

# International Development Committee

## Oral evidence: Climate change, development and COP26, HC 99

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Members present: Mrs Pauline Latham (Chair); Theo Clarke; Brendan Clarke-Smith; Chris Law; Navendu Mishra; Mr Virendra Sharma.

Questions 1 - 38

### Witnesses

**I:** Dr Lisa Schipper, Environmental Social Science Research Fellow, Environmental Change Institute, University of Oxford; Dr Alessandra Sgobbi, Co-Chair, Adaptation Committee, and Head of Sector, Centre of Thematic Expertise for Connectivity, Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development, Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, European Commission.

**II:** Cecília da Silva Bernardo, Representative of the Least Developed Countries Group and Director for Co-operation, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Environment, Republic of Angola; H.E. Diann Black-Layne, Ambassador for Climate Change, Antigua and Barbuda, and Lead Negotiator on Climate Change, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

**III:** Suranjana Gupta, Special Adviser on Community Resilience, Huairou Commission; Julius Ng'oma, National Co-ordinator, Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC).

## Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: Dr Lisa Schipper and Dr Alessandra Sgobbi.

Q1 **Chair:** Welcome to the first evidence session in the International Development Committee's inquiry into climate change, development and COP26. Before the Committee begins the questions, could I ask the witnesses on the first panel to introduce themselves? We have four or five questions and only 40 minutes, so be aware of the time when you are answering them.

**Dr Schipper:** I am an environmental social science research fellow at the Environmental Change Institute, which is at the University of Oxford. I am also a co-ordinating lead author for an IPCC chapter entitled "Climate resilient development pathways" and a co-editor in chief of a journal entitled *Climate and Development*. In other words, I have spent my career focused on the linkages between climate change and development and, more specifically, on the relationship between adaptation, vulnerability to climate change and development.

I should also mention that, over the years, I have interacted a lot with DfID and done some work for them. As a result of a paper that came out in January, I have recently had several conversations with FCDO and was invited to present findings of this paper to a number of Africa-based FCDO colleagues two months ago. Of course, my university is huge, with lots of researchers. Some of them undoubtedly have links with and funding from FCDO, but I currently do not receive any funding from them.

**Dr Sgobbi:** Good afternoon to everyone. My name is Alessandra Sgobbi. I am here in my capacity as co-chair of the Adaptation Committee. At the outset, let me thank you for inviting the Adaptation Committee to provide evidence to this inquiry. The committee was established back in 2010 and is the main expert body on adaptation under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris agreement.

Our goal is to enhance the implementation of adaptation action and to do so in a way that strengthens coherence across the different constituted bodies and entities under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We are engaged in sharing knowledge, providing guidance and helping parties and non-party stakeholders, Governments and practitioners to accelerate adaptation action on the ground. It is a politically balanced body. We have 16 members, coming from different parts of the world, who bring very diverse sets of expertise that enrich the work of the Adaptation Committee.

We have already interacted with the COP26 presidency. For instance, we have been able to participate in the event that the presidency organised on the global goal on adaptation. The presidency participated in an event that the Adaptation Committee organised with Governments and



practitioners on the same topic. That has provided useful insight, both for our work and in preparation for COP26.

**Q2** **Chris Law:** Thank you for the introductions. Alessandra, I wonder if I can begin with you to give the beginning of an overall picture. Can you describe what is meant by adaptation in the context of climate change? Have attitudes towards it changed in recent years?

**Dr Sgobbi:** Adaptation to climate change is any measure that helps minimise, address or avoid the most dangerous impacts of climate change. First and foremost, mitigation is very important to avoid the impacts of climate change. Also, we need to make sure that we are able to prepare for the new norm and for changes that might come our way in different sectors and across different governance levels. In this sense, adaptation is very much linked to disaster risk reduction. I am sure Lisa will also, in case there is interest, be able to provide the IPCC definition of adaptation.

Has the attitude changed in the last years? Yes, definitely. With the Paris agreement in 2015, we have seen a momentous shift. Adaptation is now on par with mitigation in terms of political importance. It has been recognised as a top priority, not only for developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and have the least ability to adapt to it, but also for developed countries. Adaptation is a shared challenge for all communities across the world. This is a very important shift in the perspective and the perception of climate change adaptation.

**Q3** **Chris Law:** What are the UK Government doing particularly well in planning for the run-up to COP26? Where could they be doing a lot more and a lot better?

**Dr Sgobbi:** If I think about the work that the Adaptation Committee is doing, the UK Government have certainly been very proactive and helpful in reaching out to the Adaptation Committee and trying to co-ordinate our approaches. The presidency has been providing significant space for parties and non-party stakeholders to discuss adaptation-related matters. This is one of the key asks of many parties: to be able to have a larger space to catch up with mitigation-related elements, so we give the same importance to adaptation as well.

The UK, the presidency, has done a lot in terms of the dialogues that were held last year, providing space for loss and damage, for instance, as well as for adaptation discussions, and in the recent negotiation sessions that just concluded last week. We had a significant amount of both negotiation and non-negotiation space that was provided to discuss issues related to adaptation, also loss and damage and, in particular, the Santiago Network. In this respect, it is something that is really responding to the requests of parties to the Paris agreement, in recognising the need for discussing more adaptation-related matters.



**Q4** **Chris Law:** If there was one change that the UK Government could make towards climate change, what would it be? In our previous Committee report, we recommended that the UK Government should adopt an explicit climate justice approach, as the Scottish Government have. Would this help better align the UK with SDGs and would it be a better approach towards climate change?

**Dr Schipper:** It is important to recognise that climate justice is a central element for both adaptation and mitigation. We have seen that, in the past, adaptation has basically been addressing only the impacts of climate change. When we do that, we are not looking at the root causes of vulnerability. Why are people even sensitive or exposed to climate change?

By looking through a justice lens, you would hopefully get at those issues that are the underlying drivers of vulnerability. That would be a fantastic approach and would address a lot of the issues we found in our research over the years, in terms of the shortcomings between the ways that development aid works and the way Governments are trying to do adaptation. That is a good suggestion.

**Dr Sgobbi:** I fully agree with what Lisa has just outlined. The challenge is to recognise that adaptation is pervasive and we need to address not only the impacts but the root causes of vulnerability of communities, individuals and households across the world. This is a very strong anchor, linking the climate change adaptation agenda to the sustainable development goals. Indeed, building stronger bridges between the two agendas is one of the ways in which we can enhance action on all fronts and pursue sustainable development.

**Q5** **Theo Clarke:** Alessandra, what are the challenges in preparing Governments for the upcoming global stocktake?

**Dr Sgobbi:** As you know, the Adaptation Committee has been mandated with preparing a report that would feed into the global stocktake on where we stand when it comes to adaptation, where the gaps we still see are and how action can be enhanced. One of the challenges that we have identified in the work preparing us for this task is that very often we lack a solid basis of information.

Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation action is not as well developed as is the case for mitigation, for good and bad reasons. The methodologies are of course very different and the challenges are very different. Adaptation is often very local, and extrapolating or aggregating progress has its benefits but also drawbacks, in terms of hiding hotspots of vulnerability. A lack of complete and comprehensive information is one of the key challenges that we have identified in our work.

