**Written contribution on the loss and damage of climate change to the right to development**

**Report on the contribution to the 2024 reports of the Special Rapporteur on the right to development**

**Background**

Within the African continent, the most extreme and catastrophic picture of climate change and its repercussions on all human rights levels is evident: civil, political, economic, social and cultural. Those climate changes and their catastrophic consequences impede the commitments of the Governments of the countries of the continent: international, regional and national to human rights, particularly the right to development. The negative effects of climate change are widening, creating crises, including the fact that climate change has caused a 30 percent decline in total African output on the African continent. It has also pushed 118 million people into extreme poverty and its negative effects, which have affected many of the countries of the African continent. However, they are more pronounced in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia. In this context, Elizka Relief Foundation submits its written contribution to the Special Rapporteur on the right to development, highlighting the loss and damage of climate change in the African continent and monitoring them in both the Democratic Congo and Somalia in a more focused manner. Then, makes its recommendations to strengthen the capacity to address climate change in the right to development.

1. **The impact of climate change on causing damage and losses to the right to development in Africa**

The realities and variables of the global climate and environmental order threaten to have severe human rights implications at all political, civil, economic, social and cultural levels, in particular the right to life, food, security, water, housing and the environment. Climate change has created a variety of environmental and climate phenomena, primarily climate displacement. Statistics reveal that the climate displacement crisis resulting from the extreme climate changes taking place on the continent is exacerbated by the impact of the 160:260 million people living in coastal areas, pointing to the responsibility of climate change for the displacement and displacement of 21.5 million people per year, which could double to 12 billion refugees and climate displaced persons by 2050.[[1]](#footnote-1) The climate displacement crisis creates an environment in which displaced persons lose most of their human rights, primarily their right to development and enjoyment of their various dimensions.

Despite the worsening of the global climate crisis, the continent of Africa is experiencing a major intensification of the crisis more than other global contexts. The African continent has experienced rising temperatures since 1991, culminating in the third to eighth warmer classification of 2020. Africa is the second most depleted and arid continent in the world. particularly in countries such as Libya, Morocco, Algeria, Sudan and Somalia in its northern and north-eastern regions, States such as Burkina Faso, Zimbabwe, Cap Verde, Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, and States in its western parties, and South Africa in the southern parties. Reports on the continent monitor the water scarcity of 14 States on the African continent, to which 11 States are expected to join by 2025,[[2]](#footnote-2) and even their climate infrastructure is declining. Only 28 of the 54 States provide basic-level services and 9 provide full levels of services. The crisis is exacerbated by the fact that only 40% of the African population have access to early warning systems to protect them from climate change, while the rate of early warning of multiple hazards per 10 persons is also low, and only 4 of the 54 African States provide drought-warning services with a full capacity level for their citizens.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Statistics reveal the adverse effects of climate change on the continent's security, development and rights endeavors and gains. Climate change is causing sharp declines in Africa's total output by 30%, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, of a value of between 30 and 50 billion dollars. Future statistical estimates of the role of climate change in leading 118 million Africans to suffer from extreme poverty and the negative effects of floods, droughts and heat by 2030 indicate a dramatic rise in internal displacement rates estimated at 86 million by 2040, affecting and affecting between 108 and 116 million people in Africa from rising sea levels by 2030, as well as the catastrophic impact of the water stress phenomenon on 250 million people, which could contribute to the displacement of 700 million people by 2030.[[4]](#footnote-4)

1. **The impact of climate change on causing damage and losses to the right to development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Despite the greatness and abundance of the Democratic Republic of Congo’s resources, including fresh water and mineral reserves related to the green transition, and its giant vegetation cover that has led to its classification and consideration as “the lungs of the world,” and the ability of its forests to generate about ($223 billion - $398 billion) annually from stored carbon and services. The associated ecosystems needed to mitigate the effects of disasters and enhance the resilience of DRC communities. However, the climate changes experienced by the Democratic Republic of the Congo are significantly increasing in rank 12 of the 188 countries on the list of countries most vulnerable to climate change, and ranked (5) in the list of those least prepared for it. Droughts within the country reach 100% during the rainy seasons, and the country's warming crisis portends a catastrophic rise in temperatures between 2 and 3 degrees Celsius (2050).[[5]](#footnote-5)

Climate change thus represents major pressures and challenges for human rights, particularly the right to development; it is detrimental to agricultural activities, resulting in the erosion of its estimated development contributions of about 30% of GDP.[[6]](#footnote-6) Analysis suggests that the survival of the Democratic Republic of the Congo without any action to address climate change will push 16 million more people into poverty and will cost them a future loss of between 4.7% and 12.9% of GDP by 2050.[[7]](#footnote-7) The loss of major gross domestic product (GDP) rates will be reflected in the obstruction of the movements of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in completing its efforts in various development dimensions, thereby impeding, in the long run, the enjoyment by citizens of their various rights, particularly the right to development.

