AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP
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CSO
Civil Society
Société Civile

Newsletter

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For an African People-Centered COP27

Engaging Civil Society for Climate resilience and a Just Energy Transition in Africa.

Joint statement by the African Development Bank-Civil society coalition at COP27

The African Development Bank - Civil Society Coalition towards COP27 comprises several departments of the African Development Bank, expert civil society leaders and development partners in various fields. Ahead of COP27, the Coalition held several meetings and exchanged ideas on how the voices of vulnerable populations for enhanced climate resilience and a just energy transition can be better heard at COP27 through joint effort. The Coalition also sought to jointly identify African priorities at COP27 and agree on a post-COP27 action plan for preparing local communities in Africa for COP28.

Considering that

- The African Development Bank values the perspective of civil society organisations as they play an increasingly important role in tackling climate change and promoting renewable energy, while contributing to Africa's inclusive sustainable development and green growth.
- Although Africa contributes the least to the global greenhouse gas emissions, it is the most vulnerable continent, bearing a disproportionate burden of the negative impacts of climate change. To date, nine out of the ten most vulnerable countries in the World are in Africa, as well as 10 of the top 12 countries, which are most at risk of droughts.
- COP27, in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, being an "African" COP, offers a global platform for all of us to amplify Africa's voice and common position on climate change. It presents a golden opportunity for humanity to turn the tide against the current existential threats for Africa.
- Discussions between the African Development Bank-Civil Society Coalition and the African Development Bank Civil Society Forum, held in October 2022 under the theme "Engaging Civil Society for Climate Resilience and a Just Energy Transition in Africa", called on the Coalition to ensure more advocacy at COP27 for inclusive climate action and for COP27 to be people-centred.

Declares that

- We, the members of the African Development Bank-Civil Society Coalition on COP27, will work together on the following four identified thematic priorities: Climate resilience; just energy transition; gender and climate finance; and agriculture with a focus on adaptation, taking into account the special circumstances of Africa. These priority areas can serve as entry points for engaging communities in climate action and as umbrellas for implementing practical and high-impact projects for improving the lives of vulnerable communities, at continental, national and specifically at local level. We hold civil society engagement at all levels in high regard to ensure inclusion and build resilience, accelerating climate justice and encouraging a just energy transition.
- We acknowledge that grassroots-level organisations and communities on the frontline of climate change often have the best understanding of local vulnerabilities and know-how about the most contextually appropriate resilience responses to address them. Pragmatic and equitable adaptation and resilience actions require women, youth, disabled, displaced, and indigenous peoples to be at the heart of their design, decision-making, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
- We renew our commitment to gender equality and empowerment in our climate action and to considering a gender perspective when developing resource mobilisation strategies, applying climate finance instruments, and ensuring equitable participation in the

- decision- making and deployment of financial resources, particularly at the local level. We commit to highlighting flagship initiatives supporting locally led gender and climate change action and improving opportunities for women to participate in the green economy. We do this notably by ensuring that women benefit equally from development projects focusing on clean technology, renewable energy, climate-smart agriculture, and financial inclusion.

- We will work together to build resilience against the negative impacts of climate change and sufficiently feed the continent by effectively reaching smallholder farmers with appropriate endogenous, climate-informed agricultural technologies and evidence backed- innovations. We will also explore the Bank's finance mechanisms needed to support climate actions and achieve development co-benefits in food systems without causing harm.

- COP27 provides an opportunity to link climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and food security, creating lasting, high-quality avenues to support climate-smart agriculture and inclusive innovation systems grounded in an African-led agenda.

- We commit to tapping into the potential of renewable energy to support economic development, innovation, and improved access to affordable and secure energy services across Africa. It is important to note that the shift to an economy underpinned by energy efficiency and renewable energy will bring about a positive change at many levels. Therefore, we need to ensure that the benefits and impacts are evenly distributed, analyse where inequity may occur and work collectively to ensure a widespread transition that is just and fair.

Invites the global community, governments,and development partners at COP27

- To scale up the implementation of best practices, innovations and technologies in an inclusive, participatory approach that includes farmers, local and vulnerable communities, especially women and youth, and in a manner that combines scientific and traditional knowledge.

- To engage African civil society organisations in supporting adaptation, share innovations, promote locally led and nature-based approaches and support the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). In addition, Development Partners and governments should ensure that resources set aside for adaptation support and finance for climate action in Africa are accessible to civil society organisations, following the Principles for Locally Led Adaptation.

