



# Climate Change Policy

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# Content

**3**

## **Climate Change Policy**

**4**

## **About Climate Change**

**5-7**

## **CKU Target Groups and Sectors**

- Women and Gender
- Children and Youth
- Health Sector
- Educational Sector
- Small-scale agriculture/ Local food security
- Water

**8-9**

## **CKU Approach to Climate Change**

- Risks Assessment and Climate Change Adaptation
- Climate Change Mitigation

**10**

## **National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA)**

# Climate Change Policy

**CKU consider the issue of climate change as one of the most urgent issues to respond to in recent time in relation to the development work, which CKU members and their partners are involved in, as it is affecting negatively prospects for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).**

**The issue of climate change is further relevant to address in a theological perspective, which sets the frame for the basic Christian values, which CKU and its member organisations adhere to. According to the Bible God created man to inhabit the earth with all it entails. God further entrusted man to rule over the earth and to be a good steward of it. God said according to Genesis 1;26; “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”**

**In this perspective, responsibly stewardship becomes a key issue, which links human beings to the management of natural resources. As widely acknowledged, some of the changes in the climate observed over the past decades are closely connected to the management and use of natural resources. This fact should challenge us as Christian organisations to respond in humility to the climate change crisis by confessing on behalf of humanity that we have not been adequate stewards of the earth. Consequently, lifestyles and behaviours should be reconsidered and solutions jointly sought – also for the sake of future generations.**

**Climate change is therefore not an issue, which should be taken lightly. CKU believes that we as individuals and organisations have a responsibility to act upon this fact in whatever way we might find possible and feasible within the resources available.**





## About Climate Change

Scientific data clearly shows the impact of human action on climate change and documents among other things the relation between carbon dioxide emissions, global warming and changed weather patterns.

The effect of climate change is clearly seen through e.g. rising sea levels, unpredictable rainfalls, soil erosions, melting ice, destruction of forests and coral reefs and has already affected the livelihoods of millions of people especially the poor in developing countries. The consequences of these changes are particularly serious in developing countries where livelihoods and ecosystems are highly sensitive to changes in climate; the majority of people rely on the natural resource base for their livelihoods; and the capacity to adapt is limited by poverty, poor governance and inequitable distribution of resources and power.

CKU and its member organisations have witnessed changing trends in extreme events over the past few years, e.g. floods in Bangladesh and in Pakistan and both flooding and droughts in Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia with the consequences of damaged crops and agricultural infrastructure affecting local

food security and health due to insufficient portable water and sanitation etc. The paradox of climate change is that those who contributed least to the problem are suffering the most. And those who contributed most to the climate change and have benefitted with significant economical growth and development, are affected at a minimum level. Africa is the most effected continent. In 2008 alone, 104 natural disasters were reported in Africa out of which the majority were related to climate as well as changed climate. 20 million Africans were forced to leave their homes due to droughts, storms or floods. In 2020 some scientists are predicting that the outcome of the agricultural sector will diminish with one half due to changed precipitation patterns, if no adaptive measures are taken, and this may lead to millions of Africans migrating to survive elsewhere. Climate changes surely effects Africa the most due to its existing poverty rate and vulnerability. Even so, Africa is only responsible for 3,5% of the global emissions. As a contrast, the US emits over 25% of greenhouse gases but only has 4% of the world's population. This is an ethical dilemma, which calls

for an ambitious response particularly from political leaders in North. The world leaders were gathered in December 2015 for the COP21 to negotiate a joint commitment and agreement. This ended with the Paris Agreement, which is an international agreement dealing with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation and finance starting in the year 2020. The agreement is yet to be ratified by all countries and is thus not as ambitious as many had hoped and prayed for.

The climate change crisis is a growing reality, which will require continued response not only from world leaders but from all of us. This global climate crisis calls for an urgent and holistic response, which tackles both the causes and the effects of climate change. Systems, policies, business practices, attitudes and lifestyles need to change - primarily in North but also in South - for the sake of future generations. Vulnerable communities particularly in developing countries need support to climate change adaptation and to further reduce vulnerability in order to overcome hazards and to further develop.

# CKU Target Groups and Sectors

The priority groups targeted by the CKU member organisations and their partners are most often located in poor and remote communities and include often women, children and youth or other vulnerable groups such as ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities. These groups also happen to be the most vulnerable groups in regard to climate change impacts. Climate change push back development efforts and is likely to interfere with all sectors targeted by CKU through various development interventions.

## Women and Gender

In communities that are dependent on natural resources women are likely to bear disproportionate hardship to the effects of climate change. Women typically are responsible for 60-80% of the food production in rural areas and travel long to access water and firewood, especially after a disaster, where potable water may be reduced.

In reverse, women also represent an immense source of potential knowledge skills to build the adaptive capacity of their communities being the primary managers of natural resources and food production and should therefore be included in climate change adaptation initiatives.

It will be important to ensure women's access to information, education and land to reduce their vulnerabilities and to increase their adaptive capacity. This will also involve enhancing women's influence in decision making forums locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Women are targeted in many development projects supported by CKU and it could therefore be argued that adaptive capacities of women already are being enhanced in many places. However, the need for additional capacity building should be analysed to further reduce women's vulnerabilities in the event of climate disasters. It is for example estimated that during natural disasters, the chances for women and children to die are 14 times higher than for men.