Progress has already been made, so I do not think we should be discouraged. When it comes to the global stocktake in particular, I believe we also need to bear in mind that this will be a process that



repeats every five years. We need to learn as we move forward, starting from the information basis that we have now, to help us identify ways in which we can bridge this knowledge gap and move forward in a more coherent manner with outcomes from the global stocktake.

**Q6 Mr Sharma:** Lisa, to what extent is adaptation aligned with the UN sustainable development goals, in particular the goal on poverty reduction?

**Dr Schipper:** It is a little difficult to say. Maybe following up on the previous question as well, it is very hard for us. As researchers, we do not have a very good sense of what successful adaptation is. It is really difficult to align and understand how deep adaptation has to go. As I said earlier, most adaptation initiatives are just scraping the surface, looking at the impacts of climate change, maybe doing some adjustments to buildings, to roads and thinking about infrastructure. Very little adaptation is actually trying to get at these underlying drivers of vulnerability that have to do with development.

As a consequence, it is really hard to say on the alignment of poverty reduction and adaptation. Most of the efforts are not actually going in that direction at the moment. I suppose the answer is that it currently is not doing anything. Back to the question about justice, if we were to use a climate justice lens, we could actually see more specifically how adaptation efforts link with poverty reduction efforts.

Recent research we have done has shown that a lot of adaptation strategies are actually making people worse off, by introducing new vulnerability, making the current vulnerability worse or redistributing vulnerability. That obviously includes increasing poverty as well. At the moment, I do not think there is a strong alignment at all.

**Q7 Brendan Clarke-Smith:** Good afternoon, everybody. Lisa, could you tell us briefly what maladaptation is and give us an example of it, please?

**Dr Schipper:** Maladaptation is essentially when adaptation goes wrong. A broad understanding of maladaptation—"mal" being bad—is that you plan an adaptation project but you plan it poorly. An example is when you do not consider the local context or you do not work sufficiently with local people who are actually going to be doing the adapting to understand the local context.

I can give you some specific examples. One example of maladaptation from Vietnam was where a hydroelectric dam and forest protection policies to regulate floods in lowlands were implemented. At first, it seemed to be beneficial for reducing vulnerability to the specific flooding hazard that people were experiencing. On closer inspection, these policies were shown to be undermining access to land and forest resources for mountain people who were upstream. This meant that the intervention was resulting in those people becoming more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and more marginalised. That is an example of



maladaptation. Unfortunately, there are many of these kinds of examples around the world.

**Q8** **Brendan Clarke-Smith:** You recently published a paper on maladaptation. How have the policymakers at the FCDO and other Departments reacted to that so far?

**Dr Schipper:** That paper is related to the other paper that I was mentioning that FCDO was quite keen on. Based on the two presentations that I did for their Africa-based climate officers, or environmental officers possibly, it is clear that a lot of these issues resonate with them. They are aware of what sorts of drivers there are of maladaptation.

The challenge is that the structures within the funding cycles and the short cycles essentially contribute to meaning that we cannot see what is happening over time very well. Therefore, if you want to have a short impact, the likelihood is that you are also going to shortcut by not doing sufficient local consultations and understanding the local context. You might be tending to work with the same people who you have worked with previously, who would then essentially be the elites. If you continue to work with the same people, ultimately you marginalise other people.

They are fully aware of all those things. It is just that they are operating within a structure that does not allow them to step away from these kinds of problems.

**Q9** **Chris Law:** On the maladaptation area, one of the things we read about is how financing is overplayed. In other words, at times, the money spent is not anywhere near the amount that is meant to be spent on adaptation. In terms of maladaptation, is there part of a budget that is contingency, in case, with the best intentions, projects go badly wrong? Is there a support fund that comes forward to reverse the further damage you have just created?

**Dr Schipper:** This is an innovative idea that I have not heard mentioned before. Essentially, it would be the dusting-up project that would have to clean up after the project goes wrong. One of the challenges is that the funding is not necessarily the biggest problem. It is the way that a lot of adaptation projects are designed. They are just poorly done.

Having said that, there could be more funding built in to cushion the planning, to prepare and enable the kinds of consultations that would need to happen and this collaborative design, which we would call co-production in my world. The local people who are also going to be part of the project and the local decision-makers, as well as the external funders, have a good dialogue about what the priorities are. That would also address a lot of issues that, as you point out, would probably require more funding.

**Q10** **Chris Law:** You would think that working in that partnership would be obvious for those on the ground. Why has that not happened up until now? What concrete steps have been taken to change that?



**Dr Schipper:** Based on some of the things that were mentioned to me when I discussed with FCDO, I can draw on that a little bit. One of the challenges is that sometimes FCDO or other external funders have to bypass certain actors in order to be efficient and get projects implemented. That sometimes means either you have to go through Government and specifically then do not get to interact with actors that the Government do not agree with, or, similarly, you might want to try to bypass Government in a way. Then you end up working with other actors.

As you can imagine, in certain countries, this is not a problem. In other places, there could be a lot of conflicts between the different actors. That means that those consultation processes do not happen, because they are extremely inconvenient politically and extremely difficult.

Q11 **Chair:** Is there anything that we have not asked you that you would like to get across to the Committee?

**Dr Sgobbi:** If I may chip in on the maladaptation issue, I believe that sharing information on what has happened and what has worked can help avoid maladaptation in the first place. That should be our primary objective, though the idea of contingency funding is also quite interesting. One of the challenges that we often face in sharing good practices or learning from what has worked is that we tend to shy away from sharing what has not worked. This is something that sometimes slows down the learning process.

In terms of the upcoming COP, working on the global goal on adaptation is one of the issues that many parties are asking for. This is linked to the global stocktake, as was discussed before. It is one of the areas where we, as the Adaptation Committee, are strongly engaged. It is one of the topics that the UK presidency seems to have taken to heart. I believe this is very good. Continuing to engage and provide evidence, which can help us show what effective adaptation is and what we have been able to do, will be important.

It is not just about the money. It is about how we spend it and what we get from the money we invest in adaptation. Adaptation is not a cost; it is an investment. This is also something that often does not come across. Those were just some thoughts triggered by the discussion today.

Q12 **Chair:** Lisa, did you want to add anything that you wish you had said but did not manage to get in?

**Dr Schipper:** Certainly, I would be happy to. Thank you for the opportunity. Climate change is not the big problem. It is unjust, unsustainable and uneven development that is the problem. It is when climate change combines with that that we have issues. Claiming that the UK is spearheading this race to resilience while also cutting aid that would address the root causes of vulnerability is undoubtedly a tremendous contradiction. If we do not see these things holistically, the chance to



advance and really have a move towards climate-resilient development becomes very minimal. That is what I would add.

**Chair:** Thank you very much. In the absence of any further questions from the team, we conclude our questions to the first panel. Thank you very much to both witnesses for coming to give evidence today. If there is anything you think of afterwards that you want to write to us about, you can. We are very open to getting more evidence in writing.

## Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: Cecília da Silva Bernardo and Diann Black-Layne.

Q13 **Chair:** We are now going to move on to the second panel. Before I ask the Committee to begin its questions, can I ask the witnesses to introduce themselves?

**Cecília da Silva Bernardo:** Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Cecília da Silva. I am the director for co-operation at the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Environment of the Republic of Angola. I am the lead negotiator for the adaptation agenda of my country and one of the lead negotiators for the LDCs as well. I am here representing the least developed countries today.

