

Report

# THE ALTERNATIVE AFRICA CLIMATE WEEK: 40 under 40 to build resilience

Monday 18– Wednesday 20 March 2019 | WP1686



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Report

# The Resilient 40 Conference

an out-of-the-ordinary conference for extraordinary times.

## SUMMARY

As governments across Africa gathered for the UN-led Africa Climate Week in Ghana, simultaneously, 40 young African thought leaders, actors, and change makers from 11 countries across the African continent came together in South Africa with counterparts and experts from the United Kingdom. The aim of the round-table dialogue was to provide a platform for the emerging generation of leaders to discuss how individuals, societies, and governments can become more resilient in their responses to climate change.

The UK, as a partner with Africa, is committed to lead on building resilience to climate change for the UN Secretary General ahead of his 2019 Climate Summit. Increasing the connections between the UK and Africa on climate is of enormous mutual benefit and this conference built on the existing partnerships and stimulated new ones. This renewed and modern UK-African partnership in turn can strengthen the case for international action.

Calling themselves #TheResilient40 this next generation of leaders created a platform to build momentum to face this threat and to improve climate resilience across Africa. They discussed how climate change is already affecting them and their societies, and developed ideas

for solutions to increase resilience to face the threats ahead, sharing expertise across the continent. Each individual committed to taking their own actions to build resilience to climate change, equipped by the conference with knowledge, insights, and tools to allow them to mobilise their communities to increase resilience to climate change.

NO CONTINENT WILL BE AS SEVERELY HIT BY THE CONSEQUENCES OF CLIMATE CHANGE THAN AFRICA. INDEED, CHANGE IS ALREADY HAPPENING AND THE CONTINENT IS SET TO BECOME INCREASINGLY VULNERABLE TO EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS AND CLIMATIC IMPACTS; THREATENING DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND THE LIVELIHOODS OF ALL.

This report summarizes the excellent discussions that took place at the conference, and elaborates the key takeaway points:

- Climate change is already impacting Africans, threatening development, infrastructure and livelihoods
- People shared their stories on how African countries are being affected – Cyclone Idai and the aftermath, together with stories of severe drought in Namibia, further reinforced the reality of the situation
- Africa as a continent is very vulnerable – not only will climate change and the consequent extreme weather events affect Africans but the lack of infrastructure, support, technology and funding available on the continent means that Africa is unable to adapt to climate change in the same way that wealthier countries are able to with the result being that extreme weather events outstrips the ability of society to cope. These shocks become more complicated because of the underlying complex emergencies that exist in developing countries such as HIV, land degradation, poor governance, and a general lack of resources.
- Furthermore, environmental collapse threatens to destabilise society and the global economy. The resulting consequences are famines, forced migration, economic crises, conflict, and a new “domain of risk,” unprecedented in its complexity and the potential severity of its impact.
- Five major challenges face the younger generation of leaders including leadership, emotional, economic, moral and political challenges.
- Science and technology provide some tools to make countries more resilient such as early warning systems and improved understanding or mapping of the future challenges that Africa faces. Accurate forecasting of the weather and communicating it are key tools for resilience.
- There has been substantial institutional capacity building taking place between the UK Met Office (the national weather service or meteorological office), the Ordnance Survey Office and the BBC to build capacity for improved resilience in Africa.
- Four key themes were explored when unpacking how to implement resilience: water; food security; cities; and preparing for extreme weather events. Common discussions around these four themes identified the need for increased capacity development; people-oriented solutions; the importance of research and monitoring and evaluation to learn from ‘mistakes’; identifying and sharing solutions implemented in other countries; awareness raising; issues around funding to solve these problems and leadership opportunities for the Resilient 40 in Africa.
- When faced with the question of what finance is available for climate change in general or resilience specifically, it seems there really is plenty of finance... the trick is how to unlock this.

Mobilising the required capital requires unlocking a number of pools to work together in a complementary way for example domestic public resources, international public finance (such as multilateral development banks and development finance institutes) as well as the domestic and international private sectors.

- Policy-related uncertainty is the biggest deterrent to investment and these are both related to governance and political issues, which need to be resolved.
- Well-designed infrastructure can be pro-growth, pro-poor, and pro-climate which are all crucial for Africa.
- Resilience could be conceptualised and economic and political resilience using the neo-liberal model. It was hypothesised that sustained economic growth will be directed towards climate mitigation (through resource decoupling) and secondly, that economic growth will be designed to create resilience. Examples from the UK were used to illustrate these points.
- Climate change is still not a priority for many African politicians and thus it has not yet become institutionalised within the various levels of government. In Africa, climate change competes with issues such as youth unemployment, increasing population growth, inequality, public transport systems, and urban migration. Prioritising climate change under The Presidency and the Mayor in each country and city would assist in institutionalising climate change.
- A practical session offered participants advice on how to communicate climate change at the local level. BBC Media Action provided insights into the development journalism work they are doing in East Africa between journalists and scientists working in the climate change field. This was followed by practical tips on improving social media and photography skills as well as radio interviews. A session on campaigning highlighted the importance of building political will.
- The UK identified that climate risk is not considered effectively when making economic decisions at local, national, and international levels. In order to fundamentally change the way the UK plans and invests, they need to build resilient economies and incentives, as well as to build resilient people by giving people the skills to build climate resilience. The UK wants governments to make public commitments to factor climate risks into their decisions.
- Each individual delegate committed to taking their own actions to build resilience to climate change, equipped by the conference with knowledge, insights, and tools to allow them to mobilise their communities to increase resilience to climate change.

