
Regional Dimensions and Priorities on Loss and Damage

Introduction

Loss and Damage (L&D) refers to the impacts of severe climate change on human and natural systems, encompassing both slow-onset and extreme weather events. These impacts often result in unavoidable losses, posing a significant challenge to global communities.

Each region presents unique challenges, demanding tailored yet collectively cohesive strategies to prevent and address L&D. A nuanced exploration of their shared concerns and distinctive priorities reveals a complex landscape of climate impacts.

The United Nations Environment Programme's Global Adaptation Network (GAN) organized a series of regional webinars from July 2022 to October 2023 in Asia-Pacific, Africa, and LAC. These sessions focused on understanding the science, policy dimensions, and mechanisms to avert, minimize, and address L&D impacts. The webinars drew a total of 762 participants, indicating a high level of interest.

The regional perspectives that emerged from these webinars can be summarized as follows:

Africa

- Africa's extreme vulnerability to climate change is evident, with frequent severe events surpassing communities' coping abilities and leading to economic and non-economic losses, demanding urgent aid, including food, medical supplies, and financial support.
- Accelerating investments in mitigation and adaptation alongside scaled-up assistance is crucial to match the crisis scale, involving decentralized climate solutions to reduce impacts and costs on communities.
- Strategic partnerships, efficient fund allocation, and private sector engagement, particularly in insurance, are pivotal but require addressing coverage gaps and rising costs.
- Prioritizing comprehensive risk management, adaptation planning, and inclusive policies are imperative to address climate risks and minimize losses.
- Stakeholder involvement, youth empowerment, and inclusion of local communities are key to innovative solutions. The strategic empowerment of youth emerges as a transformative element. Beyond recognizing their potential for innovative solutions, the call is for their increased involvement in policy-making and financial access, positioning them as key agents of change.
- **Africa's vulnerability to climate change is acute, marked by severe events causing immediate economic and non-economic losses that necessitate urgent investments in mitigation and adaptation. To address these challenges, decentralized solutions and inclusive policies are crucial, alongside strategic partnerships and private sector engagement, emphasizing the need for comprehensive risk management and adaptive planning to tackle the region's climate risks effectively.**

Asia-Pacific

- Lack of data complicates managing and attributing L&D to climate change, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable populations and exacerbating with each degree rise in temperature, significantly impacting sustainable development.
- Highlighted initiatives from Bangladesh, Fiji, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent present valuable models for adaptation practices and resilience-building efforts.
- Recognition of the profound impact of climate-induced displacements on cultures and traditions, exemplified by Fiji's pioneering relocation guidelines and the Climate Relocation and Displaced Peoples Trust Fund, highlighting the need for innovative solutions at the national level.
- Urgent emphasis on innovative forecasting and early action responses tailored to local needs to effectively avert, minimize, and address L&D, underlining the importance of accessible financial mechanisms like the L&D Finance Facility (LDFF) for vulnerable countries at COP27.
- **The lack of data complicates attributing climate-induced L&D, significantly impacting vulnerable populations and sustainable development. Fiji's approach highlights the necessity for innovative national-level solutions to address climate-induced displacements, urging urgent early action responses tailored to local needs, and emphasizing the importance of accessible financial mechanisms like the LDFF at COP27.**

Latin America and the Caribbean

- Through inclusive representation, there is a need to ensure LAC's active involvement in decision-making for L&D at COP28, emphasizing inclusivity and solidarity for vulnerable communities worldwide.
- Need to ensure that accessing L&D funds doesn't disincentivize adaptation efforts, prioritizing resources for directly affected groups and boosting adaptation ambitions and financial incentives for adaptation.
- Promote proactive national and local actions beyond L&D Fund reliance, creating regional mechanisms and national frameworks. Examples like Catastrophe Risk Insurance in the Caribbean exhibit regional progress.
- Embrace diverse solutions beyond economics, recognizing cultural restoration and ecosystem revival alongside economic measures. Tailor solutions based on specific community needs.
- Bridging/closing knowledge gaps for effective L&D responses, addressing diverse risks and losses like biodiversity, social disruption, cultural erosion, and mental strain, critical for informed decision-making.
- **Experts and stakeholders in the LAC region advocate for inclusive representation in decision-making for L&D at COP28 while emphasizing financial support that doesn't hinder adaptation efforts. Their approach extends beyond funds, focusing on diverse solutions and closing knowledge gaps crucial for effective response to L&D.**

Common Conclusions From All Regions

Here are some of the common messages and key takeaways from across all three regions:

1. **Immediate Reality of Risks:** The acknowledgment that L&D is not a distant prospect but an immediate reality is a rallying point across regions. Africa and Asia-Pacific, in particular, are in the throes of severe climate events, signaling an urgent call to treat L&D as an imminent, tangible risk demanding immediate attention.
2. **Comprehensive Response:** The urgency to respond comprehensively is evident, transcending mere acknowledgment of risks. The call is for a twofold approach - an acceleration of investments in both mitigation and adaptation and the mobilization of assistance that matches the scale of crises faced by countries and communities.
3. **Role of Private Sector and Risk Management:** Private sector's critical role in L&D, highlighting the need for its judicious integration and emphasizing robust national risk management plans.
4. **Holistic Approach and International Mechanisms:** The necessity for a holistic approach that recognizes cultural, ecological, and non-economic impacts, alongside utilizing international mechanisms like the Warsaw International Mechanism and Santiago Network.
5. **Urgency of Action and Collaboration:** Emphasis on L&D as a current reality requiring urgent action, and the importance of collaborative strategies involving various sectors and stakeholders.
6. **Localized Actions and Knowledge Enhancement:** The importance of local and national actions, acknowledging knowledge gaps particularly in non-economic losses, and emphasizing the need for regional solutions.
7. **Adaptive Governance and Investment in Long-term Solutions:** The need for adaptive governance structures and prioritizing long-term solutions, focusing on empowering local communities and equitable resource allocation.
8. **Global Unified Responsibility and Collaboration:** The emphasis on a unified global response and international collaboration to effectively tackle L&D, recognizing the interconnectedness of regional efforts.

In the expansive panorama of escalating climate challenges, the call for immediate and comprehensive action resonates across continents. The commonalities shared by Africa, Asia-Pacific, and LAC underscore the intertwined nature of the global climate crisis. A unified strategy, inclusive decision-making, and a laser focus on resilience-building emerge as essential elements to navigate the intricate landscape of L&D on a global scale. As the world anticipates the outcomes at COP28, the demand is not merely for mitigation and adaptation efforts but for the establishment of a robust framework capable of addressing the intricate nuances of L&D on a global canvas. The interconnectedness of regions emphasizes that success on one front is interlinked with progress on others, echoing the shared responsibility in the face of a planetary challenge.