

Framework for Adolescent Engagement in Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action



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PREAMBLE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action (ESCA) is a growing area of advocacy and programming for World Vision. As a Christian organisation, World Vision International (World Vision) is called to be a Steward of God’s creation (Genesis 1:28, 1 Peter 4:10), and our [Environmental Stewardship Policy](#) guides World Vision entities and employees to ensure that all World Vision programmes, operations and facilities, and advocacy contribute to improved natural environments while minimising negative impacts that may affect the well-being of the children, their families, and communities that we serve. World Vision’s [Policy Position on Climate Action](#) specifically points to children’s existing engagement in issues of climate action.

World Vision has begun engaging children and youth in climate action through adolescent participation in our [Regreening Communities approach](#), green clubs and [Child-Centered Disaster Risk Resilience through IMPACT+ Active Citizenship](#) clubs and other Children’s Groups, environmental service-learning and other community projects, the global, [advocacy training and events](#), and other [local and regional initiatives](#). Our existing work with adolescents in this space provides an opportunity to formalise our approach and commitment to partnering with adolescents in enabling environments and to leverage their strengths and passion to amplify their voices and enhance their capacity to act.

World Vision International contracted Proteknon Foundation to lead the development of the present framework for adolescent engagement in ESCA, along with a 10-session life skills and active citizenship curriculum, based on extensive document and stakeholder consultations on field-based expertise and promising practices. We extend our appreciation to our partners in Proteknon, Claire O’Kane, Julia Freedson, Elana Haviv, and Sara Lim Bertrand, for their meaningful collaboration and proven commitment to child participation throughout this process.

We also extend our deepest thanks to colleagues and adolescents who contributed their time and expertise to the development of this framework and curriculum:

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We are honoured to work alongside adolescents to meaningfully engage in environmental care and climate action, for the well-being of creation and all who live in it.

Julia Smith-Brake, World Vision Senior Education Advisor, Adolescent Programming
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1. INTRODUCTION

“I call myself a climate champion, as I know I have what it takes to combat climate change. I know you can ask questions saying she is a young girl and she doesn't know what she is talking about. But, I have knowledge...I know I have what it takes.”

This is the voice of Mudasana, an adolescent girl who is a member of World Vision's IMPACT+ Club in Zambia. Mudasana and other adolescents around the world have been participating in IMPACT+ and other clubs where facilitators engage with them to foster the skills, behaviors, and attitudes necessary for participation in social, civic, and economic life and to increase learning about environmental stewardship and implementing climate actions and initiatives in their communities and around the world.

World Vision commissioned the development of this framework together with an 10-lesson curriculum on environmental sustainability and climate action (ESCA) (World Vision Eco Impact Curriculum) in an effort to consolidate its learnings from global efforts to engage adolescents and youth in climate action. For instance, working in diverse rural, urban, and camp contexts across the humanitarian development peacebuilding nexus, World Vision supports adolescent engagement in Regreening Communities, green clubs and Child-Centered Disaster Risk Resilience, environmental service-learning, and other community projects. World Vision also supports the global Adolescent Climate Champion group, advocacy training and events, such as the 2022 and 2023 UN Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP27 and COP28), and other local and regional initiatives.

This framework and the companion curriculum are aligned with World Vision's [ESCA strategic roadmap](#) and the [Environmental Stewardship Policy](#), which guide the organisation's efforts to improve natural environments and minimize negative impacts that may affect the well-being of the children, their families, and communities. World Vision places children and their rights at the center of the climate crisis and helps to create solutions that are good for people and for the planet.ⁱ

Objective and intended audience

The objective of this framework is to deepen perspectives about why and how adolescents engage in environmental sustainability and climate action and what preparation and skills they need to do so, that account for differences across adolescents living in different contexts, such as those living in rural or fragile urban settings. It also presents the three core action areas for approaching ESCA work with adolescents (focusing on educational engagement) and provides recommendations for ways forward.

The intended audience for this framework is World Vision staff around the globe, as well as partner organisations including NGOs, multilateral organisations and local civil society groups, as well as relevant policymakers at the international, regional, national, and local levels.

Methodology

The methodology for developing this framework and the companion curriculum utilised a participatory approach, with World Vision field offices, World Vision adolescent climate champions and adolescent members of World Vision's IMPACT+ clubs, and other groups around the world. See [Annex 1](#) for more details.

Scope and Coverage

Age range: This framework refers to adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18 years old and youth reaching the age of 24. This acknowledges that adolescents and youth have significant capacity to affect change yet are often left out of decision-making and climate action. This framework, and its accompanying curriculum, intends to offer adults surrounding these young people (e.g., parents, caregivers, teachers, faith and community leaders) new opportunities to meaningfully engage adolescents and youth in climate action. At the same time, it is important to note that World Vision is intentionally focusing on adolescents and youth with this current effort and plans to build on this learning to create similar materials focused on different age groups across the life cycle, particularly younger children, in the future.

IMPACT+ Clubs: These are groups of 10-25 adolescents who meet once per week, led by two or three Club Leaders who use a curriculum based on experiential learning methodologies to help the adolescents in the club cultivate competencies in the areas of active citizenship, leadership, employability and entrepreneurship, as well as sectoral knowledge in areas like nutrition, mental well-being, and financial literacy and savings.

Geographic coverage: This framework is global in nature. It is relevant to all global regions and can be contextualised in different regions and countries to increase local relevance.



2. WHY DO ADOLESCENTS ENGAGE IN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION?

The climate crisis is a crisis for adolescents

Climate change is happening now — and the climate crisis is a crisis for children and adolescents.ⁱⁱ In all corners of the globe, children are experiencing multiple threats from climate change, and climate change is a threat multiplier. For instance, the climate crisis is increasing displacement, migration, and urbanisation, and children living in urban informal settlements face additional vulnerabilities. Global warming, polluted water, contaminated air, extreme weather and climatic events all affect agri-food systemsⁱⁱⁱ, infectious disease outbreaks, biodiversity, habitats, and other critical aspects of the natural environment.^{iv}

This crisis threatens the realisation of children's rights and their ability to achieve their full potential.^v A robust international framework aims to protect children's rights in the context of climate change. Among others, this includes the following key international instruments:

- **[UN Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#)**: The international instrument which came into force in 1994 and today enjoys near universal membership (198 countries have ratified) with the overarching goal of preventing “dangerous” human interference with the climate system.
- **[Paris Agreement](#)**: The legally binding international treaty on climate change adopted in Paris at the 21st UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France in 2015 with the goal to hold the increase in global average temperatures below pre-industrial levels.
- **[Action for Climate Empowerment \(ACE\)](#)**: The term used to refer to all work under Article 6 of the UNFCCC and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement with the goal of empowering all members of society to engage in climate action through: climate change education and public awareness, training, public participation, public access to information, and international cooperation on these issues.
- **[United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution 48/13 on the Human Right to a Clean, Healthy, and Sustainable Environment](#)**: This 2021 resolution recognizes that sustainable development, in its three dimensions (social, economic, and environmental), and the protection of the environment, including ecosystems, contribute to and promote human well-being and the enjoyment of human rights.
- **[Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment 26 \(GC26\) on children's rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change \(2023\)](#)**: Emphasizes the urgent need to address the adverse effects of the environmental degradation on the enjoyment of children's rights and clarifies the obligations of States to address environmental harm and climate change and confirms that all children have a right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.
- **[Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)**: Learning and action to combat climate change is a specific priority in the SDGs, including SDG4: Education for all, SDG13: Climate action, and SDG15: Restoring degraded land, and is intrinsically linked to the achievement of all 17 goals. Target 4.7 envisions that learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development and Target 13.3 seeks to improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

Adolescents have ideas and want to seek solutions for the planet

Children and young people worldwide have expressed their desire to participate in climate action, in efforts to develop solutions to the climate crisis, and in work to seek justice for the climate crisis by holding governments and multilateral organisations accountable.^{vi} They clearly and consistently express their desire to contribute to the care and protection of the planet.



