

**Written evidence by CARE International UK to the International Development Committee  
inquiry into the progress the Government has made at putting climate change at the  
centre of aid policy.**

## Introduction

1. CARE International UK is part of the global CARE confederation which has been working to defend dignity, fight poverty and to provide lifesaving humanitarian assistance to people in need for over 75 years. CARE's response to the climate crisis started in 2002 and is rapidly growing to reflect the scope and severity of the challenge.
2. The impacts of climate change are already destroying livelihoods and increasing economic and social inequalities. People living in poverty, particularly marginalised women and girls, worldwide bear the brunt of climate change.<sup>1</sup> They are seeing first-hand how unpredictable rainfall patterns cause water shortages, reduce harvests, and exacerbate hunger.<sup>2</sup> They are witnessing the effects of more extreme weather such as cyclones and hurricanes that destroy their homes, lives and incomes.<sup>3</sup> And they must cope with longer, more severe droughts which kill their livestock and threaten their crops.<sup>4</sup>
3. The UK Government has made welcome commitments to increase climate finance, ensure 50% is directed for adaptation, and to increase gender-responsiveness.<sup>5</sup> However, in order to deliver these promises, it needs to set out how new and additional finance, which does not compromise Official Development Assistance, will be met. It also needs to set targets and clear policies for increasing finance that is gender-responsive and reaches women's rights organisations.

## Recommendations

The UK Government should:

4. **Reverse the decision to cut aid spending from 0.7% of GNI to 0.5%** and set out how the UK will ensure its international climate finance is additional to and does not compromise non-climate ODA.<sup>6</sup>
5. **Maintain commitment for 50% of climate finance to be for adaptation and use the COP26 Presidency to increase adaptation finance.** The UK must lead global efforts to ensure climate finance is urgently and significantly scaled up, and access improved for poor and vulnerable countries and communities, in particular grant-based finance. The UK should champion a new global adaptation finance goal and the scale-up of locally led adaptation and support that is accessible and responsive to the needs and rights of women, indigenous people and other marginalised groups.<sup>7</sup>
6. **Increase the gender-responsiveness of climate finance and support the leadership of women and marginalised groups most affected by climate change** – The Government must significantly increase finance for gender-just climate finance, as well as increase efforts to integrate gender equality across all climate measures, by:
  - Developing minimum standards for gender-responsive climate finance, and ensure that at least 20% of adaptation finance targets gender equality, and 85% supports gender equality outcomes;<sup>8</sup>
  - Making sure women's, women's rights and feminist organisations can access finance and resources;<sup>9</sup>

- Pushing for increased participation and representation of women in all climate negotiations and climate policy spaces and lead by example by increasing the representation of women in the UK's COP26 team.<sup>10</sup>
7. **Advance progress on loss and damage, with new and additional finance** - The UK must facilitate a constructive process that concretely advances action on loss and damage at COP26 – including scaling up finance to address loss and damage, and acknowledging it as the third pillar of climate action on a par with mitigation and adaptation. Loss and damage finance must be new and additional and not part of Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments.<sup>11</sup>

## Written evidence

### **Inquiry Question 1: The extent to which the Government has made progress on implementing the Committee's recommendations, particularly those on climate finance, climate justice, the use of ODA to support fossil fuels and making climate change a strategic priority in all aid spending;**

#### Climate Finance

8. The UK has made welcome commitments to increase climate finance contributions to £11.6bn over five years and to dedicate 50% to adaptation.<sup>12</sup> However, increases to the UK's climate finance contribution have previously been counted as part of the Official Development Assistance budget, and justified as such since the ODA budget was increasing as the economy grew and the Government was meeting the law to spend 0.7% of GNI on aid. In the context of the Government's decision to renege on its legally binding commitment and instead spend 0.5% of aid in 2021, this means that increases to climate finance, unless provided as genuinely new and additional sources of finance, will be given at the expense of other development and humanitarian priorities. This means that countries in the global south, who have not caused the climate crisis, will face shrinking support for aid programmes and have also not received new and additional climate finance as promised.<sup>13</sup>
9. The UK Government should honour the UK's legally binding commitment to 0.7% of GNI for aid and set out how the UK will ensure its international climate finance is additional to and does not compromise non-climate ODA.