**Diann Black-Layne:** Good day. It is nice to be here. My name is Diann Black-Layne. I am the director of the Department of Environment here in Antigua and Barbuda. I am the ambassador for climate change. Antigua and Barbuda is also the chair of AOSIS, which is the small island developing states. I am the lead negotiator for climate change on behalf of AOSIS.

Q14 **Theo Clarke:** Cecília, what sorts of challenges do least developed countries face in adapting to climate change? Do you think they all face similar challenges?

**Cecília da Silva Bernardo:** LDCs face different challenges, starting from vulnerabilities to climate change. LDCs are in different regions, but somehow they suffer the same challenges and kinds of vulnerabilities and impacts, such as floods, extreme temperatures and hurricanes, which affect LDCs in Asia and Africa. One of the biggest challenges is the lack of capacity of those countries to long-term plan and implement a financial capacity to develop inside-country capacity to carry out proper adaptation planning and implementation.

Q15 **Theo Clarke:** I do not know if Diann wants to add anything. It will be interesting to hear from your perspective, too.

**Diann Black-Layne:** Island states, the states that we represent, come from the Pacific, the Caribbean and the AIS region. There are about 43 countries. As islands, many of us are very small. Sea-level rise is very important to all Pacific island members, as well as those in the AIS





## HOUSE OF COMMONS

region. In the Caribbean region, we are a little more volcanic. In that region, we struggle with sea-level rise as well. Sea-level rise will impact on our ability to attract tourism. Beaches are our business, with hotels. A significant portion of the Caribbean region is impacted by drought and hurricanes.

Many of the islands are in a multi-hazard region, especially for hurricanes, which is what gets into the news. It is really nice to see that, when a hurricane passes us in Antigua and is heading to Miami, everybody gets into their car and drives away, but we cannot drive away. We have to stay here, on island, and get ready for the storms.

With many of our countries, when there is a disaster, it affects the entire economy, 100%, so similar to LDCs. That is the greatest area of vulnerability. It is not like the United States, a continental country or large country, where it may affect one small portion and the other portion is still able to continue functioning, with economic activity to pay for the cost. That has been one of the biggest issues for small and developing states. The whole country is affected.

There are issues like drought and sea-level rise. Our biggest challenge is to show the evidence that it is occurring, because we have climate deniers in our own countries. There is a lot of misinformation being spread. Our biggest issue is misinformation being spread, so there are no policies or measures taken to fix it. The first people to feel it who can communicate it are poor people, who live in more vulnerable areas. It is very difficult for them to communicate, "This is what is happening," and explain what is happening. Those are our main problems.

**Q16 Mr Sharma:** In addition to what you already said about the challenges that small island states have, after the hurricane, what lessons could we learn so that we, or other small states and the developed countries, could be more helpful? What lessons are there from that difficult period that the small island has gone through?

**Diann Black-Layne:** Right after a hurricane hits a small island, whether it is in the Pacific or the Caribbean area, or wherever it is located, the first thing that we need is help, because the entire economy is down. When we reach out to partners such as the UK, they say that we have a high per-capita income. At that moment, it is like saying, when somebody gets hit by a car and they are a millionaire, that you are not going to help them. Because they are flat on their back and they are a millionaire, everything is in place. When your entire body is out of commission, what do you do? You need help.

When you are providing support, it is provided using ODA requirements. It is like, "I am giving you overseas development assistance." What they have pretty much said is that you need to borrow money to help you get back on your feet. That is fine if you are being hit by a hurricane once every 10 or 20 years, but when it is every single year now, that is not possible. My mum is 74 and I am 52. She has experienced two more



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

hurricanes than I have. My children, who are 16 and below, only know hurricanes every single year. As a child, I never experienced that. The frequency and intensity is increasing, and this increase is caused by pollution that is not our fault.

I listened to the previous panel. Ideally, climate justice should kick in and those who are polluting should compensate us. What happens is that they say, "Oh no, go to the World Bank. Borrow this money and then you are going to have to borrow every single time." That is not sustainable. That is not possible. That creates a whole new vulnerability now for our small islands.

We are seeing millionaires and billionaires coming in and buying up the property that people cannot. Gentrification is occurring at a rapid rate. Because gentrification can occur, something crazy happens, like, "If we do not help the country, we can go in and buy up the stranded properties that are being left behind as people now try to migrate and leave." You cannot keep repairing your house every single time. This is now creating a whole new set of vulnerability and almost an incentive not to assist.

The lesson is what you do after a hurricane. Do you help your fellow country? What is the lesson there? It depends on what you want to learn from your perspective and what we want to learn from our perspective. From the island states, we learn that we will negotiate really tough with the UK and other large emitters. The best thing to do is to stop emissions. The best thing you can do for us is to cut your emissions by 86%. If you can do that, we are fine. We will not be fine completely, but that is the lesson we learned, as Antigua and Barbuda and as AOSIS. We have to get the large emitters, China, India, the UK and the US, everybody, to cut their emissions. When the hurricanes happen, you are not there to help us. You do not show up to help us.

**Q17** **Chris Law:** Diann, that was quite powerful testimony about your mother and your children. It brings into stark contrast such a short window of time and how much it is affecting where you live. I have visited a number of small island states over the years. Some of them are expected to completely submerge as a result of climate change. You have also highlighted something about your being expected to go to the World Bank, rather than get support through either a climate justice mechanism or a loss and damage mechanism. What are the main challenges that small island states face in terms of climate finance?

**Diann Black-Layne:** One of the biggest issues for climate finance is that Governments like your own said, "We are going to put this money into the green climate fund, the adaptation fund or the World Bank." You say, in good faith, "This is to help the countries adapt to climate change and so on." You put it in the World Bank, the CIF or the green climate fund. Immediately, all the traditional conditionalities that you would apply to development finance are applied to climate finance.



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

There is a struggle to keep on reminding the green climate fund and others—not the adaptation fund—that this is not development finance. It is climate finance. It is not compensation. Yes, because we have a UNFCCC agreement, we will not call it that, but you have to help us get ready. There seems to be limited ability of the donors, like yourselves and these multilateral organisations that we depend on to get access to adaptation funding, to understand that this is not development money. We did not ask you for development money. If you give it to us we are happy, of course, but this is climate money. We need it to get ready for the next hurricane.

The next hurricane is not five or 10 years away. It is now, right now. I am home here and we are getting our home ready for a hurricane. It is terrifying, every single year. This is happening from Antigua and Barbuda to Guadeloupe and BVI. You have island dependencies here and they are all getting ready for the hurricane every single year. This was not something that we did all the time.

Whereas we are adjusting to climate change, I do not think you are adjusting to the fact that it is not development money. When it is provided to these multilateral organisations, you need to say so. There has to be something to say so. In these organisations, there are people there and institutional inertia to change. You would speak to the consultants. That will not change. You will speak to the people working in the World Bank. That will not change.

Especially as small island developing states, we have a high GDP per capita because we have a small country with a small amount of people, and if two billionaires move to Antigua, that is it; our GDP per capita goes through the roof, so we no longer qualify to access concessional financing. In your country, the private sector and everybody gets access to grants and concessional financing. We do not.

