Delegate Report

UNFCCC Conference of Parties 29, 2024

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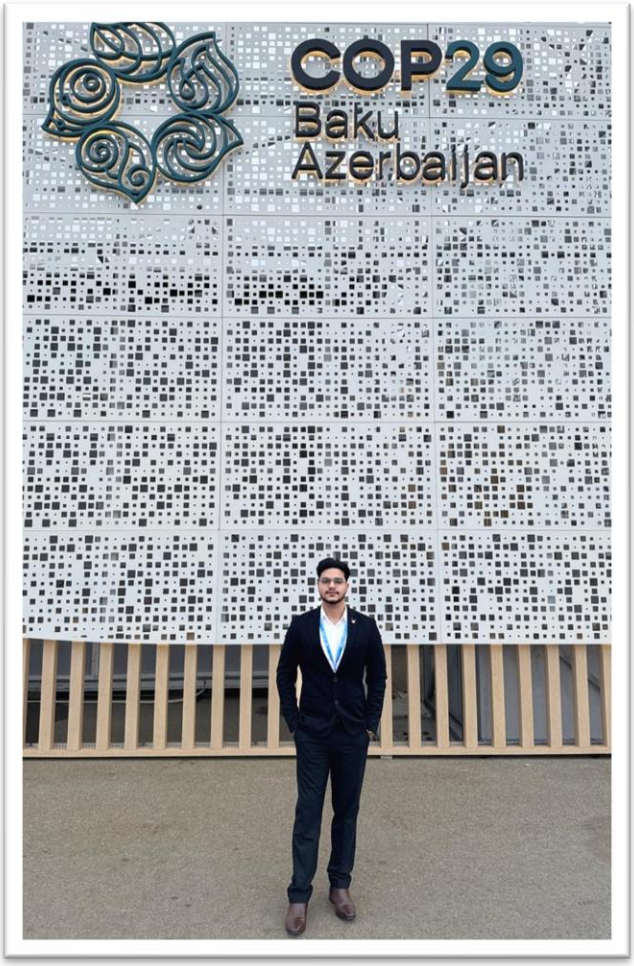


Overview

Attending COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, as a representative of the Indian Youth Climate Network (IYCN) was a transformative and profoundly enriching experience. This global platform brought together world leaders, negotiators, youth delegates, and climate advocates to address humanity's most pressing challenges. Representing youth voices, mainly from South Asia, was an immense honour and a significant responsibility.

My focus at COP29 was amplifying discussions around **Loss and Damage (L&D)**, a critical issue for vulnerable regions like South Asia. I highlighted compounding flood-induced damages in Assam and West Bengal, spanning six decades, emphasizing how these events have shaped the vulnerability and resilience of affected communities and how adaptation and mitigation strategies are falling behind the development pace.

As a Children & Youth Pavilion speaker, I presented my research paper on "Loss & Damage: Impacts and Pathways for Resilience in South Asia." This opportunity allowed me to bring attention to localized resilience measures, climate risk insurance, and the Loss & Damage Fund, which are crucial for addressing the escalating impacts of climate disasters in countries like India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.

One of the most valuable aspects of COP29 was the diversity of interactions and dialogues. From bilateral meetings with global delegates to high-level discussions on **the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM)** and **the Santiago Network** on economic and non-economic loss due to slow onset and extreme events, every moment provided insights into how global policies are shaped and the gaps that must be bridged. These interactions were a reminder of the importance of youth-driven perspectives in shaping actionable and inclusive climate solutions.

This report reflects my journey at COP29, detailing the events, negotiations, and side activities that shaped my experience. It captures the technical discussions and the human stories of resilience, hope, and collective action that I witnessed. As someone deeply committed to climate justice, I believe the insights and networks gained here will strengthen climate action at both local and global levels.

