

Call to Action for COP 27, Sham El Sheik, Egypt

This call to action has been co-developed with GNDR members from across the globe. We are the largest international network of civil society organisations working together to strengthen the resilience of communities most at risk of disasters.

COP27 is an important milestone in the Paris Agreement negotiations. This COP is based in Egypt, a key stakeholder in the climate change negotiations, making it even more essential that we champion local voice, expertise and recommendations from our members from across the globe, working on the front line of climate risk. Further to this, the next 12 months marks the mid-term point of the wider 2030 Agenda Frameworks and this COP27 is an important milestone in reflecting on the progress being made on the Paris Agreement by the international community.

Background and perspectives from those on the front line

GNDR recognises climate change to be a man-made crisis, largely created by actions made in the global north. GNDR members describe climate change as a super risk driver. Those living on the front line of risk have been documenting, evidencing and highlighting the catastrophic impact climate change is having across the globe and disproportionately in the global south. Our flagship project, *Views from the Frontline* outlined that GNDR members are reporting a continued increase in climate extreme events such as floods, droughts, storms, changing weather patterns, heatwaves, wildfires, desertification, soil and forest degradation.

Secondary impacts of climate extremes such as food insecurity, poverty, and increasing tension and conflict over natural resources are clearly demonstrating the cascading and interconnected nature of climate risk. Climate change, combined with the ongoing impact of Covid-19, rising energy and food prices and the conflict in Ukraine and in some African countries, are pushing those on the front line of risk into significantly higher states of vulnerability.

Practically, this means that climate solutions should take into consideration the vulnerabilities that climate change has triggered and their impacts on frontline communities. This is possible when DRR and climate change actors and local communities come and plan integrated solutions together.

GNDR has a specific role in the COP27 negotiations. Here, we aim to bring risk-informed expertise from our members across the globe to the climate change context. With this, we support our colleagues in CAN International to champion civil society's demands on climate change. Here, we see our strategic contribution to the discussions to be to link climate change negotiations to risk reduction policies and plans at all levels, and be propositional in outlining how the climate negotiations can and must be risk-informed.

GNDR champions localisation, promotes risk-informed development and ensures the civil societies work together in ensuring global decision making is society driven . For COP27, our main areas of policy influence are targeted towards the discussions on loss and damage, financing, and adaptation. We also aim to champion the importance of women and youth inclusion in decision making.

Recommendations

Call to Action

At the start of 2022, GNDR asked members in the global south what they feel must be prioritised if we are to reach the 2030 agenda targets. The key recurring recommendations from our members then formed this GNDR call to action. This policy paper aims to contextualise our call to action points specifically to the climate change context. Here, we aim to contribute to the climate change negotiations by bringing a gender transformative and risk-informed lens to decision making on adaptation and loss and damage. Therefore, we call on member states to champion the following 10 calls to action messages in their COP27 negotiations. We also call on all stakeholders to actively champion evidence and include these messages in all climate change influencing, policy negotiations and action.

GNDR has developed a COP27 Call to Action with members in the global south and technical input from the GNDR climate group.

Here, our members have identified 10 key messages for member states and other stakeholders. These include:

1. Listen and effectively engage with communities at the front line of climate risk

It is essential that those living on the front line of risk, at the local level, are meaningfully included in decision making on climate change adaptation and loss and damage at all levels. Here, local expertise, evidence and knowledge is essential for risk-informed policy and action. The national delegation should therefore integrate the actions of local actors and their views/voices by facilitating their participation in climate debates. This will also serve as an entry point for the integration of local and indigenous knowledge systems into the global climate debate.

2. Invest at the local level

Finance for adaptation and loss and damage should be channelled through existing national structures and policies such as national disaster risk management policies, national adaptation plans and the nationally determined contribution (NDC). However, both public and private finance around this legislation must be directed to the local level. Decision making around how this finance is spent must be driven from the local level and be guided by local knowledge and expertise from those on the front line of climate risk. These funds should clearly integrate both humanitarian needs and disaster risks management.

3. Empower civil society to strengthen effective climate actions on the ground

Civil society organisations have an important role to play in effectively coordinating actions on adaptation, and loss and damage. Civil society must be meaningfully included in negotiations, decision making and implementation at all levels, and work together to coordinate effective risk-informed policy and action. CSOs should benefit from financial support to empower local communities in the process of shifting power and capacity building. Moreover, the UNFCCC and the host countries should work together to put in place favourable and tangible conditions for the participation of CSOs, especially those from developing countries.

4. Create space for women leaders to meaningfully participate in decision making on climate change at all levels

GNDR recognises that women often face the brunt of cascading climate change impacts. However, women also have local knowledge and the capacities required to adapt effectively to climate change risk. Women must be meaningfully involved in decision making on climate change actions and advocate for climate justice at all levels.

5. Strengthen climate risk reduction and adaptation in conflict affected states

GNDR members report that increasing stress on natural resources is exacerbating tension and conflict in fragile states. Risk reduction governance is often overlooked and deprioritised in fragile and conflict affected states. Therefore, the global community must work together to strengthen climate risk-informed governance in fragile states as a critical element of peace building and stability.

6. Meaningfully involve youth in loss and damage and adaptation decision making

Young people have the knowledge, skills and innovation required to meaningfully tackle the climate crisis, strengthen adaptation efforts, and translate the loss and damage negotiations into practical action. They are the most exposed and their future is highly threatened by climate hazardous events. It is essential that member states work with young people and bring youth into decision making at all levels.

7. Learn from Covid-19 and the weakness in risk governance the pandemic demonstrated; apply this learning to strengthen climate risk reduction and governance

The Covid-19 pandemic outlined the weaknesses in risk governance across the globe. Invest in learning from these failures and apply lessons learned to the climate crisis to ensure sustainable and meaningful progress on adaptation and loss and damage action. This learning should mainstream and blend indigenous knowledge and contemporary science into all climate actions. More than Covid-19, impacts climate change can also be detrimental and challenge any system in place. This can be avoided.

8. Promote inclusion across all levels of climate change decision making

Meaningful integration across all decision making levels on climate change including those less visible, less heard and most vulnerable is essential to ensure no one is left behind in tackling the climate crisis. Climate solutions should be considered by all societies and should be informed by any social capital. Therefore, it is important to extend the climate debate to all the communities including women, youth, persons with disabilities, etc.

9. Countries should effectively integrate land use planning in disaster risk reduction, climate adaption, and loss and damage

Dealing with climate change not only involves managing greenhouse gas emissions, but also minimising risks from natural hazards through mitigation and adaptation, well structured and well elaborated land use planning. Land use planning plays a key part in reducing current and

future community risks associated with climate change, notably by enhancing prevention and preparedness and/or facilitating response and recovery in a community. Responsible management of the environment and its resources, and flexible and responsive development will reduce climate risks.

10. Establish and implement community centred nature-based solution (NBS), nature-based infrastructure and ecosystem-based adaptation

NBS are actions to protect, sustainably manage, or restore natural ecosystems that address societal challenges - such as climate change, human health, food and water security, and disaster risk reduction - effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

Nature-based solutions such as green roofs, rain gardens, or constructed wetlands can minimise damaging runoff by absorbing stormwater, reducing flood risks and safeguarding freshwater ecosystems. NBS/NBI can contribute to disaster risk reduction, build resilient cities, improve water management and contribute to long-term food security.

For more information on this call to action or the work of GNDR, please visit our website at www.gndr.org or email our Climate Lead, Kossivi Adessou at: adessou.kossivi@gndr.org or our Policy Lead, Becky Murphy at: rebecca.murphy@gndr.org