

KIOS Guidelines for Climate Smart Human Rights Defenders

Climate change

KIOS encourages its partners to assess their impacts on climate change and take climate impacts into consideration in their projects and operations. KIOS aims to fund projects which have taken climate impacts into account in the planning phase.

Climate change increases temperatures and causes heat waves, severe droughts, storms, flooding and wildfires. It has an enormous impact on water resources, food security, human health, biodiversity and ecosystems at large, among others. It risks positive development trends – poverty increases instead of decreasing, insecurity spreads instead of peace.

Climate change affects especially the people living in developing countries. The ones facing the most severe consequences are often the most vulnerable and marginalized, who are beneficiaries in KIOS funded projects. Climate change often challenges the outcomes of development initiatives including human rights initiatives. Ultimately, *climate change challenges the rights of people*. Therefore, KIOS urges the applicants to take into account probable climate change impacts and consequences for intended beneficiaries in project planning, especially if the intended project is in the area of high risk. Climate change can also affect populations by bringing new serious challenges. If any new risks rise during project execution, projects should assess these risks in connection with their interim reports.

KIOS has developed *Guidelines for Climate Smart Human Rights Defenders* in order to address this issue. It also includes guidance for the partners of KIOS on how to reduce their impacts on climate change.

This guide aims to start conversation – these are the first steps towards climate and environmentally sustainable offices and initiatives within KIOS’ program and funding. KIOS’ partners are encouraged to create their own assessment tools and ways of reducing their carbon emissions, and finally create their own path for planning climate sustainable human rights projects.

KIOS acknowledges *climate justice* through which the rights of the most vulnerable and marginalized are protected and efforts for tackling climate change are fairly allocated. KIOS considers that *climate change decision-making needs to be inclusive and transparent*, ensuring the participation of the most vulnerable. Sustainable and effective climate change solutions respect human rights and moreover, ensure the fulfilment of these rights.



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development states that climate change is "one of the greatest challenges of our time". [SDG Goal 13](#) stresses the need to "take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact", and finally Goal 17 urges to strengthen global partnerships to support and achieve all of the 2030 SDG goals.

For *democracy, human rights, governance, conflict management and mitigation* the direct and in-direct impacts of climate change are numerous, varying from reduced quantity, quality and access to key resources to inability and/or unwillingness of responsible institutions to manage the impact of environmental change.

We can work on these issues on two levels. We need *climate change mitigation* – efforts to prevent the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere from reaching a dangerous tipping point. This is an urgent priority. You can also try to reduce your own carbon dioxide emissions in your organization.

Project implementation

Consider: *what is your organization's way of taking action against climate change?*

All human rights related projects do not have a well-founded climate change dimension. This is natural due to the variety of project objectives. However, all projects may try to reduce their carbon footprint by for example considering following suggestions:

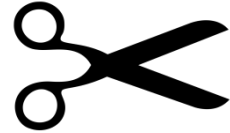
Is your organization's staff aware of different ways of reducing the organizational carbon footprint? Are they engaged in developing new ways and finding solutions?

Use [Climate Sensor](#) !

Or try [EnviroMeter](#) !

Or use a climate calculator, for example [this one](#) !

Practical concerns for all projects and organizations:



KIOS encourages:

- *using energy efficient office spaces / buildings*
- *using renewable energies such as solar or wind power*
- *avoiding air pollution*
- *switching off lights, fans and air-conditioning when out of office*
- *using energy saving settings in all electronic devices, such as computers and mobile phones*
- *switching off electronic devices when they are not in use*
- *using energy friendly office equipment*
- *maintaining and fixing office equipment*
- *sharing ownership of electronic equipment such as copying machines with other organizations*
- *avoiding printing. If a paper version is needed, double sided printing is encouraged*
- *recycling, if possible: plastic, metals, glass, paper and all material / items that some other organization could use*
- *decomposing organic waste*
- *using rechargeable batteries*
- *using climate and environmental friendly cleaning products*
- *ensuring that sanitation system functions properly and sanitation is available for everyone*
- *using climate and environmental friendly manufacturers and suppliers for procurement*

Source: FINGO's Climate Sensor & EnviroMeter

Consider

When TRAVELLING:

- *Walking or bicycling whenever possible.*
- *Using public transportation.*
- *Commuting together.*
- *Using low-emission vehicle and fitting the size of the vehicle to purpose.*
- *If possible considering security aspects, avoid travelling. Organize online meetings instead.*
- *Reducing air travel. Compensating air travel with carbon tax.*
- *Organizing all possible meetings and activities on the same visit, especially if air travel cannot be avoided.*

When ORGANIZING TRAINING / WORKSHOP:

- *Choosing an event venue located near the participants.*
- *Using shared transport, if the venue is far. Advising in the use of public transportation in the invitation of the event.*
- *Providing vegetarian meals.*
- *Prioritizing locally produced food.*
- *Using recyclable materials. Avoiding plastic (e.g. cups, bags, envelopes etc.)*
- *Avoid using disposable products such as paper cups and plates.*
- *Distributing materials only when needed. Avoid printing.*

Project planning

There are several types of Human Rights projects, which are not related to climate change, so these guidelines only want to focus on the fact that climate change may cause an additional factor to be reflected. KIOS wants to encourage its partners to consider the local risks related to climate change. If relevant, these reflections could be included in new applications.

