

Annual Report

2022

Streamlining access to finance for
young people at the grassroots and inspiring
global climate action



BLI
Inspiring Global Good



GYCAF
GLOBAL YOUTH CLIMATE
ACTION FUND

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GYCAF

The Global Youth Climate Action Fund (GYCAF) is the first of its kind climate fund dedicated to financing youth-led climate action around the world. The idea for the fund was birthed at COP25 and developed over a three months consultation period that involved virtual dialogues with finance experts to help curate a vehicle that supports and champions youth-led climate action. This initiative is hosted by BLI Global.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the entire GYCAF team, Juliet Luwedde Grace (Programs Coordinator), Ashish Adhikari (IT Coordinator), Angenette Bantiles (Storytelling Coordinator), Sena Sugiono (Programs Coordinator), Mian Joseph Atta (Social Media Coordinator), Gonzalo Carruitero (Sustainability Coordinator) and Robert Horne (Operations Coordinator).

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"It can be a lonely and sometimes **difficult** job, to continue at it, especially when no one is rewarding or watching. But to those **activists**, I say to you, silent activism is still **climate activism.**"

Dear Readers, Activists, Donors and Supporters,

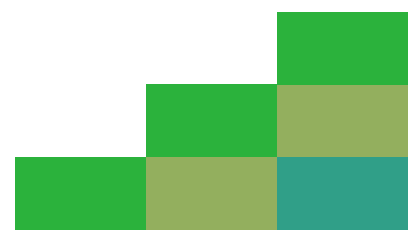
Welcome to the first annual report of the Global Youth Climate Action Fund initiative. In the same breadth, I would like to thank everyone for showing up for us in thoughts, with your financial support and with your constructive feedback. We would not be making one year if we did not take into account all the unique ingredients that make for a successful fund.

As we begin a new year, I invite you to take the time to read through some of our accomplishments and lessons learned. As a young fund, we went into 2022 with an open, bright and eager mind, ready and energized to learn, and determined to ease access to finance for young people doing incredible work at the grassroots, as you will read for yourselves.

I also want to encourage you not to give up hope, but most importantly, to take actionable steps that will conserve our beloved and precious planet. Alone, the dream seems distant and daunting, but together, that dream takes on wings and becomes reality. All this is possible together. All this is possible when we pass on the knowledge from our fore-fathers from one generation to the next and empower young people financially.

May our report inspire you to continue the good fight.
Truly Yours,

MARIA HORNE
GYCAF CEO





General Background

Photo by Peter Burdon on Unsplash





General Background

MICROGRANTS

In 2022 with funding from The Horne Family Foundation, the Global Youth Climate Action fund launched her first ever open call for grants applications. We received over 1000 applications, an overwhelming response from the global community, demonstrating to us that there is a need for climate funds like these to be made readily available and accessible to young people. We built our grant criteria to focus on sustainable agriculture, clean energy, oceans, capacity building, nature-based solutions and tech and innovation. Our goal was to finance projects in the five regions around the world and cement us as truly global yet centered on grass roots activation

YOUTH FUND COMMITTEE

With the help of the GYCAF Youth Fund committee, we were able to narrow down and select 10 deserving youth organizations to received funding of up to US\$1000 each. The Youth Fund Committee comprises 10 young vibrant leaders representing five regions of North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa. The committee members were selected through an application pool and brought to the fund review process knowledge and cultural context to grant applications from the region they represented. Without their active involvement in the application review process, we would not have been able to achieve our fund objectives. We strongly believe in representation and look forward to working with the Youth Fund Committee in future years.



General Background

STORYTELLING CAMPAIGN

Once the projects had been successfully selected and funded, we embarked on a campaign to capture and share stories of young people who were already carrying out amazing work in their communities. To this end, we started the Storytelling campaign that awarded a cash prize to the 10 best stories that were submitted through our global submission pool. This activity surprised and inspired our team because we received diverse stories about challenges and accomplishments that young people were going through. We feel truly humbled to be a part of shaping a story and a future where young people are prioritized and financially supported to achieve their climate action goals. But not only that, but also the ability to positively impact the communities that these young people work to improve.

