



Humanitarian café 2: The UN Climate Change Conference (COP28)

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Summary report by KUNO

Between 30 November and 12 December, COP28 will take place in Abu Dhabi. The aim of this conference is to review progress made by members of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to limit global warming and its consequences.

At this Humanitarian Café prior to the Climate Conference, organized by Red Cross the Netherlands and KUNO, the objective is to discuss the goals and bottlenecks NGOs want to bring to the COP. During this event, the following questions were discussed: What are your priorities? What can we do together? And what message do we want to convey?

Speakers:

- **Fleur Monasso**, Manager Capacity, Strengthening and Partnerships at the Red Cross Climate Center,
- **Rosa van Driel**, Policy Advisor Climate Justice at CARE,
- **John Ede**, President Ohaha Family Foundation (Nigeria), dealing with climate induced disasters.

Rosa van Driel

Prior to the COP28, the International Climate Coalition NL, a coalition of 16 Dutch (I)NGOs, decided to streamline the work of Dutch (I)NGOs on climate justice leading up to the COP such as trying to connect to the same policy makers and politicians. All the NGO representatives came together and wrote a position paper incorporating the key priorities of Dutch NGOs working on climate change.

The position paper touched upon seven key priorities, however, Rosa explained that there are two most important ones that can make or break the success of the COP. The first thing is the need for *a time-bound phase-out of all fossil fuels while ensuring a just transition*¹, which can be seen as the basis of climate change. During last year's COP a start was made with an agreement on 'phasing-down unabated coal power'. However this is not enough, as we need to phase out all fossil fuels. The second thing is to *address loss and damage with the operationalization of an inclusive loss and damage fund*². The decision to start such a fund last year was a historical one. However, this is not the same as the aid system nor is it just about mitigation and adaptation. It is a form of compensation from those responsible to those suffering the most. During this COP, the details of this fund might become clearer,

¹ Position paper Dutch (I)NGO priorities for climate justice at COP28:
<https://www.careneland.org/content/uploads/2023/10/Position-paper-Dutch-INGO-priorities-for-climate-justice-at-COP28-CARE-Nederland.pdf>

² Ibid. position paper

however what we see so far is that they are not coming together since the interests differ greatly. Three key issues are: Who will receive money from the fund? Who pays for the loss and damage fund? And where should the fund be hosted?

What role can NGOs play in this?

There are a couple of things to consider in answering this question according to Rosa van Driel. For example, where do we find ourselves when compromises need to be made regarding the loss and damage fund? Do we side with the developing or developed countries? What are the needs and gaps that we see? What can humanitarians do and what can we not do? Especially the last question is not always entirely clear to policymakers. Lastly, we need to broaden public and political support for delivering on climate finance promises. NGOs have a very big role to play here and should team up to be most impactful.

Fleur Monasso

Fleur Monasso started her presentation by emphasizing that we should continue to stress that every small temperature rise will lead to humanitarian impacts. Therefore we need to do everything we can to reduce the temperature rise and mitigate the effects.

Leading up to COP28, the Red Cross put the following key points on its agenda. Firstly, *locally led action*. Local communities should be in the driver's seat on how to spend money regarding climate action and which solutions would be suitable. We want and need to listen to them. Secondly, *early warning systems* are of great importance to the Red Cross. Thirdly, Fleur emphasized the importance of *Loss and Damages* during the COP³. As humanitarians we have to work across the whole disaster cycle and research how we can reduce loss and damage. Humanitarians have the practical solutions, but the question of where the money needs to come from is discussed at the COP. Furthermore, *climate adaptation finance* is also a priority for the Red Cross. Take for example health. Between 2009 and 2019, approximately \$29 billion was committed to climate adaptation projects. Of this amount, 4,9% was spent on health-related adaptation and 0.2% went to projects with a specific health objective⁴. This funding falls significantly short considering the effect climate change has on livelihoods, food security, agriculture and so on. The last main priority of the Red Cross at the COP28 is *climate resilient health systems*.

Looking at the COP28, the recommendations of the Red Cross Climate Center are as follows. Firstly, adaptation finance, which fulfills and goes beyond obligations under UNFCCC must be mobilized as quickly as possible and much more needs to target the health sector. Secondly, advocacy, research, and actions must prioritize countries with high health (and climate) vulnerability. And lastly, funding should be channeled to support the implementation of health national adaptation plans (HNAPs), and engagement with adaptation leads within Ministry of Health.

John Ede

John Ede kicked off his presentation by emphasizing that the African continent is only responsible for a small part of climate change, but is experiencing many negative impacts. The money they receive to tackle the many negative impacts is little, however they are expected to do a lot with it. John explained what we should keep in mind when thinking

³ Watch a video about the Loss and Damages here: Regie Gibson - *Should They Stay or Should They Go*: <https://vimeo.com/645572044>

⁴ According to the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and the Climate Funds Update Databases

about climate action. First, we are starting climate change action a little too late, but there is hope as we can design early warning systems. Second, money is needed to make progress on climate action. Third, capacity building is crucial. We need to identify which technologies are available and which are suitable for specific countries. John Ede explained that agricultural technology is especially important on the African continent. People need to become aware of sustainable ways of living and which technologies they can use to their advantage in this. Finally, local capacity is vital in climate action. However, the key question remains: how can we empower local actors to pass on the message of the importance of climate action?

When is the COP28 a success and when is it a failure for you?

For Fleur the COP28 would be a success if real practical action can be taken after the COP. She wants to see actual scaling, and what concretely needs to be done to keep people safe from harm, e.g. on water, health, etc. She thinks the COP should facilitate this. For Rosa, the COP28 would be a success if there is a commitment in clear language to face out fossil fuel. Furthermore, she would like to see the establishment of the loss and damage fund which would also need to be accessible to local grassroot organisations. Lastly, gender should be mainstreamed into the negotiations.

The series Humanitarian Cafe is an initiative of Artsen zonder Grenzen, the Dutch Relief Alliance, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands Red Cross and KUNO.

