



BRING **IN** THE GIRLS!

Girls' and young women's views
on climate change



WORLD ASSOCIATION
OF GIRL GUIDES
AND GIRL SCOUTS



Report
VOICE MATTERS



BRING IN THE GIRLS!

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Bring In the Girls!: Girls' and young women's views on climate change

Main authors: Inês Maria Gonçalves (WAGGGS) and Bárbara Méndez

Data analysis: Ana María Restrepo

Revision and technical supervision: Juan Pablo Arguello, U-Report Digital Specialist (UNICEF)

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WAGGGS and UNICEF value the voices of young people and seek to recognise their experiences and opinions. This report is considered a reliable reflection of what girls and young women have shared through this consultation. However, it should not be used as a single source of information but rather as a complement to statistically robust research on this topic.

The data presented is not statistically representative of girls and young women globally, or in any specific country or region. Sampling stratification and post-stratification weighting were not applied. The statements in this publication are the views of the girls and young women consulted and do not necessarily reflect the policies or the views of WAGGGS, UNICEF and U-Report.

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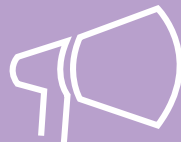
SUMMARY



33,523
girls and
young women



90
countries



18
languages



KEY FINDINGS

Research suggests that girls and young women are the hardest hit by climate change¹. Despite this, their voices are not adequately represented in climate discussions, resulting in policies that do not address their specific needs.

This must change.

In early 2022, WAGGGS and UNICEF launched a U-Report poll to amplify girls' voices on climate change. In total, 33,523 girls and young women from 90 countries were consulted on this topic and its gender dimension.

What they told us is critical to better understand girls' views and experiences. Although girls and women are already playing a vital role in responding to climate change, they are often excluded from the conversation. More needs to be done to ensure all girls are heard, supported, and empowered to take the lead.

Girls and young women around the world have raised their voices. It's time to #BringInTheGirls to the climate discussion!

Awareness

Nearly 3 out of 10 girls and young women consulted are not familiar with climate change and 1 out of 10 has never heard about it.

Girls agency

Climate change has a disproportionate impact on girls and young women. However, more than half of them (56%) say that they were unaware of this fact. After learning this, 8 out of 10 girls and young women still think girls around the world have the power to tackle climate change.

Listening to girls

6 out of 10 girls and young women say their government has never consulted them on policies related to the environment.

Empowering spaces

Almost all Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (9 in 10) believe that their journey in the movement encouraged them to take action and protect the environment.

Girls as drivers of change

Most girls have already taken action to tackle climate change. 52% have done it a few times, while 28% have taken action very often.

¹ Gender and the Environment: Building Evidence and Policies to Achieve the SDGs, OECD, 2021
Poverty and the Environment/Climate Change. UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative, 2018
Gender, Climate Change and Health, WHO, 2014.

WHY WE SHOULD LISTEN TO GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN?

Foreword

Hi! My name is Itzel, I am 15 years old and I am from Mexico.

In my role as Climate Poll Ambassador, I went to an underprivileged community to consult girls on their views about climate change. Some girls I consulted didn't even know what climate change was. Even less that it makes girls more vulnerable and that they suffer the hardest consequences when a climate crisis hits. I found the situation shocking! Just imagine how many more girls are in the same situation.

From the poll development to the compilation of the data, I've learned a lot of things. I've seen further into the reality of climate change around the world. I've learned that each girl and young woman sees climate change in a unique way, based on her own point of view and her own life experiences.

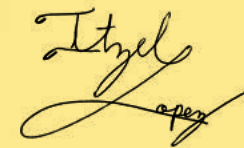
This consultation also made other girls more aware of their potential. They were able to think about what they can do, and I encouraged them to make those changes happen.

As Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, we have the opportunity to listen to other girls and educate them about climate change. My mission is to continue to share knowledge and help other girls reach their goals and raise their voices.

We have the power to make a difference: starting with little actions in our own communities. Together, we can make our world a peaceful, equal, and livable place.

LISTEN TO GIRLS!

We have things to say!



*Itzel López Moreno, member of the consultation
co-design team and Climate Poll Ambassador*



LET'S DIVE INTO THE TOPIC

Background

What is Climate Change?

Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather on our planet. 🌍

Human activities (like burning coal, oil and gas 🚗 🏭 🔌) creates greenhouse gas emissions that act like a blanket around the Earth, trapping the sun's heat ☀️ and raising temperatures. 🌡️

As a consequence, the weather becomes more extreme and unpredictable, impacting our planet and those who live in it.² 🐟 🌳 👨👩👧👦

Disproportionate impact on girls and women

- 4 out of 5 people displaced by climate change are girls and women.³
- Around the world, girls are the first to leave school to support their families and take on extra domestic chores created by new climate conditions. Girls are also less likely to re-enroll in school than boys after an environmental crisis.⁴
- When water is scarce, women and girls are forced to travel long distances, often in unsafe conditions, to reach water and bring it home. This also exposes them to increased risks of gender-based violence.⁵
- Climate emergencies, like droughts and floods, can make girls miss school during their periods due to the lack of water and adequate sanitation for menstrual hygiene management.⁶
- During severe weather conditions, girls in vulnerable households are more likely to drop out of education and be forced into marriage⁷
- By 2025, climate change could keep more than 12 million girls from completing their education every year.⁸

² United Nations - [What Is Climate Change?](#)

³ [The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index](#). UNICEF, 2021

⁴ [A greener, fairer future: Why leaders need to invest in climate and girls' education](#). Malala Fund, 2021

⁵ [The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis: Introducing the Children's Climate Risk Index](#). UNICEF, 2021

⁶ [When Coping Crumbles Drought in India 2015-16: A Rapid Assessment of the Impact of Drought on Children and Women in India](#). UNICEF, 2016

⁷ [Girls' rights in climate strategies](#). Plan International, 2019

⁸ [A greener, fairer future: Why leaders need to invest in climate and girls' education](#). Malala Fund, 2021

“Most of the time, we do not identify climate change as a huge challenge that we are facing. But, actually, it is.