ROAD TO COP #27

To further enhance and support climate literacy and climate policy awareness, we continued our signature webinar series that focuses on enabling dialogues between experts and young people. Our 2022 session had both young speakers and industry experts share their knowledge on the pressing issues leading up to the COP27 UNFCCC session in Egypt. From defining loss and damage financing to interactive one on ones with youth activists, we were able to dissect ideas and critical concerns for young people and come to an understanding on what progress could look like. These webinars give us hope that we are providing a platform for young people and the global climate community to share knowledge and ideas with each other in a safe space. Which is why in 2023 we are looking forward to building the GYCAF academy that supports and creates this enabling environment to exchange ideas and learn from each other.

Lessons Learned

Photo by NOAA on Unsplash





Lessons learned



Financing is a Journey



From the moment of ideation right to disbursing funds, the team went through several stages of conceptualization and growth. We learned how to define and then refine our strategy to reflect our innate vision. And while it was important to take into consideration the demands and proposals from others out there, we took time to build a vision that we believe will work for young people and support them in taking action now with real financial backing.



Financing is a Story



Numbers and data are the building blocks of solving any problem, but we have seen that people, funders and donors particularly, care more about connecting with a problem and how they can participate in helping solve this problem, than they do the amount of data provided. Data is important, however, telling a story that unites and inspires others to be a part of your cause is truly the love language of financing. We are grateful everyday to those that join us on this journey.





Lessons learned



3 Young People are Capable



As much has been said on the lack of experience, and young people just not being ready to take on climate action head-on, we have found this to be untrue. Young people are ready and very capable to innovate for solutions and solve challenges in their communities. Yes, they do need a guiding hand to help them along as they either scale their entrepreneurial solution for impact, or grow community outreach, but all data and feedback attests to their readiness for financial support and willingness for peer to peer guidance.



Investing in Capacity Building is Critical



Many young people have incredible ideas and solutions that work at the start up stage with limited to no funding. The microgrants they received from donors and the philanthropic community helps to bolster their impact. Unfortunately, a lot of these ideas and solutions die within a few months to a year due to lack of sustainable support systems to enable young people to thrive past the grants stage. As much as there are a myriad of programs out there aimed at strengthening the capacities of young people, these programs need to be readily accessible for the youth, such that they can accommodate and incorporate best practices into their initiatives as they grow. Some critical tools include, learning how to fundraise and crowdsource, building sustainable financial models and partnerships and understanding the importance of measuring impact.



Annex I Microgrants

Photo by Zane Lee on Unsplash





Microgrants

The GYCAF envisions a world where young people are given the resources to pursue green entrepreneurship and create a green economy with the goal of lowering carbon emissions and conserving the environment.

As a result of the fund commitment, the GYCAF launched in 2022 its first cycle of the microgrants to support youth-led climate action projects around the world.

The campaign financed around 12 projects that fell under the following 6 categories:

- **Sustainable Agriculture:** Smart agriculture to ensure food sustainability
- **Clean Energy:** Powering communities in need of light and energy
- **Oceans:** Protecting marine life and mitigating climate catastrophes
- **Capacity Building:** Empowering youth with entrepreneurship skills
- **Green Stewardship:** Protecting biodiversity and influencing behavioral change
- **Technology and Innovation:** Breakthroughs that solve climate-related problems





Microgrants

1. Tanganyika Coastal's Community Resilience (TACOR) Project by Disaster Risk Management in Africa (Democratic Republic of Congo, Africa). Since 2002 until now, Lake Tanganyika has recorded its longest and ever recorded water rise since 1889. The 2021 rapid rise was the most disastrous hazard which destroyed up to 10,000 basic infrastructures on the lake's shores in all coastal cities in Burundi, Tanzania, Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and left thousands people homeless.

