



# Hear us out

## Communities Confronting the Need for Climate Change Adaptation and Loss & Damage Repair

Consultation with West African CSOs and  
Municipalities on Climate Change with CARE

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CARE FRANCE

### Introduction: a problem of definition and prioritisation

According to the UNFCCC, adaptation refers to adjustments in ecological, social or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects. It refers to changes in processes, practices and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change.

Some of the consequences of climate change exceed the adaptation capacities of developing countries, and generate considerable costs **that cannot be avoided**. It was in this context that the Loss and Damage Response Fund was set up. The question of how to define what is and should be covered by Loss and Damage is still being debated, particularly in developing countries, as relayed by the Climate Action Network Africa - CAN Africa.

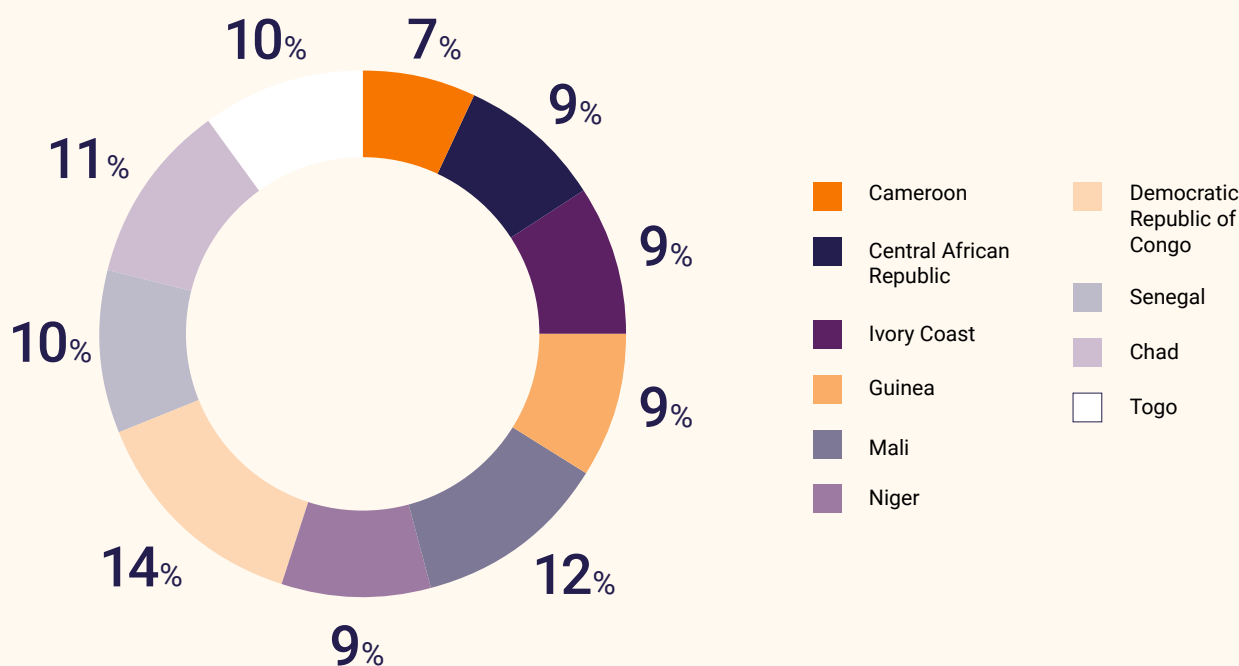
While adaptation needs are largely under-funded, with only 5%<sup>i</sup> of identified climate financing going towards adaptation, or 10% if co-benefits are taken into account, **the lack of clarity in defining the financial requirements for each sector, and the lack of definition of priorities at sub-regional, national and local levels** is slowing down the effective implementation of adaptation objectives and the setting up of operational strategies for responding to loss and damage.

**Climate justice requires real community participation in defining priorities and strategies.** In this context, CARE France has consulted the CSOs and municipalities of West and Central Africa to define their needs in terms of adaptation and response to loss and damage.

