

History of Children at COP: An Essential Stakeholder in the UNFCCC Process

Climate change is the biggest global threat to children, as it impacts every dimension of their present and future

Current Impacts

- Health**
Heat-related illness and death, cardiovascular failure
- Education disruptions**
Children experience disrupted education each year due to climate-related disasters
- Mental health**
Extreme heat causes an increase in post-traumatic stress disorder and depression in children
- Food & water scarcity**
Crop failures due to climate change causes malnutrition, affecting growth and development of children

Even if the Paris Agreement pledges are fulfilled, children face severely disproportionate climate impacts:

- A child born in 2020 faces **two times the risk of wildfires** than a person born 1960
- Climate change could increase the number of malnourished children under the **age of five by 20% by 2050**
- Children born in 2020 will face **2.6 times more droughts** on average than people born in 1960.

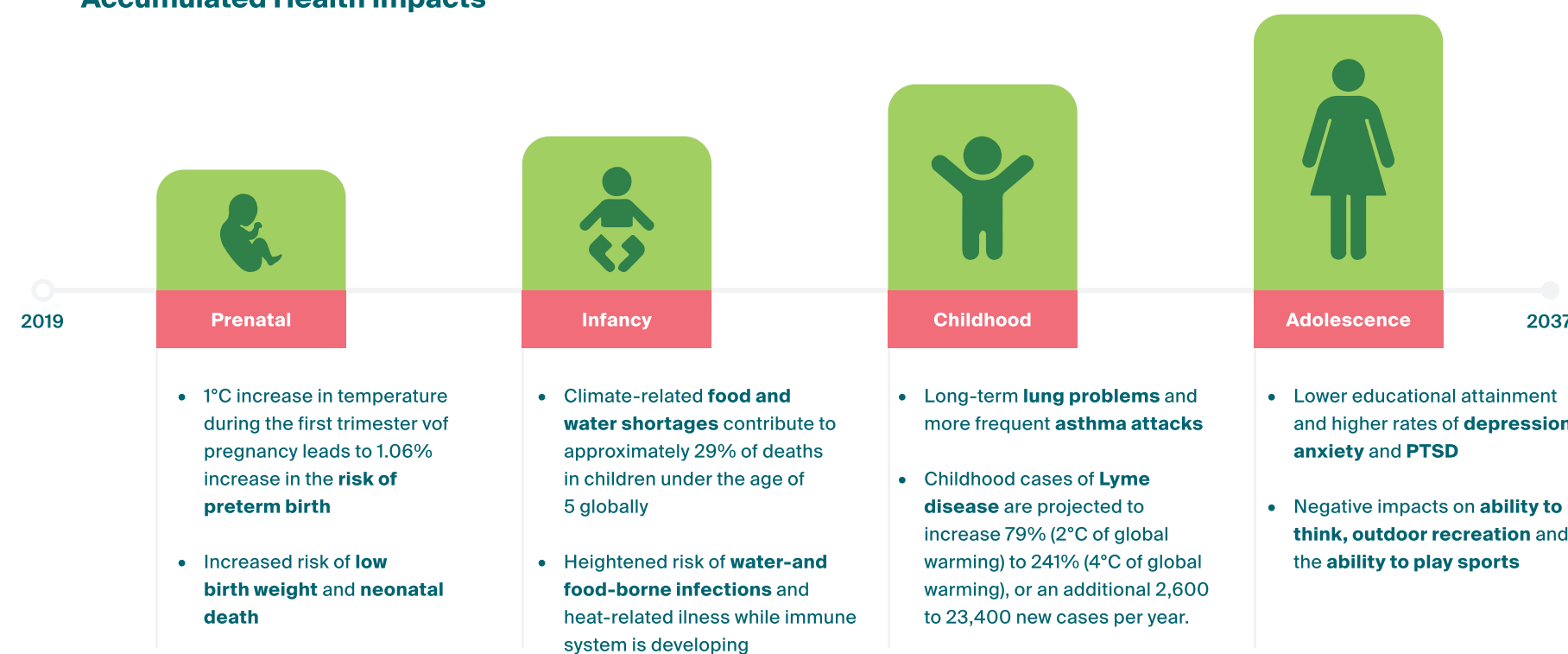
“ In their Global Youth Statement young people call for action on 15 climate themes, each requires consideration. Let’s start with this: young people are the bedrock of this movement.

Mr. Simon Stiell
Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC on Climate Change

Climate change harms the health of children

Climate change poses risks to children throughout their development. Here we present a few examples of how climate change harms health from before birth to adolescence

Accumulated Health Impacts



Climate change is projected to cause an additional **250,000 deaths** per year between 2030 and 2050 due to malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea, and heat stress. Number of premature deaths from exposure to particulate matter is likely to more than double to **3.6 million/year**.

Due to climate change in 2020, **3.6 billion** people lacked safely managed sanitation services, **2.3 billion** lacked basic hygiene services and more than **2 billion** live in water-stressed countries with lack of access to safe drinking water.

