

## **British Red Cross submission of evidence to the International Development Committee Inquiry on climate change, development and COP26**

### **Who we are**

1. The British Red Cross is an auxiliary to the UK Government in the humanitarian field. We provide life-saving humanitarian assistance and expert advisory support on core humanitarian themes, in the UK and internationally, and work closely with government departments, including the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO). We are part of the world's largest, independent humanitarian network, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement). In collaboration with our Movement partners, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), with its 192 National Societies, British Red Cross works to meet the needs of people affected by humanitarian crisis.
2. British Red Cross have been working with FCDO on a number of innovative climate-related programmes, including Forecast-based Financing and Preparedness programme in southern Africa and Sahel, to support Red Cross National Societies and communities are better able to respond to climate shocks. UK government has also supported Forecast-based action by the DREF (Disaster Relief Emergency Fund) that allows Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies to implement activities in preparation of a likely extreme weather event.
3. Additionally, we work closely with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Climate Centre (RCCC), the specialist reference centre of the IFRC, in operation for the last 19 years which supports the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and its partners reduce the impacts of climate change and extreme-weather events on vulnerable people. The Climate Centre, alongside other strategic partners, supported the organisation and delivery of the Climate and Development Ministerial and in collaboration with the COP26 Presidency and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat, will deliver a four-part dialogue series aimed at UNFCCC negotiators designed to identify practical actions that enable more effective adaptation to climate change in the run up to COP26.

### **About the submission**

4. This submission is focussed on areas where British Red Cross has insight and recommendations on the opportunity for the UK government to build momentum towards COP26, recognising that the UK Government's chairing of G7 and COP26 Presidency is a critical opportunity to drive forward the ambition needed to tackle the impacts of climate change for the most climate vulnerable communities. Our evidence stands as complement to evidence submitted by ICRC to this inquiry, which provides a more specific focus on conflict. Our specific areas of focus reflect our unique core mandates.
5. This submission is not intended to be an analysis of the effectiveness of UK Aid on climate adaptation. We recognise the potential challenges ahead putting policy ambition into practice with the recent reductions to ODA from 0.7-0.5% of GNI. However, we believe it is critical that UK ODA be allocated to the contexts and communities where the humanitarian needs are the greatest, in a manner consistent with principled humanitarian action that allocates aid on a needs basis. We call for the existing budget to be targeted at the communities most in need, used in an effective, transparent and accountable manner and reaches the most climate vulnerable communities.

6. Our recommendations are guided by tangible humanitarian impact experienced by communities. We recommend the Government continue to recognise the importance of preserving funding for tackling protracted humanitarian crises in a sustainable manner and for climate shocks. This includes prioritising early warning and anticipatory action, which is evidenced widely as the approach which saves lives, livelihoods and the prevention of further humanitarian needs
7. The COP26 UN climate conference is a critical moment for UK government and global leaders to raise ambition and deliver on commitments to support communities most impacted by climate change. The Red Cross and Red Crescent movement are focused on supporting the most vulnerable communities impacted by climate change, and as such ahead of COP26, we hope the Government and COP26 Presidency continue to focus and raise ambition on climate adaptation, addressing the needs of people impacted the most by current climate impacts while building long-term resilience.
8. The British Red Cross welcomes the COP26 Presidency's focus on climate adaptation and finance through key initiatives; Adaptation Action Coalition, Race to Resilience campaign and working multilaterally to support the development and adoption of ambitious initiatives such as the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP). The Climate and Development Ministerial, brought welcomed additional focus to critical areas of concern for the most climate vulnerable countries and communities, through its four tracks including responding to climate impacts today and in the future, improving access to climate finance enhancing quantity, quality and composition of climate finance, and fiscal space and debt.

#### **Implementation of the Climate and Development Ministerial Pathway**

9. The Climate and Development Ministerial pathway clearly identifies key priorities on a road map of key international engagements leading up to COP26.<sup>1</sup> Delivery on the Ministerial outcomes provides a unique opportunity for the UK Government to continue to build trust, positive commitments, implement and test solutions and overall build momentum with parties on critical issues such as access to finance towards COP26.
10. **Recommendation: We strongly encourage the UK Government to facilitate the active engagement of climate vulnerable countries and representatives of vulnerable communities in follow up action to the Climate and Development Ministerial, and to continue to break down silos between the four tracks. This can be done through a cross-cutting focus on promoting locally-led adaptation action and on ensuring adaptation and development efforts prioritise reaching the most vulnerable.**

#### **Climate finance – exceed \$100 billion target and increase share for climate adaptation**

11. At the Climate and Development Ministerial, countries called for commitments to fulfill the \$100 billion climate finance target and to boost adaptation finance, noting that \$100 billion was a floor and not a ceiling.<sup>2</sup> COP26 needs to address the delivery of the USD 100 billion target by 2020, committed to by developed country Parties to support developing countries, including its balance between supporting mitigation and adaptation. With the OECD reporting in 2018 climate finance mobilised totalled USD 78.9 billion, of which 21% went to adaptation,<sup>3</sup> continued focused diplomatic attention is required.