Tanganyika Coastal Community's Resilience - TACOR Project is a youth-led project that promotes access to the climate risk information in the aim of strengthening the community's resilience to coastal floods in the African great lakes region. The project identifies areas under coastal flood risk, assesses the flood's occurrence possibilities and proposes protective measures to be adopted by vulnerable communities. With funding from the GYCAF, the project targeted up to 50,000 families living in flood prone areas in the Congolese coastal cities of Uvira and Baraka.



2. Green The Lake Youth Climate by Pipie Community CREMA Youth Wing (Ghana, Africa). GYCAF supported the organization to plant 1000 trees as a buffer extension around Lake Bosomtwe to prevent degradation, evaporation and erosion deposit into the lake caused by natural and human activities. It is estimated that upon maturity, these trees will sequester 400 tonnes C/ha/yr which amounts to \$1680 annually. This would be used by the community CREMA Youth and community school for maintenance and upscale of the project.



Microgrants

The buffer serves as a practical science field to complement students' theoretical and indigenous knowledge of trees in the community. This will inspire them to care for their environment as young scientists in the Bosomtwe district and evolve as environmental conscious professionals in the future.

The direct beneficiaries i.e. the Pipie CREMA Youth and community school teachers and students were very co-operative. In all 750 trees were planted in the buffer and 250 on participants' farms. This would reduce the rate of degradation, evaporation and erosion deposit into the lake. As the buffer sustains the lake for now and the future, in a similar way these trees upon maturity will serve the economical, nutritional and health needs of the present and future generation.



3. Briquette Production and Enterprising by Concerned Generation Network (Sierra Leone, Africa). This project provided an alternative climate solution to end the use of wood and cutting down of trees for cooking through the Promotion of briquette production and usage.

This project has social, economic and environmental benefits on women and youths' empowerment and further contributed to a number of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) intended for community impact like reduction of energy poverty (SDG 1), lessening exposure to health risks (SDG 3), reducing drudgery for women in collecting wood fuel (SDG 5), improving access to modern energy (SDG 7), reducing GHG emissions and strengthening communities' resilience to climate change (SDG 13), and diminishing pressure on forest resources (SDG 15).



Microgrants

Due to the continued climate needs of communities, the project was implemented in vulnerable communities in the Bombali District in Northern Sierra Leone. The project implementation started in May and ended in October 2022.

Based on initial planned activities, the implementation involved Awareness raising, trainings and production of the briquettes. By September 2022, the team had trained 250 community youths on Briquette production comprising 153. In these communities, 84 of the trainees have started their local briquette production using local materials while reducing the pressure on forest.



4. Save Bugoma Forest by Bugoma Women Farmer's Association (Uganda, Africa). Bugoma Women Farmers Association Uganda in partnership with National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) have been currently working on the Save Bugoma Forest Campaign 2020.

Following the rampant deforestation threats they have spearheaded, the struggle sued the degraders resulting in halting of the forest degradation attempts until final settlement of the issues at hand and the attempts have continued to be engineered to reduce the vast forest cover to its former glory.

GYCAF provided funding to facilitate the mobilization of one thousand (1000) young girls and women to meaningfully participate in the Save Bugoma Forest Campaign 2020 to restore 6,000 hectares of forest cover conversion from sugarcane plantations.



Microgrants



5. Sustainable Fish Farming by Zimbabwe Youth For Impaired Persons Trust (ZYIPT) (Zimbabwe, Africa). The organization trains a group of Youths With Disability (YWDs) to farm fish in a sustainable and comfortable way.

With financing from GYCAF, the project trained 15 YWDs on fish farming knowledge and management. With reference to a baseline survey done by ZYIPT, YWDs in Arda Transau have been excluded from actively participating in income generating activities, hence the need to fill this equality gap.

The understated project aimed to sensitize program beneficiaries and the community on how to conserve the environment through gully reclamation, tree planting and wetlands protection which resonates to GYCAF mission on protecting ecosystems for biodiversity conservation.