Duration: Week 1 & Week 2 (11 Nov – 20 Nov)

Badge: Issued by Indian Youth Climate Network

Recognitions:

- Interviewed by **ClimaTalk**

- Interviewed by **U.S. Department of State**

- Interviewed by **African union Local media**

Objectives

As a delegate for the Indian Youth Climate Network (IYCN) at COP29, my objectives were clearly defined to ensure meaningful engagement and contribution to the global dialogue on climate action. These goals guided my participation throughout the conference:

1. **Amplifying South Asian Perspectives**
    - Represent the unique challenges and needs of South Asian countries, particularly in addressing Loss and Damage (L&D), to ensure their voices are heard on global platforms.
2. **Presenting Research and Solutions**
    - Share insights from my research on "Loss & Damage: Impacts and Pathways for Resilience in South Asia" at the Children & Youth Pavilion, focusing on innovative solutions like climate risk insurance and the Loss & Damage Fund.
3. **Engaging in Negotiations**
    - Actively track and contribute to discussions on the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM), Santiago Network, and the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for climate finance, ensuring that they address the critical needs of vulnerable communities.
4. **Networking and Collaboration**
    - Connect with global stakeholders, including negotiators, policymakers, and youth leaders, to exchange ideas and foster collaborations for localized and scalable climate solutions.
5. **Highlighting Non-Economic Losses**
    - Advocate for including non-economic losses—such as trauma, cultural identity, and ecosystem degradation—in L&D frameworks to emphasize the human side of climate impacts.
6. **Youth Empowerment**
    - Represent IYCN and YOUNGO, ensuring youth voices and perspectives are integrated into climate policy discussions and decision-making processes.
7. **Bridging Local and Global Efforts**
    - Explore ways to align global climate action strategies with local initiatives in India, particularly those addressing flooding and resilience-building.

Through these objectives, my goal was to contribute to meaningful discussions and bring back actionable insights and strategies to strengthen climate resilience efforts in my region

Activities

During COP29, I actively participated in various sessions, negotiations, and bilateral meetings, enabling me to contribute to critical discussions on climate action and resilience-building. Here is a detailed account of my key activities:

1. **Presentation at the Children & Youth Pavilion**

Presenting my research paper, *"Loss & Damage: Impacts and Pathways for Resilience in South Asia,"* at the Children & Youth Pavilion was a significant milestone. This platform allowed me to:

- Highlight the historical trend of flood-induced losses in Assam and West Bengal from 1961 to 2020.
- Propose innovative solutions such as climate risk insurance and implementing the Loss & Damage Fund.
- Advocate for localized, community-driven resilience measures to address escalating climate risks in South Asia.

The discussion resonated with youth and policymakers alike, sparking dialogues on actionable and scalable solutions for vulnerable regions.



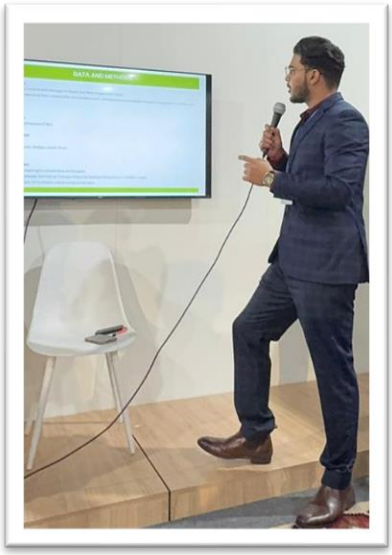




Fig: Presenting my research paper, "Loss & Damage: Impacts and Pathways for Resilience in South Asia," at the Children & Youth Pavilion

1. **Side Event Participation**

I actively engaged in several high-impact side events, including:

- **Unpacking the Loss & Damage Landscape**: Explored non-economic losses, such as trauma, cultural identity, and ecosystem degradation, emphasizing that these are often irreplaceable and require innovative approaches for healing and recovery.
- **Scaling up Climate Action on Loss & Damage**: This session, hosted by the COP29 Presidency, focused on operationalizing the Santiago Network with robust mechanisms for implementation and transparency.



Fig: Santiago Network session for Loss and Damage during COP29

These events offered insights into bridging policy frameworks with grassroots realities, aligning global solutions with local needs.



Fig: Session hosted by the WIM ExCom, focused on Unpacking the Loss & Damage Landscape

1. **Bilateral Meetings and Networking**

I held meaningful bilateral discussions with diverse stakeholders to exchange ideas and foster collaborations:

- **Meeting with Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh**: Discussed India's climate strategies, emphasizing the integration of youth perspectives in addressing Loss & Damage.
- **Engagement with Ambassador Mr Sridharan Madhusudhanan**: Gained a deeper understanding of India's role in international climate diplomacy and regional collaborations.



