

# ADAPTATION

## Placing poor people and women at the centre of the world's response to climate change

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### Meeting the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable people

For lasting adaptation solutions in a changing climate, an international climate change regime must place pro-poor and gender-equitable approaches at its core and provide sufficient funding for and prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable people. At COP17 in Durban, Parties must deliver on the action items in the Cancun Agreements to continue operationalising the Adaptation Framework.

### CARE demands for COP17

It is critical at COP17 that Parties finalise agreement on the areas laid out in the Cancun Agreements and create a pathway for decisions to be made at COP18. Specifically, CARE calls on Parties to:

- Agree on appropriate modalities and guidelines to enable developing countries, particularly the Least Developed Countries, to formulate and implement National Adaptation Plans;
- Operationalise the Adaptation Committee;
- Agree on activities under the loss and damage work programme and on a clear mandate for a decision to be made at COP18; and
- Agree on the next phase of the Nairobi Work Programme.

### The threat of climate change

Climate change presents a profound threat to the vision of a world where poverty has been overcome and people live in dignity and security. The world's poorest people have contributed least to climate change, yet they are the most impacted.

Climate change, through increasing droughts and floods and shifting rainfall patterns and water availability, also has a particularly dire effect on

People living in extreme poverty are the least responsible for causing climate change, yet they are most affected. This is a profound injustice which the international community—based on historic responsibility—must redress.

agricultural productivity and the health of fisheries. This compounds food insecurity, particularly among the poorest and most vulnerable populations and especially in the context of feeding a growing world population.

The Cancun Agreements include critical text that indicates the importance of a range of key principles. Paragraph 12 of the Cancun Agreements affirms that adaptation “should follow a *country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and fully transparent* approach, taking into *consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems*” and “should be based on and guided by...as appropriate, *traditional and indigenous knowledge*.” Likewise, the Adaptation Framework, as established in the Cancun Agreements, invites Parties to undertake vulnerability and adaptation assessments. The Cancun Agreements also set out clear next steps for Parties to operationalise the Adaptation Framework.

Based on these deliverables, CARE demands the following at COP17:

## Adaptation Committee

Parties must operationalise the Adaptation Committee.

CARE calls for:

- The composition of the Adaptation Committee to be equitable and gender-balanced and include adaptation and social development experts, including policymakers, research organizations and practitioners;
- Representatives of civil society—particularly from developing countries and including local communities and women’s groups—to also be empowered as active advisory members of the Committee; and
- The Adaptation Committee should be enabled to benefit from the work of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group, the Technology Executive Committee and the Consultative Group of Experts through the *ex-officio* membership of their respective chairs.

## Gender & Adaptation

Women’s rights and contributions are central to lasting solutions for development and for adapting to the challenge of climate change. Experience of poverty reduction shows that when women control household income, it is often more likely to be spent on human development needs.

As such, climate change adaptation should thus empower women and men to acknowledge and address the inequitable distributions of rights, resources and power, including gender inequalities, that constrain their communities’ ability to adapt.

<sup>1</sup> Parry, M., Evans, A., Rosegrant, M.W., & Wheeler, T. (2009). *Climate Change and Hunger: Responding to the Challenge*. World Food Programme (WFP), Rome, Italy.

<sup>2</sup> Nelson, Gerald C., et. al. *Climate Change: Impacts on Agriculture and Costs of Adaptation*. International Food Policy Research Institute. 2009

Because of climate change, 10-20 percent more people may be at risk of hunger by 2050. Of these, 65 percent are expected to live in Africa.<sup>1</sup> By 2050, 25 million additional children could be undernourished because of climate change.<sup>2</sup>

## National Adaptation Plans

Parties must agree on the modalities and guidelines for the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) process.

CARE calls for:

Parties to agree for the NAPs to:

- Constitute an ongoing planning process, rather than a prescriptive outcome;
- Reflect the principles laid out in paragraph 12 of the Cancun Agreements; and
- Examine needed policy change to facilitate adaptation, including community-based adaptation, at national and local levels, and to integrate NAPs with other climate change development and poverty reduction strategies.

Parties to agree to support the NAPs process at a global level to:

- Enable learning, including south-south learning;
- Include opportunities to facilitate knowledge and information sharing in order to leverage the Least Developed Countries Expert Group’s (LEG) work on medium- and long-term adaptation and the ongoing work of the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP). CARE welcomes the effort by the NWP and the LEG to explore gender considerations and gender-sensitive approaches to adaptation;
- Provide adequate financial and technical support, including up-front support, for local and national-level capacity building and to undertake participatory planning and vulnerability assessments.

## Loss and Damage Work Programme

Parties must agree on further activities under the work programme on loss and damage.

