

Statement by Principals of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)

CLIMATE

3 November 2021

The global humanitarian community calls on world leaders at the climate summit to prioritize the most vulnerable and at-risk countries and communities.

Members of the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee](#) urge Governments at COP26 in Glasgow to step up support to people most at risk and vulnerable to the devastating effects of the climate crisis.

As humanitarian organizations, we have witnessed for years how climate change is placing millions of lives at risk and creating unprecedented humanitarian needs. In the last 20 months alone, more than 658 million people have been exposed to extreme-temperature events, while climate-related disasters have killed more than 17,200 people and affected the lives and livelihoods of at least 139 million.

The climate crisis affects communities around the world, but those who face multiple other threats, including conflict, violence, poverty and COVID-19, particularly women and girls, are disproportionately affected. Their capacity to cope with shocks and adapt to changes is limited. These vulnerable communities are being left further behind. They need urgent support to adapt and respond to the climate risks and disasters that threaten their lives and livelihoods.

Humanitarian organizations have a crucial role in supporting vulnerable communities. We are committed to being part of the solution, to helping people anticipate, absorb and adapt to climate resilience, and to responding when people are forcibly displaced due to the effects of climate change. We are committed to increasing our own environmental sustainability and ensuring we do not inadvertently contribute to worsening these crises. We are committed to being more effective and inclusive, and to scaling action to minimize the impacts of shocks, including loss of lives and livelihoods, and to sharing our insights about the humanitarian consequences of climate change in policy debates, including through the [Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations](#).

The extent of the scale and impact of the climate crisis is more than humanitarian organizations can address alone.

World leaders who gathered at COP26 in Glasgow must rise to the challenge and scale up climate mitigation. They must prioritize support to build resilience and strengthen

adaptation of local communities for effective climate action in order to avert and minimize loss and damage from climate-related shocks and stresses.

Governments should take the following measures:

- Ensure a focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized people in crises, with a particular focus on women, youth, internally displaced people and refugees.
- Listen to communities and grassroots leaders, particularly women, youth and indigenous people, and engage them in decision-making and co-creating and owning solutions that put people, climate and nature at the centre of all actions.
- Invest in more effective preventative risk management and capacities at the local level, including on climate risk monitoring, early warning and early action. We must work closely with communities to better anticipate, respond and adapt to potential climate disasters.
- Increase financing for climate-adaptation action that targets the most vulnerable countries and communities.
- Turn global commitments into effective local action that empowers those most at risk. This includes ensuring that local institutions have access to adaptation finance, including risk transfer mechanisms such as social protection and insurance and nature-positive solutions, and ensuring that investments are accessible and meet the needs of those most at risk.

We urge Governments to consider the humanitarian consequences that their decisions have on people bearing the brunt of the climate crisis. We have no time to lose.

Signatories

- Mr. Martin Griffiths, Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs (**OCHA**)
- Mr. Sean Callahan, President and Chief Executive Officer, Catholic Relief Services (**CRS**)
- Mr. Dominic MacSorley, Chief Executive Officer, **Concern Worldwide**
- Mr. Qu Dongyu, Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization (**FAO**)
- Mr. Peter Maurer, President, International Committee of the Red Cross (**ICRC**)
- Ms. Jane Backhurst, Chair of **ICVA** Board, Christian Aid
- Mr. Ignacio Packer, Executive Director, International Council of Voluntary Agencies (**ICVA**)
- Mr. Samuel Worthington, Chief Executive Officer, **InterAction**
- Mr. Jagan Chapagain, Secretary General, International Federation of Red Cross (**IFRC**)

- Mr. António Vitorino, Director General, International Organization for Migration (**IOM**)
- Ms. Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (**OHCHR**)
- Ms. Abby Maxman, Chair, Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (**SCHR**), and President and CEO, Oxfam America
- Mr. Gareth Price-Jones, Executive Secretary, Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (**SCHR**)
- Ms. Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (**SR on HR of IDPs**)
- Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (**UNDP**)
- Dr. Natalia Kanem, Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (**UNFPA**)
- Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director, United Nations Human Settlement Programme (**UN-Habitat**)
- Mr. Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (**UNHCR**)
- Ms. Henrietta H. Fore, Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund (**UNICEF**)
- Mr. David Beasley, Executive Director, World Food Programme (**WFP**)
- Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General, World Health Organization (**WHO**)