

Key Messages

THE CLIMATE CRISIS

November 2022

Endorsed by IASC Deputies Group

Top-line Messages

The humanitarian community is calling for:

- Urgent and ambitious mitigation action to avert the worst outcomes of climate change.
- Increased investments in building resilience and adaptation for the most vulnerable and worst affected.
- Meaningful decisions, concrete actions and increased finance to avert, minimize and address losses and damages¹.

Humanitarian organizations are already on the ground, helping communities to take anticipatory action before shocks, building resilience and delivering finance quickly. In fragile and conflict-affected contexts, humanitarian organizations are working to address the consequences of climate shocks on people's lives including by strengthening lifesaving assistance and protection.

Background

- **The climate crisis is a humanitarian crisis.**
 - Climate change contributes to humanitarian crises, especially in contexts where people are already vulnerable – from Pakistan to the Horn of Africa to Small Island States. Climate-related disasters increase risk and vulnerability, negatively impacting human rights and disrupting livelihoods and threatening lives around the globe. More than 3 billion people live in hotspots with high vulnerability to climate change.² Twelve of the top 15 most climate-vulnerable countries appealed for emergency humanitarian international assistance in 2021³. Many of these countries are deeply fragile and enduring armed conflict, which further limits people's ability to adapt and respond to shocks.

¹ IPCC Glossary, Loss and Damage entry clarifies the usage of terminology on climate and this document follows the IPCC practice. Research has taken Loss and Damage (capitalized letters) to refer to political debate under the UNFCCC following the establishment of the Warsaw Mechanism on Loss and Damage in 2013, which is to 'address loss and damage associated with impacts of climate change, including extreme events and slow onset events, in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.' Lowercase letters (losses and damages) have been taken to refer broadly to harm from (observed) impacts and (projected) risks. Available at: <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/glossary/>

² IPCC Working Group II Report- Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Available at: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/>

³ See OCHA's Financial Tracking Service and ND-GAIN's Country Index.

- We see the impacts daily. Since the 1990s, the average number of extreme weather-related events per decade has increased by nearly 35 per cent⁴. In the last decade, a staggering 1.7 billion people have been affected by these climate events⁵.
- Globally, acute food insecurity is at a record high, driven by a deadly mix of conflict, climate change-related weather extremes and economic shocks, including those caused by COVID-19.
- Too often, communities in vulnerable and marginalized situations are unable to access global response efforts to support climate change adaptation, risk reduction and preparedness. From 2014–2021, finance from four climate funds amounted to US\$161 per capita to non-fragile States compared to just \$2.1 per capita to extremely fragile States⁶.
- Climate action must reflect and address the rights, needs and priorities of all, including women, children, youth, older people, people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, minorities, displaced people and migrants, and people living in hard-to-reach areas.

Humanitarian Roles and Response

- **The humanitarian community is implementing critical climate action.**
 - Humanitarians are taking action. They are helping communities to take anticipatory action before shocks, building resilience across sectors and delivering finance quickly and, in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, working to address the consequences of climate shocks on people's lives and livelihoods.⁷
 - Humanitarian organizations have a crucial role in supporting communities to manage multiple risks and impacts from interconnected disasters and crises, especially in vulnerable and marginalized situations, ensuring that no one is left behind.
 - Humanitarian organizations are committed to do more to help scale preventative and anticipatory climate actions, but we are already overstretched and unable to meet all needs. Some losses and damages caused by climate extremes are addressed through humanitarian response, but losses and damages go well beyond the humanitarian sector.

⁴ IFRC, World Disasters Report 2020. "Come heat or high water. Tackling the Humanitarian impacts of the climate crisis together." 2020 Available at: reliefweb.int/report/world/world-disasters-report-2020-come-heat-or-high-water-tackling-humanitarian-impacts

⁵ Ibid

⁶ UNDP, Climate Finance for Sustaining Peace: Making Climate Finance Work for Conflict-Affected and Fragile Contexts, 2021. Available at: www.undp.org/publications/climate-finance-sustaining-peace-making-climate-finance-work-conflict-affected-and-fragile-contexts

⁷ From 2006–2022, the Central Emergency Response Fund provided humanitarian finance to 87 countries (nearly 50 per cent of countries in the world) to help take action before or after climate shocks.

- We are committed to be more effective, participatory and inclusive, to scaling up action to minimize the impacts of shocks, and to prevent displacement and the loss of lives and livelihoods.
- Recognizing that many climate-related crises are predictable, we must scale up our collective forecasting and risk analysis capabilities for strengthened anticipatory action and shock responsive social protection systems, preparedness and resilience building. This must include working together to establish pre-agreed plans that identify reliable early warning information, partners and activities, and be accompanied by pre-agreed financing that can be released predictably and rapidly when an agreed trigger-point is reached.
- More than 300 humanitarian organizations representing local, national and international NGOs, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, UN agencies, IFRC and ICRC have adopted the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations. The Charter outlines our commitment to be part of the solution and help people adapt to a changing climate and environment, while also increasing our own environmental sustainability.
- We hope that progress on plans for timely mitigation and adaptation actions will be recorded in the Global Stocktake, as well as climate-related action and funding from the humanitarian sector (including work such as early warning and preparedness, anticipatory action, shock-response social protection, emergency response and recovery). The IASC is ready to support this by providing needed information and details.

