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CARE study shows: climate change exacerbates poverty

Progress in climate change negotiations only successful if rich countries keep their promises

A new study released today explains that poor people are the most affected group due to climate change, and are often the ones who suffer the most. The report by CARE and the Centre for Development Research of the Bonn University (Germany)- *"Waiting for the water to come? Poverty reduction in times of global climate change"* - examines the relation between poverty reduction and climate change. It will be presented today at a conference right before the upcoming UNFCCC climate talks which start on May 31st in Bonn.

The field study clearly shows that living standards determine how people can adapt to climate change. At the same time, the impacts of climate change widen the gap between poor and rich people within communities as well as regions, countries and continents.

"Climate change tears many successes of poverty reduction apart. Climate-related shocks are affecting the lives of millions of poor people with increasing frequency and severity. Without urgent action, recent development progress will be reversed," said Poul Erik Lauridsen who is leading CARE International's policy work on climate change.

The impacts of climate change drive many people into desperation. "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 majority of the living ones were weak and less productive. This causes a lot of suffering because livestock is their main source of income," said Cynthia Brenda Awuor, CARE's Climate Change expert for East and Central Africa. "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."

For organizations such as CARE, for which climate change poses a new threat in the fight against poverty, the study recommends eight points of action. This list includes such actions as the utilization of local adaptation strategies, the integration of local communities for planning and implementing adaptation measures, and the usage of local knowledge.

The report identifies ways to help vulnerable people in developing countries adapt to climate change. Recognizing that climate change is going to affect economies of many developing countries negatively, developed countries have promised to deliver new and additional resources to developing countries to help them combat climate change. However, most pledges of fast start climate change funding (2010-2012) from developed countries are recycled aid money. "This is simply unacceptable. If we are to make any progress in negotiations this year rich countries must live up to past promises and deliver new and additional money to cover the costs of climate change in developing countries," Lauridsen said.

You can download the study [here](#). If you like to interviews with Cynthia Brenda Awuor or any other of the CARE experts present at the Bonn Climate Change Talks, please contact:

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***CARE International** is a leading aid organisation with more than 60 years' experience fighting global poverty and delivering emergency assistance. In 72 countries, CARE works with the poorest communities to improve basic health and education, enhance rural livelihoods and food security, increase access to clean water and sanitation, and expand economic opportunity. Our long-term development assistance and emergency relief initiatives are currently benefiting about 55 million people around the world. In response to the growing crisis, CARE is helping the most world's most vulnerable communities adapt to the impacts of climate change.*