The results of this study show that climate change is already a reality, causing major losses and damage. Aware that this is only the beginning of more significant changes, feedback from the field highlights the need to focus on adaptation. This underscores the need to consult localities and municipalities to define funding priorities.

**Methodology :** The study conducted by CARE France is divided into a quantitative and a qualitative component. A total of 219 organizations were surveyed, including 149 civil society organizations and 77 municipalities in 10 West and Central African countries. There was also three rounds of participatory consultations with selected organizations, to complete the qualitative part of the survey, and to jointly define recommendations and analyze results. For 3 weeks in september and october 2024

**Figure 1: Geographical distribution of respondents by country of residence**



## 1. A significant increase in climatic hazards over the past 10 years

What are the main impacts of climate change on our territories?

- 95% report an increase in heat waves
- 85% report an increase in intense rainfall
- 80% report an increase in flooding
- 67% report an increase in droughts
- 61% report an increase in coastal erosion
- 43% note an increase in storms and cyclones

85% of the respondents report that those disasters and/or **climatic** hazards have dramatic consequences on human lives in their own communities and localities.

The floods of September 2024, for example, claimed the lives of **30 people in northern Cameroon<sup>ii</sup>** and **destroyed nearly 56,000 homes**. Since the start of this year's rainy season, flooding has already claimed **229 lives in Nigeria, 341 in Chad<sup>iii</sup>, 217 in Niger, and many others.**

## 2. The concrete, long-term consequences of increasing climate hazards on human lives, territories and livelihoods

The slow consequences of climate change impact livelihoods, which indirectly take lives. 70% of respondents noted the impacts of increasing heat waves on human life, for example, the malfunctioning of essential equipment in health centers (such as generators) and heat wave deaths linked to the destruction of livelihoods, and increased vulnerability to **water availability**.



### Testimonials gathered during participatory consultations

#### CONSEQUENCES OF DEPLETED WATER SUPPLIES AND WATER POINTS :

« In a village of agropastoralists and herders, water points are very rare due to drying up of the water table. The herders, who are numerous for too few water points, have to travel 20 to 25 km between the water point and the grazing areas. One woman was forced to spend the night around the waterpoint, and had to leave her children alone in the village. One of her 3-year-olds got lost and died of thirst because he escaped during the night to look for his mother.. » - Issa, Chad

« Rainfall irregularity is a reality and a concrete effect of climate change, as previously arable areas have been flooded, villages destroyed, herds displaced due to very heavy rains that are not usual in certain regions. These effects lead to displacements » - Y. Boire, Mali

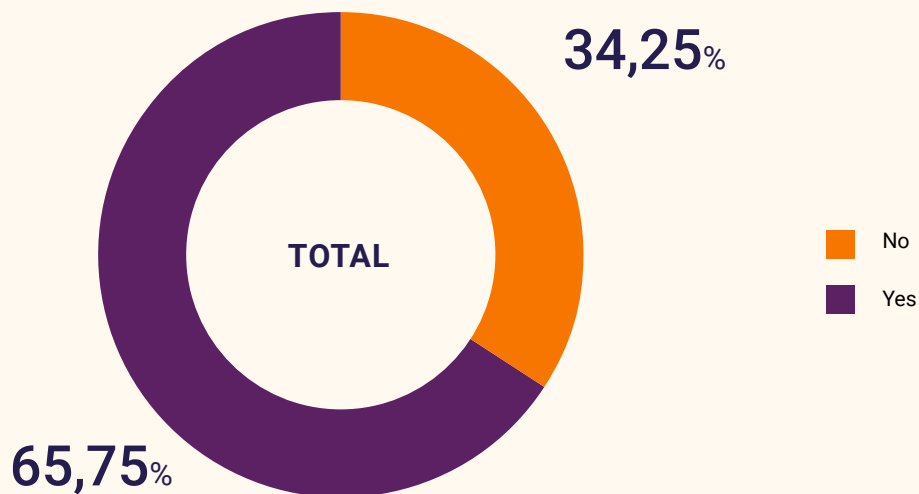
« In the Donga department, human lives were lost when small-scale market gardening was hit by heavy flooding. Growers don't know how to adapt to this they don't know how to fix the damages either. The rain devastated everything, and one grower lost his 2 children and his wife, not to mention the agricultural losses. » - Neolida, Benin