## Children and Youth

Children are more likely than adults to perish during natural disasters or succumb to malnutrition, injuries or disease in the aftermath. Natural disasters may force children out of their homes - or even their countries. They may become orphaned or separated from their families, and may be preyed upon by opportunistic adults. Children must be the first priority in risk reduction efforts. In areas, where floods due to rising of sea levels are common, it might save thousands of lives if children are trained e.g. how to swim as part of a school curriculum. Furthermore, risk reduction initiatives should be designed to educate families and children about simple and practical actions that can protect life and personal property in the event of natural climate disasters. According to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, children are also recognized as rights-holders and can contribute significantly as actors in e.g. disaster risk reduction and adaptation programmes.



## Definition:

**Adaptive capacity is defined as:** The ability of a system to adjust to climate change (including climate variability and extremes), to moderate potential damages, to take advantages of opportunities, or to cope with the consequences.

One of the most important factors shaping the adaptive capacity of individuals, households and communities is their access to and control over natural, human, social, physical, and financial resources.



## Health Sector

Natural disasters – caused by climate change or not – most often effect the health situation in a given community in different ways. Lack of food, potable water and sanitation can cause health problems like malnutrition, diarrhoea etc. or even lead to various epidemics such as cholera or tuberculosis. Disaster preparedness including health considerations are important to consider in health interventions in order to reduce vulnerability in communities and secure maximum impact of the intervention. Such considerations are not new. However, what may be new to consider when integrating climate change considerations in future health interventions are the longer-term effects of global warming, which may cause e.g. diseases to spread from place to place. Malaria-carrying mosquitoes have for example been observed in new places due to warmer climate (e.g. Addis Ababa), and people in these places have not been accustomed

## Educational Sector

Climate disasters may lead to a situation, where hungry and undernourished children, especially girls, may not be in a condition to receive the full benefits of education and may in fact even miss school on a regular basis because they are occupied by finding food or to earn extra income for the family or because they are simply too physically weak to attend classes. Supportive measures

to worry about prevention means, treatment etc. before. Similarly, changing climate increases the risk of other mosquito-borne diseases like dengue fever, yellow fever and various viral causes of encephalitis. Algae blooms in water could be more frequent, increasing the risk of diseases like cholera. Respiratory problems may be aggravated by warming-induced increases in smog etc. The right to family planning is another aspect, which to some degree link to climate change vulnerabilities. Excessive population growth, which is experienced in some countries, may put extra pressure on the use of natural resources, if these are limited or managed poorly. Particularly, larger urban cities can be vulnerable both in regard to planning capacities and in their capacity to adapt to potential hazards. In addition, the increasing flow of people migrating to the cities only adds extra to these challenges, which also makes migration an issue to consider.

should be considered to support local food security while addressing education.

Lack of food can also lead to migration, as rural families might try to find alternative survivals in the cities. Such shift will often lead to drop-outs of schools, and the chances for children to get back into school when facing new challenges in the cities are low.



## Strengthening of Local Communities (Social Sector)

Communities, which are poorly organized and empowered in general, will have difficulties in planning and addressing solutions to cope with droughts, floods etc. Building adaptive capacity in communities (individuals, household level and community level) are components, which already play a large part in many projects supported under this CKU sector. Such components may include savings groups, income generating skill training and organising development committees to advocate for rights of the poorest people. Climate change may exacerbate small-scale, local conflicts over natural resources, which have significant implications for livelihoods and security, particularly for the most vulnerable people. On a larger scale, climate change can also be considered a serious security

threat in certain conflict prone districts such as in the Middle East, where tensions and conflicts already affect the everyday life of many civilians, e.g. the Palestine/ Israel conflict and religious tensions in Egypt between Muslims and Christians. It is predicted that due to population growth and rising temperatures causing dryer lands, food insecurity will be an issue, which will need solutions and require national cooperation. Water scarcity is predicted as another threat, which will affect livelihoods hugely. As water sources are shared across national boundaries in the Middle East and in parts of Africa, solutions will require not only national cooperation but also regional cooperation. Peace and stability in order to foster good dialogue and cooperation will therefore be essential to continue promoting in the years to come.



## Small-scale agriculture/ Local food security

Basic food security is one of the first areas to be affected, when the weather patterns change due to climate change. Impacts are often seen in hampered or reduced crops, which might be caused by extreme weather events like droughts

or floods, however even smaller changes in temperatures and rainfall patterns also do have a significant, often negative, impact on agriculture and other resource-based livelihoods.

## Water

Access to potable water is a major development challenge, which many development projects already are addressing as

part of e.g. health interventions. Climate change is adding extra pressure on water availability with the predicted future climate change related disasters to come.



# CKU Approach to Climate Change

CKU will respond to the climate change crisis with an approach, which is unfolded in the next pages and explained under the two themes Risks Assessment and Climate Change Adaptation and Climate Change Mitigation.

