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Leadership for the Future: Resilience and Inclusion

Climate Change: Collective Action and Leadership Transcript for Climate Change Panel

Speakers

- Adedana Ashebir, Regional Director – Africa and the Middle East, Village Capital
- Jasmine Sanders, Executive Director, Our Climate
- Shaban Senyange, Wildlife Health and Conservation Media Specialist (2018 Mandela Washington Fellowship Alumnus, Uganda)
- Winfred Mutinda, Mandela Washington Fellow, 2019
- Soni Osazee Omontese, Mandela Washington Fellow, 2021
- Clarisa Regede, Mandela Washington Fellow, 2021
- Laissa Malih, Mandela Washington Fellow, 2021

Session Transcript

Winfred Mutinda: I am Winfred Mutinda from Nairobi, Kenya. I am a Mandela Washington Fellow 2019 hosted at the university of California Davis under the public management track I have worked in the energy sector for six years now and my work plays a key role in ensuring eradication of energy poverty during the covenanted pandemic period there's been a challenge in the demonstration of adaptive leadership at a personal level organizational level and even for government I've also had to come up with a personal leadership plan to ensure that I'm responsible during this time the need to social distance and the closure of public institutions necessitated that I come up with an inventory strategy to be able to ensure continuity of my mentorship sessions I also got the opportunity to launch the my lady engineer experience forum which is an e-mentoring platform connecting lady engineers across diverse engineering fields. I also managed to carry out the packages of Hope project which is a food drive initiative aimed at assisting the needy community members. Mandela Washington Fellows despite our geographical boundaries we all have one common call to transform our communities into these servant leaders there is no blueprint on how to act during a crisis, but we can all purpose to be responsive leaders let us not underestimate the power of serving others as well as the power in collaborating and partnering with other organizations and leaders for the greater community goods.

Shaban Senyange: Good day ladies and gentlemen and welcome to this breakout session where we are going to be focusing on Climate Change Climate Action, and Leadership. Now before we get started, I just wanted to pose a little question, and food for thought if you may. Now if you are asked to paint a picture about what climate change looks like in Africa, and the world, what would that picture look like? Let's all take a moment, visualize what that picture looks like now on countries and



in our own environment. I'm curious to hear or see what each of those pictures look like for us and maybe you can have a few people that might say something in the chat that you can sample out later on in the discussion. Now I came across a quote today that painted a very thought-provoking picture of what climate change looks like. And it said, we are the first generation to feel the sting of climate change, and yet we are the last generation that can do something about it. Now, my name is Shaban Senyange, and I'll be your moderator for today, I'm Wildlife Health and conservation media specialist, and my work has revolved around creating awareness about wildlife and environment conservation issues while doing a bit of work on ground in the field of conservation, public health, climate change, and renewable energy with community development. And more recently I've started working as a field epidemiologist with the Minister of Health in Uganda, focusing on human wildlife disease interface, but also looking at the Population Health and Environment interface. Now, I'm nearly, just to make up for the discussion, I will be joined by two amazing panelists whose work has created so much impact at the forefront of climate change. Ladies and gentlemen, please help me welcome it Adedana Ashebir is the Regional Director Africa and the Middle East Village Capital if you could wave a little. And we have Jasmine Sanders, who is the Executive Director Our Climate.

Now the impact of climate change has been felt by every single country in the world now 2021 has been dubbed the year they make it or break it year, the year where we must take action on climate change. And climate change and development are closely intertwined preventing climate change is critical to promoting global development, but to make this possible we need to have individuals and institutions collaborating and finding solutions at the policy and community levels. And we hope that this session will help share views on ways the U.S. and African leaders can collaborate to address the impact of climate change in their respective communities.

At this point I am going to invite the panelists to introduce themselves and tell us about the amazing work that they do but most importantly how their work relates to climate change. Adedana if I may start with you.

