

# ~~I don't~~ CARE about climate justice.

The poor shouldn't pay the price for the climate crisis, act now!

#CARE4Climate



## CARE's Expectations for the United Nations Climate Action Summit 2019

September 2019

### Introduction

The UN Climate Action Summit must deliver tangible outcomes and commitments from government leaders to increase ambition across both mitigation and adaptation, and provide support to the poorest and most vulnerable countries. The climate crisis is taking a significant toll all over the planet. Hunger is on the rise, forests in the Arctic are burning, gender inequalities are further exacerbated, and glaciers are melting at record speed. Dirty fossil fuel companies continue to pollute the atmosphere, and thousands of fires in the Amazon destroy rainforests and further fuel climate change. If the climate crisis continues unabated, over 140 million people may face internal displacement by 2050 in Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America alone, according to the World Bank. Parliaments and municipalities have declared climate emergencies, and millions of people, particularly the youth, are demanding action in marches and strikes.

With the Paris Agreement, the world has a legal framework in place which is guided by ambitious objectives that provide solutions to address the climate emergency. Many reports have made the economic case for bold mitigation and adaptation action. For example, the call for leadership on climate resilience launched by the Global Commission on Adaptation highlights the economic opportunities, where investing \$1.8 trillion globally in five areas from 2020 to 2030 could generate \$7.1 trillion in total net benefits.

There is no more time to waste to undertake all efforts to tackle the climate emergency. There is now a line in the sand and we continue to have countries and polluting companies fall behind. It is time to put the world on a safe and clean trajectory. This will be essential to overcoming poverty, reducing gender inequality and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At the first major leader's summit on climate change after the entry-into-force of the Paris Agreement, leaders must bring clear commitments to the table to confront the climate crisis and take significant steps to close the huge gaps between the actions planned and what is scientifically needed to prevent a rise above 1.5°C. The world will be watching and the public will hold them accountable to address the climate crisis at the necessary scale and speed.

### CARE's Key Demands

CARE calls on governments at all levels, businesses, and other institutions to urgently tackle the climate crisis by building and promoting champions of gender-just climate resilience, with a focus on the poor segments of the population. CARE urges governments to:

1. Enhance their national climate plans and development strategies no later than 2020, and implement immediate concrete measures, which strengthen gender equality and are compatible with the efforts required to build resilience for the poorest populations, and shift to net zero emissions as soon as possible, in line with the 1.5°C limit.
2. Significantly increase finance for gender-just climate resilience measures to developing countries, including through new innovative finance mechanisms as well as in domestic budgets, and increase efforts to integrate gender equality across all climate measures, including by:
  - a. Ensuring that by 2023, at the latest, at least 50% of public climate finance for developing countries is for adaptation, of which at least 20% targets gender equality as a primary objective, and 85% as a secondary objective.
  - b. Earmarking a proportion of public climate finance for grassroots' women organizations providing critical support to communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis.
  - c. Ensuring that measures to address loss and damage, such as reparation, incorporate a gender-responsive approach.

### Promote gender equality across all Summit workstreams

The goal of promoting gender equality, both part of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, is concerningly absent from all the UN Climate Action Summit action track work plans publicly available before the Summit. Political, cultural and economic marginalization of women in many parts of the world is a key manifestation of gender inequality. This injustice should be sufficient motivation to prioritize women's empowerment as a key element within a differentiated approach to women's and men's roles: it is a matter of human rights and a way to achieve the SDGs. Solutions to the climate crisis must explicitly highlight and include the essential role of women and their rights. CARE calls on all countries and organizations leading Summit action tracks to explore, legislate and budget for, and introduce ways to integrate the reduction of gender inequality and empowerment of women and girls.

### Take action in line with the 1.5°C limit

CARE supports the UN Secretary General's communication on what countries are expected to bring to the Summit. Countries must come to New York with clear plans and commitments for enhancing their nationally determined contributions by 2020, in line with reducing global greenhouse gas emissions by at least 45% by 2030 (compared to 2010, according to the IPCC<sup>1</sup>). These commitments should be complemented by plans to rapidly reduce emissions to achieve net zero emissions well before 2050, in line with the 1.5°C limit, and in a sustainable, fair and rights-based manner. Such strategies must guide efforts to transform economies in line with the SDGs and build societies where the poorest and most vulnerable benefit from resilient and

<sup>1</sup> IPCC, 2018: Global Warming of 1.5°C. Summary for Policymakers.

sustainable livelihoods. Commitments to stop building coal power plants and transition existing plants to renewable energy production is essential to those plans.

