



ROAD TO DUBAI COP28 POSITION PAPER 2023



INTRODUCTION

In nearly 30 years of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties, never before have the impacts of our rapidly changing climate been so apparent and the needs so urgent.

2022 saw unprecedented flooding in Pakistan and the US, extreme storm surges in southern Africa, wildfires across Europe and record-breaking heatwaves in India. It seemed it couldn't get any worse, and then 2023 arrived, and Canada caught on fire, parts of Libya were swept away and southern Europe sweltered, demonstrating that no part of our planet is protected from the losses and damages inflicted by the ongoing man-made changes to our atmosphere.

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But while climate change touches all of us, it is those of us who are already vulnerable who suffer the most. Climate change exacerbates inequalities and [undermines progress](#) on the Sustainable Development Goals. Climate impacts cut across issues like poverty reduction, gender equality and food security, and compound risks relating to infrastructure, politics and security. Climate change smashes through silos that typically dictate how we address development challenges. At CARE we try to see the whole picture, and as advocates we take our experience as a 75-year-old humanitarian and development agency into the negotiations. Which is why we know that on the frontlines of the climate crisis is also where we see power, resilience, and the potential to adapt.

For CARE, gender equality is a cornerstone of climate action. Women are on the frontlines in agriculture, education and health systems. Their expertise and leadership can hold the key to weathering the storms of climate change – but we can't expect them to do it alone. Gender needs to be mainstreamed across the negotiations with women and girls at the decision-making table. All governments need to pursue gender-just climate action in their spheres of influence, domestically and internationally. Wealthy countries must deliver on their commitments and step-up funding, with the need for gender-just finance for adaptation and loss and damage especially urgent. This is where the vulnerability is, but it's also where the strength, solutions and capacities lie.

It is deeply unjust that these vulnerable communities are fighting to survive when they did so little to cause the crisis. The entire continent of Africa contributes [less than 4%](#) of global emissions. The fossil fuel industry accounted [for over 90%](#) of global emissions in 2022. If we are to have any chance of limiting global temperatures below 1.5°C and creating a safe, sustainable future for us all, we have to transition fairly from fossil fuels into clean, renewable energies and we have to do it now. The technology is available, but the transition requires political will. To echo [the recent call](#) from the International Energy Agency (IEA), strong international cooperation is crucial, and “governments need to separate climate from geopolitics, given the scale of the challenge at hand.” Another key strategy to promote livelihood critical resilience-building, adaptation and also mitigation is to better integrate into national planning and financing food systems actions such as sustainable food production, reducing food loss and waste, shifting towards healthy and sustainable diets and improved nutrition, conserving and restoring ecosystems, as well as scaling healthy soil practices.

But will they? Scientists and negotiators, in particular from vulnerable countries, are [losing patience](#), while [questions circle](#) around the interests and legitimacy of this particular COP leadership, which has so far failed to disentangle itself from the interests of the fossil fuel industry. With the first ever Global Stocktake on the agenda assessing collective progress towards the Paris Agreement, and deepening trust gaps between countries on climate finance, negotiations are expected to be tough.

In short, this COP will be the most comprehensive since Paris and the stakes are high. CARE will continue to advocate for the issues that matter most to the organization, its partners and the communities it serves, as it has for the last 15 years.

WHAT IS GENDER JUST CLIMATE ACTION?

Gender Just Climate Action signifies a fundamental commitment to addressing the intertwined issue of climate change and gender equality. It recognises that climate change affects different genders in different ways and that their different perspectives and experiences should be central to climate policies and actions.

At COP28, this means moving away from separate discussions on gender and instead including women and other marginalised groups as key decision-makers in all climate discussions. For effective and sustainable decision making, they have to be part of the planning, implementation and monitoring of global and national climate efforts. Gender Just Climate Action also means integrating gender considerations into all aspects of climate policy and finance, by ensuring that a significant share of climate finance goes towards gender equality goals. To do so, collaboration with women-led and women-rights organizations, both at the local and international level, is key. Moreover, it means making gender impact assessments for climate action mandatory, creating a systematic framework to measure and monitor progress.

