



GYS SUBMISSION

INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE POLICY DIVISION OF CLIMATEWATCH

Mountain Frontlines, Youth Futures and Direct Climate Finance

*ClimateWatch submission to the YOUNGO Global Youth Statement
2026: policy demands from Pakistan's mountain and
climate-vulnerable communities ahead of COP31 (Antalya, Türkiye,
9-20 November 2026)*

ClimateWatch - International Climate Policy & Research and Development Divisions

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Territorial note: References to Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir describe administrative, institutional and climate-finance access arrangements only, without prejudice to the final determination of any territorial claims.

Submission focus: This submission is deliberately narrow. It carries three linked packages into the GYS 2026: (1) practical frontline access to loss-and-damage and climate finance; (2) preventive adaptation, disaster risk reduction and people-centred early warning; and (3) youth futures - climate mobility and Action for Climate Empowerment. It is prepared for direct submission and form-based thematic input.

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Key Messages

Mountain and cryosphere communities are frontline climate constituencies, not peripheral ones. Hindu Kush Himalayan glaciers are projected to lose 30-50 per cent of their volume by 2100 even if warming stays below 2°C, and mass loss has already accelerated by 65 per cent between the decade beginning in 2000 and the decade beginning in 2010. GLOFs, flash floods and glacier-fed water insecurity are near-term human-security risks, not distant environmental concerns.

Climate finance must be judged by who can actually access it. The FRLD's first Barbados Implementation Modalities call, a USD 250 million pilot offering requests of USD 5-20 million, closed on 15 June 2026, is the test case. COP31 guidance to the Fund should require the second funding cycle to open a simplified, grant-based window for youth-led and community organizations and to disclose subnational delivery at design stage.

COP31 is the last COP before the end-of-2027 Early Warnings for All deadline, and mountain communities are the last mile. Prevention must be funded before response: glacier and hydrometeorological monitoring routed through SOFF and CREWS, school-linked and youth-enabled warning systems, and early action that is financed, not merely announced.

Youth migration intent is an adaptation indicator. When young people in GLOF-exposed valleys conclude that the future is elsewhere, adaptation has failed where they live, and no reporting system currently reads that signal. The GYS should demand both the right to move safely and the right to stay with dignity, underpinned by locally grounded climate education as survival literacy.

1 Purpose and Strategic Fit with the GYS Process

ClimateWatch submits this input to the YOUNGO Global Youth Statement 2026 from the perspective of Pakistan's mountain and climate-vulnerable communities, especially the cryosphere-dependent valleys of Gilgit-Baltistan. The Global Youth Statement converts youth perspectives into negotiation-aligned policy recommendations for Parties and other UNFCCC actors; the 2025 process emphasized evidence-based demands, thematic policy areas, synthesis and advocacy handover.¹

COP31 will be held in Antalya, Türkiye, from 9 to 20 November 2026.² This timing creates a specific opportunity: not higher ambition in principle, but institutions, finance, early warning and locally accountable delivery in practice, on deadlines that fall within the next two years.

¹Youth4Climate / YOUNGO, 2025, 2025 Global Youth Statement (accessed 23.07.2026). Cited as process precedent; the 2026 modalities should be confirmed against current YOUNGO guidance.

²UNFCCC, 2026, COP31: The Road to Antalya (accessed 23.07.2026)

This submission is deliberately narrow. It advances three linked packages, each targeted at a GYS thematic area: (1) loss and damage and climate finance, practical frontline access; (2) adaptation, DRR and people-centred early warning, prevention funded before response; and (3) youth futures, climate mobility and Action for Climate Empowerment. Youth participation and accountability are not a separate theme here; they close each package, because our experience suggests durable wins come from narrow, resourced asks tied to a specific mechanism, not omnibus demand lists.

Core proposition for the GYS 2026

Mountain communities are not peripheral to climate negotiations. They face cryosphere loss, GLOFs, flash floods, landslides, water insecurity, education disruption, livelihood stress, youth outmigration pressure and finance-access barriers, while the systems meant to protect them remain national-level, urban-centred, data-poor and difficult to reach. COP31 must treat mountain resilience, youth futures and direct access to finance as core climate justice issues.

2 About ClimateWatch

ClimateWatch is a youth-led climate policy think-tank operating as a programmatic office of the Northern Citizens' Community Board (NCCB), an ECOSOC-accredited organization based in Pakistan. ClimateWatch bridges policy research with community-informed climate advocacy across international climate policy, climate finance, disaster risk reduction, education for sustainable development and mountain resilience. It has represented civil society at COP26, COP27, COP28 and SB64 (Bonn, 2026).