#### Fossil Fuels

10. The government has made progress on the IDC's recommendations to end the use of UK aid to support fossil fuels through the March 2021 policy 'Aligning UK international support for the clean energy transition.'<sup>14</sup> However, the policy's loopholes undermine its ambitions and efforts to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees. Namely, the exemption that the policy does not apply to the CDC group or the London-based Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG), and is only remitted to influence the investment policies of these institutions.
11. The UK Government should ensure robust implementation of the policy on ending overseas support for fossil fuels, which in practical terms should mean no new fossil fuel investments (ODA and non-ODA), including both direct and indirect investments through UK Export Finance, the CDC, and the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG).

### **Inquiry Question 2: Any gaps that remain between what the Government has done and what it committed to do**

### **Climate Finance Assessment - The Government must not overstate how much they spend on international climate finance to the UNFCCC and OECD**

12. Donor countries report how much they spend on international climate finance to the UNFCCC and OECD. CARE looked at the numbers and found current official figures for adaptation finance are often severely overstated and far too high. Our research shows that donors routinely exaggerate the adaptation finance component of their projects, thereby over-reporting the amount they spend on climate adaptation.<sup>15</sup>
13. The research investigated 112 adaptation projects reported by donors totalling \$6.2 billion, representing 13% of the climate adaptation funding provided to all developing countries between 2013-2017, as reported by the OECD (2019). Our research reveals that \$2.6 billion of this adaptation finance has been overreported in official estimates. This means that climate adaptation finance only represents about 58% of what donors reported. A factor resulting in the exaggeration of figures for adaptation finance is the reporting of non-concessional loans, often at face value.<sup>16</sup>
14. This all means that vulnerable people and countries are only receiving a fraction of the adaptation finance they have been promised by donor countries. And while the burden of adaptation is falling on the world's poorest communities, the historic responsibility for global emissions resides squarely with the developed nations that are currently failing to deliver on their promises.<sup>17</sup>
15. For the UK Government specifically, of the \$99 million pledged by the UK Government that CARE International assessed, \$13 million was overreported and \$8 million was underreported, meaning \$5 million in total was overreported for climate finance. Whilst this was a smaller percentage of overreporting than CARE's research found with other donors, this still represents scope for more accurate reporting of finance that is truly targeting adaptation projects.<sup>18</sup>
16. The UK Government should increase transparency and accuracy in reporting adaptation finance by, on a project-by-project basis, ensuring greater and more consistent separation of the incremental adaptation finance from non-adaptation-related finance in the project documentation that forms the basis of their reporting to both the OECD-DAC and UNFCCC. They should more explicitly integrate and signpost adaptation in the objectives, outcome indicators and budget components defined in all their project documentation, especially where projects have additional, non-climate-relevant objectives.

### **No backsliding: as a minimum maintaining climate finance at 2020 levels, with 50% for adaptation.**

17. Oxfam found that adaptation finance provision the UK can be applauded for providing a high share of their climate finance to adaptation.<sup>19</sup>
  - In 2017-18, the UK spent on climate finance:
    - **Adaptation only - 40% (\$547m)**
    - **Adaptation +50% cross-cutting - 49% (\$670m)**
  - This is living up to the 50% pledge to ensure commitment to adaptation.<sup>20</sup>
18. However, The UK is not ensuring finance goes to those on the front lines of the climate crisis in the Global South. On average, globally, around 20.5% of climate-related development

finance reported to the OECD went to Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in 2017–18, and 3% to Small Island Developing States (SIDS). If we assume that the same proportion of climate finance reported to the UNFCCC went to LDCs and SIDS, this will amount to around \$12bn and \$1.8bn per year, respectively. Specifically, the UK gave 41% to LDCs and 0.1% to SIDS in 2017-18.<sup>21</sup> The bulk of this finance was in the form of loans and other non-grant instruments. Therefore, while developed countries are likely to claim they are on track to meet the \$100bn goal, the extent to which climate finance is increasing developing country indebtedness, and the enduring gap in support for adaptation, due to this finance being provided in the form of loans, are grave concerns.<sup>22</sup>

19. In light of the vulnerability LDCs and SIDS suffer from climate shocks and stresses, the UK must ensure LDCs and SIDS are provided with the resources to cope with increasing climate impacts, commensurate with the increasing risks they face.<sup>23</sup> LDCs and SIDS are failing to receive enough of the support they need and are entitled to – especially vital grant-based finance – and the scale of finance provided in the form of loans and other non-grant instruments risks contributing to rising and unsustainable debt burdens in many countries. Thus, the resources provided by the Government must be in the form of grants, not loans.

