

Hivos
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AMBITION
APPROACH
THEORY
OF CHANGE



**CLIMATE
JUSTICE**

PUTTING JUSTICE, EQUITY AND
HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE CORE
OF GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION

This white paper outlines the ambition, approach and Theory of Change of one of Hivos' three impact areas:
Climate Justice

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01 HIVOS' AMBITION ON CLIMATE JUSTICE

SUMMARY

Climate change is a political, social and ethical issue, rather than a purely environmental one. It is caused by an unsustainable economic model that gradually destabilizes everything we need and want, and distributes wealth and power unequally in the world. At the same time, it exacerbates this inequality by affecting those who are least responsible the most. Peoples and countries with low incomes and long histories of oppression are the ones facing the worst impacts of climate change, despite having contributed the least to causing it.

In this context, Hivos works with key rightsholder groups and social movements from the Global South in putting their priorities and agency at the center of global climate action. By forging multi-stakeholder partnerships and building on our track record, we aim to promote Climate Justice by focusing on political, financial and behavioral interventions that will trigger the tipping points of positive, transformational social change.

Our vision: Justice, equity and human rights are at the core of global climate action, which is grounded in the priorities and agency of those disproportionately impacted by climate change and responds to their needs.

In the next several years, we will contribute to the following outcomes:

- Agreements, policies and regulations that integrate social and economic rights in the climate agenda are adopted and implemented at the local, national and international levels.
- Narratives that promote Climate Justice inspire behavioral change across societies and help the global movement grow.
- Financial flows are redirected towards inclusive, decarbonized, climate-resilient development.

02 THE CONTEXT

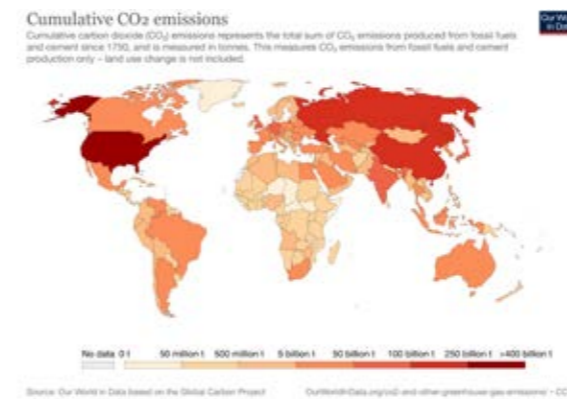
Climate change is caused by an unsustainable economic model that destabilizes everything we rely on and hope for. This model has not only resulted in an unequal distribution of wealth and power in the world. The disruption it has brought about in our climate now further exacerbates that inequality by hitting those least responsible the hardest. Peoples and countries living in poverty and with long histories of oppression are the ones confronting the highest costs of climate change,

despite having contributed the least to it. This is what makes climate change a political, social and ethical issue, rather than just an environmental one.

As shown in the following graphs, while historical responsibility for GHG emissions and the highest ecological footprint¹ are concentrated in the Global North, there is higher vulnerability to climate change and its impacts (for example in agricultural productivity) in the Global South.

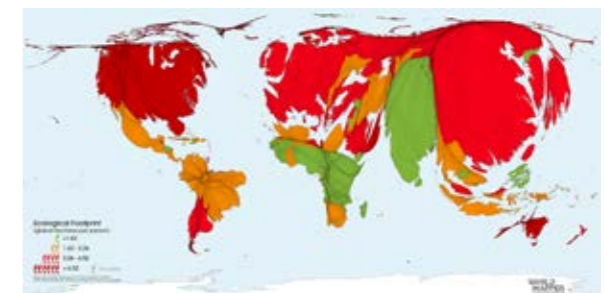
Cumulative CO2 1751-2019 (from fossil fuels and cement)