Photo credit: Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action Strategic Roadmap 2024-2027 for a Thriving Environment for Children, World Vision, 2024.

Voices of adolescents on why they want to engage in ESCA

“These days, young people and children are full of potential and have a lot of good ideas. This is exactly why their voices shouldn’t be shut [down]; adults should take their opinions into consideration more often and stop thinking that each one of us teenagers is immature.”

(Carla, age 14, Romania)^{vii}

“I would ask the governments to carry out campaigns to protect the environment and to involve us, children, who are more committed than the adults to stop climate change. They need to support us in doing things for the environment.”

(Isidora, age 15, Chile)^{viii}

“People need to learn the three ‘Rs’ to take care of environment. These are reduce, reuse and recycle. We need to spread the three ‘Rs’ to adults throughout recycling workshops to how bad is throwing away the garbage everywhere. Garbage is big pollution factor.”

(Diego, age 15, Chile)^{ix}

“We need to treat climate change as one of the greater crises of the planet, as Greta [Thunberg] has been telling us. We, children, need to take action immediately because climate change is not just an adult’s concern. It is our problem too.”

(Nomundari, aged 14, Mongolia)^x

“Wherever we have an opportunity to talk about climate change it is crucial, as we are talking about the future of a new generation. Imagine what will happen in 10, 20 or 30 years if we don’t change the behavior of people?”

(Carlos, age 20, Brazil)^{xi}

Adolescents are agents of change

Adolescents are powerful agents of change and [their participation matters](#). Adolescents bring fresh voices and perspectives to ESCA and, as they have grown up with the presence of technology and digital information, they can bring innovative ideas and solutions to the challenges of our time. Also, due to their long-term stakes in a healthy, liveable planet, adolescents often approach ESCA with deep personal motivation, energy, and a sense of perseverance. Moreover, they bring unique power to ESCA movements due to their ability to leverage peer influence, media savviness, and intergenerational connections. Significantly, the [UNFCCC Sherm El Sheikh Implementation Plan](#) refers to children as agents of change for climate action.

Examples of successful ESCA action by adolescents:

Tanzania: Kongwa Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR): This World Vision project has been a key driver in advancing sustainable land management and empowering communities across five villages. Moreover, the project has actively engaged youth efforts to boost economic empowerment and environmental conservation. The FMNR project trained 247 youth from five different villages, equipping them with the essential knowledge and skills to effectively implement FMNR practices.

Since the training, the youth have now taken on leadership roles within village environment committees, becoming the driving force behind the mobilization, execution, and supervision of FMNR activities across 1,250 hectares of community demonstration plots. Their responsibilities include selecting appropriate trees for FMNR and managing the growth of regenerating trees through pruning. Additionally, these young leaders have been instrumental in raising awareness among local farmers about the benefits of FMNR. As a result, 350 farmers have adopted FMNR practices in their croplands, recognizing the significant role of trees in enhancing soil quality, preventing erosion, and boosting crop yields. Youth involvement in this project has successfully integrated sustainable practices into the community, **ensuring long-term environmental and economic benefits.**

Malawi: Briquette making in the Traditional Authority Mavwere in Mchinji: Through this project, World Vision has been training local young people in briquette making as alternative sources of energy to biomass. In Mavwere, World Vision has reached dozens of youth clubs for support with eco-friendly energy sources. For example, in Likasi community, a youth club at Jusi village has been trained in making briquettes to mitigate the impact of deforestation in the area. The youth have also been training village members on briquette making to spread the adoption of the eco-friendly energy source and have utilized the briquette making skill to advance green livelihood opportunities.

Gift Frank, the club chair, explained that through sale of briquettes, the club has made over Mk100,000 (USD100). At the individual level, some of the youth are monetizing their skills to advance their own livelihoods. Grace Jonasi, 21 years old, explained, "World Vision trained our youth club in briquette making and environmental conservation last year. But as an individual I thought it wise to also make my own briquettes for business. I make briquettes and sell a pack for Mk200... with accumulating proceeds from the briquette business, I have been able to venture into pig farming. Right now, I have one pig but might have over 30 pigs by next year because pigs multiply quickly." With her business, she intends to support her siblings with school needs which includes purchasing notebooks, pens, and school uniforms.

Sri Lanka: IMPACT+ Club: The IMPACT+ Project Model has been implemented in Sri Lanka since 2022. In Kalpitiya Area Program, an IMPACT+ Club implemented a project that supported the entire community to cross the road during rainy days, which has enabled 80 children to cross the bridge daily to attend school. Previously they had been unable to cross the road during times of intense rain, due to the high rainwater levels. In these conditions, children had to remove their footwear to cross the road and then put them back on to walk to school. As a result of the complications some families kept smaller children home, forcing them to miss many days of school during this season when the road was submerged.

To address this, the adolescents in the IMPACT+ Club, with the support of their parents and the community, built a small bridge to enable children to cross the road to go to school regardless of the weather and stay after school hours to attend extra classes and sports activities. "What a blessing this bridge is to us," said the mother of a little boy.

3. HOW CAN ADOLESCENTS PARTICIPATE IN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION?

Adolescent participation in ESCA can take a variety of forms and have benefits for climate mitigation (e.g., clean energy, waste management, emissions reduction), climate adaptation (e.g., community-based disaster risk management, anticipatory action efforts), advocacy for climate justice, as well as their own increase in knowledge, skills, and practice. The following are various modalities for adolescent participation in climate action and practical examples of how this is already underway in World Vision programming and initiatives.

Education

Education is the primary modality for imparting information about the climate crisis and fostering the skills, behaviours, and attitudes necessary for adolescents to participate in efforts to seek and contribute to solutions for the planet.

Example: Climate change education through the World Vision Eco Impact Curriculum associated with this framework aims to reach adolescents across the globe to support their learning about the climate crisis, environmental stewardship, disaster preparedness, climate justice, and climate-oriented livelihoods.

Example: World Vision East Asia regional team is developing a series of comic books, activity books, and educational videos for children and adolescents to support them in understanding actions they can take to address climate change, such as regeneration of trees, based on a child-led research project on the experiences of children across the region.