Work directly relevant to this submission includes a rapid policy brief on Gilgit-Baltistan's FY2026-27 interim budget,³ research on Pakistan's institutional readiness for the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage,⁴ the Glacier School climate-literacy initiative in GLOF-exposed mountain communities, and policy work on youth migration intent, early warning gaps and community-informed climate governance.

³ClimateWatch, 2026a, From Disaster Response to Climate Resilience: A Climate Budget Assessment of Gilgit-Baltistan's FY2026-27 Interim Budget, Rapid Policy Brief, July 2026

⁴ClimateWatch, 2026b, Beyond Adaptation: Pakistan's Institutional Readiness for the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, Background Paper, July 2026

3 Executive Summary: Six Demands in Three Packages

ClimateWatch asks YOUNGO to include a focused mountain-frontline package in the Global Youth Statement 2026. Six demands, two per thematic package, are written for direct integration into the GYS thematic sections:

Package 1 - Loss and Damage and Climate Finance

1. Recognize mountain and cryosphere communities as frontline climate constituencies. Parties and the FRLD Board should include mountain and glacier-dependent communities, and mountain and cryosphere-risk indicators, in loss-and-damage needs assessments, adaptation finance and youth participation decisions.
2. Move from national eligibility to practical frontline access. The FRLD's second funding cycle should open a simplified, grant-based window for youth-led organizations, community-based organizations and local governments, with design-stage disclosure of subnational delivery and public tracking of finance from national approval to valley-level delivery.

Package 2 - Adaptation, DRR and People-Centred Early Warning

3. Fund prevention before response. Dedicated, visible budget lines, supported internationally through SOFF and CREWS, for glacier and hydrometeorological monitoring, GLOF and flood early warning, watershed restoration and climate-risk screening of infrastructure, with mountain-relevant Belém Adaptation Indicators integrated into NAPs and transparency reports.
4. Deliver people-centred early warning before the end-2027 EW4All deadline. Warnings must be multilingual, locally trusted, school-linked, youth-enabled, disability-inclusive, gender-responsive and connected to funded early action, with EW4All progress reported at a resolution that shows whether remote mountain communities are covered.

Package 3 - Youth Futures: Climate Mobility and ACE

5. Recognize youth migration intent as an adaptation and justice indicator. Young people in mountain regions should have both the right to move safely and the right to stay with dignity, through climate-resilient education, livelihoods, local jobs, mental-health support and visible adaptation investment.
6. Treat climate education as survival literacy. ACE should be resourced through named mechanisms, not left as an unfunded mandate, to deliver locally adapted education on glaciers, water security, GLOFs, DRR, rights, finance access and traditional ecological knowledge.

4 Evidence Base: Why This Belongs in the GYS

4.1 Mountain and cryosphere risk is a frontline justice issue

The Hindu Kush Himalayan region is undergoing accelerated cryosphere change. ICIMOD projects that HKH glaciers will lose 30-50 per cent of their volume by 2100 even if global warming remains below 2°C, and records that glacier mass loss accelerated by 65 per cent between the decades beginning in 2000 and 2010.⁵ IPCC AR6 warns that glacier mass loss and the formation of unstable glacial lakes are increasing GLOF risk in Asian high mountains.⁶ Mountain climate risk is not a distant environmental concern; it is a near-term human-security, infrastructure, water, livelihood and mobility concern.

4.2 Pakistan's climate losses show why finance must reach the frontline

Pakistan's 2022 floods affected 33 million people and caused damages exceeding USD 14.9 billion, economic losses of about USD 15.2 billion, and reconstruction needs above USD 16 billion.⁷ ClimateWatch's assessment of Gilgit-Baltistan's FY2026-27 interim budget found disaster-related spending concentrated on response and machinery, with no publicly visible budget line for glacier monitoring, early warning, watershed restoration or climate-risk screening of new infrastructure.⁸ This does not prove absence; it proves that prevention is not yet visible, traceable or accountable in the budget architecture.

