

Africa Youths Demands Immediate Action On Climate Change.



According to the Ichikowitz Family Foundation, which conducted the survey, more than three-quarters (78 percent) of African youth are now deeply concerned about climate change. This is a four-point increase from just two years ago, highlighting an increasing sense of urgency across the continent. For many young Africans, climate change is no longer an abstract issue—it is an existential threat. Ivor Ichikowitz, founder of the Ichikowitz Family Foundation, pointed out the disproportionate impact climate change is having on Africa. 'Africa is shouldering a massive burden in the climate crisis,' Ichikowitz stated. 'The United Nations has warned that 17 of the 20 countries most threatened by climate change are in Africa. From droughts to floods and violent storms, the continent is being hit hardest by global temperature rises.'

In fact, climate change poses an even more significant threat to Africa than to any other region in the world. The survey finds that the consequences of inaction will lead to instability, extreme poverty, and, alarmingly, mass migration, with nearly 60 percent of African youth expressing a desire to emigrate due to worsening conditions at home.

African youth's concerns are not unfounded. The survey points to the pressing issue of water scarcity, which is causing deep anxiety across the continent. A staggering 76

percent of respondents cited water shortages as a major climate-related concern, with 40 percent spending more than a quarter of their income just to access clean water. This figure represents a 14-point increase since the last survey, underscoring the growing financial burden young Africans face as climate change exacerbates the region's water crises. The survey also revealed that 73 percent of African youth believe climate change is already harming their countries, and a similar percentage fears that future generations will suffer even more. The ripple effects of climate change are felt across sectors, and 71 percent of those surveyed are concerned that climate change will lead to increased conflict, both within Africa and across its borders.

Despite the urgency felt by young Africans, the survey also reveals widespread dissatisfaction with government action on climate change. Less than half (48 percent) of respondents expressed satisfaction with their governments' efforts to combat climate change. However, a clear majority (81 percent) believe that their governments must do more to tackle the crisis. The survey respondents called for concrete actions, including the adoption of green energy sources (80 percent support), measures to mitigate the impact of climate change on food and water supplies (79 percent agree), and stronger efforts to reduce carbon emissions (78 percent endorse). These demands are not just aspirational but reflect the reality of

what young Africans are facing every day.

Among the factors hindering the achievement of the global 1.5°C climate target, 34 percent of African youth believe there is too much focus on building consensus rather than taking immediate action. The survey highlights several other barriers to progress, including:

Government inaction: 33 percent of respondents feel their governments are failing to act, with dissatisfaction notably high in Kenya (46 percent).

International neglect: 30 percent blame low international interest in addressing climate change, particularly in countries like Tanzania, where 44 percent of respondents felt ignored.

Disputes over compensation: 24 percent cite conflicts over compensation for developing nations, with respondents in Gabon and Malawi particularly concerned (31 percent in each).

Western governments and lobbying: 21 percent of young Africans point to inaction by Western governments, and another 21 percent blame the influence of oil and gas companies in hindering real change. The survey also revealed that African youth see greater value in global cooperation to address climate change. While some prefer swift action within smaller groups of nations, 51 percent of respondents favoured collective action, even if it takes longer. Moreover, 53 percent of respondents believe the priority should be on finding long-term solutions to climate change, as opposed to seeking financial compensation from wealthier nations. Ivor Ichikowitz emphasised the moral urgency of addressing these demands: 'Of all the world's youth,

Africans have perhaps the most principled call for climate action today. They contribute the least to carbon emissions, yet suffer the most from the disruptive effects of climate change. As COP29 concludes, the world has a moral obligation to listen to their voices and take bold, necessary action without further delay.'

The African Youth Survey, conducted across 16 countries, offers an unparalleled insight into the challenges and aspirations of the continent's youth. With almost 15,000 interviews conducted, it highlights the urgent need for governments and international leaders to act in ways that acknowledge the disproportionate impact of climate change on Africa and its youth.

As COP29 comes to a close, the question remains whether the voices of Africa's youth will be heard. The growing concern over climate change, migration, and conflict makes it clear that Africa's youth are not just passive observers—they are demanding immediate action. The final outcome of COP29 will have lasting consequences for the continent, and its youth will be watching closely to see if their calls for change are answered.

Survey methodology

The African Youth Survey, now in its third iteration, was conducted across 25 countries, including new participants such as Botswana, Cameroon, and Tanzania. The survey offers a comprehensive look at the concerns and priorities of young people in Africa, with nearly 15,000 respondents providing valuable insights into the continent's most pressing issues. As the world grapples with the climate crisis, Africa's youth stand ready to lead the charge for change—if the world will only listen.