The issue is that somebody does not get the memo that this is not development finance. It is climate finance. Then of course we do not have a definition of what climate finance is. Then we have all these criteria and so on. The difficulty has been access. The money is there and we hear from different Governments, "But we did provide the money." No, to write a cheque and put it in the World Bank or the GCF is not enough. You have to guarantee access so that we can get ready on time.

To give you a timeline, if you put money into the World Bank and we get hit by a hurricane tomorrow, and you say, "I am going to give it to the World Bank," it takes a year to get that money; it takes over 365 days. That is not appropriate if you really want to help. Climate finance needs to be clearly defined. If a donor is providing that, they must ensure there is some mechanism in the contract or the term sheet that you sign with those organisations to guarantee access to LDCs and SIDS. As the LDC representative said, the capacity for us to access that fund is limited.



I always say in negotiations, and I say to all of you, "Come and help us draft the project document to submit to the green climate fund and so on. Write that whole funding proposal." You would see and begin to understand what I am trying to say. You do not have to do that to access money to do projects in the UK. The funding proposals are 500 or 600 pages long when you add the annexes. It is crazy for you to run around and collect the information that is required. One of the earlier panels said that we have to do consultation. You have to ask questions to everybody. That is great and fine, but for many small island developing states that is time we do not have, but we have to do it anyway or else we will not get the funding. The problem with climate finance is that nobody says, "This is climate finance." Finally, when you are providing it, access is not guaranteed.

**Q18 Chris Law:** That is really helpful. For small island states, do you think there should be a different tiered system for accessing climate finance, given the urgency that you have and the frequency of the challenges you face?

**Diann Black-Layne:** Definitely, yes. For LDCs and SIDS, there should be different criteria. If we are applying for funding, LDCs may get a little bit of a break, but SIDS have to do the same amount of work as if it was Brazil, Mexico or South Africa applying. We are only 100,000 people, so we rely a lot on consultants. It is a job for them. For us, it is life and death. For them, it is a job.

We keep saying it. The COP, the Conference of the Parties, of UNFCCC says that there are special circumstances of SIDS and LDCs, but it is not really operationalised. I do not think they have an idea of how to do that. They have never asked us. I was a board member of the green climate fund. While I was there, I put forward a few ideas and the green climate fund accepted them. The direct access modality has been great. Antigua and Barbuda has a direct access entity, but it is not easy and many of the small island states would like to do that as well.

The World Bank does not want to work with us. We are too small. Our projects are \$30 million or \$40 million. It wants \$250 million or \$350 million projects. It loves the projects from China and Brazil, the big emitters. Small island developing states are like a nuisance project. We went ahead and got a direct access entity. The procedures are the same. They have made a few changes, but those are discretionary. It has to be somebody in the secretariat who says, "This is a small island. I have been there. I know the island," for them to make a change. Other than that, we have to meet the same criteria, just like everybody else.

**Chris Law:** Thank you for such a full answer. It was really helpful.

**Q19 Navendu Mishra:** I am very grateful to all the panellists. I will keep my questions brief because we are very tight for time. Cecília, could you tell us a bit more about the main challenges that the lowest-income countries face in terms of sharing knowledge and experience?



**Cecília da Silva Bernardo:** There are many challenges when it comes to sharing knowledge and experience. Do you mean regarding adaptation or regarding the efforts countries make to survive? I can provide you with both views.

**Navendu Mishra:** It is mostly about capacity building and collaboration.

**Cecília da Silva Bernardo:** Capacity is not being built at national level among those countries. As Diann said, all the time we receive consultancies and support from countries and organisations for very specific development projects for two or three weeks. This is also something we have experienced with LDC development. It does not build capacity at national level. It is something where, at a point, we can say it is like impulse to us. Of course, it is based on our national policies and circumstances. When the consultants are gone, their knowledge goes with them.

This is a huge challenge we have. We have to build capacity in countries for the long term. We have to build capacity for countries to build long-term strategies and to foresee their resilience for a long time. We will still face this vulnerability among LDCs if we do not fund—I say that for rich countries or the donors—capacity building and create expertise and technological capacity at national level. Then we will still have LDCs for a long time, and that is not what the LDCs would like to have. LDCs feel that we are being left behind. The way forward for us is to strategise for the long term and be able to live on our own feet. I hope I have responded to your question.

Q20 **Navendu Mishra:** The point about the capacity building was very important. Diann, could you tell us the main challenges for Governments of small nation states in terms of working with intermediaries, such as consultants or accredited entities? Also, do you think the UK has done enough to support Governments of small island states in mitigating this challenge?

**Diann Black-Layne:** Let me answer the last question first. It is really hard for me to tell. We work with multilateral organisations and it is hard for me to understand what the UK is doing. It does not work directly with us. Maybe the UK would have bilateral relationships with larger countries but for SIDS it normally does a multilateral, multi-country approach, though not exclusively, so it is hard to know. We have not worked directly with the UK at this time.

There is more to be done. For example, the Caribbean Development Bank would have received funding from the UK. There was a roads project, for example, in our region. The project was designed for one-in-20-year hurricane seasons, storm seasons, when we are already experiencing one-in-50-year and one-in-100-year seasons every five years. The project was not changed. Even when we spoke to the bank about it, the banks use whatever excuse to get you off the phone, and they are busy. Basically, they say, "This is what the donor requires." I do not think so. I



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

have not seen the term sheets, so I do not know, but I would not think so.

I know your taxpayers are paying a lot of money to assist other countries and it is important to be careful when you are financing that through multilateral organisations like the Caribbean Development Bank or the World Bank and others that are not purely climate. The green climate fund is fine. It is purely climate, so everything has to be climate. More can be done to ensure there are options available.

**Q21 Navendu Mishra:** On that point, it is pretty clear that the UK is not doing enough.

**Diann Black-Layne:** There is more that can be done. I do not remember the first question, sorry.

**Q22 Navendu Mishra:** It was about the main challenges for Governments of small island states, in terms of working with intermediaries.

**Diann Black-Layne:** When working with intermediaries, sometimes they want us to use a lot of international consultants. As Cecília was saying, you would not find the same level of expertise in a small island or an LDC country. However, there are a lot of people who have never graduated from college, not even secondary school, who can do the work and understand everything, except that they do not communicate it in great language.

There seems to be this drive to write your project document or the consultancy report in a language that only maybe 5% of the global population can understand. I will challenge any of you to read any of these funding proposals. I dare you to download one of them. Read it and you can tell me, or your constituents, clearly exactly what they are going to fund. You would have to sift through 600 pages to go back to the one page that has some little detailed notes in the background somewhere to say, "We are going to buy a bridge. You are going to see a bridge," or something.

Nobody understands that language, and that is the language they require you to submit your report in. You have to hire a lot of consultants to come in and write it in that language. This exposes the local people to the potential for bad behaviour by consultants. I am not saying that is a widespread issue.

We use the global fund as a template for all the work we are doing and how we interact with the green climate fund and the adaptation fund. I am sure you are familiar with the organisation for the global fund. It insists and communicates that it wants to use local people as much as possible. It also went a step further to understand that a report written by a local person would look very different from a report written by a consultant. For Antigua and Barbuda, we use that model. When we negotiate our projects, we push for that.