4.3 Early warning is a finance and governance question, not only a technology question

⁵ICIMOD, 2023, Water, Ice, Society, and Ecosystems in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HI-WISE), Chapter 2 (accessed 23.07.2026)

⁶IPCC, 2021, Sixth Assessment Report, Working Group I, Chapter 12 (accessed 23.07.2026)

⁷Government of Pakistan / ADB / EU / UNDP / World Bank, 2022, Pakistan Floods 2022: Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, Main Report (accessed 23.07.2026)

⁸ClimateWatch, 2026a, Climate Budget Assessment of Gilgit-Baltistan's FY2026-27 Interim Budget (see note 3)

The UN Early Warnings for All initiative aims to protect every person with life-saving early warning systems by the end of 2027,⁹ and UNDRR emphasizes inclusive, multi-hazard, people-centred systems that empower vulnerable communities to act on risk.¹⁰ The evidence that this works in Pakistan's mountains already exists: data from an automatic weather station at Shisper Glacier supported the timely evacuation of households during the GLOF events of April 2021 and May 2022.¹¹ The gap is not proof of concept; it is coverage, last-mile communication, local-language alerts, school-based preparedness and financing for early action.

4.4 Loss-and-damage finance must be judged by who can actually access it

The FRLD states that it addresses the urgent needs of vulnerable communities and seeks to provide resources directly to local actors through streamlined access.¹² Its Barbados Implementation Modalities set aside a USD 250 million pilot, with individual funding requests of USD 5-20 million and half the envelope reserved for SIDS and LDCs; the first call ran from 15 December 2025 to 15 June 2026.¹³ Set against USD 30 billion in damages and losses from a single flood season, requests of this size are catalytic only if they build durable local delivery channels. ClimateWatch's FRLD readiness review argues that the decisive question for mountain and administratively complex regions is not formal eligibility but practical access: whether focal points, endorsement processes, access entities and community delivery channels can move resources from a national pipeline to affected valleys and households.¹⁴

4.5 Youth migration intent must be treated as a warning signal

The World Bank projects that climate change could drive up to 216 million people to move within their own countries by 2050, including up to 40 million in South Asia.¹⁵ The Belém Adaptation Indicators adopted at COP30 include climate mobility among the dimensions of adaptation progress¹⁶, a hook this submission builds on. For mountain youth, migration intent forms when repeated climate shocks weaken confidence in local futures: land becomes unsafe, water systems shift, schools are disrupted, livelihoods narrow, recovery costs rise. ClimateWatch's own community engagement in Gilgit-Baltistan finds this pattern credible but currently anecdotal; systematic youth-disaggregated data collection is itself one of our demands.

⁹United Nations, 2026, Early Warnings for All initiative (accessed 23.07.2026)

¹⁰UNDRR, 2026, Early Warnings for All (accessed 23.07.2026)

¹¹WMO / SOFF, 2023, Early Warnings for All and the role of SOFF (accessed 23.07.2026)

¹²Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, 2026, About the FRLD (accessed 23.07.2026)

¹³Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, 2025, Terms of Reference for the Call for Funding Requests under the Barbados Implementation Modalities (accessed 23.07.2026)

¹⁴ClimateWatch, 2026b, Beyond Adaptation (see note 4)

¹⁵World Bank, 2021, Groundswell: Acting on Internal Climate Migration (accessed 23.07.2026)

¹⁶UNFCCC, 2025, Decision on the Global Goal on Adaptation adopted at COP30, Belém (Belém Adaptation Indicators); IOM Environmental Migration Portal, 2025, Indicators defined at COP30 include climate mobility (accessed 23.07.2026)

4.6 Education disruption is adaptation failure in slow motion

The 2022 floods damaged or destroyed more than 26,600 schools and interrupted the education of over 3.5 million children.¹⁷ Children born in 2020 will face substantially higher lifetime exposure to extreme climate events than their grandparents.¹⁸ For GLOF-exposed valleys, climate education is not awareness-raising; it is survival literacy, knowing what a lake outburst looks like, where the evacuation route runs, and how to claim the finance that recovery requires. ClimateWatch's Glacier School delivers exactly this in Gilgit-Baltistan, and the demand in Package 3 generalizes from that operational experience.

5 Thematic Packages for Direct GYS Integration

The following language is written for direct integration into YOUNGO thematic inputs: specific, negotiation-facing and implementable. Each package closes with an accountability demand, because participation is how the other demands become verifiable.

5.1 Package 1, Loss and Damage and Climate Finance

We call on Parties and the FRLD Board to move from formal national eligibility to practical frontline access. Loss-and-damage and adaptation finance must demonstrate how resources reach affected communities, including mountain and cryosphere-dependent regions, administratively complex territories, Indigenous Peoples, local governments, community-based organizations and youth-led institutions.

