



AGROECOLOGY CAN ACHIEVE CLIMATE JUSTICE

**Small-scale Farmers
Sharing Impacts and
Proposals**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1

BACKGROUND

2

ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

3

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE
ON SMALL-SCALE FARMERS' LIVELIHOOD?

10

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IN ORDER
TO ALLEVIATE THE CLIMATE CRISIS
AND ITS IMPACT?

14

SMALL-SCALE FARMERS' CALL TO
THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES

15

CONCLUSION



BACKGROUND



Climate change is already posing a threat to Uganda's ecosystems and livelihoods. Since 1960, annual temperatures have risen by 1.3°C, with annual rainfall expected to rise by 3.1°C by the 2060s. Food security, poverty, human diseases, crop and livestock pests and diseases, among other things, are all affected. Uganda is extremely vulnerable to climate change due to its reliance on rain-fed agriculture.

Uganda like other nations annually participates in the international negotiations on climate change dubbed Conference of Parties, where decisions that inform international climate policy frameworks and strategies are made under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This is in the struggle towards realizing a 1.5°C world. The IPCC 4th Assessment Report shows that if we stay on the current trajectory, Africa will warm 1.5 times faster than the global mean. The report further indicates that parts of Africa are already too vulnerable to climate change and already experiencing a 2-degree Celsius warming, way higher than the 1.5 degrees as previously thought. Yet Africa especially women and youth small-scale farmers remains the least capable to deal with the adverse impacts of climate change. As the world was still grappling with the emission reduction discussions, it faced with COVID-19 pandemic that brought life to a halt. This has highlighted the urgent need for a radical sustainable direction to usher in change and bring relief, dignity, and equity to billions of people including small-scale farmers, peasants, indigenous communities and fisher folks, whose survival is hanging by a thin thread. According to the FAO, climate-related disasters disproportionately affect food-insecure, poor people—over 75 per cent of whom derive their livelihoods from agriculture.

The UN Climate Change Conference of Parties brings parties together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Parties review the progress made in the fight against the climate crisis after the Paris Agreement signed in 2015, where nationally determined contribution targets were presented by parties for reducing emissions. The summit focuses on rapid reduction of global emissions, and climate finance among others. The COP agreements fall far short of ensuring a food system that feeds people in a way that is sensitive to different types of food, production conditions, and the relationship between this food and production processes with labor, the environment, and local and indigenous communities.

ESAFF Uganda strongly believes that agroecology is a critical component of the transition and that market-based solutions will not provide climate justice. Agroecology achieves climate justice with proven serious solutions to climate crisis crucial for climate mitigation and adaptation and small-scale farmers therefore must be at the heart of the Global Climate Crisis Negotiations given the impact that climate change makes on agriculture and the livelihood of small-scale farmers especially women in the rural areas of Uganda.

¹ <https://www.fao.org/resilience/news-events/detail/en/c/885036/>



ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

ESAFF Uganda acknowledges that achieving a more resilient agricultural sector is fundamental not only for a low-carbon future, but also the realization of more than 8 of the Sustainable Development Goals. Despite the fact that small-scale farmers suffer the biggest impact of climate change in Africa, their voices during national, regional and international engagements strategizing to address climate change are rarely considered coz of limited or no representation. It's on that background that ESAFF Uganda found it important to have a discussion with small-scale farmers and document their voices ahead of the climate change engagements this year.

ESAFF Uganda therefore documented small-scale farmers' voices on the impact of the changing climate to their communities and calls to their leaders on what should be done to mitigate the climate crisis. These were collected from different engagements like community meetings/events, dialogues and media engagements.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON SMALL-SCALE FARMERS' LIVELIHOODS?



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Small-scale farmers have been greatly affected by the climate change crisis. For my case, the impact of these changes has been hard. Over the years, I have seen changes in my harvests, I used to harvest at least 95% of my crops which I would sell some and leave the other for home consumption. Currently I am experiencing very low yields which sometimes are not even enough to feed my family. If not too much rain, it's too much sunshine which greatly affects our soils, gardens and yields.