Community service-learning projects

Community service-learning projects provide adolescents with practical opportunities for applying their knowledge about the climate crisis and building their skill sets to implement climate actions and strengthen their leadership roles, as well as contribute in meaningful ways to real climate issues in their communities. Service-learning projects can also engender motivation, commitment, and innovative solutions among adolescents.

Example: Since 2023 in Laos, World Vision and partners have worked through the “It Starts with Me Campaign” to raise awareness of Lao citizens on climate change by creating platforms for young people to express their climate-related concerns directly to decisionmakers, and to propose simple, doable actions that any person can take to mitigate the impact of climate change. Through the campaign over 3,500 children have engaged in community, provincial, and national events, online campaigns on social media, public events, and mass media partnerships, such as disseminating climate action tips on social media and planting over 20,000 trees. ^x

Direct advocacy

Direct advocacy by adolescents amplifies their voices and provides them with a platform for communicating their concerns, ideas, and solutions related to ESCA. Through advocacy they can influence policymakers and other relevant stakeholders at local, national, regional, and international levels, raise public awareness, build momentum towards change, and contribute towards climate justice.

Example: In eastern Tanzania World Vision engaged with youth from the coastal region, which has been experiencing increased deforestation and degradation of coastal habitats, through the Sustainable Accountability Uniting Tanzanian and Irish Youth (**SAUTI Youth**) Project funded by the European Union. The project supports young people to raise their voices to combat climate change, such as supporting participants to join community development committees to influence decisionmakers towards improving environmental conservation efforts.

Organizing and networking

Organizing and networking help adolescents build collective power by coming together as a group and amplifying their voices and messages. They can do this through in-person events and gatherings and through online platforms and social media. These efforts can also help adolescents connect to other efforts underway to mobilize their communities, increase their visibility, and build leadership skills.

Example: “Eco-influencers” is an action-oriented program through World Vision’s Amazon Basin initiative to promote a movement of adolescents to become young climate leaders and activists at national and international levels. For example, during an eco-influencers event in 2023, 270 adolescents and young people from Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Panama, and Peru came together to strengthen their capacities for using social networks and digital platforms to design and develop mobilisation campaigns to address climate change.



Photo credit: Eco-influencers: Adolescentes y jóvenes buscan ser agentes de cambio, Latin America

Community engagement

Community engagement allows adolescents the opportunity to raise awareness, including across generations, about the climate crisis and ESCA. This may involve awareness raising with parents, relatives, teachers, community leaders, younger children, and others. These efforts can also help them to build buy-in for ESCA among their communities and local networks.

Example: In the Amazon basin World Vision has worked with adolescents to support them to identify concerns in their communities that make them vulnerable to the impact of climate change, such as land degradation or poor waste management methods, and to then work with their families, schools, and communities to strengthen their care for the environment. For example, adolescents have been working within their schools to identify actions that can be taken in case of heavy rains or other climate shocks.

Example: In 2023 World Vision Mongolia supported adolescent participation in the Green Generation Forum where they were supported to learn about climate change and how it impacts their lives and to share their findings and experiences through an online survey. Over 9,000 young people participated in the survey. As a follow up, a group of young people presented the results to decisionmakers at a panel discussion during the Green Generation national forum that was led by children and youth.



Photo credit: World Vision Mongolia: Children leading a face-to-face session with representatives from climate change-related ministries and agencies, collaborating to address existing issues by engaging adolescents and diverse stakeholders."

Integrating faith in ESCA

World Vision has developed [ESCA Theological Learning Briefs](#) and their alignment with this framework offers a profound opportunity to ground environmental efforts in a rich theological context. Theology provides the meta-narrative within which individuals and societies situate themselves, shaping our fundamental worldview and guiding our actions. By embedding theological insights into the approach, we can offer adolescents a deeper understanding of why environmental sustainability and climate action are not only necessary but also a vital expression of their faith.

The ESCA Theological Learning Briefs unlock the foundational tenets of the Christian faith, explicitly connecting them to the care of creation. This connection is crucial as it frames environmental sustainability and climate action within the broader narrative of God's creation and humanity's role within it. For Christians, caring for the environment is an act of love for God, reflecting the belief that God has entrusted humanity with the guardianship of His creation. This theological perspective provides a compelling motivation for adolescents to engage in environmental sustainability, seeing their actions as part of a divine mandate.

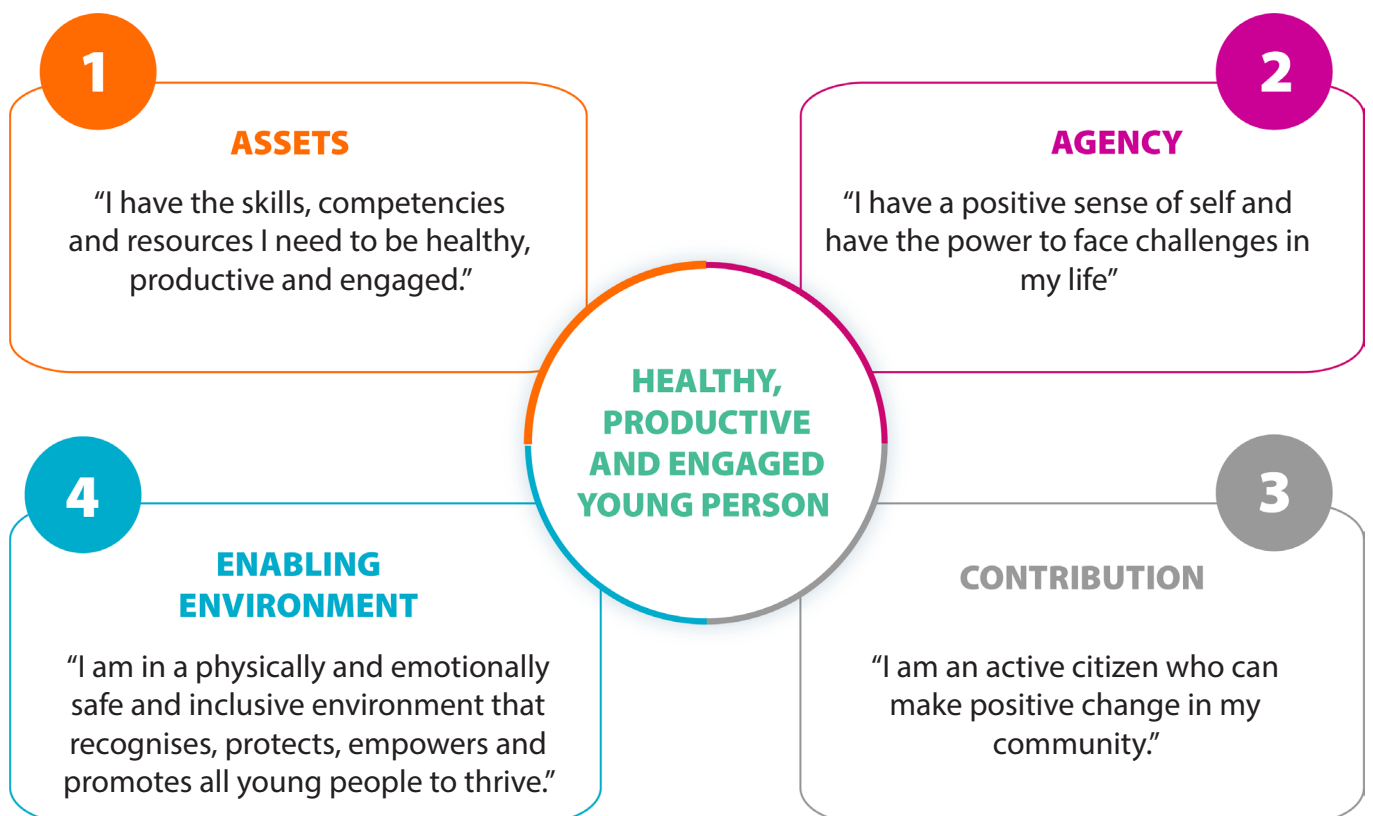
Furthermore, the theological framework helps Christian adolescents understand the multifaceted nature of environmental issues, which encompass social, economic, and spiritual dimensions. By viewing environmental stewardship through a biblical lens, adolescents can appreciate the interconnectedness of creation and the importance of addressing both immediate environmental needs and systemic injustices.