Climate change affects our studies and our ways of living. Our society made us believe that it's girls' responsibility to fetch water or collect firewood. So as the weather changes, we are always at risk of missing school and taking over those responsibilities.”

Diane Umuhire, 16-year-old girl from Rwanda



Girls and women are left out

- Less than 2% of national climate strategies mention girls.⁹
- While 43% Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) reference women or gender, it is largely in the context of women as a vulnerable group rather than contributors to climate action.¹⁰
- Only a third of 192 national energy frameworks from 137 countries include some gender considerations. In most of these, women are characterized as potential beneficiaries, but rarely as agents of change.¹¹
- In the year the Paris Agreement was agreed, only 35% of national delegates were women.¹²

⁹ Girls' Education in Climate Strategies: Opportunities for Improved Policy and Enhanced Action in Nationally Determined Contributions, Brookings Institution., Plan International and UNICEF, 2019

¹⁰ Girls' Education in Climate Strategies: Opportunities for Improved Policy and Enhanced Action in Nationally Determined Contributions, Brookings Institution., Plan International and UNICEF, 2019

¹¹ Energizing equality: the importance of integrating gender equality principles in national energy policies and frameworks, International Union for the Conservation of Nature and others, 2017

¹² Wedo - Women's Delegate Fund.

FOR GIRLS, BY GIRLS

Girl-led consultation

We know that climate change cannot be faced without the voices and leadership of girls and young women. The same applies for youth consultation! To better understand what they think about climate change, girls and young women were the ones showing the way forward.

Co-design

Five girls and young women from Rwanda, Nigeria, India, Mexico and South Africa were invited to co-design this consultation side by side with WAGGGS.

“If we had the magic power to consult all girls in the world on climate change, what would we like to know from their experiences?”

Sharmin, Mimi, Bukky, Itzel and Jasmin
Co-design team

This team explored the topic together and identified what is missing in the climate change conversation from a girl's perspective. They then wrote a questionnaire, asking more than 80 girls from 13 countries to vote on the questions they believed were the most important to include in the consultation.

This was how the poll was created!



© Sofia Vale

Climate Poll Ambassadors

33 girls and young women from Australia, Lebanon, Kenya, Saint Lucia, India, the Philippines, Madagascar, Mexico, Nigeria, South Africa, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom and Venezuela were appointed to lead this consultation.

Their passion for the environment and amplifying young people's voices were the main driving forces behind the data collection and analysis. They:

- Invited and mobilised girls and young women to participate in the U-Report poll - friends, family, colleagues and everyone in their networks!
- Handed out paper-versions of the poll to girls in schools, Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting units and underprivileged communities.
- Raised awareness about climate change and facilitated learning spaces with the girls consulted.
- Selected individual responses (from the qualitative data) from girls in their countries.



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HOW DID WE CONSULT GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN?

Methodology

The consultation took place, both online and offline, between January and February 2022. We asked 15 questions about climate change and its link to gender equality in a way that everyone could understand - making it feel more like a conversation!

Online

A U-Report poll was available in 18 languages and distributed via SMS, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and Viber. It was launched on U-Report Global and 11 U-Report national platforms:

Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Iraq, Italy, and Tanzania.

What is U-Report?

U-Report is UNICEF's flagship digital platform to engage children, adolescents, and youth in programme priorities, emergency response, and advocacy actions. It is an interactive tool that connects young people with stakeholders and allows them to amplify their voices on issues that matter to them.



© Sharmin Banu MS



Offline

Paper surveys were distributed by Climate Poll Ambassadors in 10 countries to reach girls and young women less likely to know and participate in the U-Report poll - mainly because of low internet access or not being able to use a digital device.

Australia, India, Kenya, Lebanon, Madagascar, Mexico, Nigeria, Saint Lucia, United Kingdom, and Venezuela.

This report shares the views of female participants who agreed to be part of the consultation and responded to questions about their age, gender, if they were Girl Guides, and our first question about climate change.

How did we get to the results?

We explored the data from a global perspective and looked for differences between age groups, geographic regions and those who were part of the Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting movement.

Only the quantitative answers¹³ were consolidated. Qualitative answers¹⁴ are presented as individual opinions.

Ready to take a look?

