth-led action focus on? 13. What makes a youth-led climate project successful?
Section F: Recommendations
14. What one or two policy changes would make a real difference in getting more youth involved in climate action? 15. How can partnerships between young and older generations be improved to fight climate change more effectively?

Identification Study: Youth and Climate Action in Pakistan

May 2025

With 64% of its population under 30, Pakistan is home to one of the world's largest youth cohorts. Yet, despite their potential to lead climate action, young people remain largely excluded from policy discussions, especially those from rural and marginalized backgrounds. This report, commissioned by Bargad under the Pakistan Youth Leadership Initiative (PYLI) funded by the British Council Pakistan, aims to change that. It provides a comprehensive mapping of the climate challenges landscape concerning youth, examining the policies, networks, and institutional frameworks that shape their participation. Combining desk research and insights from diverse climate experts, youth leaders, and practitioners, this report outlines the barriers and opportunities for youth engagement in climate action. It highlights real-world case studies, strategic insights, and pathways for youth-driven climate advocacy. An essential resource for policymakers, educators, civil society leaders, and development organizations, it seeks to empower a new generation of climate champions to lead the way toward a sustainable future.



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