### CARE calls for:

- Parties should also agree on a clear mandate for a decision on a work programme on loss and damage to be made at COP18;
- Activities to include workshops, calls for submissions and technical papers, as well as engagement of vulnerable groups and communities and intended beneficiaries, in order to ensure that Parties are positioned to make a decision on a loss and damage mechanism at COP18 that will meet the needs of those most in need;
- The work programme on loss and damage to contribute to developing countries' progress on national adaptation planning, particularly the exploration of the potential scope of rapid- and slow-onset climate change impacts and potential approaches to address loss and damage, such as disaster risk management and reduction, social protection schemes and insurance mechanisms, as well as needed policy change, including with regard to climate-induced migration; and

- The work programme to also explore how paragraph 12 of the Cancun Agreements impacts approaches to address loss and damage and examine the needs of developing countries to be able to access and apply these approaches.

## Nairobi Work Programme

Parties must agree on the next phase of the NWP to ensure increased knowledge and dissemination of good practices related to climate change vulnerability, impacts and adaptation.

### CARE calls for:

- The work of the NWP to support gender-sensitive approaches as well as the examination of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation related to water and food security, as outlined in the current annex to the text; and
- The NWP should facilitate knowledge sharing among Parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, through workshops, technical papers and roundtables.

## Prioritising the most vulnerable people

The poorest and most vulnerable people are on the frontline of climate impacts and yet often have limited resources and are disempowered from the means to escape poverty. Women are often particularly vulnerable to climate impacts, and gender inequalities affect all members of society. Adaptation should empower women and men to acknowledge and address the inequitable distributions of rights, resources and power that constrain their communities' ability to adapt.

CARE's experience has shown that vulnerability to climate change varies not only between countries, but within countries, communities and even households. The international regime and its adaptation framework must ensure that the most vulnerable populations receive support and are empowered to take action. For adaptation plans and activities to meet their needs, vulnerable populations must be prioritised and be guaranteed a role in decision-making processes throughout adaptation programmes.

## Adaptation Finance

The best-designed adaptation regime will not be effective if there is inadequate funding to support adaptation efforts. While estimates vary, the consensus is that the need in developing countries for adaptation alone is in the order of tens of billions of dollars per year.<sup>3</sup> In the Cancun Agreements, developed country Parties committed to mobilizing USD 100 billion a year in public and private funding by 2020 for all climate activities. Not only do pledges for climate finance fall short of the need, but pledged funding is not available funding.

### CARE calls for:

- Developed countries to agree on finance sources to meet this 2020 commitment and on a pathway from fast-start finance to the long-term finance commitment;
- Parties to develop innovative mechanisms for raising climate financing, and decide on how they will reach the goal they have set;
- Adaptation finance must also be provided in the form of grants rather than loans and should be new and additional to official development assistance;
- Parties to progress the Cancun Agreements on the Green Climate Fund as the primary vehicle for channeling international climate finance and support the operationalisation of an equitable, transparent global climate fund, enabling simplified direct access by developing countries and ensuring engagement of civil society, including affected communities; and

The World Bank Economics of Adaptation to Climate Change (EACC) study estimates that the cost of adaptation in developing countries is around \$75-\$100 billion per year between 2010 and 2050. The overall cost would also be higher if temperatures rise by more than 2°C.<sup>4</sup> However these figures do not include the costs of death, human misery or degradation of ecosystems. Additionally the full costs are likely to be much higher as these figures assume warming is stabilised at 2 degrees, whilst recent projections show the world warming by at least 3.6 degrees unless immediate green house gas reductions occur.<sup>5</sup>

- Parties must prioritize vulnerable countries to access the funding required to meet adaptation needs by promoting and supporting country-driven priorities. The fund should ensure the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders and include adequate consideration of gender aspects. The fund should especially focus on the most vulnerable countries and include the needs of the most vulnerable populations to be prioritised within countries.

For more information about  
CARE and climate change, go to:  
**[www.careclimatechange.org](http://www.careclimatechange.org)**

<sup>3</sup>In a study released in 2009, the World Bank suggested costs between \$75-\$100 billion per year between 2010 and 2050, while Oxfam in 2008 estimated needs to be at least US\$ 50 billion per year. The UNDP estimates that the costs could be up to \$86 billion per year by 2015.

<sup>4</sup>World Bank. 2010. "The Cost to Developing Countries of Adapting to Climate Change: New Methods and Estimates." Consultation draft.  
<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTCC/Resources/EACC-june2010.pdf>

<sup>5</sup><http://www.iied.org/climate-change/key-issues/economics-and-equity-adaptation/costs-adapting-climate-change-significantly-under-estimated> and  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/nov/29/climate-change-scientists-4c-temperature>