

# Eyes of the world

## Mary – New Zealand

Mary lives in New Zealand.

The Pacific Islands have been threatened in recent years by more frequent tropical storms. Lands are being lost to rising oceans.

She is part of the Pacific Climate Warriors, a youth-led group uniting against the climate crisis.



**How would you feel if your home was destroyed  
by a storm?**

**What would you do to stand against climate change that  
is causing this?**

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There are thousands of small islands in the Pacific and about 40 million people who live there.

Many of them are being forced to change their lives because of dangerous weather conditions. Some of them even leave their homes altogether. Rising sea levels are damaging coastlines and homes. Cyclones are stronger and happen more often, destroying buildings and roads. Vulnerable people suffer the most.

The Pacific Climate Warriors come from all over the region. They organise events to call for change. They work especially hard to involve young people in their campaigning, encouraging them to speak up and be heard.

“The catastrophe that people fear in the future is what we’re experiencing now.”

The Pacific Climate Warriors’ mantra:  
“We are not drowning, we are fighting.”

Mary Moeono Kolio is a leader for the New Zealand group of the Pacific Climate Warriors. Mary works hard to encourage young people to see themselves as climate leaders. She believes that Pacific people can be the voice that the world needs. They can show that climate change is already happening and causing big problems in people’s lives.

Mary and her older brother Joe, also a Climate Warrior, are determined to challenge how the world works for the most disadvantaged. “I see people as guardians of each other, as well as guardians of the earth,” Mary says. “I do believe that human beings will fix climate change, but I worry that it will be at the cost of the Pacific people.”

She says that she is worried that the action that is needed on climate might only be taken when people realise that islands and countries are being lost.

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## Florence – Zimbabwe

Florence is from Zimbabwe.

Climate change has caused the rains to come later and to be more erratic. It is very hard to grow crops. Because of this, people are going hungry.

Florence has to walk for four hours to collect water.



**How would you feel if you had nothing to eat and had to walk a long way for water?**

**What would you do to stand against climate change that is causing this?**



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In Zimbabwe, people rely upon water to grow their crops. Climate change has caused the rains to come later and become more unpredictable. This means that only is there not enough to drink, but families will not have enough food to eat in the coming months.

Last year the harvest failed, largely because of extreme weather. This included droughts that lasted months on end, to floods which wiped out villages.

Florence lives in the north of Zimbabwe. The places she would normally go for water have dried up, so she has to walk four miles to the next available water source. These water sources can also be unsafe. There can be diseases, as well as dangerous animals like crocodiles.

*Through the Church network, CAFOD has provided families with emergency food and safe, clean water.*

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## Fatima – Bangladesh

Fatima lives in Bangladesh.

Rising sea levels lead to more flooding, and climate change means it rains more, and more heavily.

It is hard to grow food because of the flooding, and homes are damaged by storms.



**How would you feel if the waters were rising around you and coming down from above?**

**What would you do to stand against climate change that is causing this?**



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More than 35 million people live in the south and south-west coastal regions of Bangladesh. This area is particularly under threat of cyclones and floods. Climate change means it rains more often, and more heavily. Sea levels are rising. Homes are being destroyed and farmers find it hard to grow enough food.

CAFOD is working with Fatima's community, helping them to adjust to this new and changing climate. Women like Fatima's mum, Rubina, are learning about new seeds that grow even when there is heavy rain. They are trying out new crops, and they are even starting to sell compost to earn money.

This project in Bangladesh is all about making sure that people are able to make a living and also take care of the environment.

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## Delio – Peru

Delio is from the Peruvian Amazon.

Every minute, an area of the Amazon rainforest bigger than a football pitch is lost.

If trees are removed, the area can become much warmer and drier, which can turn fertile land into desert.



**How would you feel if your land became a desert?  
What would you do to stand against climate change that  
is causing this?**



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The Amazon river flows through nine countries, one of which is Peru. The rainforest in the Amazon region is very important to the health of the planet. Sadly, an area of rainforest bigger than a football pitch is lost every minute. This contributes to climate change around the world, but also affects the people who live in the rainforest.

Many of these people are indigenous people. This means that their ancestors were the first groups of people who lived in the area. They keep many traditions and ways of life that have belonged to them for hundreds of years.

One of the effects of deforestation (people cutting down the trees) is that the rainforest becomes drier. This makes it harder to grow food and find water to drink, both for the people and the many animals that live there. The land will become like a desert.

Delio is an indigenous community leader for the Ashaninka people. He works as a teacher in a university in the Amazon region. He tells his students about looking after the planet.