Adedana Ashebir: Sure, thank you all so much for having me it's a pleasure to be here I've met a few Mandela Washington Fellows over the years so I'm happy to engage with the 2021 class in this way. My name is Adedana Ashebir. I'm the regional director for Africa and the Middle East at Village Capital. Village Capital is a global organization devoted to democratizing entrepreneurship and what that means is making sure that entrepreneurs that are building solutions to the problems that we face including climate change have the resources mentors training capital and investment that they need to succeed to grow and to scale and. So I manage our operations in Africa and the Middle East and so through that we have supported countless entrepreneurs in a variety of sectors: fintech, education, and health but for the purposes of today what's more important to our discussion in energy and in agriculture as well. And so we're an organization that's been working since 2009, since 2012 in Africa, and so it's a pleasure to be here today to talk through how I see climate change also it's a personal

interest of mine I did my bachelor's and my master's in environmental studies and environmental management respectively so this is something that I've also studied. And it's nice to be able to use my degrees again because I haven't used them quite as much as perhaps, I would have liked considering how much I spent for them, so it's great to be here.

Shaban Senyange: Thank you so much, Adedana. Jasmine, over to you.

Jasmine Sanders: Hi, everyone. Thank you so much for having me here today. And I'm Jasmine Sanders, I'm currently the first black female executive director of Our Climate. Our Climate, Our Climate is a climate change advocacy organization, empowered by a youth grassroots movement. The organization actually started in the state of Oregon in the United States as a statewide campaign, and it was artwork that started a movement, it brought together young student leaders and adult allies, and they had painted these mosaic art tiles they marched to the Capitol in Oregon. And this was a powerful tool. A tool that spoke to many people, as we know, artwork leaves room for interpretation, it leaves room for conversation. And so that is how we found that we have been able to advocate, and to make a difference and make an impact here in the United States. In 2016 we transitioned to a national organization. And when I joined the organization last year, we transitioned to affecting not just state level policy but federal level policy. Young people, specifically Gen Z and millennials are some of the most knowledgeable people I know, you guys are up for anything, not afraid of a conversation, not afraid of it being taboo or intense want to acknowledge you want to hold people accountable, but you also want to get to the solutions, and so I'm very happy to be here today and speak with each of you.

Shaban Senyange: Thank you so much. It is sad that we cannot hear everybody give you guys a warm round of applause. The impactful work that you guys do, and I'm excited to be having this discussion with you. Just a reminder to the Fellows who are on this platform, there'll be opportunities for you guys to ask questions, if you have any questions, please write them in the chat section and we'll shall be able to sample this questions during the session, especially in the Q&A. Now, earlier when we said like this this one of the amazing things about the fellowship is it creates unique opportunities for Fellows and the U.S. citizens to collaborate and I for one, as a 2018 Mandela fellow collaborated with a writer and director for a wildlife film called Sides of the Horn and we're going to do a bit of work on the ground, relating to conservation and also tackle aspects of climate change and endangered species, we're focusing on the rhino. Now, this collaborations are very important towards, you know, common objectives, especially if promoting growth and prosperity strengthening democracy and governance and enhancing peace and security. Can you share your thoughts on why addressing climate change is critical in achieving these objectives? And if you can provide examples of strategies that support this, especially linking it to the work that you do. Jasmine I could start with you and then we could go to Adedana.

Jasmine Sanders: Yeah, I think this is a great question. Climate change is such an intersectional issue. I am both a climate scientist and a climate justice advocate, all harped on the climate justice part. Every great social justice movement started on the community level. So, from promoting growth and prosperity to strengthening that democratic governance to enhancing peace and security. All of these common objectives are centered around social justice. The key thing to know here is that if we don't advocate and fight for racial justice, housing justice, disability justice, gender justice, food justice and more; then we won't achieve climate justice. It's absolutely critical that we acknowledge the world's history the United States history, we hold ourselves and each other accountable, and we find solutions. I like to say there's no one size fits all for climate change we need an entire toolkit to revolutionize mitigating the climate crisis.

Shaban Senyange: Thank you so much Jasmine. Adedana.

Adedana Ashebir: Sure, so to the question of why addressing climate change is critical to achieving the objectives of growth, prosperity governance, democratic governance, and peace and security. I think the short answer is none of this matters if we're dead or drowning, the broader answer is that the environment doesn't need us, and we need the environment. And so, climate change is correlating to instability to migration to food and water insecurity to livelihoods disturbed, public health is an increasing concern as well through heat waves, droughts, heavy storms sea level rise. And the concern increasingly about vector borne diseases what malaria will look like for example, in Africa, in the current moment.