According to the respondents, 1 in 4 people are severely affected directly by the impacts of climate change in their locality, whether in terms of loss of livelihood, health, human life, or serious non-economic consequences such as emergency displacement; 58% report death linked to climate change in their localities ; The municipalities interviewed, representing approximately 45 million inhabitants across 20 countries, estimate 30,000 deaths annually attributable to climate change within their localities. Extrapolating this figure to the total population of West and Central Africa, which comprises 460 million inhabitants, suggests an estimated 310,000 deaths per year due to direct consequences of climate change in the region. These figures do not take into account deaths related to the indirect consequences of climate change, such as deaths linked to conflicts induced or amplified by climate change. How many annual deaths should we expect in the coming years?

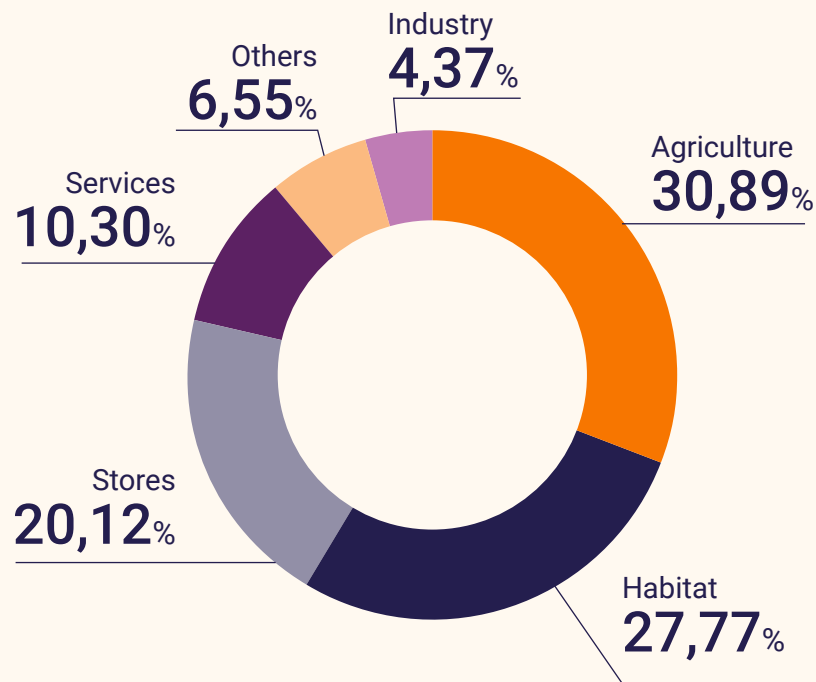
**Figure 2 : Have any people died as a result of climate change impacts in the last 2 years ?**



- 84.93% claim that the heavier rains and/or flooding have caused damage to people's livelihoods, such as the destruction of crops, disruption to the food trade due to damaged roads, or the loss of equipment needed for economic activities.
- 83.5% say that more intense and/or longer rains have an impact on their living environment.
- 69.4% confirm that the more intense heat waves have had a significant impact on human health and life.
- 72.60% report that more intense heat waves and droughts have caused significant material damage, including the destruction of crops and the drying up of lakes and water sources.
- 47.03% report that intense heat waves prevent them from working outdoors, which particularly impacts sectors requiring outdoor activities.



**Figure 3 : Sectors most affected by the impacts of climate change**



The non-fulfillment of the right to food is a very important issue for communities, who recommend support not only for adaptation aspects with sustainable agriculture, but also, more frontally, food support for vulnerable populations already affected by climate change.

