

Resilient Futures

PROTECTING YOUNG LIVES
IN A CHANGING CLIMATE



ARNEC
Asia-Pacific Regional Network
for Early Childhood



**Early Childhood
Regional Networks
Fund**

Resilient Futures

PROTECTING YOUNG LIVES
IN A CHANGING CLIMATE



About ARNEC

The Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC) is a regional network that advances the agenda on and investment in Early Childhood Development (ECD) in the Asia-Pacific region.

Established in 2008, ARNEC's vision is to ensure that all young children in Asia-Pacific realise optimal well-being and development. It works with partners and members in promoting holistic and inclusive ECD. ARNEC provides a platform for diverse stakeholders such as government and non-governmental organisations, foundations, academia, development partners, and ECD practitioners to share and learn from each other's policies, research and program practices.

In 2019, ARNEC was among the first in the region—and globally—to articulate how climate change is risking young lives. ARNEC continues to raise awareness of the interlinkages between ECD and Climate Change, and advocate for ECD as a cost-effective, comprehensive, and enduring pathway to achieve climate resilience and sustainable development.

Cover photo by **Yen Sotheara, Caregiver, Cambodia.**

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Foreword

EVELYN D. SANTIAGO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL NETWORK FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD (ARNEC)

Climate change, a pressing global issue, poses the greatest threat to our planet and ourselves. It disproportionately affects vulnerable groups, particularly young children.

Young children bear nearly 90% of the global health burden associated with climate change. Their developing bodies face unprecedented challenges due to increased pollution, rising temperatures, frequent flooding, and toxic substances. These consequences affect their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

To address this concern, ARNEC has prioritised placing young children at the forefront of climate action. We align children's rights and well-being with the climate agenda. Since 2019, we have developed advocacy materials, conducted research, and generated evidence to raise awareness about the interlinkages between early childhood development (ECD) and climate change. Collaborating with country partners, we have also implemented advocacy campaigns and actions to address the adverse effects of climate change on young children, their families, and communities.

The coffee table book "Resilient Futures: Protecting Young Lives in a Changing Climate" showcases our advocacy and commitment to placing young children at the center of climate actions. It offers insights into the challenges faced by young children in a changing climate, the transformative nature of their childhood, and the significance of their well-being.

We thank our Youth Champions for ECD and Climate for capturing compelling images, sharing their reflections, and emerging as critical voices. We hope these photographs and stories inspire you to support our advocacy for a clean, safe, nurturing, and sustainable environment for young children.

We gratefully acknowledge our partners, especially the Bainum Family Foundation and the Early Childhood Regional Networks (ECRN) Fund, for their unwavering support in our advocacy efforts for ECD and Climate Change. Their contributions made this coffee table book a reality.

We also acknowledge our collaborative partnership with the Oxford University through the Children and Climate Initiative, which enables us to distribute printed copies of the book to our partners.

We hope this book inspires collective action and moves individuals and organisations to combat climate change. We envision that its reach extends to every platform where climate policies are formulated and implemented, whether at the local, national, regional, or global scale.

The challenges faced by young children today are beyond their control. We must protect their well-being and development, as the consequences they endure today will have a lasting impact on their lives.

Their future is at stake. We must prioritise climate action for young children.

Youth in Climate Change

NEELIMA CHOPRA, PROGRAM AND PARTNERSHIP SPECIALIST
SRIHARI GOVIND, CLIMATE AND YOUTH ADVISOR

Youth have always been at the forefront of social transformation, serving as the voice of reason, justice, and hope in times of uncertainty. Their leadership in the climate movement has been instrumental in demanding accountability and systemic change. In recent years, youth engagement within global climate processes, including the United Nations Climate Conferences, has grown more visible, powerful, and transformative.

Human-induced climate change is an existential threat that demands both immediate and long-term action. It requires solutions that not only mitigate current impacts but also address the deep-rooted inequities that perpetuate vulnerability. The intersection between early childhood development (ECD) and climate change represents both immediate concerns and the long term solutions, protecting those most affected today including young children, and their families while investing in the foundations of resilient, just, and sustainable societies for generations to come.

Traditionally, childhood experiences, especially in the context of climate change, have been interpreted through adult perspectives. Children's realities, emotions, and understandings have often been narrated for them rather than by them. While children's voices must remain central in this discourse, young people, having only recently transitioned from childhood themselves, are uniquely positioned to advocate for the youngest children. In the context of early childhood, these youth stakeholders are among the most important actors,

second only to the children themselves. Their proximity to both childhood experience and social responsibility makes them powerful bridges between children's lived realities and the adult decision-making spaces that shape their futures.

To harness this momentum and shift the paradigm, the Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC) brought together Youth Champions for ECD and Climate - a pioneering effort to bridge youth leadership in climate change and early childhood advocacy. These youth advocates who include young parents, doctors, educators, diplomats, and researchers have captured through their lenses and voices how climate change is transforming the lives of young children across the region. Their work, grounded in participatory methods, does more than document; it compels reflection, empathy, and action.

The stories and images in this collection reflect resilience, nurturing care, and intergenerational solidarity. They remind us that centering young children in the climate discourse is not just a moral imperative, it is also a strategic pathway toward a sustainable and equitable future.