Source: Our World in Data, 2019



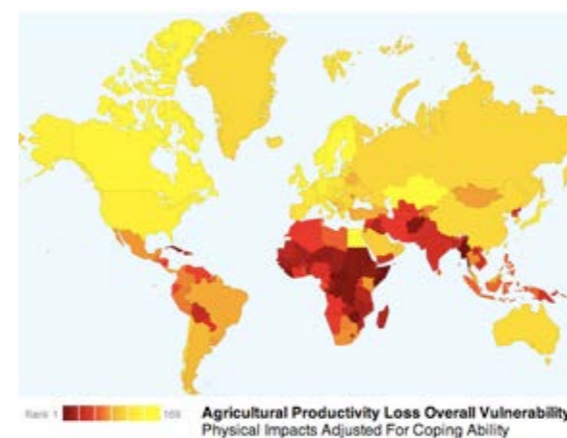
Ecological Footprint 2019

Source: WorldMapper, 2019



Ecological Footprint 2019

Source: Coppoium, Science Po 2014



Vulnerability to Climate Change 2019

Source: Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative, 202



1. The ecological footprint is the impact of human activities measured in terms of the area of biologically productive land and water required to produce the goods consumed and to assimilate the wastes generated. It is the amount of the nature needed to produce the goods and services necessary to support a particular lifestyle (WWF online).

For Hivos, therefore, addressing climate change must have social justice at its heart. In other words, Climate Justice. Climate Justice targets the very nature of the social, economic, and political systems that cause injustice and environmental degradation. In combination with other societal challenges, climate change is creating the “perfect storm” at an accelerating pace and scale with which we, as humanity, have no experience. It is a “super wicked problem” for which the window of opportunity to avoid a planetary disaster is closing rapidly. We need to address it as what it is: a climate crisis.

CLIMATE CHANGE AS A WICKED PROBLEM

There are several elements that make climate change not only a wicked, but a super wicked problem. Researchers like Levin et al. (2012) point out some of its key features:

Climate change as a wicked problem

- It is unique - we don't have experience with anything similar.
- It is a symptom of other problems and other problems are symptoms of it.
- There is no single way to stop it.
- It changes over time.
- There is uncertainty about impacts and solutions - no right or wrong response.
- It is linked to development and our failed economic system.
- It involves changing behavior.
- There are cross-governance boundaries.
- It is large and abstract and exceeds human comprehension, but it is nevertheless as real as a hammer.
- We cannot point to it as a whole (“Show me this thing called global warming, where is it exactly?”), but we experience its manifestations, e.g. tornadoes, droughts, wild fires.
- It challenges our assumptions of human mastery over the world and at the same time demands immediate human action.

Climate change as a “super wicked” problem

- TIME is running out.
- Those who cause the problem also seek a solution.
- There is a weak central authority.
- Irrational discounting pushes responses into the future.

Modified from: Rittel and Webber 1973, in Auld, Bernstein, Levin and Cashore, 2007; and, Levin et al, 2012

Climate change, ecosystem degradation, social inequality, and now Covid-19, are threatening the significant progress we have made on human wellbeing and the protection and full exercise of human rights. But we need a better understanding of how climate change multiplies the sufferings of people burdened by the global injustices of hunger, dispossession, and human rights violations. Unfortunately, key voices of the Global South are generally absent from international (and national) debates on climate change and the discourse surrounding Climate Justice. The resulting knowledge gap in turn fuels duty bearers' ignorance about the issue and the Climate Justice debate.

Ironically, several of the most affected social groups, such as youth, Indigenous peoples, and women, have led climate action and ecosystem conservation in many parts of the world. Their actions embody social and solidarity-based economies of necessity and help resist the environmental devastation impacting their communities. Thus, it is critical to build a shared understanding of diverse, local struggles to collectively advance Climate Justice and human rights. Global action must be guided by the experience, priorities and direct involvement of affected communities and the leadership of social movements.

AN OUTLINE OF CLIMATE JUSTICE

Achieving Climate Justice calls for connected and collaborative action, intersecting all aspects of development, like never done before. This means ensuring that vulnerable

populations and priority groups that have suffered the most from natural resource extraction and ecosystem degradation are not excluded from climate decision and policy making or from the benefits of sustainable economic development, as has often been the case.

WHAT IS CLIMATE JUSTICE?

“Climate Justice is a term used for framing global warming as an ethical and political issue, rather than one that is purely environmental or physical in nature. This is done by relating the effects of climate change to concepts of justice, particularly environmental justice and social justice and by examining issues such as equality, human rights; collective rights, and the historical responsibilities for climate”. (Source: Wikipedia in UNEP LEAP- Law and Environment Assistance Platform)

Science confirms what communities and movements have been saying for decades: the current development and economic model must change, as it is destroying the planet and impacting the most vulnerable groups. In this context, Climate Justice is in a privileged **position to offer what today's climate action lacks: an approach that puts nature and people squarely at the center.**

Important aspects of a Climate Justice approach:

- Demand responsibility and accountability of those responsible for the climate crisis, while fully respecting individual and collective human rights. This includes an equitable distribution of the burden that disproportionately impacts certain groups, including women and girls, Indigenous peoples, and people living in poverty on marginal lands and in coastal areas.
- Focus on gender, children's rights and youth. The impacts of climate change are not the same for everyone. They are often worse for women, particularly those working in vulnerable sectors such as agriculture, or lacking access to resources, information or participation. Gender must therefore be at the heart of effective climate responses at all levels.

