The Climate Connection

Country Report: Sri Lanka

Young People on Climate Change : A Perception Survey

March 2021

Acknowledgments

The interpretations offered in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the British Council, its officers, or those individuals who contributed to the research.

Contents

Contents

Contents

List of figures

List of tables

List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ACE	Action for Climate Empowerment
COP	Conference of the Parties
COP26	2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference
COY	Conference of Youth
Covid-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CSO	Civil society organisation
FGD	Focus group discussion
GDP	Gross domestic product
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KDQ	Key discussion question
KII	Key informant interview
KIQ	Key informant question
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
RQ	Research question
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Executive summary

Climate change is one of the most pressing issues affecting youth today. Young people happen to be among the groups most vulnerable to climate change impacts, particularly in developing countries such as Sri Lanka. At the same time, they are also the future leaders and decision-makers whose actions will prove decisive in how the world addresses climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Sri Lanka is a tropical island nation in the Indian Ocean with a youth population of roughly 2.6 million between the ages of 18 and 25 years. If the age bracket is extended to 15 and 29 years, approximately a quarter of the total population classifies as youth.

This research was conducted in early 2021 through a representative sample-based survey of 1,000 youth across all nine of Sri Lanka's provinces and their districts. Additionally, ten focus group discussions (FGDs) and 25 key informant interviews (KIIs) with youth, older youth and technical experts were conducted, along with a literature review analysis to establish baselines and define the scope of the research.

In relation to youth perceptions, Sri Lanka's youth are generally aware of climate change but the majority neither have technical understanding nor in-depth knowledge of the topic while climate change is seen as a crisis looming in the distance, issues such as poverty, unemployment, and pandemics are considered far more urgent at the moment.

Overall, rural youth are more exposed to climate change impacts than urban dwellers, most prominently through loss of agricultural yields and income for rural families. For many young people, climate change has been a reality for the entirety of their adolescence, with no recollection of a time before global warming and its accelerating impacts changes and large-scale actions.

There is a significant interest among Sri Lanka's youth to learn more about climate change, and the majority believe to some degree that their opinions and actions on climate change will matter in the future. When it comes to engaging in climate action, young people seem to favour a variety of tools and activities rather than a single solution. However, emphasis is placed on education and showcasing of successful practices as a tangible way to inspire and facilitate action. Sri Lanka's youth believe in collective action for climate change and view it as a public responsibility, not an individual issue, which highlights the need for systemic changes and large-scale actions.

According to this report, a lack of access to knowledge resources, a lack of tutoring and low engagement with government action were identified as barriers for youth engagement in both urban and rural contexts. Amongst young women in rural areas, a lack of access to knowledge resources and a dearth of projects at the community-level were a major concern. Meanwhile, the urban male population called attention to a lack of engagement opportunities by the government as a major barrier. Many pointed out that their current lifestyle did not allow them to engage in community-level extracurricular activities and that they faced pressure from their families to pursue regular everyday chores or studies instead. Financial constraints were also highlighted as a concern.

Climate-change-related awareness training has been received by only 30 percent of the respondents. Similarly, active participation in climate action by youth is only 32 percent, which is less than a third of surveyed youth in Sri Lanka. This signifies a potential for government and non-government actors to reach out to young people and enhance climate-related education and training as well as provide opportunities for engagement. Slightly more than half of the respondents think that the Government of Sri Lanka is taking serious steps on climate change, with another fifth being unsure or having no opinion on this.

When it comes to information, social media is by far the most widely used source. However, social media is only considered the third most reliable source after television and newspapers. While youth prefer traditional media such as newspapers and television in terms of reliability and trustworthiness, they appear to use social media as their main source of information. Knowledge of international and intergovernmental processes, including those under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, is limited to an extent; 43.8 percent of the survey participants were somewhat aware of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while 30.3 percent knew about the upcoming UNFCCC 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26).

One of the biggest obstacles for youth engagement is a lack of time and energy. Sri Lanka's youth are generally bound by responsibilities including education and employment, leaving them little room to engage in extracurricular climate action, which feels disconnected from their routine lives. Therefore, further integrating climate change into education and training curricula, creating additional incentives for engagement and connecting climate action with other areas of life would help enhance youth awareness and engagement.

Youth in Sri Lanka have the awareness as well as the requisite tools to act on climate change. However, they need opportunities to engage on all levels and develop a deeper insight into environmental and climate action within society.

1 Research context

Climate change poses an existential challenge for countries, communities, and individuals across the world. However, not everyone is affected equally nor in the same way. The physical hazards of climate change interact with existing socio-economic setups, vulnerabilities, and sensitivities in complex ways that lead to differential impacts across diverse populations and subgroups.

Roughly 16 percent of the world's population, or about 1.2 billion people today are between the ages 15 and 25. They already find themselves at the forefront of climate change and experience many of its impacts first-hand. In addition, they are threatened by the increasingly intense and frequent climate change impacts that are projected to occur throughout this century if adaptation and mitigation needs are not addressed urgently. Finally, as decision-makers and key actors of the future, it is crucial to raise the awareness of the youth, to build their capacities and include their voices in any process on climate change and sustainable development.

1.1 Youth needs and vulnerabilities

Climate change is one of the most critical issues affecting youth today, especially in developing countries where 87 percent of the world's young people live. They also happen to be the most vulnerable to economic and non-economic climate impacts to their food security, nutrition, physical and mental health, education, social cohesion and inclusion, development, employment, and livelihoods. Climate change affects the natural and social environment they grow up and live in, and aggravates existing socio-economic vulnerabilities. Losses in ecosystem services, land degradation, water scarcity, rise in sea levels, extreme weather events, and other adverse impacts affect families and communities, potentially leading to climate-related migration and displacement, poverty, chronic disease, and reduced opportunities.

Therefore, youth across the globe must depend upon successful climate change adaptation to shield them from climate impacts and allow them to continue pathways of sustainable development. Youth are also key actors in ensuring that adaptation actions are effective and create lasting change. It is important to ascertain that their voices are heard, and that they are part of the decision-making processes related to climate change adaptation actions, as well as beneficiaries of adaptation processes on the national and global level.

When engaging in climate action and resilience-building, youth are often faced with numerous obstacles, including the following:

- Lack of awareness of institutions and their processes

- Lack of access to government decision-making and international processes

- Lack of technical knowledge and capacity

- Limited availability of resources and funding, especially reliable long-term funding

- Lack of youth inclusion in policies and plans, including the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process

- Lack of availability of climate information and gaps in knowledge dissemination

- Unavailability of knowledge products in local language and with local context

- Adverse impacts of climate change to their communities, families, livelihoods, health, education, and development, specifically for youth from rural, poor, or vulnerable communities.

These obstacles disproportionately affect youth in developing countries and hinder their engagement in climate action and environmental action. Youth in developing countries suffer from a lack of funding, capacity, and awareness with research studies suggesting that while they are aware of the impacts of climate change, they have limited knowledge of national and international institutions and processes such as the UNFCCC, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), or the Kyoto Protocol.

1.2 Youth and the UNFCCC process

When it comes to decisions on climate action, adaptation, environmental protection, and sustainable development, youth will have to live with the consequences of today's actions or inactions. Accordingly, the 1992 Rio Declaration and the Rio+20 outcome document identify intergenerational equity, solidarity, and the needs of future generations as the foundations of the processes on sustainable development including climate change adaptation.

The two cornerstones for the engagement and participation of youth and other civil society stakeholders within the UNFCC process are Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement. Article 6 focuses on the six key elements of education, training, public awareness, public participation, public access to information, and international cooperation. Similarly, Article 12 contains a commitment to enhance climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation, and public access to information.

Under these two articles, there have been several programmes and activities held in the past three decades:

- 1992: Negotiation and signing of the UNFCCC at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) in Rio de Janeiro by 154 states

- 1997: Adoption of the Kyoto Protocol

- 2002: Adoption of a five-year New Delhi Work Programme on Article 6 for 2003–2007

- 2007: Adoption of a five-year amended New Delhi Work Programme on Article 6 for 2008–2012

- 2012: Adoption of eight-year Doha Work Programme with specific focus on youth and children for 2013–2020

- 2014: Lima Ministerial Declaration on Education and Awareness-Raising pushes for momentum on integration of clim formal and informal education, pr raising, and greater participation climate-smart decision-making ar

- 2015: Negotiation of the Paris Ag includes Article 12 focusing on e and whole-of-society inclusion

- 2016: Intermediate progress rev Work Programme

- 2018: Adoption of the Action for Empowerment (ACE) decision on youth as part of the work progra Agreement

- 2021: Upcoming review of the Do Programme and ACE by the Subs Implementation to take stock of t progress; evaluate effectiveness; barriers, good practices, and less identify recommendations for en implementation of Article 6 of the Article 12 of the Paris Agreemen

Article 6 of the UNFCCC and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement seek to reduce the impacts of climate change by enabling all of society, including youth, to be part of the solution through education and training for a climate-resilient and low-emission future. Thus, youth are represented in UNFCCC negotiations and other UN events related to climate change through YOUNGO, the official Youth Constituency of the UNFCCC, which allows official engagement and access during negotiations and meetings.

Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) is a term adopted by the UNFCCC to denote work under Article 6 and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement that sets out an overarching goal to empower society, including youth, to engage in climate action through education, training, public participation, public awareness, public access to information and international cooperation. In addition to the opportunities for countries to integrate the six elements of ACE in the NDC revision process, they should ensure that youth are included as key stakeholders in the NAP process by following the guidance provided by the NAP Technical Guidelines regarding climate change education and training.

YOUNGO, together with local youth organisations, also organises the Conference of Youth (COY) in conjunction with the meeting of the conference of the parties to the UNFCCC. The first COY took place in 2005, after which it became an annual event until 2020, when it was postponed due to the global pandemic. COY16 is now planned for 2021 ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland.

2 Research design

The survey data was collected through a set of key research questions, while a predetermined method of analysis (see annexes) was employed to examine the survey responses. The following section details the results of the analysis against the key research questions. The questionnaires were disseminated in English as well as in two local languages (Sinhala, Tamil) as per the preference of the respondent.

2.1 Basis

1. **A sample-based survey** among youth to identify perceptions, beliefs, and barriers around climate change and climate action in Sri Lanka. This was administered through a structured questionnaire, where more than 1,500 youth were interviewed by local research assistants covering 24 out of the 25 districts in Sri Lanka. When selecting the 1,000 questionnaires for analysis as per the predetermined criteria, questionnaires were categorised according to province, and a required minimum number for the province was selected to ensure appropriate provincial population/ethnic representation in Sri Lanka. The selected age group for this was youth between 18 and 25 years. Due care was given to ensure substantial representation in all types of communities (i.e. farming, fisheries, estate).

2. **Focus group discussions (FGDs)** were carried out among selected categories of stakeholders to identify their standpoint on youth perspectives of climate change and climate action in Sri Lanka and on the influence of English language in effectuating climate action. Fifteen FGDs were carried out representing seven provinces and covering various youth groups aged between 18 and 35. The participants included unemployed youth, youth from various activist groups in higher education, academia, government officers, and the private sector. The FGDs were conducted using a selected set of questions based on the key research questions. The focus group selection did not specifically focus on covering all provinces due to the Covid-19 travel restrictions during the period but was more focused on reaching diverse sections of society as mentioned above.

3. **Key information interviews (KIIs)** were carried out among selected categories of stakeholders to identify their standpoint on climate change, the role of civil society, and youth perspectives of climate change and climate action in Sri Lanka. Twenty-five interviews were carried out with experts ranging from government and academia to the private sector as well as members of civil society organisations (CSOs). The KII participants were mostly male, which is partially due to the prevailing travel restrictions and partially reflects the status quo in the country, of men occupying key decision-making positions in both government and private institutions.

The methodology for the analysis of the feedback presented in this section intends to address the research questions related to the characterisation of youth perspectives on climate change and climate action, with an emphasis on a broader context of sustainable development. Furthermore, the feedback helps us link the responses of FGDs and KIIs while appraising the findings of the sample-based survey and triangulates it with field surveys as well as outputs of the literature review in the backdrop of both the national and global scenarios.

2.2 The sample-based survey

The methodology for the analysis of the feedback for this method comprised four stages:

- **Stage 1:** Presentation of the responses quantitatively, where the responses for each question in the questionnaire are presented in tabular format under the three main sections of the questionnaire (Section 1: Demographics, Section 2: Perceptions and attitudes, Section 3: Challenges and readiness).

- **Stage 2:** Presentation of the responses in graphical form (particularly pie, column, and bar charts in combination) to synthesise the findings. Here responses of more than one question could be presented in a single graphical form, as appropriate, for better illustration and interpretation.

- **Stage 3:** Observation and interpretation of each of the graphical forms, in accordance with the research questions (see Annex I, RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 4:** Critical review and conclusion, based on the outputs of Stage 3 (Observation and interpretation), presented under each of the research questions.

2.3 Focus group discussions
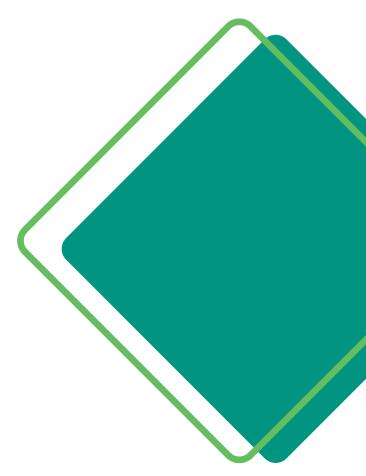
The methodology for the analysis of the responses to the FGDs comprised five stages:

- **Stage 1:** Qualitative descriptions of the responses for each focus group in discussion questions, categorised under the defined stakeholder groups (i.e. educationists, government representatives, CSO, and non-governmental organisation (NGO) representatives, community influencers, technical specialists and researchers, and youth groups).

- **Stage 2:** Synthesis of the responses of all focus groups under each key discussion question.

- **Stage 3:** Establish the relevance of key discussion questions to the research questions (see Annex I, RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 4:** : Compare and contrast the responses of all focus groups (Stage 2 above) with those derived from the sample-based survey (Stages 3 and 4 of the sample-based survey methodology) under each research question (see Annex I, RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 5:** Interpret the results of Stage 4 above to make conclusions about the level of conformity/non-conformity of the responses of the two methods, namely the sample-based survey and FGDs (i.e. to address RQ7 in Annex I).

2.4 Key informant interviews

The methodology for the analysis of the responses to the KIIs was similar to that for the FGDs presented above, and presented in the following five stages:

- **Stage 1:** Qualitative descriptions of the responses for each key informant in interview questions, categorised under the defined stakeholder groups (i.e. educationists, government representatives, CSO/NGO representatives, community influencers, technical specialists and researchers, and youth groups).

- **Stage 2:** Synthesis of the responses of all key informants under each key interview question.

- **Stage 3:** Establish the relevance of key interview questions to the research questions (see Annex I, RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 4:** Compare and contrast the responses of all key informants (Stage 2 above) with those derived from the sample-based survey (Stages 3 and 4 of the sample-based survey methodology) under each research question (see Annex I, RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 5:** Interpret the results of Stage 4 above to make conclusions about the level of conformity/non-conformity of the responses of the two methods, namely the sample-based survey and KIIs (i.e. to address RQ7 in Annex I).

2.5 Literature review

The final stage of the analysis is with reference to the findings of the literature review, which was accomplished using the following three-stage methodology:

- **Stage 1:** Synopsise the information gathered through the literature review in interpreting the local and international scenarios to respond to each research question (see Annex I, RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 2:** Compare and contrast the real-time findings (sample-based survey, FGDs and KIIs) with those derived in the literature review under each research question (see Annex I, RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 3:** Interpret the results of Stage 2 above to make conclusions about the level of agreement between the real-time findings and those derived through the literature review (i.e. to address RQ8 in Annex I).

3 Literature review

3.1 Country context of Sri Lankat
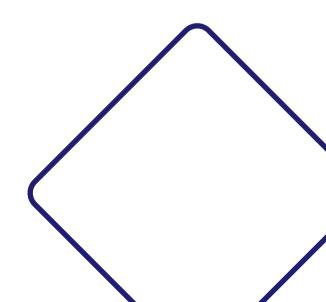
Sri Lanka is a tropical island nation situated in the Indian Ocean. It has a population of almost 22 million people and a total land area of 62,705 square kilometres, resulting in high population density. While the services sector is the largest GDP contributor, a major percentage of the population is still employed in the agriculture sector and produces paddy, pulses, perennials, and export crops such as tea, rubber, and coconut. Other important contributors to the economy include the tourism industry, the textile and garment sector, as well as remittances from labour migrants working abroad (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2020).

Within the region, Sri Lanka ranks highly on several key human development indicators, including an average life expectancy of 77 years, an average literacy rate of 92.5 percent, and 10.6 mean years of schooling (UNDP, 2020).

Sri Lanka is both exposed and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Sudden-onset events such as floods, storms and high winds as well as slow-onset processes including droughts, sea level rise, increasing day-time and night-time tempera-tures, and reduction of agricultural yields affect key sectors such as food security, water resources, coastal and marine, health, human settlements, ecosystems and biodiversity, and tourism (Government of Sri Lanka, Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment, 2015).

Sri Lanka's 2012 Census of Population and Housing counted a total of 20,359,439 people in the country, 2,477,610, or 12.17 percent of which were between the ages of 18 and 25. Out of these, the breakdown by gender is 1,203,254 male (48.57 percent) to 1,274,356 female (51.43 percent) between the ages of 18 and 25. By sector, the majority of youth (76.2 percent) lived in rural areas, followed by almost 20 percent in urban areas and 4 percent in the estate sector (Government of Sri Lanka, Department of Census and Statistics, 2012).

