

## **Session: Youth in the Age of Climate Disaster: How Youth Can Impact the Future**

### **Introduction**

I come from the central part of Uganda from a small town Ntovu in the Masaka district A community that covers almost 37% of Uganda's population a huge portion of which are children and women with unrecorded cases and enormous human-induced climate disasters that continue to disproportionately erase livelihoods, and families and rob children of their fundamental rights. Ladies and gentlemen all protocols observed; My name is Namatovu Darren, and I am a 24-year-old environmental educator and social entrepreneur. I am currently dedicated to the growth of the Phoenix Children Foundation, a youth-centric nonprofit organization established in 2020 with a firm commitment to improving the lives of children in Uganda by advocating for their fundamental rights. I am also a fellow of Together for a New Africa, a two-year pan-African initiative aiming to empower young leaders in Africa to tackle the challenges within their communities and collectively shape the future of their continent through co-leadership, good governance, a Culture of Unity, and the revitalization of African "Ubuntu" wisdom, supported by the Focolare movement. Thank you for the opportunity to share this with you.

In 2023, there was a significant increase in global temperatures, marking the highest recorded levels in 140 years. The year 2024 has already demonstrated a trend of surpassing previous records in terms of climate-related disasters, including heat waves, storms, droughts, and resulting human displacement. The recent Human Development Report by UNDP has highlighted that nearly 70% of young people view climate change as a global emergency posing a threat to their future. As we approach the final decade of sustainable development goals, it is essential to recognize that developing countries with rapidly growing populations, such as Uganda, require climate policies that will positively and directly impact young people.

### **Collaboration**

- ❖ Through collaboration with various grassroots and international organizations, our diverse thematic initiatives, including an environmental education program, have positively impacted and supported over 5000 children, youth, and

communities. This program aims to empower children, educators, and young individuals with the necessary knowledge to drive a paradigm shift and actively engage in impactful climate action.

- ❖ We understand the importance of involving young people in existing climate initiatives and their contributions. However, we can only achieve this through collaboration across generations. At Phoenix Children Foundation, we collaborate with all stakeholders to harness collective knowledge and ensure no one is left behind

### Recommendations

- ❖ The need and agency to narrow the agency gap means that institutions must prioritize the people-centered approach by investing in human security, phasing away from all fossil fuels, and recognizing the interdependence of people on the planet.

The transformation of financial commitments into actual disbursements is imperative in **climate finance**. It is essential to provide support to the vulnerable regions in the South through the allocation of grant instruments rather than loans.,

- ❖ **Climate philanthropy**; I cannot emphasize this enough because out of all the philanthropy funds that are directed towards climate, why is only 0.76 percent of that go to youth-led organizations and only 5% of this comes to Africa, we need a stream of funding for developing countries to speed out the transition, particularly focusing on youth innovations and renewable energy projects.. If 69% of people around the world are willing to sacrifice some of their income to contribute to climate solutions that only communicates how devastated communities and people are affected and by ensuring a fair and equitable flow of funding is accessible addressing the gap between access to resources and emerging climate initiatives driven by young community activists and organizations, especially in Africa.

❖ **In pursuit of sustainable peace,** it is important to consider the allocation of significant resources. There is a need to carefully examine funding priorities, and ensure that crucial areas such as the environment, education, climate, and social welfare are not overlooked. True security involves prioritizing mutual disarmament and fostering international agreements to build confidence. This approach will enable us to effectively address pressing challenges, including climate change and the promotion of human rights at a global level. It is imperative that we put an end to human rights violations, particularly the excessive massacres of children, and work towards establishing a security framework that is rooted in humanity.

❖ In times of natural disasters, we often find ourselves inadequately prepared despite the rapid technological advancements that allow us to predict weather events and geological patterns. The key question that arises is: why were we not sufficiently prepared? We need the kind of climate communication and data that is accessible and that links to all preparedness efforts as a resilience mechanism