- Stress the importance of care, respect and prioritization of other forms of life.

Finally, the capacity to act on mitigation and adaptation, and to address loss and damage, varies significantly across nations and communities. From an international relations perspective, Climate Justice implies that industrialized countries – whose path to industrialization, old or new, is responsible for climate change – are to be held accountable. *They* must now mitigate its negative impact on vulnerable people and support a just transition in developing countries through financing and technology transfer, among other measures. Applicable human rights principles include accountability, international cooperation, participation, and a maximum availability of resources.

From a justice perspective, climate action requires approaching the complexity of the climate crisis with a deep understanding of how the intersecting crises (sanitary, climate and humanitarian) combine, and knowing the types of initiatives and solutions that we need to implement. Alternatives exist and are viable; what we are lacking is the political will and global social awareness to make it happen. The Covid-19 global shutdown and subsequent rapid generation of vaccines proved that swift and drastic changes can be made if there is political will and generalized social awareness. Now, as the world starts to forget the grave systemic injustices exposed and intensified by the pandemic and unequal access to vaccines, is the time to seize this opportunity to promote systemic change.

03 OUR CLIMATE JUSTICE THEORY OF CHANGE

Our ultimate goal is to help put justice, equity and human rights at the core of a global climate action grounded in the priorities and agency of those disproportionately impacted by climate change and which responds to their needs.

What does this require?

We strongly believe that recognizing the complexity of climate change must be at the core of any solutions we propose. Addressing a *super wicked* problem like the climate crisis therefore calls for complex, adaptive systems thinking and approaches. In light of the all-encompassing consequences of climate change, and the urgency of climate action, we need to think and collaborate strategically to contribute to positive social *tipping points*: outcomes that may trigger larger, transformational changes in society, which, according to the latest science, may still be enough to counter catastrophic climate change (Otto et al. 2020; Behrens P. 2021).

Some of these positive social tipping points are:

Behavioral tipping points. A sufficiently large minority can change societal norms and shift the majority toward, in this case, new ways of living and relating to the environment. A study by Centola et al. (2018) projected that if 20-30% of people, for example, switch to eating a plant-based diet or using electric cars, they might move the majority of people to do the same.

Financial tipping points. By divesting from fossil fuels and redirecting financial flows towards climate action, the financial sector is becoming a key player in the global climate agenda. Private financial actors and pension funds are increasingly considering the risk that climate change and climate action represent in their investment decisions (Haas and Unmüßig 2020). Simultaneously, as the Paris Agreement calls for, public and multilateral banks are working in redirecting financial flows from fossil fuels towards low-emission, climate-resilient development. As more public and private actors in the financial sector divest from fossil fuel-heavy assets and reinvest in climate action, the world may witness a structural reshaping of the global financial system.

Legal tipping points. The lawsuit that Friends of the Earth Netherlands (Milieudefensie), together with 17,000 co-plaintiffs and six other organizations, won against Shell in early 2021 exemplifies how climate activism can contribute to legal tipping points. When the High Court in The Hague ruled that Shell must reduce its CO2 emissions by 45% within 10 years, it not only had an impact on Shell itself, but set a legal precedent for future litigation against major polluters globally. The verdict also sent an important signal to the fossil fuel industry, which will have to start contributing to climate solutions instead of prolonging the climate crisis. Since 1990, more than 1300 climate change-related lawsuits have been filed globally, setting important precedents and enabling judicial power to lead climate action.

There are other financial, technological and political tipping points that can catalyze transformational change, but the above are prime examples.

What do we propose?

Our Climate Justice impact area is a faithful representation of Hivos' deepest held convictions. We put at the center of our work key rightsholder groups who are both disproportionately impacted by climate change and thoroughly involved in climate action to protect their climate change-stricken communities. Typically, these groups are rarely heard from in climate decision-making. The Climate Justice agenda therefore builds on their voices and actions.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY

"KEY RIGHTSHOLDER GROUPS"?