I think in terms of the strategies that we employ; we support entrepreneurs that are building solutions. So we are not solution makers ourselves, but we support and we amplify the efforts of those who are building businesses that are tied to solving questions around energy and agriculture; how to make it more carbon efficient, how to increase the reach to smallholder farmers, etc. So that's, that's the work that we do. And I think strategies look different in the United States versus what they look like in Africa. So, there is more of a discussion around what urban planning, smart urban planning looks like for Africans growing cities. In the U.S. there's a similar discussion to that about, can we have high speed rail so that you can get between New York and D.C. in ideally 20 to 30 maybe an hour or 20 30 minutes to an hour versus taking four hours to drive in a car. So there are, there are linked strategies. But of course, the situations at hand are different.

Shaban Senyange: Great, thank you guys so much. We have a question from a 2021 Fellow.

Soni Osazee Omontese: Hi I'm Soni Omontese from Nigeria. I'm a Mandela Washington Fellow in the Civic Leadership Staley School of Leadership Studies, Kansa State University. Given the fact that carbon Dioxide will continue to remain in the atmosphere for hundreds even thousands of years and keep warming our climate. What can we do to reduce the risk faced from climate change, and how do

we place emphasis on the real threats climate change poses above the economic opportunities it presents?

Shaban Senyange: Jasmine. Do you want to start with that?

Jasmine Sanders: Sure. I think this is a loaded question. So, I like to look at things as challenging opportunities. And one thing I would, I would start off with is when you are providing the data and the facts to people it's very important that you're also providing the socio-cultural perspective, and you're providing compassion. Climate change is such a huge issue, and a lot of people, they are wondering, well how can I fit in? How can I make an impact? how can I make a difference, and tap into this? And now you have companies and organizations who are also making these pledges and these promises. But there's a difference between them actually wanting to make a difference and undo some of the things they have done, and just greenwashing. Greenwashing is a term used for, lack of better terms. people are just saying something to, to hear them talk about it. And so you have for example, companies that are saying their recycling, yet they are some of the biggest producers of plastic in the world. And, you know this is a huge problem. So, what can we do to reduce, reduce those risks that we face from climate change. First off, it's speaking up in the United States, here at Our Climate we work with young people in high school, in college running a leadership development program. Our policy principles are focused on renewable energy targets corporate polluter fees, and environmental justice legislation. I think it's very important to know that you have to look at everything within the environmental justice lens because there have been so many environmental injustices done to communities of color and other frontline communities, including low-income coastal communities around the world and its frontline communities who are disproportionately impacted. So you have to make sure you speak up, you talk to your elected officials, and that can include your members of Congress that can include your mayor, or your city council, whatever your local government is in your country, speak to them, tweet them, write them, go have a meeting with them, they should be accessible for you.

The other thing that I would say is we have to work inside of our homes, as a family unit, what are some of those things that we can start to do? You know, it's also inside of our businesses are we actually going to make sure that we are trying to make this a sustainable place? Are we speaking up for affordable and sustainable housing? Are we making sure that we are going to be open to the variety of solutions that are out there. A big topic right now is carbon removal, and how that can be done and deployed successfully, making sure that we are having community based listening sessions, and not just having sessions and you know that one time conversation with the community in the town hall, and then leaving them completely out of the project. Going in and not making sure that they're sustained with the enough amount of resources, and when, when I say resources, I'm talking about funding, I'm talking about additional technical expertise, I'm talking about paid training, you

have to make sure that this is going on in order for you to deploy all of these various solutions including but not limited to carbon removal and a renewable energy just transition.