Consider:

How does your project plan take into account the foreseeable impact of climate change?

Are your objectives relevant for the beneficiaries if there is a major change in the environment?

How climate risks may impact your organizations ability to achieve set objectives?

How can your organization monitor climate risks?

When it comes to *climate change adaptation*, the urgency to respond is somewhat different. While mitigation demands immediate action, adaptation requires immediate planning. Some areas will be more affected than others. Fortunately, there is sufficient time to plan in a considered and coherent way how to adapt our towns and local societies, and the support systems they rely on, to the future impacts that climate change will bring. To do so will require the development of long-term strategies, taking in consideration especially the different *vulnerable groups*. This is an important task for human rights organizations to consider. We need visions of how we might effect a transition towards the level of a just climate resilience that society will require in future.

You may try to follow these steps:

Step 1: Preparing the ground

- Develop a stakeholder engagement and communication plan.
- Plan collaboration with local authorities and key actors.

Step 2: Assessing the current adaptation baseline

- Identify the impacts of current weather extremes and recent climatic trends.
- Map roles, responsibilities and affected stakeholders in relation to identified impacts.
- Identify existing policies and measures linked to the management of identified impacts.

Step 3: Assessing future climate risk

- Identify future climate risks.
- Set objectives in relation to managing future climate risks.
- Identify human rights issues related to the objectives in collaboration with the vulnerable groups.

Step 4: Identifying, assessing and prioritising adaptation options

- Identify adaptation options.
- Assess each option across a number of criteria.
- Prioritise options for implementation.

Step 5: Drafting the adaptation strategy

- Draft a strategy for the implementation of desired adaptation options.
- Allocate roles and responsibilities for implementation.

The adaption opportunities are many. One can aim to improve access to justice and conflict resolution mechanisms particularly around management of natural resources. Or for example promote collaborative governance structures that allow for coordinated climate change adaption. Mitigation opportunities include for example support for development of stable and democratic land planning and management institutions, and adopting land reforms that promote sustainable land management and resilient societies (e.g. by clarifying and securing private or collective property and use rights, promoting secure access to land for women and vulnerable groups).

Source for both: FINGO's EnviroMeter & Climate Sensor

NEPAL



[Finn Church Aid Climate Mainstreaming approach and tools](#) handbook includes among others country level climate mainstreaming document concerning Nepal (p. 13). The document includes for example analysis of climate change in Nepal's context and overall vulnerability. In addition, the document analyses climate change impacts in different parts of the country.

USAID has analysed climate risk issues in Nepal, including how it will affect among others human health, food security and infrastructure (please see [climate risk profile Nepal](#) and [climate info Nepal](#)). Nepal is highly vulnerable to climate change and is already facing some consequences.

SRI LANKA



USAID's [Climate Information Factsheet](#) for Sri Lanka includes information about current and estimated climate conditions for Sri Lanka. USAID also offers [Greenhouse Gas Emissions Factsheet for Sri Lanka](#) and has analysed the overall vulnerability of Asia-Pacific region (more information [here](#)).

The World Bank published in 2018 a study on the impact of temperature and precipitation changes on living standards in South Asia (please see the report [here](#))

KENYA



Climate risks are various in Kenya as well. Extreme weather conditions such as heavy rains and increasing temperatures have an impact among others to food security and human health (please see more information [here](#) and about Kenya's greenhouse gas emissions [here](#))

UNDP has published a [country case study](#) on Kenya that aims to provide information on how to address the challenges caused by climate change.

UGANDA



Climatelinks offers several useful documents, such as climate information factsheet on Uganda, *Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and GHG Emissions Factsheet* (please see [Uganda Climate Info](#) for all documents).

IPCC has provided among others climate scenarios for Africa (please see more information [here](#)), which predict for example that Cameroon, Uganda and Kenya might be about 1.4C warmer by 2050.



Climate change has already had an impact on Rwanda causing heavy rains and floods in north-western highlands. At the same time there has been periodic droughts in the eastern lowlands of Rwanda. Climatelinks includes information among others about [Climate Change Adaption in Rwanda](#).

Through [Rwanda Climate Portal](#) you will find information on the latest national efforts to tackle climate change.

Source for all maps: CIA the World Factbook

In addition to projects in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Uganda ja Rwanda, KIOS grants funding to regional work, Tibetan civil society organizations operating in exile as well as to strategic, long-term partners operating in East Africa and South Asia. Countries and regions have their own, contextual climate change challenges, which we trust our partners take into consideration when practising their human rights work.

Want to know more?

- *USAID has analysed [climate stresses, impacts & opportunities in different sectors](#) .*
- *[Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC](#) – International body for assessing the science related to climate change*
- *[Climatelinks](#) – A global knowledge portal for climate and development practioners*
- *[Sustainable Development Goal 13](#) – Progress and info, targets and indicators*
- *[World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal](#) – Information, data and reports about climate change around the world*
- *[UNDP Social Vulnerability Assessment Tools for Climate Change and DRR Programming](#)*