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

We have people who can read a plan and who are dyslexic on our team. They cannot read or write and they can read a plan. They do a video report. We take one of our staff and convert that to English to write it on paper. We have people who have never graduated from university and we are doing a great job with all our projects. Of course, it costs a lot less. There is a huge difference in price when you are doing that. We need to strike the right balance. We cannot get rid of consultants, but to build capacity in LDCs and SIDS, as Cecília was saying, you have to hire local people and stop expecting them to write an epistle that 5% of the population can read.

This is why we always have a capacity issue, because of the level of writing and documentation. Nobody does that, not even in the private sector. In the development sector, like this sector, that is what is expected. I do not know why. If we can work on that, capacity will not be an issue, and the money will go a lot further.

**Navendu Mishra:** Those are key points. Thank you so much.

Q23 **Chris Law:** We have all heard about the best outcome that there could be from COP26 and how the UK Government aim to achieve that. What do you think a bad outcome would be, and what should the UK Government do to avert it? I will ask you a second question, if you do not mind. Have cuts to official development assistance damaged the UK's credibility and international leadership ahead of COP26?

**Cecília da Silva Bernardo:** Thank you very much for the first question about a good outcome for COP26. If COP26 makes new decisions with regard to adaptation and finance, it will be a good COP. It would be a good outcome for COP26 if the concerns of LDCs and SIDS are really considered. Adaptation is urgent for our groups of countries. It is an emergency. As Diann said, hurricanes do not wait and we have also faced a lot in Africa in 2019 and even this year, as have countries in Asia. A good consideration of adaptation will be a good outcome.

If you do not mind, could you repeat your second question?

Q24 **Chris Law:** Do you think the cut to official development assistance of almost a third has damaged the UK's credibility and international leadership ahead of this year's COP?

**Cecília da Silva Bernardo:** The UK has the opportunity to provide very good leadership in this process. Right now, somehow the UK's leadership is lacking. It may be based in development events that took place, for example at the G7 leaders' summit. For example, we did not hear from the UK a strong commitment on continued support and provision of funding to LDCs or to the most vulnerable. We also saw that there was a cut from 0.7% to 0.5% in development assistance from the UK. Those things that happened do not provide us with a good sense of confidence. I believe the UK is in a good position to change the way we are seeing it and really become the leader in this fight.



**Diann Black-Layne:** What would be a good outcome of COP? We need to close out the Paris agreement work programme. The Paris agreement came into force within 12 months of Paris, which was great, but the work programme, which would include a key area for the private sector engagement, which is the market, has not been closed out. As AOSIS, we have said to the UK presidency, "Close it out." Whatever it is, wherever it is, every year we continue is an opportunity lost. If we get only 7%, let us do 7% per year and then there will be other opportunities to ramp it up if we want to.

We need to close out. Wherever we are in Glasgow, let us take that and move on. We need to start getting into implementation mode. Why implementation mode? For us in AOSIS, of course we really want to see the whole world cut its emissions. Emissions reduction, so we do not get any hotter or have more frequent hurricanes and so on, is our biggest issue.

We need an agreed signal of what the private sector is supposed to be doing. It has one foot in the future and one foot in the past. We need to give a clear market signal of what it is that we are going to be doing. If the UK can send a clear market signal to the private sector, where most of the money is going to be spent for mitigation and adaptation, that would be a huge success.

A bad outcome would be exactly the opposite of that: the idea that, if we stretch it out a little longer, our negotiators are going to come up with something more ambitious and amazing. I have been in these negotiations since 2008, and that is not going to happen. Let us consolidate where we are and live to fight another day. We should not be complacent. As the COP president, you should be bold. Most of the parties are sick and tired of talking. We are ready for implementation, but many are not. Many people are stuck in negotiating mode and want to continue negotiating.

The UK should be strong, put its foot down and say, "No. No more meetings, no more talk. When we get to Glasgow, we will take whatever you put on the table. Yes, we will try to lobby for more ambition, but that is what we are going to get and what we are going to move on with." That will be a good outcome for the UK.

An in-person COP would be great. You cannot work miracles, so I do not think you need to try. Not everybody will be able to come, because we are still in a pandemic in many parts of the world. Whatever you can do to make it as inclusive as possible is all you can do. We are in a pandemic, so we are not expecting miracles. That is what I tell my group, as AOSIS. If you try to overdo it, you could maybe make it worse. This is my suggestion to you.

On the credibility of the UK and of donors, for us in AOSIS—I am sure LDCs and Cecilia would agree—there is a broken trust. We all had an agreement that a certain amount of money would be provided. It has not





## HOUSE OF COMMONS

been provided at the scale that has been requested since 2009. It is just not happening. Do not get me wrong: there are great things happening, but there is a trust issue. The UK could pay a little more attention to the trust issue. If you give your word, you should keep it. If it is broken, you will have a trust issue. That is the trust issue right now.

Cutting your budget for aid is only logical; you are in a pandemic, so that is logical. There is an area we would like to see where you can build trust. It is not the 0.5% of your GDP, your budget, that we are worried about. It is the 99.5%. What is that being spent on? Is that buying more fossil-fuel vehicles? Is that cutting down forests? Is that subsidising fossil fuels? That is the part we are worried about, and that is the part that will damage your credibility, not the 0.5%, in my view.

Q25 **Chair:** Is there anything either of you would like to say that has not been asked but that you would kick yourself if you left this meeting without saying?

**Diann Black-Layne:** Technology transfer is something we do not talk about a lot. For Antigua and Barbuda and many island states, when we buy solar panels or a wind turbine, for example, it lands in our country and is installed at a price three times higher than you have in the UK. That is just not right. We have to do something to get access to the technology that we need at a price that a regular UK or US citizen is able to access.

In Antigua and Barbuda and many island states, the grid is not stable. When there is a hurricane, there is no grid. There is no electricity. A back-up energy system is really important. We cannot grow diesel back-up generators. We have to use solar panels and battery systems, for example. This is just an example. It is three times the amount that you would pay in Miami or London.

The area of technology transfer is something you could look at. Way back in the old-time days, colonial days, the UK used to have tied aid, where you transfer technology as part of the aid, something that China is doing now. I am not an economist, so I am not saying reinstate it, but we were guaranteed access to technology, because it would come with the loan or grant or something like that.

Now it is very different. It is really hard to get access to the technology you need. If Antigua wanted to use 100% renewable energy tomorrow, we would not be able to get access to the technology at a price. If we wanted to have 100% electric or hydrogen vehicles, forget it. If we are transitioning fast, and we are seeing this rapid transition, how do we get access to technology in a more efficient way? That is something where you can look back in your history, maybe not repeat exactly that, but see how we can set up a technology mechanism that rapidly transfers technology to developing countries.



**Cecilia da Silva Bernardo:** It is important we all know that long-term adaptation to climate change is a priority for the LDCs. Adaptation for the LDCs is urgent. Disasters are happening every year in different countries, as we often see in the news. Long-term strategies have to be supported. As you know, the LDCs now have the LIFE-AR initiative that will provide support to countries to develop their long-term strategies. We know this is important to change the business-as-usual way we used to work and receive support. We are aware it is not that easy. It is hard to change the paradigm just like this, but we have to keep trying. With all your support, we believe it will be possible.