<sup>1</sup> COP26 UK Presidency (2021) 'Climate and Development Pathway' <https://2nsbq1gn1rl23zol93eyrcj-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Climate-and-Development-Ministerial-pathways.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> COP26 UK Presidency (2021) 'Climate and Development Ministerial Chair's Summary' <https://ukcop26.org/climate-development-ministerial-chairs-summary/>

12. The UK's commitment to 50 per cent balance in its climate finance contributions between finance for mitigation and finance for adaptation should be leveraged in upcoming diplomatic engagement, encouraging other countries to do the same ahead of COP26.
13. **Recommendation: The UK Government should continue to lead global efforts to ensure climate finance is urgently and significantly scaled up to exceed USD \$100 billion target, using its diplomatic efforts to increase the global investment and balance in climate adaptation finance with attention for clear targets on adaptation finance aimed at reaching poor and vulnerable countries and communities.**

### **Champion increased adaptation finance for the most climate vulnerable, including conflict and fragile states**

14. Despite global commitments to leave no one behind, global action and investment in adaptation, risk reduction and preparedness often leaves out the most vulnerable and marginalised communities.
15. IFRC World Disasters Report 2020 analysis on climate finance, highlighted that none of the 20 countries most vulnerable to climate change (according to ND-GAIN) and to climate- and weather-related disasters (according to INFORM) were among the 20 highest per person recipients of climate change adaptation funding.<sup>4</sup> Many of these are affected by conflict. For example, Somalia, the most vulnerable, ranks only 71st for per person funding disbursements. Notably, none of the largest five recipients of climate finance are fragile contexts.
16. As the ICRC notes in its 2020 report 'When Rain Turns to Dust', conflict-affected communities are already disproportionately affected by the consequences of the climate crisis, through loss of life, disease, economic setbacks, deteriorating living conditions and erosion of livelihoods, but unlike stable countries, fragile ones often lack the necessary structures to access and manage financing and the technical capacity to design adapted programmes.<sup>5</sup>
17. To close this gap and ensure that funding from major climate funds and bilateral donors reaches countries in crisis, and the most vulnerable and remote communities within those countries, a certain level of risk needs to be accepted.
18. **Recommendation: The UK government should champion the need for global investment in adaptation, risk reduction and anticipatory action to reach vulnerable communities at the local level where the need is greatest and that the systems and financing conditions are designed accordingly to enable access for fragile and conflict-affected states.**

### **Invest in local actors**

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<sup>3</sup> OECD (2020) 'Climate Finance Provided and Mobilised by Developed Countries in 2013-18' <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/f0773d55-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/f0773d55-en>

<sup>4</sup> IFRC (2020) 'World Disaster's Report: Come Heat or High Water' [https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/20201116\\_WorldDisasters\\_Full.pdf](https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/20201116_WorldDisasters_Full.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> ICRC (2020) 'When Rain Turns To Dust: Understanding and responding to the combined impact of armed conflicts and the climate and environment crisis on people's lives' [https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/topic/file\\_plus\\_list/rain\\_turns\\_to\\_dust\\_climate\\_change\\_conflict.pdf](https://www.icrc.org/sites/default/files/topic/file_plus_list/rain_turns_to_dust_climate_change_conflict.pdf)

19. Communities on the frontline of rising risks are experiencing the brunt of climate and weather extremes. There is international agreement that locally led, inclusive and participatory approaches are essential as part of an equitable, whole-of society approach – this is explicit in the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework. Yet climate adaptation financing tends to favour bulk spending through central governments over tailoring and targeting locally, and directly financing local organisations. There are limited incentives for supporting a diverse portfolio of small-scale programmes or growing new partnerships with local organisations and institutions. For example, IIED research found that less than 10% of funding committed under international climate funds to help developing countries take action on climate change is directed at the local level.<sup>6</sup>
20. Communities and local organisations are not only the first to respond, but also play a vital role in adapting to rising risks. Supporting local leadership and integrating local perspectives into local and national planning processes, responses and disaster risk reduction (DRR) is essential – especially perspectives from groups most vulnerable to climate risks. This includes, from people affected by conflict whose capacity to manage shocks is already strained, to migrants and displaced people who may struggle to access the services and assistance they need, to poorer urban communities.
21. There are initiatives to build on, including mechanisms in the Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund to ‘enhance direct access’ by simplifying procedures for smaller grants.<sup>7</sup> Truly locally owned, participatory financing models can expand donors’ understanding of the local realities of climate change and of what works in different contexts.
22. **Recommendation: The UK Government should champion decentralised access to funding for adaptation particularly at the local level. This should include support to scale locally-led disaster risk reduction and adaptation action that is accessible and responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable to risk, including women, children, and other marginalised groups.**