Microgrants

6. Think Lead Change by Green School Farming (Bangladesh, Asia). The initiative's overall objective was to change the fate of a low-income malnourished community to a healthy and prosperous one that is environment friendly. The project took a multilevel approach, incorporating seven core elements: sustainable agriculture, biodiversity protection, NbS agriculture capacity development, sustainable agriculture technology integration, nature-based intervention, community nutrition supplementation, and green stewardship, in order to create a cycle of intervention that positions young people at the forefront of sustainable nature-based agriculture practice in the community, while also providing nutritional supplementation. The project focused on a low economical community in the outskirts of the Dhaka district of Bangladesh. The community where the young people lack quality nutritional foods.

With funding from the GYCAF, the project engaged over 160 youths in the establishment of the agricultural zone within the school, providing mentoring, direction, and resources. Green school farming incorporated sustainable agriculture technologies such as environmentally friendly agriculture products, effective land utilization and organic materials. Young people received training throughout the project to serve as the project's green stewards, and mentorship was offered to help them protect and maintain the agricultural zone. The project's "Nature-Based Solution" is helping to protect biodiversity and the environment. Young people have been given the tools they need to be important stewards and climate ambassadors for land and water resources thanks to the initiative. And because of this natural agricultural zone, communities will have a healthier environment.





Microgrants

7. Youth Climate Camp by MekaTeam (Bangladesh, Asia). GYCAF funded the climate literacy program that impacted 20 young people from different universities. MekaTeam is a youth-led organization that implements climate literacy projects in the surrounding areas of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

They work with university students and school children to implement climate knowledge through creative activities.



8. Hero of Light by SEED4Com (Philippines, Asia). The Philippines is vulnerable to impacts of climate change, disasters such as earthquakes, cyclones and fires. Among the basic needs of life to be addressed aside from water, food and housing is electricity. Thus there is a need to have readily available or trained youth in the local communities to make solar lamps for lighting.

Hero of Light project, implemented by Sustainable Energy and Enterprise Development for Communities, Inc. (SEED4Com), aimed to capacitate and train young people on the importance of renewable energy for just transition.

With funding from the GYCAF, the project equipped them with the skills to assemble solar lamps and turn over the assembled lamps to vulnerable communities hit by disasters and last mile communities. In the end the project made 50 solar lamps and trained 25 youth providing lighting to 50 families.



Microgrants



9. School Solar Power by Kerepua Community Water Association (KCWA) (Vanuatu, Oceania). Ian Livo Primary school, located in the western part of Vanuatu, in the island of Santo far in the western side of Santo was selected as the beneficiary to receive solar power with funding from the GYCAF. KCWA requested this funding to be able to provide not only lighting to the school, but also climate awareness. Using clean energy is the best way for climate change mitigation as it does not emit carbon dioxide emissions to the atmosphere.

The School Principal, teachers and students were so happy to see the new solar systems that were funded by the GYCAF Project funding. The main objectives of the project were to provide light and energy to the school, support teachers and students to improve teaching and learning and encourage and strengthen community involvement through social activities such as cultural nights and music nights.





Microgrants

10. HyperFarm by Concerned Generation International (United States, North America). CGI works to bring a hydroponic farm system to a food insecure neighborhood that is sustainable (uses 99% less water), it allows them to grow 365 days a year and it will allow them to increase their capacity to serve more families/ individuals who live in food insecure neighborhoods. The growth of this produce will allow them to deliver and/or have convenient pick up locations for families to source fresh local produce.

CGI completed the project in October of 2022. It took 4-6 months to complete the project, after receiving funding from GYCAF. CGI plans to continue offering this program in the future as they received wonderful feedback from the community that they served. The project from the initial stages to the completion took about 9-12 months including research, planning, fundraising and implementation.