- To note that Loss and Damage arising from climate change has emerged as a critical issue among the continent's stakeholders. Hence, take the opportunity at COP27 to discuss current solutions for managing climate risks and impacts, identifying gaps and scaling up opportunities for Loss and Damage and ensure that the COP27 discussions result in the formulation of mechanisms that will improve existing solutions and close gaps, along with concrete suggestions on how any agreed additional institutional arrangements for Loss & Damage financing could look like.

- To ensure that COP27 responds to the concerns of the African people and that vulnerable communities (women, youth and others), and territorial collectives are targeted by and benefit from climate action.

- To acknowledge the unique position of the African continent as significantly affected by climate change and ensure that developed countries make payments towards their commitments for adaptation and mitigation finance, considering that despite Africa's high and well-known climate vulnerability, the continent receives only 3% of global climate finance.

- To double climate finance and guarantee access of civil society organisations to climate finance for inclusive climate action.

- To ensure that adaptation and resilience-building are central to Africa's fragile economies, whose vulnerability has been exacerbated by climate change.

Our Coalition is committed to working with all stakeholders on adopting a post-COP27 action plan to ensure monitoring, accountability, and ownership by local communities. Sharm-El-Sheikh, 15 November 2022. Bank Civil Society Coalition on COP27.

CSO perspective

Coalition members' quotes



"Africa needs climate change mitigation/adaptation approaches that build from the bottom up, respect human rights, and aligned to the needs and aspirations of the African People. Climate finance needs to be deployed to remove barriers to adoption of best practices to empower the Local communities in Africa to make the right decisions over their land".

Pauline Nantongo Kalunda
Executive Director
Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda – ECOTRUST



"As one of the main humanitarian actors, ICRC works daily to protect and support vulnerable people affected by combined effect of climate change and conflicts. By partnering with all the stakeholders including the Bank (AfDB)-Civil Society Coalition and by orienting finance for adaptation towards the most affected communities, we can scale up solutions up to COP28".

Jean François Yao
Principal Policy Advisor
International Committee of the Red Cross - ICRC



"Local communities have also been the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, losing lives and livelihoods. Civil Society Organizations, should therefore ensure that populations at the base of the pyramid have access to the Loss and Damage Fund, created at COP27, once fully operational".

Brenda Tautsagae
Special Programmes and Civil Society Engagement Consultant
African Development Bank



"The time has come for a more responsible consideration of African agriculture in the fight against climate change. PAFO and its members have made the fight against climate change and its effects on African agriculture a priority in its strategic plan".

Kolyang Palebele
Président Panafrican Farmers Organization – PAFO

AfDB-CSO Coalition on Climate Change and Energy Access in Africa

The Conference took place in a global geopolitical context defined by the lingering effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine crisis and others. Decision CP27, adopted at the end of the Conference, acknowledged the impact of this "complex and challenging" geopolitics on energy, food and economic situations. It nonetheless underscored this was not enough reason for backtracking, backsliding or deprioritizing climate action.

Africa went to the Conference with clear expectations that reflected the special needs and circumstances of the continent. For example, we wanted, at a minimum:

- Discussions on Africa's special needs and circumstances as granted in Article 4.1(e) of the UNFCCC: Such a move would have profoundly impacted talks and decisions, especially in prioritising adaptation finance and aligning climate finance and technology transfer to the urgent needs of the continent.
- Increased ambition on climate finance, notably the doubling of adaptation finance, due to the continent's high vulnerability: Amongst others, Africa also pushed for simpler procedures to access climate finance, which is partly responsible for the continent's low share of climate finance, which stands at less than 3% today.
- Including loss and damage on the agenda and creating a facility to finance loss and damage
- A just transition approach that allows the continent to continue using its natural resources to accelerate development and growth

The AFDB/CSO Coalition for Road to COP 27 shared many of these demands. In addition, we world leaders ahead of the Conference to make Sharm el-Sheikh and African people's COP. PACJA wanted COP27 discussions and decisions to reflect Africans' voices, needs and aspirations, guided by science and the climate justice principles at the heart of the UNFCCC.

The Cover Decision of COP27 (Decision CP.29) or the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan has eight sections covering the main issues on the agenda, from the science and urgency of climate change to matters dealing with collaboration.

We conclude that COP27 did not really meet the expectations of Africa, even though the Parties discussed the burning issue of financing loss and damage for the first time. In some instances, especially in the language on mitigation and energy, we conclude that COP27 lowered the bar and failed to spur the magnitude of ambition to reduce emissions and support adaptation needed to address the climate crisis squarely. In failing to table Africa's special needs and circumstances for discussion, debates and decisions missed the critical perspectives necessary to develop global climate policies and actions needed to respond to the urgency of climate change impacts on the continent.

