



**The Brookings Institution
Africa Growth Initiative
Foresight Africa Podcast**

**“Dispatches from Africa’s COP: Ghanaian youth are joining climate action for survival”
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Episode Summary:

Nadia Owusu, convenor at the Local Conference of Youth Ghana, and MaryJane Enchill, deputy chief executive officer/head of communication at HATOF Foundation, share their takeaways from COP27, naming climate fund mobilization as a crucial outcome. Both climate activists discuss their work on climate justice and educating their communities on the impact of climate change.

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ORDU: Hi, I'm Aloysius Uche Ordu, director of the Africa Growth Initiative at the Brookings Institution and host of Foresight Africa Podcast. We wrapped up season one of the podcast in August and we will return with season two in early 2023 after the publication of our flagship report titled "Foresight Africa."

Now, though, I'm happy to present a special series on this podcast titled, "Dispatches from Africa's COP." In November, COP27 was held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. One of the key themes of COP27 was the role of youth in addressing the climate change challenge, and Africa's youths rose to the occasion and presented some of the things they are doing on the frontlines of the climate fight.

In this special series, I'm talking to youth climate activists from different African countries who participated in COP27. They will share their valuable insights and their ideas and their proposals for action. These youths are from Ghana, from Kenya, from Madagascar, and from The Seychelles.

You can find season one episodes of this podcast on our website, Brookings dot edu slash Foresight Africa Podcast. Also, you can find the "Foresight Africa" report there as well. And now, here is a dispatch from COP27, Africa's COP.

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ORDU: My guests today are two Ghanaian youth climate change activists. They both participated in COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. Ghana is experiencing erratic rainfall, rising temperatures, droughts, floods, and tidal waves. These present serious threats to agriculture and the livelihoods of people in various communities across the country. MaryJane Enchill and Nadia Owusu, I'd like to bid you both a warm welcome to our show.

ENCHILL: Thank you.

ORDU: To start with, do tell us about yourselves. What inspired you to become climate activists and about your work on climate change in Ghana? Nadia?

OWUSU: Thank you so much for giving me this platform once again. I'm really happy to be sharing space with you and all your listeners all over the world. My name is Nadia Nanaya Owusu. I like to call myself a youth advocate working around the globe with different youth leaders in an intersection of technology, women empowerment, skills development, and also to fight for climate change and climate justice.

For me, I would say that I wasn't pushed by passion for this work—it was a matter of urgency, because in the different spheres of work that I do, climate change is affecting each and every field. Everything I do in the area of pushing for women empowerment, climate change affects women. In the area of skills development, if drought hits, if floods hits, young people are forced to move away from their place of abode. So, for me, working in the area of climate change became a matter of urgency more than the work of passion.

So, yeah, that's what got me into the climate change space last year when I decided to host the first youth climate change conference in Ghana, bringing young leaders together, meeting with government officials, and also stakeholders in Ghana to deliberate on climate change issues. I found myself being the one mobilizing for youth to speak up their voice and to also take up climate action as one of the things they have to do to push for the SDGs. So, yeah, thank you so much.

ORDU: Thank you. And MaryJane, what inspired you?

ENCHILL: Thank you very much for the opportunity to be here today to share my experience and what actually inspired me to be part of this movement.

So, just like Nadia said, also coming into climate change, or communicating on environmental issues, has to do with the issue of survivability and agency. It's not just about passion, because I believe that passion alone is not enough to be able to get things done. You need to have ... bring in what the science is saying for the challenges ahead of us is looks like and the need for action to be taken. So, for me, as an environmental communication person, I came into this way.

And when I was doing my first degree back at home and I decided to look at the issues of environment, I had a chance to be in a meeting where there was discussion on climate change—I didn't know what climate change was all about. And when I understood that our survival depends so much on the need for a good environment, I decided to take it upon myself to be part of this discussion, and to also bring people to the full knowledge of the need to fight for a sustainable environment. So, that's what actually brought me into the fray.

And so, my work basically at the national level, I've been part of an organization called the HATOF Foundation, and we've been working across the globe. And what we do is that we try to engage communities, we work at the local level, at the _____ level, try to bring in ____ policy discussion with issues that are happening on the ground. And then also at the global level, we look at what is happening whilst we feed the global discussion with issues on the ground, we go back home to also see what policy decisions we need to take to be able to address the challenges that we face on the ground.

