




CLIMATE CHANGE AND POPULATION DYNAMICS

Many of the world's poorest countries face the double burden of climate change and high population growth, which worsens the effects of climate change and stretches resources. Vulnerable groups, including women and girls in these countries, are even more disproportionately affected by climate change effects in terms of adverse health, safety and increased gender inequality.

While climate change is largely caused by the **unsustainable consumption and production** patterns of the world's richer countries, it is **the lack of fulfilment of sexual and reproductive health and rights - including an unmet need for family planning** - that to large parts lead to high population growth in the world's poorer countries. The latter is making it difficult for the most vulnerable communities to adapt to the effects of climate change, and both challenges need to be solved at once!

WE ASK OF THE PARTIES TO COP22 TO:

- Deliver on their commitments to the **Paris Agreement and COP21 Decision** of respecting human rights, the right to health, gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- Integrate reproductive health and family planning in **National Adaptation Plans** – using a rights-based approach – and support implementation financially.
- Deliver on their commitment to the **2030 Agenda** of 'leaving no one behind' by disaggregating data by sex, age, geographical location, income, socio-economic status and other parameters to reveal inequalities and social equity issues, highlight the impact of climate change, and revise adaptation plans and financing accordingly to reach those furthest behind.
- Work with **relevant partners** from the population, health, gender and SRHR communities to fulfill reproductive health and rights as a goal in itself (SDG 3.7 and 5.6), and as a means to adapt to the effects of climate change (Paris Agreement)



225 million women in developing countries have an **unmet need for modern contraception** and 74 million pregnancies every year are unintended (UNFPA and Guttmacher, Adding it Up, 2014)

Climate change affects women and girls more, as they are the ones who mainly fetch water and other natural resources such as firewood for cooking, a situation made more demanding and time consuming by drought, flooding and other effects of climate change.

On average, a woman in Uganda gives birth to **5,8 children in her lifetime**. Often, such women would prefer to have 2-3 children fewer than that



IPCC highlighted population dynamics in their 2014 report and the important role family planning can play as an adaptation strategy and in reducing climate change vulnerability.



Comoros, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kiribati, Sao Tome and Principe, Uganda and Zambia have recognized family planning as an adaptation strategy in their national adaptation programs.

PSDA WELCOMES THE PARIS AGREEMENT AND SEVERAL PSDA MEMBERS ARE ATTENDING COP22 TO CALL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES IN PARTICULAR:

“Parties should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations and the right to development, as well as gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity” (*preamble*)

“Parties acknowledge that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems (...) with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socio-economic and environmental policies and actions” (*Article 7.5*)

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AS AN ADAPTATION MEASURE

Adoption of the Paris Agreement committed Parties to deliver on the most ambitious climate agreement ever reached including a goal on adaptation. This requires enormous technical, financial and creative measures from everybody involved including the application of an integrated human rights based approach to sexual and reproductive health and rights, which needs to be incorporated in resilience and climate adaptation plans and programs. This will improve the ability of the most vulnerable people – especially women and girls -- to adapt to the effects of climate change, and make them more resilient towards new challenges.

ABOUT PSDA

The Population and Sustainable Development Alliance (PSDA) is an international network of civil society organizations from the global north and south who advocate jointly for integrating sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), population dynamics, health and gender with environment and climate change using a human rights based approach. We do so, because these areas are interlinked and thus will be met most effectively and sustainably using an integrated and holistic approach.

For more information on PSDA and our activities during COP22, please visit our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/populationandsustainabledevelopmentalliance/>