Adedana Ashebir: I will add, so I think Jasmine already laid out a really great framework. I will add that in the current moment to the question about how can we place emphasis on the real threat of climate change poses above the business opportunities that it presents. So, I think we are in the era of seeing in real time what the real threat is. And so, for those who remain unconvinced or for those who don't believe or whatever the case may be, where science communication has perhaps faltered and not done a good enough job. We are seeing wildfires, we are seeing. We are seeing incredibly hot summers, we are seeing incredibly cold winters. We have seen how infrastructure across the globe has not caught up to, to the current moment, whether it's buildings collapsing, flooding, you name it. So unfortunately for those who have to learn by fire, we are alerting by fire, and so maybe this is a misplaced hope. But my hope is that, unfortunately because things are now so bad, there will be a bit more urgency because I think unfortunately with something like climate change, it's very abstract, or whether it's global warming or climate change. It's a very abstract concept.

So, if you ask someone. So, my preference is, don't ask people if they believe in climate change or believe in global warming, ask people if they understand it, because we're past the point of belief, now. Ask if you understand, and if folks don't understand, explain, because the believing framework. You've already lost the plot because if someone doesn't believe there's no convincing. But understanding is different. And so, having framing that discussion around understanding and being willing to put in some time to explain, I think will go a long way. Because I think a part of what has happened here is a loss in the battle of communication about what this issue is, about how it impacts us. And I think now, for those who quite couldn't understand albedo effect or one degree or two degrees or, you know some of the scientific aspects of this, people understand fires on their nightly news, they understand flooding in their communities, they understand their lives being disrupted they understand migration. And so, I think a part of how to reduce the risk is to improve the communication around it as well.

Shaban Senyange: Thank you guys so much. Just wanted to say a quick comment before we jump into a question that just popped up in the chat. You know, I've been a part of meetings where people are constantly talking about providing opportunities for young people on the continent, or growing businesses and there's never conversations about engaging or incorporating environmental sustainability into these business models, which I think is part of the problem. And like Adedana has highlighted that, it's not like people do not understand climate change as a concept. They see things happen in their communities, whether it's, you know, a change in rainfall patterns or increased heat waves, they see these things it's just that the daily hustle and the daily grind to make ends meet, is really forcing people to, to survive. And the conversations about providing sustainable alternatives that are not, you know, accessible, readily available is another theme altogether. And whereas, that's

a challenge, there's been a lot of young people, African leaders that have managed to harness the power of the problem that is climate change, and you know the problem that is youth unemployment and created solutions. Like we have people who are building houses from plastic bottles of people who are making, you know, renewable energy and B.K.T from biodegradable materials so there's so much that is affecting the continent that presents opportunities that can help us create opportunities. And also the issue of just looking at climate change as one thing. I don't think we have that chance anymore it really takes a multidisciplinary approach to look at climate change, whether it's from a health perspective, a business perspective, all these interdisciplinary approaches coming to help us address climate change.

I want to jump in, into a question that just popped up in the chat right Nawa Silishebo if I slaughter your name, apologies from Zambia, Texas Tech University. And they ask, in your experience, how have you been able to build capacity in people at the grassroots who are usually the majority in most areas to advocate for climate change?

Adedana Ashebir: So I believe this more to Jasmine because she actually does organizing work, and again we support entrepreneurs, but for our part, we support businesses that are building solutions, whether it's how to make agriculture, more efficient, how to provide energy solutions either for the home or for businesses, how to make those scalable how to make those affordable. That's the type of support that we provide.

Jasmine Sanders: Yeah. You know, organizing on the grassroots level, you already have people who are passionate about the issue. They're on the front lines, so they automatically care. And I think that's, that's why that part is not difficult. I think the part that you have to work at is keeping people engaged because climate justice, social justice, you don't leave that when you walk away from work, and you go home. Climate change comes with me everywhere I go when I go home and I'm with my partner and our daughter, we're dealing with climate change. I talked to her about climate change as the circle of life for Lion King, I don't know if anyone here has seen the movie The Lion King, but the circle of life of climate change, it's so complex, it's so intersectional. We used to talk about it from just the environmental in the financial perspectives, but there's so much more there. There's the migration flows the food and security the housing, the socio-cultural, the racial, and the health. You know, there are so many things that are going on myself as a black woman, when I'm speaking to. I'm originally from Monroe, Louisiana, and so big black population. And for me, when I'm speaking to, particularly black people and wanting to connect with them and let them know, we have to care about this we have to, not only are we on the front lines of it but we have to advocate for it because we are the ones who are most at risk. Black women in particular, are extremely vulnerable when it comes to climate change, and how I break that down, is by making the issue, real for them.