NALWADDA REHEMAH
Mukono District



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Climate change has greatly destroyed our soils. I have seen continued declines in soil moisture hence an increased need for irrigation. This is also leading to smaller yields and even desertification.

MASUDIO MARGARET
Adjumani District



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Excessive rainfall has destroyed most of my crops in the field especially the maize and coffee. The coffee berries usually ripen even before they are mature leading to losses because they cannot be bought at the same prices as the mature coffee.

NANTONGO EVA
Mukono District



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Unpredictability of the weather which leads to late or early planting has led to destruction of most of my crops. I can no longer produce enough to reach the market demand which has eventually reduced on my income.

KATO MOSES
Mukono District



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My garden was attacked by Invasive weeds such as Striga Asciatica which have greatly affected crop growth and development. Continuous weeding is now necessary, which is burdensome to me and my wife.

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We have also been falsely predicting planting seasons owing to shifts in the onset of rains, which has led to seed losses or poor harvests.

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The heavy rains have also made most of the roads so impassable, we cannot transport any produce to the market easily. Some of my crops end up ripening in the store.

MIIRO JAMES
Mukono District



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Due to the little rains, there is less penetration of water into the soil which has led to less fertile soils and low-quality yields.

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The prolonged sunshine has decreased household food stocks leading to food insecurity. As women small scale farmers, we bear the cultural responsibility of ensuring that the household is fed. During dry seasons, food is scarce and we hoard the little food we have left for our families instead of taking to the markets to make some money.

NAKIJIBA IRENE
Mukono District



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In some crops like maize, there has been increase in new number of pests and diseases, these affect yields and discourage production. Most of these pest and diseases are prevalent in the seeds that are being distributed by government programs.

MOLLY ADONGO
Apac District



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As a poultry farmer, I find it hard to buy the highly priced poultry feeds for my chicken. These prices were hiked because of the scarce maize which is an effect of the destruction of most of the maize farms by the unreliable climate conditions. My cow and goats too lack pasture to feed due to the dried-up grazing grounds.

KABWAMA PAUL
Mukono District



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Climate change has destroyed the social support and security that always existed in our communities because of the reduced resources hence creating a bit of competition within the members of my community. Now most people are living independently unlike in the previous days.

VICKY LOKWIYA
Gulu District



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As a maize farmer, the excessive rain hampers proper drying of my maize before I can store it. The maize gets affected by molding and aflatoxin contamination, rendering them unsafe for consumption. My whole family is exposed to health risks from the consumption of contaminated food.

MUSUUZA MARGARET
Mukono District



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We have been affected by massive crop failures which have created food shortages, which in turn increase the incidences of food theft from household gardens and granaries, thereby heightening insecurity.

WALI CHRISTOPHER
Mukono District



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The changing and unpredictable climate has greatly affected my livestock, my cattle became so thin and decrease the milk production due to lack of pasture during the prolonged dry seasons. The income I would get from selling many liters of milk also greatly reduces.

KAMUKAMA PATRICIA
Mukono District



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Access to clean water for my cattle has been difficult. Nearby water sources dried up because of the long dry spell, while water sources get contaminated with eroded soil during floods making the water unfit for home consumption.

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As a youth, it has been so difficult for me to pay back bank loans due to destruction of crops which led to losses.

ASABA RICHARD
Mukono District



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Climate change has discouraged many young people and made them disregard agriculture hence they don't see any hope in it. This is affecting production because we are old and can no longer produce the much food needed; we need the young people to take over now.

EBUU MARTIN
Apac District



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Climate change has increased the cost of living in the community and with the coming of COVID-19 it's even worse.

EBUU MARGARET
Apac District

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IN ORDER TO ALLEVIATE THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND ITS IMPACTS?



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I think there is need for the Government to increase funds in climate research with keen focus on agroecology and also strengthen preparedness like early warning systems to inform small-scale farmers on changing patterns hence guiding our adaptation actions.

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Government and different partners should use the media especially local media to provide detailed periodic climate information to enable small-scale farmers plan accordingly.

NALWADDA REHEMAH
Mukono District



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Government should improve the infrastructures like roads and water drainages in the rural areas that have been affected by the impacts of climate change. This may require the national government to seriously fund the local government.