**Diann Black-Layne:** I have one quick point, because I do not want to kick myself after. In the Paris agreement there is article 2.1(c). That is where we are going to be greening the financial sector. The UK has done a lot of work in this sector. We have been tracking it, and we would like to thank you for that. The UK is showing real leadership in dealing with the issues of stranded assets and so on. It would be really important if you could help our local banks, our regional banks and our development banks to do the same and to encourage them not to fund projects that will damage the climate and to make sure that all their projects have a resilience measure inside. It would be great if the UK could make that agreement with us. That would be fantastic.

**Chair:** Thank you very much. That concludes our questions to the second panel, who have been very disciplined again. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank both our witnesses for appearing before us today. As I said to the previous panel, if there is anything you want to write to us on in the future on this topic, please feel free to do so, because we would be very happy to hear from you.

## Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: Suranjana Gupta and Julius Ng'oma.

Q26 **Chair:** We now move on to the final panel today. Again, before we ask the questions, could we ask the witnesses to introduce themselves?

**Julius Ng'oma:** My name is Julius Ng'oma. I am working as national co-ordinator for the Civil Society Network on Climate Change in Malawi, one of the least developed countries. I am also associated with Southern Voices on Adaptation, which is a network of civil society organisations in the global south, and the Panafrican Climate Justice Alliance, which is a network of civil society organisations in Africa. We work with local and international NGOs, particularly community-based organisations, on issues to do with climate change and resilience. I am happy to be here to share my experience and answer the questions from the panel. Thank you.

**Suranjana Gupta:** Good afternoon. My name is Suranjana and I work for the Huairou Commission. The Huairou Commission is a global network



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

of grassroots women's organisations and other kinds of civil society and development organisations. We focus specifically on empowering grassroots women's groups to build more resilient sustainable communities.

In terms of climate change, we have been focused for the past several years on supporting our member groups to build a range of resilience practices to consolidate and scale up those practices in collaboration with local governments. We have been connecting to other organisations and institutions, including research organisations like IIED, to create momentum, new thinking and an exchange of ideas around the question of what an effective resilience programme that is gender-equitable, sustainable and really works for poor people's organisations and women should look like and what finance for that should look like. We have also been working a little bit with financial institutions like the Asian Development Bank to develop new programmes around community resilience. We are closely involved in designing that programme along with them.

**Q27 Mr Sharma:** What is the main challenge that you face in making grassroots organisations heard in climate negotiations?

**Julius Ng'oma:** The challenges are many, but I want to zero in on a few of them. First of all, we want to get the voices around the table. In these negotiations, you need to be able to mobilise. You need to have a very good strategy on how you want to get ideas from different grassroots organisations. Mobilisation is not a very simple issue, particularly when you look at our context. For example, in many of our countries you have so many grassroots organisations, but you may not be able to reach them well enough because of so many challenges regarding finances and also in terms of the accessibility of some of these organisations.

I will give you an example. In my country, Malawi, my organisation's offices—we are a hub—are always based in capitals, but there are so many grassroots organisations that are working in the peripheries of the country that to have the resources to mobilise them together, to consolidate input and to get to the table for a discussion has always been a challenge for most of us. That is always associated with a lack of the technologies that are there. At the moment, as we are heading to COP26, we need to find ways to mobilise grassroots organisations in the context of Covid, for example through the use of technology and the internet to enable such inputs to be brought to the table.

That has always been a difficult task, because, in our context, if you want to rely on the technology or on the internet service, it is not always there. It is always found in the urban centres where, if you are lucky, you have some internet connection and you have the electricity to facilitate all of that. In reaching out to the remotest areas, some of the grassroots organisations there are not even able to access the internet. They do not have the gadgets; they cannot even be on the Zoom platform for them to share their ideas. These are some of the challenges, for example, that we



are facing in the modern digital world, because not everyone has the gadgets or the internet access.

**Suranjana Gupta:** I would put it this way. The grassroots organisations that we work with are working every day to solve the multiple development problems and crises that they face, one of which is unpredictable weather patterns and disasters arising from climate change. Despite all the work they do and the leadership they demonstrate in their communities locally, in general, as women's groups, they are living in impoverished communities, be that rural, urban or indigenous, and they are not perceived as leaders who have anything to contribute to the climate negotiations or policymaking. Therefore, in general, they are excluded from decision-making processes even at the local level. They are quite far away from the climate negotiations.

The negotiators' discussions on justice and equity are very much about how justice and equity are distributed across countries. We are working much more on what is happening with grassroots organisations locally in communities not only in the low-income countries but with these organisations of poor women and poor communities in middle-income countries as well. The equity discussion that we are engaged in within our network is a little different.

Thirdly, there are so many layers between the grassroots organisations at a local level and the climate negotiations at a global level. There is no deep connection and understanding of what kinds of financial mechanisms or programming will really reach and serve the needs of the most vulnerable groups and communities. Although they are victims, they are also part of helping to create the solutions.

Q28 **Theo Clarke:** To pick up on what you just said, Suranjana, in a previous session we heard from some women's rights organisations that they were really operating on a shoestring. They found it very difficult to access funding from the big donors such as FCDO due to their very strict donor requirements. I would be interested to hear what your organisation is doing to help those grassroots women's organisations access more funding, particularly from larger donors. Out of interest, is there anything more that you would like to be able to do?

**Suranjana Gupta:** At present, we do not have a very large budget, but we have been working with the Swedish Sida for several years. A very large proportion of the financing we receive goes to our member organisations in the global south: in Africa, Latin America and Asia. We have been supporting the women's organisations in these countries through what we call a community resilience fund.

What we do is we support organisations to identify and create local priorities based on their context and their capacities to spend money in the ways that they most need to. For example, in the Philippines, women's groups could be using a lot of the resources to rebuild or retrofit their houses after a hurricane or to restore livelihoods. Many of the



groups this year, for example, have had to support a lot of the work that members and small groups have been doing around the Covid response. For example, they have supported people to do livelihood activities; they have supported women to access health information and healthcare services; and they are looking at more long-term measures to restore livelihoods.

In India, for example, we have large numbers of women who have been doing work on promoting eco-agriculture, indigenous seeds and vegetable farming. Women have negotiated cultivation rights either from local government or from their families to have specific plots on which they only grow food crops, which they control, to feed their families, and the surplus is sold in the markets. The kitchen gardens have been a very successful strategy in the climate work, but they really leveraged that and scaled it up during the Covid crisis, because so many of these groups were experiencing huge crises in terms of food and nutritional issues in their families and communities.

We support groups not only to do this kind of resilience-building work, which has to do with the ability to withstand crises including disasters in their communities, but to place and locate that work inside a larger social-movement-building approach. That includes enabling them to build collectives and collective strength; to organise groups to train and support their leadership to build capacities; to talk to and to meet with local government and to attend national Government meetings; and we have also supported them to come to many global policy meetings and speak in those global arenas and present their work there.

Of course, we also support them to build larger networks to expand their impact, to build coalitions and to influence Government to the extent that they can. The resilience-building work is seated inside a larger effort to shift relationships and power. There was another question.

**Q29 Theo Clarke:** You have mostly answered it. It was specifically whether there is anything else you would want to do as an organisation that you do not currently do.