In the United States in particular, black communities were predisposed to bad air quality, toxic led, and living next to landfills, due to redlining, you know, this was something that came out of the New Deal years and years ago, which a housing program was supposed to be created, and it was. But the intention was for it to help lower class and middle-class white families. And there was an explicit clause in there, and that was, excluding African Americans and putting African Americans in parts of cities that were known to have bad air quality. And so, this now goes down generations of grandmothers who want to pass down their house to their grandchildren, but it's sitting next to a landfill. So now you have grandparents who are wanting to, in their heads, they're debating well do I passed this house down so my grandchildren, you know there's a legacy and there's generational wealth, or do I give it up. So now, we're having to give up, you know, passing down a legacy in our families because we're concerned about our health. Another way that I give this example is there was an article in The New York Times, I think it was early last year, and it was talking about the linkage between black maternal health and climate change. There's a direct correlation of black women having premature births miscarriages and low, low birth weights because of climate change because we're predisposed whether living or working in areas of bad air, we're sitting next to landfills or sitting next to a plant. So this is why it's important, this is how you bring people in, keep them engaged, and you have to show them that advocating looks a number of ways. It's not just where you're in the streets with a poster, but it can be you on Instagram or Tik Tok, it can be used sitting down and having a conversation with your family at the dinner table or with your friends at happy hour. It's you, making sure that you're informed, getting those news clips and just reading five minutes worth of news in the morning time. There's so many ways to be an advocate and we need each and every one of you to do that.

Shaban Senyange: Thank you so much as me, I love that take on diversity and inclusion and I think it really plays a very important part in the climate change discussion. Now we have another question from 2021 Fellow from Zimbabwe.

Clarisa Regede: Hello everyone. My name is Clarisa Regede, and I'm from Zimbabwe. I am in the Leadership and Civic Engagement track. And my question today is how can African countries, integrate conversation climate change into policy and governance, so that we can better prepare for the impact of climate change?

Shaban Senyange: Adedana.

Adedana Ashebir: So this might not be the most sophisticated answer but you just do, you just do it. And this is about any negotiating. If you come to the table with your, with your desires, or with your needs, you know, closed mouths don't get fed. So if you are not advocating if you're not including this, it won't be included. Because trade agreements, other countries are not going to offer, you know. I think, in terms of how to get African countries to do this, I think this speaks to what Jasmine spoke

earlier which is, you know, reaching out to your, to, to your elected officials, making the case, having entry points through perhaps ministries of education and environment and trade. You know, connecting with MPs and legislatures across different countries in Africa can look different from the United States, but in terms of how can African countries integrate climate conversations and policymaking, I mean, that to me is, again, you either want to do it or you don't. And we're at an age right now, where you know through, you know, the summer that we had or the US summer that we had last summer and all of the other movements that came out of it, you're seeing that people have to make a stand one way or the other about how they feel about certain things.

And so, I think the situation is no different. It can be included in terms of, of benchmarking for investments. I was a part of a working group where it was a China, Africa Council on environment conservation so how to make, how to include conservation goals in discussions with Chinese investors and the Chinese government on infrastructure projects because admittedly a lot of infrastructure projects are going to go through, unfortunately, a national park, or land that was, you know previously gazetted for conservation. And so, there are those types of working groups that exist. And some of these conversations admittedly are not in the forefront so you wouldn't know. But in the meantime, however it works to, to, to reach out to your elected officials, or to those who are representing you, I think getting it on their agenda so that they know it's important. But unfortunately, especially when it comes to trade deals, whether it's bilateral or with the EU at large, or with the US or China, etc, if you don't come to the table with that as a mandatory stipulation for engagement, it's not going to happen.

Jasmine Sanders: I think that was a great answer, I'm only going to add just a little bit here. It should be part of every policy conversation that impacts every part of our lives. So, there is no reason why climate, should not be on the table when policy decisions are being made. And I think when you bring that home and you utilize your storytelling skill set, and you bring in that data, because, elected officials, policy makers, they're all different, and they listen to different things. So, knowing who your audience is, is how you're going to be able to, I think is Adedana said earlier, it's important about having people understand. And so, you got to make them understand in the language, and I'm not necessarily saying the language we speak, but it's the language that we hear, because we all take in information differently and process it.