Climate change has a significant impact on education

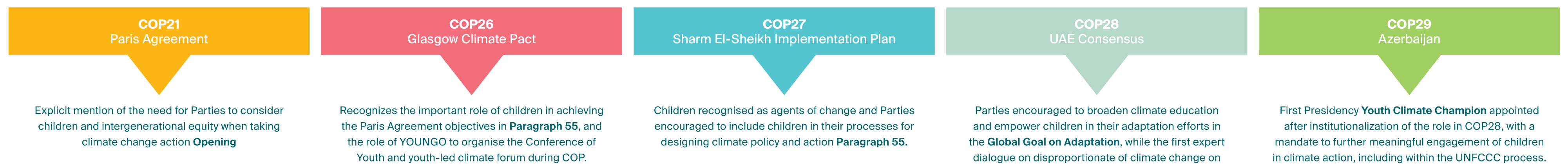
Climate-exacerbated disasters disrupt the education of nearly **40 million** children worldwide, and this number continues to increase each year.

Extreme weather events disrupt education by:

- Between 2008 and 2018, an average of **24 million** children were forced out of school each year due to extreme weather events.
- UNESCO estimates that **175 million** children are exposed to extreme weather events annually, putting their education at risk.
- Climate change could cost the education sector **\$158 billion** annually by 2050 due to the damage to infrastructure.
- In low-income countries, up to **80%** of education facilities are at risk of being impacted by climate-related disasters.
- According to UNICEF, girls are **1.5 times** more likely than boys to be out of school in countries affected by displacement or natural disasters.

Notable COP decisions on Youth and Children:

- Decision -/CP.21 Opening**
“Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on [...] children [...] and intergenerational equity”
- Decision -/CP.26; Paragraph 55**
“Recognizes the important role of non-Party stakeholders, including youth, children, and other stakeholders, in contributing to progress towards the objective of the Convention and the goals of the Paris Agreement”
- Decision -/CP.27 Paragraph 55**
“Recognizes the role of children and youth as agents of change in addressing and responding to climate change and encourages Parties to include children and youth in their processes for designing and implementing climate policy and action”
- Decision -/CP.26; Paragraph 55**
“requests the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, at its sixtieth session, to hold an expert dialogue on children and climate change to discuss the disproportionate impacts of climate change on children and relevant policy solutions in this regard”



Recent COPs have seen significant progress in the journey of meaningful children’s participation

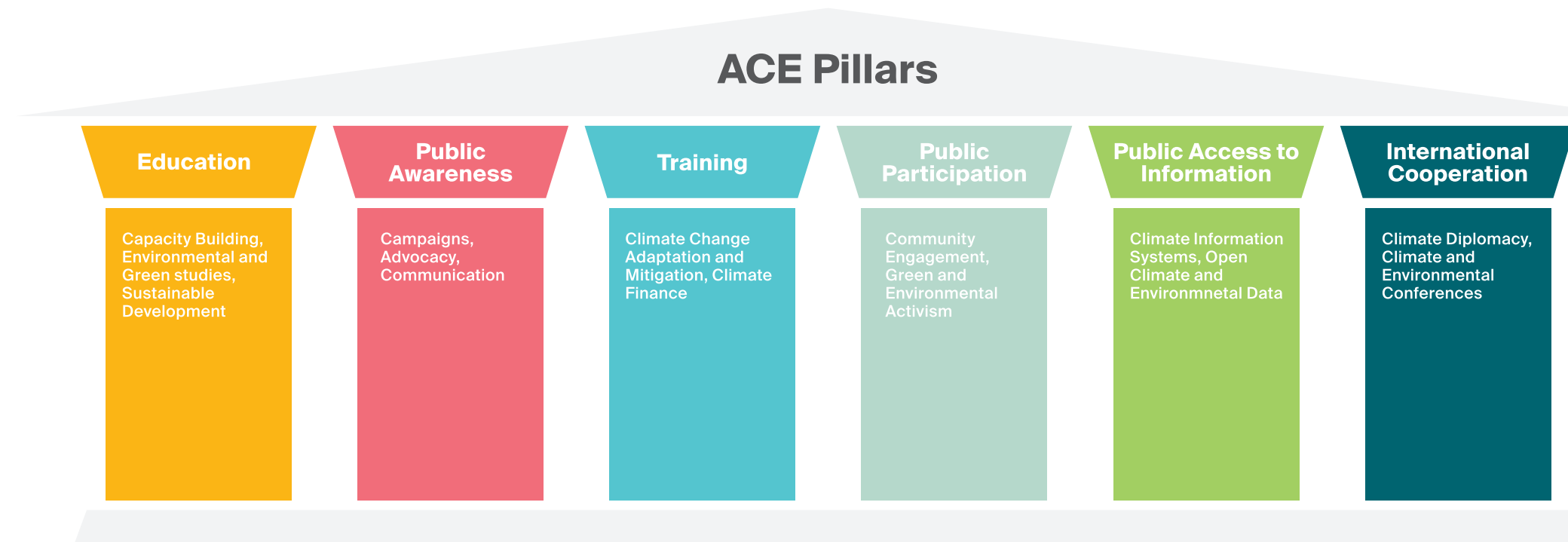
COP27	COP28	COP29
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COP27: The Youth Envoy role was established, providing a Presidency local point for children’s inclusion in COP The first COP Simulation “Little COP” for children hosted in Cairo prior to COP27, producing a set of children’s demands for the COP outcomes. First-ever Children and Youth Pavilion at COP27. Inaugural flagship Presidency event on children hosted on COP Youth and Future Generations Day Save the Children, UNICEF and the UN-High Level Champions brought delegations of children to COP27. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COP28: The Youth Climate Champion (YCC) role is established and institutionalised, building upon the COP27 legacy, with a mandate to advocate for children and youth COP28 Road to COP event educates 1,000 children on COP and the UNFCCC process A 2nd Little COP is held during the 18th Conference of Youth in collaboration with YOUNGO High-level dialogue on children rights hosted by COP28 Presidency and UNICEF First official COP Presidency Day on children and education A 2nd edition of the Youth and Children Pavilion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COP29: First Presidency YCC appointed within the COP Presidency team to enhance youth and children participation in COP, amplify youth voices, strengthen capacity building, and mobilise support for youth action A 3rd Little COP planned during COP29 to ensure children’s voices are integrated into the negotiations process Summer Climate Camp to be hosted in Baku with participation of young educators. The agenda includes ToT sessions and COP simulation for teachers and provision of practical guide for integrating climate change into curricula