We've been working with farmers and youth groups, and then we realized that most populations in Ghana, 80% of them are farmers. In Africa also being an agrarian economy, and agriculture also is rain _____. It means that our food systems are very much sensitive to rainfall variability. So, what then can we do? What kind of discussions should we have with both farmers to get their views and also with government to bring to them what the issues are and how they can actually support the people on the ground. Because, of course, without food there will be no survival.

And then besides that, I've also been working with the young people back home and basically my interest in getting young people also to be part of the discussion because our survival depends on a good climate, without climate change, I mean, without discussing climate change and the impact it brings to us, of course, our future will be at stake.

So, we try to mobilize youth also and then through the form of establishing a council back at home and to mobilize or bring the opinions of these young people to the fore of governments, to decision-making, to also have their views heard at the end of the day. So, basically that's what we've been doing back home in terms of the fight for climate change. So, like we said earlier on, it's not about just passion, but this is about survivability of next generation.

ORDU: Indeed, it is about survivability, as you both put it. I was just wondering if you could share with us what opportunities and challenges you both face in the work you do at home in Ghana. Nadia?

OWUSU: Talking about challenges in the climate change space, I would like to highlight that especially where I come from, people feel climate change is far away from them just because they do not understand the terminologies that have got to do with climate change. They believe it's a very foreign matter, but they forget it is the basic thing that is happening to them in their day to day

activities—the change in rainfall patterns, the difference in seasons, the difference in climates. They just think something has just happened. But when you talk about climate change, they they think it's something that that is far away from them. So, understanding the matters on the ground, especially when it comes to climate change education, is one major challenge.

And another challenge will be funding for, adaptation and mitigation for climate change. And Ghana is also a major challenge because people are being displaced, people are at the brunt of the crisis, and they need funding to to adapt, they need funding to branch out into different things they previously used to use for their livelihood. So, if there's there's a stop in fishing for fishing communities when the water levels drop, farmers need alternative means for survival. And the only way they can do that is if they are being trained to have differing skill sets able to survive within that period of time. So, for me, it's understanding climate change issues when it comes to climate literacy. It's also about funding issues. And I would let Jane speak to more issues on the ground as well.

ORDU: You mentioned agriculture, you mentioned the fisheries. And of course, Ghana, the energy as well because the water level determines the generation of electricity at the Akosombo Dam and elsewhere. But anyway, basically how does your work actually connect with the global climate movement?

OWUSU: So, one thing I did at the beginning of my climate change journey was to join the United Youth Initiative for Africa, something we started in the university to push for the SDGs. We realized climate change was becoming rampant in Ghana. So, what the organization did was to join the United Nations Framework on Climate Change, which was their youth constituency at that time that dealt with climate change issues, YOUNGO. What YOUNGO did was to capacitate us with a lot of resources, a lot of opportunities to know more about what was happening in the global climate change space, where we went through different series of webinars to capacitate our volunteers on the ground about what they needed to know.

We also launched the Local Conference of Youth and Climate Change, where young people deliberate with governments, stakeholders, and different parties about how we want our youth demands to feed into policy- and decision-making when it comes to climate change in Ghana.

One way we did this was to host conferences. We did the first one last year, 2021, where we launched the Youth Climate Council. And thanks to that, about 500 youth groups in the climate change space have been fully registered with this Youth Climate Council that would serve as a major umbrella for all climate change institutions in Ghana.

Another thing we are doing is to launch the Green Youth Clubs, which would serve as a climate literacy program, or an initiative to train young people, out of school youth, and also women, and youth in disadvantaged communities about the things they need to know about climate change, from which climate change education promotes climate literacy at their local levels.

Our work is feeding into the global movement at the United Nations level, where we put together youth demands where after we hosted a local conference, we translate that into the regional conference at the Africa level. And at the end of the day, before every year COP is hosted, we collate all these youth demands into a global youth statement which is presented to the COP presidency at COP. Last year it was presented to Alok Sharma in Glasgow. This year we are presenting it to the presidency in Sharm el-Sheikh.