**WHAT ARE THE MAIN CONSEQUENCES WE FACE BECAUSE OF UNADDRESSED ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE?**

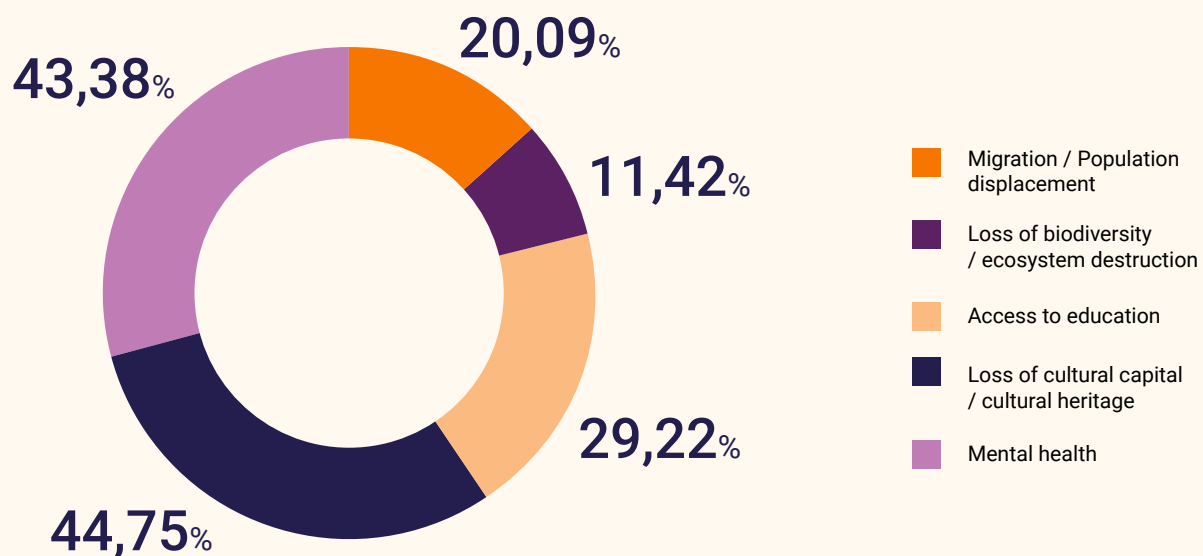
1. Food Security
2. Water Governance
3. Rainfall Early Warning Mecanism

**WHAT ARE THE MAIN CONSEQUENCES WE FACE BECAUSE OF UNADDRESSED RESPONSES TO LOSS AND DAMAGE?**

1. Restoration of Human lives and livelihoods
2. Loss of Housing
3. Agriculture and Livestock - Loss of Herds and Crops
4. Damage to water infrastructures

### 3. Non-Economic Losses and Differentiated Impacts

Figure 4 : Non-economic losses reported by respondents



Concerning non-economic impacts, it would appear that **population displacement and biodiversity loss are the most widespread and significant impacts** across the different countries of West and Central Africa.



*« The Far North region has been hard hit by flooding ( 365,000 displaced, 32 dead, 56000 houses destroyed, 67000 households affected, 5,000 animals). The 32 dead and 10 injured were mainly elderly people. In addition, many health infrastructures have been affected, leading to health complications for pregnant women and the elderly. The start of the new school year is delayed if schools are occupied by people who have been forced to move because of the flooding, and there are displacements from the far north to other parts of the north and even to the south. Infrastructures are damaged and market garden crops are affected. This has had an impact on farmers' and growers' incomes, which have fallen drastically or even disappeared ». - Yinda, Cameroon*

#### FOCUS ON SEXIST AND SEXUAL VIOLENCES

*« Increased promiscuity due to population displacement caused by flooding has led to an increase in violence and aggression against women. ». - Neolida, Benin*