Based on the most recent estimate published by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, the country's total population had reached 21,670,000 in 2019. Assuming a similar ratio of youth, this equals a target current total population of around 2.637 million people between 18 and 25 years of age (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2020). If a wider youth definition of 15 to 29 years is applied, almost a quarter of the total population classifies as youth.

Based on a 2018 study, the overall youth (15–35 years) unemployment rate for Sri Lanka is 11 percent, several times the unemployment rate of adults 35 years of age and approximately twice as high as the South Asian average. However, there are significant differences based on age group and province. Unemployment is highest for youth between 15 and 19 years (65 percent), 20 and 24 years (43 percent), and highest in relative terms for the Southern Province, Sabaragamuwa Province, Central Province, Uva Province, and Northern Province. However, due to the larger share of the total population, the absolute numbers of unemployed youth are found in the Western Province, Southern Province, Sabaragamuwa Province, and Central Province, which together account for 65.1 percent of all unemployed youth in the country. Furthermore, there is a considerable gender gap, with unemployment of female youth significantly higher than that of their male counterparts. This indicates issues with school-to-work transitions as well as a mismatch between skill sets and training on the one hand and available employment opportunities on the other (USAID, IESC and Verite Research, 2018).
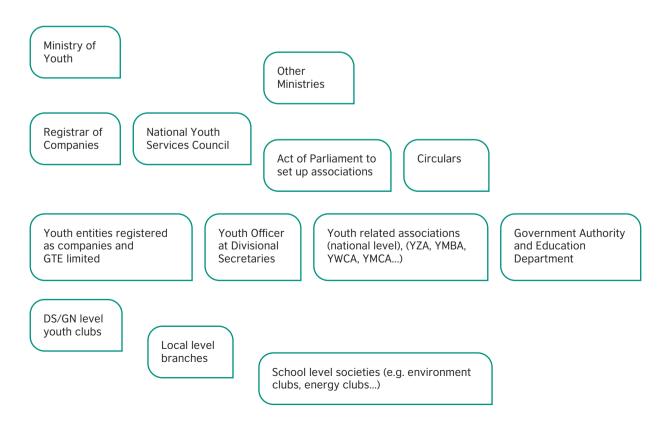
3.2 Institutional setup and policy landscape

When it comes to the policy and legal landscape, several actors are involved in the formulation and delivery of youth-related policies, including entities such as the ministries mentioned below as well as the youth themselves. Sri Lanka has a line Ministry of Youth and Sports as well as a line Ministry of Education that are the apex institutions mandated to work on youth, sports, and education. In addition, the country also has four state ministries relevant to youth and education: the State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Pre-schools, and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services; the State Ministry of Skills Development, Vocational Education, Research and Innovation; the State Ministry of Rural and School Sports Infrastructure Improvement; and the State Ministry of Education Reforms, Open Universities, and Distance Learning Promotion.

Sri Lanka also has a National Youth Services Council that oversees a network of youth clubs, over 12,000 youth centres across the island, and a range of capacity-building programmes. In addition, Sri Lanka has instituted a National Youth Parliament consisting of members from all ethnic communities between the ages of 15 and 26, which commenced its first session in 2010 and added a senate or upper house in 2013 (see Figure 1).

The Ministry of Youth and Sports has responsibilities covering social inclusion, entrepreneurship promotion, vocational education, and training, and implementing the National Youth Policy. The National Youth Policy has established an inter-ministerial Presidential Youth Development Commission in charge of implementation and monitoring of the National Youth Policy, which promotes research and development alongside. Sri Lanka's Ministry of Labour and Labour Relations, and in particular the Department of Labour, monitors conditions of work and provides labour market information as well as statistics. Other relevant actors include the Entrepreneurship Task Force, the Ministry of Social Services and the Ministry of Education.

Figure 1: Institutional set up for youth in Sri Lanka

Table 1: Laws, policies and regulations related to youth in Sri Lanka

Year	Law, policy or regulation
1978	The Universities Act No. 16 of 1978
1979	National Youth Services Act No. 69 of 1979
1995	Vocational Training Authority of Sri Lanka Act No. 12 of 1995
2002	Youth Corps Act No. 21 of 2002
2011	National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in Sri Lanka 2011–2016
2014	National Youth Policy 2014
2017	National Youth Policy Draft 2017
2018	National Policy on Technical and Vocational Education 2018
2019	• National Policy on Pre-school Education 2019 • National Policy Proposals on Higher Education • Proposals for a National Policy on General Education in Sri Lanka

3.3 The literature

Sri Lanka has a strong education system and boasts one of the highest literacy rates in the region. However, the majority of its population is still rural, dependent on agriculture, and vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Besides climate change, people face challenges in finding employment, and many lack the appropriate education or training to meet the demands of the existing labour market (ILO, 2016; USAID, IESC, and Verite Research, 2018). Additionally, youth in Sri Lanka often lack appropriate sources of information, finance, and capacities to start their own businesses or address the challenges of sustainable development and climate change (USAID, IESC, and Verite Research, 2018).

Based on the review of published literature, there is a gap of awareness on climate change among the youth of Sri Lanka, as well as a lack of evidence-based evaluations of youth engagement with climate action in the country.

Even key pieces of literature such as a comprehensive World Bank assessment of Sri Lanka's education sector do not mention climate change and make no reference to climate education (Dundar et al., 2017). On the national level, the Government of Sri Lanka has been trying to enhance awareness and education on climate change among youth, as evidenced by the National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change Impacts 2016–2025 and the NDCs under the Paris Agreement, which commit to including youth in adaptation actions as well as enhancing their awareness, training, and education on climate change (Government of Sri Lanka, Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment, 2015, 2016).

From the literature review, some of the key gaps, needs, challenges, and issues that have been identified when it comes to youth engaging with climate change and climate action in Sri Lanka are identified in Table 2.

Table 2: Identified challenges and issues

Lack of green skills and green jobs	• Youth in small, medium, and micro enterprises do not generally find a platform or institutional mechanism to advance sustainability and climate-friendliness (Maclean, Jagannathan, and Panth, 2018). • No national consensus and strategy on green jobs and green skills development (Maclean, Jagannathan and Panth, 2018).
Lack of comprehensive climate education	• Sri Lanka has a large youth population, but school children and youth do not currently have a comprehensive understanding of climate change and adaptation (Baba, 2010). • Youth do not have the knowledge of healthy, climate-friendly practices, and sustainable lifestyles that they need (Baba, 2010). • Limited awareness of traditional knowledge and its application (Ambepitiya, 2015).
High levels of unemployment among youth	• Unemployment is especially high among women and educated women (UNESCO, 2013). • Lack of entrepreneurship among young people (UNESCO, 2013). • Lack of training for youth employment (UNESCO, 2013). • Absence of social security for the unemployed (UNESCO, 2013). • Huge share of employment in the informal sector and absence of legislative coverage for this sector (UNESCO, 2013). • Lack of career guidance from primary school level onward (Damayanthi et al., 2013). • Low social recognition for youth to work in the agriculture sector, and establish climate-friendly and sustainable practices (Damayanthi et al., 2013). • Limited facilities to receive vocational degrees and diplomas for school leavers to work abroad, even though climate change increases migration pressure (Damayanthi et al., 2013).
Lack of published and processed data	• Limited published data on youth and climate change in Sri Lanka (Damayanthi et al., 2013).
Lack of interest in communities to take ideas from youth and follow their actions	• Community members do not welcome contributions or ideas related to climate change from young people.
Lack of awareness creation	• Lack of access to climate related resources available to young people, particularly in rural areas. • Need for youth to engage in climate change conversations.
Covid-19 crisis	• Youth organisations expressed greatest concern about the impact of Covid-19 on mental wellbeing, employment, income loss, disruptions to education, familial relations, and friendships, as well as a limitation to individual freedoms. A significant share of respondents also expressed concerns about access to reliable information.
Lack of means for young people to influence climate change issues	• While young people have voting powers, they lack the skills to influence policies and/or interventions as well as platforms to be heard.

In addition to these gaps and needs, the literature identified a number of positive trends in the form of ongoing interventions and measures as well as the potential for future action that could be taken by either the Government of Sri Lanka or other key stakeholders (see Table 3).

Table 3: Current and potential future interventions

Awareness creation on climate change	• Integrating climate change into national school curricula and university courses. • Outreach and agriculture research centres of several universities. • Inclusion of specific teaching and learning modules with respect to sustainability in technical and vocational education and training institutions (Maclean, Jagannathan, and Panth, 2018). • Implementation of National Climate Change Policy, NAP, NDCs and other policies and plans related to climate change, conservation, and sustainability (Government of Sri Lanka, Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment, 2015, 2016). • Create awareness through outreach activities such as fundraisers, fairs, concerts, live events, seminars, and posters (Damayanthi et al., 2013). • Training coordinator programme of the irrigation department to conduct irrigation-related awareness (Aheeyar, 2012). • Possibility to build on existing ICT knowledge, which is high among youth, in order to share knowledge and enhance climate education (Ambepitiya, 2015). • Involve media in creating climate awareness (Maclean, Jagannathan, and Panth, 2018).
Youth engagement through small-scale projects	• Ecosystem conservation and restoration, e.g. tree planting along reservoir catchments or mangrove planting in collaboration with schools, universities, and youth organisations (UNDP/GEF/SGP, 2016). • Active participation of school children through environmental clubs set up within the school system; however, these often focus on conservation and pollution reduction, not on climate action (UNESCO, 2013). • Youth are willing to engage in climate action and work toward realistic, achievable goals (Ambepitiya, 2015).
Skill-building among young people	• Guiding youth about traditional water management, land management, agricultural practices, and other techniques that can facilitate adaptation and natural resources management (Aheeyar, 2012; UNDP/GEF/SGP, 2016). • Certificate courses for skill development related to livelihoods that align with climate change adaptation and environmental conservation, e.g. ecotourism and nature-based tourism. • Expose large groups of young people to sustainability concepts and train them in sustainability and green skills (Maclean, Jagannathan, and Panth, 2018). • Work of the National Youth Employment Task and implementation of the NAP on Youth Employment (UNESCO, 2013). • Providing enhanced extension services, market facilities, infrastructure, finance, and land to increase youth participation in agriculture and enhance social recognition of farming (Damayanthi et al., 2013; UNESCO, 2013).
National mechanisms and platforms for youth engagement	• National Youth Services Council, including youth clubs and over 12,000 youth centres across the island (SLYCAN Trust, 2020). • Sri Lanka's Youth Parliament, a youth-led initiative run since 2010 by members of all ethnic communities between 15 and 26 years of age, allowing them to receive comprehensive training regarding political decision-making processes and build their capacities (SLYCAN Trust, 2020). • Potential to better align education policies with policies on climate change and the environment (Maclean, Jagannathan, and Panth, 2018).

4 Country findings and discussion
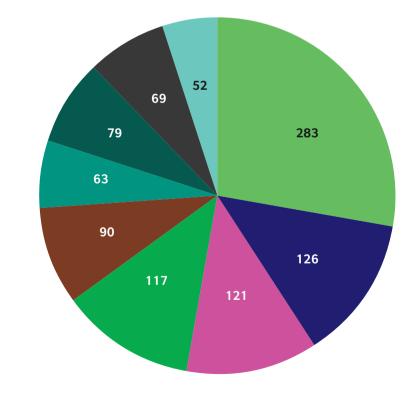
The following chapter details the findings of the representative sample-based survey as well as the FGDs and the KIIs conducted in Sri Lanka in March 2021 across all nine provinces.

4.1 Survey demographics
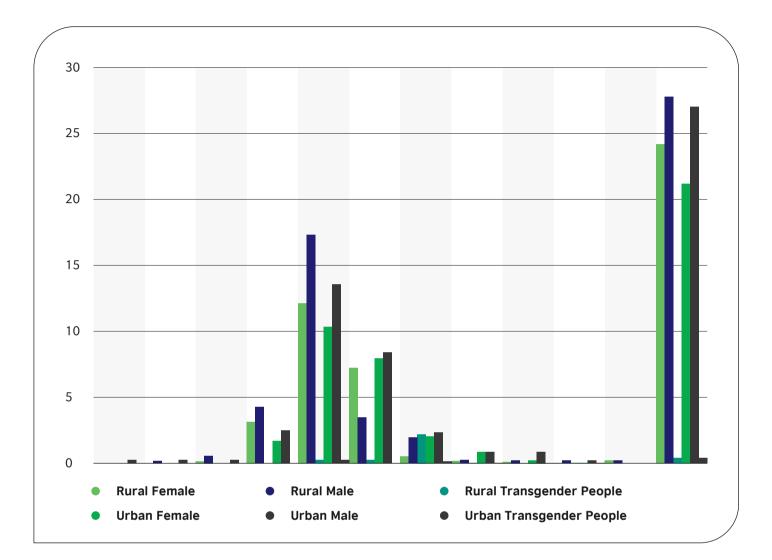
The representative sample-based survey collected data from 1,000 respondents from across the country covering all nine provinces and almost all districts. Special care was taken to select respondents who were reflective of diverse ethnic groups as well as Sri Lanka's population distribution by province.

Figures 2 and 3 and Table 4 illustrate a breakdown of the sample demographics

Figure 2: Provincial breakdown

●	**Western**	**28%**
●	**Central**	**13%**
●	**Southern**	**12%**
●	**North Western**	**12%**
●	**Sabaragamuwa**	**9%**
●	**North Central**	**6%**
●	**Eastern**	**8%**
●	**Uva**	**7%**
●	**Northern**	**5%**

Figure 3: Distribution by ethnic group
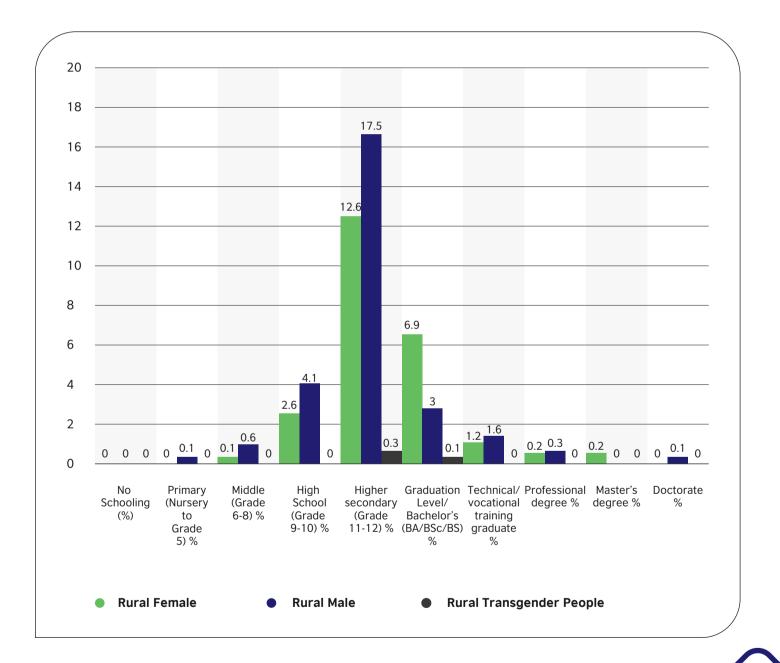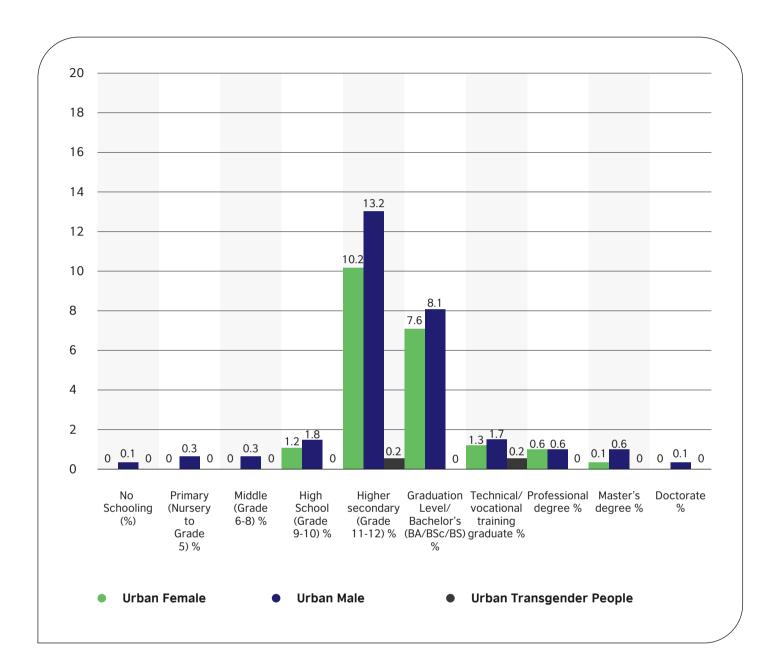
Table 4: Distribution by gender, age and area

	Male	Female	Transgender People/No Response	18-22	23-25	Rural	Urban	Estate
Gender	543	543	8					
Age				529	471			
Area						415	483	102
Total	**1,000**			**1,000**		**1,000**		

The education level of the youth who participated in the survey was skewed slightly toward higher formal education (as illustrated in Figure 4) but is approximately representative of the overall realities of the country. Figures 5 and 6 illustrate the distribution of the levels of education attained in both urban and rural areas while also detailing gender segregation. The urban classification was made based on the local authority division, with areas under municipal and urban council jurisdiction classified as urban, and those under Pradeshiya Sabhas classified as rural.
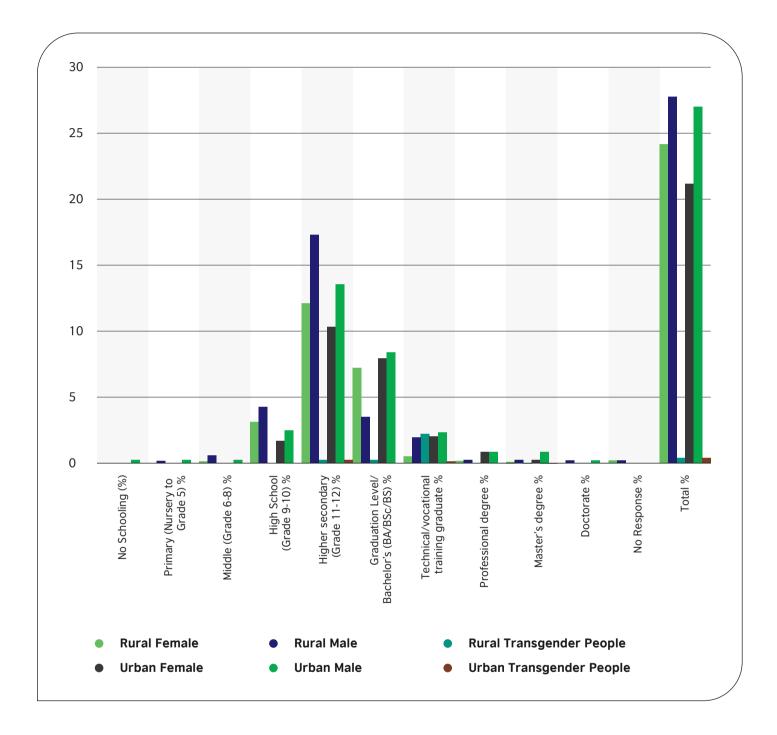
Figure 4: Breakdown by education level (rural)

Figure 5: Breakdown by education level (urban)

Bar chart showing education level breakdown for urban population by gender.

