



World Food Programme

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES

# Loss and Damage Solutions

## Overview

The term “loss and damage” refers to the negative **consequences of climate change that occur despite mitigation and adaptation** efforts. Historically anchored in the climate justice movement, the distribution of loss and damage across vulnerable communities reflects the reality that communities who have contributed the least to the climate crisis are facing the worst of its impacts.

Loss and damage materializes in the wake of extreme weather events such as heatwaves, floods, storms and droughts, as well as slow-onset events such as sea level rise, desertification and biodiversity loss. The scale of loss and damage can range from the disruption of essential services, displacement and food insecurity to the irreversible loss of life, culture, territory and ecosystem services.

## Solutions

The climate crisis is a key driver of the unprecedented rise in global hunger and the face of loss and damage is that of every person whose food security is affected by unimpeded climate shocks and stressors. As the world’s largest humanitarian organization, **the World Food Programme (WFP) witnesses firsthand how climate-induced losses and damages contribute to the global food crisis.**

Not only is WFP on the ground saving lives after climate disasters by providing immediate relief and food assistance to address losses and damages from climate change - it also empowers communities to strengthen their resilience against climate shocks, supporting them avert and minimise losses to livelihoods and food systems.

November 2024

**In 2023, WFP supported almost 18 million people in 60 countries with effective and targeted solutions for climate action.** These targeted solutions and services helped build the resilience of food-insecure populations, strengthening their capacity to adapt to the growing impacts of climate change.



WFP supports people and their communities to:

## Adapt to climate change

by supporting the restoration of degraded ecosystems, the rehabilitation of local infrastructure, promoting sustainable farming practices to enhance regenerative livelihoods and reducing post-harvest losses.

*In 2023, WFP's Food for Assets activities reached 7.9 million people across 47 countries, contributing to the rehabilitation of over 300,000 hectares of land and the construction of irrigation canals, roads, and water points. WFP's sustainable energy initiatives have reached over 1.5 million people across 14 countries, transforming communities*

*with energy-efficient solutions. These programmes installed energy-saving cooking technologies in 54,000 schools and 135,000 households, reducing reliance on traditional fuels.*

## Reduce and address short-term climate-related risks,

protecting the most vulnerable against climate extremes, by strengthening early warning systems and emergency preparedness, expanding shock-responsive social and financial protection, and activating anticipatory actions.

*In 2023, WFP supported governments and communities to manage growing climate risks through anticipatory action and early warning systems in 36 countries, covering over 4.1 million people. Anticipatory Actions were activated in several countries, benefiting over 638,900 people with anticipatory cash transfers and over 2.3 million people with early warning information. 7.5 million people benefitted from climate information services, receiving timely weather forecasts tailored to their specific needs.*

*WFP-supported climate risk insurance programmes provided 5.1 million people in 27 countries with financial protection. In areas affected by drought, floods, and tropical cyclones, insurance pay-outs enabled WFP to assist nearly 800,000 people.*

## Respond by providing emergency relief

to communities where climate disasters have caused losses and damages to livelihoods, ensuring that immediate needs are met while supporting longer-term recovery.

*In 2023, WFP reached an estimated 150 million people with food, cash and commodity vouchers.*

# Call to action

**Communities who have historically contributed the least to the climate crisis continue to face the very worst of its impacts. They often lack access to the systems, resources and capacities to avert, minimize and address loss and damage effectively. The global community must unite to protect people and their food security on the frontlines of the climate emergency.**

**WFP continues to advocate for climate justice with a view to protecting the most vulnerable people in the wake of predictable climate-related disasters. This requires loss and damage funding to reach the livelihoods most affected by climate change in a way that is as cost-efficient and effective as possible.**

## **Accelerate solutions to reduce and address Loss and Damage from climate change**

The scale of an extreme weather event is not the only factor that determines the size of a disaster. Disasters are determined by the underlying vulnerability of the people, livelihoods or food systems exposed to their impacts. Loss and damage occurs at the intersection of climatic, social, economic and political impacts – but also in places where people are cut off from access to natural, financial, human and social capital.

Through mechanisms like the [Santiago Network](#), governments in hot spots of climate risk must have access to technical expertise and know-how to scale up effective solutions to minimize and address loss and damage. These solutions include climate information and early warning services, community-based disaster risk reduction, anticipatory action systems, disaster risk financing and insurance solutions, and shock-responsive social protection mechanisms.

Global leaders must invest in systems that predict climate hazards and provide physical and financial protection to the most vulnerable.

## **Accelerate loss and damage financing to communities in fragile and conflict-affected situations**

The frontlines of the climate crisis overlap with conflict, displacement and economic shocks. People trapped at this intersection

are the most vulnerable, and they deserve the fastest and most decisive support. There is an urgent need to provide more funding to initiatives which protect these communities from loss and damage.

The [Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage](#) must be operationalised urgently to deliver critical resources to frontline communities affected by unmitigated climate extremes. This funding must be accessible at the local level by communities experiencing hunger and malnutrition, including in fragile and conflict-affected situations.