- Through COP31 guidance to the FRLD, direct the Board to open, in the funding cycle that follows the Barbados Implementation Modalities pilot, a simplified grant-based window for youth-led organizations, community-based organizations and local governments in frontline areas, modelled on the Adaptation Fund's small-grants and enhanced direct access modalities, with proposal templates completable without international consultants.
- Require funding requests to disclose, at design stage, subnational consultation processes, target geographies, community-benefit pathways and delivery partners. Design-stage disclosure, not an additional approval hurdle (see the Policy Trade-off Note).
- Require national focal points to publish tracking of climate finance from national approval to provincial or regional, district, valley and community-level delivery, in formats accessible to youth-led budget-monitoring initiatives.

¹⁷OCHA, 2022, Pakistan: 2022 Monsoon Floods, Situation Report No. 10 (accessed 23.07.2026)

¹⁸Save the Children / Vrije Universiteit Brussel, 2021, Born into the Climate Crisis (accessed 23.07.2026)

- Include mountain and cryosphere-risk indicators, GLOF exposure, glacier-fed water insecurity, landslide risk, in national loss-and-damage needs assessments, alongside coastal, urban and agricultural losses; recognize non-economic loss and damage including land, cultural heritage, indigenous knowledge, mental health, education continuity and community cohesion.
- Accountability: youth and frontline communities must be consulted before FRLD funding requests and major adaptation-finance proposals are submitted, with youth seats in national loss-and-damage advisory processes.

ClimateWatch Analysis: The test is delivery, not eligibility. The first BIM call closed on 15 June 2026. Whether its projects build durable local delivery channels, or stop at national pipelines, will be observable by COP31. The GYS should demand that this evidence shapes the second cycle's design, and that administrative or territorial complexity never becomes a functional barrier to climate justice.

5.2 Package 2, Adaptation, DRR and People-Centred Early Warning

We call on Parties to treat preventive adaptation as a minimum public-finance obligation. In mountain regions, prevention means community-based early warning, glacier and hydrometeorological monitoring, watershed restoration, climate-risk screening, resilient infrastructure and preparedness systems that connect warnings to funded action.

- Allocate dedicated, visible budget lines for GLOF and flood early warning, glacier monitoring, hydrometeorological stations and last-mile risk communication in mountain regions, with international support routed through SOFF and CREWS, whose mandate is precisely this observational and warning infrastructure.
- Report Early Warnings for All progress at a resolution that shows coverage of remote, rural and mountain communities. The initiative's deadline is the end of 2027; Antalya is the last COP at which course-correction is possible.
- Integrate mountain-relevant Belém Adaptation Indicators into NAPs, NDCs and Biennial Transparency Reports, and use the Belém-Addis Vision process to ensure cryosphere risk is measurable in the indicators' operationalization.
- Fund youth volunteer early-warning networks, school preparedness plans, evacuation drills and community risk maps; warnings must be multilingual, disability-inclusive and gender-responsive, delivered through locally trusted messengers.
- Require climate-risk screening for roads, bridges, schools, health facilities and irrigation systems in high-risk mountain valleys as a condition of development finance; integrate traditional ecological knowledge with scientific monitoring under community consent and attribution.

- Accountability: publish adaptation and DRR spending, allocations, releases, expenditure and outcomes, at subnational level in accessible formats.

ClimateWatch Analysis: Prevention is not yet visible in the budget architecture. Gilgit-Baltistan's FY2026-27 interim budget recognizes disaster pressure yet shows no publicly visible line for glacier monitoring, early warning or watershed restoration. The Shisper Glacier evacuations prove the model works; the gap is financed coverage, not concept.

5.3 Package 3, Youth Futures: Climate Mobility and ACE

We call on Parties to recognize youth climate mobility as more than post-disaster displacement, and to treat Action for Climate Empowerment as the infrastructure that makes staying viable. In frontline mountain regions, migration intent forms when repeated shocks weaken confidence in local futures; education is where that confidence is either rebuilt or lost.