ECD & Climate Mentors

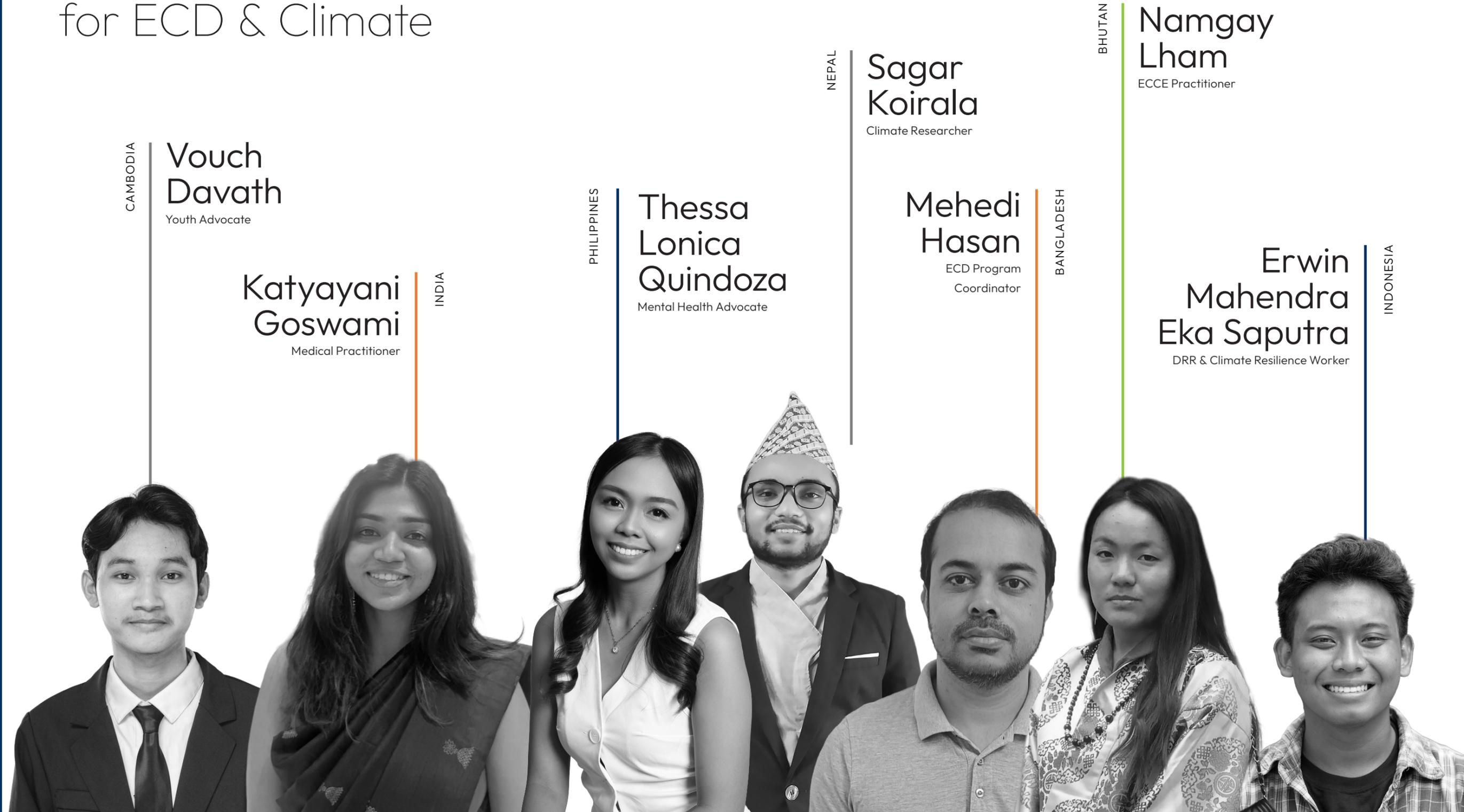


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Program and Partnership Specialist | India



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Youth Champions for ECD & Climate



CAMBODIA

Vouch Davath
Youth Advocate

INDIA

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PHILIPPINES

Thessa Lonica Quindoza
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ECCE Practitioner

INDONESIA

Erwin Mahendra Eka Saputra
DRR & Climate Resilience Worker

Project Design and Process

ARNEC encourages and empowers youth to represent and amplify the voices of young children in shaping climate action and early childhood development policies. The 'Climate Change through the Eyes of Children in Their Youngest Years' project was conceptualised by ARNEC, grounded in meaningful youth engagement, participatory research, and ethical storytelling. It engaged seven youth champions from the region to capture and document the lived experiences of how climate change is impacting young children in their communities.

The project followed a structured, participatory, and ethical process to ensure that every image and narrative represented children and their communities with accuracy, dignity, and respect. Each of the youth champions underwent training sessions, facilitated by ARNEC.

These training sessions introduced the youth champions to Photovoice methodology, a participatory research method in which participants use photography and the stories behind their images to identify and represent issues important to them, allowing researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the topic under study. For participants, Photovoice offers a unique

opportunity to visually portray experiences and share personal knowledge on issues that may be difficult to express with words alone¹. This active involvement demonstrates to participants that they are valued members of the research process² and fosters a sense of community ownership by drawing attention to important local issues³. For researchers, the combination of visual and narrative data encourages dialogue among participants, uncovers perspectives not easily captured through interviews or focus groups alone, and enhances understanding of issues from the participants' point of view⁴. The resulting photo stories thus provide a rich platform for nuanced insights into community experiences and challenges.