Education Level	Urban Female	Urban Male	Urban Transgender People
No Schooling (%)	0	0.1	0
Primary (Nursery to Grade 5) %	0	0.3	0
Middle (Grade 6-8) %	0	0.3	0
High School (Grade 9-10) %	1.2	1.8	0
Higher secondary (Grade 11-12) %	10.2	13.2	0.2
Graduation Level/ Bachelor's (BA/BSc/BS) %	7.6	8.1	0
Technical/ vocational training graduate %	1.3	1.7	0.2
Professional degree %	0.6	0.6	0
Master's degree %	0.1	0.6	0
Doctorate %	0	0.1	0

Figure 6: Breakdown by education level (total)
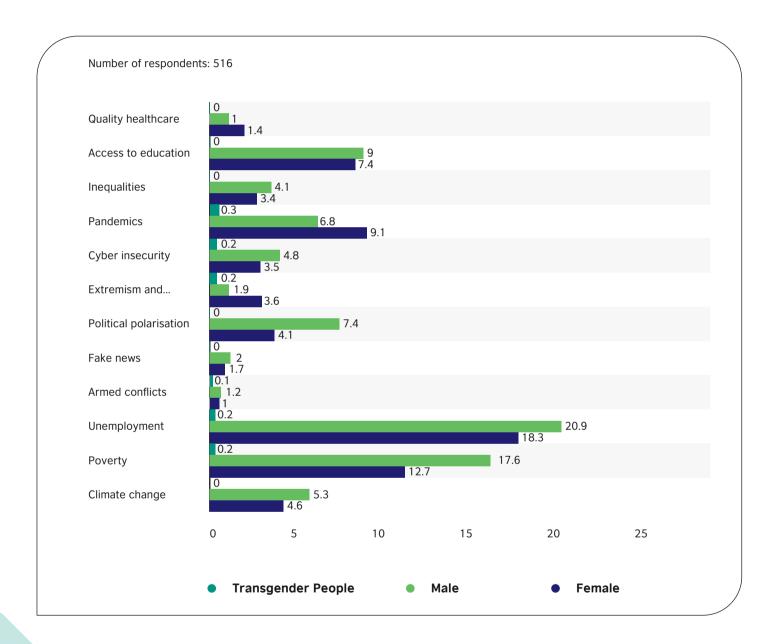
4.2 Youth perception of climate change

Youth perceptions of climate change were evaluated based on ten relevant questions in the sample questionnaire. Out of 1,000 youth aged between 18 and 25 years, 861 (86.1 percent) were able to provide a response to the question 'What do you think climate change is?', but how comprehensive the explanation was varied significantly. Only 58 respondents (5.8 per cent) were able to describe climate change as changes in climatic conditions caused by anthropogenic activities. In general, this points to a high level of general awareness of climate change among youth in Sri Lanka, but also reveals a lack of specific knowledge about what climate change is or what it entails.
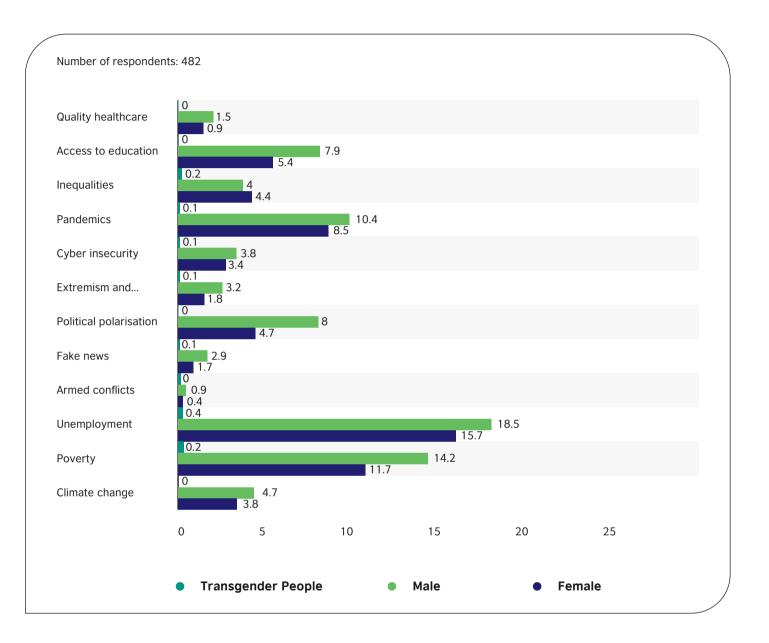
When it comes to the most pressing issues faced by youth today, climate change was only listed as sixth out of 12 options given. The top three positions were taken by unemployment, poverty, and pandemics. Figures 7 and 8 detail the different answers garnered by this question, divided by gender as well as urban and rural youth.

Figure 7: Most important issues for youth in today's world (rural)

Number of respondents: 516

Issue	Transgender People	Male	Female
Quality healthcare	0	1	1.4
Access to education	0	9	7.4
Inequalities	0	4.1	3.4
Pandemics	0.3	6.8	9.1
Cyber insecurity	0.2	4.8	3.5
Extremism and...	0.2	1.9	3.6
Political polarisation	0	7.4	4.1
Fake news	0	2	1.7
Armed conflicts	0.1	1.2	1
Unemployment	0.2	20.9	18.3
Poverty	0.2	17.6	12.7
Climate change	0	5.3	4.6

● **Transgender People**   ● **Male**   ● **Female**

Figure 8: Most important issues for youth in today's world (urban)

Number of respondents: 482

Issue	Transgender People	Male	Female
Quality healthcare	0	1.5	0.9
Access to education	0	7.9	5.4
Inequalities	0.2	4	4.4
Pandemics	0.1	10.4	8.5
Cyber insecurity	0.1	3.8	3.4
Extremism and…	0.1	3.2	1.8
Political polarisation	0	8	4.7
Fake news	0.1	2.9	1.7
Armed conflicts	0	0.9	0.4
Unemployment	0.4	18.5	15.7
Poverty	0.2	14.2	11.7
Climate change	0	4.7	3.8

● **Transgender People**   ● **Male**   ● **Female**

Overall, the patterns between urban and rural youth are similar. Female rural youth are more likely than both female urban youth and male rural youth to consider pandemics and extremism as major threats, one of the few overall areas in which young women appear to be more concerned than young men. Rural youth seem to be slightly more concerned about climate change than those living in cities, and young men slightly more than young women, however, the overall difference is not significant.
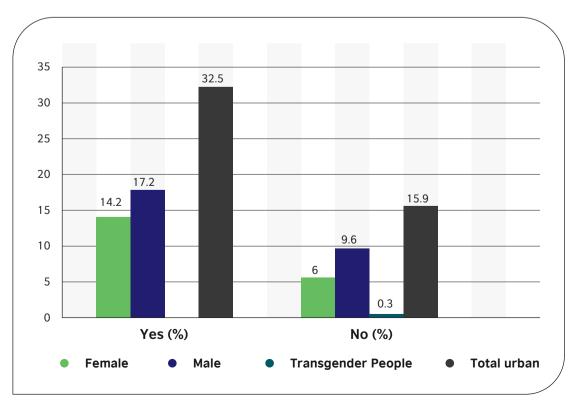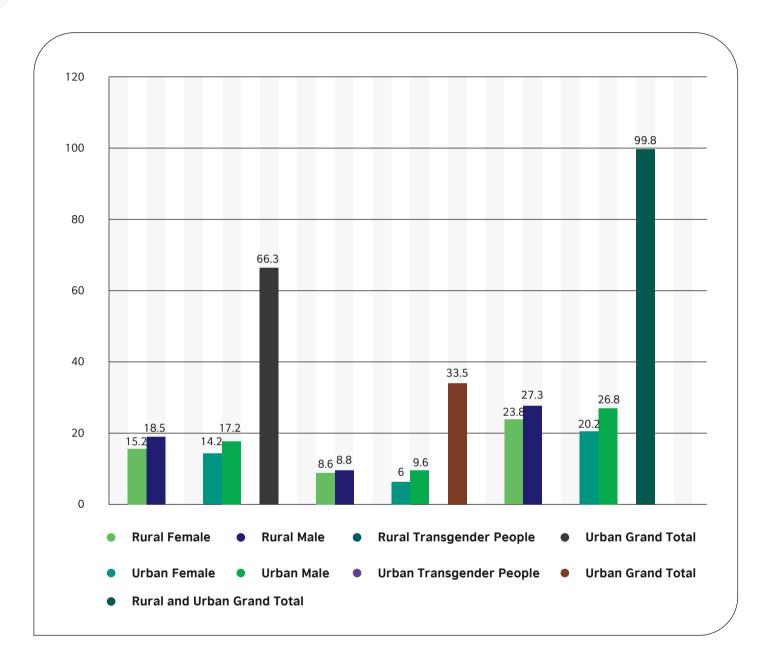
However, when asked if they believe that climate change will be the biggest threat for Sri Lanka in the future, 66.3 percent answered in the affirmative, reflecting a widespread belief among youth that the threat of climate change is fast gaining momentum. Figures 9, 10, and 11 detail responses with an urban/rural breakdown as well as percentages against the total number of 1,000 respondents.

Figure 9: Climate change as biggest threat (rural)

Figure 10: Climate change as biggest threat (urban)
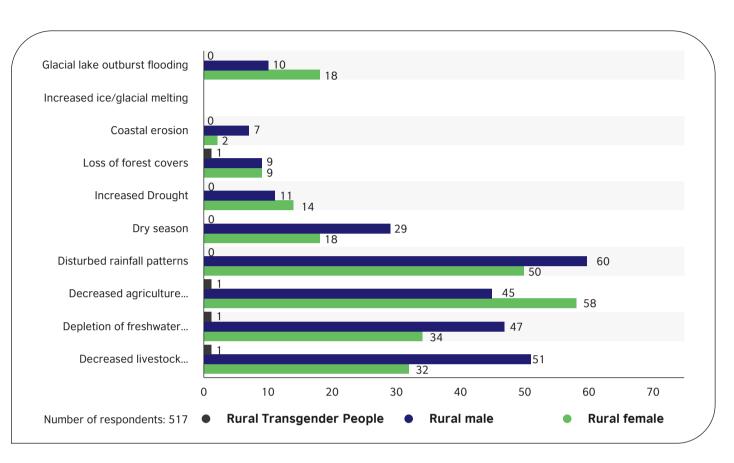
Figure 11: Climate change as biggest threat (total)

Legend:
- Rural Female
- Rural Male
- Rural Transgender People
- Urban Grand Total
- Urban Female
- Urban Male
- Urban Transgender People
- Urban Grand Total
- Rural and Urban Grand Total

Sri Lanka's youth seem to have a general awareness of climate change and consider it an important issue for the future, but do not see it impacting their lives at the moment. This is despite the fact that almost 100 per cent of surveyed youth reported some kind of climate-related impact in the area where they live. Answers to the question about the 'most common climate change issues observed in your area' ranged from severe drought to heavy rainfall to decreases in livestock productivity (see Figures 12 and 13). This points to the fact that youth do possess an understanding of sudden-onset and slow-onset climate change impacts, particularly in relation to the agriculture sector, even if they are unable to provide a technical definition or explanation of the term 'climate change'.
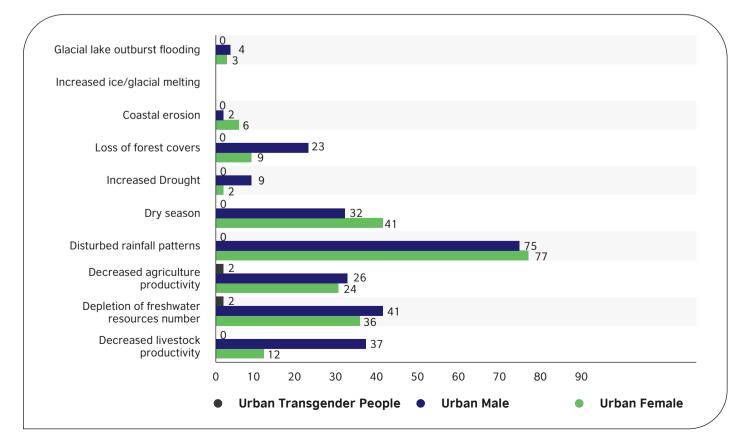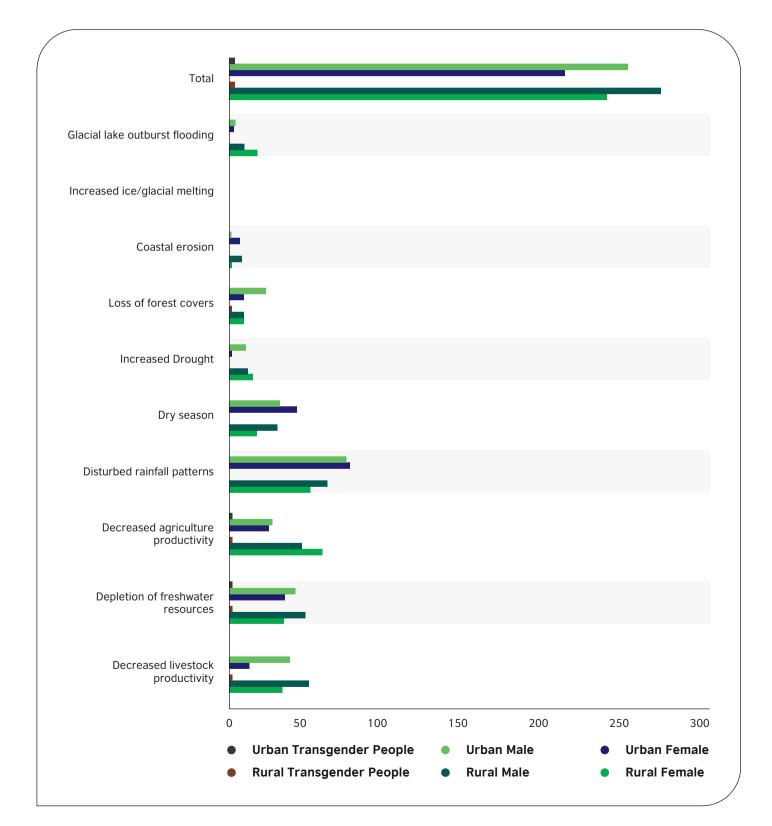
Figure 12: Most common climate change impacts observed (rural)

Number of respondents: 517   ● **Rural Transgender People**   ● **Rural male**   ● **Rural female**

Figure 13: Most common climate change impacts observed (urban)

● **Urban Transgender People**   ● **Urban Male**   ● **Urban Female**

There is a significant difference between the frequency and the types of climate impacts reported by rural and urban youth, with rural youth more exposed to climate change impacts and more focused on losses in agricultural productivity and yields. This is likely connected to the fact that for many rural families, climate change impacts are most vividly felt through losses in income and livelihoods, while urban youth experience climate change mainly through changes in weather patterns such as rainfall or temperature. Although 995 youth reported climate change issues in their area, individual impacts were felt by 699 people, which is still a substantial number (see Figures 14 to 17).