GENDER JUST ADAPTATION

At COP21, with important contributions from CARE's delegation, the Paris Agreement established the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience, and reduce vulnerability to climate change. By establishing the GGA, Article 7 of the Paris Agreement elevated adaptation from a local undertaking to a global ambition embedded in sustainable development efforts and linked to mitigation objectives that governments committed to in the Agreement.

To better understand, conceptualize and ultimately achieve the Global Goal, a two-year Work Programme, dubbed the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation (GlaSS), was launched at COP26 in Glasgow. Its ambition was to define the key elements of the goal, including the methodologies, indicators, metrics, and data sources to support the assessment of adaptation progress and enhance and support adaptation action through country-driven processes. At COP27 in Egypt, with input from CARE, Parties agreed to initiate the development of a framework to guide the achievement of the GGA, with a view to adopting that framework at COP28. In Dubai, Parties must ensure that they make the crucially needed progress in adopting and operationalizing the GGA.

The main challenge for adaptation remains inadequate finance, with funding from developed countries and multilateral agencies still skewed in favor of mitigation and not matching current vulnerable countries' adaptation needs. At COP26 CARE welcomed the commitment of developed countries to double adaptation finance by 2025 compared to 2019 levels -- even though this is a drop in the ocean compared to the amount of [adaptation finance required](#). This is a significant milestone in addressing the imbalance between funding for adaptation and mitigation. However as CARE's recent report shows, developed countries [have so far failed to define a pathway](#) for fulfilling this commitment. Additionally a very small portion of finance flows to local and women-led organizations, with only [2.9% of climate-related development finance](#) identifying gender equality as a principal objective.

KEY DEMANDS FOR COP28

- ❖ On the way to achieving a balance between support for mitigation and adaptation, the COP26 promise to at least double adaptation finance must be underpinned with a clear roadmap on how to get there as well as concrete new finance pledges at COP28, in particular for adaptation-specific funds focusing on women-led and gender-transformative initiatives.
- ❖ Parties must make the crucially needed progress on adaptation by establishing and adopting the GGA framework and agree a substantive COP decision on the operationalization of the GGA.
- ❖ COP28 must further accelerate the integration of adaptation into local, national and regional planning, including the development and implementation of participatory, inclusive and gender-transformative National Adaptation Plans.
- ❖ Scale-up the implementation of sustainable food systems action, in particular by strengthening national food system transformation pathways developed in the context of the UN Food Systems Summit, and supporting their joint implementation and regular review and alignment to climate objectives, and including through agreements under the Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security (SSJW). Inclusive and participatory governance mechanisms that account for the interfaces

between food systems and human rights, gender equality and livelihoods in the adaptation context should be strengthened and leveraged.

- ❖ Adaptation finance channels must be reformed to increase the allocation and access for those who need it most by:
 - Reducing administrative barriers;
 - Funding and supporting local institutions and women-led groups, including through operationalizing key principles of locally-led adaptation and resilience-building.

FINANCE FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

In 2009 developed countries committed to supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation activities in developing countries. It was agreed that they would provide scaled-up, new and additional finance, reaching USD 100 billion a year by 2020 at the latest. The Paris Agreement has also extended specific financial support obligations for the group of developed countries into the future. However, this commitment has so far not been met. Developed countries assert that the goal will be met in 2023, but so far, they have not provided transparent information to support this claim. In the CARE report [Hollow Commitments](#) released in June, CARE looked into plans for future climate finance from developed countries and whether they align with such obligations. These combined submissions do not provide evidence that the USD 100 billion target will be met this year. Large climate finance providers, such as Germany, UK, and the US, even have difficulties in delivering on their existing climate finance goals. It is also unclear which countries and multilateral institutions are expected to contribute what.

Furthermore, international climate finance was supposed to come on top of Official Development Assistance (ODA) for poverty eradication and other development priorities. Another report from CARE released in September, [Seeing Double](#), found that so far most climate finance from developed countries was not additional to ODA. This means that fewer resources than promised are available for the much-needed fight to overcome poverty, eradicate hunger and pursue the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). And even if adaptation and mitigation measures can harness multiple benefits for the SDGs, as well as help to reduce poverty and pursue gender justice, the needs and the urgency are so vast that full delivery of the 0.7% ODA promise plus the appropriate levels of climate finance is essential.

