Impacts on poor countries and people

Climate change is threatening the lives and livelihoods of people everywhere and threatening the stability of life on our planet. Current atmospheric concentrations have already committed the planet to decades of disruption of the normal cycle of life. This will affect the entire planet. But the worst impacts will be felt by the poor and marginalized. Because of the global distribution of the impacts and the limited capacity of vulnerable communities to respond to abrupt changes, they are the first victims of the excessive emissions by industrialized countries that are causing climate change.

Respecting and protecting rights

All humans have equal right to be protected from the adverse effects of climate change. Adaptation to the adverse impacts of climate change must protect, respect and fulfil rights, with particular attention to those who are vulnerable, such as local communities, women and indigenous peoples. Developing countries must supported to establish lines of defence against growing impacts, while all peoples seek a fundamental change of paradigm that allows us to protect and to take care of Mother Earth and all its forms of life.

Adaptation not resignation

The notion of adaptation to climate change as a resignation to impacts provoked by the historical emissions of developed countries must be rejected. Support to combat the impacts is a debt not aid. And industrialized
countries must adapt their modes of life and consumption in the face of this global emergency.

Many people are already forced to move from affected areas. Industrialized countries must meet their responsibilities to the hundreds of millions of people that will be forced to migrate due to climate change.

**Business as usual won’t work**

The proposals by developed countries on adaptation offer to continue the business-as-usual model: obtain loans from the World Bank when a disaster hits, beg for aid assistance to prevent disasters, and come to the UNFCCC to be told to keep planning for adaptation.

Efforts to bring adaptation under bilateral cooperation and international financial institutions controlled by developed countries will limit the ability of those suffering the impacts to participate and respond.

**The need for effective institutions**

New institutions for adaptation under the Convention are needed to ensure decisions are transparent and equitable and respect the sovereignty of nations and peoples.

They must recognize that support to address adverse impacts is a responsibility, not charity, and provide developing countries with the space to decide how to best manage the response to the crises created by the historical accumulation of greenhouse gases.

“*The proposals by developed countries on adaptation offer to continue the business-as-usual model: obtain loans from the World Bank when a disaster hits, beg for aid assistance to prevent disasters, and come to the UNFCCC to be told to keep planning for adaptation*”

People’s Agreement, April 2010, Cochabamba