Incorporating these theological insights into climate action opportunities for Christian adolescent engagement not only enriches their educational experience but also empowers them to become proactive stewards of creation. It fosters a sense of purpose and responsibility, encouraging adolescents to take meaningful action in their communities and beyond. By aligning their environmental efforts with their faith, adolescents can contribute to a sustainable future.

4. WHAT SKILLS DO ADOLESCENTS NEED TO PARTICIPATE IN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE ACTION?

World Vision applies a positive youth development (PYD), strengths-based approach, focusing on adolescents' strengths, skills, and possibilities. It affirms positive outcomes for adolescents through productive activities and healthy relationships and focuses on building on the capacities already present. The PYD approach also recognizes that children and adolescents grow within environments, structures, and systems and within a broader cultural, political, historical context, place and time.

To fully leverage the potential of adolescents to participate in ESCA, they can benefit from a combination of knowledge, skills and preparation. This aligns with the World Vision's focus on the four main areas Positive Youth Development as described below:

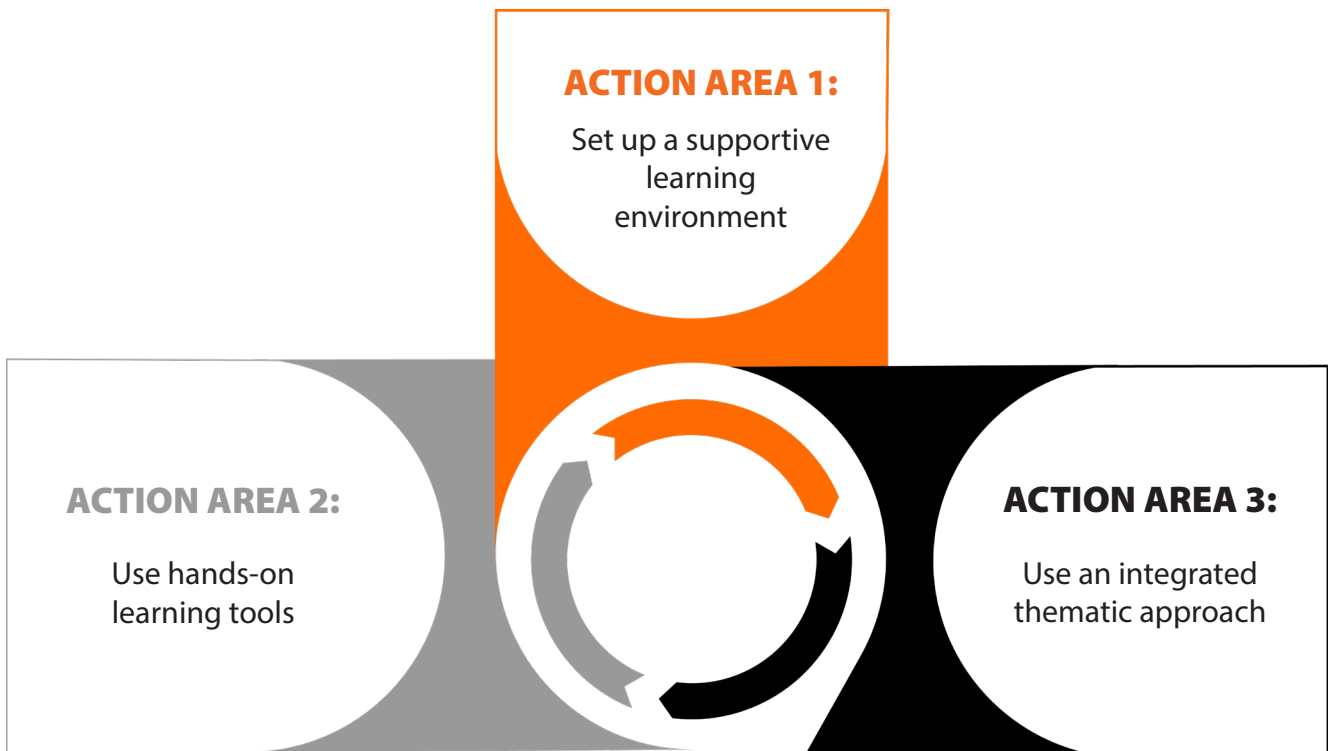


Integrating ESCA into the four main areas of PYD (as described in World Vision’s approach to PYD) can take various forms as illustrated in the table below. Note that these illustrative ideas were shared by adolescents who participated in the development of this framework and the companion World Vision Eco Impact Curriculum.

PYD Areas	ESCA Examples
<p>Assets (e.g., education, life skills, character strengths, vocational skills)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn how to prepare for extreme weather and climatic events • Have knowledge of environmentally friendly and sustainable systems and practices (e.g., agricultural practices, solar and wind sources, waste management, etc.) • Learn about environmental protection from early childhood • Develop appreciation for and personal connection to nature • Understand opportunities for environmentally sustainable livelihoods
<p>Agency (e.g., meaningful participation, experiential pedagogy, participatory learning and action)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and care for a garden • Clean a playground • Rainwater harvesting and other forms of water conservation • Collect plastic waste from water bodies (e.g., rivers, lakes, seas, beaches, etc.) • Reflect on your spiritual identity as a steward of creation and your sense of agency for taking meaningful action
<p>Contributions (e.g., shared planning, community engagement, leadership development)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join community development councils • Communicate with local leaders about climate solutions • Teach parents, relatives and friends about sustainable practices • Educate young children about the environment • Participate in advocacy at national and international platforms • Create and share artwork about the environment • Community outreach and awareness raising (e.g., street theatre, newsletters, campaigns, posters, etc.)
<p>Enabling Environment (e.g., socio-ecological systems, supportive relationships and systems, social norms)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults listen to adolescents’ perspectives, ideas and solutions • Duty bearers uphold their obligations to protect the natural environment and children’s rights to a healthy environment • Communities encourage and support sustainable systems (e.g., recycling, repurposing, composting, sustainable agriculture, waste management, etc.) • Climate activism and sustainable lifestyles are encouraged by society • Climate-friendly livelihoods are available.