Additionally, training sessions and one-on-one feedback sessions were also coordinated with youth advocates on storytelling, interviewing and videography.

Together, these equipped participants with the skills needed to translate complex realities into visual narratives that were compelling, while protecting the dignity of those who were captured. The sessions were facilitated by experts from Young Lives-India, University College Cork and JDot Productions.

Ethical Considerations were at the core of the project. Before beginning any documentation, all participants were provided with clear 'Photo Submission Guidelines' and consent form outlining expectations, rights, and responsibilities. Contributors were required to obtain informed consent from all identifiable individuals in their photographs, particularly the guardians of young children, and to avoid graphic, distressing, or staged imagery. Each submission included a signed statement confirming that the contributor had secured all necessary permissions and understood that ARNEC may use the material for research dissemination and advocacy.

Subsequently, every photo submission and accompanying narrative underwent a thorough review by the ARNEC team to ensure compliance with the organisation's ethical standards, including safeguarding children and the respectful representation of children and families. Special consideration was given to the sensitivity of visual content, given the subject matter and the young age of many participants. While sensitivity guided the review process, the team also prioritised the truthful representation of the realities of climate change. Some

images may appear stark or unsettling; however, they were included because they authentically reflect the lived experiences of youth advocates and contributors from seven countries across Asia. Their inclusion underscores that climate change is not a distant threat but an immediate, tangible consequence of human activity.

An important strength of the project is the professional background of its contributors. The youth advocates and contributors are trained professionals with direct experience working with or for children, including health professionals, development workers, and early childhood educators. Their engagement contributed lived experience, insight, and personal commitment, ensuring that each photograph conveyed not only a compelling narrative but also a nuanced understanding of the impact of climate change on young children.

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2. Moffitt P, Vollman AR. Photovoice: picturing the health of Aboriginal women in a remote northern community. *Can J Nurs Res*. 2004 Dec;36(4):189-201. PMID: 15739944.

3. Wang C, Burris MA. Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment. *Health Education & Behavior*. 1997;24(3):369-387. doi:10.1177/109019819702400309

4. Darbyshire, P., MacDougall, C., & Schiller, W. (2005). Multiple methods in qualitative research with children: more insight or just more? *Qualitative Research*, 5(4), 417-436. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794105056921>(Original work published 2005)

The Journey

1

A Beginning

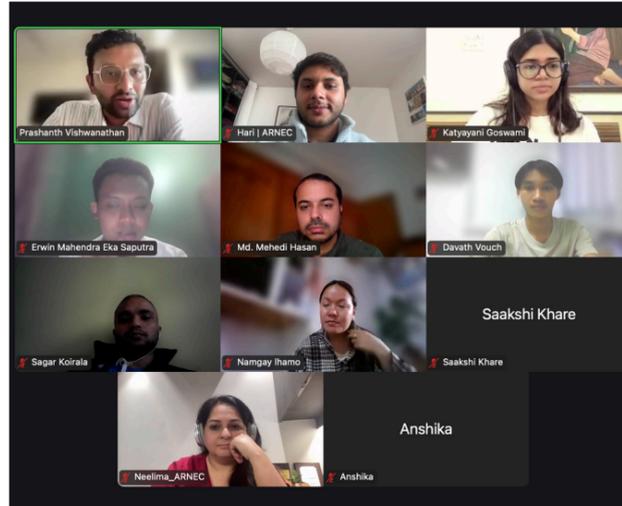
An idea takes root at the ARNEC Conference 2024 in Penang, sparking a shared commitment to children and climate.



2

7 Youth Champions Appointed

From across Asia-Pacific, seven Youth Champions identified and stepped forward to become the voices of children in a changing climate.



3

Undergoing Training

A month of training- listening deeply, observing closely, shaping stories with care.



4

Seeing Through Children's Eyes

Through Photovoice, Youth Champions capture powerful moments of childhood in a shifting climate.



5

Conversations Across Generations

Communities, elders, caregivers, and children share their lived realities and hopes for the future.



6

Stories Unfold

Their work shines on the regional stage as Youth Champions present at the ARNEC Conference in Manila, 2025



7

A Book Born of Voices

These images and narratives come together here, honouring children's experiences and calling for action.

Responsive Caregiving

Ensuring caregivers are supported and able to provide sensitive, responsive care.

When crises hit, caregivers carry impossible burdens: securing water, food, and healthcare while soothing children's fear. Without support, stress undermines the consistent, loving care young children need.



“

Climate change is forcing caregivers into impossible choices!

Erwin Mahendra Eka Saputra,

DRR and Climate Resilience Worker, Indonesia



The Tree That Watched Me Grow, Now Gone

Once a sanctuary of shade, a mango tree now stands lifeless. Its branches bare, under the weight of rising heat. Beneath it, a young child gazes at what remains of her childhood companion. As extreme heat scorches the earth, children lose safe spaces to play, fresh fruit that nourish them, and the cooling shelter that once protected them. Each disappearing tree reminds us that climate change is not distant, it is affecting the daily life of young children and taking away familiarity and comfort. Protecting the environment is protecting childhood, and thereby every child's right to grow, dream, feel safe, and play amid lush green landscapes.