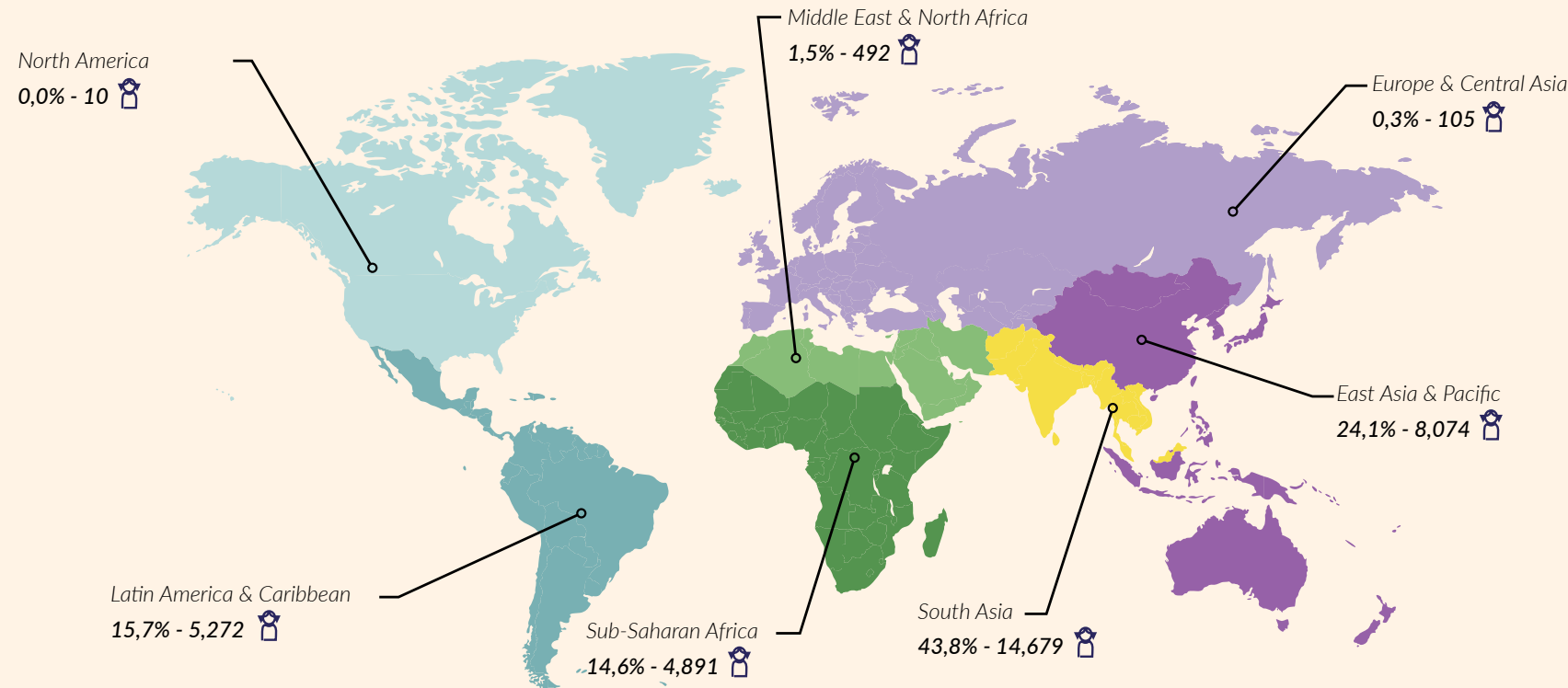
¹³ Answers to questions that had options to choose from

¹⁴ Answers to questions where respondents could share their unique views

WHO HAVE WE LISTENED TO?

Sample

33,523 girls and young women from 90 countries participated in the consultation. Of these:



This map is stylised and it is not to scale. It does not reflect a position by WAGGGS, UNICEF and U-Report on the legal status of any country, territory or the delimitation of any frontiers.

WHAT HAVE GIRLS TOLD US ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE?

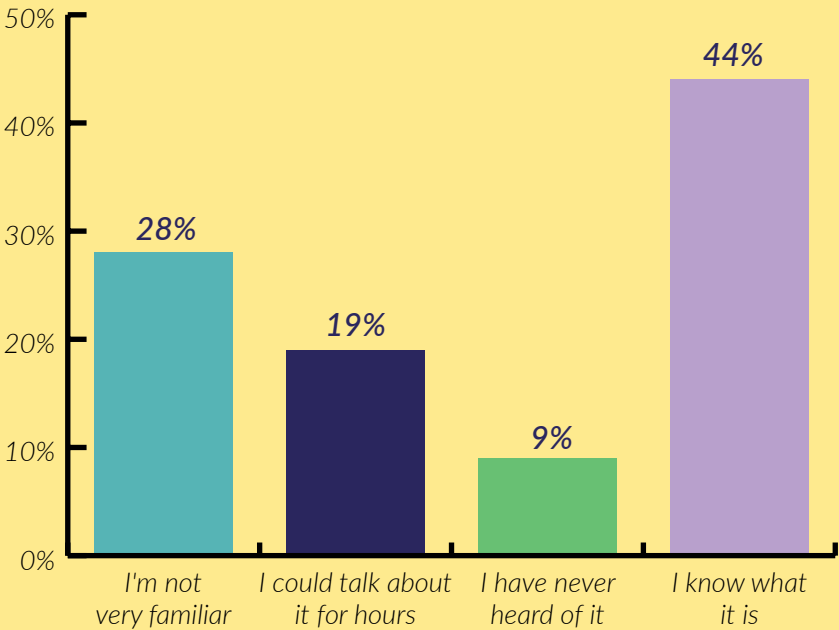
Result analysis

“Climate Change affects everyone in one way or another. By doing this consultation, we are able to understand how it affects girls.”

Jasmin, 21-year-old member of the co-design team from South Africa



How familiar are you with climate change?



Zooming in 🔍

- Girls and young women in Europe and Central Asia (28%) are more likely to feel very confident about their climate change knowledge compared to their peers worldwide (an average of 19%).
- Almost twice as many girls and young women in the Middle East and North Africa (17%) have never heard of climate change compared to the global average (9%).

