

YECA SEPTEMBER, 2025 NEWSLETTER

BUILDING YOUTH-LED SOCIAL MOVEMENTS FOR CLIMATE ACTION IN EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IS KEY.



Group picture with students during the climate justice series in Ntungamo district.

INTRODUCTION.

Dear Reader, welcome to our September 2025 Newsletter.

In September, Youth for Environmental Justice and Climate Action (YECA) supported university students to conduct climate justice series in secondary schools in Ntungamo district. The climate justice series is a campaign that YECA runs every year to build youth-led climate justice movements in educational institutions for climate Action.

Today, climate change is a growing concern worldwide, and its effects are particularly pronounced in developing countries. In Uganda, climate change is not only altering the environment but also significantly impacting education. The consequences of climate change on education are both immediate and long-term, affecting communities in various ways.

Through the climate justice series, YECA engages students to explore how climate change is disrupting education in Uganda and how schools are working with communities to mitigate climate change issues and environmental restoration practices.

The increasing climate changes in Uganda require agent action to increase climate change actions in educational institutions through building resistance and resilience of the students to fight climate change in schools, but also in their communities.

The climate change impact on education has greatly affected school-going children, leading to a lower turnout of learners to continue their studies since the majority of them are forced by changes caused by the climate to drop out of school, especially girls.

To continue building social movements through grassroots mobilization, from 18-20 September 2025, YECA visited six schools to raise awareness about the roles of students in climate action and discussed strategies that can be put in place to increase climate change actions in schools.

Therefore, in this episode of the newsletter, we share insights from the climate justice series that YECA conducted and share the gaps that need to be filled for students to fully participate in climate action activities in schools.

Enjoy the newsletter

Learning for a Greener Tomorrow: Can Schools Drive Climate Justice?

In 2023, YECA kicked off climate justice series targeting educational institutions to build a movement of young climate justice leaders in Uganda. The climate justice series is one of the platforms to empower students with knowledge on climate activism and their role in protecting and conserving the environment.

Our Climate Justice Series aims to educate and empower students to take action against climate change through interactive workshops, discussions, and activities to foster a community of young leaders committed to creating a more sustainable future.

In this newsletter, we share the voices of students from schools visited and the challenges faced in implementing climate justice actions in their communities.

Further, we share recommendations that need to be put in place to support schools to fully participate in climate action activities to protect, conserve, and restore the lost green economy.

These issues are shared below,

- **Limited information about climate change:** At Rukoni secondary schools, Aron Atwine shared his experience in climate activism. He said that there is an increase in climate change in Uganda, and this is caused by many factors. Although Amon knew some of the factors, he said that most of the

information is not in schools, and little is taught based on the current situation. He said that the information they received was written previously, and they ended up not getting updates about the climate issues happening, especially when they are at school. Amon noted that the school does not buy newspapers, and they have no access to watch the news every evening. This has limited students' understanding of the climate justice issues happening in Uganda. Amon's call is to increase access to information and support the school in accessing newspapers and televisions where they can watch climate change stories to inform their climate actions.

Intimidation from security agencies; Kamuntu Rolland, who is a student at Nyakyera secondary school, informed students that most of the time, he has seen University students being arrested whenever they come out to demonstrate about the oil and gas projects in Uganda, especially those against the EACOP project. He said that watching such stories has kicked most of the students out of climate activism work due to fear of arrests. He said that one of his brothers is among the 12 youth climate activists against EACOP who are currently held up in Luzira. Father Roland shared that as students, they would be happy to be part

of the climate activism, but what they are watching on TV makes them afraid to practice their freedom through peaceful demonstrations. YECA pledged to empower the students about their human rights and how they can use litigation to challenge the injustices, especially from security agencies.

• **Limited institutional support:**

Ainomugisha, one of the students at St. Peter's Lwera, shared her experience based on the institutional gaps in the education curriculum. He said that in order for the students to give maximum participation in climate activism, there is a need for a common climate change curriculum that should be formulated to empower young climate analysts in schools. She said that currently there is little talk about climate change during class sessions, and most of the teachers' aim is to pass exams, which makes students not understand social issues in their communities. Ainomugisha's story adds to YECA's advocacy to have a renewable energy curriculum included in educational institutions to fill the gaps in renewable energy.

• **Limited financial and human resources support:** Mr Tudrakira Joshua, who is the teacher at Kiyooro High Schools, indicated that many climate action initiatives can be promoted in schools to conserve and protect the environment, and the school has time to engage students in climate activism work, but unfortunately, the schools have no resources. He said, for example, that students can be taught to write good opinions and publish, but the school has no computers that can assist students in typing their information for publication. Further, Mr. Tudrakira said that students are very innovative when supported, but due to limited finances, the schools' level of participation in

- **Inadequate policy implementation and weak governance:** Andrew Agaba, who is one of the students from Makerere University, indicated that Uganda has good climate change and environmental policies, but unfortunately, their implementation in schools is impeded by insufficient funding, unequal distribution of resources, and poor communication between districts and local communities. He said that the government needs to scale down enforcement of these policies and engage students to understand and monitor the implementation in their communities. Furthermore, he said that students often lack practical experience with ecological systems due to increasing urbanization and limited opportunities for hands-on learning. In some cases, practical equipment for weather monitoring is inaccessible to students. This calls for more support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the climate change series, the following recommendations were made.