11. Sowing Climate Hope by Legaia (Mexico, North America). Sowing Climate Hope was a climate brigade in Popotla neighborhood in Mexico City, aimed to encourage citizens to weave community networks in the face of the current socio-environmental crisis. Legaia held a series of talks and workshops and helped to involve people in an Urban Garden, and through that, generate a space for listening and action, showing that climate hope in cities still exists and lies in the community.

The gardens are a way to recover the community and natural bonds, to get closer to the land, to its cycles, and they are the first step towards food autonomy.



Microgrants

As a result, they decided that a first approach to the topic would be through learning how to build an urban garden because, in many urbanized areas, people are no longer in contact with nature, and do not know the production of the food we consume, whose processing and transportation also pollutes. At the close of the project, 5000 people were reached online, 120 participants were involved in the project and the urban garden produced 15kgs of food.



12. Sustainable Pots by Ollas Sostenible (Peru, South America). The project currently has a communal orchard in the form of terraces with triple impact, 4 steps of 20 square meters of cultivation. With the allocated budget, a homemade greywater reuse system will be placed in the community garden area. This system will serve to irrigate the garden throughout the year, and will also serve to feed the future biodigester that is connected to the common pot. The system will have 2 temporary storage containers, pipes and 1 impulse motor to distribute the water





Annex II Youth Fund Committee 2022

Photo by K. Mitch Hodge on Unsplash





Youth Fund Committee

Below is a list of the young people that served on the GYCAF youth fund committee. The YFC is set up to have one active committee member and one alternate committee member for; North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Indigenous Youth. During the initiation phase, it was agreed to incorporate all members to active members to assist with the application review process in a fair and sustainable manner.



Luna Abadia (United States)

Luna Abadía is a trilingual, globally-minded youth leader. She is passionate about climate action and seeks to use her language skills, international experience, and focus on diversity and equity to make tangible change on this critical issue.

Skylar Kylstra (Canada)

Skylar has been involved with the climate movement for many years, both as an activist and within her career. She currently works at Ostrom Climate Solutions on the International Land Use team.



Natalia Tsuyama (Brazil)

Natalia is a co-founder of Sustentabilize-se, Specialist in Public Policy and serves as a licensed organizer of TEDxSavassi. She is an activist in the fight against global climate change and defends a model of sustainable economic development.





Youth Fund Committee

Xiomara Acevedo (Colombia)

Activist, consultant and social entrepreneur. Founder and director of Barranquilla+20, a youth-led & focused NGO whose mission is to educate and empower children/youth in climate change, biodiversity and water in Colombia.



Benjamin Santhouse-James (UK)

Ben is an MSc Energy Systems student at the University of Oxford. He previously studied Earth Science (Geophysics) at Imperial College London, where he graduated with the Governors' BSc Prize.

MaryJane Enchill (Ghana)

Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Head of Communications at HATOF Foundation, Communications Specialist for Ghana's National Adaptation Plan Project and Assistant Country Coordinator at Climate Action Network-Ghana



Ando Rabearisora (Madagascar)

She is a second year Ph.D Student on Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) and a Ph.D Designated Emphasis on Coastal Science and Policy at the same university (UCSC).



Youth Fund Committee



Marinel Ubaldo (Philippines)

Advocate for climate justice and the environment. She is also a Founder of the Youth Leaders for Environmental Action Federation, a youth-led organization that aims to mentor youth individuals and organizations in climate advocacy.

Jin Tanaka (Japan)

Member of YOUNGO. Branch Manager of UNISC International. He is also involved in advocacy for action on climate change and other environmental issues both domestically and internationally.



Margherita Barbieri (Italy)

Global Shapers Project Lead and Mentor for the World Economic Forum circular initiative Scale 360°. Member of the Italian Climate Network. Interested in climate policy, circular economy, among other sustainable-related topics.



Overall Scope

We strongly believe in involving young people in the decision-making process, and it is for this reason, that a Youth Fund Committee has been set in place to actively participate in the grant selection process for the year 2022. The YFC is set up to have one active committee member and one alternate committee member for; North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Indigenous Youth.