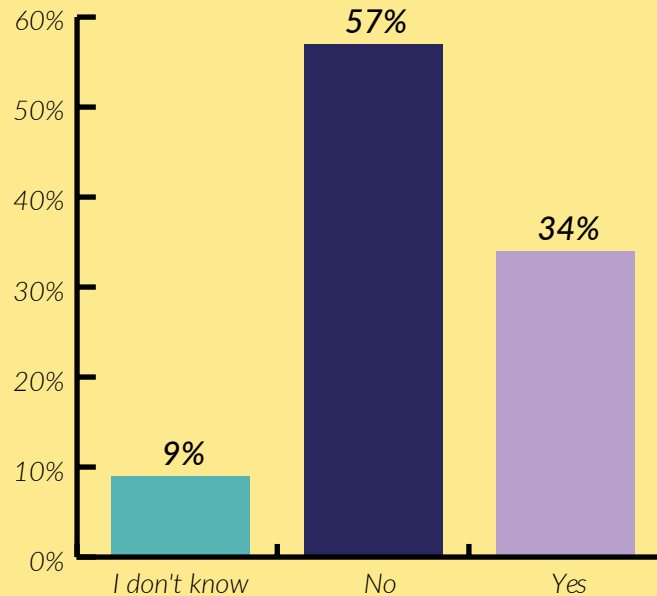
Almost half of the girls and young women consulted (44%) know what climate change is, followed by those who are not very familiar with it (28%).

19% say they could talk about it for hours, while a small group of girls and young women (9%) have never heard of it.



Do you think climate change is being taken as seriously as COVID?

More than half of girls and young women (57%) believe climate change is not treated with the same seriousness as COVID.



Zooming in 🔍

- Half of the girls (10-17 years old) think that climate change is not taken as seriously as COVID, a percentage that rises to 63% for girls aged 18 to 25.
- A higher percentage of girls and young women who answered the online poll (59%) think climate change is not taken as seriously as COVID than those who participated offline (35%).

Why is that?

"Because people are not seeing instant results of climate change in their current lifestyles, and when they actually notice, it will be too late."

17-year-old girl from Lebanon

"The government doesn't take it [climate change] seriously."

13-year-old girl from Nigeria

"I think it is not taken into account because it does not imply an imminent threat in the present, unlike COVID-19. The consequences of climate change are more unknown and ignored, although they are affecting many people."

19-year-old young woman from Mexico

"Because it is not within anybody's economic interests."

23-year-old young woman from Greece

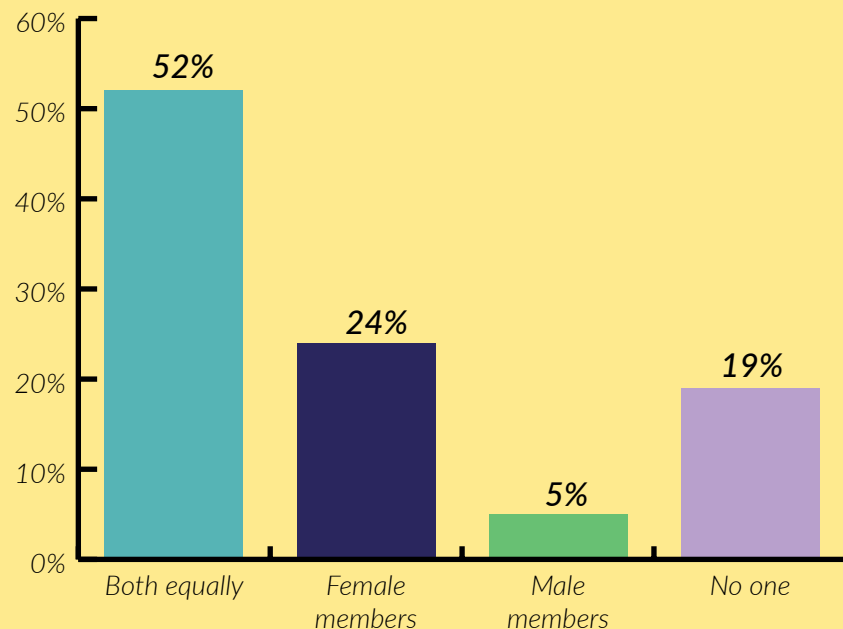
"The issue of climate change is not getting the same attention from the media."

15-year-old girl from Indonesia

In the place where you live, who carries out more activities to protect the environment? (eg: recycling, saving energy, planting, etc)

More than half of girls and young women (52%) say that both women and men carry out activities to protect the environment equally.

1 in 4 girls and young women (24%) report that women carried out more activities to protect the environment in the place where they live.

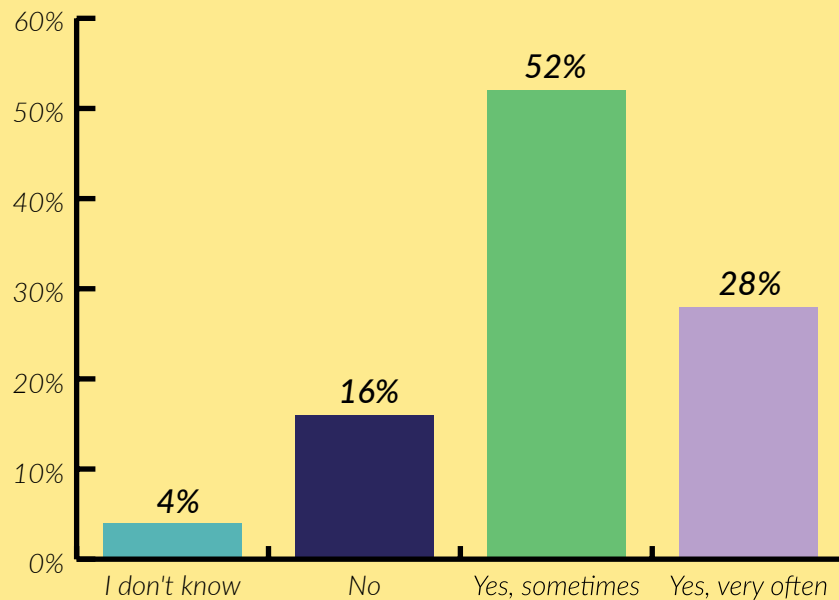


Zooming in 🔍

- A greater number of girls and young women who are Girl Guides (60%) have the perception that both women and men are equally involved in activities to protect the environment compared to those who are not (45%).
- Most girls and young women around the world believe that both women and men are equally involved in such activities. However, in the Middle East and North Africa region, 4 of 10 girls and young women say neither of them are involved. This result is double the global average (19%).