Mitigation

- **Urgent and ambitious mitigation action is needed to avert the worst outcomes of climate change.**
 - Keeping the global temperature rise to below 1.5°C is a humanitarian priority. Beyond 1.5°C means global warming (a threshold we are likely to cross in the next decade without urgent action), adaptation and resilience options are increasingly limited, and losses and damages will rise. The burden will exacerbate growing inequalities between and within countries. Climate change mitigation is the best way to protect people, including by reducing future climate risks.
 - In the present scenario, humanitarian organizations are struggling to meet all existing emergency needs. If the climate crisis continues on its current trajectory, the level of suffering, unmet needs, and losses and damages will grow exponentially.
 - We are committed to being part of the solution by reducing our carbon footprint and increasing our environmental sustainability efforts to ensure we do not worsen these crises.

Adaptation

- **Increased investment in and action for resilience and adaptation across systems are essential.**
 - At COP27, Parties must outline how they will implement the commitment made in Glasgow to double adaptation finance to at least \$40 billion in 2025, with clear prioritization of the most climate-vulnerable countries and populations.
 - We also call on Parties to further scale up adaptation financing, to ensure parity between climate mitigation and adaptation.
 - Strengthened coordination between humanitarian and development actors and their respective funding mechanisms is required to facilitate cost-effective transformative adaptation in fragile settings.

Enabling local action

- Finance for climate-change adaptation and risk reduction must reach fragile and conflict-affected countries, where displaced people take refuge and where they hope to safely return and which are too often left behind, as well as the most vulnerable people within these countries.
- All stakeholders must work better with local and community actors and the most marginalized groups, including women and young people so that solutions to prevent and anticipate climate disasters and address losses and damages, both economic and non-economic, are informed by local needs and led by local communities.
- Women, children and young people must be protected from climate devastation through adaptation of the social services they rely on, such as health, WASH, education, nutrition, human settlements, and protection. Children and young people must also be included in resilience-building efforts, equipped with climate change education and green-skills training, and given opportunities to participate in and influence decision-making on climate policy.

Loss and Damage (L&D)

- **We need meaningful decisions, concrete actions and finance for Loss and Damage.**
 - Countries and communities are already experiencing losses and damages, which will continue to increase with every increment of global warming⁸. The agriculture sector – which underpins the livelihoods of over 2.5 billion people –

⁸ IPCC Working Group II Report- Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Available at: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/>

- is particularly exposed, absorbing 26 per cent of the overall impact caused by medium- to large-scale disasters⁹.
- All stakeholders must scale up action to avert, minimize and address economic and non-economic losses and damages. An equitable and practical approach is needed that includes arrangements to mobilize financial, technical and capacity support for climate-vulnerable and at-risk countries and communities and people in vulnerable and fragile situations.
 - As humanitarians, we can take action to:
 - Minimize losses and damages by strengthening and investing in disaster risk reduction, early warning, preparedness, anticipatory action, shock-responsive social protection systems and resilient health systems.
 - Address key aspects of losses and damages through actions such as humanitarian response (evacuation, shelter, health care, support for food security and livelihoods, etc.) and rehabilitation in ways that effectively manage climate risks and impacts for building resilience (i.e. build back better).
 - We recognize that humanitarian action does not and cannot deal with a significant portion of losses and damages (such as threats to entire ecosystems, the devastation of livelihoods and economies, and the need for reconstruction of homes and infrastructure).
 - We call for additional funding to avert, minimize and address losses and damages. Even where humanitarian action can be effective, humanitarian funding is not enough or sufficiently predictable at the global level.
 - We call for the urgent operationalization of the Santiago Network to help vulnerable countries access technical assistance for averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage in developing countries. We look forward to contributing to this.
 - We call on Parties to constructively engage ahead of COP27, including by examining modalities for Loss and Damage finance, taking into account existing institutional arrangements and the options to mobilize grant-based finance, including through new and innovative sources, and providing new funding in addition to humanitarian and development funds.
 - We call on Parties to ensure that losses and damages are recognized, and that action is taken to avert, minimize and address them. We hope that finance for losses and damages will be considered alongside that for adaptation and mitigation.
 - We hope that losses and damages will be included in the upcoming Global Stocktake and that action is taken to avert, minimize and address them. We hope that finance for losses and damages will be considered alongside that for adaptation and mitigation.

⁹ The Impact of Disasters and Crises on Agriculture and Food Security, 2021, FAO. Available at: <https://www.fao.org/3/cb3673en/cb3673en.pdf>