

Guide to Loss and Damage

Introduction

COP26 in Glasgow didn't achieve everything we wanted in support of those living on the front line of the climate crisis – but there were glimmers of hope. One of these was that the issue of 'Loss and Damage' was brought to the fore.

SCIAF intends to campaign on Loss and Damage as part of our climate justice work in the run up to COP27 and beyond. This short guide explains what Loss and Damage is, and why it's crucial that real progress is made at COP27.



What is Loss and Damage?

The 'losses and damages' of climate change refer to the irreversible impacts of the climate crisis which cannot or have not been avoided by reducing our emissions or adapting to global temperature increases. They affect humans and the natural environment.

Damage from climate change includes impacts such as loss of life, loss of land, loss of income, loss of traditional knowledge and culture, or loss of personal possessions. These losses may be from floods, droughts, storms, or processes such as desertification, sea-level rises or the spread of tropical diseases.



Advocacy

Many organisations, including SCIAF, have lobbied for Loss and Damage to be made a high priority in the fight against climate change. At COP26, the announcement by the Scottish Government to create a £2 million Loss and Damage fund was hailed by campaigners as a good thing. As the first wealthy nation to commit to this sort of funding, many saw it as "breaking the taboo" on this issue. Until this point, wealthy nations had been resisting calls to fund Loss and Damage for many years.

Importantly, the commitment by the Scottish Government sends a message, loud and clear, that Loss and Damage needs to be addressed urgently and that other wealthy countries must follow suit to create a sizeable pot of money to support those in need.

Christine's story

Christine Enock is a farmer in Malawi and a SCIAF project participant. She's witnessed the devastating impact of drought on her whole community.

"The drought brought many difficulties for women, as they are the ones responsible for the children and households.

"Because of the drought, we lost our crops. We had to leave the children hungry and crying so we could look for food and try and get some work wherever we could.

"It also affected our family lives. Our husbands had to move away to look for food and a job which meant women were left at home to look after the family. The men came back with little or nothing."

Families across Malawi are losing crops, losing loved ones, and losing their traditional ways of life. Already, they are paying for the losses and damages of the climate crisis.



Why as Catholics should we care about Loss and Damage?

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis called us to respond to both "the cry of the earth, and the cry of the poor".

Yet, it remains the case that millions of our sisters and brothers around the world are still suffering from the impacts of climate change – but wealthy nations are not supporting them, or making the necessary changes required to heal our Common Home.

Together with our partners around the world, we are appalled by this global injustice – an injustice that is keeping people poor, and robbing families of a future.

The issue of Loss and Damage is about reaching out to our global neighbours in need, and helping them thrive in the way God intended. A focus on Loss and Damage is about putting the poorest people at the heart of our response to climate change.



What is SCIAF doing?

- We advocate for increased support for Loss and Damage with decision-makers, and work with other organisations to help keep the issue on the political agenda.
- We ensure that the voices of those most affected by Loss and Damage are heard, and that world leaders listen to what they say.
- We work with partners across the globe to support communities living on the front line of the climate crisis.

What is SCIAF asking for?

Though COP26 in Glasgow is over, the UK still holds influence as the outgoing COP Presidency until the beginning of COP27. Through our latest campaign – **'Time to pay up!'** – we are therefore demanding that the new Prime Minister use this position to:

- 1 Champion a new global fund for Loss and Damage and commit UK money to this
- 2 Urge rich nations to pay up too; grants not loans is what is needed
- 3 Make sure that the money is easily available for those who need it most.

 **Time to**
 **pay up!**



What can I do?

There are a number of things you can do:

- Sign SCIAF's petition – **'Time to pay up!'** – on Loss and Damage and encourage family and friends to do the same.
Visit sciaf.org.uk/payup to put your faith into action!
- Sign up to SCIAF's emails to keep up-to-date on this issue as well as our other work in Scotland and overseas sciaf.org.uk/join
- Contact your MP and encourage them to raise the issue of Loss and Damage in Parliament with the new Prime Minister, to highlight this injustice and lend support to those living on a knife edge as a result of the climate crisis.

The time for action is now.

Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund

SCIAF is the official relief and development agency of the Catholic Church in Scotland and a proud member of the Caritas family. 7 West Nile Street, Glasgow G1 2PR. Tel: 0141 354 5555. Scottish Charity No: SC012302. Company No: SC197327. Photos: Colin Hattersley, Val Morgan, James Cave.