Fig: Meeting with Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh & Mr Sridharan Madhusudhanan

- **Dialogue with Stella Brozek-Everaert (EU Delegate)**: Delved into the valuation of non-economic losses, focusing on community recovery and solutions beyond financial compensation.
- **Bilateral with Bangladesh Delegation**: Learned about Bangladesh's proactive measures to tackle climate change, including youth involvement in decision-making processes inspiring regional youth initiatives.

These interactions enhanced my understanding of regional challenges and opened avenues for future partnerships.



Fig: Bilateral with EU&OECD

1. **Youth Advocacy and Negotiations**

As a representative of IYCN and YOUNGO, I actively participated in:

- Tracking negotiations on the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) and the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for climate finance, ensuring youth concerns were adequately represented.
- Contributing to policy dialogues by providing inputs on how youth-driven initiatives can address Loss & Damage effectively.

These engagements showcased the importance of integrating youth perspectives into global policy frameworks to foster innovative solutions.



Fig: Contributing to policy dialogues by providing inputs on how youth-driven & vulnerable communities initiatives & focus on non-economic loss can address Loss & Damage effectively

1. **Highlighting Grassroots Solutions**

I shared real-world examples of community-driven initiatives to inspire action, such as:

- **Post-Cyclone Gaja Restoration in Tamil Nadu**: Highlighted the replanting of sacred groves as a community-led effort to restore cultural and ecological heritage.
- **Pacific Island Preservation Efforts**: Discussed how communities preserve traditional knowledge amidst rising sea levels, emphasizing the non-monetary aspects of resilience.

These examples reinforced the need for holistic approaches prioritising tangible and intangible aspects of resilience.

1. **High-Level Engagements**

I had the privilege of engaging with global leaders and experts, including:

- **COP29 President Mukhtar Babayev**: Focused discussions on scaling up youth-driven initiatives for Loss & Damage.



Fig: *COP29 President Mukhtar Babayev*

- **Kamal Kishore (Head of UNDRR)**: Explored aligning disaster risk reduction strategies with localized resilience efforts, emphasizing community involvement.



Fig: Kamal Kishore (Head of UNDRR)

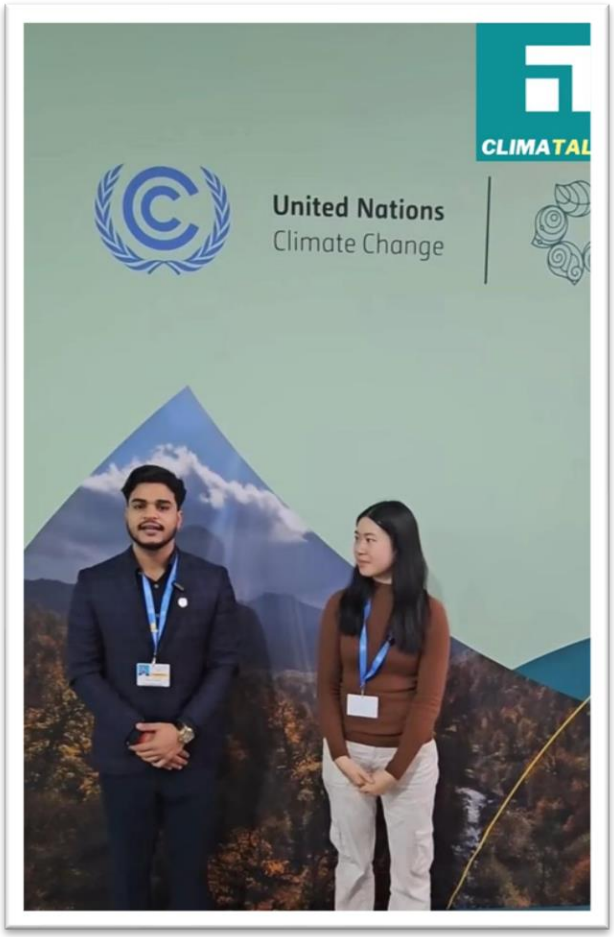
These interactions provided valuable insights into aligning high-level strategies with ground realities.