Have you taken action to tackle climate change? (eg: taking part in a campaign, educating friends and family, joining environmental activities, etc)

Good news! Most girls and young women (80%) have taken action to tackle climate change. However, 16% of the girls and young women consulted told us they have not yet engaged in activities that tackle climate change.

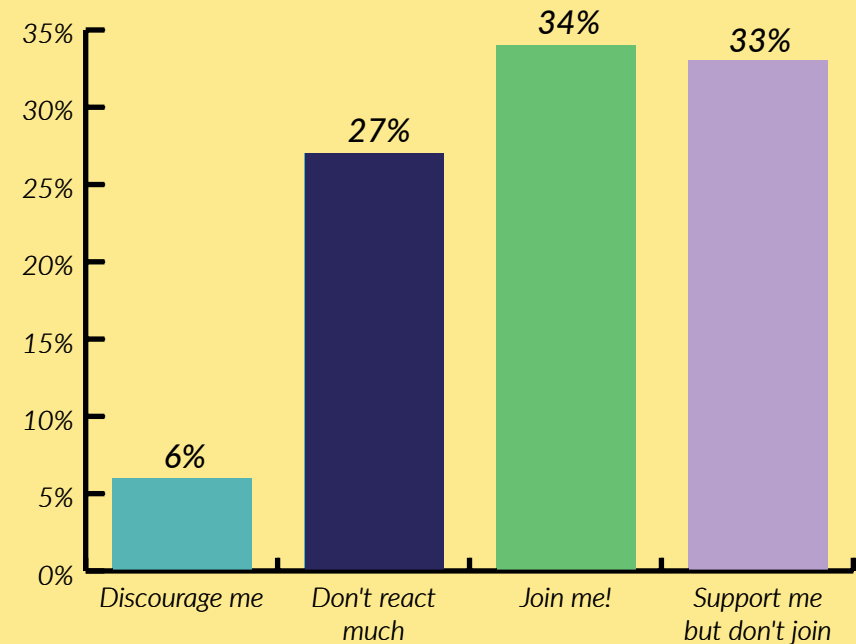


"I have not done anything but if I will get a chance I will surely try."

13-year-old girl from India

For those who answered yes, how do adults around you react when you take those actions? They...

One-third of girls (34%) who have taken action to address climate change report that when they do, adults close to them join in. Another third (33%) are supported but say adults don't join them in those activities.



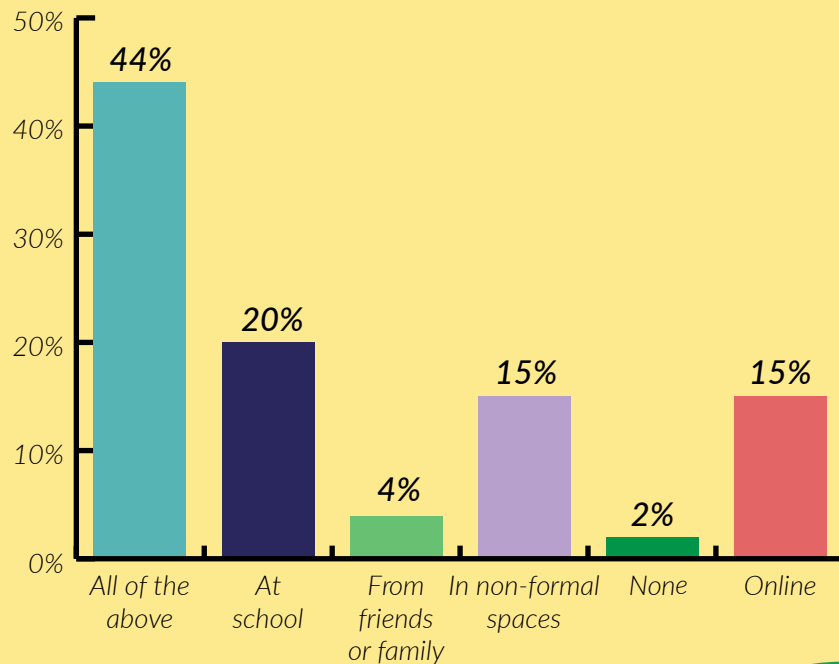
Zooming in 🔍

- Girls and young women taking the online poll (35%) report that adults close to them join their initiatives compared to those consulted offline (27%).
- Girls and young women in the South Asian region report the most support from adults in their actions to address climate change. Nearly half of the respondents (45%) report that adults join in their activities.

Where do you prefer to learn about climate change?

Almost half of the girls and young women who participated in the poll (44%) prefer learning about climate change in all of the ways suggested, including in school, through family and friends, non-formal spaces, and online.

Of the options presented, girls and young women have expressed a preference to learn about climate change mostly at school (20%), followed by informal spaces such as youth clubs, Girl Guiding or Scouting communities (15%) and online settings (15%).