Outside of the UNFCCC, a stimulating debate on innovative/alternative sources of finance picked up in the lead up to and at the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact hosted by France in June 2023. Different options of levies have been put on the table to finance climate action, including loss and damage response, strongly supported by some Heads of States and Governments from countries which are particularly vulnerable to climate change. However, no concrete commitment has been made in this regard, apart from the creation of a task force to examine possible new financial resources through taxation. At the September 2023 Africa Climate Summit, African leaders called on world leaders to support the implementation of a global carbon taxation system on the fossil fuel trade, maritime transport and aviation, and a global financial transaction tax.

KEY DEMANDS FOR COP28

- ❖ Climate finance must be new and additional to ODA commitments, grant-based, predictable and easily accessible.

- ❖ Developed countries must provide clear, quantitative information on how they will deliver 100bn USD of climate finance in 2023, and they must commit to make up for the shortfall in previous years so that a total of 600bn USD is provided in the period 2020-2025.
- ❖ While the process to design a post-2025 New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance is scheduled to be concluded only in 2024, COP28 should agree key parameters:
 - The new goal should be needs-based leading to a massive scale-up of climate finance;
 - There will be annual goals for 2026-2030 and sub-targets for public support to mitigation and adaptation as well as for loss and damage;
 - Only climate finance on top of ODA commitments and grant components will count.
- ❖ Women-led organizations must be included as key stakeholders in the new climate finance goal, funding criteria and allocation. All finance must include provisions to challenge gender inequality. Funding modalities should be reassessed to ensure flexible funding that is accessible by and responsive to the needs of women and girls in affected communities.
- ❖ Parties should agree on innovative/alternative sources of grant-based finance that can generate new and additional resources for climate action, including a minimum of USD 50bn annually for loss and damage action by 2024. (E.g. windfall tax on the fossil fuel industry, the redirection of fossil fuel subsidies, international levies on commercial air passenger travel and emissions from international shipping.) The approach to mobilize such finance must be rooted in the principle of 'polluter pays' and UNFCCC's foundational principles of equity, justice, fairness, and access.

WOMEN IN ACTION

Lucky Akter became a Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) after receiving training from CARE Bangladesh. As a DRR Leader she is engaged in disaster preparedness activities and disseminating early warning advisories during disaster events. Lucky lives in a unique wetland ecosystem in north-east Bangladesh shaped like a large bowl. During the monsoon season the area is submerged under 3-4 meters of water and almost every year there are flash floods. The lives and livelihoods of people are hugely impacted by the vast stretches of turbulent water that damage or destroy crops and other assets. Lucky encourages her community to follow early warning advisories and identify safe places to store dry food and other items. She collects early warning advisories from the local government and quickly disseminates these updates, liaising with Imams and Muajjins to share warnings via the speaker systems of the mosques, giving her neighbors the gift of time to relocate their belongings. Lucky has helped more than 100 households during climate-related disasters and is one of 2,841 DRR Leaders trained by SHOUHARDO III -- 67% of which are women.



FUNDING FOR LOSS AND DAMAGE ACTION

At COP27, with contributions from a strong CARE delegation, the fight for climate justice took a huge step forward. In Egypt, loss and damage finance made it onto the COP agenda for the first time ever - not without a struggle - and governments took the ground-breaking decision to establish new funding arrangements (FA), as well as a dedicated fund (L&DF), to assist particularly vulnerable developing countries in responding to loss and damage.

To turn the Sharm el Sheikh promise into action, governments agreed to establish a “Transitional Committee” (TC), made of 24 country delegates, to make recommendations on how to operationalize both the new funding arrangements and the fund at COP28. Five meetings and two workshops under the auspices of the TC were held between March and November during which TC members engaged in a frank and open dialogue despite strong divergence mainly between developed and developing countries. The fifth meeting was added on short notice after members failed at TC4 to reach an agreement over key issues such as the location of the fund and the sources of funding to fill it.