Key rightsholder groups are, depending on the context, simultaneously disproportionately impacted by climate change and at the frontlines of action in their climate-stricken communities. They can include: women and girls, youth, Indigenous peoples, migrants, and the urban poor, especially in the Global South.

As a relatively small player working on the greatest challenge of our time, Hivos must act and think strategically and join forces with others in strategic partnerships. Our premise is that there are leverage points that offer an opportunity to identify and contribute to unlocking the transformative tipping points related to climate action. The key to using leverage points lies in pushing for outcomes that constitute positive social tipping points, i.e. outcomes that can trigger a larger, positive, and hopefully irreversible, response.

KEY TERMS:

Leverage points: Places to intervene within a complex system; an entry point where a small shift in one area can produce major changes in the system.

Tipping points: The moment when these changes reach a critical point in a system, after which a significant or transformative - and often unstoppable and irreversible - effect or change takes place.

Positive social tipping points: "emergent properties of systems – including both human capacities and structural conditions – which would allow the fast deployment of evolutionary-like transformative solutions to successfully tackle climate change" (Otto et al. 2020).

Pathway of change: A graphic that illustrates the change process as we foresee it and around which the other elements of the theory are developed.

Based on this premise, and combining the latest insights on positive social tipping points with Hivos' own values and expertise, we have chosen to focus our efforts on three areas that have interrelated and interacting pathways of change.

1. Reshaping climate narratives at local, national and international levels. Created by the voices and movements of key rightsholders, these narratives connect to peoples' emotions and inspire behavioral change (behavioral tipping point). This focus area harnesses the

power of diverse citizen and civil society stakeholders to change dominant or mainstream narratives that legitimize the status quo and existing power dynamics. By working on strategic communications targeting popular culture, and amplifying diverse rightsholders' voices, we aim to "move the middle," mobilize people across the world, and strengthen the global climate movement.

Our track record: we will build on approaches and experiences of *R.O.O.M.*, *African Crossroads*, *Voices for Climate Action*, *All Eyes on the Amazon*, and also connect to *Digital Defenders Partnership*, as their narratives often challenge the status quo.

2. Ensuring a just distribution of resources and strengthening local solutions by promoting equitable access to climate finance, technology and markets (financial tipping point). Climate finance and decarbonization plans and policies must swiftly, adequately and fairly support the people and communities most affected by climate change and enable effective climate action at local levels. This means we have to target both the transparency and accountability of current climate finance flows, as well as influence the global climate finance architecture so that priority rightsholders and countries can access it. Simultaneously, we will promote investment in local climate solutions driven by priority rightsholder groups in the Global South, and stimulate job creation within countries' and regions' transitions to climate-compatible development pathways.

Our track record: we will build on approaches and experiences of *Green Works*, *Voices for Climate Action*, *ENERGIA*, *All Eyes on the Amazon*, *Green and Inclusive Energy*, *RUAF*, and *Open up Contracting*.