Photo credits: Chhum Nget, Caregiver, Cambodia

This image was captured by Chhum Nget, a caregiver from Cambodia, during her visit to a home in Dang Tong District in Cambodia. It shows a child staring at a mango tree, now withered by extreme heat, a reminder that climate change is stealing the simple joys of childhood.

Silent Goodbye: A Child's View of a Changing Ocean

A young girl stands by the shore, watching her father sail into uncertain waters. The ocean that once gave, now takes away, as pollution, privatisation, and climate shifts erode both livelihoods and hope. The girl's gaze captures more than longing; it reflects the quiet sorrow of children and families forced to adapt to realities beyond their control. With dwindling fish stocks and violent storms, families face hunger and displacement, and children suffer from poor nutrition and exposure to stress and instability. Protecting these coastlines is not just environmental work; it is the preservation of identity, dignity, and the dreams of a child.

Photo credits: Monica Bengu, Youth Stakeholder, Indonesia

This image was captured by Monica Bengu, a youth stakeholder from Indonesia, near the coast of Kupang in East Nusa Tenggara. Through the figure of a young child, the image highlights the magnitude of the climate crisis, and underscores that young children bear the greatest impact.



Whatever it Takes

After the floods, a father carries his sick child across a broken bridge in search of medical help - a journey of love and desperation. With roads destroyed and clinics unreachable, his path through danger becomes an emblem of parental resilience in a collapsing world. The image lays bare the cruel truth of the climate crisis: when floods destroy healthcare infrastructure, children suffer the most. Climate disasters are breaking health systems, isolating communities, and pushing parents to take risky acts of care. This photograph calls for urgent investment in climate-resilient healthcare and disaster preparedness.



Photo credits: Erwin Mahendra Eka Saputra, DRR and Climate Resilience Worker, Indonesia

This image was captured by Erwin Mahendra Eka Saputra, a youth stakeholder from Indonesia, during a humanitarian response to the flash flood and landslide disaster in Lebak Banten. It shows how climate change is making basic health services harder to access and testing caregivers' resilience.



Resilience in the Mud

In a landscape carved by flash floods and landslides, a young boy runs barefoot through thick mud toward a child-friendly space, a fragile sanctuary of laughter amid ruin. This photograph captures both the devastation and the indomitable spirit of a child living through disaster. Homes lie broken, parents search for food aid, and roads dissolve into sludge, yet this child chases moments of joy. Each step through the mud is a testament to his courage; the instinct to play, learn, and adapt even when the world collapses around him. Floods and landslides disrupt his safety, health, and education, yet his determination reflects the resilience of entire communities rebuilding hope from loss.

Photo credits: Erwin Mahendra Eka Saputra, DRR and Climate Resilience Worker, Indonesia

This image was captured by Erwin Mahendra Eka Saputra, a youth stakeholder from Indonesia, during a humanitarian mission following a flash flood in Lebak Banten in Indonesia. The image calls for protecting children by investing in climate-resilient systems.

Safety and Security

Protecting children from harm and creating a stable environment.

Extreme weather, flooding, fires, and displacement turn homes and play spaces into hazards. Children face injury, disease, stress, and the loss of safe places to grow.



“

Young children are forced to leave their house due to climate change. It has a negative impact on their growth, development, and survival.

Sagar Koirala, Climate Researcher, Nepal



Wall and Fear

Along the fragile coastlines of Karimun Regency, the sea advances inch by inch, swallowing land, homes, and the laughter of children who once played freely by the shore. Coastal abrasion, fed by rising tides and violent waves, erodes land and the sense of safety as families live with quiet dread. As livelihoods disappear and schools often remain closed, children are left to face hunger, interrupted education, and the constant threat of harm. Reinforcing sea walls and restoring mangroves can shield communities, but true rebuilding lies in restoring their sense of safety and hope for the future.

Photo credits: Allya Najla Raffifa, Youth Stakeholder, Indonesia

This photo by Allya Najla Raffifa, a youth stakeholder from Indonesia, was taken in Pongkar Village in Karimun Regency, and is a reminder that for children living by the sea, climate change is not a distant threat, it inches closer with every tide.

Playing in Puddles, Living under Threat

Amid rising waters in Karimun Regency, children wade through flooded streets where classrooms once stood. Coastal flooding and rising sea levels rob children of education, nutrition, and safety. Diseases spread easily, homes crumble, and families struggle to rebuild. Parents, weighed down by the struggle for survival, cannot always shield their children from danger or despair. Yet, even in the face of crisis, the young find moments of joy, reminding the world that hope endures.

Photo credits: Allya Najla Raffifa, Youth Stakeholder, Indonesia

This image was captured by Allya Najla Raffifa, a youth stakeholder, during her visit to Buru Island in Karimun Regency, Indonesia. The image captures the struggles of coastal fishing communities in Buru Island.





A Childhood Drowned

A little girl wades through floodwaters where streets once provided safe spaces for play and laughter. The rising water mirrors the deepening crisis of climate change. Floods have transformed familiar neighbourhoods into perilous zones, cutting off schools, contaminating water, and leaving children vulnerable to disease and hunger. This photograph captures the silent drowning of childhoods, washed away by neglect and inaction. It urges us to invest in flood prevention, adaptive infrastructure, and child-focused recovery programs.

