

Climate Change and Children: Impact, Rights and Participation

10-12 May 2021

Yerevan

Organised by



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“There may be no greater, growing threat facing the world’s children – and their children – than climate change”
UNICEF “Unless we Act”

Description

Climate change has been identified by United Nations’ agencies and experts as one of the biggest threats to children’s health. Their unique physiology, metabolism and developmental needs put children at higher risk as they experience disasters and environmental damage differently than adults. Globally, children are being detrimentally affected by climate shocks (e.g. droughts, floods, cyclones) and related diseases, polluted air, soil and water, exposure to toxic substances. Despite contributing the least to the causes of climate change, children are the worst affected by it, right now and in the future.

Every change in climate also undermines implementation of UN Sustainable Goals (e.g. 1, 13, 15) and a number of other rights of children. The effects of environmental harm, for instance, may undermine the full enjoyment of children’s right to life, to education, to an adequate standard of living, to play, to be protected from exploitation and hazardous work. Such impact might also affect in disproportionate ways certain groups like girls, ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, to name a few.

As the impact of climate change is child-sensitive, any response to it has to be child-sensitive too. Even more, it has to fully include meaningful consultation and direct participation of children in line with article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that ‘the child who is capable of forming his or her own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child’. The Convention also recognises the rights of the child to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. In this light, it is significant that much as (adult) concerns on the impact of climate change have raised worldwide, so have the voices of children and adolescents who have mobilised demanding States to take measures in mitigating the impact of climate change and start immediate actions.

The main aim of the conference is to bring together experts, representatives of States, international and non-governmental organisations, policymakers, academics and students from a broad range of countries to discuss and debate on the importance of a child rights-based approach to climate action and to suggest options ensuring child participation in such policy developments.

The Conference is organised within the frames of the Regional Master’s Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in the Caucasus programme / GC Caucasus/ jointly by the Yerevan State University, Global Campus of Human Rights, the Right Livelihood Foundation, UNICEF Armenia through its “Adolescents as agents of climate action in their communities” project, funded by Austrian Development Cooperation, ShareMusic & Performing Arts, Sweden, and Small theatre of Armenia.

Climate Change and Children: Impact, Rights and Participation

Programme

Time Zone: Armenian Time

Monday, 10 May: Opening Day

Venue: Yerevan State University

14:00 Press Conference

14:15 - 14:30 Registration of participants and entry to online space

14:30 Opening & Welcome Speeches

Artur Israyelyan, Vice Rector, Yerevan State University

Zhanna Andreasyan, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, Republic of Armenia

Prof. Manfred Nowak, Secretary General, Global Campus of Human Rights, GC Headquarters

Dr. Veronica Gomez, President, Global Campus of Human Rights, LAT.MA programme

H.E Andrea Wiktorin, Head of EU Delegation to Armenia

Mr. Shombi Sharp, UN Resident Coordinator

Ole von Uexkull, Executive Director, the Right Livelihood Foundation

SPECIAL ADDRESS BY CHILDREN (IN COOPERATION WITH UNICEF)- 10-15 minutes followed by short UNICEF Video

Keynote Speech and Q&A

Nnimmo Bassey, Health of Mother Earth Foundation "The Rights of Mother Earth", Right Livelihood Laureate, 2010

David Boyd, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment, "Good practices in implementing the right to a healthy environment from a child rights-based approach"

Moderator: Artur Ghazinyan, Centre for European Studies

15- minute break

16:45-18:00 Panel One

Climate Change and its impact on children's rights: Post-Soviet Region

Speakers:

Tigran Tovmasyan, Regional Emergency Specialist, UNICEF Europe and Central Asia Regional Office - Almaty Bureau "Children and Climate change"

Olga Emelyanovich, Lecturer of the Department of Public Administration of the Faculty of Law BSU, "Climate-oriented education from human rights and gender perspective"

Yuliya Vashchenko, Professor at the Administrative Law and Procedure Department, Law School, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Ukraine, "Children's rights and climate change in the policy and law of Ukraine"

Nino Tevzadze, Caucasus Environmental NGO Network, "Facilitation of Youth Participation in Climate Change

Policy Design and Implementation through Multi-stakeholder Regional Action Groups within the Georgia Climate Action project"

Moderator: Armine Markosyan, Project Assistant and Communications Specialist, Women's Fund Armenia, CESAA Alumni