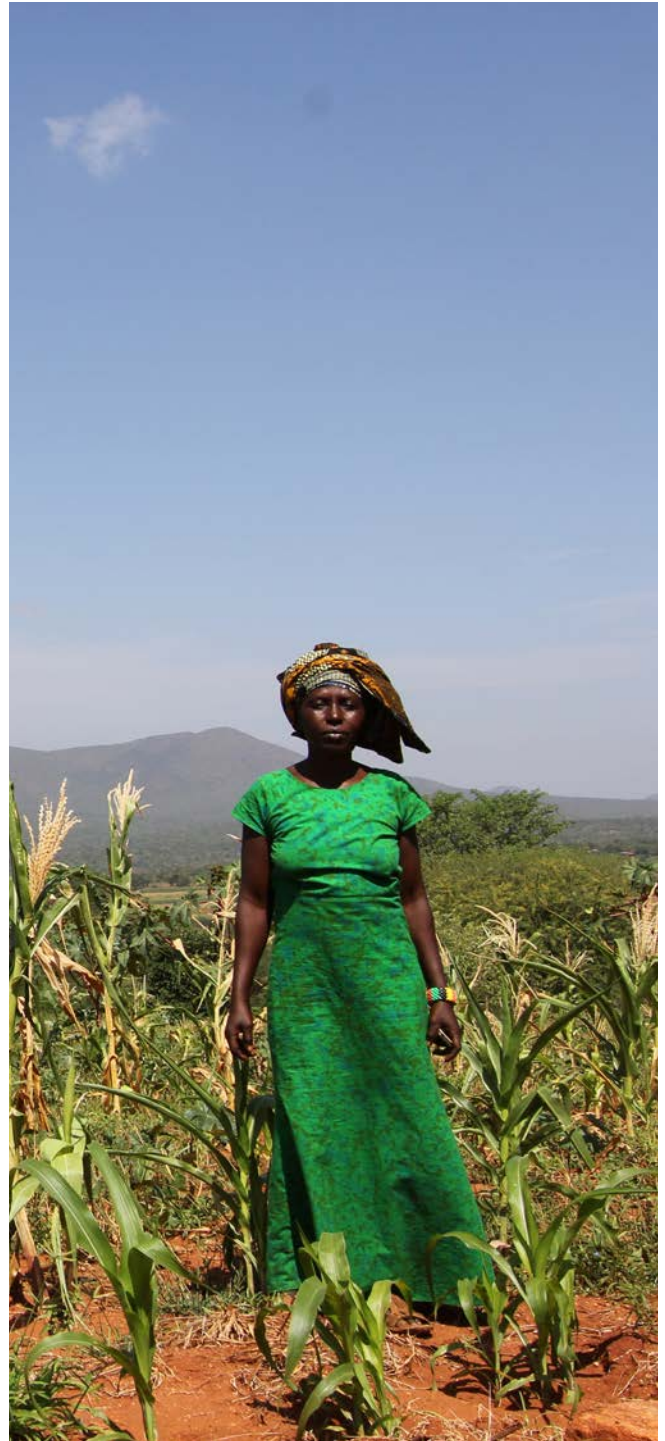
## WHAT ARE OUR PRIORITIES FOR LOSS AND DAMAGE NON-ECONOMIC LOSSES?

### Non-economic loss

1. Population Displacement
2. Access to education

### Differenciated impacts

1. Adaptation: Gender differentiation, with a focus on economic activities and income resources. Focus on access to land
2. Loss an damage: Gender-based violence, particularly in relation to conditions of displacement: in the context of displacement, it must be taken into account that civil security must focus on gender segregation to ensure women's safety.



## 4. Priorities for action: mitigate effects, adapt or repair losses

Adaptation and response to loss and damage go hand in hand. At present, however, emergency actions do not take sufficient account of adaptation in loss and damage response strategies.