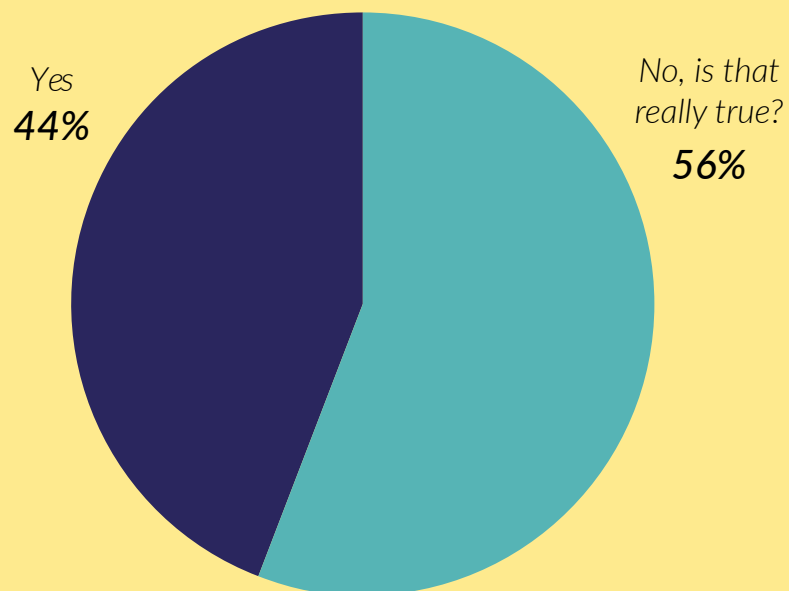


Zooming in 🔍

- Girls and young women from the South Asia (27%) and Sub-Saharan Africa (23%) regions are more likely to want to learn about climate change in school.
- The preference for online learning is highest in the East Asia and Pacific region (24%) and Europe and Central Asia (21%).
- Most of the girls and young women who prefer to learn about climate change in non-formal spaces are from the Sub-Saharan Africa region (20%) and Latin America and the Caribbean (18%).

Did you know that girls and young women are the most affected by climate change?

More than half of the girls and young women who participated in the poll (56%) said they were not aware of the disproportionate impact of climate change in girls and young women's lives.

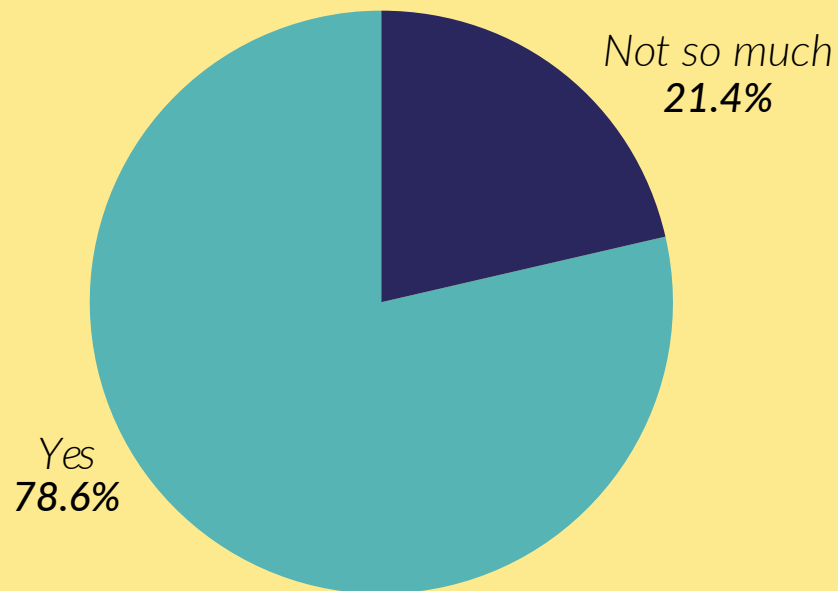


Zooming in 🔍

- Girls and young women who are not Girl Guides are the most unaware of this situation. Nearly 6 in 10 (63%) said they do not know that girls and young women are the most affected by climate change.
- The highest proportion of those who were not aware of the gendered impact of climate change live in Latin America and the Caribbean, where 7 out of 10 girls and young women report not knowing about it.

Still, do you think girls and young women have the power to reduce climate change?

The poll provided some information about the disproportionate impact of climate change in girls' and young women's lives. After learning about that, nearly 8 out of 10 respondents (79%) still believe that girls have the power to mitigate it.



They shared their views on why and how girls can be drivers of climate action

"We know how to get ourselves out of any adverse situation, make our own place where they don't want us to enter, and change the things that don't seem right to us. The creativity within each girl and young woman will be key to creating change."

23-year-old young woman from Argentina

"We can educate and empower each other."

17-year-old girl from Sri Lanka

"Leading by example is always a great way to get started. Showing to people - our friends, family, colleagues - different ways to live more sustainably. It all starts with ourselves and the example we set for those around us."

18-year-old young woman from Portugal

"If we work together, we will be taking the first step towards change."

13-year-old girl from Trinidad and Tobago

Those who said “no” explained the reasons behind their response:

“Unfortunately, machismo still has a stronghold in our society, and women and girls cannot always be as influential as they would like to be.”

23-year-old young woman from Bolivia

“Where I live, we can’t even decide on how to cut our own hair, [tackling climate change] is too big to do.”

23-year-old young woman from India

“In my country, the voices of girls are the least heard.”

16-year-old girl from Madagascar

“In our community, females are oppressed so they are inhibited from taking any action without the male’s approval.”