What therefore is the way forward for the AFDB/CSO Coalition? For the first time in history the AFDB and the African CSO fraternity sat together and came up with a joint statement that was presented publicly at COP27. In spite of the not very bright conclusion we have above, we need to see where our common position made some gains. One of them is the African Special Needs and Circumstances. The COP27 Cover Decision emphasizes that accelerated financial support for developing countries from developed countries and other sources is critical to enhancing mitigation action and addressing inequities in access to finance, including its costs, terms and conditions, and economic vulnerability to climate change for developing countries,22 and that scaled-up public grants for mitigation and adaptation for vulnerable regions, in particular sub-Saharan Africa, would be cost-effective and have high social returns in terms of access to basic energy; (Paragraphs 34 of COP 27 and 58 of CMA 4 Cover Decisions) This in effect means Africa Special circumstances are being recognized to some extent. After all, our demand has not been recognition of the special circumstances, because it is already recognized under article 4.1.e of the UNFCCC. Our demand has been the operationalization in every aspect of the Paris Agreement implementation. Now that we have this under finance, our push should be that this should be reflected under lost and damage, technology, adaptation, and others.

The beauty of this is that our Coalition has since changed from focusing on COP27, is now a permanent platform called the AFDB-CSO Coalition on Climate Change and Energy Access in Africa, which will be a consultative platform that maintain dialogue and interaction between African CSO fraternity and all departments of the Bank. Let us therefore get to work!



Augustine Njamnshi
Chair Panafrican Climate Justice Alliance

The role of Youth in the COP27 agenda

First and foremost, electing Egypt to host COP27 was such an honor, and it was indeed such a great event. Very special for me as I attended successively COP25, COP26 overseas and hosted COP27 in my home country.

Also, it was a great opportunity for youth from Africa and from all over the world. It was very important for us to be there and to host these countries in Egypt, especially those that are particularly threatened by climate change.

During the COP, my organization "Youth Love Egypt" has played a key role. First, we were part of the Co-hosts for COP27 and responsible for youth volunteers. This was a huge opportunity as we have dedicated ourselves to empowering youth towards COP27 all year long. In total, 16 youths representing YLE attended COP27 in the Blue Zone with Support from PACJA. Secondly, as part of the Egyptian collation for Climate Change since, we empowered 10 organizations to take a place in COP27 at the Blue Zone and we organized several workshops for these organizations, again with the great support of PACJA. In short, this event could not be missed, and I applaud this initiative of the organizers for having set a pavilion for youth within the Africa pavilion.



Moreover, it was also a very good opportunity to be part of the AfDB-Civil Society Coalition for COP27. We take a lot of pride for this and for encouraging youth to be present at the negotiation room and to participate in panels, whether than simply attending the COP as bystanders. As an organization we had more than 11 side events, most of them were led by youth. Youth's active participation was all, the more crucial that we had at a Youth Pavilion for the first time ever.

As a last message, I would say that we need to make more efforts for climate change adaptation and focus more on loss and damage finance. To make it work, everyone should take responsibility for Climate justice.

For COP28, we will need more youth voices. The Youth and children pavilion is once again a great initiative to begin with, but we will also need more support to young negotiators from South countries.



Ahmed Fathy
CEO Egypt Youth Love Coalition for Climate Change

Bank perspective

Accelerating Gender Equality and Climate Change Nexus

The COP27 at Sharm al Shaikh was an opportune moment to advance the Gender Equality agenda on the African continent and push for transformative financing in private sector, public sector and civil society.

In terms of private sector, AfDB launched the Gender in Climate Action Accelerator, a tool to support private sector companies improve the gender responsiveness of their corporate climate governance and measure their performance.

The Accelerator will support governments in promoting gender-sensitive climate sector policies, accelerating their green transition to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a joint initiative by the Egyptian government, the African Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the French Development Agency, AFD.

When it comes to public sector, the Bank, with First Lady of Kenya, Rachel Ruto, and ICRC advocated for more financing for inclusive greener economies. The First lady focused on ways to ensure green jobs for women, whilst ICRC explained the issues in the Sahel facing communities in their efforts to adapt to climate change.

Kenya's First Lady Rachel Ruto explained that as the efforts for greener economies grow, the focus should be on upskilling and reskilling to help women and girls to access green jobs. Al Hamndou Dorsouma, Acting Director of Climate Change and Green Growth at the African Development Bank called for a more equitable distribution of climate resources in the Sahel. Sidi Mohamed EL Wavi, Director of Climate and Green Economy at the Ministry of Environment in Mauritania, underscored the importance of eliminating barriers to quality education for women to enhance their representation at all levels.