Photo credits: Jauharoh, Parent, Indonesia

This image was captured by Jauharoh, a parent from Demak in Indonesia, as their child wades through flood waters. By sharing this deeply personal moment, Jauharoh hopes the image will be a reminder that climate change is not a distant threat, it is endangering young lives today.

Dirty Waters, Children at Risk

The dark water in this image mirrors the neglected edges of the city, a reflection of lives built on survival and forgotten by progress. In this urban waterway, children play where toxins swirl, unaware of the danger beneath the surface. It is not just a story of environmental decay, but of social inequality, in the face of the climate crisis. Floods, disease, and displacement have become familiar visitors, their frequency worsened by climate change. The community continues to endure, but endurance alone should not be their only strength. Every young child deserves real opportunities and a clean, nurturing environment.



Photo credits: Thessa Lonica Quindoza, Mental Health Advocate, Philippines

This picture, captured by Thessa Lonica Quindoza, a mental health advocate from the Philippines, highlights health risks faced by children living in underprivileged communities and impacted by the climate crisis.

Behind the Wall

A young girl plays behind a towering seawall in North Jakarta, an area once filled with laughter, prayers, and the rhythm of everyday life. Rising sea levels swallowed this community, forcing families to abandon their homes and leaving behind ghostly structures. What was once a safe playground is now an unsafe shoreline. The child's presence among the ruins is both haunting and hopeful, a fragile act of resilience amid displacement. Behind the wall lies not just water, but the story of families uprooted, of futures uncertain.

Photo credits: Erwin Mahendra Eka Saputra, DRR and Climate Resilience Worker, Indonesia

This image was captured by Erwin Mahendra Eka Saputra, a youth stakeholder, in Muara Angke, North Jakarta, Indonesia. This photo shows how rising seas are eroding the foundations of childhood and calls for urgent child-centred climate action.





Melting Glaciers

The once-white peaks now shine with bare rock and melting ice, a sad reminder of time slipping away. In Bhutan's highlands, glaciers that once fed rivers and nourished valleys are dissolving before the eyes of a generation that may never know their former glory. The melting snow signifies more than loss of beauty; it signals water scarcity, unstable weather, and ecological upheaval that threaten children's futures. For them, this transformation means growing up in a world where nature's balance has been broken. Yet amid loss, hope endures. Communities are teaching their children the language of sustainability, conserving water, planting trees, and learning the science of survival.

Photo credits: Migma, Educator, Bhutan

With this picture, Migma, an educator from Bhutan, urges immediate action to preserve natural resources.

Children Affected by Fire

In Banke District, a fire reduced everything that belonged to these children to ash. What started as a small spark, fueled by heat, wind, and extreme weather, turned into widespread destruction. The fire destroyed more than homes, it took safety, routine, and joy. Climate change is making such fires stronger, leaving families displaced and children traumatised. This photo shows innocence amid chaos. Families, now on safer ground, try to rebuild with fragile hope. Every burned home is a warning: without collective action, the flames will keep spreading, threatening the futures of children.



Photo credits: Sagar Koirala, Climate Researcher, Nepal

This image was captured by Sagar Koirala, a climate researcher, in Banke District in Nepal following a fire. The image highlights how a fire, intensified by stronger winds linked to climate change, can burn down livelihoods.

Adequate Nutrition

Providing proper and sufficient food.

Climate hazards such as droughts, floods, and bio-diversity and livelihood losses are shrinking food security, from failed harvests to collapsing fisheries, pushing young children toward hunger, illness, and stunting.



“

Every child deserves a future where water is abundant, the land is fertile, and their childhood is not stolen by the harsh realities of climate change.

Yen Sotheara, Caregiver, Cambodia



Where Did the Water Go?

A child stands at the edge of what was once a pond, staring into a cracked mosaic of earth. The last puddle glistens faintly under the sun, a remnant of memories now gone dry. Climate change has turned abundance into scarcity, drying up once-reliable water sources. For children, the transformation is both bewildering and cruel. The land that once invited play now warns of scarcity, hunger, and extreme heat. With timely action, these dry ponds can be restored, giving children, and our shared future, a chance to thrive.

Photo credits: Yen Sotheara, Caregiver, Cambodia

This image, captured by Yen Sotheara, a caregiver from Cambodia, shows a once-full pond now reduced to a small puddle, highlighting the profound impact of environmental change on children and communities.

Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) in Sarlahi, Nepal

In the fields of Sarlahi, a child's thin arm is wrapped with a MUAC tape and a small yellow strip that reveals a painful truth. Droughts and poor harvests, worsened by climate change, have deepened malnutrition. This image captures not just a medical assessment, but a national alarm. Behind every measurement lies a story of reduced rainfall, poor soil, and fading hope. Yet amid the despair, the same hands that measure also heal. Communities learn to grow climate-resilient crops, mothers learn to nourish with alternate foods, and health workers strive to help every child thrive. This photo reminds us that combating climate change is also combating hunger and every centimeter gained on that yellow tape is a victory for a generation's future.

Photo credits: Sagar Koirala, Climate Researcher, Nepal

This image was captured by Sagar Koirala, a climate researcher from Nepal, at a health camp in Sarlahi District in Nepal. The photo highlights the domino effect of climate change: shifting weather patterns affect agricultural productivity, reduce food output, and lead to poor nutrition in young children.