**Inquiry Question 3: The extent to which the Government’s work to date on climate change and development has taken the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the needs of low-and-middle-income countries and vulnerable groups into account;**

**Climate justice is a gender justice issue – UNSDG 13 will not be met without also meeting UNSDG 5. The Government must have ambitious goals to reach both targets by taking women and girls’ needs into account.**

**How climate and gender justice are joint agendas**

20. Climate change exacerbates existing inequalities including those based on gender, race, class sexuality, ethnicity and disability.<sup>24</sup> Marginalised women and girls, particularly those living in poverty in the global south, face higher impacts of climate change and have less opportunity to shape decisions about how to address it.<sup>25</sup> Of the estimated 26 million people who flee their homes every year as a result of climate change, 20 million are women and girls.<sup>26</sup> Women are often responsible for subsistence farming and collecting water – which means they are increasingly affected by more extreme droughts or floods.<sup>27</sup>
21. Women are more likely to live in poverty than men, so are less likely to be able to escape the impact of major disasters and find it harder to recover from them.<sup>28</sup> Those facing intersecting, multiple barriers to equality, for example, due to discrimination based on race, ethnicity, or disability, are even more adversely affected.
22. In large parts of the world, including sub-Saharan Africa, women do most of the subsistence farming and are the primary providers of food, water, and fuel for their families.<sup>29</sup> They are also the primary carers of children and elderly relatives. These roles mean that they are disproportionately impacted by drought, flooding, cyclones, and other climate-related events.<sup>30</sup>
23. With increased water scarcity linked to climate change, women are having to travel greater distances to collect water.<sup>31</sup> One knock-on effect is that children, predominantly girls, are often kept out of education to help with the increasingly onerous domestic tasks.<sup>32</sup>

Additional pressures in the home resulting from crop failures and food shortages can also heighten the risks of domestic violence and child marriage.<sup>33</sup>

24. A study covering 141 countries found that in countries where gender inequality is greater, women were more likely to die in natural disasters than men.<sup>34</sup> Women are more likely to live in poverty than men, so are less likely to be able to escape the impact of major disasters and find it harder to recover from them.<sup>35</sup> Climate change is exacerbating food shortages and hunger: it has been estimated that 60% of chronically hungry people in the world are women and girls.<sup>36</sup>

#### **How climate action can be gender-responsive**

25. Gender analysis is a non-negotiable action in the design process for any adaptation project – because information on differences in access to, control over, and knowledge about existing resources in a community is essential for every aspect of the project – planning, data collection, and actions. It's critical to understand and respond to intersectionality, where gender inequality is experienced in different ways depending on age, class, ethnicity, sexual identity.
26. Adaptation actions in agricultural production and livelihoods, in natural resource management, in disaster risk reduction or in the protection of ecosystems must engage with and address gender-based power dynamics to succeed. Women will remain neglected by development interventions unless their differing needs, preferences, and constraints are considered. Better integrating research and practice, and designing interventions with gender in mind, will accelerate progress towards achieving many development objectives, while enabling women and men to become agents of their own empowerment.<sup>37</sup>
27. Areas for consideration should include addressing gendered labour roles in paid and unpaid work, engaging men in gender equality, access to resources and technologies, rights to control and ownership over productive resources and women's voice and access to decision making. Having gender-trained male and female facilitators and leaders in communities who are brokers and role models is critical for creating lasting change.
28. Women are powerful agents of change and with support, their confidence increases in expressing their views in the household and in public fora. Amplifying voice improves activism and political representation and leads to greater equality and the ability for women to create the change they want to see. However, there can be risk of backlash at the household level or in the public sphere, as women increasingly move into public spaces or gain financial autonomy, and therefore requires women and men to address the societal and individual norms and behaviours that reinforce inequality.<sup>38</sup>

#### **How the UK is taking a gender-responsive approach into account**

29. The UK Government's COP26 Presidency priorities has stated *"Developing a gender-responsive approach to climate finance is vital to achieving long term climate goals. But we know there is far to go: only a small proportion of bilateral climate finance has gender equality as either a primary (3% in 2014) or secondary indicator (28% in 2014); climate finance often struggles to reach locally-led grassroots initiatives which are more likely to be led by women or marginalised groups."*<sup>39</sup>