5. ACTION AREAS: APPROACHES FOR WORKING WITH ADOLESCENTS ON ESCA

This section describes three primary action areas to establish an approach for working with adolescents in an informal learning environment on ESCA. The three primary action areas are:



Action Area 1: Set up a supportive learning environment

In setting up an informal learning environment on ESCA for adolescents, it is necessary to take into account the effects of the climate crisis on young people. To avoid eco-anxiety^{1 xii} it is essential to include social-emotional learning activities to create a positive atmosphere within the learning environment. This is needed to create a supportive learning community where adolescents feel safe to acknowledge their emotions, express their opinions, and gain solidarity and positive emotions from their collective reflections, actions, and advocacy initiatives.

Examples of how to set up a supportive learning atmosphere:

- **Group formation and trusted leaders:** e.g., trained and committed adult and peer leaders, group norms, trust building activities
- **Personal reflection time:** e.g., journal time, walking in nature or reflecting on nature
- **Collaborative learning:** e.g., group and partner work to practice supportive tactics like receptive listening or think-pair-share

¹ “[Glenn] Albrecht coined the term ‘eco-anxiety’ to describe a chronic fear of environmental doom, but eco-anxiety is also defined as mental distress or anxiety associated with worsening environmental conditions or anxiety experienced in response to the ecological crisis.” (Coffey et al., 2021)

- **Inquiry-based learning:** e.g., participants asking questions and conducting research
- **Visual thinking strategies:** e.g., examining or reviewing multimedia
- **Experiential strategy design:** e.g., learning the skills to create, implement, and evaluate service-learning projects
- **Storytelling:** e.g., first-person narratives and group sharing to communicate and discuss difficult topics
- **Intergenerational insights:** e.g., participants educate family members about sustainable environmental practices, participants interview community members about addressing environmental issues
- **Community building:** e.g., games and activities that use movement to help break down barriers and build connections
- **Linking to faith:** e.g., reflecting on spirituality in creation, learning skills to read religious texts through an environmental lens, connecting to faith leaders on ESCA

Action Area 2: Use hands-on learning tools

When working with adolescents on ESCA in informal learning settings, such as after school clubs or community meetings, using hands-on learning tools can help to encourage participants to be reflective and thoughtful and to meaningfully engage while having fun. Examples of such learning tools include:

- **Climate Change Journals**
Each participant has their own journal to use during activities and group work and to write individual personal thoughts and reflections.
- **Climate Change Glossary Board**
The Glossary Board supports participants as they communicate with each other and navigate difficult issues and “hot topics.” Although the words on the Glossary Board can be found in the dictionary, it is important for participants to create their own definitions for specific words, even if they slightly differ from standard definitions. This technique is a simple way to enable participants to speak a common language, ensuring understanding and preventing miscommunication. It also sets the tone for addressing the seriousness of the topics they will explore.
- **Multimedia engagement**
Use of multimedia, including photography and video, can offer diverse learning access points to enable participants to process the complex topics in a tangible manner. Multimedia supports participants to develop skills in understanding and applying knowledge about the world around them.
- **Practical learning experiences**
Using hands-on projects to support adolescents’ skill development through action that contributes to environmental stewardship and climate action can include activities like planting trees or seedlings, creating rooftop gardens, mapping urban heat islands, practicing water conservation, such as rainwater harvesting or setting up rainwater harvesting systems, and/or learning about and engaging in composting.
- **Clear and open communication (i.e., rules of engagement)**
Using clear and consistent verbal communication to ensure that participants understand that the experience is intended to be fun and to promote learning and interesting discussions. It is also important to make room for participants to ask questions that may arise.

Action Area 3: Use an integrated thematic approach

Four key themes for addressing ESCA with adolescents are:

1. **Environmental care and stewardship:** e.g., responsibly using and protecting the natural environment through conservation, restoration, and sustainable practices
2. **Disaster preparedness:** e.g., preparing communities, families, individuals for climatic events, extreme weather, infectious disease outbreaks, addressing urban climate vulnerabilities
3. **Climate justice:** e.g., holding duty bearers to account for upholding rights related to climate and environment, advocating for policy change, such as improved affordable, low-carbon public transportation
4. **Climate-related livelihoods:** e.g., learning about jobs related to environmental sustainability and climate action

An integrated approach to ESCA learning uses each of these key themes in all lessons. The goal is to enable adolescent participants to investigate environmental issues (e.g., water, deforestation, permafrost, etc.) from a holistic approach. In other words, the integrated approach allows adolescents to approach each issue from the perspective of all four key themes. This provides them with the basic understanding and vocabulary needed in each theme area prior to diving into the single focused climate issue. This also allows lessons or sessions to build upon each other.

Example of an integrated thematic approach: Permafrost in Mongolia

Environmental care and stewardship: Explain that Mongolia has joined REDD+, an international climate change mitigation scheme under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that aims to assist developing countries to protect their forests and the carbon stores within them. Citizens are working together to nurture and support their Boreal forests.

Disaster preparedness: Use photos and testimonials that show communities building trenches to address flooding from melting permafrost.

Climate Justice: Demonstrate that in Erdenetsagaan, Mongolia, local citizens have come together to document illegal actions of mining companies that are negatively affecting their environment and strengthening climate change.

Livelihoods: Learn about green jobs relevant to environmental sustainability and climate action, such as animal husbandry, crop production and forestry.

Green Jobs in Mongolia in selected economic sectors

# Sectors	Employment	D Jobs	EF Jobs	Green jobs	%
1 Animal husbandry	342,882	42,512	252,915	42,512	12.4
2 Crop production	58,477	20,932	4,591		0
3 Forestry	3,923	3,923	3,923	3,923	100
4 Energy	14,500	14,500	1,231	1,231	8.5
5 Water, sewerage, water treatment	6,538	6,538	5,159	5,159	78.9
6 Solid waste management	1,401	300	1,401	300	21.4
7 Transport	72,900	72,900	12,506	12,506	17.1
8 Construction	69,300	69,300	3,610	0	0
Total (no)	569,921	230,905	285,336	65,631	11.5
Share of employment		40.5%	50.0%	11.5%	