Figure 14: Most common climate change impacts observed (total)
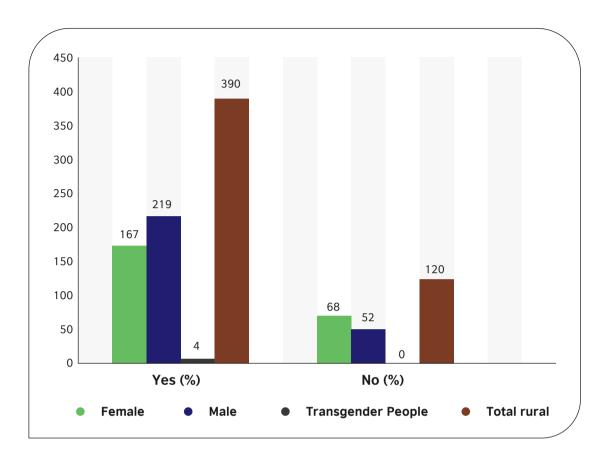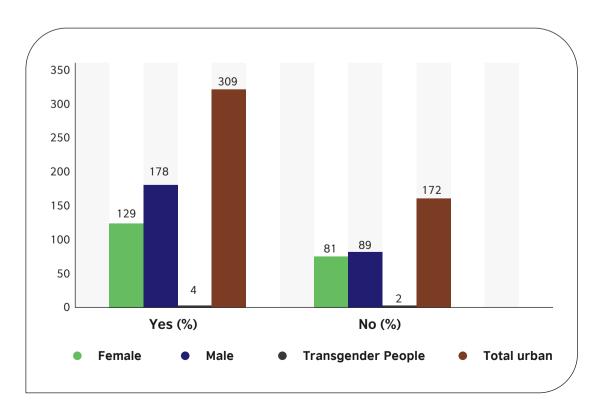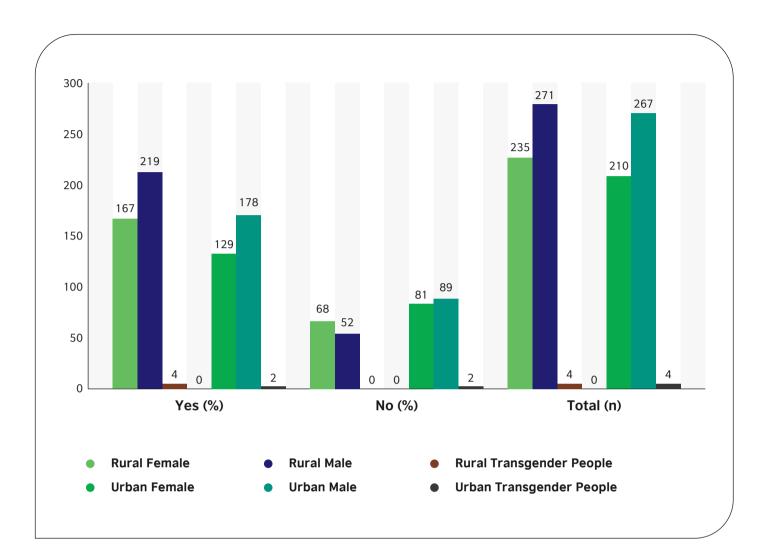
Figure 15: Encountered climate-related incidents (rural)

Figure 16: Encountered climate-related incidents (urban)

Figure 17: Encountered climate-related incidents (total)
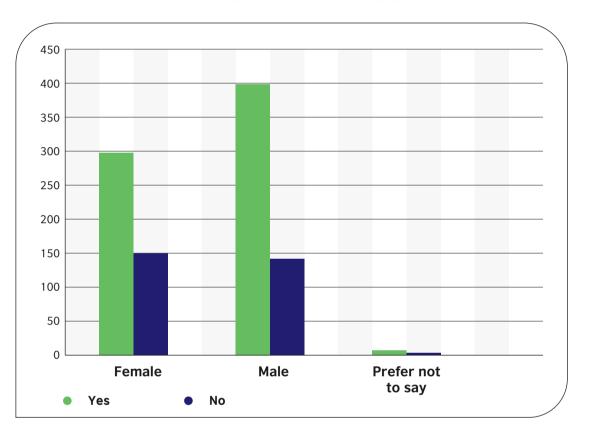
The survey targeted youth between the ages of 18 and 25, whereas the FGDs cast a wider net by selecting a larger age group as well as more specific and diverse stakeholders. The 15 FGDs covered seven provinces with youth between the ages of 18 and 35 from various disciplines, ranging from students, government employees, private sector employees, farming communities and fishing communities, to CSO activists and youth leaders. The feedback revealed that youth are quite aware of the threats of climate change. Many have grown up with climate change as the status quo, rendering them unable to imagine a life unaffected by global warming.

The majority of respondents in focus groups were of the opinion that Sri Lanka is already experiencing severe climate change impacts, specifically in the sectors of agriculture and fisheries. Families in these sectors face a real threat to their livelihoods caused by the emerging climate crisis.

A youth group in Medirigiriya in the North-Central region of Sri Lanka, which is frequently affected by floods and droughts, had this to say: 'Most of the affected population is working in agriculture, they are youth who are working on paddy cultivation. Our elder generation used to cultivate the lands using their traditional knowledge, but the current generation doesn't have this knowledge, and they hardly understand the changes of climate. Even in this season, we lost half of our paddy harvest for not understanding the changes of climate.'
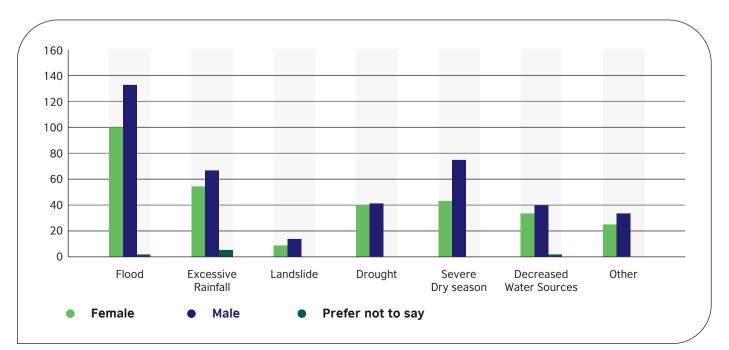
The data was analysed to evaluate if there are significant gender-based deviations in the impact of climate change. Although there were no significant differences, male youth were more likely to report that they experienced impacts of climate change than female youth. A further analysis was conducted to reveal a significantly higher percentage of male youth stating 'severe dry seasons' as a climate impact they had experienced, while similar numbers of male and female youth indicated 'drought' and 'decreased water resources' as impacts (see Figures 18 and 19).

Figure 18: Opinion on severity of climate impacts by gender

Figure 19: Climate-related incidents by gender
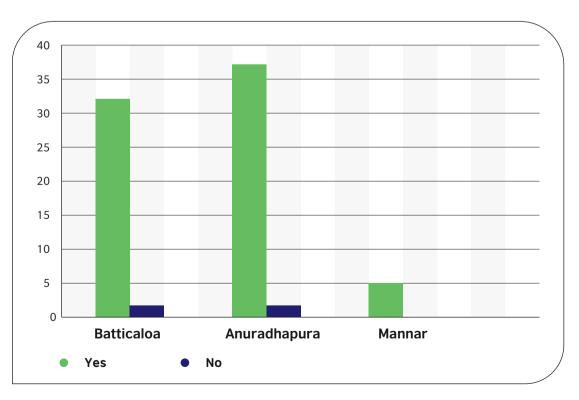
The experience of youth regarding climate change across socio-economic groups was compared using responses from Colombo and Badulla districts. Colombo is a richer district that ranks regularly in the top three income brackets while Badulla is within the bottom three of Sri Lanka's 25 districts. Table 5 shows the responses, revealing that a higher percentage of youth feel the impacts of climate change in Badulla, which may have a strong relationship with their income levels.

Table 5: Climate-related incidents by district

Have you ever experienced/encountered any climate-related incident?				
District	Yes	No	No answer	%
Colombo	43	57	6	41%
Badulla	24	8	0	75%

A similar analysis was conducted comparing three districts which had a significantly higher number of respondents from a specific ethnic group, such as Anuradhapura (95 percent Sinhalese respondents), Batticaloa (92 percent Tamil respondents) and Mannar (100 percent Muslim respondents). The experience of climate change impacts did not differ significantly, indicating that climate change impacts are felt in a similar way by youth of all ethnic groups and communities across the island.

Figure 20: Climate impacts experienced by ethnic group

---

[1] The ethnic percentage distribution does not represent the actual ethnic distribution in these districts.

To better understand young people's attitudes towards climate change in Sri Lanka, the questionnaire attributed equal importance to youth knowledge, understanding, and experiences. The questions were designed to obtain youth opinions through direct close-ended responses as well as questions relating to the current socio-economic context.

For the question on the statement 'I am eager to know more about climate issues' the responses received are given in Table 6.

Table 6: Interest in climate knowledge

		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
Rural	Female	12.3	9.5	1.4	0.4	0	0	239
	Male	14.1	8.1	2.9	1.5	0	0	274
	Transgender People	0.3	0.0	0.1	0	0	0	04
	Total Rural	**26.7**	**17.6**	**4.4**	**1.9**	**0**	**0**	**517**
Urban	Female	10.2	8.1	1.5	0.7	0.3	0.3	207
	Male	12.0	9.7	3.3	0.8	0	0	269
	Transgender People	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0	0	04
	Total Urban	**22.5**	**17.9**	**4.8**	**1.5**	**0.3**	**0.3**	**483**
Grand Total		**49.2**	**35.5**	**9.2**	**3.4**	**0.3**	**0.3**	**1,000**

I am eager to know more about climate issues?

The vast majority of surveyed youth (84.7 percent) are either strongly or slightly interested in learning more about climate change. This willingness to learn can be linked to another part of the questionnaire involving the statement, 'I feel that my opinions on climate change will matter'. Thus, it can be concluded that a vast majority of respondents believe that their opinions carry weight, and that young people play a critical role in addressing climate change (see Tables 7 and 8).

Table 7: Perception that youth opinions will matter

		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
I feel that my opinions on climate change will matter								
Rural	Female	10.3	10	2.4	0.4	0.8	0	239
	Male	10.0	11.1	4.4	1.3	0.6	0	274
	Transgender People	0.1	0.2	0.1	0	0	0	04
	Total Rural	**20.4**	**21.3**	**6.9**	**1.7**	**1.4**	**0**	**517**
Urban	Female	7.4	8.1	4.3	0.6	0.3	0.3	210
	Male	10.7	9.9	4.8	1.1	0.4	0	269
	Transgender People	0.2	0.1	0	0.1	0	0	04
	Total Urban	**18.3**	**18.1**	**9.1**	**1.8**	**0.7**	**0.3**	**483**
Grand Total		**38.7**	**39.4**	**16.0**	**3.5**	**2.1**	**0.3**	**1,000**

Table 8: Opinion on importance of youth role for climate action

		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
I feel young people play a critical role in addressing climate change								
Rural	Female	5.9	13.8	2.4	0.5	1.3	0.0	239
	Male	7.1	14.1	3.7	1.7	0.7	0.1	274
	Transgender People	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	04
	Total Rural	**13.3**	**27.9**	**6.2**	**2.2**	**2.0**	**0.1**	**517**
Urban	Female	8.1	7.3	3.9	0.7	0.5	0.5	210
	Male	9.2	11.8	4.1	1.0	0.7	0.1	269
	Transgender People	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	04
	Total Urban	**17.4**	**19.4**	**8.0**	**1.7**	**1.2**	**0.6**	**483**
Grand Total		**30.7**	**47.3**	**14.2**	**3.9**	**3.2**	**0.7**	**1,000**

It is important to note that for both questions, a larger number of youth agreed only slightly and not strongly. There is also a disparity of opinion between rural and urban youth, with rural youth more likely to believe that their opinion will matter, but less likely to believe that youth play a crucial role in climate action.

The remaining questions are aligned to youth opinions on whether an action they take will succeed based on the current context of the country and society (see Table 9).

Table 9: Most powerful tools to make a positive impact against climate change

		Campaigning/ activism %	Education %	Policy level changes %	All of these %	Other %
Rural	Female	3.5	5.0	2.2	12.8	0.4
	Male	3.7	6.0	2.0	14.3	1.3
	Transgender People	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
	Total Rural	**7.3**	**11.1**	**4.2**	**27.2**	**1.8**
Urban	Female	3.2	3.5	2.9	11.0	0.3
	Male	3.5	5.5	2.5	15.2	0.4
	Transgender People	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.0
	Total Urban	**6.7**	**9.0**	**5.5**	**26.5**	**0.7**
Grand Total		**14.0**	**20.1**	**9.7**	**53.7**	**2.5**

The vast majority of surveyed youth (84.7 percent) are either strongly or slightly interested in learning more about climate change. This willingness to learn can be linked to another part of the questionnaire involving the statement, 'I feel that my opinions on climate change will matter'. Thus, it can be concluded that a vast majority of respondents believe that their opinions carry weight, and that young people play a critical role in addressing climate change (see Tables 7 and 8).

Table 10: Activities to influence political decision-making on climate issues

		Voting in elections %	Contacting a local political rep %	Taking active part in a campaign %	Signing a petition %	Taking part in a public protest %	Joining a political party %	Show-casing success of community led Impact Projects %	No response %	Total n
Rural	Female	2.1	2.7	3.2	3.5	2.4	0.1	7.7	2.2	239
	Male	2.8	3.6	3.6	2.6	4.3	0.8	7.1	2.6	274
	Transgender People	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	04
	Total Rural	**4.9**	**6.4**	**6.9**	**6.1**	**6.7**	**0.9**	**15.0**	**4.8**	**517**
Urban	Female	2.6	2.5	3.5	2.4	1.6	0.3	7.2	0.9	210
	Male	4.0	3.1	3.6	2.6	2.4	0.5	9.6	1.1	269
	Transgender People	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	4
	Total Urban	**6.6**	**5.6**	**7.1**	**5.1**	**4.0**	**0.8**	**17.1**	**2.0**	**483**
Grand Total		**11.5**	**12.0**	**14.0**	**11.2**	**10.7**	**1.7**	**32.1**	**6.8**	**1,000**

When it comes to selecting the most appropriate tool to make a positive impact on climate change, more than 50 percent of the respondents believe that a combination of activities is required to bring about success, while a considerable number (more than 20 percent) also believe that education is the most important tool.

The responses to the question on most effective tools to influence political decision-making tallies well with the above, where the responses are evenly distributed across all the options apart from two. The field, 'showcasing success of community-led impact projects', stands out with a high response of just over 32 percent, and 'joining a political party' with a low response of only 1.7 percent. Almost seven percent of surveyed youth did not respond to this question at all (see Table 10).
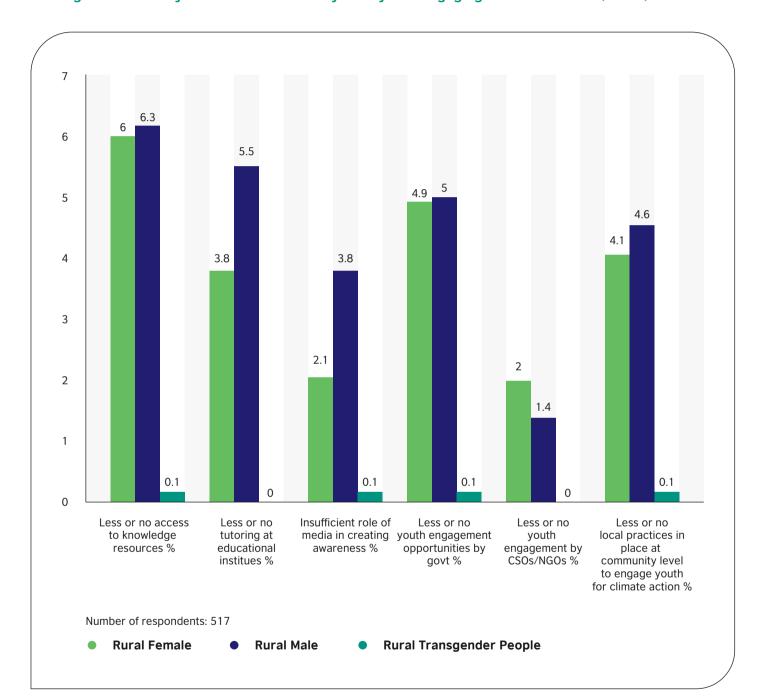
Sri Lankan youth look to concrete action and good practices to inspire climate action and do not seem interested in joining the political process to affect change. They believe that climate change has to be addressed through various tools and actions, and that education plays a key role in this process.

