

Web Update
Bonn Climate Change Talks
May 31 – June 11, 2010



CARE has been active in the Climate Change Talks in Bonn from May 31 to June 11 with a delegation of nine staff. In addition, a group from the Southern Voices project – who work with CARE partner organizations in Tanzania, DR Congo, Nepal, Ghana and Vietnam – participated with the financial support of CARE.

On May 28, just prior to the two weeks of negotiations, CARE organized a conference to present its latest study on adaptation, “*Waiting for the water to come? Poverty reduction in times of global climate change.*” Cynthia Brenda Awuor, CARE’s Climate Change expert for East and Central Africa, gave a vivid description on the panel of how poor people in Africa will be affected by climate change and how they can adapt under the present circumstances. “When I was working in a Somali community in Southern Ethiopia, people were experiencing a long drought. According to the entire community, 2009 was the hottest year so far. Some of their livestock had died, and a majority of the living ones were weak and less productive. This causes a lot of suffering because livestock is their main source of income,” Awuor said. “To survive, many of the community members said they would leave it all to Allah (God). This was a sign that they were losing hope and were almost reaching the point of total despair.”

On June 3, CARE together with the Accra Caucus on Forests and Climate Change launched a new report which proposes an alternative vision for achieving the objectives of REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). The Accra Caucus is a network of southern and northern NGOs representing around 100 civil society and Indigenous Peoples’ organizations. Based on case studies from around the world, the report “*Realising Rights, Protecting Forests: An Alternative Vision for Reducing Deforestation*” argues for socially just policies and actions that tackle the drivers of deforestation, rather than focusing exclusively on carbon. “This study by the Accra Caucus argues that a global REDD agreement could do harm unless it safeguards the rights of people. Action on REDD must not occur without the free and prior and informed consent by the people affected by those decisions,” said Raja Jarrah, CARE International’s senior advisor on REDD and co-editor of the report.

The Bonn Climate Change Talks covered a large variety of topics including REDD, Adaptation, Fast Start Finance, governance of finance and sources of finance. The CARE team provides an overview of the status quo from Bonn:

Adaptation

Over the course of the two weeks of negotiations, Parties tackled a number of issues related to adaptation. The discussion of the current Long-term Cooperative Action text (LCA) regarding adaptation focused primarily on crunch issues, including the link between adaptation and finance, the inclusion of response measures in the adaptation text, a loss and damage mechanism, and the role of an Adaptation Committee. The LCA session on the adaptation text, however, did not reveal a significant shift in Parties’ positions on these elements of the text.

Parties also discussed the proposed terms of reference for the review of the Adaptation Fund. However, Parties were not in agreement on the scope and timing of that review, and it is likely that these discussions will need to continue before terms of reference are agreed. Parties did recommend the continuance of the Nairobi Work Programme.

Finally, Spain formally announced in the LCA that it is working with Costa Rica and the United States on a near-term adaptation initiative. Details of the initiative are still being discussed among the three countries, but

initial information indicates that they intend it to facilitate learning, particularly at the regional level, regarding adaptation approaches and measurements of success. Because these three countries have not finalized the initiative, CARE and partners a good opportunity to help shape it.

REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation)

The REDD negotiating text was one of the sections closest to completion in Copenhagen and it was not re-opened for negotiation in Bonn. However, there remains the possibility that the REDD text could be used as a bargaining chip in negotiations in other areas, so we need to remain vigilant to ensure that the safeguards currently included are maintained.

An instance of this potential danger arose when the Congo basin countries (COMIFAC -Central African Forest Commission) drew attention to the huge loopholes in rules being negotiated for developed country forest emissions under the Kyoto Protocol (LULUCF – Land Use and Land Use change). They contrasted this with the more stringent demands being proposed for developing countries to participate in REDD. While a technical fix has now been proposed for some of the LULUCF loopholes, the threat remains for weaker controls on REDD in the future, with disastrous consequences for forests and local communities.

In parallel with the UNFCCC negotiations, a large group of countries have set up an Interim REDD+ Partnership to fast-track finance and readiness activities pending a UNFCCC deal, brokered by the Government of Norway. CARE's concern is that this may enable REDD to start being implemented in certain countries without the agreed international safeguards that CARE has been advocating for in the UNFCCC. The apparent progress made by this partnership has led to some parties proposing similar ad-hoc negotiations for other negotiating tracks such as adaptation.

Fast Start Finance

Fast start finance (FSF) has been one of the big topics in the Bonn negotiations, as the 100 billion US Dollars pledged in the Copenhagen Accord can help leverage the negotiations. The European Union (EU) hosted a side event where it gave an update on its contribution pledged in the Copenhagen Accord. From that presentation, it is clear that there are still major gaps in the transparency of the EU FSF. And, in many instances, it is still unclear whether the funding is new and additional, whether it will be given as grants or loans, and how the balance between adaptation and mitigation will be.

The EU is, however, aware of these shortcomings in their reporting, and will try to improve the situation before Cancun. The reporting so far does unfortunately point in the direction of financing being old money in new bottles. The rest of the developed world still hasn't reported anything on FSF.

Governance of finance

Governance of finance as well featured prominently in the negotiations in Bonn. The line between developing and developed countries hasn't been 100 percent clear, but the discussion has evolved around whether an agreement should include the creation of an overarching financial board that will be disbursing the finance to thematic funds or not. Some developed countries (including the US) have flat out rejected the idea of an overarching board that has been pushed for by some smaller developing countries. However, there appeared to be some movement in the negotiations with regard to the role of existing institutions in the governance of future climate finance.

Sources of finance

The high level panel advisory group on finance (AGF) – appointed by United Nations General Secretary Ban Ki

Moon to give advise on the sources used for raising financial resources – presented an update on their work. They said they expect to have their final report ready in late October this year. There was a debate between developing countries, which have argued that there is no time to wait for this report and that sources should be discussed now, whereas the developed countries do not want to open up this discussion until the report is finished. The results from the AGF analysis will only be recommendations. The analysis will cover all finance sources, both private and public.

Meetings before COP 17

It was decided that there will be another one-week session in Bonn in the beginning of August and a two-week session in China before the next Climate Change Conference will take place in Cancun, Mexico.

The studies presented in Bonn can be downloaded here:

“Realising Rights, Protecting Forests: An Alternative Vision for Reducing Deforestation”

- *English:* http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/reports/Accra_Report_English.pdf
- *French:* http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/reports/Accra_Report_French.pdf
- *Spanish:* http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/reports/Accra_Report_Spanish.pdf

“Waiting for the water to come? Poverty reduction in times of global climate change”

- *English:* http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/reports/Waiting_For_The_Water.pdf
- *German:* http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/reports/091215_Warten_bis_das_Wasser_kommt.pdf

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