18:00 Day wrap up

Tuesday, 11 May

Venue: Yerevan State University

14:20 - 14:30- Registration of participants and entry to online space

14:30-Human Rights through Arts (Documentary in cooperation with ShareMusic & Performing Arts, Sweden and Small Theatre of the National Centre of Aesthetics after Henrik Igityan, Armenia)

14:45 - 15:45- Keynote Speech and Q&A

Luisa Neubauer, Fridays for Future on "Children as agents of change on environmental matters" / "Why children and young people believe that another world is possible" / "No more empty promises"

Nina Ferencic, Senior Regional Adviser on Adolescent Health, Development and Participation and on HIV/AIDS, UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia. "Adolescent and youth participation in decision making"

Moderator: Karen Ayvazyan, CESAA Alumni

15-minute break

16:00 - 17:00 Panel Two: Setting Precedent: Advocating or Child and Adolescents' Participation in Planning, Decision-making and Mitigating Climate and Health Threats

Speakers:

Shauneen Lambe, co-founder, Impact Law for Social Justice, "Participation of Young People in Strategic Litigation"

Suranga de Silva, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Specialist UNICEF, Timor-Leste Country Office, "Climate & Health Threats - Adolescents as Agents of Change"

Yusra Abourabi, SciencesPo Rabat – International University of Rabat, "Youth transnational cooperation facing climate change"

Diana Harutyunyan, Climate Change Programme Coordinator, UNDP, Armenia, "Youth education on climate change is considered essential for their involvement in decision making in Armenia"

Elvis Fokala, Manager, Children's Rights Unit Centre for Human Rights, Faculty of Law, University of Pretoria South Africa, "Children as Agents of Change: Child Participation as a Tool to Alleviate the Impact of Climate Change on Children's Socio-Economic Rights in Africa"

Moderator: Mariam Muradyan, Child Rights Officer, GC Caucasus

17:00 Day wrap up

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Wednesday, 12 May

Venue: Yerevan State University

14:15- 14:30 Registration of participants and entry to online space

14:30 -15:45 Panel Three: Regional Dimensions of Climate Challenges, Public Narratives and Climate Change and Children's Rights (GC Partners)

Speakers:

Neshan Gunasekera, World Future Council, "Trusteeship for Future generations"

Viviana Krsticevic, Executive Director, Center for Justice and International Law, "Climate Rights in the Americas"

Chaker Mzoughi, Faculty of Law, Political and Social Sciences of the University of Carthage, Tunisia, "Climate Change and Children's Rights in the Arab region"

Mladen Domazet, Institute for Political Ecology, Zagreb and ERMA programme, Sarajevo, "Climate challenges in SE Europe"

Aoife Daly, University College Cork, "Youth Climate Litigation at the European Court of Human Rights"

Moderator: Srgjan Vidoeski, ERMA programme Alumni

15-minute break

16:00 -17:30 PANEL FOUR: POLICY ANALYSTS OF THE POLICY OBSERVATORY "ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS: REALIZING THE RIGHTS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS"

Speakers:

Visalaakshi Annamalai, Environment and Human Rights in the Curriculum (APMA)

Ademola Oluborode Jegede, Climate change and the future generation under the African Human Rights System (HRDA)

Juan Wahren, Indigenous Youth and Climate Change in Latin America (LATMA)

Tomáš Jungwirth, "Planet over Profit? A reality check of Europe's aspirational climate policies"(ERMA)

Short break

Zoi Aliozi, Climate Justice: Climate Change and Human Rights (EMA)

Elise Daniaud, Children environmental rights (ARMA)

Marina Rakopyan, Global Climate Change and Ecosystem Restoration (CES)

Moderator: Ravi Prakash Vyas, Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator, APMA, Kathmandu School of Law, Nepal, GC Alumni

17:30 Recommendations & Conference wrap up

Hosting institution:

Centre for European Studies of the Yerevan State university in the framework of the Regional Master's Programme in Human Rights and Democratisation in the Caucasus

Organisation team:

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Venue address:

1 A.Manookian, Yerevan, Yerevan State University, Library wing Centre for European Studies, Robert Schuman hall,

For conference registration please follow this link

<https://utopiax.typeform.com/to/kojCnFDc>
Conference registration and ZOOM links

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86292467957>



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