**Suranjana Gupta:** If we had more resources, we would want to scale up a lot of this work and we would want to work more closely, if there were opportunities, with those who design policy and programmes in order to align them more with the capacities and contexts of the groups that we work with.

**Q30 Brendan Clarke-Smith:** Good afternoon, everybody. Julius, this is a question for you specifically. In a previous session, we heard there is often a discrepancy between what local organisations want and what donors fund. Grassroots organisations sometimes find it quite difficult to draft their bids in that kind of technical language. What does your network do to help these grassroots organisations access this funding and be able to navigate this tricky system?



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

**Julius Ng'oma:** That is a good question. I was also going to share that as one of the challenges, but, since you have asked it in that way, I will talk about one thing that we are worried or concerned about, which is the lack of technical capabilities in many of the organisations that we are working with, including those that are working at the grassroots level, around understanding some of the technicalities of the programmes that are being channelled to their communities through donor funding.

We have always been advocating for the programmes to have better designs. The donors are developing these programmes. They should be able to get the views, the needs and the priorities of the local communities themselves. In a way, we are acting as a bridge to make sure we communicate the understanding of the donors and make sure that the donors also understand the needs and priorities of these vulnerable communities through their grassroots organisations. As we are moving forward, we should at least be able to find programmes that are really targeted and are really answering the questions that the local communities want to be answered.

Minus that, we have always been talking to various donors and especially participating in the different reviews of strategies for donors. They should at least be able to get to have some strategies that are directly related to what the grassroots organisations would want to have. For the Government, we know a mismatch has always been there in terms of the deals that the Government of Malawi is striking with the different donors. The bilateral relations that are there always come with different conditionalities and different strategies that might work, to our understanding, for some of the communities but might also not work for some of the other communities. At the end of the day, the Government might also want to have that bilateral relation and benefit from the funding, but they might not necessarily understand the nitty-gritty of how the approaches of different donors are going to impact the grassroots and impact the communities.

I will give you an example. For the past five or 10 years, we have been experiencing a lot of funding cuts. We are also experiencing the strategies that are called matched funding from the FCDO and other donors. They also want grassroots organisations to pump in some resources for them to get funding from the donors. We are looking at a situation where we are dealing with grassroots organisations that do not have the resources at hand. How do you want to target them, work with them and support them with a strategy that uses matched funding? That has always been a challenge.

Instead of the grassroots organisation accessing the resources in the way they are supposed to, we find ourselves in difficulties. We cannot access the resources because we do not have a particular resource at the grassroots level. Some of these issues have always been there, and we keep on dealing with such issues. This has always impacted our grassroots organisations in terms of accessing resources, but it also has a



long-lasting impact on the projects they can actually implement at grassroots level.

**Q31 Navendu Mishra:** Julius, I believe your organisation has worked with both the now-abolished Department for International Development and the Scottish Government. In your work with them, is there a difference between them? If so, what is the difference?

**Julius Ng'oma:** Do you mean between the Scottish Government and the UK?

**Navendu Mishra:** Yes, so DfID was the UK Government's dedicated Department for International Development. The Scottish Government have a lot of autonomy; DfID was a UK Government Department.

**Julius Ng'oma:** There is not much difference from my perspective. My organisation has accessed resources from both of them, but it has always been through a middleman or a middle organisation. For instance, we have not accessed resources from the Scottish Government directly as a grassroots organisation. We had to go through international organisations that are linked to the Scottish Government. In the same way, we have not accessed resources directly from the Department responsible for UK aid, which is currently FCDO. That has always gone through a number of international organisations. It comes to us as the national network, and then we go to the grassroots.

In both cases, the issue has always been the lack of direct access to this funding. This is between the donor itself and the network and even the grassroots organisations. With that, there have always been complications in terms of the level of resources that we have been receiving. The two or three organisations in between would always require so many things, such as administrative costs and so on and so forth. By the time the resources would get to a network like CISONICC and then to a grassroots organisation, the money is too little to make an impact on the ground. The modes are similar in terms of how these two institutions have provided resources indirectly to civil society organisations in Malawi.

**Q32 Navendu Mishra:** Following on from that, the previous Committee heard about the impact of short-term projects on capacity building. What has been your network's experience with short-term projects overall?

**Julius Ng'oma:** That was my next point. There is a problem here, and I will give you an example. There is a project for which we have been receiving support from the Scottish Government. On paper, the project would appear to be for five years. Because it has some international attachments to it with international advocacy, and so on and so forth, we tend to have a short-term project of three years. Two years have already been done, maybe in the UK or somewhere else. Then they want to get experience from Malawi to fit into the international level. That has always been a problem.



With these one, two or three-year projects, if it is a resilience-building or capacity-building project, we introduce the project to the communities, but we have nothing to show for it on the ground. They are always so short term that we cannot even see or elaborate the impact on the ground. That has always left the communities hanging and asking a lot of questions about whether a project is actually working, what it is doing and whether it is addressing their needs and priorities, or whether they are just projects that, for example, the UK and other donors want to showcase.

For example, some of the projects want to come to communities with designated technologies. They would come to Malawi and try to build capacity in civil society and grassroots organisations, but they then leave them with only the experience to show that this is something that can work without having the funding to upscale those kinds of technologies. Those are some of the challenges.

**Q33 Navendu Mishra:** Suranjana, would you like to come in on the question about short-term projects? What is your experience with them?

**Suranjana Gupta:** From my understanding of the women's groups that we work with and the work that we do—we are a movement—short-term projects do not work for us. We take what resources we can get, but donors are very particular. They ask us for results. The timeframe in which you can get solid results requires more time. When you ask us, "In this one year, what did my specific tiny amount of money actually do in terms of impact?" they are not going to get the most powerful impact. We are talking about intergenerational poverty here, people who have been poor for multiple generations. You are talking about trying to empower them and shift their relationship with their families and their communities. You are trying to make the Government look at this constituency of women's groups differently.

These kinds of things take five to 10 years. The UK's BRACED project report a couple of years ago talked about that as being one of the lessons. You have to look at longer timeframes. Where capacity building is concerned, sometimes capacity building means training. You can have a project where you have 10 trainings and you have these external people come and do this traditional training. They give you a handover or some kind of technology, knowledge or know-how. That is not going to be very effective, because people are not vulnerable only because they lack knowledge. Vulnerability persists because there are social, political and economic processes that keep reproducing those vulnerabilities and keep people excluded from accessing resources and accessing public planning and decision-making processes.

We have to try to shift capacity building to make it much more about understanding power relationships and shifting them. For example, in our network the grassroots leaders or women farmers from Kenya recently hosted a peer exchange, where they showed other groups in east Africa as well as in India the kinds of work they are doing to rehabilitate soil.





They have created a manual and they have a number of trainers that they have created. That is immediately shifting the idea: it is empowering women by making them their teachers and trainers. They have a different relationship. They can be hired. In many cases, Governments can remunerate them for disseminating information.

When you look at building capacity, you can support it by saying, "You can have funds to learn by doing, by testing out different examples, and to learn how to present your work to Government and have dialogue with Government. Learn how institutional budgets are created; learn where you intervene and how you understand institutional entry points, whether that is at a local level or a national level." Then you are talking about a very different kind of capacity building, which then looks at the technical aspects but also the political aspects and the equity and justice aspects of climate change and resilience building. We have to shift our analysis and revisit our definition of capacity building.