Youth perceptions about whether climate action should be a common responsibility of all communities or a means of individual survival are illustrated in Table 11.
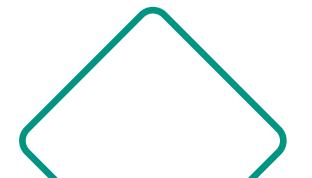
Table 11: Opinion on public responsibility
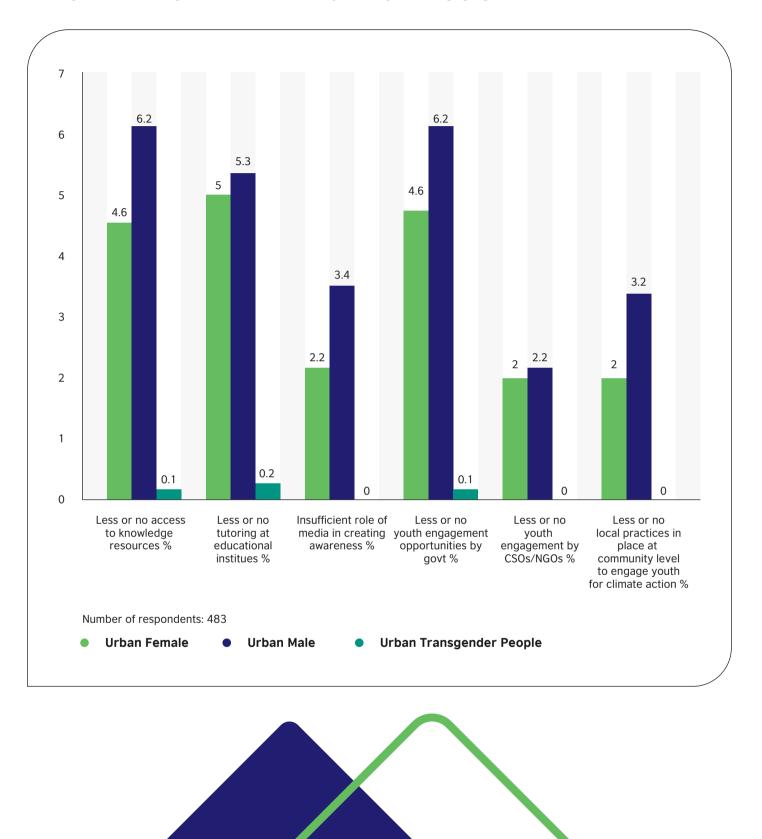
		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
I feel that getting knowledge and helping others to understand the climate change threats is our public responsibility								
Rural	Female	13.5	8.4	1.6	0.3	0.0	0.1	275
	Male	15.1	7.7	3.3	0.9	0.4	0.0	238
	Transgender People	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	04
	Total Rural	**28.8**	**16.3**	**4.9**	**1.2**	**0.4**	**0.1**	**517**
Urban	Female	11.8	5.6	2.4	0.4	0.2	0.3	272
	Male	14.9	8.0	3.1	0.7	0.5	0.0	207
	Transgender People	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	04
	Total Urban	**27.0**	**13.6**	**5.6**	**1.1**	**0.7**	**0.3**	**483**
Grand Total		**55.8**	**29.9**	**10.5**	**2.3**	**1.1**	**0.4**	**1,000**

The feedback reveals that more than 55 percent of youth strongly believe that climate change awareness and climate action are a public responsibility, while another 30 percent slightly agree. Therefore, it can be deduced that a substantial number of youth support collective action and collaboration-based approaches rather than climate action as an individual survival strategy.

This was highlighted by the following statement made by a youth group in Monaragala during an FGD: 'The biggest challenge is that climate action is perceived as voluntary work that can be done as an optional thing, which should not be the case. Climate action should be a way of life, otherwise the next generation will face severe difficulties. Lack of knowledge of this is the greatest challenge we face.'

Identifying the nature of the challenges restricting youth from participating in climate action in their own regions is of vital importance. Taking these factors and other regional, gender, and resource-based parameters into account will be critical in developing solutions for meaningful youth engagement (see Figures 21 and 22).
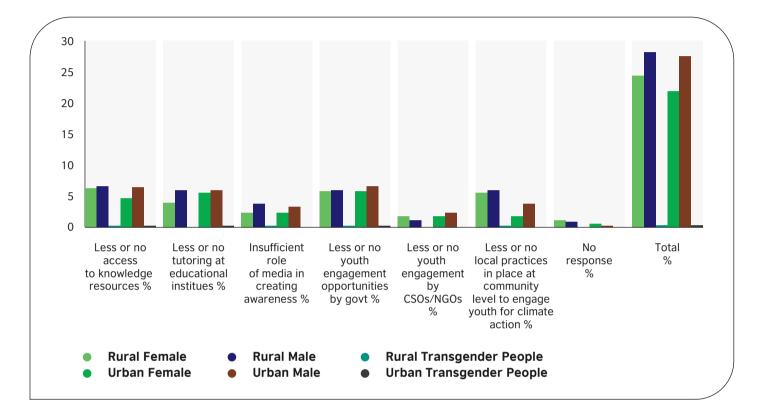
Figure 21:The major barriers identified by rural youth engaging in climate action (Urban)

Number of respondents: 517

- Rural Female
- Rural Male
- Rural Transgender People
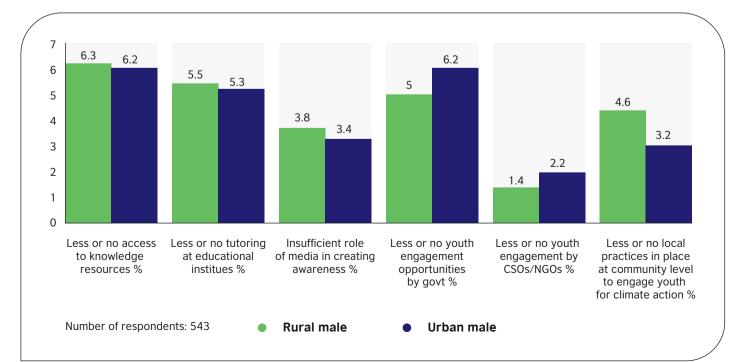
Figure 22: The major barriers identified by urban youth engaging in climate action

Number of respondents: 483

● **Urban Female**   ● **Urban Male**   ● **Urban Transgender People**
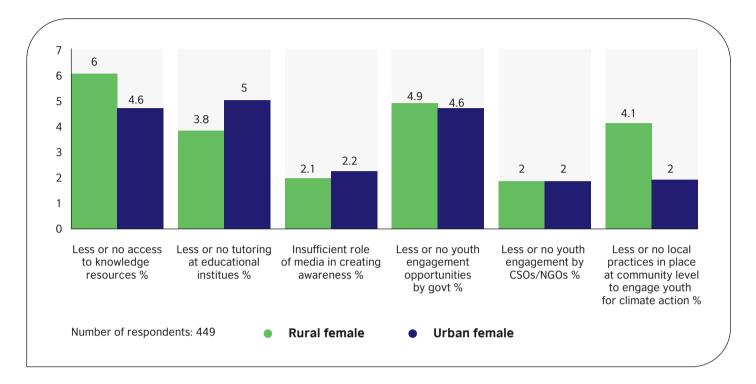
In both urban and rural contexts, a lack of access to knowledge resources, lack of tutoring, and low engagement with government action were identified as the greatest barriers (see Figure 23) to successful engagement of youth in climate action. Figures 24 and 25 showcase the major barriers highlighted by male and female youth, respectively.

Figure 23: The major barriers identified by youth engaging in climate action (summary)

Figure 24: Major barriers identified by male youth in engaging in climate action
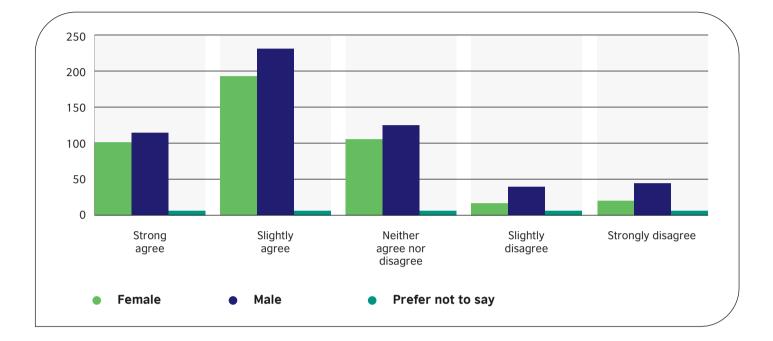
Figure 25: Major barriers identified by female youth in engaging in climate action

Number of respondents: 449   ● **Rural female**   ● **Urban female**

A youth group from Jaffna in the north of Sri Lanka identified their barriers during an FGD as follows:

> Society is not willing to listen to youth when they talk about climate, and lack of access to knowledge and training in the climate field is an issue for us to actively engage in climate action. Many young people after their twenties are focused on starting their life, therefore climate action needs to address their livelihood needs as well.

> Given the current context, youth are forced to either attend to their education or start earning for themselves. Therefore, it is very difficult for them to find time for local activities. There should be mechanisms to compensate for their time or give substantial recognition for their efforts that will help them in finding livelihood opportunities.

Interestingly, the above sentiment was echoed by a high-level government officer during a KII.

The data was further analysed to see if any barriers specific to a region were highlighted. The rural female community identified a lack of access to knowledge resources as well as a lack of projects for community-level engagement. Meanwhile, the urban male population identified a lack of engagement opportunities with the government as a major barrier.

Both male and female youth had a similar opinion regarding access to development-related material, with 66 percent of female and 62 percent of male youth confident that they could access the required information (see Figure 26).

Figure 26: Perception of youth on access to information on events and development

The same data was analysed in the two districts of Badulla and Colombo, one a low-income district and the other a high-income district. Of these youth, 52 percent in Colombo and 59 percent in Badulla, or roughly half the youth who participated in the survey, mentioned that they could access the information (see Table 12).

Table 12: Perception of youth on access to information by district

I can access information about events and developments in my community						
District	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neight agree or disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	%
Colombo	26	29	26	8	17	52
Badulla	2	17	12	0	1	59

However, there seems to be a district-wide disparity in terms of accessibility to development-related information in the community. The three districts listed in Table 13 display varying percentages of satisfaction about receiving information, with both 'strongly agree' and 'slightly agree' responses taken as 'satisfactory' responses.

Table 13: Perception of youth on access to information on events and development

I can access information about events and developments in my community						
District	Strongly agree	Slightly agree	Neight agree or disagree	Slightly disagree	Strongly disagree	%
Batticaloa	9	25	0	1	0	97%
Anuradhapura	8	22	8	2	4	68%
Mannar	1	1	3	0	0	40%

4.4 Youth readiness for climate action

The readiness of youth to engage in climate action was analysed using a variety of questions which evaluated their interest in other community activities, their knowledge of international processes, the type of training youth have received on climate action and the level of confidence they have to become active climate champions within their communities (see Tables 14, 15, and 16).

Table 14: Climate-related information among youth

I feel that my opinions on climate change will matter							
		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
Rural	Female	3.3	11.6	5.9	1.5	1.6	0.0	239
	Male	6.1	11.7	5.4	2.2	1.9	0.1	274
	Transgender People	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4
	Total Rural	**9.4**	**23.7**	**11.3**	**3.7**	**3.5**	**0.1**	**517**
Urban	Female	2.8	10.5	4.9	2.0	0.5	0.3	210
	Male	5.1	11.1	6.2	3.3	1.2	0.0	269
	Transgender People	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	4
	Total Urban	**7.9**	**21.8**	**11.1**	**5.3**	**1.7**	**0.3**	**483**
Grand Total		**17.3**	**45.5**	**22.6**	**9.0**	**5.2**	**0.4**	**1,000**

Table 15: Practical steps taken by youth

I am practically taking steps to protect my community/peers/family		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
Rural	Female	4.7	11.4	3.8	2.0	1.5	0.5	239
	Male	6.8	12.9	4.9	1.4	1.2	0.2	274
	Transgender People	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	4
	Total Rural	**11.6**	**24.5**	**8.7**	**3.4**	**2.8**	**0.7**	**517**
Urban	Female	4.9	7.6	5.0	2.6	0.7	0.2	210
	Male	7.4	10.0	6.7	1.9	0.9	0.0	269
	Transgender People	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	4
	Total Urban	**12.3**	**17.9**	**11.8**	**4.5**	**1.6**	**0.2**	**483**
Grand Total		**23.9**	**42.4**	**20.5**	**7.9**	**4.4**	**0.9**	**1,000**

Table 16: Youth engagement in community development activities

I am engaged in community development activities (e.g. environmental cleanliness, road planning, business development, etc.)		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
Rural	Female	7.7	7.2	5.8	1.5	1.6	0.1	239
	Male	7.7	11.3	4.5	2.8	1.0	0.1	274
	Transgender People	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	4
	Total Rural	**15.4**	**18.8**	**10.3**	**4.3**	**2.7**	**0.2**	**517**
Urban	Female	3.7	6.4	4.2	3.5	0.9	0.3	210
	Male	7.7	8.6	5.3	2.2	1.0	0.0	269
	Transgender People	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	4
	Total Urban	**11.4**	**15.2**	**9.5**	**5.7**	**1.9**	**0.4**	**483**
Grand Total		**26.8**	**34.0**	**19.8**	**10.0**	**4.6**	**0.6**	**1,000**

The tables above indicate a gradual progression on how many young people are engaged in 'talking about issues', and how many are taking individual or family-level steps or community-level development action. The difference between the cumulative figures of 'strongly agree' and 'slightly agree' is small with values ranging between 60 percent and 66 percent. When analysing the 'strongly agree' figure, more people seem to be actively engaged in community development activities compared to people who are simply talking to peers on climate issues.

The current level of community-level engagement in general could be compared with the climate-change-related awareness and training that youth have received. This will help explain the gap between engagement in general community-level development activities, and also engagement in specifically climate-change-related actions (see Tables 17 and 18).

Table 17: Youth participation in climate change awareness sessions

		Have you ever participated in any climate change awareness session?					
		Yes, in a session organised by a government body n	Yes, in a session organised by an NGO n	Yes, in a session organised by a local community organization n	No n	No response n	Total n
Rural	Female	25	17	16	181	0	239
	Male	40	24	24	186	0	274
	Transgender People	0	2	0	2	0	0
	Total Rural	**65**	**43**	**40**	**369**	**0**	**517**
Urban	Female	37	19	24	130	0	210
	Male	40	39	27	162	1	269
	Transgender People	0	0	0	4	0	4
	Total Urban	**77**	**58**	**51**	**296**	**1**	**483**
Grand Total		**142**	**101**	**91**	**665**	**1**	**1,000**

Table 18: Youth participation in climate action

Have you ever participated in any climate change mitigation/action activity?							
		Yes, in a session organised by a government body n	Yes, in a session organised by an NGO n	Yes, in a session organised by a local community organization n	No n	No response n	Total n
Rural	Female	23	14	17	183	1	239
	Male	30	23	26	192	1	274
	Transgender People	1	1	0	2	0	4
	Total Rural	**54**	**38**	**43**	**392**	**2**	**517**
Urban	Female	32	12	25	138	1	210
	Male	40	36	26	159	2	267
	Transgender People	0	0	0	4	0	4
	Total Urban	**72**	**48**	**51**	**301**	**3**	**483**
Grand Total		**126**	**86**	**94**	**693**	**5**	**1,000**

Training related to climate change has been received by only 30 percent of the respondents. Similarly, active participation in climate action is reported as only 32 percent, less than a third of youth surveyed in Sri Lanka. This reveals the potential for government and non-government actors to do more in terms of education and training youth through formal and non-formal processes on climate action. Although, there is no significant overall difference between rural and urban youth in terms of awareness training received, urban youth have opportunities to engage in climate action, which gives them a slight edge over rural youth.

Knowledge about international processes related to climate change translates to the training received and access to knowledge resources, both of which lie in the lower end of responses (see Tables 19 and 20).

Table 19: Youth familiarity with SDGs

I am familiar with the SDGs and the social issues that they cover								
		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
Rural	Female	2.5	10.8	4.4	2.6	3.3	0.3	236
	Male	2.2	8.5	8.1	2.3	6.3	0.0	274
	Transgender People	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	4
	Total Rural	**4.7**	**19.3**	**12.7**	**5.0**	**9.7**	**0.3**	**514**
Urban	Female	1.6	6.6	5.3	3.2	4.2	0.1	209
	Male	2.6	9.0	6.2	3.6	5.4	0.1	268
	Transgender People	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	4
	Total Urban	**4.2**	**15.8**	**11.6**	**6.9**	**9.6**	**0.2**	**481**
Grand Total		**8.9**	**35.1**	**24.3**	**11.9**	**19.3**	**0.5**	**1,000**

Table 20: Youth familiarity with UNFCCC COP26

I know about the details of COP26, when and where it will be and the issues it will cover								
		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
Rural	Female	1.3	7.2	7.0	3.9	4.1	0.4	239
	Male	1.7	5.3	9.9	3.5	6.9	0.1	274
	Transgender People	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
	Total Rural	**3.0**	**12.6**	**17.2**	**7.4**	**11.0**	**0.5**	**517**
Urban	Female	0.7	5.3	5.7	3.3	6.0	0.0	21
	Male	1.9	6.8	7.2	4.3	6.7	0.0	269
	Transgender People	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	4
	Total Urban	**2.6**	**12.1**	**13.0**	**7.7**	**12.9**	**0.0**	**483**
Grand Total		**5.6**	**24.7**	**30.2**	**15.1**	**23.9**	**0.5**	**1,000**

The level of awareness about the SDGs is at 43.8 percent, which is higher than the knowledge on COP26 (30.3 percent). These figures are relatively high and could be attributed to the skewness of the group towards a higher level of formal education.