Given the current reality, the negative impact of climate change can be envisaged by monitoring the impact of heavy rains and rising levels of the Congo River, with 600,000 citizens affected in eight provinces: Sud Kivu, Kasai Central, Kasai, Chuaba, Mongala, Chubo, Hot Uélé and Kinshasa according to January 2024, as a result of which total initial public investment needed to partially offset climate change risks is estimated at $10.9 billion by 2050.[[8]](#footnote-8)

1. **The impact of climate change on causing damage and losses to the right to development in Somalia**

In Somalia, climate change remains one of the growing and growing challenges to human rights and its realization at all political, civil, social, and cultural levels, owing to the geographical location extended in the Horn of Africa; it contains 80% of arid and semi-arid land versus its ownership of 1.6% of agricultural land, and while Somalia experienced a gradual and continuous increase in temperatures between 1991 and 2013, between 30 and 40 degrees Celsius, prospects for its continued rise of some 3.2:4.3 degrees in future.[[9]](#footnote-9)

The climate changes in Somalia have also led to the second most vulnerable country in the world, and estimates are growing that parts of Somalia can transform into unliving areas by 2080. The adverse effects of Somalia's severe climate crisis have combined with its political, security, social, and health challenges to create a critical human environment. In terms of the right to development, climate change threatens agricultural activities, livestock and their estimated development contributions (70 percent) of gross domestic product (GDP) and their economic and life contributions to 60 percent of Somalis, particularly in rural areas,[[10]](#footnote-10) directly intercepting the rights to development of the largest number of Somalis in their economic and social dimensions. The reality does not reveal a significant improvement in the Government's efforts to combat the climate crisis and its negative impact. During the period 2016 to 2017, deep droughts caused damage and losses of more than $3.25 billion, called for recovery and assistance interventions estimated at $1.77 billion,[[11]](#footnote-11) a crisis that was repeated in 2023 when Somalia tested heavy rains and floods that affected some 1.7 million people and displaced some 700 thousand people from its homes. as well as being a major driver of hunger and food insecurity crises in Somalia affecting some 4.3 million people.[[12]](#footnote-12)

**Recommendations:**

Based on what was reviewed about the extremely negative effects of climate change on the reality of the right to development **in the African continent, particularly in the democratic States of Somalia and the Congo**, the importance of taking serious, purposeful steps to enhance resilience and the ability to confront climate shocks and their consequences for the legal dimensions of the citizens of the continent is highlighted. Within this framework, Elizka Relief Foundation presents a set of recommendations as follows:

* We recommend that the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Development collaborate with the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia to launch a regional program aimed at generating climate finance in support of the dissemination of monitoring and early warning systems for climate change and disasters to the countries of the African continent.
* We Encourage the Rapporteur to cooperate with the Government of the State of Somalia to formulate a targeted national initiative to develop local initiatives to address the impacts of climate change on local communities and to put forward proposals on ways to deliver vital social services by overcoming the effects of the climate crisis.
* Elizka recommends that the Governments of Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo establish a local research institution on information and statistical monitoring and analysis of the negative impacts of climate change on local communities to take advantage of their research products in integrating climate action plans and the right to development implementation line in the context of the climate crisis.
* We call on the Rapporteur to cooperate with the Governments of Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to develop a training program aimed at building the capacity of civil society to launch educational campaigns and to raise awareness of the risks of climate change and the possibilities of reducing and dealing with them, to monitor the extent to which companies operating in both countries adhere to the principle of community responsibility and to submit proposals on ways to promote and operationalize the right to development in the face of the climate crisis.
* Elizka recommends that the Governments of Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo should endeavor to modernize the legislative structure and include penalties for private actors and economic institutions that contribute to the deepening of the climate crisis are in line with the Government's approach to addressing the climate crisis and implementing mitigation and adaptation plans.
* We encourage the Governments of Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo to invest in renewable and clean energies, reduce dependence on non-renewable energies, apply environmentally friendly and climate-friendly agricultural mechanisms, and increase agricultural and tree spaces
1. Migration Data Portal, migrations type: environmental migration, access date November 20, 2022, <https://bit.ly/3EDmod1> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ilyas Masih Patricia Trambauer,,A Review of droughts in African continent : A geospatial and long term perspective ,”**Hydrology and earth system science**”, April 2014, p3643. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. WORLD Meteorological organization, State of Climate in Africa highlights water stress and hazards, 8 September 2022, <https://bit.ly/3AjdbnS> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. VOA, Climate Change, Conflict Forcing More People in Africa to Flee, 7 September 2022, <https://bit.ly/3EP07Je> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. DRC, National climate change profile, 13 September 2019, <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/drc-national-climate-change-profile> . [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. World Food Program, Democratic Republic of the Congo emergency, <https://bit.ly/3bmQvWG>. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. WR, Congo River floods leave families with no means of support, 1 February 2024, <https://shorter.me/0KBNV> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. RW, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Country Climate and Development Report, 16 November 2023, <https://shorter.me/-nEVw> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Climate diplomacy, how can climate considerations be integrated into the women, peace, and security, 25 October 2021, <https://bit.ly/3BsDu8x> . [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. ICRC, in our latest pieces exploring the link between climate change and conflict…, 13 September 2021, <https://bit.ly/3bkPIWm> .

11 devex, Scoop: Somalia beats famine for now, but confronts dire climate reckoning, 30 November 2023, <https://shorter.me/7DCii> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. WFP, from drought to floods: climate extremes drive Somalia hunger crisis, 14November 2023, <https://shorter.me/CyaVU> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)