1. **Media and Outreach**

I actively contributed to outreach efforts, including:

- Interviews with **ClimaTalk**, the **U.S. Department of State**, and **African Union local media**, where I shared insights on my work on loss and damage, community empowerment and IYCN's role in advancing climate action.
- Dissemination of key takeaways from critical events to youth networks, ensuring that insights reached a wider audience for collective learning and action.

These activities strengthened my resolve to bridge the gap between global climate governance and local implementation, ensuring that the voices of the most affected communities are heard and acted upon.





Detailed Report on Loss and Damage (L&D) Discussions at COP29

The following sections provide an exhaustive account of the deliberations, agreements, and challenges surrounding **Loss and Damage (L&D)** during COP29.

1. Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM)

1.1 Background and Purpose

The Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM), established in 2013, is pivotal in addressing Loss and Damage associated with climate change impacts, particularly in vulnerable countries. It focuses on:

- Enhancing knowledge and understanding of L&D.
- Strengthening dialogue and coordination.
- Supporting action and implementation for loss and damage.

1.2 Key Discussions at COP29

Governance Debate: COP vs CMA

A significant point of contention was the governance structure of WIM:

- **Developing countries** (G77+China, AOSIS, LDCs, and AGN): Advocated for dual governance under the COP and CMA. This ensures that all parties, including those outside the Paris Agreement, are equally represented.
- **Developed countries** (US, EU, and Japan): Pushed for sole CMA governance to streamline processes and avoid overlap with COP.

Outcome

Despite extensive negotiations, no consensus was reached. The governance decision was deferred to **CMA7 in November 2025**. This delay risks impeding WIM's operational clarity and effectiveness in the interim.

2. Santiago Network

2.1 Operationalization

The Santiago Network is intended to provide **technical assistance** to countries facing climate-induced loss and damage. Discussions focused on scaling up its capacity and ensuring accessibility for vulnerable nations.

Host Country and Trustee

- The **Philippines** was confirmed as the host country, reflecting its leadership in climate action.
- The **World Bank** was designated as the fund trustee, ensuring financial integrity and efficiency.

2.2 Key Deliverables and Plans

1. **Technical Assistance**:
    - Santiago Network will provide targeted support to governments and communities for non-economic loss assessment, disaster recovery, and climate-resilient infrastructure.
2. **Knowledge Products**:
    - The network will release technical guides and case studies on human mobility, desertification, and risk mapping by **2025**.
3. **Scaling Collaboration**:
    - Partnerships with regional organisations and NGOs to amplify knowledge-sharing and direct assistance.

3. Loss and Damage Fund (LDF)

3.1 Financial Pledges

The LDF secured **$720 million in pledges** during COP29, with notable contributions from:

- **Germany**: $200 million
- **United States**: $150 million
- **EU**: $130 million

- **Others** (Japan, Australia, private donors): Remaining contributions

Concerns and Challenges

1. **Long-Term Sustainability**:
    - There are concerns about maintaining consistent financial contributions. The pledged amounts, while significant, are insufficient to meet the scale of L&D globally.
2. **Fund Deployment**:
    - Advisory board discussions highlighted the complexity of fund allocation, emphasising the need for:
        - Transparent criteria for fund disbursement.
        - Prioritisation of the most vulnerable communities.

3.2 Roadmap

The operational framework for the LDF is scheduled for completion by **December 2025**. This framework

. will outline:

- Eligibility criteria for accessing funds
- Processes for monitoring and evaluation of funded projects.

4. Stakeholder Perspectives

4.1 Developing Countries

- **Small Island Developing States (SIDS)** and **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** highlighted the existential threats climate change poses, including rising sea levels, displacement, and destruction of livelihoods.
- Advocated for expedited disbursements from the LDF to address immediate climate-induced damages.
- **Key Quote**: "For us, loss and damage is not just about funds; it's about survival." – Minister of Environment, Tuvalu.

4.2 Developed Countries

- Acknowledged the moral responsibility for climate-induced damages but stressed the importance of ensuring fund accountability and transparency.
- Proposed blending LDF resources with private capital to scale financial flows, sparking criticism about prioritizing corporate interests over vulnerable communities.

4.3 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

- Criticised the slow progress in operationalising the LDF and WIM.
- Urged for more ambitious contributions from developed nations, pointing out that $720 million is a fraction of what is required annually.
- Pushed for community-driven solutions and inclusion of marginalised voices in decision-making processes.

