



## Report on Resilience: Evidence and Action Side event, 16 July, at HLPF18

In an increasingly turbulent and unpredictable world new approaches to development are needed to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We face a new reality: disasters and shocks are occurring more frequently and chronic stresses are lasting longer. We need to ensure that all people, especially in developing countries, have prosperous lives and are resilient to these shocks and stresses.

Recognising this challenge, the UK, Sweden, Germany and Uganda, with the Global Resilience Partnership, sponsored a side event (Agenda in Annex I) at the High Level Political Forum on 16 July. This event had three objectives:

- To highlight the latest scientific evidence on the challenges to development posed by climate change.
- To show how action on building resilience and maintaining the integrity of ecosystems supports the delivery of the SDGs.
- To identify where change is needed to build resilient people, communities, cities, and economies.

The event was well attended and chaired by Neil Briscoe (DFID). The main messages from the event were: 1. The evidence for action was urgent with development gains and achievement of SDGs at risk; 2. There are solutions to build resilience; and, 3. We have a year of opportunity the Global Climate Action Summit and the UNSG's 2019 Climate Summit to help realise substantive and transformation action to build resilience. Summaries of interventions are given below.

**Karen Pierce** (UK Permanent Representative to UN) noted the importance of collaboration around the event with Sweden, Germany and Uganda and it was a good example. She reflected on how difficult it has been to raise climate change in the Security Council in the past, even though many countries had showed interest. This was changing and Council debated climate security related risks the previous week. She said UK considers that dealing with climate change is a moral obligation, and the need for action is more pressing than ever before. Poverty will begin to increase again due to the impacts of climate change, eradicating the progress of the last decades. She said the UK was pleased to be working with UNDP to championing resilience for the UNSG's 2019 Climate Summit. The UK looked forward to working with a wide range of partners to make this important work a success.

**Johan Rockström** (Executive Director, Stockholm Resilience Centre - by video) explained that social-ecological resilience is about persistence, adaptiveness, and transformation and that these three features will be required to fulfil the 2030, finding new ways of interacting with the ecosystems to build prosperity. The critical component of these three principles for Johan is transformation – how are finding ways to get people to thrive in the face of uncertainty.

**Monique Barbut** (Executive Secretary, UNCCD) mentions that 3 billion people are trapped in degraded land areas, which means that their options are reduced and they are drawn into conflicts around resources or are forced to move. There were 25 million people displaced by

climate related events in 2016. She believed that in the future we will need to achieve net gains, e.g. increased biodiversity. At the moment we need to focus on the most vulnerable and acknowledge their active role in stewardship of natural resources. There are plenty of good examples of rehabilitation driven by local communities, in particular by women. Funding of these actions often gives good returns of investments.

**Belay Begashaw** (Director General of SDG Center for Africa) spoke about the criticality of water and agriculture. Africa's population is expected to reach 4 billion by 2100. There are 730 million rural people at the moment. This will create huge challenges. Per capita water availability was 9000m<sup>3</sup> and 5100 m<sup>3</sup> in 1980 – it will drop to 1600m<sup>3</sup> and 2600 m<sup>3</sup> in 2100. Water consumption has increased sixfold in 100 years while the population has quadrupled. 70 % of water withdraws is for agriculture; sources of fresh water are running dry and becoming polluted. For Africa pathways should enable Africa to improve productivity / unit. Agriculture can reverse today's undernourishment, through restoration. Africa can increase by 50 % agriculture production with use of existing technology. The current production system only enabled Africa use 20 % of the potential. The need for irrigation will increase due to climate change, population increases and increased food requirements, which will exacerbate competition for water. The world lacks political agreements on how to reach the goals. Pathways should be agreed, reflecting the regional and local context yet fit within a global framework. Inclusive governance will be needed in order to implement these transformations.

**Seth Schultz** (President of Urban breakthroughs, Special Advisor to Global Covenant of Mayors on Science and Innovation, and Co-Founder of the Coalition for Urban Transitions) has recently taken part in the IPCC 1.5 degree report, and argues that urbanisation is one key solution. Urbanisation has driven economic development up till now, and the way in which the next 30-40 years of urbanization is conducted will determine resilience, e.g. recommending to build densely and facilitate non-motorized or low carbon transportation. National governments should provide opportunities and leadership, yet only 1 out of three governments have adopted national urban strategies. Cities are already experiencing climate change and therefore have already begun the transitions, driving business development and saving resources while creating jobs. The financing gap of 1-1.5 trillion USD can be bridged by enhancing credit worthiness, facilitating new investments – national governments can help using fiscal instruments. More compact and efficient urban growth offers a \$17 trillion opportunity to 2050 and investments in low carbon buildings and mass transit could create up to 39 million new jobs worldwide and would also help make cities resilient.

**Tom Okurut** (Chief executive, National Environment Management Authority of Uganda) stressed that interventions must be adapted to local contexts. He highlighted that currently there were unseasonal floods in Uganda and that transformations in dealing with this situation will be needed, and that resilience was a high priority for the country.