## **Accelerate climate action to prevent loss and damage to food systems**

Food systems around the world are affected by climate-induced losses and damages. In fragile settings, over 70% of people rely on agriculture and food-based livelihoods. At the same time, global food systems are leading contributors to global heating. Food systems must urgently transform to counter loss and damage through becoming less carbon-intensive, more resource-efficient, and more resilient to the impacts of climate change. This will promote more equitable access to resources, protect the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, drive the transition to low-carbon economies, and avoid the breakdown of food systems as a root cause of hunger. Their lack of diversity, reliance on polluting practices and exposure to disruption threatens global food security.

# Case studies

## Bangladesh

In July 2024, WFP activated the largest **pre-financed humanitarian response** ever. As water levels in the Jamuna River approached critical levels, WFP provided 5,000 BDT (US\$ 43) to nearly 90,000 households (450,000 people) and early warning messages four days before the floods peaked and leveraged two national social protection systems (MCBP and EGPP), reaching 8,100 recipients in flood-affected areas. Proactive **Anticipatory Action** is a critical component of WFP's strategy to reduce climate-driven loss and damage in the world's most vulnerable areas.



*“Our anticipatory actions are designed not only to provide immediate relief but also to strengthen the resilience of communities against future floods. We are committed to working with local partners and authorities to ensure these efforts are sustainable and impactful.”*

**Dom Scalpelli, WFP Bangladesh Country Director**

## Guatemala

Guatemala is one of the most vulnerable countries to natural hazards, which are increasing with the current climate crisis. WFP is implementing a climate risk management

strategy to support smallholder farmers, as well as local institutions, to mitigate the impact of climate-related shocks on their livelihoods through innovative risk finance mechanisms. A [parametric microinsurance programme](#) was designed to build resilience in the most vulnerable communities. WFP has successfully scaled up the project since piloting in 2021, to insuring over 14,000 families in six departments across the country. During the 2023-24 season, 5,337 families received payouts for drought and 30 families received payouts for excessive rainfall.



*“No matter how much rain or too much sun that damages our harvest, the insurance can be activated, and they pay us an amount to recover from the shortages [...] I had never heard of climate insurance. If the insurance is activated, the money would be used to buy food or replace the loss of what the rain or drought has affected.”*

**Maria, a member of the Ixil indigenous Mayan community and a WFP beneficiary in Municipality of Nebaj, Departamento de Quiché, Guatemala**

## Haiti

WFP is supporting the integration of **social protection and anticipatory action (AA)** in Haiti. The country's first-ever AA activation took place in November 2023, which leveraged the national social protection system to swiftly provide cash assistance and early warning messages to people exposed to flood risk. WFP supports the Government of Haiti on building existing disaster management mechanisms, investing in social protection infrastructure to provide more timely and effective support to people exposed to climate shocks. The initiative aligns to WFP's commitment to the [CoP28 Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace](#), which calls for more decisive collective action to build climate resilience at the scale and speed required in highly climate vulnerable countries and communities.



*"At home, I took precautionary measures, secured important belongings and food in one place, secured my children as well [...] when we receive the information, we pass the message on to our neighbours, or we give a megaphone to one of the young people to get the message across."*

**A Haitian woman who received the early warning messages in November 2023**

- » [Linking Anticipatory Action and Social Protection in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Settings: The Case of Haiti](#), October 2024

## Malawi

In 2023, [Tropical Cyclone Freddy](#) hit Malawi, triggering floods and mudslides that killed more than 1,200 people and displaced 500,000. WFP integrated its Cyclone response into its resilience programmes so that 118,000 households (531,000 people) benefited from increased access to productive resources, ecosystem regeneration, increased agricultural yields, and reduced environmental degradation. A total of 1,459 hectares of land was restored, 2.6 million seedlings raised and planted, and 1,400 hectares of land irrigated. Following Cyclone Freddy, 89 percent of beneficiaries and 63 percent of non-beneficiaries in affected communities believed that livelihood assets protected their fields and communities.



*"In 2023, despite the cyclone affecting other communities, my crops are intact, and I have a bumper harvest. Farmers in neighboring villages who didn't build trenches and bunds have lost crops and houses to flooding. Everyone in the project has these structures in their gardens, and we are reaping the benefits. Today I have a different story to tell."*

**Anne Elija, a widow with four children from Chapilira village, Malawi**

## Zambia

In early 2024, Zambian farmers, who were already grappling with the effects of the climate crisis, faced an El Niño-induced drought when a five-week-long dry spell pushed the country into a state of national disaster and emergency. WFP received a **US\$ 3.3 million** payout from its [African Risk Capacity \(ARC\)](#) Replica policy, the maximum it could receive after paying US\$ 500,000 for the premium. The early response that WFP was able to mobilize provided **169,000 people** with emergency cash transfers to support their recovery from the drought and prevent hunger and loss of livelihoods across much of the country's southern, western, eastern and central provinces. The Government of Zambia also received an insurance payout from its ARC policy, amounting to US\$9.9 million, which enabled the Government to assist over 555,000 people with cash assistance.



*"The payout I received had a positive impact on my family. My first action was to buy food [...] I believe the payouts have been highly beneficial. Without this assistance, many community members say we would have struggled to survive and become malnourished."*

**Moya Kubindama, a 28-year-old smallholder farmer and a mother of two from Kasisi village, in the Mamboromoka area of Shangombo district in Zambia - from [here](#).**



### World Food Programme

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