So, everything we are doing in Ghana has its representation of both the regional level and also at the global level. I'm happy to both to do this collaborating not just in Ghana, but with different youth

initiatives and youth organizations in Africa. And all of these are translated into different youth demands at a global level.

So, yeah, that's what we are doing. I'm really proud of the work we are doing to get our volunteers, to get our government institutions that are being supportive of young people. This year we had UNDP, we had UNICEF, we had the National Youth Authority in Ghana support the work we are doing, we had a lot of UN agencies back up the work we are doing together with the Environmental Protection Agency in Ghana. So, we believe the government is having a listening ear to what young people need in terms of pushing for climate action at different levels.

ORDU: Those are pretty impressive. Pretty impressive in terms of what you're doing and the connection to the global scene. Thank you very much. MaryJane, any thoughts on how your work connects with the global climate movement?

ENCHILL: Yeah. So, like I mentioned, HATOF Foundation has been in this process for a very long time. Our engagement has been with the youth and then also basically with the government as well. What we actually do is that HATOF being the forefront of civil society engagement, we collate ideas and suggestions from civil society groups and feed that into national discussions, that also translates into what government brings as its contribution to the global discussion.

So, for instance, one of the things we've been doing is with the national communication, we collect data and then also database on what civil society are also doing in terms of climate change. And then this data is given to the government through the EPA Ghana, and this is put into what we call the national communication. So, HATOF has actually contributed to the first, second, third, and fourth national communications at the national level, which, of course, is communicated to the UNFCCC.

And then also, we look at what financial gaps exist in all of these we do. And that also is communicated in the chapter, what we call the finance constraints of the country. That is at the national level.

What we also do also that feeds into the global movement is the fact that we build the capacity of civil society organizations. Back at home, Nadia will bear witness that there are a lot of capacity gap at the local level, at the national level. So HATOF being in this process for a very long time, we try to go back to build capacity and then also again collect ideas what capacity constraints that a country or civil society are facing for which they cannot actually support government in its obligation or try implement its obligation. We try to build capacity to bridge this gap.

So, fortunately, HATOF Foundation currently has been able to access half a million grants from the Green Climate Fund to build more national capacity for civil society and then youth groups back at home. And some of these things that we intend doing is that, okay, so, how can this group support the National Designation Authority of, let's say, the Green Climate Fund or even the national _____ points of the UNFCCC to be able to drive the climate agenda at the local level because these people are in touch with their grassroots. And so, they need to get the capacity to be able to address national, local issues at the grassroots level. And then at the end of the day, like I mentioned, we try to collate ideas, gaps, lessons made and then this is fed into national decision-making.

And then also, let me put it that way, that what HATOF actually does, again, as far as the youth front is concerned, is that we provide mentorship and coaching and then also intense professional development for youth within the climate change space. We give them capacity on negotiations, capacity on climate finance. And fortunately, I'm happy to say that our contribution has led to the now global Young Negotiators program that is running now. We have about three Ghanaians from

Ghana who are part of the negotiations to be able to learn what the negotiations is like and also make some kind of contribution.

So, let me also say, we are very happy doing what we are doing because our fellowship program is running quite well and we hope to get more youth trained to be able to be part of the negotiations. We've noticed that a lot of the negotiators will be fading out very soon because they age-wise they are quite old. So, how do we bridge that gap that we foresee? And that is what the fellowship program at HATOF Foundation, which we call the HATOF Youth Climate Fellowship, is doing. Just try to build capacity of some small cohorts of young people who can actually be part of the negotiation process.

So, these people are able to bring back national voices into the global discussion that is happening. We train them to be part of the YOUNGO and the other ___ for COP groups and the YCC. Fortunately, HATOF Foundation as part of this process also hosts a secretariat of what we call the Global Youth Biodiversity Network. You know, there's a need for us to have a synergy between climate change, biodiversity, and land degradation. So, that's _____ also and give us the impetus to house a national youth groups that is looking at these synergy in the conventions.

At the end of the day, whatever it is that they are doing at a global level, we try to provide opportunity for them by giving them badges to be part of the negotiation process.

ORDU: Great, that's fascinating indeed. I think, you emphasized the capacity gaps in the civil society organizations and the need to really, really view those capacities through mentoring, through coaching and negotiation skills and other soft skills. Fascinating work, indeed. Let us turn now to COP27 negotiations themselves. What were your expectations and priorities going in? Nadia?