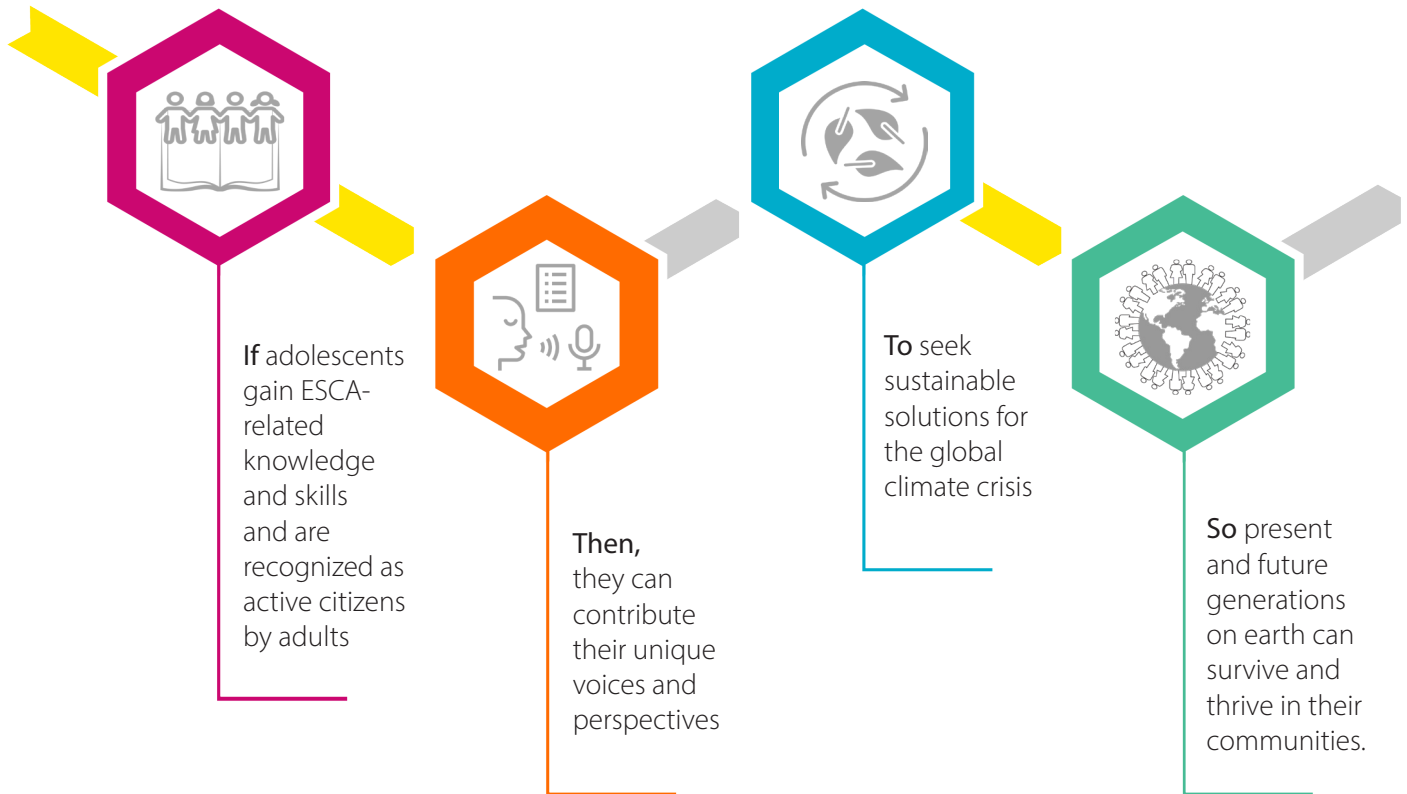
D Jobs = Decent Jobs, EF Jobs = Environmentally Friendly Jobs

Green Jobs Mapping study of Mongolia, Economic Policy and Competitiveness Research Center (EPCRC), 2014, p. 4.

6. THEORY OF CHANGE

This theory of change is indicative of how adolescent climate action and education leads to sustainable, ESCA-related change. It is a generalised model that is intended for use and adaptation in local contexts.

Theory of Change



The Global Environmental and Climate Crisis:

e.g., plastic contamination, toxic air and water, land degradation, extreme events such as headwaves, drought and flooding, food insecurity, etc.

Environmental and Climate Crisis Impact on Adolescents:

e.g., destruction of homes and schools, health impacts, decreased access to adequate and nutritious food, forced migration, infectious diseases, climate anxiety, etc.

Theory of change description

If adolescents gain ESCA-related knowledge and skills and are recognized as active citizens by adults...

...by obtaining the necessary education, experiences, skills and spaces, such as :

- Climate education
- Active citizenship training
- Environmental stewardship training
- Positive Youth Development
- Social service learning projects
- Community engagement opportunities
- Opportunities to communicate with and influence stakeholders and policy makers

Then, they can contribute their unique voices and perspectives

...by participating in advocacy, intergenerational dialogues and community engagement, such as:

- Educate parents, relatives, teachers and friends
- Educate younger children
- Advocate with local, national and international decision makers
- Communicate with peers on social media
- Conducting community outreach and campaigns
- Promote climate justice

To seek sustainable solutions for the global climate crisis

...by leveraging their unique perspectives, creativity, digital awareness and peer networks to develop and help implement innovation solutions to issues, such as:

- Prevent deforestation and promote regeneration
- Promote renewable energy sources
- Promote sustainable waste management
- End use of pesticides/fertilizers in gardening
- Preparation for (and management of) extreme weather and climatic events
- Prevention of (and management of) infectious disease outbreaks
- Climate justice
- Behaviour change

So present and future generations on earth can survive and thrive in their communities

...by creating a more livable, healthy and sustainable planet, such as:

- Cleaner water and air
- Reduction of plastic pollution
- Regeneration of trees and forests
- Healthy ecosystems and habitats for animals
- Increased food security
- Reduction of extreme weather and harmful climatic events
- Fewer outbreaks of infectious diseases
- Accountability by duty bearers

Note: local World Vision offices, partners, and communities can tailor this theory of change for use in their local contexts by re-articulating the problem, steps and outcomes that are most relevant for their given context. They may also find it worthwhile to consider the specific assumptions and risks underlying their localized theory of change, as well as defining metrics for success and practical methods for monitoring and evaluating success.

Tracking the progress

In addition to contextualising the above Theory of Change, programmes will also need to select measurement indicators and tools to track progress and assess the effectiveness and contribution of their adolescent environment and climate action programming. As mentioned previously, this type of programming contributes to two Sustainable Development Goal targets, and programme measurement should include ways to contribute to the tracking of those targets.



Target 4.7: Education for sustainable development and global citizenship

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development.



Target 13.3: Build knowledge and capacity to meet climate change

Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.

World Vision has global standard indicators and tools to measure quality education interventions, ESCA programming, and adolescent well-being. For adolescent engagement in environmental sustainability and climate action, and to contribute to the above SDG targets, we recommend the following measures:

- **Measures of quality interventions**, including assessment of safe and inclusive spaces, teacher and facilitator capacity, and feedback from adolescents themselves;
- **Measures of active participation**, including numbers of active Eco Impact clubs and active participants, disaggregated by age and gender;
- **Measures of skills and knowledge**, including knowledge of the environment and climate change, and skills for climate action such as critical thinking and empathy;
- **Measures of behaviour** for environmental care and climate action, including self-efficacy, citizenship, and future orientation; and,
- **Measures of enabling environment**, including community projects, adolescents' positive and peaceful relationships with parents and caregivers, teachers, and other duty bearers, and youth-friendly policies and services.