Finally, the TC adopted the key document including recommendations for a COP/CMA decision and the proposed governing instrument of the fund in early November, with a proposal to host the L&DF under the World Bank (WB) for an interim 4-year period, provided that the WB will confirm within a six-month period following COP28 that it is able to meet the various conditions set out in the text. However, all countries sitting on the TC expressed their disappointment and reservations regarding the outcome document. Developing countries are particularly concerned by the lack of scale identified for the fund, as well as the weak language on sources of finance which fails to constrain historical emitters to provide support but only urges them to do so while encouraging other countries to complement voluntarily. The governing instrument itself stays super vague on sources of funding and while mentioning “innovative sources”, it does not specifically include a reference to levies on the most polluting industries which have gained significant momentum over recent months, including at the June 2023 Summit for a New Global Financing Pact. Various TC members, from both developing and developed countries, also complained about the deletion of references to a human-rights based approach in the governing instrument. On the governance, it is also quite problematic that no seat is being granted on the Board of the L&DF to affected communities and civil society representatives. On eligibility, the text keeps the fund eligible for all “particularly vulnerable developing countries” and mandates the Board of the fund to develop a resource allocation system, with a minimum percentage allocation floor for Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, therefore without excluding other developing countries to access funding. At the very end of TC5, the US explicitly did not agree to the package of documents, with particular mentioning of the paragraphs on funding sources.

Thus, countries will have to figure out their approach towards COP28, whether to open up the governing instrument, whether to give additional guidance through the COP decision, or whether to pursue and try to close gaps as part of the detailed development of the fund in the years to come, as well as the discussions on the future climate finance goal (see above).

Beyond the L&DF, it will also be important that Parties take the next steps to operationalise the Santiago Network on L&D, a technical support arm for countries facing losses and damages.

KEY DEMANDS FOR COP28

- ❖ CARE urges Parties to reach an agreement by COP28 on the operationalization of the new funding arrangements to respond to loss and damage. It is critical that the L&DF plays a central and coordinating role in the loss and damage financing architecture.
- ❖ It is critical to ensure that the L&DF is guided by the following principles: equity, accessibility, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, country ownership, new and additional finance, grant-based and non-debt creating financial instruments, with a rights-based and gender-transformative approach, and meaningful and effective participation of affected communities.
- ❖ Through different funding windows, the L&DF should support a wide range of activities including relief in the aftermath of climate disasters in complementarity with humanitarian response, as well as longer-term rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts, response to slow-onset events, and should allow direct access for communities, including women-led organizations and women's rights organizations, indigenous communities as well as other marginalized groups.
- ❖ Rich countries should be primarily responsible for the replenishment of the Fund but contributions from a variety of private, philanthropic, and innovative/alternative sources should also be pursued. All particularly vulnerable developing countries should be eligible to receive support from the Fund, but with a clear priority (e.g. through an initial majority allocation of the funds) for poorer and more vulnerable countries (including LDCs and SIDS) with funding to focus on particularly vulnerable population segments.
- ❖ CARE calls on all developed countries and other countries with significant emission shares to swiftly announce new pledges to the L&DF, if possible during the COP itself, on top of 0.7% ODA commitments, and that these will not be counted as adaptation finance so as to avoid a diversion from its critically needed increase.
- ❖ Governments must agree on a host organization for the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage (SNLD) that has adequate regional representation and elect members of the SNLD Advisory Board. It will be key to ensure that the SNLD fully starts its work in 2024 and provides critical technical assistance to most vulnerable countries, including through country-specific needs assessments.
- ❖ While additional funding is needed, we need to make better use of existing funding that impact food systems interventions that benefits climate outcomes, as well as a range of others including public health and social well-being.