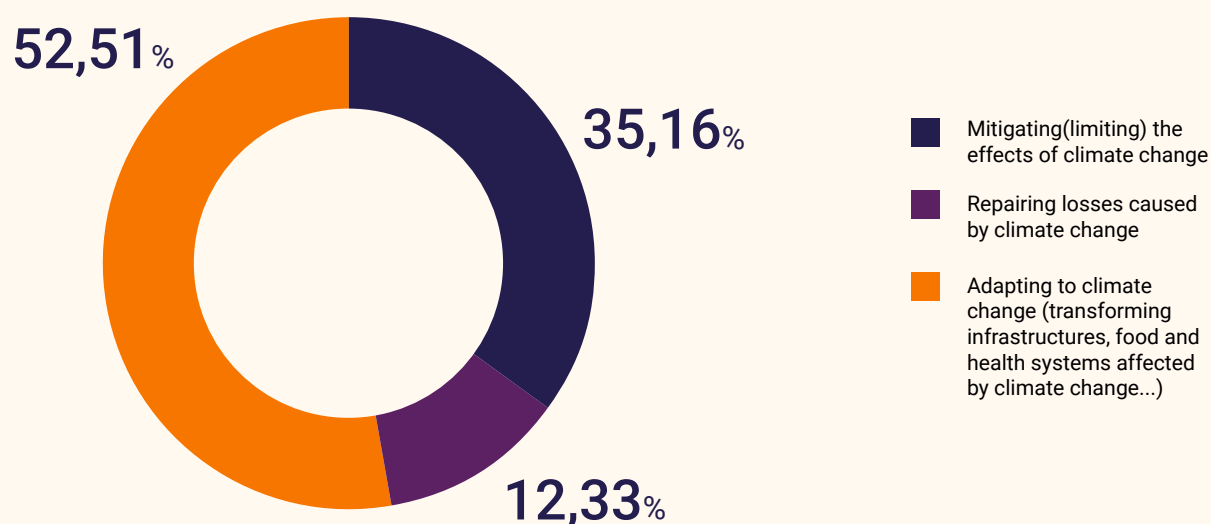
*« In the north of Cameroon, where we operate, there are regions where everything has been destroyed and has to be rebuilt. In such cases, we need to go beyond reconstruction and include adaptation plans. We also need to look beyond the local level. (...) In the case of disasters, the local contribution is very important because local organizations have been present on the ground for a long time. »*

*- Yinda, Cameroon*



The CSOs and municipalities surveyed report a slightly greater need for funding priority for loss and damage than for adaptation in their respective localities. However, in the West African context, adaptation issues remain a priority for 52% of respondents:

**Figure 5 : What do you think is the priority ?**



The CSOs and municipalities we interviewed recommended working with municipalities to build and rebuild resilient, truly efficient infrastructures.

#### WHAT ARE OUR FUNDING PRIORITIES?

*Respondents indicate slightly higher budget estimates for loss and damage than for adaptation. They vary from hundreds of thousands of euros per year for small municipalities to several tens of millions of euros per year for capital cities. However, with limited budgets, priorities can change.*

#### With a reduced budget, CSOs recommend :

Commit 60% of funds to adaptation and 40% to losses and damages

#### Loss and damage, funding priorities :

- 80% financing for repairs to short-term losses and damage
- 20% financing on repairs for long-term losses and damage



## 5. Locating aid, government collaboration and coordination of organizations and stakeholders.

CSOs and municipalities recommend direct, localized funding, with priority given to rural communities, which are the least endowed. This demand for localization is considered all the more important for adaptation than for responses to loss and damage.

In addition, local capacity-building needs to be taken into account when drawing up, implementing and monitoring development plans, in particular with dedicated and sufficient budget envelopes for institutional support at regional and departmental level.