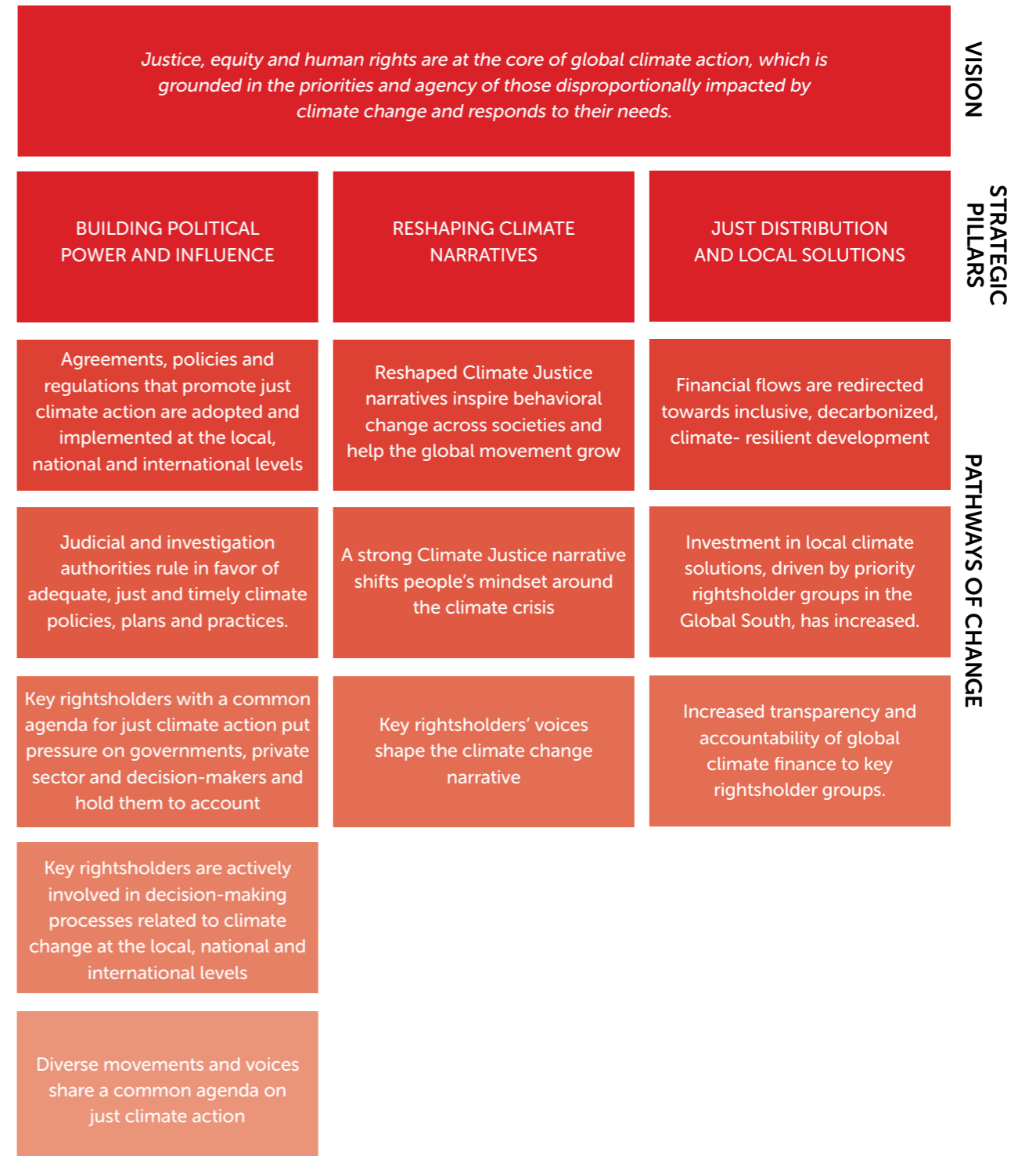
3. Building political power and influence (political tipping point), by bringing diverse rightsholders and movements together so they can pressure governments and the private sector, engage in decision-making processes, and hold duty bearers to account. This includes work in movement building and advocacy, and supporting those most affected by climate change in their efforts to access and utilize the legal system,

promote changes in policies, plans and practices, and establish transformational legal precedents. This focus area underpins the first two and builds on and synergizes with Climate Justice advocacy work in our other impact areas (Civic Rights in a Digital Age and Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) using Hivos' key digitalization strategy.

Focusing on these positive social tipping points as outcomes allows Hivos to draw on systems thinking to identify and target the right leverage points, and try to unlock transformative change without taking on the challenge of climate change in its entirety.

The following graphs show the Climate Justice Theory of Change and its underlying assumptions. The exact interrelations and interactions between the three focus areas will be different in each context and for each program or project. To avoid an information overload, we will not describe these interrelations and interactions here. Details about feedback and feedforward loops will be presented together with more concrete program and project Theories of Change.

CLIMATE JUSTICE – THEORY OF CHANGE



ASSUMPTIONS

BUILDING POLITICAL POWER AND INFLUENCE	RESHAPING CLIMATE NARRATIVES	JUST DISTRIBUTION AND LOCAL SOLUTIONS
If movements with different but interrelated causes work together, then they have stronger political influence	Climate Justice narratives can become the dominant narrative in the climate change discourse	Just distribution is a priority in the midst of the climate emergency and its interaction with other planetary crises
The Climate Justice agenda has enough common points of interest to drive cooperation among diverse movements and voices	Climate Justice narratives that combine scientific facts with affective messaging can shift the debate in the midst of the disinformation era	Knowledge and information around climate finance empowers key rightsholders to demand change and increased investment in local solutions (links to focus area 1)
There is a relationship between fair policies and fair implementation	Speaking and connecting to peoples' emotions generates agency and energy for behavioral change	
Landmark climate litigation cases can trigger a larger, often irreversible, response.		