7. WAYS FORWARD

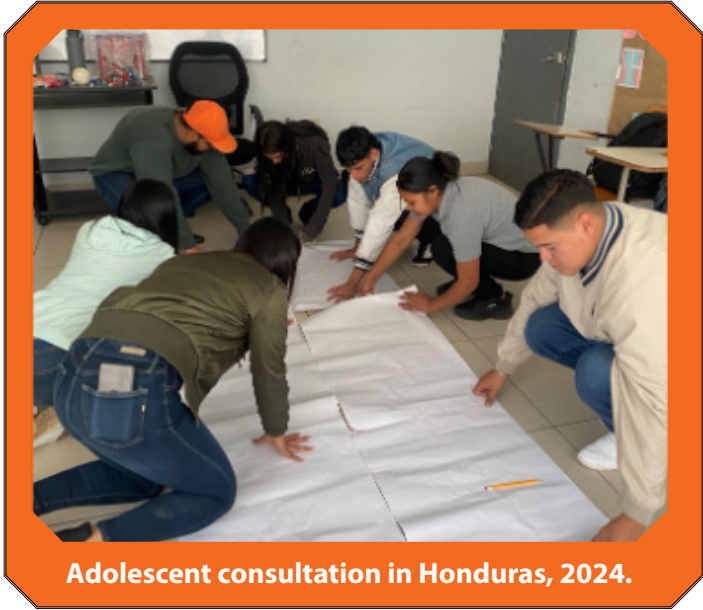
World Vision is committed to supporting adolescents in their environment stewardship and climate action learning and initiatives. World Vision commits to:

- Testing this framework and the accompanying curriculum in diverse social and climatic contexts for peer learning and sharing, as well as generating evidence to share promising practices;
- Building on this framework to set organisational priorities for ESCA and Education, aligning and leveraging both sectors' roadmaps over the next 5 years
- Developing the capacity of adults, including World Vision staff and local partners working directly with adolescents, on Positive Youth Development approaches to ESCA, as outlined in this framework;
- Developing and strengthening structures and processes to include meaningful adolescent participation in World Vision's ESCA and Education programming, advocacy, and internal decision-making

Annex 1: Methodology in focus

This framework was developed through a multi-phased, participatory, and highly collaborative process between the Proteknôn consulting team and World Vision global and field staff, adolescents working with World Vision offices in Africa, Asia and Latin America and World Vision’s adolescent climate champions.

Data collection source	Description
Literature review	A panoramic desk review, included the full review of approximately 60 documents, including documents related to WV’s child and youth programming, ESCA programming, Impact+ Clubs, Positive Youth Development, as well as partners’ curricula, activities and child-friendly materials on climate change.
World Vision International	World Vision Global Centre task team for this framework and curriculum includes representatives from Education, Child Participation, Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action, and Faith and Development/Spirituality and Nurturing of Children, who provided overall guidance and direction throughout the data collection and framework and curriculum development phases.
World Vision Field and Regional Offices	Consultations were held with four WV field offices, as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office • Mongolia Field Office • Amazon Basin Initiative • South East Asia Regional Office India.
Adolescent Consultations	WV field offices held in person workshops with adolescents in Zambia, Sri Lanka, and Honduras to gather their inputs, ideas, perspectives and recommendations. This included a total of 70 adolescents (51 female, 19 male) across the three regions.
WV Adolescent Climate Champions Engagements	The Proteknôn team together with WV-education hosted a virtual workshop with WV Adolescent Climate Champions from Brazil, Ecuador, and Zambia. During the call, the youth shared their climate concerns and actions they have taken and provided suggestions on key topics.



Adolescent consultation in Honduras, 2024.



Adolescent consultation in Sri Lanka, 2024.



Adolescent consultation in Zambia, 2024.



Adolescent consultation in Zambia, 2024.







Zoom call with WV Youth Climate Activists, 2024.

Annex 2: Strategic links to the World Vision environmental sustainability and climate action strategic roadmap

The table below outlines opportunities for adolescent contributions to the World Vision ESCA Strategic Roadmap through the ESCA curriculum and other activities

World Vision ESCA Strategic Road Map Focus Areas, and climate justice advocacy	Potential for adolescent contributions through ESCA curriculum and other activities (* = low, *** = medium, ***** = high)	Brief examples (including opportunities for adolescents to contribute to climate mitigation, climate adaptation and climate justice)
<p>Focus Area 1) Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) Scale-up:</p>  <p>Restoration of ecosystems and ecosystem services for children and communities</p>		<p>Children and adolescents are recognized as critical agents of change in climate action and restoring ecosystems. World Vision will work with children and communities through environmental and climate education and community empowerment using the ESCA curriculum, Citizens Voice in Action (CVA) and school- and community-based environment and climate change awareness raising sessions to build their capacity to undertake climate action School-based FMNR eco-clubs are also being piloted.</p> <p>Adolescents will learn about FMNR, greening and other environmental and climate protection activities through the ESCA curriculum. This contributes to the roadmap indicator # of children participated in environmental and climate awareness sessions. Through service learning projects adolescents will have opportunities to raise awareness on environmental and climate priority issues that are most relevant to their geographic and socio-political cultural context.</p> <p>Where FMNR (conserving and restoring their land and seascape), greening or other environmental programming work is underway, pro-active efforts are needed to ensure opportunities for voluntary and meaningful participation of adolescents and children</p>

World Vision ESCA Strategic Road Map Focus Areas, and climate justice advocacy	Potential for adolescent contributions through ESCA curriculum and other activities (* = low, *** = medium, ***** = high)	Brief examples (including opportunities for adolescents to contribute to climate mitigation, climate adaptation and climate justice)
<p>Focus Area 2) Building sustainable agri-food systems for food and nutrition security</p> 		<p>Sustainable agriculture can be part of the solution – it can be harnessed to minimize emissions to mitigate climate change by supporting regreening initiatives such as agroecology. It can also build resilience by helping smallholder farmers and communities to adapt and build longer term resilience by adopting water saving technologies such as rainwater harvesting and improving soil health through utilizing organic fertilizers and reducing soil tillage. Through the ESCA curriculum adolescents will learn about water conservation and practical ways to conserve water, as well as the benefits of using organic fertilizers rather than pesticides. Service learning projects will enable practical application of their skills.</p>
<p>Focus Area 3) Strengthening community resilience to climate-related disaster risks</p> 		<p>The ESCA curriculum integrates a focus on disaster preparedness. Adolescents will learn about and have practical opportunities to apply knowledge and skills to increase emergency preparedness and resilience to climate-related disaster risks. Adolescents’ interest in awareness raising and action on proper waste management will also be supported through the ESCA curriculum. Pro-active methods should be made to train children and adolescents (especially representatives from existing community and school based clubs) in community based disaster risk reduction. Impact + club members, as well as representatives from other clubs can be trained and included as representatives in disaster risk committees to enhance child-focused initiatives.</p>