Indeed, the implementation of local climate change adaptation plans is essential to enable municipalities and civil society organizations (CSOs) to effectively manage the impacts of climate change. In most cases, local adaptation strategies are limited to the “environmental” aspects of local development plans. However, these local “environment” or “adaptation” strategies are budgeted for in only 44% of cases. When budgets do exist, they remain minimal. For example, the annual budget for the town of Niamana Sobala in Mali (5000 INHABITANTS), in the Ségou region, which is particularly sensitive to climate change, is €1,500.

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*Humanitarian associations are only there for a given time and cannot cover all areas of the country. Each community needs to have its own plan, without relying solely on partners who are not local and have no knowledge of the realities.*

Y. Boire, Mali

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This support for local **and institutional operations** in the fight against climate change, adaptation and management of the response to loss and damage must be budgeted for separately, in addition to the amounts required by municipalities and CSOs.

Coordination between local and international organizations during the management of natural disasters must also be strengthened :

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*In the case of disasters, the local contribution is very important, as local organizations have been present in the field for a long time.*

Yinda, Cameroon

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## WHAT WE THINK ABOUT **LOCATING** AID AND COORDINATION BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS

### Locating Aid

1. Allocate funded directly to local initiatives - especially for adaptation - on a minimum basis of 50% to 70%
2. Focus on rural and remote communities.
3. Training and financing of local institutional support.

### Location priorities by domain

1. Fundamental priority for adaptation
2. For losses and damage whose effects are immediate, the level of coordination required exceeds local capacities. The coordination offered by international organizations in emergency situations is essential, but must take into account the systematic involvement of CSOs and municipalities in its implementation.



<sup>i</sup> <https://www.climatepolicyinitiative.org/publication/global-landscape-of-climate-finance-2023/>

<sup>ii</sup> Cameroun : Extrême-Nord - Aperçu des inondations (Au 19 septembre 2024) | OCHA

<sup>iii</sup> Tchad : Situation des inondations - Rapport de situation n° 02 (06/09/2024) - Chad | ReliefWeb

<sup>iv</sup> Traduit du français.



# RECOMANDATIONS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR COP 29 NEGOTIATIONS

## 1. SYSTEMATICALLY INCLUDING MUNICIPALITIES AND CSOS IN ADAPTATION STRATEGIES

- Require that adaptation and response to loss and damage strategies incorporate formal partnerships with municipalities and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and that sufficient budget is allocated to the institutionalization of this participation.
- Making sure that Adaptation priorities and Loss and Damage priorities are co-defined to ensure on-the-ground knowledge and contextual understanding the necessary strategies.

## 2. BREAKING DOWN CATEGORIES OF LOSS AND DAMAGE AND ADAPTATION

- Establish specific, detailed categories to differentiate loss and damage from adaptation funding, ensuring effective allocation and prioritization.

## 3. ENSURING THAT PRIORITIES ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

- Structure funding allocations to reflect priority needs, distinguishing between immediate and long-term impacts of climate change.
- Ensure adaptation strategies prioritize Food Security, Water Governance, and Early Warning Systems, focus immediate reparative responses on human life, livelihoods, and housing, and address non-economic losses by prioritizing Population Displacement and Access to Education.

## 4. GENDER MAINSTREAMING DIFFERENTIATED FOR ADAPTATION AND LOSS AND DAMAGE

- Establish gender-responsive frameworks for both adaptation and loss and damage components, adapting approaches to the specific needs of women and vulnerable groups in each category.

## 5. LOCATING AID AND COORDINATION BETWEEN STAKEHOLDERS

- Allocate 50% to 70% of funds directly to local initiatives, prioritizing rural and remote communities, and ensure systematic inclusion of municipalities and CSOs in loss and damage coordination to align emergency responses with local needs and capacities.
- In order to facilitate access to this financing and to provide a proper response align with the challenges of climate justice, this financing should be mainly given through grants, with sizes adapted to the needs and capacities of local stakeholder.



We warmly thank all participants, mayors, and members of OCS for their time and valuable insights. We also warmly thank the GRET and the Climate and Development Commission of Coordination Sud for their support and valuable advice in conducting the study.



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