

Responding to climate change and its impact: community-informed approaches to loss and damage, protection, and compensation

Moderated by **Rafic Khouri** (Co-Lead of the International Professional Cluster), the session tackled the key issues that communities faced on climate change, and the challenges and capacities needed by women to access compensation to loss and damage and other climate change funds.

Mino Ramaroson (HC) shared the exercise undertaken by HC members on getting a common position on the ongoing discussions and global policy debates on loss and damage, which was alluded in the Paris Agreement on climate change, with the recognition by countries the importance of “averting, minimizing and addressing” loss and damage. The study, in partnership with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), was done to support grassroots organizations to convene local discussions to understand the long-term impacts of climate change. In particular, the study reflected on how communities experience losses and damages in the face of prolonged and multiple climate and disaster crises which will help in gaining a sharper analysis of risks for enhanced community preparedness, planning, resilient recovery and building back better. The top five hazards identified were: (1) unpredictable weather, (2) unseasonal rain and frequent flooding/flash floods, (3) longer dry seasons/droughts, (4) heatwaves, and (5) forest/pasture fires. Their adverse impact concerned health, injuries, and damage to livelihoods and assets.

Among the key findings indicate that grassroots women’s experience of climate impacts or the need to compensate them is not adequately reflected in global policy debates. There is no framework or accurate estimates that assess or quantify the amount of losses borne by local communities, who are least responsible for contributing to loss and damage caused by global warming. It is also unclear at present how the Loss and Damage funds will be designed and delivered to affected countries and local communities.

Clarissa Augustinus reminded the EGM of the international conferences which meet to discuss different aspects of climate change, namely UNCBD (about biodiversity), UNFCCC (about carbon released in the atmosphere), and UNCCD (about land degradation). Although these items have a strong land dimension, these are seldom recognized, while global policies are thoroughly discussed. GLTN members should

lobby their governments to reflect on members' priorities linked to challenges under consideration in these international conferences. As such, capacities that women grassroots leaders need to develop to claim from the loss and damage fund include: (1) finding out if their country is eligible for funding; (2) working with governments; (3) learning the new climate language; (4) reaching out to new partners; and, (5) working with global-local power imbalances.

Hellen Nyamweru Ndungu (GLTN/UN-Habitat) provided the participants an overview of the variety of tools developed and promoted by GLTN with specific focus on how these innovative land tools and approaches can be applied in the context of loss, damage, and climate reparations. These tools cover the following themes: (1) access to land and tenure security, (2) land management and planning, (3) land administration and information, (4) land-based financing, (5) land policy and legislation, and (6) cross-cutting issues. She illustrated this variety with GLTN's successful experience in Nepal, in particular on how land tools were implemented in Dolakha, one of the districts worst affected when a massive earthquake hit the country in April 2015, including the aftershocks which led to the total destruction of risk-prone settlements due to landslides, ruptures, and destabilization of the earth.

Using this as a case study, the presentation emphasized on the importance of tenure security and discussed how unrecognized land tenure increases vulnerability of communities in the face of disasters. In the case of Dholaka, communities whose land records were destroyed following the earthquake had a difficult time proving ownership of the lands they occupied pre-disaster. They (squatters, undocumented citizens, or owners without a formal land title) also risked missing out of government grants and other form of assistance such as relocation.

In collaboration with the Government of Nepal through the Ministry of Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation (MoLMCPA), and the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA), UN-Habitat and other local and international partners, GLTN tools (STDM, Participatory Enumeration) were implemented to facilitate the identification, verification, and recording (IVR) of land tenure status of local communities in Dholaka. As the project progressed, the Participatory and Inclusive Land Readjustment (PILaR) and the Fit-for-Purpose Land Administration (FFP-LA) tools were also applied within the continuum of land rights approach. Following this exercise, an integrated settlement plan was approved by NRA to facilitate relocation of 85 households from the vulnerable village of Boshimpa to a new safe site in Panipokhari. In conclusion, the presentation underlined the importance of addressing tenure security issues in disaster prone areas to prevent, mitigate, prepare, and respond to natural disasters. Additionally, disaster

management policies must be redirected towards tenure security, poverty, and vulnerability reduction instead of compensation, resettlement, and relief response.

The **plenary discussion** raised the challenge for defining the policy agenda on climate change and capacitating GLTN Partners in advocating such agenda. This can facilitate in organizing the Network members to prepare for climate change discourses. On the other hand, early warning land tools to prepare communities and increase resilience to loss and damages should be further developed and promoted. Such tools should to the extent possible build on indigenous knowledge and practices. The Tenure-Responsive Land Use Planning (TR-LUP) can be retrofitted and can be an added protection of communities against the negative impact of climate change.

The plenary discussion also helped in conveying the visible and invisible losses borne by grassroots women to climate policy and financial institutions, while looking at the challenges and gaps they are facing in coping with crisis, and identify the practical solutions that work best in ensuring communities can anticipate, respond to, and recover from shocks.

Rafic Khouri concluded that GLTN Partners should enhance their knowledge of the climate change policies and tools, lobby about land management challenges as a key issue for these policies — at governmental and non-governmental levels, using for that purpose GLTN arguments, tools, and experiences. Greater support for adaptation initiatives, including social protection, should be prioritized to enhance communities' preparedness and response capabilities to natural disasters.

Where do we go from here? Towards a new social contract for the World Social Summit, Summit for the Future, and World Urban Forum

This session focused on the discussion draft of the "*The Quezon City Framework for Developing a Women-Led New Social Contract to Enhance Land Rights and Climate Justice.*"

Siraj Sait (UEL) introduced the structure, form, and agenda of the draft NSC, and the need for a framework that would allow local partners and stakeholders globally to engage with the development of their social contracts to identify priorities,