Miles for Water, Miles from Childhood

Each morning in Pulau Sabu, a young boy sets out before dawn, balancing buckets heavier than his years. His journey for water is long, his path unpaved, and his reward is barely enough for a day's survival. Climate change has turned his village into a parched landscape where water, a basic necessity, is now scarce. In this daily struggle lies the injustice: children robbed of learning, rest, and play to fulfil tasks that should never be theirs. This image pleads for a world where childhood is measured not in miles walked, but in dreams pursued and achieved.

Photo credits: Monica Bengu, Youth Stakeholder, Indonesia

This image, captured by Monica Bengu, a youth stakeholder from Indonesia, illustrates the heavy toll of climate change on children, for whom daily survival has become a constant struggle.

Good Health

Ensuring children have access to necessary healthcare.

Climate change is a child health emergency. Heat, air pollution, unsafe water, and disrupted health services are driving more respiratory illness, infections, preterm births, and missed vaccinations among young children, stealing healthy starts and slowing holistic development.



“

Climate change is not just an environmental crisis - it is a public health emergency, and children are paying the highest price. Every breath a child struggles to take is a reminder that air pollution, extreme heat, and food insecurity are robbing our youngest generation of a healthy future.

Dr. Katyayani Goswami, Medical Practitioner, India



A Childhood Under the Burning Sun

Once green, this field is now dry and barren. A young boy shields his head with a towel, trying to protect himself from the extreme heat. The photo shows how climate change affects daily life: grass is withered, soil cracked, and play replaced by survival. Extreme heatwaves that were once rare now make childhood exhausting. This is not just a story in the news, it is the daily reality for children who can no longer play freely outdoors. To protect childhood, we must act against climate change.

Photo credits: Vouch Davath, Youth Advocate, Cambodia

This image, captured by Vouch Davath, a youth advocate from Cambodia, shows a once-playful space now dried and brown from extreme heat, with his little brother shielding himself from the scorching sun.

Breathless Childhood: The Silent Toll of Climate Change

A child lies in a caregiver's arms, gasping for air, his small chest rising against the weight of polluted skies. This image exposes the invisible cost of the climate crisis. Rising temperatures, choking air, and overwhelmed healthcare systems have turned breathing itself into a struggle. The oxygen tube is more than a medical equipment; it is a lifeline to a future under threat. Air pollution and heat waves are not abstract statistics; they are lived realities that fill paediatric wards and rob children of their childhoods. This photo is a plea for urgent action to clean the air and protect children's health.

Photo credits: Dr. Katyayani Goswami, Medical Practitioner, India

This image was captured by Dr. Katyayani Goswami, a medical practitioner from India, while working at a hospital in Chennai. Moved by the image of an intubated child and a helpless parent, Katyayani, with consent from parent and the hospital, shares the picture to highlight the growing health challenges for young children and the urgent need for climate action.





Trash Threatens my Life

In Karimun Regency, smoke rises daily from piles of burning waste, a seemingly quick solution to a growing problem of mounting waste. What began as an act of convenience, has turned into a silent assault on health, releasing toxins that scar lungs, dull minds, and disrupt growth. Parents grapple with pollution and struggle to provide nurturing care. Each plume of smoke is a cry for better systems. Waste management is not just an environmental duty; it is a promise of a safer childhood.

Photo credits: Allya Najla Rafifa, Youth Stakeholder, Indonesia

This photo by Allya Najla Rafifa, a youth stakeholder from Indonesia, highlights the dangers of waste burning on children's health and calls for collective action to protect them.

Danger in the Air

Beneath a hazy, poisoned sky, a mother clasps her child's hand, guiding her through air heavy with pollution. This is the air that makes young children sick and stunted. Every breath carries harm. Children who never chose this reality inherit its consequences. Shifting to clean energy is no longer a choice, it's a responsibility because every young child deserves the right to breathe clean air, play freely, and grow strong.