Contrastingly, in the FGDs where information was analysed qualitatively, the response received from the groups was that they do not have much knowledge on international processes and platforms due to a lack of resources and networking opportunities.
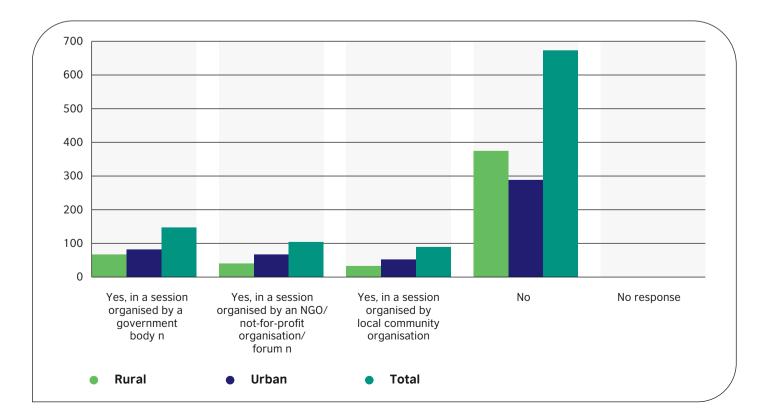
There was no significant difference between male and female youth receiving training on climate change. However, a significant bias towards urban youth being able to attend such trainings is visible in the responses. While 28 percent of rural youth responded that they had received climate-change-related training, the percentage of urban youth was 38 percent – not large, but 36 percent higher than rural youth (see Table 21 and Figure 27).
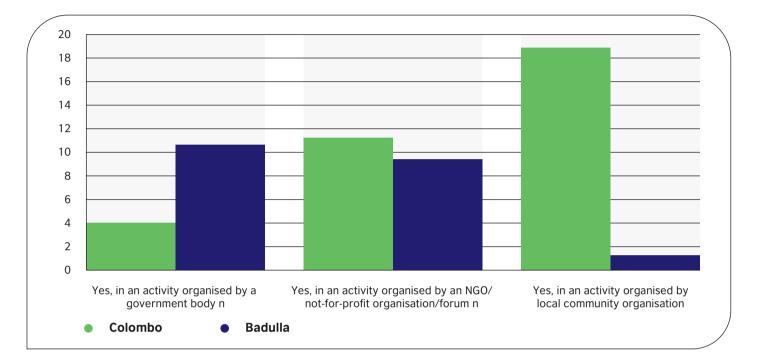
Table 21: Youth participation in climate change awareness sessions, rural/urban

	Have you ever participated in any climate change awareness session?				
	Yes, in a session organised by a government body n	**Yes, in a session organised by an NGO not-for-profit organisation/ forum n**	**Yes, in a session organised by local community organisation**	**No n**	**Total n**
Rural	65	43	40	369	517
Urban	77	58	51	296	483

Figure 27: Youth participation in climate change awareness sessions, rural/urban

A similar disparity was observed when the two districts of Colombo and Badulla, a high-income district and a low-income district, were compared (see Figure 28).

Figure 28: Youth participation in climate action by district

4.5 Government and youth in climate action

A key question regarding the government and youth in climate action focused on the opinion of youth about whether the government considers climate change a national issue (see Table 22).

Table 22: Role of the government in climate action

The state and government in my country is thinking of climate change as a serious issue								
		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
Rural	Female	4.1	10.1	4.5	2.1	3.1	0.0	274
	Male	5.4	9.3	6.2	3.2	3.3	0.0	239
	Transgender People	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	4
	Total Rural	**9.5**	**19.6**	**10.7**	**5.3**	**6.6**	**0.0**	**517**
Urban	Female	4.2	4.9	4.3	3.2	4.1	0.3	272
	Male	4.7	9.3	3.8	3.8	5.3	0.0	207
	Transgender People	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	4
	Total Urban	**8.9**	**14.3**	**8.1**	**7.0**	**9.7**	**0.0**	**483**
Grand Total		**18.4**	**33.9**	**18.8**	**12.3**	**16.3**	**0.3**	**1,000**

Around half of the respondents (52 percent) believe that the government is taking climate change seriously; another 19 percent are unsure about it or do not have a strong opinion.

An analysis of the tools suggested by youth as being the most useful to influence political decision-making is an indicator of what youth perceive as the best way to communicate with the government. The tools they picked were diverse and more or less evenly distributed among the options, which implies that they believe there are multiple ways to convey a message to decision-makers. The eagerness and confidence of youth to engage in community-level activities, specifically involved with the government, indicates that they would receive information well on a local level (see Table 23).

Table 23: Youth access to information

I can access information about events and developments in my community		Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Slightly disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No response %	Total number
Rural	Female	4.1	11.8	6.5	0.9	0.5	0.1	239
	Male	5.3	11.7	6.2	2.1	2.1	0.0	274
	Transgender People	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.0	4
	Total Rural	**9.4**	**23.5**	**12.9**	**3.1**	**2.7**	**0.1**	**517**
Urban	Female	5.9	7.7	3.8	1.4	1.9	0.3	210
	Male	5.9	10.7	5.8	1.8	2.7	0.0	269
	Transgender People	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	4
	Total Urban	**11.9**	**18.6**	**9.7**	**3.2**	**4.6**	**0.3**	**483**
Grand Total		**21.3**	**42.1**	**22.6**	**6.3**	**7.3**	**0.4**	**1,000**

Here, the number of youth who agree strongly or slightly amounts to 634, which is a high percentage. However, 362 people strongly or slightly disagree, which is also a considerable number.

This is reflected in the related questions on the challenges faced by youth actively engaged in climate action, where they were asked to pick the three most important barriers. The highest number of respondents chose 'less or no youth engagement opportunities provided by the government', which highlights the fact that there is an expectation of youth that the government will create more opportunities for engagement in climate activities.

The qualitative feedback received from the FGDs and KIIs falls in line with most of the feedback received from the sample survey. The general feedback from respondents on the question of whether the government considers climate change a key issue in the country was positive. It is considered a key issue and there are institutional arrangements, a national policy on climate change, and good stakeholder engagement at the national level on international processes. However, there were concerns as to whether there is enough knowledge and capacity to integrate climate response strategies into large-scale development agendas.

A youth group in Nuwara Eliya, an area with many estates, mentioned that

> Awareness creation and capacity-building sessions should happen in local language, as many people do not speak English. At the same time, the facilities to learn English should be improved in these areas for local youth to gather knowledge from and make connections to other parts of the world.

It was also mentioned that the government could take an active role in creating platforms for CSOs to engage in these processes. Collaborative projects between the government and NGOs were also seen as a way to involve youth in both national and international activities.

4.6 Civil society and youth in climate action

Civil society is considered another actor in effectively engaging youth in climate action. The current interaction between CSOs and youth in relation to climate action was evaluated through three questions which were analysed in previous sections, as well as input from the KIIs.

Of the youth who reported that they have participated in climate-change-related awareness programmes (334), a larger number have participated in programmes conducted by an NGO or CSO than in government programmes (192). The same applies to climate-change-related activities at the community level, where of the 306 youth who have participated in such activities, 180 have engaged in an activity conducted by an NGO or CSO.

Of the three options provided in the questionnaire regarding barriers faced by youth in effectively engaging in climate action, the answer 'less or no youth engagement opportunities by CSOs/NGOs' was selected 314 times out of 2,814, fourth highest out of all the options.

During the KIIs, the role of CSOs was highlighted and appreciated. On the role of civil society in building capacities at the grassroot level for climate risk mitigation and adaptation, almost all were in agreement that CSOs can play a major role in knowledge dissemination and capacity-building of communities on adaption and other climate action. However, it was also mentioned that the government could take an active role in creating platforms for CSOs to engage in these processes. There was also a common requirement to further build capacities of CSOs at various levels to address these require-ments, particularly in strategies to engage youth.

A youth group from local universities, which is connected with international networks, felt during the FGD conducted with their leadership team that they knew little about national processes and were engaged in a limited scope of climate action. They realised that they need to be more connected with government actors and other CSOs to enhance their relevance.

The key informants could only identify a limited number of organisations working on youth and climate change in Sri Lanka, with around one third unable to name even a single CSO or NGO working in this area. Of those that were able to name organisations, 53 percent mentioned SLYCAN Trust, followed by Rotaract Clubs at 17 percent, the National Youth Services Council, Leo Clubs and Reforest Sri Lanka at 12 percent, and more than 20 other organisations that were mentioned by only one informant each.

Similarly, during FGDs, the role of CSOs and NGOs was acknowledged as very important. Highlighted as close to grassroot level with flexible modes of engagement, it was also appreciated as a facilitator between government and other actors. Finally, it was mentioned that CSOs need to be innovative and reach out to various cross-sections of society.
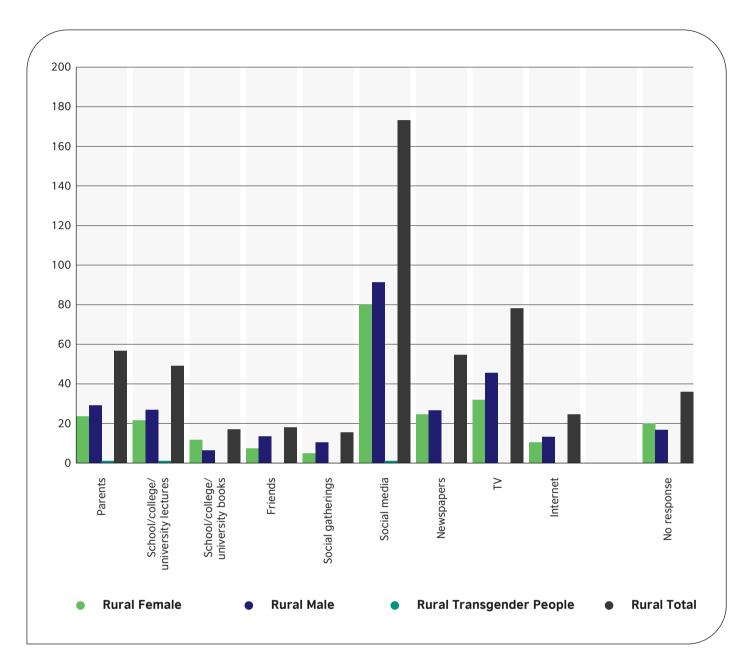
4.7 The role of media

The survey evaluated the role of social media extensively, trying to understand the type of info used and most trusted by youth. The respondents' answers reflected a significant difference be information tools they use frequently and the ones they trust the most (see Tables 24 and 25 a 30).
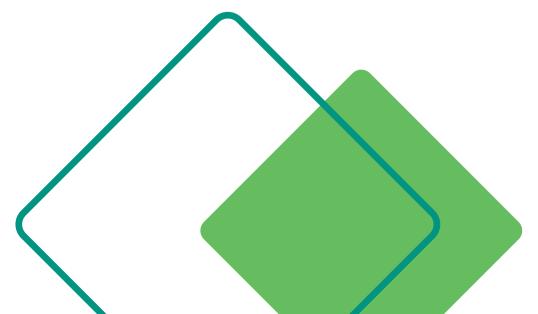
Table 24: Most important sources for climate-change-related information

		Parents n	School/ college/ university lectures n	School/ college/ university books n	Friends n	Social gatherings n	Social media n	News papers n	TV n	Internet n	No response n	Total n
Rural	Female	24	22	11	6	4	80	26	32	11	20	236
	Male	28	25	6	12	10	91	27	45	14	15	273
	Transgender People	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	4
	Total Rural	**53**	**48**	**17**	**18**	**14**	**173**	**53**	**77**	**25**	**35**	**513**
Urban	Female	32	34	6	7	1	61	20	25	10	14	210
	Male	26	27	9	14	5	82	31	36	16	21	267
	Transgender People	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	4
	Total Urban	**58**	**61**	**15**	**21**	**6**	**147**	**51**	**61**	**26**	**35**	**481**
Grand Total		**111**	**109**	**32**	**39**	**20**	**320**	**104**	**138**	**51**	**70**	**994**

Figure 29: Most important sources for climate-change-related information (rural)

Rural Female · Rural Male · Rural Transgender People · Rural Total

Figure 30: Most important sources for climate-change-related information (urban)

Legend: ● Urban Female ● Urban Male ● Urban Transgender People ● Urban Total

Table 25: Most reliable sources for climate-change-related information

		Parents n	School/ college/ university lectures n	School/ college/ university books n	Friends n	Social gatherings n	Social media n	News papers n	TV n	Internet n	No response n	Total n
Rural	Female	31	31	10	5	15	30	55	44	17	1	239
	Male	29	33	8	8	19	50	53	55	16	3	274
	Transgender People	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	4
	Total Rural	**60**	**65**	**18**	**13**	**34**	**82**	**108**	**100**	**33**	**4**	**517**
Urban	Female	14	35	7	1	0	32	31	62	17	8	207
	Male	31	30	11	6	10	49	41	45	32	12	267
	Transgender People	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
	Total Urban	**45**	**65**	**18**	**7**	**10**	**83**	**74**	**107**	**49**	**20**	**478**
Grand Total		**105**	**130**	**36**	**20**	**44**	**165**	**182**	**207**	**82**	**24**	**995**
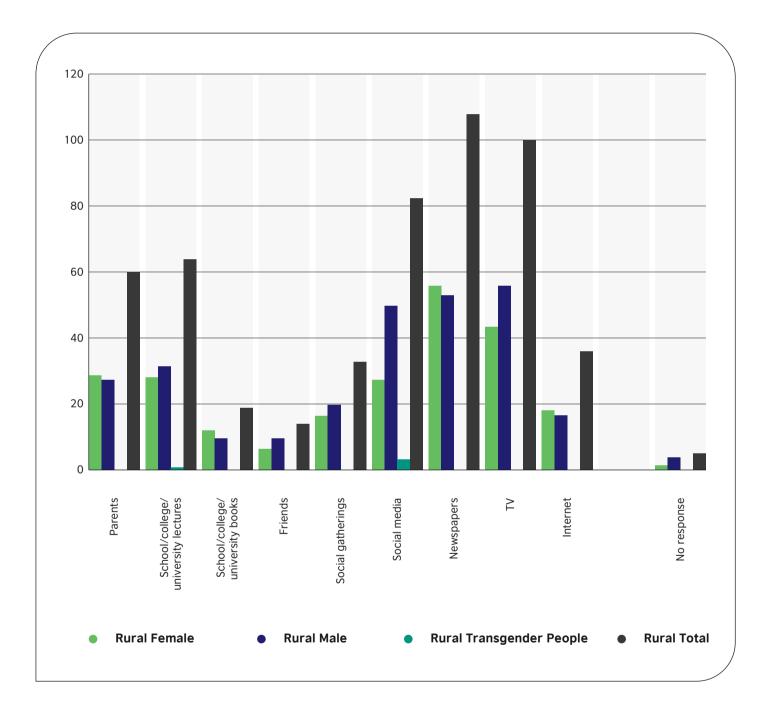
While social media is by far the most frequently used source for information (34 percent), it is only the third most trusted after television and newspapers. It is also identified by a far smaller percentage of respondents as the most trusted source as compared to the most used one (17 percent). On the one hand, youth prefer traditional media such as newspapers and television in terms of reliability and trustworthiness, but on the other they paradoxically seem to be using social media as their main source of information.
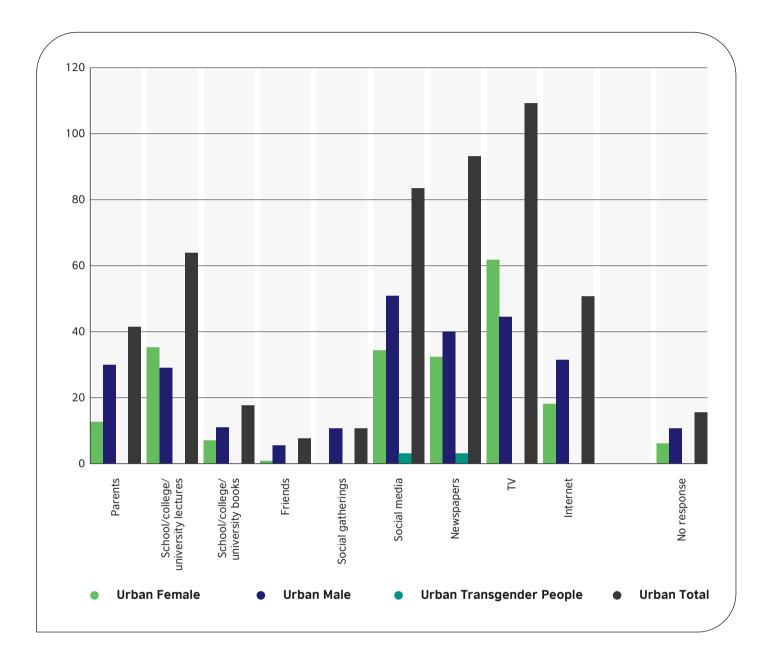
For the question about the most reliable digital media with three answer options, different media were ranked as shown in Figures 31 and 32.

