

High Stakes and High Expectations from the Bali Climate Change Summit:

CARE International Calls for Climate Change Policies that Work for Poor People

CARE Experts Available for Interviews

Bali, Indonesia (December 2, 2007)—As the 13th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) gets underway in Bali, CARE International is urging all Parties to do more to ensure that climate change policies work for poor people.

This month, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned that we are on the brink of committing the world to catastrophic climate change. The impacts of climate change are already hurting the world's poorest people though they have contributed little to causing the problem.

In a joint statement released with Oxfam, Greenpeace and WWF, CARE International urges world leaders to heed scientists' clear message and take serious action to tackle the unprecedented threat of climate change. Together, we say that Bali is the time and place to act.

Our expectations are simple. At Bali, Parties to the UNFCCC must agree on a clear mandate to launch negotiations for a new global compact to succeed the Kyoto Protocol's first phase. This compact must:

- Be finalized by 2009 and in place by 2012;
- Be sufficiently ambitious and comprehensive to ensure that the world's greenhouse gas emissions peak and begin to fall well before 2020;
- Include a commitment by industrialized nations to adopt binding, absolute targets to cut their emissions by at least 30% from 1990 levels by 2020; and
- Offer a fair deal on adaptation for the world's most vulnerable developing countries.

CARE is a leader in taking practical action to reduce the impacts of climate change on the world's poorest people.

"Climate change is self-evident to the people we work with," says Dr. Charles Ehrhart, Climate Change Coordinator for CARE International. "It is already affecting their livelihoods, food security and access to water. We see it contributing to tensions within and between communities. We see it making poor people's lives even harder."

Dr. Ehrhart adds that Parties to the UNFCCC must take dramatic steps to mitigate climate change. These steps have to tackle the difficult issue of forestry and land-use change, which contributes approximately 25 percent of the world's annual greenhouse gas emissions. According to Ehrhart, "If we lose the fight to conserve the world's forests, we will lose the fight to avoid catastrophic climate change. Our choice of strategy is equally crucial – it must be done in such a way that we don't make poor people's lives even harder. It should be done in such a way that we reduce poverty. This is because solutions to climate change, poverty reduction and conservation are co-dependent."

It is too late to stop substantial climate change; therefore, Parties to the UNFCCC also must prioritize getting resources to poor people in support of adaptation.

An Adaptation Fund was established under the Kyoto Protocol. However, it still isn't operational. "We must put the Adaptation Fund into practice now," says Angie Dazé, CARE's Regional Climate Change Coordinator for Southern and West Africa. "There's no time to lose in making it operational and in making sure that it is managed in a way that is fair, efficient and flexible. It must also be easy for the most vulnerable communities and countries to gain access to it."

Flexibility in adaptation funds is critical so they can be integrated into a range of development policies and programs to ensure that development efforts are resilient to climate change, and contribute to reducing the vulnerability of the poor to its impacts.