ADAPTATION IN ACTION

Buumba, 45, is a mother of seven and a small-scale farmer in southern Zambia. Her region has been struggling with severe droughts, heavy rains, and flash floods, making it difficult to grow vegetables, maize, and grain. At the beginning of 2023, a flood displaced more than 4,000 people in Buumba's district alone, leaving her fields under water. There was little left for her to salvage. But there was one crop that survived – a more stress-tolerant orange maize. Not only was it still standing after the floods, it's rich in vitamin A in a country where more than half of the children under five are vitamin A-deficient. By working with CARE and choosing to adapt her crop, Buumba can still grow maize and feed her family despite the extreme challenges caused by climate change.

MITIGATION FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

The latest IPCC report highlighted [the unprecedented scale](#) of the challenge required to keep warming to 1.5°C, following previous reports and multiple COP decisions confirming the action gap. More than a century of burning fossil fuels has taken us to a temperature of [1.2°C](#) above pre-industrial levels, with 2023 potentially being the first year crossing the 1.5°C threshold. To stay below 1.5°C, where [according to models](#) we might be able to avoid the worst potential impacts of climate change, will require deep, rapid and sustained greenhouse gas emissions reductions in all sectors. According to the IPCC, for warming to be limited to 1.5°C, emissions need to peak by 2025 at the latest and be reduced by [43% by 2030](#). Unfortunately the [UNEP Emission Gap report](#) released in 2022 shows that recent national pledges aren't getting us there. We are still a long way from the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to well below 2°C and according to UNEP the policies in place point to a 2.8°C temperature rise by the end of the century.

All governments, corporations, and NGOs – including CARE – must consequently take concrete action towards the globally required targets for reduction emissions by 2030. Any government or entity that makes claims about when and how they will reach net-zero emissions needs to do so accompanied by robust, science-based emission reduction targets. Minor elements of highly credible and high-quality offsetting might play a role, but only as part of a robust reduction strategy, and not as the first nor only step towards addressing emissions. CARE is strongly of the view that domestic mitigation and actual emission reductions must be the priority, including by quickly shifting away from fossil fuels and switching to sustainable renewable energies. The energy transition to a system powered by renewable energies and free of fossil fuels also offers the opportunity to establish inclusive employment in the renewable energy industry. The meaningful participation and representation of women and girls in all their diversity, and Indigenous Peoples, local communities, youth and other marginalized groups, must be fostered in all levels of business operations, from decision-making to implementation to revenue-sharing.

KEY DEMANDS FOR COP28:

- ❖ To have a fair chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C, global greenhouse gas emissions need to peak before 2025 at the latest, be reduced by at least 43% by 2030, and by at least 60% by 2035, compared to 2019 levels. All Parties to the UNFCCC, with particular need for developed and other G20 countries, should increase the ambition of their NDCs in order to close the “emissions gaps” and close “implementation gaps” through policies and actions to deliver them.
- ❖ CARE also highlights that the Paris Agreement stipulates that Parties should take action to conserve and enhance their carbon reservoirs and sinks, such as forests and peatlands, and should do so in a community-led, human rights-based manner, noting that the benefits of sustainable land and ecosystem approaches are much wider than their emissions impact and must be adequately rewarded.
- ❖ Parties, as part of the agriculture discussions, should also step up their support for a equitable, resilient and just measures within a food systems approach that looks at emissions beyond agricultural production - including food loss and waste, processing transportation, consumption, biodiversity loss and land use change – which is crucial to achieve our mitigation (and also adaptation) objectives while ensuring global food and nutrition security. Interventions that aim to build circular bioeconomies (use of food waste for energy or fertilizer, etc) or strengthen local supply chains have proven to be effective across equity, resilience and climate emissions, and should be scaled up.
- ❖ All UNFCCC Parties should agree to a rapid, just, and equitable global phase-out of fossil fuels in all sectors by 2050 at the latest, in line with a 1.5°C temperature limit.
- ❖ Parties should agree on a global renewables target: to triple global renewables capacity to 11,000 GW by 2030, deploying at least 1,500 GW per year by 2030. This should be complemented by substantial improvements in energy savings with the aim of reducing total final energy demand on a global level, alongside wrapped up financial support to so-called developing countries with particular needs.
- ❖ Governments and business should also take further actions to speed up the decarbonization of high emitting sectors (shipping, aviation, agriculture).