Figure 31: Most reliable digital media (rural)
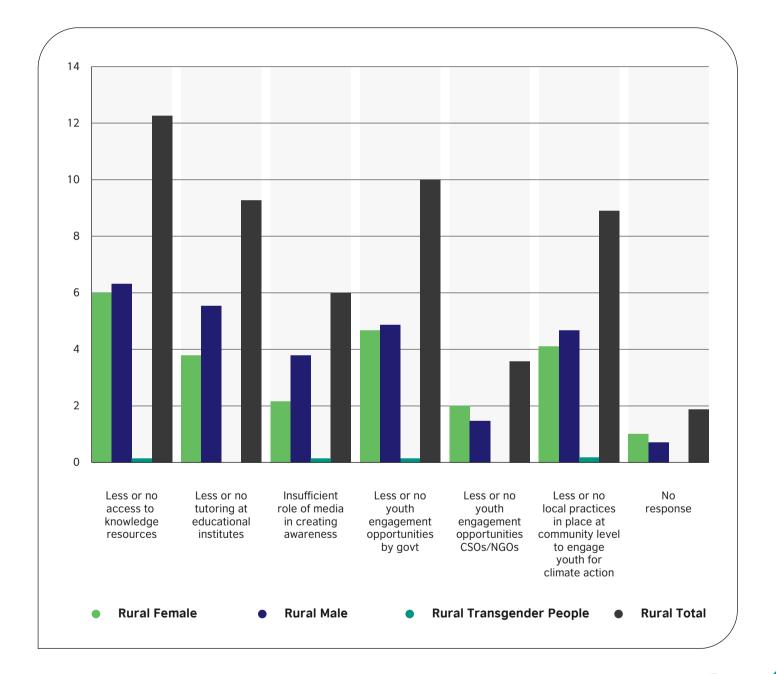
Figure 32: Most reliable digital media (urban)
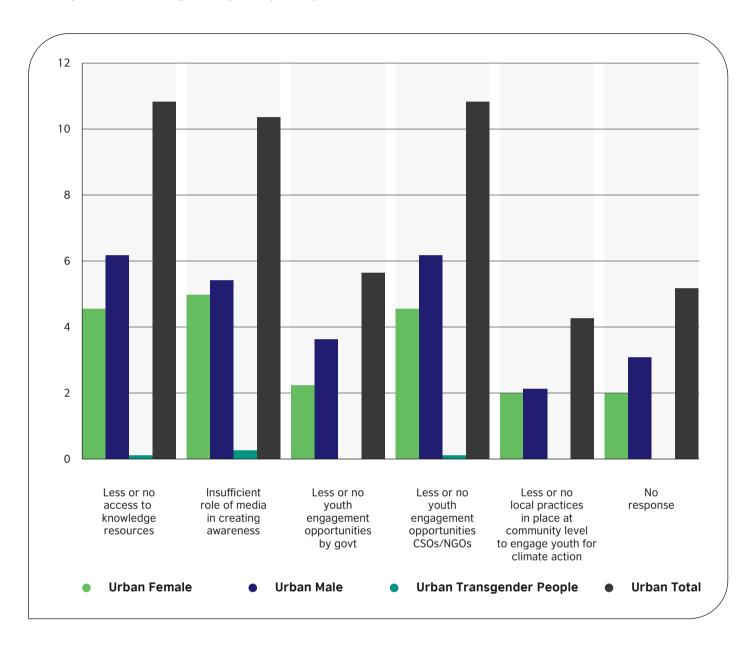
Again, conventional television was ranked as number one, followed by other social media such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and WhatsApp. The trends were not very different between urban and rural youth, indicating that digital access and usage have now more or less evened out across the geographical divide in Sri Lanka.

Regarding the role of CSOs in engaging youth and the most suitable tools to promote youth engagement in climate action, the most common response was to conduct more localised action enabling youth groups to engage effectively where success of these could be shown. With regard to creating awareness, social media groups as well as innovative tools such as drama and arts were suggested. A key difference observed in the FGD responses and the individual survey responses was that in the individual surveys, social media was highlighted as a popular tool but not regarded as a trusted source, while in the FGDs social media was seen as an easier way to attract youth. This may be due to the fact that youth might have various other sources to verify the information they receive.

4.8 Challenges for meaningful youth engagement in climate action

The surveyed youth were given the option to highlight the most important challenge they face when engaging in meaningful climate action. Out of six options, they were given the chance to select three (see Figures 33 and 34).

Figure 33: Challenges for youth participation in climate action (rural)

- ● Rural Female
- ● Rural Male
- ● Rural Transgender People
- ● Rural Total

Figure 34: Challenges for youth participation in climate action (urban)

Of the barriers identified by the survey, lack of youth engagement opportunities provided by the government, lack of tutoring at educational institutions, insufficient role of media in creating awareness and lack of access to knowledge resources, all received a similar number of votes

This result can be compared with the feedback received from the FGDs, where the lack of available time was seen as a challenge. Many highlighted that the current way of life does not allow youth to engage in community-level extracurricular activities, as their time is already strictly allocated to education or vocational training tasks. It was highlighted that instead of individual stand-alone actions, changing the way of life would be the correct path to promote effective climate action. Other major challenges discussed were the lack of opportunities at the local level to engage as well as pressure from family to do regular day-to-day work. Financial difficulties were also highlighted as a major concern.

The response from the key informants was similar. With regard to challenges faced by youth in engaging in climate action, opinions were diverse, with the most common responses being the busy, fast-paced nature of current lifestyles as well as the responsibilities of youth to support their families. According to the informants, youth have little freedom to get involved in activities besides their education and employment. Lack of knowledge, capacity, and social networks was also seen as a barrier, as was a lack of strategies and platforms from the Government, CSOs, or NGOs to engage youth.

5 Conclusion and key recommendations

Climate change is a pivotal issue affecting youth today. Youth are among the most vulnerable groups to climate change impacts, particularly in developing countries such as Sri Lanka, but they are also the future leaders and decision-makers whose attitudes and actions will prove decisive for how the world addresses climate change mitigation and adaptation.

In Sri Lanka, youth are aware of climate change and its impacts but often lack a detailed understanding of climate change and its impacts as well as opportunities for climate action. They are willing and interested to learn more and engage, even though they see climate change as more of a future threat, not one of the most pressing issues in their individual lives at present.

Less than a third of youth have received climate-change-related awareness training, and roughly the same percentage is engaged in climate action. There are barriers to youth engagement that require an effort to overcome, and it seems that awareness and capacity-building are necessary to enhance youth engagement. Youth are interested in gaining more knowledge and doing something that benefits their communities, but they need to be given means and opportunities. Among other enabling factors, media plays a key role, with social media being the most used and traditional media being considered the most trustworthy when it comes to information on climate change.

5.1 Key findings

The following key findings were collected from the FGDs and KIIs:

- There are currently no national climate change champions or role models to spearhead climate action campaigns.

- There are several organisations and individuals working on youth and climate action in Sri Lanka. The process of collective action is more sustainable.

- Youth lack a number of skills to successfully lead climate action, including general soft skills such as leadership, developing networks, and strategic planning skills, and specific technical skills with regard to adaptation, mitigation, and risk management action.

- Youth who have attained higher education are more likely to have access to skills and knowledge related to climate action, than youth with lower levels of education.

- There is consensus among experts that low-income communities are very likely to be affected by climate change impacts. Within these groups, youth, children, women, disabled people, and farmers are among the most vulnerable subgroups of society.

- District data shows that youth with lower average incomes (based on Central Bank statistics) are more vulnerable and consequently more aware of climate change impacts.

- Young Sri Lankans are so occupied in the pursuit of education, tuition, vocational training, fulfilling family responsibilities and work, that they have little time to spare for voluntary activities related to climate change or other extracurricular engagement.

- Climate action should become intrinsic to livelihood options for youth to allow for their effective engagement.

5.2 Key recommendations

For government actors, CSOs, NGOs, and other institutions, the following recommendations were collected from the FGDs and KIIs:

- Reach out actively to youth, conduct activities that they can engage in and plan actions in conjunction with the youth of an area.

- Enhance access to trainings and capacity-building, particularly for rural youth.

- Carry out capacity-building sessions among the local community.

- Conduct capacity-building sessions in local languages.

- Identify key groups and provide skills irrespective of educational background.

- Enhance integration of climate change education into national school curricula, vocational training, and university courses.

- Create spaces and allocate time for youth to engage in environmental or climate action as an extracurricular activity; establish incentives and strengthen recognition of such activities.

- Increase valuation of climate and environmental action as employment options.

- Enhance sustainability and environmental training in companies and government institutions.

- Enhance alignment of education policies with policies, plans, and processes related to climate change and sustainable development.

- Recommend a quota for youth engagement in all locally implemented climate-change-related projects to ensure a specific percentage of job positions are given to local youth.

- Develop youth groups from the grassroots level and connect them with the district, provincial, and national-level associations as well as international processes.

- Develop collaborative projects between government and CSOs/NGOs to connect youth with national and international interventions or programmes.

For youth to enhance their engagement, the following recommendations were identified by the FGDs and KIIs:

- Build advocacy and networking skills alongside leadership skills within different groups to facilitate the emergence of role models.

- Utilise social media to create awareness of climate change and climate action among youth.

- Build youth capacities on practical traditional knowledge and skills around ecosystem services, land use and water management that relate to climate change adaptation and resilience.

- Spread awareness and strengthen recognition of climate change and climate action as a key challenge as well as opportunity for youth.

- Form networks and strengthen coordination, collaboration, and exchange of experiences among youth groups and other community-based organisations or CSOs.

- Better integrate climate change into school and training curricula as well as the day-to-day life of youth, so the perception of climate action can shift from extracurricular engagement to an integral part of education, work, and life.

References

1. Aheeyar, M M (2012) Climate change adaptation in water management for food security: Recent developments in Sri Lanka – A review of Existing Knowledge and Information. Sri Lanka Water Partnership and Global Water Partnership.

2. Ambepitiya, K (2015) The Role of Communication Technology and Indigenous Knowledge in Promoting Climate Change Adaptation in Sri Lanka.
Baba, N (2010) Sinking the Pearl of the Indian Ocean: Climate Change in Sri Lanka. Global Majority E-Journal, Vol. 1, No. 1 (June 2010), pp. 4-1.

3. Central Bank of Sri Lanka (2020) Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka 2020. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Statistics Department.

4. Damayanthi, MKN, Samarasinhe, GG de LW, Bandara, MACS, Hitihamu, HMSJM and Perera, S (2013) Youth in Development: Sri Lanka. Research Report No. 161. Colombo, Sri Lanka: Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute. Available online at http://www.harti.gov.lk/images/download/reasearch_report/new1/161.pdf.

5. Dundar, H, Millot, B, Riboud, M, Shojo, M, Aturupane, H, Goyal, S and Dhushyanth, R (2017) Sri Lanka Education Sector Assessment: Achievements, Challenges, and Policy Options. The World Bank.

6. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) (2019) Youth in Motion for Climate Action! A Compilation of Youth Initiatives in Agriculture to Address the Impacts of Climate Change. Rome, Italy: FAO. Available online at http://www.fao.org/3/ca5746en/ca5746en.pdf.

7. Government of Sri Lanka, Department of Census and Statistics (2012) Census of Population and Housing 2012. Ministry of Policy Planning and Economic Affairs. Available online at http://www.statistics.gov.lk/pophousat/cph2011/Pages/Activities/Reports/FinalReport/FinalReportE.pdf.

8. Government of Sri Lanka, Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment (2015) National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change Impacts in Sri Lanka: 2016–2025. Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment, Climate Change Secretariat. Available online at https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NAPC/Documents%20NAP/National%20Reports/National%20Adaptation%20Plan%20of%20Sri%20Lanka.pdf.

9. Government of Sri Lanka, Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment (2016) Nationally Determined Contributions. Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment, Climate Change Secretariat. Available online at https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/ndcstaging/PublishedDocuments/Sri%20Lanka%20First/NDCs%20of%20Sri%20Lanka.pdf.

10. Gunatilaka, R, Mayer, M and Vodopivec, M (eds) (2010) The Challenge of Youth Employment in Sri Lanka. Washington, DC: The World Bank. Available online at https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Challenge-of-Youth-Employment-in-Sri-Lanka-Gunatilaka-Mayer/068158bd199d5a23efaf2cf885e362770af75adf.

11. Hwang, S and Kim, J (2017) UN and SDGs. A Handbook for Youth. Incheon, South Korea: UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) .

12. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) (2019) Creating Opportunities for Rural Youth. 2019 Rural Development Report. Rome, Italy: IFAD. Available online at https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/41190221/RDR2019_Overview_e_W.pdf/699560f2-d02e-16b8-4281-596d4c9be25a.

13. International Labour Organization (ILO) (2016) Youth Employment Policy Summary: Sri Lanka. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO. Available online at https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-bangkok/documents/publication/wcms_534105.pdf.

14. International Labour Organization (ILO) (2017) World Social Protection Report 2017–2019. Universal Social Protection to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO. Available online at https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_604882/lang--en/index.htm.

15. International Labour Organization (ILO) (2020) World Employment and Social Outlook. Trends 2020. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO. Available online at https://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/weso/2020/lang--en/index.htm.

16. Lee, K, Gjersoe, N, O'Neill, S and Barnett, J (2020) Youth perceptions of climate change: A narrative synthesis. WIREs Climate Change 11/3.

17. Maclean, R, Jagannathan, S, and Panth, B (2018) Education and Skills for Inclusive Growth, Green Jobs and the Greening of Economies in Asia. Case Study Summaries of India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and VietNam. Springer.

18. SLYCAN Trust (2020) Youth Engagement in Climate Change Adaptation. Empowering Youth to Enhance Climate Action. UNFCCC/SLYCAN Trust.

19. Tilakaratna, G and Jayawardana, S (2015) Social Protection in Sri Lanka: Current Status and Effect on Labour Market Outcomes. SARNET Working Paper No. 3. Institute for Human Development. Available online at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316542698_Tilakaratna_G_and_S_Jayawardena_2015_%27Social_Protection_in_Sri_Lanka_Current_Status_and_Effect_on_Labour_Market_Outcomes%27_SARNET_working_paper_No_3_South_Asia_Research_Network_for_Employment_and_Socia.

20. UNDP/GEF/SGP (2016) Coping with Climate Change and Variability: Lessons from Sri Lankan Communities. UNDP Global Environment Facility/Small Grants Programme.

21. UNESCO (2013) Country Programming Document for Sri Lanka 2013-2017.

22. United Nations (2020) World Youth Report: Youth Social Entrepreneurship and the 2030 Agenda. New York, USA: United Nations. Available online at https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2020/07/2020-World-Youth-Report-FULL-FINAL.pdf.

23. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2020) Human Development Report 2020. The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene. New York, USA: UNDP. Available online at http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr_2020_overview_english.pdf.

24. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Oxford Poverty and Human Development index (OPHI) (2020) Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2020. Charting Pathways Out of Multidimensional Poverty: Achieving the SDGs. UNDP and OPHI. Available online at https://ophi.org.uk/global-mpi-report-2020/.

25. United Nations Joint Framework Initiative on Children, Youth and Climate Change (2013) Youth in Action on Climate Change: Inspirations from Around the World. Bonn, Germany: UNFCCC Secretariat. Available online at https://sgp.undp.org/images/Publication%20Youth%20in-%20Action%20on%20Climate%20Change%20Inspirations%20from%20Around%20the%20World%20English-%20SGP%20examples.pdf.

26. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2009) At the Frontier: Young People and Climate Change. Youth Supplement to the State of the World Population. New York: USA: UNFPA. Available online at https://unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/youth_swp_2009.pdf.

27. United States Agency for International Development (USAID), International Executive Service Corps (IESC) and Verite Research (2018) Youth Labour Market Assessment: Sri Lanka. Colombo, Sri Lanka: YouLead Project – IESC and Verite Research. Available online at https://www.veriteresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Youth-Labour-Market-Assessment-26.12.2018.pdf.

28. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (2018) Climate Risk Profile: Sri Lanka. USAID Fact Sheet. Available online at https://www.climatelinks.org/sites/default/files/asset/document/Sri%20Lanka_CRP_Final.pdf.

Annexes

Annex I: Methodology forthe analysis of feedback

Basis

The feedback was obtained using three methods:

1. **Sample-based survey** among youth to identify perceptions, beliefs, and barriers around climate change and climate action in Sri Lanka. This was administered through a structured questionnaire.

2. **Focus group discussions (FGDs)** among selected categories of stakeholders to identify their standpoint on youth perspectives of climate change and climate action in Sri Lanka as well as on the influence of the English language in effectuating climate action. This was administered through the KIIs.

3. **Key informant interviews (KIIs)** among selected categories of stakeholders to identify their standpoint on climate change, the role of civil society and youth perspectives of climate change and climate action in Sri Lanka.

The methodology for the analysis of the feedback presented in this section intends to address the research questions related to the characterisation of youth perspectives on climate change and climate action. There is an emphasis on the broader context of sustainable development, to link the responses of the FGDs and KIIs in appraising the findings of the sample-based survey and to link the overall feedback of the field surveys (above three methods) to the findings of the literature review in context of the country as well as global scenarios in general.

Sample-based survey

The feedback was obtained using three methods:

- **Stage 1:** Presentation of the responses quantitatively, where the responses for each question in the questionnaire are presented in tabular format, under the three main sections of the questionnaire (namely, Section 1: Demographics, Section 2: Perceptions and attitudes, and Section 3: Challenges and readiness).

- **Stage 2:** Presentation of the responses in graphical forms (particularly pie, column, and bar charts in combination) in synthesising the findings. Here responses of more than one question could be presented in a single graphical form as appropriate for better illustration and interpretation.

- **Stage 3:** Observation and interpretation of each of the graphical forms, in accordance with the research questions (RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 4:** Critical review and conclusion, based on the outputs of Stage 3 (Observation and interpretation), presented under each of the research questions.

Focus group discussions (FGDs)

The methodology for analysis of the responses of the FGDs comprised five stages:

- **Stage 1:** Qualitative descriptions of the responses for each focus group in discussion questions, categorised under the defined stakeholder groups (i.e. educationists, government representatives, CSO and NGO representatives, community influencers, technical specialists and researchers, and youth groups).

- **Stage 2:** Synthesis of the responses of all focus groups under each key discussion question.

- **Stage 3:** Establish the relevance of key discussion questions to the research questions (RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 4:** Compare and contrast the responses of all focus groups (Stage 2 above) with those derived in the sample-based survey (Stages 3 and 4 of the sample-based survey methodology) under each research question (RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 5:** Interpret the results of Stage 4 above to make conclusions on the level of conformity/non-conformity of the responses of the two methods, namely the sample-based survey and FGDs (i.e. to address RQ7).