### **Invest in anticipatory action**

23. It is now known when and where the majority of weather-related emergencies are likely to strike, due to much better access to weather forecasts and risk analysis data that allows us to predict the impact of weather events with a good degree of accuracy.<sup>8</sup> Resources should be allocated in advance to make sure the most vulnerable are protected and actors on the ground have better capacity to act early and respond effectively.
24. Investment in anticipatory action and disaster risk reduction is essential to ensure that the most vulnerable communities are better able to cope and become more resilient to the impacts and effects of climate change and extreme weather events. This means supporting local- and national-level humanitarian actors to better prepare for and better manage crises and recover from them more rapidly.
25. There are many good examples of locally driven early action, DRR and climate change adaptation interventions to learn from and replicate.<sup>9</sup> For example, the Kenya Red Cross has

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<sup>6</sup> IIED (2017) ‘Delivering real change: Getting international finance to the local level’

<https://pubs.iied.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/migrate/10178IIED.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> IFRC (2020) ‘World Disaster’s Report: Come Heat or High Water’ [https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/20201116\\_WorldDisasters\\_Full.pdf](https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/20201116_WorldDisasters_Full.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> IFRC (2021) ‘The Future of Forecasts: Impact based forecasting for early action’ [https://www.forecast-based-financing.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/RCCC-Impact-based-forecasting-Guide\\_2021-3.pdf](https://www.forecast-based-financing.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/RCCC-Impact-based-forecasting-Guide_2021-3.pdf)

been supporting county-level governments to devolve climate finance and planning to the local level, and to develop frameworks for disaster risk management which allow forecast-based action funds to be created.

26. Significant investment to enable anticipatory action have been made in recent years, including the UK Government's continued partnership to drive the early warning and early action agenda and achieve the ambitious targets outlined in the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) with the aim of making 1 billion people safer from disaster by 2025. But more needs to be done to invest in risk-informed early warning systems and early action capabilities linked to crisis finance instruments.
27. **Recommendation: The UK Government should continue to champion early-action financing models that respond to climate risk based on forecasts, mitigating the worst effects of crises through anticipatory action and continue to use diplomatic efforts to secure ambitious commitments ahead of COP26.**

### **Summary of recommendations**

28. We strongly encourage the UK Government to facilitate the active engagement of climate vulnerable countries and representatives of vulnerable communities in follow up action to the Climate and Development Ministerial, and to continue to break down silos between the four tracks. This can be done through a cross-cutting focus on promoting locally-led adaptation action and on ensuring adaptation and development efforts prioritise reaching the most vulnerable.
29. The UK Government continue to lead global efforts to ensure climate finance is urgently and significantly scaled up to exceed USD \$100 billion target, using its diplomatic efforts to increase the global investment and balance in climate adaptation finance with attention for clear targets on adaptation finance aimed at reaching poor and vulnerable countries and communities.
30. The UK government should champion the need for global investment in adaptation, risk reduction and anticipatory action to reach vulnerable communities at the local level where the need is greatest and that the systems and financing conditions are designed accordingly to enable access for fragile and conflict-affected states.
31. The UK Government should champion decentralised access to funding for adaptation particularly at the local level. This should include support to scale locally-led disaster risk reduction and adaptation action that is accessible and responsive to the needs of the most vulnerable to risk, including women, children, and other marginalised groups.
32. The UK Government should continue to champion early-action financing models that respond to climate risk based on forecasts, mitigating the worst effects of crises through anticipatory action and continue to use diplomatic efforts to secure ambitious commitments ahead of COP26.

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<sup>9</sup> IFRC (2009) 'Forecast-based Financing: A new era for the humanitarian system' [https://www.forecast-based-financing.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/DRK\\_Broschuere\\_2019\\_new\\_era.pdf](https://www.forecast-based-financing.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/DRK_Broschuere_2019_new_era.pdf)