



## **Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries**

### **High-level Thematic Round Table 4: Enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and addressing vulnerability to climate change and disasters in landlocked developing countries**

**Thursday, 12 December 2024, 10 am - 1 pm**

#### **Introduction**

Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) are among the most vulnerable countries to the adverse impacts of climate change. They are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation, extreme weather events, and the socio-economic consequences of climate change.

#### **Extreme vulnerability of LLDCs to climate change**

According to data reported in the Sendai Framework Monitor, the mortality rate between 2013 and 2022 was 2.12 in LLDCs, significantly higher than the global average of 1.15. The economic impacts of disasters are significant with LLDCs reported 4.14 per cent of economic losses, while having only 1.05 per cent of the GDP of reporting countries. Infrastructure vulnerability is also a major concern, with an average of 36,532 critical infrastructure units and facilities destroyed or damaged by disasters annually in LLDCs during 2015–2022. Limited early warning systems pose a significant risk to LLDCs, with only 59 per cent among LLDCs have reported having multi-hazard early warning systems.

LLDCs are experiencing more frequent and severe climate-related hazards, including droughts, floods, and extreme temperatures. Approximately 54 per cent of land in LLDCs is classified as dryland, making them prone to desertification, land degradation, as well as heat stress. Water scarcity is a pressing issue, with the per capita availability of renewable internal freshwater resources in the LLDCs was only 60 per cent of the world average in 2020. Water resources also face multiple pressures and are highly sensitive to climate change impacts such as a disruption in rainfall patterns and increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events. Mountainous regions are subject to melting glaciers, glacial lake outburst floods, landslides, and flash floods, while traditional water resources are under threat.

The economies of LLDCs are often reliant upon climate-sensitive sectors making them particularly vulnerable to environmental shocks and long-term climate change. Agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries and mining- all highly susceptible to climatic variations - form the backbone of many LLDC economies. Furthermore, LLDCs rely on intricate transport networks through transit countries, which themselves are increasingly affected by climate-related hazards. For instance, prolonged droughts can severely impact river-based transit routes, reducing water levels and impeding navigation. Conversely, extreme weather events like cyclones and floods can cause catastrophic damage to critical transport infrastructure such as ports, roads, and railways in coastal transit countries. This dual vulnerability - both in

their domestic production and their export pathways - places LLDCs at a significant disadvantage in the face of escalating climate change, threatening their economic stability and development prospects.

### **Climate Finance for LLDCs**

LLDCs have made significant strides in securing climate finance from various global funds. As of October 2023, LLDCs had received USD7.9 billion for climate change activities, amounting to 15 per cent of totals, from the GEF Trust Fund, the LDC Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund. This represented 9 per cent of total climate finance for mitigation disbursed to developing countries through the Global Environment Facility, and 31 per cent of total climate finance for adaptation. Additionally, as at 5 March 2024, LLDCs had received USD 3.1 billion from the GCF, amounting to 23 per cent of total GCF funding.

LLDCs face persistent challenges in accessing finance, often relying on international assistance due to limited direct access to international public finance. Despite some progress in streamlining approval processes, LLDCs face constraints in preparing adaptation plans and projects for established funds, hindered by technical capacity constraints and stringent access conditions. Enhanced support is crucial to assist LLDCs in preparing bankable projects.

### **Unlocking the Potential: Critical Minerals and Renewable Energy**

Many LLDCs possess vast reserves of metals and minerals, including the critical minerals, essential for clean energy transitions, such as lithium, nickel, cobalt, copper, and rare earth elements. Several LLDCs also have significant untapped renewable energy resources, offering promising pathways for sustainable development and energy security. These have positioned LLDCs as potential key players in the global shift towards sustainable energy.

To fully capitalize on these natural endowments, LLDCs require targeted support to develop and implement strategies for domestic value addition of their critical minerals. This approach is crucial for driving structural transformation, boosting export growth, and fostering overall economic development.

While public finance remains a significant source of global renewables investments and key to leveraging private finance, financial flows remain insufficient to meet 2030 energy targets.

By harnessing their mineral wealth and renewable energy potential responsibly, LLDCs can not only contribute to global sustainability efforts but also pave the way for their own economic prosperity and energy independence.

### **Way forward**

The Gaborone Programme of Action for the LLDCs outlines important areas for action — complementing the SDGs, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement. The Programme of Action sets ambitious targets to address climate change, disaster risk reduction, and environmental challenges. Key targets and commitments include putting in place national adaptation plans by 2025, strengthening support for adaptation projects, fully implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, embedding disaster risk reduction in development policies, developing multi-hazard early warning systems, and mobilizing increased adaptation finance. The programme also emphasizes

building climate-resilient infrastructure, halting biodiversity loss, and restoring degraded ecosystems.

These targets are supported by commitments to provide financial and technical assistance, promote consideration of LLDCs' needs in loss and damage funding arrangements, and enhance support for implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The Programme of Action also notes the interest and commitment of the LLDCs to develop a dedicated work programme on LLDCs under the UNFCCC in order to ensure effective voice and participation of LLDCs in the climate change negotiations.

LLDCs also require support in building resilience, for example on multi-hazard early warning systems, investments in basic infrastructure, and services to communicate disaster information to communities. The Secretary-General's Early Warnings for All Initiative – which calls for protecting everyone on Earth with early warning systems against increasingly extreme weather and climate change – can support LLDCs in strengthening their resilience against disasters. These actions should go hand-in-hand with the development and strengthening of local, national, and regional platforms and strategies for disaster risk reduction to achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Enhanced financing and capacity building are also crucial for disaster loss data collection, risk assessment, climate forecasts, early warning systems, and public access to disaster risk information. Support is needed in the form of financing, capacity building, and technology transfer as outlined in the political declaration of the Sendai Framework mid-term review.

Reliable and affordable sources of clean energy access will be an essential enabler for LLDCs to build productive capacity, move up global value chains, decouple economic growth from greenhouse gas emissions, and enhance health-related outcomes, especially for women and girls.

LLDCs need stronger institutions dedicated to renewable energy policy, enhanced access to finance and support for capacity building and bankable project preparation to achieve their renewable energy goals.

Against this backdrop, this roundtable will focus on strategies and concrete measures to improve LLDCs' access to climate finance, developing effective adaptation measures, and leveraging initiatives like the Loss and Damage Fund. The roundtable will also address the critical need for capacity building, technology transfer, and sustainable energy solutions to help LLDCs build resilience against climate-related hazards and advance their economic development.

### **Guiding questions**

1. What specific measures can be undertaken to ensure comprehensive integration of climate change adaptation, DRR, recovery and rehabilitation considerations and environmental sustainability in LLDC economies?
2. How can international financial institutions and development partners enhance specific support measures to ensure that LLDCs are better able to access climate finance?

3. What innovative capacity building measures are needed to ensure that LLDCs are able to implement adaptation measures effectively once finance has been secured?
4. How can the LLDCs fully benefit from the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage and the Loss and Damage Fund?

### **Programme**

*Co-chairs (interventions - 4 minutes each)*

1. Co-Chair 1
2. Co-Chair 2

*Keynote (interventions - 12 mins)*

3. Keynote presenter

*Panel (interventions - 7 minutes each)*

4. Member State 1
5. Member State 2
6. UN system 1
7. UN system 2
8. Stakeholder

*Discussion*