5. Regional Focus: South Asia

5.1 Vulnerabilities and Impacts

South Asia remains one of the most vulnerable regions to climate-induced disasters:

- **Bangladesh**: Faced escalating cyclonic storms and saltwater intrusion, exacerbating food insecurity.
- **Nepal**: Struggled with glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), threatening downstream communities.
- **India** Recorded significant loss and damage from floods and cyclones, including Cyclone Gaja (2018).
- **Sri Lanka**: Experienced economic losses from severe droughts affecting agriculture and water supply.

5.2 Regional Initiatives

- Countries agreed to enhance cross-border collaboration on **early warning systems**, **disaster risk reduction**, and **knowledge sharing** under the Santiago Network.
- South Asian representatives called for tailored LDF projects focusing on regional challenges like monsoon variability and transboundary water conflicts.

6. Role of Youth in L&D Advocacy

6.1 Youth-Led Side Events

The Children & Youth Pavilion hosted over 15 side events on L&D, featuring grassroots solutions and lived experiences from young activists across the globe.

- **Key Session**: *"Redefining Resilience: Youth-Led Solutions for Loss and Damage"* highlighted innovative approaches like community-based mangrove restoration and peer-to-peer climate education in vulnerable regions.

6.2 Youth Contributions to Policy

- Youth organisations collaborated with Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSA) to submit a policy brief emphasising:
    1. Strengthening intergenerational equity in L&D governance.
    2. Expanding Santiago Network's outreach to include youth-driven projects.
    3. Establishing capacity-building programs for young leaders in vulnerable regions.

7. Next Steps and Recommendations

7.1 Immediate Actions

1. **Clarify WIM Governance**: Resolve the dual governance impasse at CMA7 to enhance WIM's efficacy.

2. **Operationalise the LDF**: Expedite the development of fund disbursement mechanisms, focusing on equitable access for vulnerable countries.

7.2 Long-Term Goals

1. **Global Solidarity**: Developed nations must scale up financial pledges and meet their commitments to bridge the gap between needs and available resources.
2. **Community-Driven Solutions**: Empower local and indigenous communities to play a central role in designing and implementing L&D projects.
3. **Integration of Non-Economic Losses (NELs)**: Expand L&D frameworks to include losses like cultural heritage, biodiversity, and mental health impacts.

Conclusion

COP29 marked a significant yet incomplete step toward addressing Loss and Damage globally. While progress was made in operationalising the Santiago Network and securing initial funding for the LDF, the delay in resolving WIM governance and limited financial commitments underscore the need for sustained and urgent action.

A collective, inclusive, and transparent approach is essential to ensure that the promises made at COP29 translate into tangible relief for the communities bearing the brunt of climate change impacts.

Overview of overall Negotiations

The negotiations at COP29 presented opportunities and challenges as parties engaged in extensive discussions on critical topics such as the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), Loss and Damage (L&D), adaptation, mitigation, and the operationalization of frameworks like the Santiago Network. This section provides a detailed analysis of these negotiations, emphasizing their implications for vulnerable nations and global climate action.

- **New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG)**

The NCQG represents a significant step forward, replacing the $100 billion annual target set in 2010. Developed under Article 9 of the Paris Agreement, the NCQG aims to mobilize financial flows to meet the growing demands of developing nations for mitigation, adaptation, and addressing Loss and Damage.

Key Features of the NCQG:

- **Financial Scale**:
  - The target is to mobilize $1.3 trillion annually by 2035, with at least $300 billion allocated annually to meet immediate needs.
  - Developing nations' total needs are estimated at $5.1–6.8 trillion by 2030.
- **Vulnerable Groups**:
  - Given their disproportionate climate risks, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are prioritized.

Key Barriers Discussed:

- High borrowing costs and limited fiscal space for developing nations.
- Complex application processes and conditionalities tied to funding access.
- Risk of increasing unsustainable debt burdens.

Critical Reflections:

While the NCQG is ambitious, its success hinges on overcoming historical failures to meet smaller targets like the $100 billion goal. Without binding accountability mechanisms and accessible finance pathways, vulnerable nations may face challenges mobilizing necessary resources.

- **Adaptation**

Adaptation remained a central focus, with discussions on enhancing National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA). The UAE-Belém work program emphasized the importance of mapping and tracking adaptation indicators to ensure effective implementation.