Photo credits: Allya Najla Rafifa, Youth Stakeholder, Indonesia

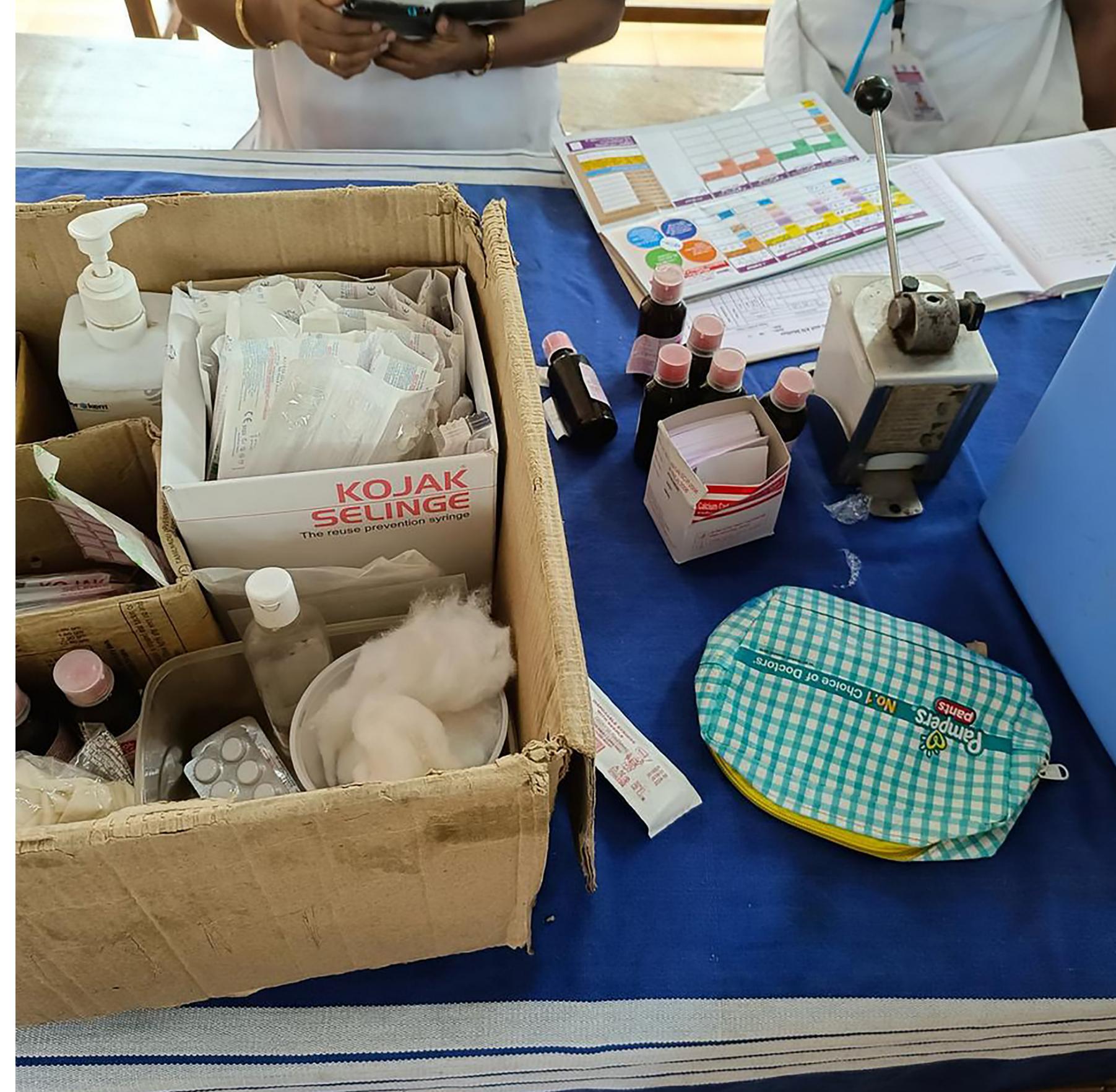
This image was captured by Allya Najla Rafifa, a youth stakeholder from Indonesia. It is set against the backdrop of a coal-based power plant and reflects her concerns about its harmful impact on young children.

Missing Shots: How Extreme Weather Endangers Childhood Immunisation

In a makeshift clinic, vials of life-saving vaccines wait untouched as storms rage and roads flood. The image tells a story of silent loss, where protection exists but goes unused. Climate change disrupts essential healthcare, making it harder for families to bring their children to health centres for immunisations. Each missed vaccination deepens inequality and exposes young children to preventable diseases. Healthcare workers persevere, organising vaccination drives in harsh conditions. Their determination shines through every challenge, offering hope that with stronger, resilient systems, every child can be protected.

Photo credits: Chirag Pradeep, Social Worker, India

This image was captured by Chirag Pradeep, a social worker, at a makeshift clinic in Medavakkam in Chennai, India, during the monsoon season, a time when heavy rains bring Indian cities to a halt. The image is a call to build climate-resilient healthcare systems so that no child's survival is impacted by extreme weather.





Born too Soon: Climate Change and the Rising Burden on Neonatal Care

Two fragile newborns share one incubator, their tiny breaths a testament to both life and fragility. The scene exposes a crisis. Rising temperatures, polluted air, and maternal stress are causing more babies to be born prematurely, overwhelming healthcare. This image shows the difficult reality of newborns affected by a warming planet they did not create, and showcases the resilience of healthcare workers and families, fighting to give these babies a fair start. To protect future generations, we must act now: clean the air, cool the planet, and strengthen healthcare systems.

Photo credits: Divya Manoj, Caregiver, India

This photo was captured by Divya Manoj, a caregiver, at a medical facility in Chennai, India. The image illustrates how climate change is straining healthcare systems and threatening the survival of newborns.

Air Pollution Taking Away Childhood

On a smog-stained rooftop, a one-and-a-half-year-old child plays with what is available. The city below hums with pollution, its grey haze swallowing lives. Outdoor play has become a privilege, and childhood now unfolds behind closed windows and air purifiers. The image shows a parent's concern for a world where their child cannot play outside safely anymore. This photo tells an urban reality: pollution is limiting children's opportunities to grow, play, and dream freely.

Photo credits: Md. Mehedi Hasan, ECD Program Coordinator, Bangladesh

This picture was captured by Md. Mehedi Hasan, a parent of a toddler in Bangladesh, expressing his hope for a safe, pollution-free environment where his child can play outdoors without exposure to polluted air.



