**Overview**

[The 2021 Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) Youth Forum](https://www.aceyf.com/) (AYF) was a virtual conference organized by the ACE Working Group of YOUNGO between July 10th and 18th, 2021.

Building on the foundation laid by the first ACE Youth Forum in 2018, the 2021 ACE Youth Forum aimed to elevate **the voices of young people** during this critical year for progressing the work of ACE. More specifically, it provided a platform for meaningful exchanges to **enhance youth implementation of ACE** and to craft a set of **youth policy recommendations** for the next governmental ACE decision governments must adopt by COP26.

To accomplish this goal, the AYF was organized into two parallel tracks:

| Track 1: Exchange **views, experiences, and best practices** for ACE implementation and climate-related issues | Track 2: Collaboratively **brainstorm and formulate proposals** for the new ACE Work Programme being negotiated at COP26 |
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This Summary focuses on the key policy outcomes for enhancing future implementation of ACE, especially with regard to the next work programme due from COP26. Further information on the experience sharing from Track 1 is provided in Annex 1.

The AYF reached many young people across the world and raised their awareness of ACE and their capacity to support its implementation. Further details on the demographics, agenda, and other aspects are available separately in the AYF 2021 Impact Report.

**Key Policy Outcomes for ACE**

Track 2 was divided into three thematic areas for ACE policy, which were:

* Group 1: Metrics, Goals, and Reporting for Domestic ACE Implementation
* Group 2: International Collaboration on ACE within the UNFCCC
* Group 3: Supporting Infrastructure for ACE Implementation

***Summary from Group 1: ACE Metrics, Goals, and Reporting***

Group 1 developed suggestions and recommendations for metrics, goals, and reporting to help guide domestic implementation of ACE, as detailed more fully in Annex 2.

A highlighted aspect was the need for mandatory annual reporting on domestic ACE implementation under the UNFCCC (additional to existing areas like National Communications), while emphasizing the need for capacity building and resources to support those Parties who may otherwise be unable to fulfill such requirements within their current circumstances.

***Summary from Group 2: International Collaboration on ACE within the UNFCCC***

Group 2 considered three core aspects of international collaboration on ACE with specific relevance to the next work programme and related efforts under the UNFCCC Process. These were an ACE Action Plan, ACE Task Force or Expert Group, and a virtual ACE Marketplace.

**Establish an Action Plan for the Next ACE WP**

* Derive approach and structure from precedent set by the Gender Action Plan
* Identify cross-cutting themes to focus on in addition to the 6 ACE elements
* Such themes might include, inter alia:
  + Finance for ACE
  + Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting of ACE activities
  + Supporting infrastructure for ACE implementation
  + Enhancing the role of youth in ACE implementation
* Determine specific actions to advance each thematic focus and all 6 ACE elements
* Assess progress and update/rotate focus areas/elements annually

**Implement an Expert Group or Task Force for ACE**

* Select relevant experts from both Parties and NPS
* Assign specific tasks/deliverables linked to the focus areas from the Action Plan
* Ensure young people are fully engaged as both recipients and experts

**Establish a Virtual Marketplace for ACE Projects**

* Create an online portal for the submission of ACE-related projects from both Parties and NPS which are seeking funding from "other sources"
* Mobilize the attention of potential funding sources to the Marketplace, especially with the support of key figures like the Climate Champions, Executive Secretary, etc.
* Monitor and report annually on financial flows secured through the Marketplace, especially concerning the balance of funding across the 6 ACE elements

***Summary from Group 3 Infrastructure for ACE implementation***

Group 3 addressed several aspects related to ensuring a robust infrastructure for governance and support is available for delivering and enhancing ACE implementation across all levels.

**ACE NFPs**

The ACE National Focal Point is a critical role for both international collaboration and domestic implementation of ACE, yet it must be strengthened with proper authority, resources, connections, and other support in order to be truly effective. They should work closely with youth and other Non-Party Stakeholders in a close team to achieve significant and sustainable results.

**ACE Youth Focal Points**

Establishing the role of an “ACE Youth Focal Point” can be of extraordinary benefit. The exact model for this would depend on national circumstances, however the essence is simple; having a young person, with climate experience and connections, support government efforts on ACE. It will not only broaden support for climate action and ease national implementation of ACE policies, but also boost domestic public participation and enhance international collaboration.