- Recognize youth migration intent as an adaptation and climate justice indicator in NAPs, NDC implementation plans and loss-and-damage assessments, building on the inclusion of climate mobility in the Belém Adaptation Indicators and on the mandate of the UNFCCC Task Force on Displacement.
- Protect both the right to move safely and the right to stay with dignity: invest in climate-resilient livelihoods for mountain youth, including adaptation entrepreneurship, ecosystem restoration, resilient tourism, climate services, community research and green skills.
- Collect youth-disaggregated data on how disasters, education disruption, livelihood loss and infrastructure damage influence migration decisions; protect remittance-dependent households through shock-responsive social protection; ensure safe labour-migration pathways include climate-related occupational protections, especially against extreme heat.
- Appoint and resource national ACE focal points with structured youth consultation, and specify which existing mechanism carries ACE resourcing, such as GCF readiness

windows or the Adaptation Fund's small-grants modality, rather than leaving ACE an unfunded mandate.

- Finance locally adapted climate curricula for mountain schools and community learning spaces, glaciers, GLOFs, water security, DRR, rights, finance access, with teacher training, school safety plans and youth-led climate literacy in local languages; protect traditional ecological knowledge through consent-based documentation and community ownership.
- Accountability: recognize youth-led climate education and youth-led policy research as adaptation infrastructure and as legitimate inputs into national and international climate governance, consulted before NDCs, NAPs and finance proposals are finalized, not after.

ClimateWatch Analysis: Migration intent is the indicator adaptation reporting does not yet read. When a young person in a GLOF-exposed valley concludes that the future is elsewhere, that is adaptation-failure data, and no national reporting system currently collects it. Making it an indicator turns an invisible loss into an accountable one.

6 Policy Trade-off Note

We recognize two honest tensions in our own demands. First, disclosure requirements on FRLD funding requests could slow disbursement, the very problem direct access is meant to solve. We therefore ask for disclosure at the design stage, using simplified templates, not as an additional approval gate; whether this balance is right will be verifiable in whether second-cycle approval times stay within the Board's own targets. Second, mountain-specific asks sit in tension with country-driven allocation. We do not seek quotas; we seek indicators, windows and disclosure that make mountain communities visible within country-led processes. If frontline delivery can be demonstrated through existing channels, these demands are met; the burden of proof, however, currently runs the other way.

7 Negotiation-Aligned Priority Language

To support GYS editors, the table below converts each package into concise language for direct integration.

GYS THEMATIC AREA	RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE	WHY IT MATTERS
Loss and Damage / Climate Finance	Parties must ensure that the FRLD's post-pilot funding cycles are accessible in practice to frontline communities, including mountain and administratively complex regions, through simplified, grant-based windows for youth-led and community organizations and design-stage disclosure of subnational delivery.	Prevents climate finance from stopping at national pipelines.
Adaptation / GGA / DRR	Preventive adaptation must be funded before response: community-based early warning and glacier monitoring supported through SOFF and CREWS, mountain-relevant Belém Adaptation Indicators in NAPs, and EW4All coverage reported for remote mountain communities before the end-2027 deadline.	Converts ambition into risk reduction, on a deadline.
Youth Futures / Climate Mobility / ACE	Youth migration intent should be recognized as an adaptation and justice indicator, alongside the right to move safely and the right to stay with dignity, supported by ACE resourced through named mechanisms to deliver locally grounded climate education as survival literacy.	Makes adaptation failure visible where young people live.

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About ClimateWatch

ClimateWatch is a youth-led climate think-tank operating as a programmatic office of the Northern Citizens' Community Board (NCCB), an ECOSOC-accredited organization. Based in Pakistan, ClimateWatch bridges stringent policy research with on-the-ground climate advocacy, producing evidence-based analysis that informs national and international climate governance.

Our Mission: ClimateWatch exists to ensure that Pakistan's most climate-vulnerable communities, from the cryosphere regions of Gilgit-Baltistan to the flood plains of Sindh, are represented in climate policy decisions at every level, from local government to international negotiations.

Our Work

- 1) *International Climate Policy (ICP)* tracks and analyzes Pakistan's engagement with global climate frameworks, including the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement, and associated finance mechanisms. ClimateWatch has represented civil society at COP26, COP27, COP28, and SB64 (Bonn, 2026).
- 2) *Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)* operates under UNESCO's ESD 2030 agenda, translating global sustainability goals into locally leveled learning initiatives. Flagship project: the Glacier School, bringing climate and earth science education to mountain communities in Gilgit-Baltistan facing glacier dynamics and GLOF risks.
- 3) *Research & Development (R&D)* produces primary research on Pakistan's climate vulnerability, fiscal policy, and adaptation gaps.

This submission is a product of the International Climate Policy, Education for Sustainable Development, and Research & Development divisions working jointly.

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