04 OUR TRACK RECORD

Hivos has a strong track record of promoting climate action with initiatives that put the priorities and participation of those most affected by climate change, inequality and environmental degradation at the center. Building

on our work in Hivos' former strategic areas, Green and Open, we are rolling out the Climate Justice agenda in the following countries through seven key programs.

WHERE WE WORK



For the latest news, opinion articles and stories of change from around the world about our Climate Justice work, please visit [our website](#). There, you will also find [an overview](#) of current and finalized programs that collectively make up our track record.

CURRENT PROGRAMS

Voices for Just Climate Action (VCA)

Strategic focus: reshaping climate narratives; building political power and influence; just distribution and local solutions

Scope: Kenya, Zambia, Tunisia, Indonesia and Brazil

Key partners: WWF, SouthSouthNorth, Akina Mama wa Afrika, Slum Dwellers International, Fundación Avina

Program snapshot: VCA amplifies local voices on key platforms and shapes strategic narratives and the public debate to create momentum and societal support for climate action. It also advocates to make national, regional and international climate policy, practice and finance more responsive to locally-shaped climate solutions.

All Eyes on the Amazon (AEA)

Strategic focus: building political power and influence; just distribution and local solutions

Scope: Brazil, Ecuador and Peru

Key partners: Greenpeace, COICA, COIAB, Alianza Ceibo, ECA-Amarakaeri, Global Forest Watch, ISS, Digital Democracy, Article 19, AIDA, among 26 partners.

Program snapshot: AEA uses innovative technologies to collect evidence, and monitor and evaluate deforestation, ecosystem degradation and rights violations. Using this evidence, we stimulate land defense and forest protection through communication, campaigning, legal and policy strategies. The program fights for structural changes to guarantee the rights of Indigenous Peoples, defends environmental defenders, promotes transparency and accountability, and strengthens access to justice. This is supported by collective learning, exchange, and capacity building, and partnerships to expand relevant networks and collaborative initiatives.

ENERGIA

Strategic focus: building political power and influence; just distribution and local solutions

Scope: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa and Tanzania

Key partners: 30+ partners worldwide, including NGOs, research institutes, social enterprises, networks and government organizations.

Program snapshot: Hosted by Hivos since 2016, ENERGIA aims to contribute to universal, equal and equitable access to and control over sustainable energy for all, putting women at the center of its efforts. To do this, ENERGIA

implements multi-year programs that:

i) contribute to energy access for all by scaling up the delivery of energy services through women-led micro and small businesses; ii) advocate for and provide technical support to mainstreaming gender approaches in energy policies and programs; iii) provide the evidence base for improving energy investment effectiveness through research; iv) raise awareness and enhance knowledge of issues related to gender and energy through networking and knowledge products.

GreenWorks

Strategic focus: just distribution and local solutions; building political power and influence

Scope: Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria

Key partners: GreenWorks Alliance members include: Nahdet El Mahrousa, ElSpace, ElRehla, The Tunsian Center for Social Entrepreneurship, AUC VLab, Clean Tech Arabia, Flat6Labs Tunisia, Wasabi, Fondation Tunisie Pour Development, Sylabs, Impact Partner, ElSpace Innovation Hub, Med Angels Investment Network, Education for Employment Tunisia, and Alexandria Angels.

Program snapshot: The GreenWorks program, implemented by an alliance led by Hivos, contributes to climate change mitigation by creating sustainable business and job opportunities for more than 9000 young women and men in the green economy in North Africa. To this end, the program focuses on: i) supporting the creation of "innovation clusters" that enable businesses in the green and digital economies to scale; ii) enhancing the capacities of Business Development Support Organizations and Employability Hubs to create jobs and develop private sector activities beyond program support; iii) training youth in 21st-century skills to afford them economic opportunities in future-oriented green sectors; iv) enabling social enterprises operating in the green economies to scale their businesses and create new jobs.

Amazon Indigenous Health Route

Strategic focus: building political power and influence; just distribution and local solutions.