**Anne Hamill** (Director of Resilience, IISD) stated that entrepreneurship is needed but not enough in itself, and that institutions changes and transformations are required, and the right capacity development and support for entrepreneurship to flourish and that includes incentives and institutional support from governments is needed.

**Richard Blewitt** (Head of Delegation and Permanent Representative of International Federation of Red Cross and Crescent Societies) highlighted three innovations: financing for early response

which saves money, crowdsourcing for resilience, and partnering with insurance companies to estimate risks as a basis for preventive actions. The key links of IRC's work to Zurich and the investments company's like Zurich Insurance are making in flood resilience measurement tools.

**Jay Koh** (CEO, Lightsmith Group) is establishing the first private investment fund aimed at climate adaptation. It will invest in companies providing solutions for resilience. He hopes for financing from public and private sources, and has initiated collaborations with e.g. GEF.

**Henk Ovink**, (Special Envoy for International Water Affairs, Netherlands) explained that the Netherlands has centuries of experience of resilience actions to share. In the Caribbean the Netherlands are building capacity and developing a trust fund to support the recovery from Hurricanes. It is important to not repeat the mistakes of the past and there is a need to be more transformative. We also need funding – the thousands – to unlock the millions.

**Tracy Mann** (Project Director, Climate Wise Women) encourages keeping in mind women's opportunities and ability to fulfil the aspirations of Johan Rockström. She has many examples of this, and asks for facilitation of female leadership.

**Andy Norton** (Director of IIED) raised the importance of finding the right intervention points and getting finance to the local level. This requires advanced methodology for collaborate with local actors and connecting local institutions with available knowledge bases, and to increase the efficiency of climate adaptation investments in the private and public sectors.

**Shaila Shahid** (Coordinator Gender and Climate Change, International Centre for Climate Change and Development, Bangladesh) saw that land ownership, control of assets and market access is crucial for empowering women and building resilience. Gender differentiated statistics enables more targeted actions, and she emphasised women need to be the focus of resilience.

**Simon Young** (Strategic Advisor to Capital, Science & Policy Practice, Willis Towers Watson) shared examples of the work of insurance companies in building resilience, and the significant opportunities to build on this work.

**Andreas Pfeil** (Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany) said Germany was very pleased to support this event and building resilience a priority. He highlighted insurance solutions such as InsuResilience, which brings together governments, scientists and investors strengthening the resilience of the most vulnerable.

**Kajsa Olofsgård** (Swedish Ambassador for the 2030) welcomed the event and highlighted the role of ecosystem resilience, and the need to realise synergies between climate change mitigation and adaptation, and natural resource management.

**Tom Okurut** on behalf of the Ugandan Government said Uganda was pleased to support this event, and restated the importance of building resilience to Uganda and many other developing countries.

**Sally Taylor** (Head of Climate and Environment, DFID) closed the meeting thanking all the speakers and for focusing on the actions that will build resilience. She restated that the UK is pleased to be working with UNDP to champion resilience at the SG's 2019 Climate Summit. She stated UK was looking forward to working with partners on developing bold actions for the Summit, and invited all those interested in this work to contact DFID.

*For further information on the event please contact [info@globalresiliencepartnership.org](mailto:info@globalresiliencepartnership.org)*

## **Annex Programme for High level Event: Building Resilience - Evidence and Action**

### **Welcome**

*Chair: Neil Briscoe, Head of the Global Partnerships and Multilateral Effectiveness Department, UK Department for International Development (DFID)*

### **Opening**

*Karen Pierce, UK Permanent Representative to the UN*

### **The Challenge**

*Johan Rockström, Executive Director of the Stockholm Resilience Centre*

*Monique Barbut, Executive Secretary of UNCCD*

### **The Evidence**

*Water and Agriculture: Belay Begashaw, Director General, SDG Centre for Africa*

*Cities: Seth Schultz, President of Urban Breakthroughs & Special Advisor to Global Covenant of Mayors.*

### **The Action – Panel**

*Tom Okurut, Executive Director, Uganda National Environmental Management Authority.*

*Anne Hammill, Director of Resilience, International Institute for Sustainable Development*

*Richard Blewitt, International Federation of the Red Cross/Crescent UN Permanent Representative.*

*Jay Koh, CEO, Lightsmith Group*

### **Interventions:**

*Henk Ovink, Special Envoy for International Water Affairs, Netherlands.*

*Tracy Mann, Head, Climate Wise Women.*

*Andy Norton, Director of the International Institute of Environment and Development.*

*Shaila Shahid, Coordinator Gender and Climate Change, International Centre for Climate Change*

*Simon Young, Strategic Advisor to Capital, Science & Policy Practice, Willis Towers Watson*

*Andreas Pfeil, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany*

*Kajsa B Olofsgård. Ambassador for the 2030, Sweden*

*Tom Okurut, NEMA, Uganda*

### **Closing**

*Sally Taylor, Head of the Climate and Environment Department, UK DFID*

*Facilitator: David Howlett (GRP)*

*Rapporteurs: Lars Berg (SRC) and Nate Mathews (GRP)*