**Q34 Navendu Mishra:** I would like a brief contribution on this follow-up question, if I can go to Suranjana first. What can the UK do bilaterally or as COP26 president to help you prolong the benefits of the projects that you run?

**Suranjana Gupta:** First of all, we definitely need to put more money into climate finance. Trying to redress the imbalance between mitigation and adaptation financing is important. Those who are the most vulnerable, whether they live in low-income or middle-income countries, are already suffering because of climate change. That is not far away; it is now happening to them every day.

Adaptation financing is very important, but, most importantly, it has to be designed and delivered through mechanisms that ensure it gets down to local groups on the ground and puts money in the hands of local grassroots organisations in order to help them address very local priorities, which depend on their own context and their own capacities. We have to create high levels of ownership and help them leverage that money and those resources by working with Governments and scaling up their work.

If the UK or if people are not clear on how this gets done, they have to work with organisations that have a strong track record of having worked with grassroots organisations to develop these kinds of mechanisms. The other piece is around leadership. One piece is championing, showing and demonstrating what you are ready to put in in terms of resources, and the other is around persuading other countries to do the same. The UK has a big role there not only at COP26 but also in the other multilateral spaces where you play an important role: at the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the G7. There are all these places that call for a strong leadership role for the UK in supporting the most vulnerable.



Lastly, I want to say that the FCDO has signed on to the locally led principles for adaptation. Those are a fairly robust set of principles. There are eight principles, and they talk about promoting devolved decision-making, patient and predictable financing for local groups and a number of other things. Those represent an important touchstone that you can use to ask yourselves, "Are we really supporting the most vulnerable and providing resources where they are really needed?" Signing on is great; it is fantastic that the FCDO has done that. Now it is time to put the principles to work.

**Julius Ng'oma:** I also wanted to share what my colleague has said. We need leadership to be there in the sense of making sure that the finances are provided from the UK Government in whatever form, whether it is in a multilateral set-up or in a bilateral set-up. We need an increase in finance towards climate change adaptation in these countries. It would actually help us, as the least developed countries and the developing countries, to have projects that can be more sustainable, that can build the community resilience that is needed and that can reach out to the communities that are suffering from the impacts of climate change.

There are issues to do with adaptation financing. We need to move away from looking at two or three-year, short-term projects. We need to look at transformative programmes that can help address the many challenges that different communities face. It is not only about climate change resilience. There are myriad challenges in our countries that are related to poverty. For example, you cannot only work on climate change-related issues and have an impact if you do not also address other vulnerabilities within the community.

This is why, as we are calling for financing for climate change, we also want the Government of the UK, for example, to understand that this is a question of livelihoods. This is a question of addressing other underlying causes of vulnerabilities within the communities. One or two-year projects might not work for us. We need to have five-year programmes that can be transformative enough and address all the vulnerabilities and the capacity issues that my colleague has also mentioned, so that, at the end of the day, we should be able to move out completely from this cycle of vulnerabilities within our countries.

For us, the issue of financing towards loss and damage is also very critical. We know that the discussion around financing loss and damage has always hit a snag during the COP discussions. As we are getting to COP26, we feel like the Government of the UK should have particular leadership in terms of making sure we progress in terms of financing towards loss and damage. It has to be very clear. It is not only about ODA; it has to be about addressing the challenges that are there relating to the losses and damages associated with climate change.

Q35 **Chris Law:** Suranjana, if you have one key message for the UK Government on COP26 and grassroots women's organisations, what



would it be?

**Suranjana Gupta:** It would be to set aside a proportion and very clear targets around financing for grassroots women's organisations and to co-design and develop the way in which that money is programmed for them.

Q36 **Chris Law:** That is about as crystal clear a message as I could deliver. That is great, thank you. Julius, it is the same question for you: if you had one message for the UK Government, and indeed the Scottish Government for that matter, on COP26 and grassroots organisations, what would it be?

**Julius Ng'oma:** The first question was about the challenges for grassroots organisations. My message would be that the UK and Scottish Governments have to be able to open up the platform for the participation of grassroots organisations in all forms as part of the discussions around COP26. I can give you a message right now about financing towards climate change—I have already mentioned financing towards loss and damage and financing towards adaptation—but it would carry more weight if these grassroots organisations, women's organisations and youth-led organisations are also given the space to showcase and put on the table what they can do and what capacities they have for the UK Government and the other Governments that are going to be sitting at the table discussing issues to do with climate change.

Q37 **Chris Law:** Given the Scottish Government's leadership on climate justice, something the UK Government have not yet adopted, despite it being recommended in our last report published in spring 2019, how important is the Scottish Government's involvement in COP26? It is hosted as a UK Government initiative, in partnership with Italy.

**Suranjana Gupta:** I will have to give you written comments on that.

**Chris Law:** That is fine. I am happy to accept that.

**Suranjana Gupta:** It is in Glasgow, and the Scottish Government have a big role in it. Perhaps I would have to get back to you on that.

**Julius Ng'oma:** Like my colleague, I cannot answer that, but one thing I know is that the principles of climate justice revolve around the issues of equity and how the developed countries can support the developing countries. Since the Scottish Government look to be a champion of climate justice, we should see more leadership from the Scottish Government in lobbying other Governments that do not believe in climate justice to consider that principle when discussing issues to do with financing during the COP and other issues to do with loss and damage. These are critical issues that are affecting the developing countries, and those have to be addressed in an equitable way following the principles of climate justice.

Q38 **Chair:** Is there anything that either of you want to say now before you



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

go? If you do not want to add anything that you think you have missed, please feel free to write to us in the future. We are quite happy to receive written evidence from you. If there is anything you want to say finally, please feel free to do so.

**Suranjana Gupta:** In terms of designing programmes that are useful and can really make an impact at the grassroots level, it is very important to understand that there are multiple crises that local communities and women's groups face. For example, in Uganda one of our groups found that people were suddenly not able to have three square meals a day.

It is hard to attribute how much of that is to do with climate change, how much is to do with food commodity prices and how much is to do with the privatisation of public lands where they were growing food. People experience these things in a very integrated way, and they have very integrated approaches to dealing with them. We have to design things so that we are not so siloed in our approach and that we can align the programming to the priorities and frameworks that actually work for local communities and grassroots women.

**Julius Ng'oma:** One thing that I wanted to mention is about the technical capabilities of the different civil society groups and grassroots organisations. As the UK Government are also considering how to continue working with Governments at a bilateral level, it is very important for them also to consider working directly with different civil society groups in terms of developing their capacity to understand some of the issues and some of the technicalities within the bilateral relationships with countries but also to position themselves to better support grassroots organisations and communities at large.

The programmes that are developed should have long-lasting impacts. It is not good to see civil society organisations working again and again with the same communities for a long period of time but not necessarily having that lasting impact, because there is always this gap in terms of the capacities that are there within the country. We would like to recommend that there is also a clear link between the Governments, the donors and the civil society organisations for that kind of lasting impact.

**Chair:** Thank you very much. I would like to thank both of you very much for being our third panel and for sitting through the other two panels. I appreciate you coming. All the panels have given us a lot of evidence and a lot to think about. All of your evidence will be incorporated into our final report. Thank you very much indeed for coming.