For developed countries, due to their historic responsibility, this translates into demands for faster decarbonization. For example, CARE calls on the European Union (EU) to reduce its emissions 65% by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2040. The EU's announcement should explicitly mention how to achieve the committed greenhouse gas emission reductions. As scientific analyses have shown, the current plans of many other countries, including the US, Australia, Japan, China, Brazil, are completely insufficient to prevent a rise in global average temperature above 1.5°C.<sup>2</sup>

### “Resilience and Adaptation” Workstream

The “Call for Action on Adaptation and Resilience” as the key statement of this action track along with a list of initiatives which are expected to be promoted by the Summit was launched in early September.<sup>3</sup> CARE promotes an approach to adaptation and resilience-building that is gender-transformative, just and supports poor women and men to access the necessary resources, and pursue their rights and opportunities to deal with the impacts of the climate crisis. Adaptation activities promoted under the action tracks should strengthen resilience and empower the most vulnerable groups, particularly women and girls, who should be identified and involved through a comprehensive, participatory and gender-responsive situational analysis, and integrated in programs and projects. At the same time, it is important in this context not to regard women as “victims” because of their vulnerability, but as key change agents and rights holders who need to be further empowered.

Many developing countries are creating National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), often supported by the Green Climate Fund. The promotion and implementation of these plans should be envisaged by the resilience and adaptation action track as one important means of advancing the integration of adaptation and resilience into long-term planning. The NAP process should provide for a comprehensive, participatory and gender-transformative analysis of vulnerability to climate change (including the social, economic and political determinants of vulnerability) using sex- and age-disaggregated data in vulnerability and adaptation assessments. Gender transformative budgeting in the NAP process should ensure that there are sufficient resources to implement gender-specific activities and coordinate with national and regional stakeholders working on gender equality.

Making climate finance accessible to those that need it most must be facilitated by a commitment by governments to remove administrative barriers to accessing climate funds, offering smaller-sized, local funding options, and increasing fiduciary risk-tolerance. We emphasize the need to provide additional public and grant-based financial resources for adaptation in developing and vulnerable countries.

Gender equality must be integrated across adaptation (and mitigation) finance, and should be measured, such as through the OECD gender markers. CARE demands that by 2020 at least 85% of the projects accounted for in the OECD system include gender at least as a significant (secondary) objective (marker 1), and out of that at least 20% are a principal (primary) objective (marker 2). CARE's calculations for support provided in 2017 (latest available figures), updated from a report published in 2018<sup>4</sup> indicate that Canada (95%), UK (73%) and EU institutions (72%) are the top-runners among G7 when it comes to the share of their adaptation funding that addresses gender equality among other objectives, but no country reaches the 20% threshold

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<sup>2</sup><https://climateactiontracker.org>

<sup>3</sup>[https://d1keuthy5s86c8.cloudfront.net/static/ems/upload/files/A Call for Action on Adaptation and Resilience .pdf](https://d1keuthy5s86c8.cloudfront.net/static/ems/upload/files/A%20Call%20for%20Action%20on%20Adaptation%20and%20Resilience.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> CARE, 2018: Punching below their weight. Monitoring the G7 support for adaptation and gender equality. <https://careclimatechange.org/publications/punching-below-their-weight-monitoring-the-g7-support-for-adaptation-and-gender-equality/>

for adaptation funding with gender equality as a principal objective (as opposed to just a significant objective). Advancing the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment in climate resilience measures is essential for both the recipient as well as the contributing countries. In this regard, CARE looks forward to accompanying the implementation of the agreed pro-poor principles, including gender, under the InsuResilience Global Partnership (IGP), which is expected to be part of the Climate Summit initiatives.

At COP25, governments are also expected to review the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage (WIM) which addresses an important component of resilience building beyond adaptation. The review should result in the establishment of additional sources of finance (see next section) and advance gender equality across loss and damage actions. While the details of this will not be negotiated at the Climate Summit in New York, loss and damage should be clearly communicated on and addressed, and not just be subsumed under adaptation; this is currently missing in the action track's work plan. The loss and damage that, in particular, vulnerable, developing countries are already facing is too severe to not actively address now.

