

## Round table on “Climate Change and the Sustainability of Vulnerable Communities” 8<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Accelerating climate impacts are having devastating effects on local communities across the world. These range from the destruction of homes, education and healthcare facilities and other critical infrastructure to the loss of livelihood and increased food and water insecurity. In some regions, climate induced disasters are resulting in large scale humanitarian crises and displacement.

With increasing impacts of climate change, the intensity and frequency of related disasters increases, leading to impacts on lives and livelihoods, in this context the IFRCs World Disaster Report 2020 stated that 83% of all disasters are caused by climate change and weather-related events rising by almost 35% over the last three decades and impacting over 1.7 billion people around the world.

A recent glaring example are the monsoons in Pakistan which have sub-merged one third of the country damaging over 2 million houses, 23,900 schools and 1,460 health facilities. It is estimated that more than 10 million people are currently displaced. In South Sudan, unprecedented floods and droughts have rendered the country one of the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. It ranks as one of the top five countries in the world in relation to the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) due to disasters, reaching 506,000 IDPs as of the end of 2021. In the Horn of Africa, an extended unprecedented drought is threatening the lives and livelihoods of 22 million people, nearly 7.8 million people in Somalia, almost half of Somalia estimated population, have been affected by the worst drought experienced by the country in over 40 years. Currently, over 1.1 million people are displaced and, by the end of this year, approximately 6.7 million people across Somalia, are expected to face high levels of acute food insecurity.

This growing climate impact on these affected communities further hinders development efforts towards tackling poverty and unemployment, and compounds the negative consequences of the global economic downturn and soaring food and energy prices, thus contributing towards aggravating existing inequalities and fragilities, with women and youth being most adversely affected, particularly in conflict-affected settings.

In several places, the impacts of climate change posed itself as a contributing factor and/or risk-multiplier during and after situations of conflict, and thus it is becoming increasingly relevant to undertake and invest in well-resourced adaptation and resilience initiatives that contribute to sustaining peace and reduces the risks of conflict and violence and their resulting forced displacement.

Many Governments and local communities are not adequately equipped to prevent, prepare for and adapt to these far-reaching impacts whose effects will continue to amplify. It is estimated, for instance, that climate change could force 105 million people in Africa out of their homes in search for safety and better livelihood opportunities by 2050.

Confronting these challenges calls for an investment into empowering local communities through integrated responses and multifaceted action by all countries and stakeholders while ensuring context specificity and national/local ownership. Most notably, it is imperative to accelerate climate adaptation to mitigate the risks associated with climate change as well as strengthen crisis preparedness and emergency response capacities. Furthermore, it is of importance critical to enhance the access of locally-led climate adaptation projects to climate finance in a manner that increases their resilience and minimizes the scope of loss and damage they are subject to.

### Background information:

- Paris Agreement called in Article 9 for striking a balance between mitigation and adaptation funding and channeling more public and grant-based funds towards adaptation. 7% of global climate funding in 2019 was channeled towards adaptation and resilience projects (compared to 5% in 2018).
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015 - 2030), adopted in 2015, through its guiding principles sheds light on the importance of strengthening local communities' resilience to climate change
- In 2015 at the Paris COP, H.E president of Egypt, on behalf of the AU, launched the Africa Adaptation Initiative as a form of regional approach to stimulating and further strengthening adaptation activities at scale in the African continent. The African Union's recently launched its Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032), which recognizes the importance of vulnerable communities' engagement when designing climate-responsive policies.
- This year the UN Secretary-General has asked WMO to spearhead new action to ensure every person is protected by early warning systems within five years.
- It is estimated that by 2050, climate change could force around 216 million person out of their homes, 85.7 million of which are in Sub-Saharan Africa, despite this, national and local communities lack adequate capacities to prevent, prepare and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

## Goals:

This roundtable aims to examine means for strengthening local responses to growing climate change impacts, particularly scaling up durable solutions focused on climate adaptation, strengthening crisis preparedness and disaster risk reduction, responding to wide-scale forced displacement, and bolstering community level resilience and identifying entry points to accelerate finance for local climate adaptation.

It also aims at exploring ways to tackle impacts of climate change in relation to migration and displacement, and means to implement objectives established in international commitments, and mobilize efforts of different stakeholders to deal with climate and weather-related disasters and degradation to manage climate induced displacement and migration.

## Guiding questions:

### General:

- How to strengthen coordination and partnership across the climate, humanitarian, disaster risk reduction and emergency response actors at all levels (local, national and international) to devise holistic responses to climate-induced disasters?
- What are action points to scale-up early warning systems, including through technical and knowledge exchange to capacitate national and local stakeholders to deal with the negative implications of climate change?
- How to enhance the operationalization of the Humanitarian, Development, and Peace Nexus (HDPN) in response to contexts where climate change, displacement trends and conflict dynamics are intertwined, and how can we promote integrated responses and scaled up partnerships?

### Questions focused on affected local communities:

- How to ensure that the needs of local communities are integrated in national climate policies, including NDCs and NAPs, as well as in humanitarian, disaster risk reduction and emergency response mechanisms and frameworks?
- How to strengthen the capacities and diversify and scale up the resources availed to bolster their resilience and adaptation capacity of local communities?
- What are good examples of local climate adaptation projects that contributed to the long-term sustainability of local communities?
- How to design and implement context-specific responses to address the needs of local communities in conflict-affected settings that are particularly vulnerable to climate impacts?

Questions focused on the role of financial institutions:

- What are the main challenges and opportunities for accelerating finance to small scale and locally-led climate adaptation projects - including women and youth-led projects - as well as local disaster risk reduction and humanitarian response?
- How can global climate finance be simplified or fit for purpose in order to meet the needs of local communities, including women, children and young people?

Questions for the private sector:

- How to diversify financing resources and incentivize the private sector to contribute to local climate adaptation projects? What are good examples of innovative finance mechanisms in this regard?