CHRISTINE NABWAMI
Mityana District



Given the way climate change is impacting on women rights especially in our communities, government through the different structures should develop adaptation programs specifically focusing on women in rural areas. More work should also be done on addressing the current gender issues caused by climate change.

PETER ENYETU
Amuria District



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In my view, the Government should carry out regional soil testing to identify lacking nutrients. This will help us know which nutrients or organic fertilizers to add to our soils.

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The Government should also regulate destruction of wetlands to erect big factories which leads to floods and conduct farmer led and inclusive research.

NAKIJOBA IRENE
Mukono District



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The Government should sensitize small scale farmers to practice Ecological Organic farming methods, agroforestry, preserve and use indigenous seeds that are more resistant to climate change. This is one of the key ways to fight against the climate crisis and ensuring food sovereignty.

KATO MOSES
Mukono District



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As an L.C.3 Councilor, I realized that many of my fellow farmers were affected by the climate change crisis though many of them had no idea of the situation, we need more sensitization and information on climate change made easily available to all small-scale farmers.

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I encourage small scale farmers to plant more trees and consider utilizing energy saving technologies such as gas and brickettes. The government should invest in promoting tree planting and restriction of charcoal burning and cutting down trees for brick burning.

NANTONGO EVA
Mukono District



“

Government should improve the infrastructures like roads and water drainages in the rural areas that have been affected by the impacts of climate change. This may require the national government to seriously fund the local government.

IKAARI ZERIDA
Jinja District



“

Given the way climate change is impacting on women rights especially in our communities, government through the different structures should develop adaptation programs specifically focusing on women in rural areas. More work should also be done on addressing the current gender issues caused by climate change.

CHRISTINE OJOK
Gulu District



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I request the Government to repair/ grade our roads during the rainy seasons and popularize irrigation among small scale farmers and provide workshops on climate change to further educate us on its effects and how we can adapt to the crisis.

MIIRO JAMES
Mukono District



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I feel like government and different global stakeholders should publicly acknowledge that agroecology is the answer to the current climate crisis. They should invest in upscaling agroecology both in policy and practice.

MASUDIO MAGARET
Adjumani District.



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The Government should enact bylaws that protect the environment starting from the village to district level and put it into law for every family, school, church, mosque to plant at least 10 trees. This will eventually increase on the number of trees which will conserve our environment.

KABWAMA PAUL
Mukono District



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The Government should implore policy action to address climate change and variability impacts and prioritize promotion of gender-responsive climate-smart agriculture, gender transformative approaches to empower women and increase farmers' access to productive resources.”

NAKIJOB A IRENE
Mukono District



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The government should support civil society organizations to train us on climate resilient technologies in agriculture as well as reduce costs on irrigation equipment for small scale farmers.

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I think the Government should put a special credit facility or fund for small scale farmers specifically faced by climate change crisis such as floods, hailstorms and prolonged dry spells.

MUSUUZA MARGARET
Mukono District



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There should also be sensitization of students in schools about climate change and its effects. They should also be taught the various ways how our environment can be restored through planting trees in schools.

KAMUKAMA PATRICIA
Mukono District



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We, the small-scale farmers should be consulted in any processes concerning climate change since it impacts our livelihoods directly. Government and other stakeholders should deliberately put-up structures that ensure that small-scale farmers' voices are profound in all policy process.

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Our governments in the Malabo Declaration committed to reduce vulnerabilities of the livelihoods of our population through building resilience systems. Government should invest heavily in building resilience systems especially through agroecology.

HAKIM BALIRAINÉ
Mayuge District

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Us in Kasese district, we need government and partners to install disaster early warning systems that can protect our livelihoods from being destroyed by the results of climate change. Already some of our members has lost property and lives in different floods and other disasters. We need this to stop.

PANGANI BEATRICE
Kasese District

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Government should make information about climate change adaptation more accessible for small-scale farmers. This information should be translated into the local languages; this will be very instrumental in guiding our actions towards climate change adaptation.

EMMANUEL TUMUSHIIME
Kisoro District

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I ask the government to include the youth in environment restoration programs and popularize organic farming which protects the environment as well as regulate natural forests and stop tempering of natural streams and lakes.