Annex III Storytelling Campaign

Photo by Edgar Castrejon on Unsplash





Storytelling Campaign

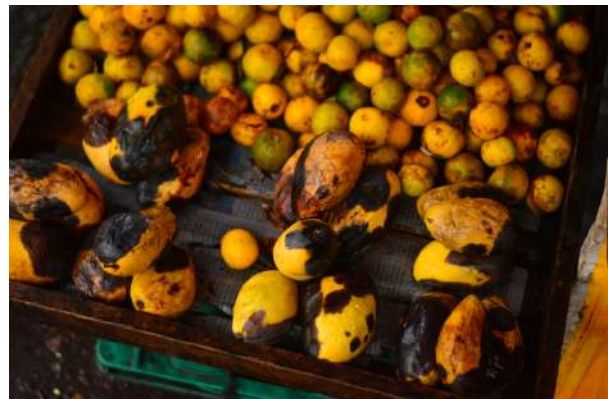
In 2022, we run our first storytelling campaign to give young people a voice to share their experiences, challenges they have endured, and how they overcome these challenges in the face of the climate crisis.

We ran a five month long campaign that resulted in two winners from Philippines and Vietnam respectively. We were also amazed by the quality and impact of the stories we received and decided to showcase the top ten stories on our website.

These stories showed us how dedicated young people are to solving for the climate and how the climate crisis is affecting their communities and themselves. Our takeaway is that it is important to listen to our neighbors to understand from their perspective how the climate is affecting them, and to perhaps show some empathy to one another, reminding ourselves that we are not alone in the climate crisis.

1. Coleen Awit (Philippines) - Sagup Negros: Food Waste Mitigation Initiative.

Coleen's story about food waste in drop-off centers and how this issue end up in the foundation of the Sagup Negros organization is the reason why she obtained the first price in this contest. "While food waste is a growing issue, it is also an untapped opportunity" she said.





Storytelling Campaign

2. Nam Nguyen (Vietnam) - Youth for Climate Vietnam. Nam's story treats about path he has traveled during part of his life to meet himself and understand more about what is happening to the Earth. "My hometown used to have 4 distinguished seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter. And since climate change hit, the winter is not cold anymore" he points out.



3. Maria Alejandra Téllez (Colombia) - Climate Action Leadership. Maria Alejandra made her way to the podium with an incredible story about herself and how she discovered leadership in the last years. "Leadership is not an inherited skill; it is a treasure which, if found and properly cultivated, can serve to positively transform the world" she wisely commented.



Annex IV Road to COP 26 Webinars

Photo by Johny McKenna on Unsplash





Road to COP 26



Youth in Sustainable Finance

Our first session was a collaboration with YOUNGO focusing on Sustainable Finance for Youth and took place on May 28th. The discussion was on how youth organizations can create sustainable finance for their initiatives and projects, and how they can retain donors. Guest speakers included: Bertha Argueta an economist with over 7 years of experience in climate finance and governance issues; Aurora Audino an environmental engineer with experience in sustainable finance and climate policy and Christine Mbatuusa an economist with over 5 years of experience in climate change issues with experience in financing for development.



Financing Loss and Damage

The second session in the webinar series focused on "Financing Loss and Damage" and addressed the discussion around practical ways loss and damage is being financed around the world. Speakers shared their experience on how they have negotiated policy for this contentious issue and how this policy affects youth at the frontlines.

Role of Philanthropy

The third session on the "Role of Philanthropy in supporting Climate Action" addressed the discussion around practical ways loss and damage is being financed around the world. Speakers will share their experience on the challenges and opportunities to give back and raise money to support youth climate projects. The speakers shared their experiences on What Philanthropy meant to them, and the different shapes and forms in which it manifests. For this session, the panel included Olasimbo Sojinrin Country Director - Nigeria Solar Sisters and Archana Soreng Member UN Youth Advisory Group/Youth Climate Justice Fund.





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