30. The UK Government has hosted a number of events and meetings which focused on increasing gender-responsive climate finance, disaster risk reduction and resilience, and supporting women's leadership, including to mark International Women's Day and at the UN Commission on the Status of Women. It will be important for these discussions to translate into decisions to focus the UK's climate finance on initiatives that have proven to have gender-responsive approaches and are accessible to women's rights organisations. This should include a focus on addressing structural causes of gender inequality through the UK's engagement with platforms and initiatives it takes part in and has influence over. It should also use its COP26 Presidency to encourage similar commitments from other donor countries.
31. However, no targets are set to ensure a certain percentage of climate finance invests in gender equality, and no guarantee of engaging with local women's rights organisations, which is necessary to achieve gender equality.
32. The Government could significantly increase finance for gender-just climate finance, as well as increase efforts to integrate gender equality across all climate measures, by:
  - Developing minimum standards for gender-responsive climate finance and ensure that at least 20% of adaptation finance targets gender equality, and 85% supports gender equality outcomes.
  - Making sure women's, women's rights and feminist organisations can access finance and resources.

**The Government must do more to take women and girl's specific needs into account in their climate discussions and policies.**

33. Women are under-represented at all levels of climate negotiations – from national to global. The average representation of women in national and global climate negotiating bodies in 2015 was below 30%.<sup>40</sup>
34. In the UK specifically, Prime Minister Boris Johnson has appointed the Secretary of State for International Development, Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP, as the UK's International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience for the COP26 Presidency, who has herself championed gender-responsive climate action.<sup>41</sup>
35. Nonetheless, most of the politicians who will host the COP26 talks for the UK in Glasgow are men, from the business secretary Alok Sharma, who will act as president of the summit, to his team of climate and energy ministers – Lord Callanan, Zac Goldsmith and Kwasi Kwarteng – who have represented the UK in recent online meetings. The SHEChangesClimate campaign found that only 15% of the COP26 leadership team were women.<sup>42</sup>
36. The UK should lead by example by increasing the representation of women at the highest level of negotiations and Government appointments to its COP26 team.

## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> CARE International. 'Responding to climate change.' *CARE International*, last updated 2nd January 2021. <https://www.careinternational.org.uk/fighting-poverty/building-resilience/responding-climate-change>
- <sup>2</sup> CARE International. 'Climate Change.' *CARE International*, last updated 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020. <https://www.care-international.org/home-page/food-and-nutrition-security-climate-change/climate-change-1>
- <sup>3</sup> See reference 2 above.
- <sup>4</sup> See reference 1 above.
- <sup>5</sup> UNDP. 'Gender and disaster risk reduction.' *UNDP*, 2013. <https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/gender/Gender%20and%20Environment/PB3-AP-Gender-and-disaster-riskreduction.pdf>
- <sup>6</sup> CARE International. 'Stand up for UK aid.' *CARE International*, last updated 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021. <https://www.careinternational.org.uk/stand-uk-aid>
- <sup>7</sup> CARE International. 'Why Climate Justice is a Gender Justice issue.' *CARE Insights*, March 2020, p. 3. [https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/media/k2/attachments/CARE-International-UK\\_Why-climate-justice-is-a-gender-justice-issue\\_March-2020.pdf](https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/media/k2/attachments/CARE-International-UK_Why-climate-justice-is-a-gender-justice-issue_March-2020.pdf)
- <sup>8</sup> CARE International. 'PUNCHING BELOW THEIR WEIGHT: Monitoring the G7 support for adaptation and gender equality.' *G7 Report*, 2021. [https://www.care-international.org/files/files/G7ReportDesign\\_Compressed.pdf](https://www.care-international.org/files/files/G7ReportDesign_Compressed.pdf)
- <sup>9</sup> See reference 7 above.
- <sup>10</sup> See reference 7 above.
- <sup>11</sup> See reference 7 above.
- <sup>12</sup> Elena Ares, Alice Broughton, Esme Kirk-Wade. 'Estimates Day Debate: COP26 Climate Conference – Debate Pack.' House of Commons Library, Number CDP 2021-0033, 9 March 2021, p. 4-5.
- <sup>13</sup> International Institute for Environment and Development. 'UK aid cuts threaten climate leadership role of COP26 president.' *IIED*, 30 March 2021. <https://www.iied.org/uk-aid-cuts-threaten-climate-leadership-role-cop26-president>
- <sup>14</sup> Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. 'Aligning UK international support for the clean energy transition: Government Response.' OGL: Crown Copyright, March 2021. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/972811/uk-support-clean-energy-transition-consultation-response.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/972811/uk-support-clean-energy-transition-consultation-response.pdf)
- <sup>15</sup> Andrew Hattle, Christopher Roy and Hans Peter Dejgaard. 'Climate Adaptation Finance: Fact Or Fiction?' *CARE Insights*, January 2021. [https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/media/k2/attachments/CARE\\_Climate-Adaptation-Finance\\_Fact-or-Fiction\\_Jan-2021.pdf](https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/media/k2/attachments/CARE_Climate-Adaptation-Finance_Fact-or-Fiction_Jan-2021.pdf)
- <sup>16</sup> See reference 15 above, p. 2.
- <sup>17</sup> See reference 15 above, p. 36.
- <sup>18</sup> See reference 15 above, p. 18.
- <sup>19</sup> OXFAM, 'Climate Finance Shadow Report 2020: Assessing Progress Towards The \$100 Billion Commitment.' *Oxfam Library*, October 2020. <https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621066/bp-climate-finance-shadow-report-2020-201020-en.pdf>
- <sup>20</sup> See reference 19 above.
- <sup>21</sup> See reference 19 above, p. 10.
- <sup>22</sup> See reference 19 above, p. 20.
- <sup>23</sup> See reference 19 above, p. 21.
- <sup>24</sup> M. Halton. 'Climate change impacts women more than men.' *BBC*, 15 July 2019 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-43294221>
- <sup>25</sup> See reference 7 above.
- <sup>26</sup> B. Kamal. 'Climate migrants might reach One Billion by 2050.' *ReliefWeb*, 21 August 2017. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/climate-migrants-might-reach-one-billion-2050>
- <sup>27</sup> Nellemann, C., Verma, R., and Hislop, L. (eds). *Women at the frontline of climate change: Gender risks and hopes. A Rapid Response Assessment*. United Nations Environment Programme: GRID-Arendal, 2011. <https://www.grida.no/publications/198>
- <sup>28</sup> See reference 24 above.
- <sup>29</sup> Tricia Glazebrook, Samantha Noll and Emmanuela Opoku. 'Gender Matters: Climate Change, Gender Bias, and Women's Farming in the Global South and North.' *Agriculture* 2020 (10), pp. 2-25.