OWUSU: For me this year, I told a few of my colleagues that I, I don't want to have high hopes for this year's COP. They keep putting text to every COP. Last year we had the Glasgow Pact and it's a year on and we're still trying to track what the Glasgow Pact has been able to do. This year coming in, we are seeing it's an African COP and it's going to be an implementation COP.

I didn't want to raise my hopes high, but one thing I was looking forward to ensure that every promise that are being making in terms of investment for Africa, I know the funding they are given in terms of loss and damage is being actualized. I was also happy about the introduction of the Children and Youth Pavilion, where they give young people the voice, especially African youth the voice, to push for matters that resonated with them in terms of loss and damage in Africa. It's very prominent stuff. We get more reparations for things that we've lost because we are the, you know, we're at the receiving end of all the climate change effects—we're the less polluters—but an end of the day we are receiving more and more damages, we are receiving more and more losses.

And for me, one thing I'm looking forward to is African leaders able to demand what's rightfully ours. And also when we start getting funding from all the sources that are promising is going to come, they are being put to the right use. So, for me, I'm not so expectant. I just want to see how these matters unfold after COP. So, I'm looking for the aftermath of COP more than what is going to happen at COP.

ORDU: And MaryJane, your expectations and priorities going into COP?

ENCHILL: I mentioned that I had two expectations when coming to COP. The moment I packed my bags, my mom was like, so what are you going to discuss this time around, what are you looking forward to this time around? And I mentioned two things: that I'm looking for a clear path

for climate finance. For me, I've basically been looking forward to a day when the definition of climate finance will actually be adopted. What can we classify as climate finance ____ is very important.

And the second thing I was looking forward to is to have some kind of youth inclusivity in the financial mechanism architecture, basically, when I was coming. So, those are the two things I was looking forward to.

And some will ask why are you looking forward to a definition on climate finance. It's very critical. You know, the COP, like Nadia mentioned, we call it the implementation COP, and also an African COP. Africa has been looking forward to more financial flows coming into the country to address the impacts of climate change. And there's always been so much back and forth when the discussion of finance comes up. A lot of contentions here and there. So, coming to COP, I was like, okay, so if this is an African COP, then of course this is the time that we need to really forge a clear path for financial discussions at the COP, and at the end of the day, we're getting something better back home.

And I should say that so far it hasn't been as we expected. The discussion on finance has been very, very daunting for us because the definition for climate finance has not been adopted. The COP has actually refused to adopt it, even when the Standing Committee on Finance came up with a clear definition. I mean, basically not to define what exactly the Finance Committee brought out, what the definition simply meant was a transfer of public funds from the developed countries to developing countries, which, of course should include all financial flows relating to climate mitigation and adaptation. But unfortunately, we don't have the definition adopted.

And it's my fear is that if we are unable to actually define climate finance, what it's going to mean is that we risk ODAs being backed as climate finance. You can't really tell what an ODA is and what climate finance is, because official development assistance comes from development projects, and we need to have monies that are meant for climate change. Of course there's going to be development, but what the incremental cost of development assistance, which is caused by climate change, has to be financed. But if ODAs come in the form of climate finance, then of course that is not very fair. So, we need a definition of what climate finance is to be able to decipher between climate finance and then also development assistance.

But what I would say is my joy is the fact that a youth component has actually been—we are happy to say that the COP has given clear guidance to GEF to ensure that youth are engaged as far as financing is concerned. So, we look forward to when we get back home wherever finances from GEF or GCF is being disbursed, we look at what at the youth component, what kind of youth engagement has been done here and there, and will we take that forward.

ORDU: I think the point you both made are salient and the definition issue is particularly important because there's a lot of smokes and mirrors, interchangeability of these and mixing ODA and climate change money, as you said, it's obviously not a good thing from the point of view of the beneficiary countries. That was a particular reason why the ODA was disbursed in the first instance and that reason remains valid. And then on top of that, climate change money. So, I fully share your sentiment that it's important everybody to be absolutely clear on what exactly we're talking about as regards climate finance. Still on COP27, what impressed or surprised you the most? Nadia?