Key Points:

- Adaptation finance needs are projected to reach $215–387 billion annually by 2030.
- Prioritizing adaptation in funding allocations to address immediate risks for vulnerable nations.

Challenges:

- Historical underfunding of adaptation compared to mitigation.
- Lack of robust metrics and enforcement mechanisms for adaptation finance.

Opportunities:

The negotiations underscored the need to shift from pledges to actionable strategies. Success stories like Bangladesh's climate-resilient infrastructure initiatives can be blueprints for integrating adaptation and mitigation strategies.

- **Mitigation**

The discussions on mitigation highlighted the divide between developed and developing nations on emissions reductions and equity considerations. Developed countries pushed for stricter emissions cuts and a fossil fuel phaseout while developing nations emphasized the need for financial and technical support to transition sustainably.

Key Takeaways:

- Upcoming deadlines for new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in 2025 were a focal point.
- Discussions emphasized the role of renewables and energy efficiency in achieving global stocktake outcomes.

Challenges:

- Balancing equity with ambition remains a persistent issue, as developing nations need external support to achieve aggressive mitigation targets.

- **Loss and Damage (L&D)**

L&D discussions focused on addressing gaps in support for nations facing irreversible climate impacts. The operationalization of the Loss & Damage Fund and the Santiago Network were central to these dialogues.

Highlights:

- The emphasis on public and non-debt-inducing finance, including grants and guarantees, was a step forward.
- Recognition of non-economic losses, such as trauma and cultural heritage, are critical components of L&D.

Challenges:

- Absence of clear financial targets for L&D within the NCQG.
- Operational frameworks like the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) require significant improvements in accountability and effectiveness.

Key Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths:

- Recognition of the financial and non-financial aspects of climate impacts.
- Emphasis on inclusive approaches for women, youth, and Indigenous communities.
- Alignment with the Paris Agreement goals for financial flow shifts.

Weaknesses:

- There are long timelines for implementation, with many key actions deferred to 2035.
- Limited binding commitments, risking the repeat of past underperformance.

- Ambiguity in defining climate finance and prioritizing vulnerable groups effectively.

Conclusion
The negotiations at COP29 demonstrated the complexity and urgency of global climate governance. While the NCQG and other frameworks offer promising pathways, their success will depend on actionable commitments, enhanced accountability, and equitable implementation. Persistent advocacy and continued collaboration will be crucial for developing nations to ensure these goals translate into tangible outcomes.

Reflections and Recommendations

COP29 was a profoundly transformative experience, providing insights into global climate governance while reaffirming the urgency of addressing the multifaceted impacts of climate change. I gained a nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the climate action landscape through my engagement in negotiations, side events, and bilateral discussions. Below are my reflections and recommendations based on these experiences:

Reflections

1. **The Human Side of Loss and Damage (L&D)**
    - My discussions on non-economic losses, such as trauma, loss of cultural identity, and ecosystem degradation, were particularly impactful. These are aspects often overlooked in conventional financial discussions. Dialogues with delegates like Stella Brozek-Everaert highlighted prioritizing healing and recovery over assigning monetary value to such losses.
2. **The Evolving Landscape of Climate Finance**
    - The discussions on the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for climate finance underscored the complexities in bridging the financial gaps for vulnerable nations. While developed nations emphasized leveraging private sector investments, developing countries focused on public **financing, grants, and concessional terms**. The absence of binding commitments and the ambiguity in defining climate finance remain critical barriers.
3. **Mitigation and Adaptation Synergies**
    - The emphasis on adaptation strategies, including the UAE-Belém work program, underscored the growing importance of tracking adaptation indicators and enhancing National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). However, the lack of consensus on mitigation work programs (MWP) and stocktake outcomes highlighted the persistent divide between emissions reductions and equity considerations.
4. **Youth as Catalysts for Global Solutions**
    - As a youth representative, I observed the power of young voices in influencing dialogues, especially on Loss and Damage. Platforms like **YOUNGO** emphasize the role of youth in bridging **intergenerational gaps**, ensuring that equity and justice are central to climate negotiations.
5. **Disparity Between Global Commitments and Local Realities**
    - The gap between high-level pledges and ground-level implementation was evident throughout COP29. Discussions often lacked actionable strategies to translate global

commitments into tangible benefits for vulnerable communities, highlighting the need for localized solutions.