ASABA RICHARD
Mukono District

SMALL-SCALE FARMERS' CALL TO THE CONFERENCE OF PARTIES;



During the different dialogue meetings organized by ESAFF Uganda, small-scale farmers made some calls to the conference of parties, small-scale farmers emphasize that Agroecology achieves climate, social and ecological justices, these calls to the Parties of the UNFCCC include;

Address the current financial limitations which is affecting the implementation of policies and programs that are focused on addressing climate change in an ecological friendly manner. We call on parties to desist from funding climate change policies and programs that don't protect food sovereignty in Uganda. We stress that funding should be with shorter timeframes since commitments towards emission reduction and climate finance is urgent.

Parties should urgently prioritize climate information access, sustainable and adaptive food systems rooted in agroecological systems.

Parties should focus on prioritization of adaptation in Uganda's programs of action in Nationally Determined Contribution.

Because of the proven evidence, focus should be on transition to agroecology with increased recognition and support for agroecology within UNFCCC and other international fora as the best solution for the climate and food system crises.

Parties should support the domestication of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) which set platforms for voices from rural communities to be heard. When implemented-UNDROP would be key in addressing the economic, social, cultural, and political dimensions of climate change and human rights.

Align awarding criteria and procedures of financial mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund to small-scale farmers and their organizations so that farmer organisations can access available funding given their capacity to mobilizing small-scale farmers especially women and youths and building workable grassroot climate adaptation and mitigation measures.

Parties should purposefully invest resources both technical and financial in research on agroecological approaches like resilient agricultural practices that are being nurtured by small-scale farmers. These approaches respect traditional knowledge and promote food sovereignty.

Parties should create a direct platform to the UNFCCC that actively involve small-scale farmers especially women as a special group that experience the daily impact of the decisions and actions by policy makers and implementers on climate change.

Parties should further strengthen youth capacity through empowering youth to access skills development to create business opportunities in areas that protect and restore ecosystems. This will play a big role in supporting climate and sustainable development ambitions.

Parties should adopt models that also involve the next generation like school children in the discussion at COP because they are the custodians of the future.



CONCLUSION

We strongly believe that small-scale farmers therefore must be at the heart of the Global Climate Crisis Negotiations given the impact that climate change makes on agriculture and the livelihood of small-scale farmers especially women in the rural areas of Uganda. ESAFF Uganda strongly believes that agroecology achieves climate justice with proven serious solutions to climate crisis crucial for climate mitigation and adaptation. Agroecology is key to small-scale farmers because it strengthens livelihoods and fosters collective actions to addressing the climate crisis and employs two agricultural methods, such as diversification of crops, conservation tillage, green manures, natural fertilizers, biological pest control, rainwater harvesting, and production of crops and livestock in ways that store carbon and protects natural resources.

Brief about ESAFF Uganda

Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) Uganda is a small-scale farmer-led policy influencing movement formed to facilitate processes through which small-scale farmers' development concerns can be solicited, articulated and ultimately addressed through local and national policies and programs. The formation of ESAFF in 2002 was a direct response to the need to create a forum where Small Scale Farmers (SSFs) are able to deliberate on and voice their concerns.

ESAFF Uganda works to enhance the SSFs ability to make informed decisions and participate meaningfully in development processes through capacity building, advocacy, research and institutional development. The forum brings together small-scale farmers into a social movement to build common aspirations, learning and linkages. ESAFF Uganda brings together small-scale crop farmers, pastoralists and traditional fisher folks. ESAFF Uganda works towards a vision of empowered self-reliant small-scale farmers through nurturing the participation of small-scale farmers in sustainable development processes, for self-reliance through advocacy, capacity building and institutional development. ESAFF Uganda has membership in 54 districts of Uganda and is part of ESAFF which is a regional movement in 16 countries in eastern and southern Africa. ESAFF Uganda is also a member of La Via Campesina which is the largest small-scale farmers/peasants movement in the world.

To learn more about our work, please visit the following websites;



www.esaffuganda.org

www.organicuganda.org

www.agroecologyschool.org

www.kilimomart.com



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