23-year-old young woman from Lebanon

Zooming in 🔍

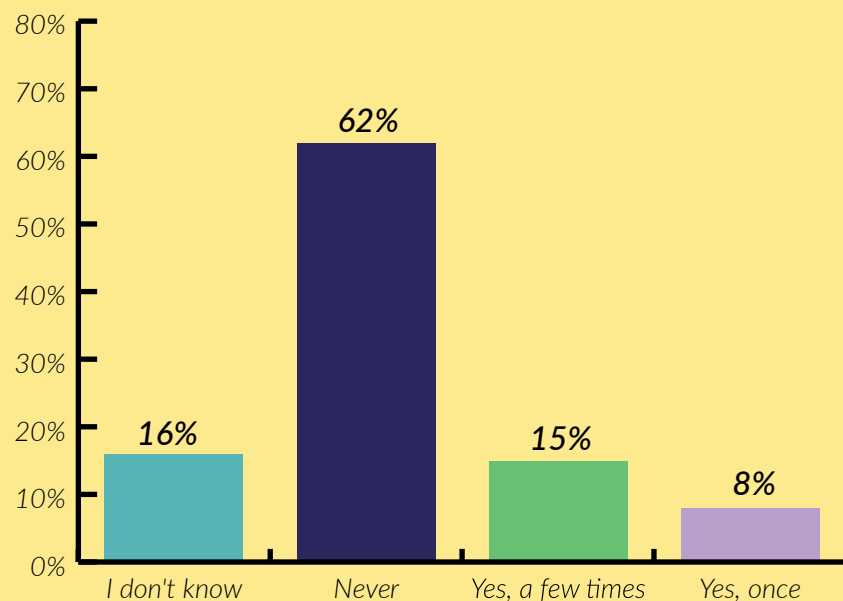
- The consultation revealed that girls and young women who responded online are more likely to believe in their ability to reduce climate change than those who participated offline (82% versus 53%).
- Girl Guides are more confident in their ability to influence climate change than those who are not Girl Guides (82% versus 75%).



Has your government ever asked your opinion on policies related to the environment?

6 out of 10 girls and young women (62%) say their governments never consulted them on policies related to the environment.

In contrast, 23% say they have been asked, with 15% saying they have been asked a few times and 8% only once.



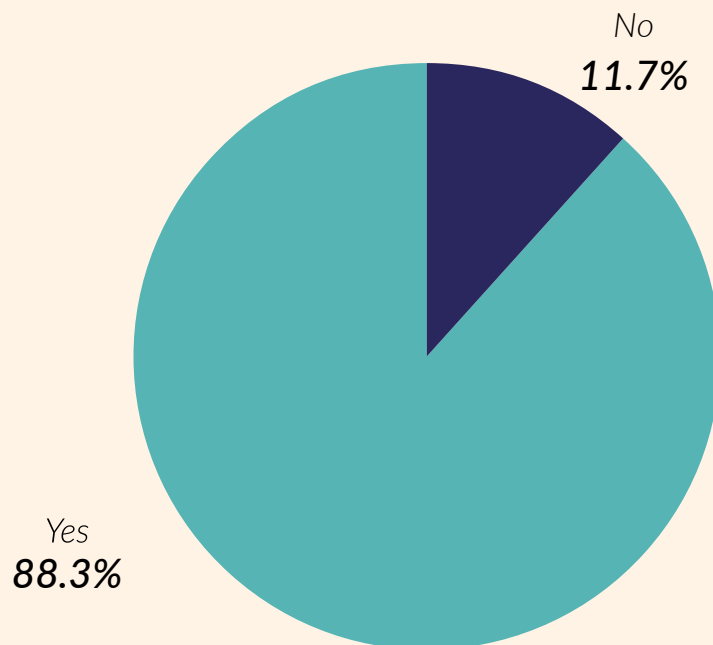
Zooming in 🔍

- In South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, 28% of girls and young women say that the government has asked their opinions on environmental policies (28% in both regions). This represents a higher perception of youth consultation compared to the global average (23%).
- In the Middle East and North Africa, only 6% of girls and young women report that their governments consult with them.

HOW ARE GIRL GUIDES AND GIRL SCOUTS ENGAGING WITH CLIMATE CHANGE?

Impact of Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting

Most of the girls and young women consulted who are Girl Guides (88%) say being one encouraged them to fight climate change and protect the environment.



They shared what they've done so far:

"We have people working as a team and informing people about climate change."

21-year-old Girl Guide from Nigeria

"I opt for plant-based food."

13-year-old Girl Guide from Australia

"I have learned more about this topic."

15-year-old Girl Guide from Venezuela

"By raising awareness."

22-year-old Girl Guide from Libya

Data also shows a strong relationship between being a Girl Guide and the commitment to climate action and environmental protection.

- **Greater awareness of climate change**

21% of Girl Guides report being able to talk for hours about climate change compared to 18% of respondents that do not consider themselves Girl Guides.

Furthermore, there is a higher perception of its gender dimension among Girl Guides, with 50% reporting knowing that climate change disproportionately affects girls and young women compared to 37% that are not Girl Guides.

- **Increased agency**

Girl Guides take more action on climate change: 84% have told us they are already taking action in comparison to 76% of their counterparts.

More than 1 in 3 Girl Guides (35%) say they do it very often, compared to 21% of respondents who are not Girl Guides.

- **Greater intergenerational collaboration**

43% of Girl Guides report support from surrounding adults when carrying out activities against climate change, compared to 24% who are not Girl Guides.