- The government should support schools to engage students in practical climate projects, including tree planting, renewable energy installations, and sustainable gardening.
- The Ministry of Education and sports should support schools to encourage students to participate in local climate initiatives and advocacy campaigns.
- The schools should provide students with mentors who can guide and support their climate work.
- Students also indicated the need to establish networks for students to share experiences, resources, and ideas.
- Utilize social media and online forums to connect students and facilitate climate discussions.

Pictorial of the schools visited.

Our climate sessions began at Ruhanga Adventist Secondary School to spread awareness about the students' role in climate justice and environmental conservation. From the discussion held, students indicated willingness for climate action and had innovated many practices in schools, including fruit tree planting and agroecology gardens at school. On top of that, the school uses biogas and solar as one of the strategies to raise awareness about the use of renewable energy sources in the school. 'I learnt how to produce biogas from our school through interacting with operations at the biogas section, I practiced it at home, we now use it for lighting and cooking', Aron, who is a senior six student, narrated a story. Fronting renewable energy as a solution campaigning tool to end fossil fuels is one of the campaigns that centres YECA's work.



Further, our sessions proceeded to Ruhaama Secondary School to spread awareness about the youth's role in climate action. For this school, the most challenging issue they are facing is limited access to information about the current climate change issues. One of the students indicated that they could not access Newsweek or watch television for news at night. This limits their understanding of climate issues happening currently and makes them concentrate only on passing exams, not understanding social issues around the school.



At Ruhoko secondary school, we engaged students in climate action activities they are doing and how they are affected by climate change. One of the students indicated that currently there is a lot of heat that has affected their concentration, especially in the afternoon. This increased absence of some students to miss some lessons due to too much heat, which is increased due to limited rains and changing seasons. Students say that they have a lot of actions they can organise, but they lack financial support to implement them.



Furthermore, we engaged students at Kiyooro High School on climate justice advocacy and what their roles are in environmental protection and conservation in Uganda. At this school, students identified the need for more climate change advocacy awareness to keep them updated about the ongoing climate issues in Uganda. Both the students and teachers requested support to form an environmental club in school that will focus on writing about climate change issues in Uganda. They said that this is a good idea to have their climate advocacy outside of school to contribute to building a sustainable environment for all. YECA will follow up with support to have the club formed and operational.



Furthermore, our climate justice series reached Brainstorm High School and engaged students on their roles in climate justice. Students shared their experiences on what they are doing in their society, including tree planting and awareness campaigns to mobilize the public to participate in environmental restoration practices. In this school, students requested support to establish an environmental club that will keep doing the awareness campaign in school, but also be climate ambassadors in their communities.



Also, we visited Nyakyera Academy to engage students in their climate action roles. This is the school that has been organising clean-up sessions in Nyakyera trading centre and surrounding communities to spread awareness about the community's role in keeping the environment clean. The school informed us that they have been working with local organisations in climate action work, and they were happy to see YECA reaching their schools for partnership. The school requested regular visits to interact with students to build young climate justice leaders in Uganda.



In addition, in September 2025, Youth for Environmental Justice and Climate Action (YECA) supported and participated in an environmental parliament that happened at the Uganda parliament premises. The discussion focused on climate action in politics and the role of green jobs as a solution for sustainability and employment. The environmental parliament is one of the platforms that provides space for young people to share ideas on climate action and demand accountability from leaders as far as climate change issues are concerned. YECA supported five youth to participate in the debate, and we hope that what was discussed will be implemented. We keep following up on the implementation of the action points.



In addition, on September 9, 2025, we supported the 12 StopEACOP youth activists who were arrested as they attempted to deliver a petition to Stanbic Bank over its support for the EACOP project. YECA supported the youth to attend the court session for a bail application. Unfortunately, the magistrate refused to hear the bail application, and the case was adjourned to October 1, 2025. This is one of the many cases that YECA is working on with partners to defend the rights of youth climate activists in Uganda. We shall keep you posted on our upcoming events.



**We value
your
feedback**

**Thank
you.**

About YECA

Youth for Environmental Justice and Climate Action (YECA) is a youth-led and youth-focused non-profit organization in Uganda. The organization was formed to build a climate justice movement in Uganda with a focus on youth, especially in educational institutions. The organization is committed to conserving and protecting Uganda's environment in its density through public policy research and advocacy to influence environmental policies in favor of the local person. Through research, advocacy, and community education, YECA works with young people and local-level leaders to promote sustainable management of natural resources for economic development.

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