OWUSU: I don't think I had any wild moments for COP, maybe due to my participation. I don't think I have any wild moments at all, for now.

ORDU: MaryJane?

ENCHILL: Yes, same here. I'm not so much impressed. But what surprises me more is the fact that, at one of yesterday's discussion, we hear that now there's the call for widening of the contributor base for the multilateral funds. In this case, I'm talking about the GCF, the Global Environment Facility, and then also maybe the Adaptation Fund and other funds created under the COP. That's now the initial discussion that developed countries should mobilize resources into these funds to address the impacts of climate change in developing countries, less developed countries. Now the narrative is that, okay, we want to widen the contributor base. Now developed countries should also make some kind of contribution.

And I feel that this is not acceptable. It really surprises me that this is coming up at the moment because, of course, I mean, why would we want to enburden the developing countries now? Of course, there may be some kind of valid point to say that there are some countries that call themselves developing countries, yes they are better off on their own than assessing grants for ... that are meant for less developed countries.

But we should look at it critically. Who are those that qualify to contribute to the fund? What does the convention say? What have we agreed upon? What does the Paris Agreement say? It didn't actually state that developing countries should be part of the contributors of the fund. It was a voluntary kind of action. So, if you are calling upon developing countries to also now make contribution, I think it should still be maintained as voluntary and not, I mean, forcing it down the throat to say that this should go into the agreements or texts so that at the end of the day, developing countries will also be made to contribute to the fund.

So, for me, that is what actually surprised me. And I, I, I, I, I was I was dumbfounded, I was short of words when I actually saw that signal coming from the developed countries. I mean, meaning that developed nations should also make contributions to the 100 billion we're talking about. Is it because we failed to mobilize it by 2020? What is the issue? So, I mean, that is, I'm actually ____ climate finance. So, that is what I should say that actually surprised me the most to see that we should widen it by including developing countries to also make contributions to the fund. That's not acceptable for me.

ORDU: Then those are indeed very, very valid observations. While you were at COP, you both participated with a number of other youths from across the African continent, and the debate was about the need to set up an African Youth Council. Looking back now, what in your view should be the key role of such a youth council, do you think? Nadia?

OWUSU: Yeah. The issue of climate councils have been on the uprise. I don't think it's something new. My fear is how or which key role would this council be playing? Because in different African countries there's the Youth Climate Council at different levels and they all play different roles to push for youth in climate change, youth in climate action and also equipping it with different resources they need to champion climate action.

So, we are in different organizations. Not _____ here about the launch of an African Youth Climate Council. For me, that is great. It's coming at a time where it's really needed because the African youth need a voice, especially when it comes to the discussions on climate change.

I, I want the climate change council to be an independent body which is reflective of youth voices and youth demands whenever it has to take a very independent role. I'm looking forward to see that this council capacitates young people, especially marginalized youth groups, with the kinds of resources they really, really need. We don't want it to be politicized in any way. That defeats its

purpose, because the moment when this thing becomes a political, too, then it's its goals are not met. It becomes very different from what it was set out to do.

So, for me, I really want it to be an independent body. Wherever it's going to have its secretariat, it should be a very, very independent body where young people can look at the council and say, yes, this is an African-based climate council. We don't want any kind of infiltration, any kind of body that would work to defeat the purpose of this youth climate council. For me, I'm embracing it with all my might and power. I'm looking forward to it to push the agenda. If it's really for youth led by youth and would be, you know, controlled in a way that it's pushing the agenda for youth.

ORDU: MaryJane?

ENCHILL: Great, Nadia. That that's basically it. I think share in what Nadia just mentioned. And just to add to what she said, is the fact that we are looking forward to the council being created by youth and for youth.

And then also we need to speak for youth, basically. We've seen councils where the composition of the council, you don't even know how it's formed, but there's an announcement of the council being formed. The process of the formation of the council should be as open and transparent as possible. And basically that's what I would say, just to add to what Nadia said, so I don't repeat what she said, basically. So, that's what I want it to be. Operated by youth and for youth and it should speak for youth, and its formation should be transparent and open as possible.

ORDU: So, what would be your advice right now to policymakers on how best to tap into the potential of our youths to tackle climate change? Nadia?

