

Media Update

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UNICEF

PRESS RELEASE

Pakistan commits to protect children and young people from the impacts of climate change at COP 29

112 million children in Pakistan are vulnerable to climate-related disasters and displacement

BAKU, 16 November 2024 – The Government of Pakistan, along with the Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Governments affirmed their commitment to protect the rights and interests of children and young people in the face of climate change at an event with UNICEF at the COP 29 Summit in Baku, Azerbaijan, today.

Leaders from the Government of Pakistan signed the [Declaration on Children, Youth and Climate Action](#), a pledge by champion governments to uphold priorities identified by children and youth across the world. The signature is a significant step towards safeguarding the lives of 112 million children and young people in Pakistan who are vulnerable to climate-related disasters, displacement, and trauma.

“We commit to integrate child rights and needs into Pakistan’s climate policies and especially the Nationally Determined Contributions 3.0, which will be the focus of COP30 in Brazil next year,” said Romina Khurshid, the Prime Minister’s Coordinator on Climate Change upon signing the Declaration on Children, Youth and Climate Action.

Nationally Determined Contributions embody efforts by each country to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. In 2021, Pakistan submitted its NDC 2.0 which was partially child sensitive. NDC 3.0 is due to be submitted in March 2025.

“We must ensure our children and young people are prepared for the future they are growing into,” said Honourable Murad Ali Shah, Chief Minister of Sindh Province. “Our education curriculum must reflect the realities of a world being altered by climate change and preparing our young people for a green economy.”

The Government of Pakistan and UNICEF are deeply concerned about the disproportionate impact of climate change on children and young people. Rising greenhouse gas emissions and short-lived climate pollutants pose an imminent threat to their health, education, and well-being. Regular flooding and intensifying heat waves expose children to higher risks than those faced by children in 1960.

"We affirm our commitment to implement the Declaration and ensure that we invest in the young people of Pakistan through education, skills and providing them opportunities," said Faisal Amin Khan, Team Lead Climate Change, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Member of Federal Pakistan Climate Change Authority.

UNICEF, the Government of Pakistan and Provincial Governments will work to ensure that children's rights and interests are at the forefront of climate action and investment.

“It is high time climate investments benefit children directly,” said UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Kitty van der Heijden. “Currently just 2.4 per cent of global multilateral climate finance is programmed in a child-responsive way. Now is the time to dramatically increase child-responsive climate action in social sectors to protect children’s health and wellbeing.”

Collectively, UNICEF is asking world leaders at COP 29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, to recognize that children and young people are disproportionately affected by climate-related disasters and impacts, dramatically increase climate finance for children and listen to demands that children’s voices be included to shape climate policies and actions.

About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone. For

more information about UNICEF's work in Pakistan, visit:
<https://www.unicef.org/pakistan/>

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Photo caption: Kitty van der Heijden, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director and Ayesha Humairah, Additional Secretary (Incharge), Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, signed the Declaration on Children, Youth and Climate Action, at the COP 29 Summit in Baku, Azerbaijan, today, in a session moderated by UNICEF Representative in Pakistan, Abdullah Fadil. The Declaration is a pledge by champion governments to uphold priorities identified by children and youth across the world. The Chief Minister of Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah, Coordinator to the Prime Minister's on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam, and provincial government officials were also present on the occasion.