

Tailoring Climate Change Response Measures to the Needs of the Most Vulnerable

INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT ATD FOURTH WORLD

Introduction

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fifth Assessment Report (AR5)¹ notes that, “Differences in vulnerability and exposure arise from non-climatic factors and from multidimensional inequalities often produced by uneven development processes.” Further, “**People who are socially, economically, culturally, politically, institutionally, or otherwise marginalized are especially vulnerable to climate change and also to some adaptation and mitigation.**” The international community therefore has an obligation to ensure that climate agreements and adaptation and mitigation actions include poverty eradication as a primary objective, acknowledging that they have direct bearing on the post-2015 agenda and poverty eradication.

These adaptation and mitigation strategies should be based on the UN Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, in order to ensure their effectiveness in the fight against poverty. **If governments fail to combat climate change with people living in poverty, it is very likely that response measures will work against these vulnerable communities.**

ATD proposes that the new agreements provide that Parties:

- Recognise that social and economic development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities, and seek to exploit synergies with other development agendas including the Post-2015 sustainable development agenda
- Utilize a reporting and monitoring structure that permits the disaggregation of data and then analysis to ensure the most vulnerable communities are adequately protected by climate-change policy
- Ensure adaptation and mitigation strategies are funded with the aim of impacting the most vulnerable communities, particularly those living in poverty.

Tackling climate change with people living in poverty in an effort to eradicate poverty

The UNFCCC 2010 Cancun Agreements reflect the awareness of governments that responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development. They note that, “**economic development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of developing countries,**” yet, **it is important to**

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IPCC WG11 AR5 phase 1 report. Climate change 2014: Impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability.

consider the primacy of these issues in developed countries as well. ATD Fourth World thus urges Parties to:

- **Ensure responses to climate change are coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner, with a view to avoiding adverse impacts on the latter**
- **Put into place social protection floors as key to eradicating poverty, as well as to providing support to those whose lives are particularly affected by the transition to a green economy**
- **Promote the creation of decent work and quality jobs, particularly for people living in poverty and workers in precarious employment, in the transition to a green economy²**
- **Implement job training programmes for people living in poverty to participate in the transition to a green economy**
- **Ensure that local communities participate in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of adaptation and mitigation strategies that affect their lives.**

People living in poverty are less likely to have a sustained voice in, or influence over, policy-making, and so in times of crisis the vulnerability of marginalised groups can increase dramatically. If the international community fails to recognize this marked risk, then UNFCCC agreements could run counter to the number one priority goal of the post-2015 agenda to eradicate extreme poverty.

Monitoring the impact of climate change and policy responses on vulnerable communities

It is of utmost importance that the international Parties use a reporting and monitoring structure that will give particular attention to these communities. **In this regard, ATD Fourth World urges all parties to:**

- **Consider non-economic impacts of climate change and adaptation or mitigation strategies, such as the disruption of support networks or the loss of culturally important sites**
- **Monitor the impact of climate change and policy responses on the most vulnerable communities, particularly those living in poverty**
- **Ensure that local communities participate in the assessment of this impact.**

In order to ensure that the most vulnerable communities are adequately protected by climate-change policies, it is critical to **use and develop disaggregated data when measuring the effects of climate change and corresponding responses**. When parties understand the particular impacts on the most vulnerable communities, they will then be

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For example, in Madagascar, the social enterprise *Miasa Mianatra Miaraka* hires people from a background of extreme poverty to manufacture energy-efficient wood cookers, that help fight the scourge of deforestation

more able to concentrate efforts on these communities and assess the success of targeted measures. It is important to note that this will require strengthening national capacity for data collection in many countries.

It is critical that up-front information submitted with INDCs include indicators to measure vulnerabilities by communities and to capture non-economic effects of climate change and response measures.

Ensuring climate change finance is directed to the most vulnerable populations

In order to ensure that funding reaches the most vulnerable communities, Parties must take concrete actions to guarantee the provision of immediate and adequate funding and to demonstrate how the funds are used to benefit the most vulnerable communities. **ATD**

Fourth World urges all parties to:

- **Develop INDCs through a transparent and participatory process with space given to all stakeholders**
- **Include in National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs) and Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) budgets for specific efforts that target the most vulnerable communities, particularly those living in poverty**
- **Provide up-front information on a methodology for measuring the amount of national investments made on mitigation and adaptation that specifically benefit people from the bottom quintile of the population (based on measures of income or multidimensional poverty indicators)**

The financing of effective adaptation and mitigation tools is important to all Parties, and should therefore be assessed in terms of effective investment in all people—those living in vulnerable communities in particular. Both developed and developing country parties should ensure that their nationally determined budgets for climate change response strategies direct resources to the communities that are most vulnerable and least equipped to cope with the effects of climate change.