OWUSU: I was looking forward to giving my remarks last, but anyways. For me, I think policymakers should stop looking at us young people as ethical points to say that they are including young people. Youth inclusivity should be away from tokenism and infantilization. We are young people, we have the skills, we have the knowledge. We just demand that we are being capacitated enough to add up to whatever agenda it is, because we can do it. We can do things. We just want to be given the space, we want to be given the voice, and we want to be given the necessary _____ when it comes to the youth bracket.

So, I don't want policymakers to just say, yes, we are including young people just for the fact that they're bringing young persons to sit on the table, or they're including young person to a board, or they have a youth envoy. That's not enough for young people. Youth voices are broader than an envoy, an individual person working for the youth. Young people are brilliant, young people are are, you know, innovative. So, if they are including young people then the inclusivity should cover all the facets.

ORDU: And, MaryJane?

ENCHILL: Yeah. Great, well said, Nad. So, like you mentioned, for me, I think policymakers are always making decisions about the future of the next generation, of our planet. Yet they continuously exclude the youth from decision-making.

So, I want to inform them that this is a very, very innovative demographic, the current youth we have. They are very, very innovative. They are leading a lot of grassroots actions at various levels, from renewable energy to agriculture, technology, and planting of trees here and there—all the things they talk about young people are at the forefront of doing this.

And so, they should indeed see us as young people. Especially in Africa, basically, we suffer the notion that once you are called a young person, then of course you are young and your mind is also young. You can't think like an adult. But trust me, the current generation of youth we have, they are very, very innovative. They have great ideas. Talk of the technologies that we see—it has been done, innovated by these young people.

So, if we really want to address the issue of climate change, just get in touch with these young people. Bring them closer, let them give you the ideas. And we we will make a very very great impact by the end of the day.

I keep saying that I was on a panel some time ago and I was sharing the idea that now the developed world is saying that by 2050 they are moving away from fossil fuel vehicles. And they are calling for fossil fuels to be kept underground. Yet African countries or governments depend so much on fossil fuel to power our cars, power a lot of things that we do. If we cannot manufacture cars by ourselves, then it means that should the world, those manufacturing cars, stop manufacturing cars that are fossil fuel vehicles and they now manufacture electric vehicles, manufacture cars that drive on hydrogen power, what can we do back at home to be able to address some of these future challenges that we foresee? Because we can't do it ourselves.

And, these young people are the same people with the technological know-how to really come up with homegrown solutions to address some of these issues. Then what it means is that if at the end of the day, the cars are no longer manufactured, and all that you have is fossil-fuel powered vehicles, and they are no longer in existence, how do you go about your movement?

So, these are some of the things we need I keep telling our policymakers should be looking at and get this innovative youth around to be able to give them some innovative solutions. At the end of the day, I think Africa can even bring some homegrown solutions to the COP to tell them that, Hey, these are the discussions we are having, these are needs and capacities and these are the viable options that we are bringing to the table.

And at the end of the day, we will be surprised that some of these viable options which will come up from the youth will be adopted at a COP, and then moneys or finances will be made available for us to implement them back at home.

So, they shouldn't just look at us as people who don't have the knowledge that we have. They should rather look at us as development partners who are bringing the innovations with them to be able to implement at the end of the day.

ORDU: Okay, let's switch gears now to the important subject of gender. Do you see any links between climate justice and gender equality? Nadia?

OWUSU: Recently I joined a discussion on climate justice, and intersectionality has to play into this entire conversation. For some people, the issue about gender is just women-to-men ratio. But for me, I see gender as a very holistic thing. It's got to do with marginalized people, LGBT communities, people that are away from the binary constraints of the gender brackets.

So, when we talk about climate justice, it's about the communities that have polluted so much and how they are supposed to be accountable for it. Just like Jane mentioned, they're trying to introduce something that has got to do with we the less developed countries contributed to a fund that we've never received funds for previous devastations that are ____ us.

And we try to push this into the gender lens, there's always this mindset about gender inequality, and when it happens to do with the climate change conversations, there's no equality whatsoever.