Recommendations

1. **Operationalizing the NCQG for Climate Finance**
    - Precise definitions for what qualify as climate finance must be established, excluding harmful activities like fossil fuel investments or debt-inducing instruments.
    - Binding commitments for developed nations to contribute equitably to the
    - **$1.3 trillion annual NCQG by 2035** is essential.
    - Establish dedicated financing windows for Loss and Damage, focusing on grant-based support for vulnerable communities.
2. **Enhancing Adaptation Frameworks**
    - To ensure successful implementation, prioritize funding and technical support for National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA).
    - Develop robust metrics to track adaptation outcomes, ensuring alignment with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities.
3. **Strengthening Mitigation Commitments**
    - Address the gap in global stocktake outcomes by prioritizing emissions reductions alongside equitable financing mechanisms for developing nations.
    - Accelerate the transition from fossil fuels to renewables while ensuring a just transition those accounts for socio-economic disparities.
4. **Integrating Non-Economic Losses into L&D Frameworks**
    - Policymakers must allocate resources to address non-economic losses, including:
        - Trauma counselling and mental health support.
        - Preservation of cultural heritage and community identity.
        - Ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation.
    - These measures complement financial compensation to provide holistic recovery for affected communities.
5. **Scaling Localized and Community-Driven Solutions**
    - Encourage the integration of grassroots initiatives into global frameworks. Examples like Tamil Nadu’s post-Cyclone Gaja restoration and Pacific Island cultural preservation efforts provide scalable models for resilience.
6. **Youth Engagement in Climate Governance**
    - Establish structured youth speaking slots in all negotiation rooms to ensure their perspectives influence policy-making directly.
    - Organize pre-COP training programs to equip youth delegates with negotiation, policy, and advocacy skills.

- Provide financial and logistical support to enable participation from underrepresented regions, ensuring diversity and equity.

7. **Strengthening Implementation Mechanisms**
    - Create transparent and enforceable frameworks for operationalising the Santiago Network and Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) to ensure timely support for at-risk countries.
    - Foster accountability through independent monitoring of commitments under adaptation, mitigation, and L&D frameworks.
8. **Post-COP Engagement and Collaboration**
    - Develop year-round youth engagement initiatives to sustain the momentum of COP events.
    - Strengthen partnerships between nations, NGOs, and youth organizations to promote cross-border collaborations addressing regional challenges.
9. **Bridging the Policy-Implementation Gap**
    - Facilitate platforms for grassroots representatives to present successful local initiatives at global forums.
    - Establish mechanisms to fund and scale community-led projects, ensuring alignment with global commitments.

COP29 served as a powerful reminder of the urgency for collective action and the need to prioritize equity in all aspects of climate governance. We can build a more inclusive and resilient future by addressing the gaps in NCQG, mitigation, and adaptation frameworks and integrating youth and local perspectives.

Learnings

COP29 was an extraordinary opportunity for growth, both professionally and personally. The experience of engaging with global stakeholders, negotiating climate policies, and contributing to critical discussions on Loss and Damage (L&D) has broadened my understanding of the interconnectedness of international climate action and local challenges. Here are my key learnings:

1. **The Importance of Contextualizing Loss and Damage**

- Loss and Damage (L&D) discussions highlighted the need beyond economic compensation. For example, after Cyclone Gaja in Tamil Nadu, the loss extended beyond homes and farmlands to include sacred groves, deeply tied to the community's cultural identity. Recovery efforts that focused on replanting these groves restored ecological balance and healed the community's collective trauma.
- Similarly, in the Pacific Islands, rising seas threaten entire ways of life. Efforts to preserve oral histories and traditional practices have become as critical as physical relocation plans.

2. **Climate Finance as the Cornerstone of Climate Action**

- The debates around the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) revealed the disparities in financial support for vulnerable nations. For example, Pakistan's devastating floods in 2022

caused economic losses **exceeding $30 billion**, yet international aid covered only a fraction of the needed recovery costs. This highlighted the urgent need for grant-based, accessible finance mechanisms to prevent nations from falling into debt traps while rebuilding.