## Risks Assessment and Climate Change Adaptation

Climate change has already impacted an innumerable number of communities, exposing them to increasing hazards and making them more vulnerable. No matter what we do to prevent climate changes (climate change mitigation), significant impacts are already inevitable. It is therefore important that we ensure that the poor, who will be most affected, will be able to adapt to the changed environment.

A starting point for understanding the ways that climate change may multiply risks is to consider the different forms of rural and urban risks and how these are shaped by the relationship between the changing array of hazards and the changing nature of vulnerability. Both hazards and vulnerability are being af-

ected by climate change.

Many projects funded through CKU already take climate into consideration when designing the projects and propose rightly e.g. use of drought resistant crops. The challenge posed by the changing climate is now that the climate of the past is no longer a reliable guide to the future. To address climate change, the design criteria must be based on probable future climate scenarios and expected impacts. Hazards may increase in number or intensity and put extra pressure on a given community and increase vulnerabilities. There might be a need to include further additional activities to reduce risks and build adaptive capacity when considering not only short-term effects of disasters but also

longer-term effects caused by climate changes.

CKU find it thus important that development interventions, in particularly in areas characterized by climate-sensitive and/ or natural resource dependent livelihoods, are based on a thorough risks assessment, which have taken into account the changing climate and the impacts on the communities. Such risks assessment will enable development interventions to become more sustainable by integrating - mainstreaming - precautionary adaptation measures into the project design. Adaptation measures should further be compared to the risk and cost of not taking action.

## Vulnerability is:

The combination of the sensitivity of people and natural systems to adverse socio-economic and environmental effects of climate change and the ability to cope with them.

## Risks:

Risks are identified and constructed in the interplay between hazards and vulnerability. When communities are confronted with natural hazards and are unable to cope and adapt to the situation, the consequences may be lives lost, persons injured, damage to capital stock and disruption of economic activity.





## Climate Change Mitigation

Global warming has reached a crisis point. If unaddressed, rising global temperatures will trigger dramatic increases in extreme weather events and cause the oceans to rise further, threatening coastal cities and smaller islands, displacing hundreds of millions of people and destroying thousands of species.

There has been a dramatic increase in the levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere since the industrial age began, which have enhanced the greenhouse effect and caused the increasing of the earth's temperature. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), carbon dioxide is 34 per cent higher now than in pre-industrial years. It is widely accepted by the scientific community that the burning of fossil fuels (coal, gas, oil) to heat and light our homes, for industry and for transport is the main cause of the enhanced greenhouse effect.

Scientists tell us that in order to avoid the worst effects of climate change, the global average temperature increase must remain as far below 2c as possible, which for industrial countries means emissions cuts of 80-95% by 2050. Measures to reduce carbon emissions and greenhouse emissions should be identified and taken into practice to avoid disaster in future. This is the essence of Climate Change Mitigation.

CKU is committed to reduce own carbon footprint and will implement an internal climate policy in 2011. Many CKU member and partner organisations have already taken practical steps to reduce their carbon emissions on an organizational level, which is encouraging. It remains a greater challenge to integrate climate change mitigation

### *Environment and Climate change mitigation*

In the current policies of CKU, environment is a cross cutting issue, which must be considered in all projects – through the stages of analysis, designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This is to ensure that projects take the environment into consideration so that they at least do no harm in this area. In other words; the focus here is to make sure that the development interventions have no negative effects on the environment.

Climate change mitigation is closely linked to this cross cutting issue. By focusing on careful use of natural resources and reduction of carbon emissions, climate change mitigation and environment share the same overall goal; to protect the environment. One example on additional issue to consider in respect of the environment and to mitigate climate change may be the use of overseas external consultants in the monitoring and/or evaluation phase, as flights emit a huge amount of carbon dioxide. Attempts to find local consultants should be prioritised and monitoring visits from abroad should be planned carefully taking the needs, timing and number of visits into consideration to avoid unnecessary travelling.

CKU will consider Climate change and environment as a joint cross cutting issue in future. This is further in accordance with Danida's approach to Danish development cooperation outlined in 'Danish Climate and Development Action Programme'. CKU will unfold this joint cross cutting issue and include recommendations for e.g. use of PV-systems (solar power) and other environment friendly technologies.



# National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA)

According to the UN's Climate Convention, approx. 50 least developed countries have been requested to prepare a National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPA) which outlines an action plan for climate change adaptation in the coming years. Support to implement the NAPA can be applied for from a fund called The Least Developed Country Fund (LDCF), which is administrated by an independent financial institution called Global Environment Facility (GEF). From a development perspective, it will be crucial to ensure that civil society organisations are involved in influencing the NAPA's and in implementing the

plan to ensure that 1) The poorest people and remote areas benefit from the action plan 2) Sufficient funds are allocated to local adaptation projects and not only allocated to e.g. infrastructure 3) To hold the National Government accountable for the use of the funds, which are expected to increase in future. Corruption and unequal distribution of resources can hamper the development process in a country hugely and result in huge poverty pockets, which may only be noticed by civil society stakeholders and neglected by the Government. This will also be the case when discussing climate change adaptation.