- **Increased exposure to youth consultation opportunities**

28% of Girl Guides say they were consulted by their governments, compared to 17% of those who are not Girl Guides.



WHAT ARE GIRLS ASKING FOR?

Calls for action

Climate change is the defining challenge of our time and poses a critical threat to our future.

Girls and young women are already on the frontline of this crisis. Far from being passive victims, they are taking action to respond to its effects.

Yet, they continue to face barriers to fully exercise their right to participation. From not being consulted to being largely absent from governments' climate action plans: girls' potential as drivers of climate action is underestimated.

The world needs to ensure that girls and young women have spaces to raise their concerns, share their experiences and transform the challenges they face into solutions. We all need to guarantee that girls can learn about climate change: why it's happening, what are the effects, and what they can do to tackle it.

**Because when they do,
girls are unstoppable.**



We need to #BringInTheGirls in the climate discussion.

Girls and young women worldwide have shared four powerful ways to do it:

- **Put girls at the center**

Invest in environmental policies that consider and prioritise girls and young women, especially indigenous girls, girls with disabilities, and those living in rural areas.

- **Nothing about girls without girls**

Ensure their voices and leadership are part of the decisions that impact their countries and communities when it comes to climate change, including during the development of national climate adaptation plans.

- **Education is key for change**

Make climate change accessible for all children and young people, include it in the school curriculum and invest in non-formal learning spaces.

- **Partner with girls**

Support youth movements and invest in building girls' capacity so they can be empowered to take the lead and contribute to climate action.

What would you like decision-makers to do?

"Make sure that everyone participates and plays a role in climate change. If everyone played a role, we all can make a big change rather than opinions being biased for only one gender."

15-year-old girl from Canada

"Engage girls and young women in the fight against climate change".

17-year-old girl from Madagascar

"Switch to sustainable transport, invest in renewable energy and improve farming."

14-year-old girl from Dominica



Join us in spreading the word!

Share the results of this consultation by using our available images [here](#). It's our turn to ensure the world listens to girls!

Don't forget to tag @wagggsworld and @UReportGlobal and use the #BringInTheGirls hashtag.

"Have the political courage to take action against large polluting companies instead of focusing only on citizens' actions."

22-year-old young woman from France

"Inform more people about the topic - in the media, to children in schools, on the internet, in workplaces. So that we are all aware of what is happening and what we can do to improve it."

19-year-old young woman from Honduras

"Make solutions instead of promises."

13-year-old girl from the Philippines

"Teach young girls about climate change in order to learn what they can do to fight climate change and protect the environment."

20-year-old young woman from Rwanda

"Adopt laws and severe penalties for those who destroy the environment deliberately."

21-year-old young woman from Tanzania

"Stop talking, do something. Actions speak louder than words!"

18-year-old young woman from Spain

WHO ARE WE?

Join us in amplifying girls' voices

World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)

WAGGGS is the largest global voluntary movement dedicated to girls and young women, supporting ten million members from 152 countries. Our work lies in girl-led advocacy, innovative non-formal education programmes and leadership development that empowers girls and young women to build the skills and confidence they need to raise their voices, defend their ideas, and contribute to a better world.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF works in the world's toughest places to reach the most disadvantaged children and adolescents – and to protect the rights of every child, everywhere. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we do whatever it takes to help children survive, thrive, and fulfill their potential, from early childhood through adolescence.

U-Report Your voice matters

U-Report is UNICEF's flagship digital platform to engage children, adolescents and youth in programme, emergency response, and advocacy actions. With over 21 million U-Reporters, it is currently active in 88 countries, and growing by 1 U-Reporter every 4 seconds.

U-Report operates as a messaging programme for youth participation and is a key tool for sharing information and receiving feedback on specific areas that impact young people, including the most vulnerable. Through the platform, youth become active participants in decision-making processes and speak out to achieve social change.



THANK YOU!

Acknowledgments

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WAGGGS Climate Poll Ambassadors:

Agahozo Cynthia (Rwanda)
Benimana Enorah Gladys (Rwanda)
Beth Fiducia-Brookes (United Kingdom)
Cecilia Villanueva González (México)
Désirée Francois (Saint Lucia)
Doria Mariana Gonzalez (Venezuela)
Francine Beatriz Pradez (Philippines)
Gobika Sarveswaran (Sri Lanka)
Hannah Ireland (Australia)
Jacqueline Velázquez (Mexico)
K.Gayathri (India)
Mevanjanahary Valisoa (Madagascar)
Mishka Maharaj (South Africa)
Nsengiyumva Uwera Diane (Rwanda)
Ntsakisi Michell Hlongwane (South Africa)
Oratile Sebole (South Africa)
Otshepeng Mazibuko (South Africa)
Priyanka Prajapat (India)
Radhika Panchangam (India)
Rakotomalala Fehizoro (Madagascar)
Raretasoa Saotranirina (Madagascar)
Safa Claudia Uwingeneye (Rwanda)
Sofia Vale (Venezuela)
Sylvia Meign (Kenya)
Therese Jelwan (Lebanon)
Umuhire Germaine (Rwanda)
Umuhoza Sandrine (Rwanda)
Yvonne Umurerwa (Rwanda)
Zaakiya Ashraf (Sri Lanka)

Consultation co-design team:

Anne Marie Iraduha (Rwanda)
Blessing Bukky Abokirisika (Nigeria)
Itzel López Moreno (Mexico)
Jasmin Rajaram (South Africa)
Sharmin Banu (India)





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World Bureau, Olave Centre
12c Lyndhurst Road
London, NW3 5PQ
United Kingdom

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(UNICEF)

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3 United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017
United States of America

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