Scope: Brazil, Ecuador and Peru

Key partners: CONFENIAE (Ecuador), FENAMAD (Peru), Centre for Indigenist Work, CTI (Brazil), National and local Health Systems

Program snapshot: An innovative healthcare model to improve access to health and support the response to the Covid-19 crisis among Indigenous Peoples and local communities, based on intercultural knowledge dialogues and multi-stakeholder processes.

RUAF - Global Partnership on Urban Agriculture and Food Systems

Strategic focus: building political power and influence; just distribution and local solutions.

Scope: Global

Key partners: The RUAF partnership brings together cities, research institutes and civil society organizations that offer a combination of technical and policy expertise with scientific research and practical knowledge. The partners are: Hivos, International Water Management Institute, Institute of Geographical Sciences and Natural Resources Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Laurier Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, City of Toronto, City of Ghent, City of Quito, Economia e Sostenibilita, and Mazingira Institute.

Program snapshot: The RUAF partnership works to transform urban agriculture and food systems in cities around the world by reducing urban poverty, enhancing urban food security, and improving urban environmental management. It brings together cities, research institutes and civil society organizations that offer a combination of technical and policy expertise with scientific research and practical knowledge.

Food Change Labs

Strategic focus: building political power and influence; just distribution and local solutions.

Scope: Zimbabwe, Zambia, Uganda

Key partners: Kabarole Research & Resource Centre (KRC), Municipal Development Partnership (MDP)

Program snapshot: We have established multi-actor platforms in five African cities/towns. They give various actors, especially citizens, a platform where they can drive positive changes and advocate for policies and practices that support climate-friendly production and consumption of diverse healthy foods in their surroundings. A change lab is a social change process which gives participants a chance to share experiences, learn from each other and from research (and be part of that research), co-create a vision, and get funding for their local solutions.

OTHER RELEVANT PROGRAMS

In addition to existing programs, our work on Climate Justice builds on the experiences, networks and approaches generated in past programs such as: Green and Inclusive Energy, Sustainable Agriculture, Food and Environment (SAFE) Platform, Green Entrepreneurship, and Sustainable Diets for All.

Additionally, we expect to bring our know-how from the other impact areas Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) and Civic Rights in a Digital Age to the Climate Justice agenda. Some of the most relevant initiatives are: African Crossroads, R.O.O.M, Digital Defenders Partnership, and Voice.

Our Climate Justice work is generously supported by



ANNEX 1

SELECTED DATA THAT RAISE OUR DEEP CONCERN

- According to data released in 2019, there were 10,733 deaths and over 60 million people affected and/or displaced by climate-related disasters globally in 2018. Eighty percent of those 60 million were women (Climate change is a feminist issue, what works to prevent violence, 20 September 2019).
- Developing countries - impacted by legacies of colonialism and imperialism - will bear an estimated 75-80 percent of the costs of climate change. (Phillip Alston, UN Human Rights Council, Climate Change and Poverty, A/HRC/41/39, 17 July 2019, paragraph 11)
- Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year, from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea and heat stress. (WHO 2018).
- The climate crisis will have devastating consequences for people living in poverty. Even under the best-case scenario, hundreds of millions will face food insecurity, forced migration, disease and death (Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights Report 2019).
- In 2017, the number of undernourished people is estimated to have reached 821 million – around one person out of every nine in the world. Climate change is determined to be among the leading causes of rising global hunger (FAO 2018).
- Climate change will affect the availability, quality and quantity of water for basic human needs, threatening the effective enjoyment of the human rights to water and sanitation for potentially billions of people (World Water Development Report 2020).
- In 2019, nearly 2,000 disasters triggered 24.9 million new internal displacements across 140 countries and territories. Most of the disaster displacements were the result of tropical storms and monsoon rains in South Asia and East Asia and Pacific (Migration Data Portal 2020).
- According to the IMF, in 2017, the world subsidized fossil fuels by \$5.2 trillion, equal to roughly 6.5 percent of global GDP (The Atlantic 2019).
- While scientists warn that nine climate tipping points are now active which could threaten the existence of human civilizations, governments' current plans for the coming decade involve the production of 120% more fossil fuels. (Harro van Asselt et al., SEI, IISD, ODI, Climate Analytics, CICERO, and UNEP, The Production Gap: The discrepancy between countries' planned fossil fuel production and global production levels consistent with limiting warming to 1.5°C or 2°C, 2019).

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