## “Finance” Workstream

### Strong Green Climate Fund replenishment

While the Green Climate Fund (GCF) is facing a number of different challenges, it has high potential as the biggest multilateral climate fund under the UNFCCC to effectively support the necessary paradigm shift to low to zero emission and climate-resilient development pathways, in line with the 1.5°C limit. The established target to spend GCF resources equally on adaptation and mitigation has proven to be an important benchmark and must be maintained. The GCF also has made progress in systematically integrating gender aspects into its work. The recent pledges for doubling GCF contributions (compared to their initial contributions made since 2014) for the first replenishment taking place in 2019, made by Germany, France and the UK, are a step in the right direction, but currency exchange rates would result in the GCF receiving much less than the doubled amount in USD. All developed countries should ensure at least a doubling in USD terms, and must orient the size of their contributions towards those contributors with highest per capita payments<sup>5</sup>. CARE also encourages other G20 countries to complement those pledges.

### New and innovative sources of public finance

Governments should use the UN Climate Action Summit process to work towards introducing new and innovative sources of public finance that take the pressure off official development aid budgets, whilst addressing the climate crisis (i.e., airline passenger taxes or levies, climate damages tax on fossil fuel exploration) which can generate truly additional finance, in particular for adaptation and addressing loss and damage. CARE recently released a [policy brief](#) on innovative sources of public finance and the GCF which provides further background. David Boyd, The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment, also recently released a report on nations' obligations to address climate change. This report also states that financing for loss and damage could be provided by the tools listed above, such as an air travel levy or a levy on fuels used by the aviation and shipping industries. A basic global air travel levy would raise \$40–\$100 billion annually (at \$10–\$25 per person per flight, given that current passenger levels exceed 4 billion per year)<sup>6</sup>.

**Climate finance from developed countries should achieve a 50/50 balance between adaptation and mitigation finance. This balance must apply to overall climate finance, not only public finance, as mitigation can more easily mobilize private finance.**

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.greenclimate.fund/how-we-work/resource-mobilization> For example, Sweden contributed USD 581 million which was almost USD 60 per capita, whereas Germany's contribution of USD 1bn was only USD 12.4 per capita.

<sup>6</sup> <https://undocs.org/en/A/74/161>

Private-sector engagement in adaptation and adaptation finance should supplement, but not substitute, public investments and public climate finance in adaptation. More public funding is needed - the answer to the problem of a lack of public funding is not private funding but more public funding. CARE is of the view that climate finance should come on top of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) provided to fulfill the ODA commitment of 0.7% of the Gross National Income (GNI). However, when scarce ODA from developed countries is invested in climate actions, the priority should be the needs of the most vulnerable people and communities who are in greatest need of support. As these are often the poor, grants are the preferred instrument. When looking at the private sector, the focus must be on local and national private sector actors, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the needs of the most vulnerable people and the adaptation solutions that may be available from local or national private sector actors in their countries. Private sector investments, including those supported through international climate finance, should undergo the same strong environmental and social safeguards and human rights standards as other types of projects.

### “Nature-Based Solutions” Workstream

Promoting sustainable and just Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) is a key area of climate action, both because of the high potential of NBS to contribute to mitigation and their role in increasing resilience and adaptation, given the multiple synergies and socio-economic benefits of such approaches. This is particularly important in considering food systems and the multiple outcomes of NBS, including food security and nutrition, as well as livelihoods.

An economic approach to valuing NBS must not be reduced to an economic valuation of nature, but consider the economic and non-economic benefits of healthy ecosystems for the people who depend on them. A localized approach that engages people on the ground, including indigenous peoples, local communities, women and youth, and promotes their solutions to maintain healthy ecosystems and enhance their own resilience, must be strengthened. Scientists made clear in the IPCC's Special Report on Land and Climate that participatory approaches that involve local communities, especially the most vulnerable, result in more effective decisions. The report also is clear that gender is a critical consideration in the design and implementation of policies and actions. Empowering women and addressing barriers to their participation in sustainable land management are effective means of capturing synergies and increasing household food security.

CARE has in-depth experience in gender-transformative adaptation in agriculture, some of which is documented in a [new report](#). Promoted approaches can generate multiple synergies if they are sustainable, productive, equitable and resilient. These are CARE's SuPER principles, which characterize the outcomes that all food and agriculture systems must have to deliver for small-scale farmers and women, in particular.

Further, we know our food systems are broken: over 820 million people are chronically hungry, while the proportion of the population overweight and obese is increasing. Food systems generate up to a third of global emissions and tax land-based ecosystems, yet a third of food is lost or wasted. A new CGIAR research paper co-authored by CARE, [“Transforming Food Systems Under Climate Change: Local to global policy as a catalyst for change”](#), highlights key areas for action to address our broken food systems in the context of climate change as well as food and nutrition security and livelihoods. The paper identifies three areas of policy change which show potential to be catalytic, namely, a) reducing emissions and increasing resilience; b) tackling food loss and waste and c) shifting diets to promote nutrition and sustainability.