Shaban Senyange: Guys for those incredible views. We do have another question from a 2021 Fellow from Kenya.

Laissa Malih: Hello, I'm Laissa Malih, I'm from Kenya, I'm a filmmaker, and I'm in the Civic Engagement track by Rutgers University. And my main question is, where does the climate communication disconnect and assumptions by both stakeholders, Storytellers, and members of the public occur? And what can be done to bridge the gap?

Adedana Ashebir: So this speaks to a little bit of what I mentioned earlier about the initial framing, when you were trying to convince, if you will, people about climate change, the question is do you believe it, do you believe in it, as if it is a story or a fake practice, rather than do you understand what's happening. And also, I think that the beginning one of the failures perhaps was sea level rise, being the, the metric that folks were to be scared of. Which is not something that you should be happy about, don't get me wrong, but I think if you project things in terms of sea level is going to increase by x in the years, people are creatures of the moment. There are some that think that are very forward thinking there are some that thinks of think of these things in terms of their children. But by and large, again, people are worried about the day to day. People are worried about. I need, you know, X amount of money for school fees. I need X amount of money to buy petrol for my car. And you know what happens later happens later. And in some ways, that is a healthy response because you can't take on the world, at the same time, the burden of the world on your shoulders can be crippling. So, I think the framing instead again should be, do you understand. And also, are you aware of the other quote unquote side effects. So yes, they're sea level rise. And so, you kind of see the metrics at different conferences water is going to be here by a certain year etc, but less so about, you know, weather patterns changing or what it does to infrastructure. What does extreme cold that infrastructure, whether it's electricity or water pipes not being built for, how much infrastructure, how much insurance, how much is that going to cost. So, I think, again, I don't know if it's necessarily a mistake, because you do your best with the information you have at the time that you have it. I think now that we're moving forward, and unfortunately the headlines are kind of helping. That is something to consider as we move ahead.

Jasmine Sanders: Yeah. There's so much of what you just said, and this question itself. When I think of the disconnect and climate communication, I think, of the media, I think of elected officials, and I think of the general public. So, by separating each of these in media, there has only somewhat kind of been a push over the past year. Prior to that, climate change was not really in the media. It was not really a priority. And this is something that many of us climate advocates are pushing and pressuring on media, we've got to make sure that this is in the news. This shouldn't be breaking news. When you see those that headline run across the screen breaking news, we need this about the climate crisis. This is something that we have got to be concerned about and all have an all hands-on deck approach to this. Secondly, if we're talking about, elected officials, specifically here in the United States because that is my context, there is a disconnect between members of Congress, so that's in the Senate, in the House of Representatives on a federal level, and the general public, unless there is a huge bill such as the infrastructure package that's all in the, excuse me in the news right now. The general public doesn't really know about what bills are being introduced and what are being passed, it's not that it's hidden, it's just not news. And so, this gap has to be bridged.

What do we do at Our Climate. At Our Climate, our student leaders absolutely love to make sure that information is put out there. So, it's by creating these informational Instagram carousel post. I'm sure

many of you guys have seen this, it's where it's those multiple pages, and then she just keeps sliding over it's a little tidbit of information and it keeps you engaged, it's colorful. They create Tik Tok Reels, you know, all of y'all love those Tiktok. I haven't been able to get in that Tiktok, quite yet, but it's 30 to 60 seconds of information very quick, and then people are intrigued, they're engaged. When you see something, and especially over the past year living in this global pandemic, we have been more on our phones than ever before. And so, that 30 to 60 seconds of tidbit of information prompts you immediately. If it piques your interest to want it to look it up even more. So, then you're doing research, and then you're talking about it and you're having that conversation.