Perhaps the strongest message came from H.E Mary Robinson on a session focused on increasing financing to women-led NGOs. The former Irish president headlined a panel discussion on "Gender Sensitive and climate just finance mechanisms" and called for a bespoke climate fund to support grassroots women to tackle climate change and build resilience.

The panelists said mechanisms tailored to supporting women and women led CSOs, who are helping to build climate resilience, must be visible, simple, and easily accessible.

"There is a problem about the visibility, transparency and accountability, and although there is some money floating around, we don't have a properly dedicated climate fund or a permanent climate fund to support women entrepreneurs in combating climate change," Robinson said.

Robinson gave the example of some women-led projects in Uganda which could do ten times more if they had access to targeted climate resources. "They had no prospects of getting the money that could be available for their sector – they didn't even know who was getting the money or where it was going."



Dana ElHassan
Gender Specialist

Bank and Civil Society form a coalition on Climate and Energy

The African Development Bank and the Civil Society Coalition on the road to COP27 jointly hosted a session, entitled "an African People-Centered COP-27" on Tuesday 15 November 2022. The session provided a platform for multi-stakeholder discussions on civil society's concerns and priorities about climate change. It also sought to amplify the voices of communities at the frontline of the climate crisis to secure climate justice for Africa at COP27. One of the main outcomes of this session is the participants unanimously agreeing to rebrand the Coalition on the road to COP27 to AfDB - Civil Society Coalition on Climate and Energy.

The objectives of the session as part of the Bank's COP27 agenda and events were to strengthen the role of civil society organisations on the climate and just energy transition agenda; further amplify the voice African citizens' priorities on climate resilience and ensure a just energy transition at international and national levels; strengthen the Bank's collaborative engagement through a joint AfDB-Civil Society statement on COP27 and beyond as well as showcase civil society organisations' best practises on climate resilience and just energy transition at community level. The session further sought to adopt a coordinated engagement action plan and joint roadmap towards COP28.

The event was successful and highly engaging as it garnered 123 in-person participants, although room capacity was 100, at the Africa Pavilion. In addition to the members of the AfDB-CSO Coalition and Bank's senior representatives, the session had attendance of the President of the Pan African Parliament, along with four Members of Parliament and representatives of the African Group of Negotiators on Youth.

During the session, participants spoke in unison about the need for COP to be more people centered, for increased support to smallholder farmers on adaptation to reduce vulnerability and for the need to involve various line stakeholders in climate change and renewable energy issues, for a collective approach by governments. The participants shared their aspirations for COP28 which included the desire for COP28 to be more youth and gender centric and to promote the voices and presence of the most vulnerable groups of society allowing them to be part of the solution.

The new coalition thus holds out the hope that the Bank and civil society will work together to monitor the decisions of COP27, to work on a joint action plan for COP28 and to jointly identify inclusive and community-valued projects in the climate and energy agenda. In addition to the joint statement by the Bank and the CSOs on African priorities, this is certainly a salutary institutional partnership approach.



Luther Yameogo
Principal advocacy and partnership Officer

Word from the Manager

Strong engagement with CSOs for the COP27 and on the way forward to COP28

I am pleased and deeply appreciative of our joint participation with Civil Society Organizations at the COP27 and of the strong message CSOs were able to convey. This was possible thanks to the Bank - Civil Society Coalition on Climate and Energy which provided a platform for multi-stakeholder discussions on civil society climate change concerns and priorities, facilitated dialogue and built a clear roadmap toward this major event. This CSO Coalition helped amplifying the voices of communities at the frontline of the climate crisis to secure climate justice for Africa at COP27. Now that COP27 is over, this is the time for us to plan for the next steps. Key lessons emerged from the Bank's collaboration with Civil Society during COP27. As COP27 was proclaimed people centered, CSOs shared stories of communities affected by climate change coming from their experience on the ground. From these valuable conversations, we must retain that climate solutions should be community centric and tailored to local contexts.

It is our responsibility and an absolute necessity to leave no one behind when building solutions to tackle climate change. It is my strong wish that we keep this momentum going so that Civil Society may have an even bigger impact during COP28 and beyond.The Bank's engagement with CSOs in preparation and participation at COP28 in Dubai will start early in 2023. I look forward to having an impactful participation of CSOs during COP28. I salute their tireless advocacy efforts for a more sustainable future on behalf of the people of Africa.



Zeneb Touré
Division Manager, Civil Society and Community Engagement Division

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