**Global Platform for ACE**

Maximizing progress on ACE requires having one clear place where all ACE related issues can be found, raised, and supported. Hosted by the UNFCCC, this site or portal would function as a place for: training ACE NFPs; reporting ACE progress; sharing best practices, important scientific papers, and reports; and a place for ACE people to connect with each other. It could also serve as the virtual home for the ACE Marketplace, adding deeper support for ACE projects.

**Annex 1: Summary from Track 1: Sharing Best Practices**

*Examples of Local ACE Activities*

* Education and training for growing our own food and using solar panels
* Organizing youth forums, conferences and workshops for sharing best practices and unifying our voices
* Collecting and sharing stories on climate impacts and climate action
* Arranging youth council or delegation programs
* Incorporation of the scientific basis of climate change in national curriculums/textbooks

*Barriers to Implementing ACE Activities*

* Financial support and access to funding for youth
* Language and communication challenges for ensuring all communities are included in ACE-related discussions and activities
* Lack of access to internet (Digital divide)
* Minimal access to structured or paid jobs for implementing ACE activities; not all work for climate action should be expected to be “volunteer work”
* Disconnect between political leaders and those taking action
* Lack of basic education leading to disbelieving of the scientific basis
* The divide between scientific community and the general public (the “consensus gap”)

*Mitigating Barriers for Implementing ACE Activities*

* Empowering public-private partnerships for ACE (e.g. university partnerships)
* Increase use of social media (including languages used and videos) for spreading scientific climate-related knowledge and climate action opportunities
* Direct public funds toward organizations implementing local ACE activities
* Support the inclusion of youth in ACE discussions and activities
* Improving the means of communication (more diverse media, using a less distant phrasing with less jargon)

*Synergizing ACE efforts at the International Level*

* Establish a platform for regional and international exchanges on ACE activities, including traditional and indigenous knowledge and experiences
* Create an umbrella group for monitoring the implementation of ACE activities
* Design a global citizen-science space for tracking climate action activities and sustainable daily lifestyle activities spearheaded by individuals and sub-national actors

**Annex 2: Full Listing for Suggested ACE Metrics, Goals, and Reporting**

*Mechanisms to engage youth in ACE implementation include, inter alia:*

* Funding for youth associations to bring climate literacy to their communities
* A Youth ACE Focal Point in each party’s official delegation
* National and regional youth councils (e.g. Norway)
* In-session workshop annually held at the SBs on youth perspectives on climate action

*Overarching goals for ACE implementation include, inter alia:*

* Parties have appointed an ACE National Focal Point who has received adequate training, direction, and resources to be an effective champion for ACE activities at the national level and to foster meaningful international cooperation on ACE;
* Parties have integrated ACE into their NDCs in a manner consistent with best practices;
* Parties have established an ACE National Strategy to guide implementation across government departments and in effective partnership with all relevant domestic NPS;
* Parties have mobilized sufficient public and private sector financial resources to fully address the chronic gap in funding for deployment and up-scaling of ACE activities; and
* Parties have deployed appropriate ACE-related education, training, campaigns and participation activities to ensure all members of civil society are up to date with the latest climate science and encouraged to be part of the solution.

*General Metrics to Measure ACE Implementation include, inter alia:*

* The holistic inclusion of climate change content across the K-12/educational system through national standards, curricula, or policies;
* Number of climate change and action trainings with adequate translation and interpretation options;
* The percentage of government funding used to support non-party stakeholders and/or sub-national actors in raising awareness about and mobilising on climate action;
* The number of places with clear and accurate information on the science and mitigation of climate change included on national and state-level government websites; and
* The number of young and marginalized people included in public participation opportunities.

*Reporting on ACE Implementation*

* Annual party reporting on national ACE implementation should be made mandatory;
* To increase reporting capabilities, capacity-building and training for ACE NFPs should be made available by the UNFCCC; and
* National-level ACE task forces, comprising both Party members and NPS (particularly representatives of academia and the youth), should be in charge of developing and publishing the reports.

**Contributors - ACE Youth Forum 2021**

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