This particular student and I'm sorry that I forgot your name, you as a filmmaker, it is so important that you're telling the stories of the people we have got to put a face to climate change. And there are so many different faces and stories to tell. And I think that this is what is important, this is where people will center, their why your why's your heart. I know in Louisiana when Katrina hit the shores of Louisiana and the Gulf Coast, something pulled at my heart. I was seeing family and friends lose their homes, lose their schools, lose your grandmother's necklace I've been passed down generations to generations, all those photos hanging on the walls that was gone. It's done. And so, there's a human side to climate change, it's not just all about the facts, the facts is for us to prove that it's actually going on. The stories is how you tell people that this is important, and this is affecting all of us, no matter how far removed you feel, which at this point, you shouldn't feel far removed, the sky was orange, it's flooding, there's major drought, it's impacting us every day; unsurvivable storm surges, increased hurricanes, intensified storms. In the Pacific Northwest here in the United States, where it should not be like above 80 degrees Fahrenheit. It was a heatwave, and it was in the hundreds. So you shouldn't ignore this. Thus is so important and it is our responsibilities to make sure that we're communicate.

Shaban Senyange: Amazing, thank you guys. Sadly, there's many more questions than we can sample right now, and we only have a couple of minutes left, to the end of the session. At this point, I'm going to invite Adedana and Jasmine to share their final thoughts or takeaway for fellows from this discussion. Adedana.

Adedana Ashebir: Sure. Well first of all, congratulations on being a part of this program for being able to make the most of this network is my wish for you all moving forward. I think it's very important as we talk about climate change, especially as this as a U.S. Africa program to be very blunt about where the burden and responsibility of climate change actually lies.

So, in terms of responsibility and who can actually do the quote most good but also do the least harm, that lies with the United States, it lies with the European Union, it lies with developed countries. And so, cookstoves in Africa are great initiatives, but that is perhaps more of a public health thing about indoor air quality in terms of carbon emissions, that is not going to move the needle enough

compared to what the United States can do or what the EU can do. Because the average American carbon footprint is 16 tons, with the EU, it's about seven tons, globally, the average is four tons. And the most recent figure that I could find about what it is in Africa, if you all could guess, unfortunately I can't see you right now normally I would ask you all to guess and I would hear from you, but I'll just tell you the answer. It's point eight, tons. So, Africa only accounts for 2 to 3% of the world's carbon dioxide emissions from energy and industrial sources. So, the burden of responsibility here is, is on the developed nations, and so that does not mean you should not advocate, and you should not try, this is not a race to the bottom. This does not mean you shouldn't advocate to be better to know better and to do better. But as you are engaging with their U.S. counterparts, I impress upon you and invite you all to ask what they are doing and ask how you can be supportive in those efforts. Because if we need to get to, under two tons average by 2050, where we're at for that drop of 50%, not very much of that can actually come from where you sit today. So think of this as a collaboration opportunity. And think about how you can leverage the network that you have to make this case, and also understand that you do not need the West, or the East or the North for your ideas, for your inspiration, for your stories, for your resources. You all have exactly what is required to meet this moment.

Jasmine Sanders: That was so well said and we could have a conversation for days. I would just add to that, I actually want to want to leave y'all inspired. So, I want you to think right now about activating your superpower. This is something that you can do. So, I want you to think of three things, what brings you joy, where are those skills that you're good at, and what is the work that needs to be done. And then the middle of those three or the combination of those three, that is where your superpower lies, that is how you can advocate, that is how you can make an impact. And again, the impact starts in the community level, starts in your home, starts in your dorm room.

Congratulations to each and every one of you. This is an amazing program and you completed it during a pandemic. So, kudos to you. Thank you so much for having me. And I hope you all have a great day.

Shaban Senyange: Thank you so much, Adedana and Jasmine for your amazing contributions to the, to this discussion. To the fellows, this is not the end, it's only the start of your incredible journey to transform Africa, the impact that world leaders, celebrities, scientists and other high-profile individuals can have by speaking about climate change issue on a global stage is huge. So as African young leaders believe in the power of your own voice, the more noise you make, the more accountability you demand from your leaders, the more our world will change for the better. But don't just make noise, follow it by action, and you guys have the power to make the most, to change the continent.



I'm still waiting for the pictures from my question earlier, follow the discussion have more conversation about this online, and tag Jasmine, tag Adedana, and tag myself, and the YALI folks. That was it from us, have a wonderful day. Thank you.