I'll take the case study of migration. Migration affects different brackets of people. But then again, marginalized people, especially women, girls, and also young people, when there's any kind of climate-induced migration, these people are always marginalized in a way that they receive less of education when it comes to climate literacy. They are also not capacitated enough to take their own actions because women are always seen as the people that are supposed to make the home, and when there's any climate-induced migration, they are either staying back at home to take care of their losses or they are forced to move without any kind of information whatsoever, without any form of security, without any form of resources to capacitate them whenever these crisis hits.

So, for me, when it comes to climate justice and gender inequality, I don't think there's any justice at all, irrespective of which kind of gender it is in question.

So, I think that we have a long way to go. We have a long way to go because the matter of climate justice and gender is not something that would ____ any time soon. It takes deliberate effort, collective effort and also people understanding that whatever gaps that have been created based on climate-induced reasons, this gap has to be closed one way or the other. So, yeah, over to you.

ENCHILL: I think Nadia has actually said a lot and. Like she said, it's true, there's inequality as far as gender is concerned. She took it from the point of marginalized groups.

But then, you know, something happened at the beginning of COP, where at the end of the day, when the family photo was taking and we were counting the number of women in there, we saw only about seven women, saw a whole lot of men at the high level section. And you ask yourself, we are talking about gender and climate change affecting women equally as it affects men. And yet, at the discussion table, we see a few of the women on the table. And that raises a lot of eyebrows.

So there's so much inequality in the system apart from the fact that, of course, climate change is affecting these women. We don't see them having a lot of voice when it comes to discussing or bringing their solutions. So, I think we should look at it also and then see how best we can bring a lot more of these young women to be able to discuss their solution as well, because they are the most affected. And so, they may have a lot of their solutions too, or the accurate solution as well. So, we need to bring them on board.

ORDU: So, as we wrap up now, ladies, what would you say are your two top takeaways from COP27? MaryJane?

ENCHILL: Well, I don't know if I'm thinking any, apart from the youth inclusion in the financial mechanism, I don't know if what I'm taking home is I should say it's good or bad. But, the issue of proliferation of funds, and then the issue of more loans instead of grants is something that I am taking back home with me as something that didn't go well at the negotiations. And also we tried to strategize again coming back next year to see what we can do about it.

If I should explain briefly on the issue of loans to grants, what we are seeing at the COP here is the fact that we are pushing a lot of more private sector, private sector financing into the climate discussion or finance discussion. And what it means is that we are looking at more loans than grants, which is in the spirit and letter of the of the convention and then the Paris Agreement.

So, for me, I think that we should do more of the loans than looking at small and big grants. I'm saying that beneficiaries of the global problem, which is climate change, should be seen providing

some resources in the form of grants, which they should see it as a corporate social responsibility they are doing to the most affected and vulnerable communities back home.

And then also look at the fact that the proliferation of funds is not what is going to actually solve the issue. What is needed is capacity to be able to assess the fund. That is what I am seeing in the discussion that is happening because others are calling for loss and damage fund and all of that. Others are also saying we have a lot of funds here and there, why can't we strengthening those funds to be able to address the issue of loss and damage as well.

So, basically, that is what I'm taking away. Not necessarily having a series of funds created, but then also looking at supporting the existing ones to be able to raise more funds to be able to address properly the issue of climate change. We need to replenish the funds and then also the need for capacity building to assess the funds instead of creating a lot of funds. So, basically these are my two takeaways. No need for proliferation of funds and then less of loans and more of grants.

ORDU: Absolutely important takeaways indeed. Nadia, final words, your takeaway from COP27?

OWUSU: I'll make it very brief. Just like Jane said, I don't know if my takeaways are good or bad. But for me, I'm looking forward to the aftermath. I want to see what is being done in the space for closing the gender gap when it comes to climate change and also how youth voices are going to be considered as vital, vital _____ or vital pointers to be able to resolve this climate change crisis. So, for me, these are the two: gender and youth inclusivity. Thank you so much.

ORDU: It's been a wonderful pleasure talking to you both. Thank you very, very much for joining us today for this conversation. Enjoy your day. Thank you.

ENCHILL: Thank you.

OWUSU: Thank you so much for the invitation.

[music]

ORDU: I'm Aloysius Uche Ordu, and this has been Foresight Africa. To learn more about what you heard today, you can find this episode online at Brookings dot edu slash Foresight Africa podcast.

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