3. **Synergies Between Mitigation and Adaptation**

- The integration of mitigation and adaptation strategies is critical. For instance, Bangladesh's climate-resilient infrastructure, like elevated homes and dams, addresses mitigation (through reduced carbon construction techniques) and adaptation (by protecting communities from rising sea levels).
- However, adaptation plans often need more funding. The discussions at COP29 emphasized the need for global stocktake mechanisms to align adaptation funding with mitigation targets.

4. **Youth as Pioneers of Change**

- Youth-driven initiatives like the Indian Youth Climate Network (IYCN) and YOUNGO demonstrate the potential of young voices to drive actionable solutions. For example, youth-led programs in Assam have empowered local communities to implement flood-resilient farming practices, reducing vulnerability to annual monsoons.
- At COP29, the visibility of youth representatives was instrumental in pushing for the operationalization of the Santiago Network, ensuring youth participation in disaster response mechanisms.

5. **Bridging Local Challenges with Global Solutions**

- Localized challenges require tailored global responses. The state introduced localized flood warning systems in Kerala, India, after the 2018 floods. This community-centred approach can be scaled up globally through frameworks like the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM), enabling vulnerable nations to adopt similar proactive strategies.

6. **Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration as a Catalyst**

- Partnerships are vital for addressing shared climate challenges. For instance, the Bangladesh delegation at COP29 shared insights on partnering with global organizations to integrate youth into decision-making processes for disaster risk reduction. Such collaborations exemplify how regional partnerships can strengthen global climate governance.

7. **Resilience is Multifaceted**

- Building resilience goes beyond physical reconstruction. After Hurricane Katrina in the United States, community-led initiatives focusing on mental health counselling and rebuilding neighbourhood bonds proved essential for long-term recovery. COP29 discussions underscored the importance of including similar holistic measures in global frameworks like the Santiago Network.

8. **The Role of Leadership and Strategy**

- Effective leadership, like that of COP29 President Mukhtar Babayev, can turn policy aspirations into actionable commitments. For instance, Azerbaijan's focus on scaling renewable energy highlights how host nations can set a precedent for aligning national goals with global climate objectives.

9. **The Power of Storytelling**

- Real-life stories often drive home the urgency of climate action. For example, the voices of Indigenous Peoples at COP29 brought attention to the loss of biodiversity and traditional knowledge systems in the Amazon due to deforestation. These stories humanize data and advocate for immediate, empathetic responses.

10. **The Need for Continued Engagement**

- Sustained engagement is critical. After COP26, Scotland's commitment to a dedicated Loss and Damage Fund demonstrated the potential of continued advocacy and pressure from civil society. This example illustrates the importance of year-round dialogues to keep climate commitments on track.

COP29 reinforced that real-world examples can serve as blueprints for scalable solutions when integrated into global frameworks. These learnings will guide my efforts to bridge policy discussions with actionable initiatives, ensuring that climate resilience's tangible and intangible aspects are addressed effectively.

Acknowledgement

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the **Indian Youth Climate Network (IYCN)** for allowing me to represent youth voices at COP29. Their unwavering support and belief in my abilities were instrumental in making this experience impactful and enriching.

A special thanks to **YOUNGO**, the official children and youth constituency of the UNFCCC, for their collaboration and for amplifying youth-driven solutions at such a critical global platform.

I am deeply grateful to all the negotiators, policymakers, and delegates I had the privilege to engage with during the conference. Interactions with individuals like **Stella Brozek-Everaert** (EU Delegate), **Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh** (Head of the Indian Delegation), and **Kamal Kishore** (Head of UNDRR) provided invaluable insights into bridging the gap between policy and implementation.

I would also like to acknowledge the inspiring efforts of the **Bangladesh delegation**, whose initiatives to involve youth in climate decision-making showcased the power of regional collaboration. Their perspectives on tackling climate-induced disasters were both enlightening and motivating.

A sincere thank you to the organizers of COP29, particularly the **Government of Azerbaijan** and **COP29 President Mukhtar Babayev**, for providing a platform where diverse voices could converge to drive actionable climate solutions.

Finally, I express my most profound appreciation **to my peers and fellow youth delegates**. Their passion, resilience, and innovative ideas were a constant source of inspiration. Sharing this journey with like-minded changemakers has reinforced my belief in the collective power of youth to transform the future of climate action.



FIG: IYCN delegation at COP 29 BAKU