



COP 27 Done and Dusted- So What Now?

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COP 27 which was dubbed as an African COP because it was held on the African soil happened at a time when inequality in South Africa and the entire world was and is still worsening; costs of living are going up tremendously; and unemployment skyrocketing especially among the youth in South Africa, amid a crippling energy crisis and a life threatening heat wave which has claimed the lives of Seven Farm Workers in the Kakamas in the Northern Cape in South Africa. Climate Change is increasing the intensity of heatwaves and all heatwaves across the world. Extreme weather events from the scorching heatwaves to unusually heavy downpours and devastating floods have caused widespread devastation across the globe in 2022. Millions of people have been killed through climate related disasters and disastrous floods in Bangladesh; the brutal heatwaves in parts of South Asia and Europe and the worsening and prolonged famine in East Africa reveals that the worsening climate crisis requires bold and decisive action. Closer to home the devastating floods and landslides that happened in KwaZulu Natal in South Africa caused by heavy rainfall on April 11th- 13th 2022 and causing the loss of 448 lives, trauma; and loss of livelihoods are still painfully fresh in people's minds. Communities have not yet recovered from the loss of lives, livelihoods, and the displacement of more than 40 000 people. Droughts, severe storms, heatwaves, and wildfires are some of the ways the climate crisis is already affecting humanity on a large scale and mostly women, youth, and most vulnerable communities. Climate change continue to ravage communities in the urban and rural areas of South Africa.

Every year and every COP is critical to drive multistakeholder action across all areas as broad as raising climate ambition and moving from pledges to action; financing the net-zero transition; accelerating industry's' decarbonisation; ensuring water and food security; adaptation finance and innovation and more. Before the historic COP 27 started in Sharm El Sheikh, in Egypt so seek solutions to the climate emergency, GenderCC-Southern Africa had gathered the voices of what grassroots communities; women; youth and Indigenous Communities would expect from COP 27 in Egypt.

On top of the agenda from the grassroots communities was:

-to advance a just transition from fossil fuels to clean energy that is gender responsive and takes into consideration the needs and priorities of women and girls in their diversity in policy and decision making; stronger distinct sustainable and context specific financing for loss and damage; and adaptation facilities; genuine investments in mitigation; A just and equitable transition from fossil fuels for all with corresponding financing mechanisms; the demand for the voice of rural women and women human rights defenders in all spaces that concern their rights and choices to be made very clear and to be implemented. The Grassroots communities made it clear that they wanted inclusion and equal participation for women and girls at all climate decision making and not to pay lip service to the women and rural communities' demands for climate and gender justice.

Nonetheless, COP 27 closed with a breakthrough agreement to provide loss and damage funding for vulnerable countries hit hard by climate disasters, although the full details of the fund still needs to be fleshed out. Governments took the groundbreaking decision to establish a Transitional Committee to make recommendations on how to operationalize the new funding arrangements and the fund at CO28- The First meeting will be expected to take place before the end of March 2023. Furthermore, COP 27 saw significant progress on adaptation with governments agreeing on the way to move forward on the Global Goal on Adaptation which will conclude at COP 28 and inform the first Global Stock- Take; improving resilience amongst the most vulnerable. New pledges totaling more than USD 230 million dollars were made to the Adaptation Fund at COP 27- These Pledges really need to be met in order to assist many more vulnerable communities adapt to climate change through the implementation of gender responsive concrete adaptation solutions. However, serious concern still remains that the goal developed by Country Parties to mobilize jointly USD 100 Billion per Year by 2020 has not yet been met with a new collective goal on Climate Finance taking into account the needs and priorities of developing countries continues.

Whilst young people were given greater prominence at COP 27, however the message from the youth; civil society and business is clear that the private sector's role has a unique role to play to provide the capital and solutions to meet the global climate goals; the global Stock-take and how countries are meeting their climate commitments to ramp up ambition. The various stakeholders and partnerships and coalitions of indigenous peoples; local, rural, and urban communities; cities and civil society including the youth and women who showcased how they are addressing climate change and how it impacts their lives needs to continue. More action and demands on accountability is still required to ensure that the road to COP 28 in the United Arab Emirates ensures that every millstone is put into action and operationalized in order to guarantee that multilateral diplomacy still works and averts the climate emergency.

So, What Now?

Whilst Climate Action is an ongoing process, and the UNFCCC process is a complicated ongoing process for most rural and urban grassroots communities and not an event and requires extraordinary collaboration; Communities across the world; in particular in Africa and South Africa would like to see urgent actions such as the a dramatic shift in the failure of governments, local, regional, and international and in particular on the most powerful to ensure that they tame the climate crisis; tackle growing inequality; poverty; and strengthen resilience to the climate crises by putting people first through rights-based approaches. Grassroots Communities are calling for gender equitable food systems and production approaches to be prioritized; the exploitation and burning of fossil fuels to stop; transformative adaptation that is people led needs to happen now; with urgency by all governments to support locally led adaptation actions and participatory gender inclusive and gender

transformative national and adaptation plans that mitigate protection risks including gender based violence risks. Governments must adopt transformative and mitigation work programs that centers gender equality; including moving away from exploiting; subsidizing; and disseminating harmful fossil fuels towards a gender just transition based on renewable energy. Clear reforms on adaptation finance channels to increase the allocation of and access of those who need it most are required. More energies should be invested in technical and financial support to accelerate gender transformative climate action and decision- making and promoting women and girls leadership in climate action and climate diplomacy- this is the paradigmatic shift required in order to avert the ongoing ecosystem destruction.