The Little COPs of COP27 and COP28 called for these initiatives to continue

- Selected articles of the COP27 Little COP demands:**
- We demand that many reserves be made to preserve biodiversity.
 - We demand increased awareness of climate change and sustainability, preferably if they are added to educational curricula.
 - We demand to reduce the use of fossil fuels and the carbon footprint and replace them with renewable energy.
 - We demand an increase in the recycling of plastic and waste and an increase in environmental awareness of the importance of these to climate change.
 - We demand supporting innovative programs to promote the blue economy, implementing carbon storage projects and planting mangroves.
 - We demand encouraging and supporting civil society organizations to implement projects that mitigate the negative effects of climate change.
 - Advocate for a worldwide shift towards renewable energy, setting the ambitious yet achievable goal of achieving 50% renewable energy consumption globally within the next decade.
 - We demand to hold annual global children’s COP ahead of the annual global COP meetings and ensure that our voices are in action.
- Selected articles of the COP28 Little COP demands:**
- Implement national education programs to equip children with knowledge about climate change, its effects, and its role in addressing climate change effects, contributing to sustainable development goals.
 - Actively promote awareness-raising initiatives on the climate crisis and the environment for youth and future generations.
 - Implement practical school measures, such as replacing plastic materials with biodegradable alternatives, installing sensor taps to conserve water, and placing recycling containers in every classroom.
 - Build the capacity of teachers on climate change, disaster prevention, and crisis management.
 - Ensure uninterrupted school access even during climate emergencies and school feeding programs in communities impacted by climate change.
 - Establish an eco-friendly piggy bank to ensure that developed nations contribute at least 1.5% of GDP annually to a global climate finance pool to serve and support developing nations in their climate action endeavors.
 - Preservation of local minority languages and dialects is essential to draw Indigenous knowledge and expertise, which helps with the analysis of the protection of environment and biodiversity.
 - A tangible and equitable framework that targets the most vulnerable communities globally. The goal is to allocate at least 30% of international climate finance specifically to projects aimed at enhancing resilience and adaptation in regions most susceptible to climate impacts.
 - A standardized global rating system that evaluates the environmental impact of financial investments to incentivize sustainable financing.

The children’s demands were shared with Parties to UNFCCC and were also considered within YOUNGO’s Global Youth Statement.

The Presidency Youth Climate Champion aims to engage children across the 6 pillars of ACE



Learn More



COP28 Youth Climate Champion Role



COP29 Website



Climate action can be accelerated if children are provided with:

- Green education to cultivate solutions and policies, shaping an environmentally conscious generation prepared for planetary challenges:**
- Climate literacy** empowers children to act on climate change with knowledge and purpose.
 - Green skills** teaches children sustainable practices, renewable energy, and environmental conservation, vital in the environmental sector.

Green education doesn’t just inform, it transforms.

It leads to research-driven solutions and policy changes. Most importantly, it cultivates an environmentally conscious generation ready to tackle our planet’s challenges.

Initiatives for Children in Azerbaijan on Climate Change implemented by EkoSfera:

- “Green Network” environmental awareness program for schoolchildren, eco-club platforms
- “SOS4Nature” summer outdoor school on climate action
- “Small Farmers” interactive program on climate change and cultural natural heritage