Opportunities for Early Learning

Providing stimulating environments that foster cognitive development.

Floods, heat, and pollution shut classrooms and push play indoors. Yet when children learn in nature and communities adapt, early learning can build resilience, curiosity, and stewardship.



“

It is not just raining anymore, sensory bins cannot capture how the typhoons are making us all feel! Let children feel the rain again, to experience it without having to suffer, that must be the world they live in, this shouldn't be the world we live in.

Jinelle Einah B. Gamboa, Educator, Philippines

A Childhood Washed Away

In the ruins of a flood-stricken village, a lone, dirt-stained doll lies abandoned. This image captures the cruel aftermath of flash floods and landslides that rip through fragile communities, erasing homes, classrooms, and childhood itself. Driven by deforestation and extreme weather, these disasters displace families and strip children of safety, stability, and learning. Beyond the physical loss lies the unseen trauma, hunger, disease, and the anxiety of uncertainty. Rebuilding must go beyond survival, it should give every child a safe place to live, grow, learn, and dream.

Photo credits: Erwin Mahendra Eka Saputra, DRR and Climate Resilience Worker, Indonesia

This image was captured by Erwin Mahendra Eka Saputra, a youth stakeholder, after a flood devastated a village in Muhara District in Indonesia. It reflects the deep impact of extreme climate events on young children.





A Day in the Life of a Teacher in a Nature School

In a small nature school in the Philippines, a teacher captures a moment of wonder, a group of children exploring a sensory bin about rain. To the untrained eye, it is play; to the teacher, it is a lesson in resilience. As storms grow stronger and recovery time shortens, even simple classroom activities become reflections of a world in crisis. Children growing up in a changing climate learn about weather not from textbooks but through lived experience—floods, typhoons, and the loss of trees and homes. The teacher faces a profound challenge: how to nurture curiosity while confronting harsh realities. Yet in this small classroom, hope thrives, children learn not only about rain, but also about empathy, care, and their role in protecting nature.

Photo credits: Jinelle Einah B. Gamboa, Educator, Philippines

This image was captured by Jinelle Einah B. Gamboa, a librarian and an educator from the Philippines, at their nature school. The sensory activity for playschool learners reflects how the country's location makes it vulnerable to extreme weather, with typhoons often leaving communities in despair.

Climate Change and the Disruption of Early Childhood Education

A young boy stands before his flooded classroom, staring at the submerged swings and bookshelves that once filled his days with laughter and learning. This image captures more than a temporary disruption; it represents a generation whose childhood has been interrupted by climate change. As floods intensify, schools close, routines crumble, and the safe spaces where children learn and dream disappear beneath the water. Teachers keep lessons alive through phone messages and home visits; parents juggle care with the struggle to survive; and children ask the simplest, yet most painful, question: “When can we go back to school?” Climate change is stealing time, opportunity, and security from young children. To rebuild what’s been lost, we must protect young children and their right to uninterrupted education.

Photo credits: Dwi Murtiningsih, Educator, Indonesia

This image was captured by Dwi Murtiningsih, an early educator, at an ECE center in Grobogan District in Indonesia. It flags the impact of climate change on children’s education.





Playing Among the Ruins: Childhood in the Shadow of the Storm

In the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Seroja, children play among the remnants of broken walls and shattered homes. Their laughter rises softly through the wreckage, defying despair, yet it echoes within the ruins of a world forever changed. Once rare, such storms now strike with brutal frequency, tearing through communities with their fury. Homes, schools, and memories vanish overnight, replaced by fear and displacement. The photograph captures both beauty and grief; tiny silhouettes of resilience standing against overwhelming loss. Communities rebuild brick by brick, but the deeper wounds of trauma, loss of security, and interrupted learning remain.

Photo credits: Monica Bengu, Youth Stakeholder, Indonesia

This image, captured by Monica Bengu, a youth stakeholder from Indonesia, shows how extreme weather events, intensified by climate change, disrupt children's lives.

Carrying the Weight of Water and the Future

On Sabu Island, childhood begins each morning with the weight of a bucket. Before sunrise, young children walk miles to fetch water. The cracked earth beneath their feet tells a story of erratic rainfall and vanishing resources, leaving them burdened with adult responsibilities far too soon. Each stride reflects strength, but also a stolen childhood. Climate change has turned simple acts like drinking and washing into daily struggles, forcing children to trade playtime for survival. Access to clean water is not a privilege, it is a right. This image demands urgent investment in sustainable solutions to ensure that no child's future is compromised.



Photo credits: Monica Bengu, Youth Stakeholder, Indonesia

This image was captured by Monica Bengu, a youth stakeholder from Indonesia, during her trip to Sabu Island in the eastern province. The image highlights how climate change disrupts basic necessities such as water access and the toll it takes on young children.

Resilient Futures

PROTECTING YOUNG LIVES IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

This coffee table book has been created using images captured by youth advocates through a photovoice process under ARNEC's project "Climate Change through the Eyes of Children in Their Youngest Years." This initiative brought together youth champions from across the Asia-Pacific region, to explore how climate change impacts young children. Through participatory research and visual storytelling, these youth champions elevated children's and caregivers' voices, traditionally underrepresented in the climate discourse, by capturing lived realities and intergenerational perspectives on adaptation and resilience.

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