Key informant interviews (KIIs)

The methodology for analysis of the responses of the KIIs was similar to that of the FGDs presented above, and listed in the following five stages :

- Stage 1: Qualitative descriptions of the responses for each key informant in each key interview question, categorised under the defined stakeholder groups (i.e. educationists, government representatives, CSO and NGO representatives, community influencers, technical specialists and researchers, and youth groups).

- Stage 2: Synthesis of the responses of all key informants under each key interview question.

- Stage 3: Establish the relevance of key interview questions to the research questions (RQ1 to RQ6).

- Stage 4: Compare and contrast the responses of all key informants (Stage 2 above) with those derived from the sample-based survey (Stage 3 and Stage 4 of the sample-based survey methodology) under each research question (RQ1 to RQ6).

- Stage 5: Interpret the results of Stage 4 above to make conclusions on the level of conformity/non-conformity of the responses to the two methods, namely the sample-based survey and KIIs (i.e. to address RQ7).

Literature review

The final stage of the analysis is with reference to the findings of the literature review, which was accomplished using the following three-stage methodology:

- **Stage 1:** Synopsise the information gathered through the literature review in interpreting the local and international scenarios to respond to each research question (RQ1 to RQ6)

- **Stage 2:** Compare and contrast the real-time findings (sample-based survey, FGDs and KIIs) with those derived in the literature review under each research question (RQ1 to RQ6).

- **Stage 3:** Interpret the results of Stage 2 above to make conclusions on the level of agreement of the real-time findings with those derived through the literature review (i.e. to address RQ8).

Annex II: Research questions

Research questions (RQs)

The feedback was obtained using three methods:

RQ1. How high is the overall awareness of youth on climate change and their willingness to engage in climate action in Sri Lanka? Which climate impacts are seen as the most important? How many youth have had personal experience with climate change impacts?

RQ2. How familiar are youth in Sri Lanka with national and international processes surrounding climate change and sustainable development?

RQ3. Where do youth get information on climate change and which sources of information do they consider most trustworthy and reliable?

RQ4. What are the ways through which youth believe they could engage in climate action? What do they perceive as challenges for youth engagement, and how high is their willingness to overcome them?

RQ5. Are there regional patterns or patterns based on population characteristics (i.e. gender, ethnic group, age, occupation, education) when it comes to awareness of climate change and willingness to engage in climate action?

RQ6. Are regional differences or differences based on population characteristics correlated with climate risk and vulnerability assessments of the country?

RQ7. How does input from the focus group discussions and key informant interviews relate to the survey results? Are there discrepancies or gaps between assessments from experts and practitioners and the surveyed representative population sample?

RQ8. Do the general findings of the survey correspond to findings from the literature review? If not, where are the deviations? Data triangulation of the real-time findings and the body of reviewed literature.

Key discussion questions (KDQs) (in FGD)

KDQ1. How are climate challenges affecting young people (girls/boys from both urban and rural areas especially young people with disabilities, as well as young people in schools)? Is there one particular group that is impacted more than others?

KDQ2. How can the youth engage with local government and other stakeholders/networks to play their part in tackling climate challenges?

KDQ3. What skills do you think are necessary for youth to become climate leaders of the future? (Discuss skills necessary for urban and rural youth as well as for male and female young groups.)

KDQ4. Mention the potential tools/mediums youth can utilise to create awareness on climate action.

KDQ5. What role should the civil societies play to ensure sensitisation and engagement of the communities especially young people for climate risk mitigation?

KDQ6. In your opinion what type of challenges restrict effective youth engagement for climate action?

KDQ7. Discuss opportunities that exist for young women and men to take part in action around climate change.

KDQ8. Are poor people more vulnerable to climate change? Discuss in light of the country specific experience/observations if any.

KDQ9. In your opinion, can fluency in the English language make climate activism more effective/easier?

Key interview questions (KIQs) (in KIIs)

KIQ1. Is climate change considered a core challenge in your country? In what ways? Is your country developing inclusive policies to manage these challenges?

KIQ2. What is the role of civil society in building capacities at grassroot community level for climate risk mitigation and adaptation?

KIQ3. In your opinion what type of challenges restrict active and effective youth participation in climate action?

KIQ4. In your country, which sector is most actively engaged in climate actions, and how successfully or unsuccessfully are they engaging youth in these efforts?

KIQ5. Who, if any, are known youth icons/networks that are actively working on climate action in your country?

KIQ6. What skills do young people require to work on climate action? How can we help youth develop these critical skills? Are there any emerging/prevailing employability opportunities to engage with for the young people?

KIQ7. How can youth engage with national, regional, and global networks to better support climate action?

KIQ8. Are poor people more vulnerable to climate change? Discuss in light of the country specific experience/observations if any.

KIQ9. Is there any one group that is more adversely affected by climate change? e.g. women, young people, persons with disabilities etc.

Annex III: Survey questionnaire

A survey of the perceptions, attitudes, challenges and readiness of youth in Sri Lanka around climate vulnerability and their action plan for looming threats.

Number		Date		Language of Interview	☐ English ☐ Sinhala ☐ Tamil
1. Demographics					
1. Select your gender		☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to say		2. Select your age group	☐ 18 ☐ 22 ☐ 19 ☐ 23 ☐ 20 ☐ 24 ☐ 21 ☐ 25
3. Do you have any disabilities?		☐ Yes ☐ No		4. Area type of your residence	☐ Rural ☐ Urban
5. Country of residence		☐ Sri Lanka		6. City of residence: _____	7. Province/ Division: _____
8. Highest level of schooling		☐ No schooling ☐ Primary (Nursery to Grade 5) ☐ Middle (6–8 grade) ☐ High school (9–10 grade) ☐ Higher secondary (11–12 grade) ☐ Graduation level/bachelors (BA/BSc/BS) ☐ Technical/Vocational Training Graduate ☐ Master's degree ☐ Professional degree ☐ Doctorate			
9. Current occupation/job type		☐ Government employee ☐ Business person ☐ Farming ☐ Private employee ☐ Daily wager ☐ Fishing ☐ NA (I am a student) ☐ NA (I am unemployed) ☐ Other ☐ Self-employed			
10. Family's (parents' /guardians') major occupation/job type		☐ Government employee ☐ Business person ☐ Farming ☐ Private employee ☐ Daily wager ☐ Fishing ☐ NA (retired) ☐ NA (not employed) ☐ Other (mention) ☐ NA (not working) ☐ Self-employed			
11. How would you rate your English language skills		☐ Beginner - Can't speak and understand English ☐ Elementary - Speak and understand few things only ☐ Intermediate -Can speak and understand reasonably and know basic tenses ☐ Advanced - Speak and understand English completely fluently			

2. Perception and attitudes

12. Do you think English is useful for communicating ideas and influencing others?	☐ Yes ☐ No	13. Do you have easy access to quality English learning resources	☐ Yes ☐ No

14. Select and rank the top three most important issues for youth in today's world

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Climate change	Poverty	Unemployment	Armed conflicts	Fake news	Political polarization	Extremism and terrorism
Rank#	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cyber insecurity	Pandemics	Inequalities	Access to education	Quality healthcare	Other (please mention)
Rank#	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*

15. What do you think climate change is?	

16. Select the three most common sources through which you hear most about climate change	☐ Parents ☐ School/college/ university lectures ☐ School/college/ university books ☐ Friends ☐ Social gatherings ☐ Social media ☐ Newspapers ☐ TV ☐ Internet ☐ Radiot ☐ Government source ☐ Other (please mention)
17. Which of the given sources do you think are most reliable for getting information on climate change? Select only three most common sources	☐ Parents ☐ School/college/ university lectures ☐ School/college/ university books ☐ Friends ☐ Social gatherings ☐ Social media ☐ Newspapers ☐ TV ☐ Internet ☐ Radiot ☐ Government source ☐ Other (please mention)

18. What are the top three most commonly occurring climate change issues you have observed in your area?	☐ Decreased livestock productivity ☐ Depletion of freshwater resources ☐ Decreased agriculture productivity ☐ Changing rainfall patterns ☐ Dry seasons (frequent/severe) ☐ Increased drought ☐ Flooding ☐ Landslides ☐ Loss of forest cover ☐ Coastal erosion ☐ Temperature increase ☐ None of them ☐ Other (Please specify)
19.For how many years have you been observing these changes/issues?	☐ Last 1–2 years ☐ Last 3–4 years ☐ Last 5 years ☐ No opinion ☐ More than 5 years
20. Do you think climate change will be the biggest threat to your country in coming times?	☐ Yes ☐ No
21. In your view how can climate change issues be addressed?	
22. What is the most powerful tool that can be used to address climate change?	☐ Education ☐ Campaigning/activism ☐ Policy level changes ☐ All of these ☐ Other _____
23. In your opinion which segment of society is most affected by the climate change?	☐ Women and girls ☐ Persons with disabilities ☐ Young people in schools ☐ Young people as whole ☐ Adult men and women ☐ Poor communities ☐ Indigenous communities ☐ Other (please mention)
24. Explain how this segment has been affected	
25. Which of the given activities do you think is most effective in influencing political decision making on climate issues? (select only one)	☐ Voting in elections ☐ Contacting a local political representative ☐ Taking an active part in a campaign ☐ Signing a petition ☐ Taking part in a public protest ☐ Joining a political party ☐ Showcasing success of community led impact projects

26. Which three of the following digital information mediums do you trust as most reliable in providing accurate information regarding climate change? (rate and select only top three)

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Twitter	WhatsApp	Facebook	Snapchat	YouTube	TV news	Digital newspapers
Rank#	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*

27. How has social media changed the way you think/feel about climate issues?	☐ Much more positive ☐ More positive ☐ Neither more positive nor more negative ☐ More negative ☐ Much more negative

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements below:

28. I am familiar with the SDGs and the social issues they cover	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
29. I am familiar with COP26 and the issues it will cover	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
30. Social media is a good source of information for learning about climate change and related issues	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
31. I am worried about the effects of climate change	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
32. I feel that my opinions on climate will	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
33. I feel that young people play a critical role in climate action	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

34. The state and government in my country consider climate to be a serious issue	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
35. I feel that getting knowledge and helping others to understand climate change and related threats is our public responsibility	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
36. I can access information about events and developments in my community	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

3. Challenges and readiness

37. Have you ever participated in any climate change awareness session?	☐ Yes, in a session organised by a government body ☐ Yes in a session organised by an NGO/not-for-profit ☐ Yes in a session organised by local community organisation ☐ No
38. Have you ever participated in any climate change mitigation/action activity?	☐ Yes, in a session organised by a government body ☐ Yes in a session organised by an NGO/not-for-profit ☐ Yes in a session organised by local community organisation ☐ No

39. In your opinion which of the below challenges are most responsible for restricting youth participation in climate action in your country? (please rank 1 for biggest challenge and 5 for lowest challenge)

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rank#	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*	*Rank#*
Less or no access to knowledge resources	Less or no tutoring at educational institutes	Insufficient role of media in creating awareness	Less or no youth engagement opportunities offered by govt	Less or no youth engagement opportunities offered by CSO/NGOs	Less or no local practices in place at community level to engage youth for climate action

40. Have you ever experienced/encountered with any climate posed incident?	☐ Yes ☐ No	

41. If yes, select the type of incident that you experienced/been affected by

☐ Flood	☐ Excessive Rain/Snowfall	☐ Glacial bursting	☐ Drought	☐ Severe dry season	☐ Decreased water sources	☐ Other specify

42. How has the incident affected you? Explain in your own words

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements below:

43. I have learned enough about the local climate threats	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
44. I am eager to know more about climate issues	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
45. I have been speaking on climate-related threats within my community/with my peers	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
46. I am taking practical steps to protect my community/peers/family	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

47. The pandemic has increased the vulnerability of my community towards climatic threats	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
48. I am aware of the Covid-19 threats and want to build my community's resilience on climate threats further	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
49. I don't have access to affordable capacity-building resources on climate action	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
50. I am engaged in community development activities (e.g., environmental cleanliness, road planning, business development, etc.)	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
51. In my community I can provide immediate relief in case of any climate-posed incident	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
52. I can use digital technology efficiently to create awareness and educate and influence peers against the climate-posed threats	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree
53. I can play a role as awareness agent on climate change if appropriate knowledge is provided to me	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Slightly agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Slightly disagree ☐ Strongly disagree

Annex IV: Focus group discussion guide

Instructions

The organisers and moderator need to ensure a gender balance in the FGDs. Preferred participants groups are as listed below:

1. Educationists *(from educational institutes, independent consultants)*

2. Government representatives *(relevant ministry professionals, serving and retired bureaucrats)*

3. CSO/NGO representatives

4. Community influencers *(individuals who are directly or indirectly involved in climate action)*

5. Technical specialists and researchers *(environmentalists, climate experts, etc. from public and private sectors)*

6. Youth groups *(individuals, members of youth clubs, societies and organisations)*

Basic demographics to record

Date: Time: Location: Sector:

Respondent Name	Gender	Occupation	Country	Age Group

Key discussion questions

It is entirely up to the discretion of organisers to either moderate discussion on all questions in each FGD or generate discussions on specific sets of questions bearing in mind the relevancy of audiences. The below given parameters are benchmarks to serve and generate discussion.

1. How are climate challenges affecting young people *(girls/boys in school from both urban and rural areas especially young people with disabilities, as well as young people in schools)?* Is there one particular group that is impacted more than others?

2. How can the youth engage with local government and other stakeholders/networks to play their part in tackling climate challenges?

3. What skills do you think are necessary for youth to become climate leaders of future? (Discuss skills necessary for urban and rural youth as well as for male and female young groups.)

4. Mention the potential tools/mediums youth can utilise to create awareness on climate action.

5. What role should the civil societies play to ensure sensitisation and engagement of the communities especially young people for climate risk mitigation?

6. In your opinion what type of challenges restrict effective youth engagement for climate action?

7. Discuss opportunities that exist for young women and men to take part in action around climate change.

8. Are poor people more vulnerable to climate change? Discuss in light of the country specific experience/observations if any.

9. In your opinion, can fluency in the English language make climate activism more effective/easier?

Annex IV: Focus group discussion guide

Name of group	Area	No. of participants	Gender breakdown	
			Male	Female
Young Zoologist Association of Sri Lanka	Island wide	12	8	4
Monaragala – Youth Group	Monaragala	10	5	5
Nuwara Eliya District – Youth Group	Nuwara Eliya	10	6	4
Jaffna District – Youth Group	Jaffna	13	11	2
Dreamspace Academy, Batticaloa	Batticaloa, Ampara	11	8	3
Mundalama, Puttalam – Youth Group	Puttalam	12	4	8
Colombo – Youth Group	Colombo	10	4	6
Benthara, Elpitiya – Youth Group	Galle	11	9	2
Nestle Preschool premises, Ambalantota	Ambalantota	10	6	4
Medirigiriya – Polonnaruwa	Polonnaruwa	10	8	2
Moratuwa – Colombo – Youth Group	Colombo	10	4	6
AIESEC in Sri Lanka	Island wide	13	6	7
AIESEC in Sri Lanka	Anuradhapura	10	6	4
Kalutara Youth Association members	Kalutara	12	6	6

Annex IV: Focus group discussion guide

Name	Designation	Institution	Gender
Mega Ganeshan	Senior Executive – Sustainability	MAS-Linea Aqua	Female
Sunimal Jayathunga	Additional Secretary	Ministry of Environment	Male
Dumindu Herath	Project Manager	IDEA Sri Lanka	Male
Ranga Pallawala	Climate Consultant		Male
WK Janith Vimukthi Akalanka	Project Coordinator	Sarwodhaya	Male
GAS Ginigaddara	University Professor	University of Rajarata	Female
BVR Punyawardena	Retired, Principal Scientist/Head	Natural resources department	Male
Srimal Liyanage	Provincial Manager	Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, Southern and Uva	Male
Namiz Musafer	Energy Consultant		Male
Heminda Jayaweera	Chief Operating Officer	Sri Lanka Institute of Nanotechnology	Male
M Sugirtharan	Senior Lecturer	Department of Agricultural Engineering, Faculty of Agriculture, Eastern University of Sri Lanka	Male
Adheesha Chathuranga Perera	Senior Manager	Sustainable Banking	Integrated Risk Management Department – SDB Bank	Male
Senashia Ekanayake	Programme and Communications Manager		Female
KGS Shanthi	Youth Services Officer		Female
Wagisha Perera	Humanitarian and Resilience Officer		Female
Kumar Lopez	Chief Executive Officer	Sri Lanka Press Institute	Male
Samantha Kumarasena	Chief Executive Officer	National Cleaner Production Centre	Male
Ruvini Ketagoda	Executive Officer	Mitsubishi Corporation	Female
Medhisha Gunawardena	Senior Lecturer		Male
AM Prabath Dilruwan	Youth Service Officer		Male
Rangitha Balasooriya	Senior Project Coordinator	IOM	Female
Sudarsha De Silva	Consultant/youth advocacy	Earth Lanka	Male
Suramya Hettiarachchi	Advocacy Manager		Female
Thisura Ramanayake	President	Rotaract Club of Achievers Lanka Business School	Male

To find out more about the Climate Connection, please visit:
www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection

To find out more about the British Council's Research
and Policy Insight work, please visit:
www.britishcouncil.org/research-policy-insight