World Vision ESCA Strategic Road Map Focus Areas, and climate justice advocacy	Potential for adolescent contributions through ESCA curriculum and other activities (* = low, *** = medium, ***** = high)	Brief examples (including opportunities for adolescents to contribute to climate mitigation, climate adaptation and climate justice)
<p>Focus Area 4) Integrating environmental stewardship and climate action</p>  <p>across operations and programmes</p>		<p>Adolescents are key actors when apply the World Vision’s World Vision’s Environmental Stewardship and Climate Action Handbook. The ESCA curriculum can be used with and by adolescents in diverse community and school based settings to integrate environmental stewardship and climate action. The curriculum enhances knowledge, awareness and practical skills to understand and apply environmental stewardship and take forward climate action initiatives. The perspectives of children and adolescents should also be sought when undertaking environmental safeguard assessments of World Vision projects and programs.</p>
<p>Advocating for climate justice for children</p> 		<p>Promoting climate justice for child rights sits at the core of World Vision’s climate action advocacy approach. The ESCA curriculum can be used to build the capacity of adolescents for advocacy on climate justice. The ESCA curriculum supports adolescents to gain knowledge on climate justice, and to gain skills and confidence to engage in awareness, action and advocacy initiatives on climate issues that most concern them. For example, adolescents (especially through existing IMPACT+ Clubs, networks of adolescent climate champions, and other child advocate networks supported by World Vision) can play an active role in local to global advocacy for climate justice and child-focused climate sensitive policy and practice developments by concerned duty bearers. Moreover, adolescents have emphasized the importance of intergenerational advocacy for climate justice, which is also cultivated and supported through the ESCA curriculum and service learning projects.</p>

Annex 3: Glossary of Terms

Action for Climate Empowerment: UNFCCC states Action for Climate Empowerment as the foundation for a low-emission, climate-resilient and just future, thanks to its six interconnected elements: climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation, public access to information, and international cooperation on these elements.

Adolescents: There are no universally agreed age ranges for the terms ‘adolescents’ and ‘youth’. For consistency and measurement purposes, World Vision Education programmes define adolescents as children aged 12 to 18 years of age.

Health and Nutrition programming may extend that range to 10-9 years. Understanding the developmental needs and the evolving capacities of a specific target age group in any context is critical for ensuring projects are responsive and successful.

Child participation: Children under 18 years of age contribute to decisions and take action on issues that affect their lives. This is best done through empowering children and nurturing positive relationships between children, adults, and communities based on mutual respect and partnership at familial, local, national, and international levels.

Climate change: A global change in weather patterns over a long period of time. This can cause weather extremes such as flooding, droughts or exacerbate other issues such as land degradation and desertification.

Climate change adaptation: The process of adjustment in ecological, social and economic systems in response to both the current effects of climate change and the predicted impacts in the future. Adaptation actions range from setting up early warning systems for cyclones to switching to drought-resistant crops, among others.

Climate change mitigation: Avoiding and reducing emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere to prevent the planet from warming to more extreme temperatures or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases. Mitigation measures include use of renewable energy, waste minimisation processes and enhancing carbon sinks, among others.

Climate justice: A term that acknowledges that environmental changes can have differing social, economic, public health and other adverse impacts on vulnerable populations. As a result, climate justice looks at environmental changes through a human rights lens, striving to address these inequalities through long-term strategies.

Conservation: The act of preserving, guarding, protecting and sustainably using the environment, including for biodiversity and maintaining natural resources and ecosystem health.

Ecosystem: The complex network of biological components, including communities of living organisms (plants, animals, birds, fish, micro-organisms), and how they interact with each other and with their physical environment – including air, water, sunlight and soil.

Environment: The area or surroundings where organisms live. This refers to those physical, chemical and natural components such as land, water, soil and atmosphere.

Experiential learning: A learning-by-doing approach, using a cycle of: experiencing, reflecting, generalising, applying.

IMPACT+: World Vision’s flagship adolescent life skills and active citizenship programming approach, which fosters the skills, behaviours, and attitudes necessary for participation in social, civic, and economic life. IMPACT+ is an acronym that stands for Involvement, Motivation, Participation, Action, Community, Teens; the “plus” denotes additional content and elements to increase the model’s focus on peaceful relationship building and other cross-sectoral outcomes.

Indigenous: Originally or naturally occurring in one particular place. In reference to plants and animals, it is where they have evolved and grown naturally with minimal human intervention. In reference to humans, it means having a distinct cultural and historical relation to an area.

Livelihoods: All of the means – assets, work, abilities and actions – that go into making a living or meeting one’s basic needs.

Nature-based solutions: Actions to protect, sustainably use, manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems, which address societal challenges, effectively and adaptively, providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

Positive Youth Development (PYD): An adolescent development strengths-based approach, focusing on adolescents’ strengths, skills, and possibilities. PYD builds adolescents’ assets (skills, competencies, and resources), agency (positive identity and power within), contribution (participation in positive change in their community), and enabling environments (healthy relationships, and safe and inclusive spaces, services, and policies).

Regeneration: Regeneration is a part of restoration but with focus on greening through living tree stumps (underground forest).

Resilience: The capacity of an individual, household, population group or system to anticipate, absorb, and recover from hazards and/or the effects of climate change and other shocks and stresses without compromising (and potentially enhancing) its long-term prospects.

Restoration: The process of returning something to its former good condition or position. Ecosystem or environmental restoration is the process of reversing the degradation of ecosystems to improve their productivity and capacity to meet the needs of society.

Service-learning: A teaching and learning strategy that combines meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Sustainable/sustainability: The ability to sustain and support over the long term. Sustainable development means meeting the needs of today without compromising the needs of the future. Environmental sustainability is the ability to use natural resources without adversely affecting ecological health and maintaining productivity for the future. In agriculture this involves the conservation of soil, vegetation and water to ensure food supplies and continued productivity and profitability for farmers, herders and other agriculturalists.

ⁱTalk less and act more, the world needs help’: Children Front and Centre of Climate Action, World Vision, 2020.

ⁱⁱTalk less and act more, the world needs help’: Children Front and Centre of Climate Action, World Vision, 2020.

ⁱⁱⁱFor more information on climate change and agri-food systems see: Climate Change, Hunger and Children’s Futures, World Vision, 2021; The Impact of Climate Change on Nutrition, World Vision 2024; A world where every child enjoys ENOUGH nourishing food so they can thrive, ENOUGH Campaign, World Vision, <https://www.WorldVision.org/ENOUGH>, accessed September 3, 2024.

^{iv}Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action Strategic Roadmap 2024-2027 for a Thriving Environment for Children, World Vision, 2024.

^vEnvironmental Sustainability and Climate Action Strategic Roadmap 2024-2027 for a Thriving Environment for Children, World Vision, 2024.

^{vi}Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action Strategic Roadmap 2024-2027 for a Thriving Environment for Children, World Vision, 2024.

^{vii}Talk less and act more, the world needs help’: Children Front and Centre of Climate Action, World Vision, 2020, p. 7.

^{viii}Ibid

^{ix}Ibid

^xIt Starts With Me Campaign: Factsheet, available at: https://www.WorldVision.org/sites/default/files/2024-06/WorldVisionI-L%20ISWM%20Factsheet%202024_ENG%201.pdf, accessed August 13, 2024.

^{xi}“Eco-influencers: Adolescentes y jóvenes buscan ser agentes de cambio”, August 15, 2023, <https://home.worldvisionamericaslatina.org/adolescentes-jovenes-eco-influencers/>

^{xii}Coffey et al. 2021. Understanding Eco-anxiety: A Systematic Scoping Review of Current Literature and Identified Knowledge Gaps. The Journal of Climate Change and Health, Volume 3. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joclim.2021.100047>.



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