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<sup>30</sup> See reference 27 above.

<sup>31</sup> World Food Programme Gender Policy and Strategy. 'Facts and Figures.' *UN Women*, 2012.

<https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/commission-on-the-status-of-women-2012/facts-and-figures>

<sup>32</sup> See reference 7 above.

<sup>33</sup> European Journalism Centre. 'Brides of the sun: An investigation into how climate change is creating a generation of child brides.' *Brides of the Sun*, 2017. <https://www.bridesofthesun.com/>

<sup>34</sup> E. Neumayer and T. Plumper. 'The gendered nature of natural disasters: The impact of catastrophic events on the gender gap in life expectancy, 1981–2002.' *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97(3), 2007, pp. 551–566

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<sup>35</sup> UN Women. 'UN Women and the World Bank unveil new data analysis on women and poverty.' *UN Women*, 9 November 2017. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2017/11/news-un-women-and-the-world-bank-unveil-new-data-analysis-on-womenand-poverty>

<sup>36</sup> See reference 34 above.

<sup>37</sup> Karl Deering, 'Gender-transformative adaptation to climate change: Let's learn from evidence of what works.' *CARE Insights*, 21<sup>st</sup> August 2019. <https://insights.careinternational.org.uk/development-blog/gender-transformative-adaptation-to-climate-change-let-s-learn-from-evidence-of-what-works>

<sup>38</sup> See reference 37 above.

<sup>39</sup> HM Government. 'Priorities For Public Climate Finance In The Year Ahead: COP26 Presidency.' *Un Climate Change Conference UK 2021*, January 2021, p. 14. <https://2nsbq1gn1rl23zol93eyrccj-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/PRIORITIES-FOR-PUBLIC-CLIMATE-FINANCE-IN-THE-YEAR-AHEAD.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> See reference 7 above.

<sup>41</sup> Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, The Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP, and The Rt Hon Alok Sharma MP. 'UK appoints champion to support developing countries to deal with climate change.' *Gov.uk.*, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2020. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-appoints-champion-to-support-developing-countries-to-deal-with-climate-change>

<sup>42</sup> Camilla Hodgson. 'Climate leaders protest against lack of women at high levels in UN summit.' *Financial Times*, December 10, 2020. <https://www.ft.com/content/ae1f6fba-641e-46c1-a6ba-3d960d0bc9f6>