## INTRODUCTION

As governments across Africa gathered for the UN-led Africa Climate Week in Ghana, simultaneously, 40 young African thought leaders, actors, and change makers from 11 countries across the African continent came together in South Africa, between 18 – 20 March 2019, with counterparts and experts from the United Kingdom. A total of 58 delegates, largely under the age 40, met to discuss adaptation and resilience related to climate change. The aim of the round-table dialogue was to provide a platform for the emerging generation of leaders to discuss how individuals, societies, and governments can become more resilient in their responses to climate change and to co-create solutions to climate resilience and provide input towards the Climate Action Summit.

The UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, will host a Climate Action Summit on 23 September 2019 with the outcome to significantly increase climate ambition. Six key action portfolios have been identified as crucial to increasing ambition. One of these six key action portfolios is increasing global action on adaptation and resilience. Furthermore, citizen and youth mobilisation has been prioritised as part of the Climate Action Summit. The United Kingdom's role during the Summit will be to champion adaptation and resilience, together with Egypt and country partners Malawi, Bangladesh, the Netherlands and St Lucia. These countries aim to use this opportunity to drive significant change to collectively build resilience to the impacts of climate change to ensure a more secure and prosperous future for all, especially in those countries particularly vulnerable to climate change.

*Co-creation is the best word to use when moving forward – describing when Africans and the international community are working together to tackle issues like this.*

The Resilient 40 conference was no ordinary conference. There is no 'normal' anymore and the climate crisis requires everyone to approach life from an out-of-the-ordinary perspective. What made this conference extraordinary? Was it the acknowledgement of the importance of youth and their leadership roles for the future? Was it the remarkable approach to a new partnership between Africa and the UK, focusing on the climate crisis? Or was it the co-creation of solutions to climate resilience? All of these elements made this conference extraordinary.

During the conference, delegates were acutely aware of the impact of Cyclone Idai, one of the worst tropical cyclones on record to affect Africa. This extreme weather event caused catastrophic damage to Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Malawi and Madagascar. Not only did the cyclone leave over 1000 people dead and cause over \$2 billion-worth of infrastructure damages; what unfolded after the cyclone was a humanitarian crisis, including a cholera outbreak. Lack of early warning and disaster-risk management systems emphasised the vulnerability of these African countries and the need to increase resilience in Africa.

Discussions during the formal conference sessions covered a range of issues including:

- ➔ Climate change and its impacts on Africa
- ➔ Vulnerabilities and resilience
- ➔ Building resilience to manage the shocks and stresses
- ➔ Building the tools for resilience
- ➔ Building resilience in practice
- ➔ How to make it work and who pays for resilience?
- ➔ Communicating climate change
- ➔ Building international responses and actions
- ➔ Individual commitments and actions following the conference.

Added to this was the time outside of the formal sessions, where young people had the opportunity to strike up friendships and interact with one another – either enjoying a nature walk with a dazzle of zebras; planting an indigenous tree; considering our personal impacts on the climate crisis by enjoying a meat-free dinner under the Southern Cross constellation; participating in the creation of an artwork made from rocks that held significance for participants; or learning about self-resilience and loving kindness as ways to make these changemakers more resilient to an unknown future. By the end of this extraordinary conference, delegates had undergone metamorphoses and were no longer ordinary conference participants. These young people had transformed into changemakers, known from hereon as The Resilient 40!

This report documents some of the formal discussions that took place during the conference and briefly explores the equally important informal sessions that shaped the changemakers and the discussions held.

*In light of the global threat brought by the climate crisis, no continent will be as severely hit by the consequences than Africa. Indeed, the continent is set to become increasingly vulnerable to extreme weather events and climatic impacts; threatening development, infrastructure, and the livelihoods of all.*

## A NOTE ON CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

For the purposes of this report, the following definitions have been assumed:

Adaptation is the adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected changes.

The definition of resiliency is the ability to recover from a negative event, such as climate change. Thus, climate resilience is a systems-based approach that encompasses a dual function:

- ➔ To adapt to or absorb shocks and stresses imposed on a system by climate change
- ➔ To reorganise and evolve so that the system maintains functionality and vitality and is better prepared for future climate change impacts.

The formal, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) definition of resilience is the “capacity of social, economic, and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event or trend or disturbance, responding or reorganizing in ways that maintain their essential function, identity, and structure, while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning, and transformation.”

The inter-connectivity between climate change, climate resilience, adaptability, and vulnerability is a particularly important relationship to understand in the context of Africa which is the continent that will be most affected by climate change. At the same time, Africans are particularly vulnerable due to the lack of infrastructure, capacity and available funding to cope with crises. For this reason, Africans have few strategies for recovery or adapting to climate change, making them less resilient. Resilience building therefore needs to be built into all aspects of decision-making, planning, and management at various levels including individuals, households, and communities to build the long-term resilience of socio-ecological systems.

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS ON AFRICA

*‘I wish there was some good news to give you but there isn’t’*

An overview of the scientific evidence identified four key points about how climate change will affect Africa:

- ➔ Although most of the world is likely to get wetter with climate change, Africa is likely to become substantially drier;
- ➔ Storm intensity increases everywhere;
- ➔ Temperature rises everywhere, although more in the interior and subtropics of Africa than on the coast and the equator; and



- Sea levels will rise on all coasts but the shape of the coast shelf and the population density will determine the vulnerability
- In short, Africa will constantly suffer from extreme weather events in the form of droughts, storms, floods and fires.

Consequently, climate change will have the following effects:

- Agriculture: Most of Africa is already above the optimum temperature for crop production; however, climate change will further exacerbate this with additional reductions in productivity for both crop and animal production, thus agriculture will be severely affected.
- Water resources: Water stress will become more severe as demand increases and there is a decline in water availability due to less reliable rainfall and a substantial drop in water quality i.e. both quality and quantity of water are a concern. The importance of increasing water efficiency in both agriculture and urban settings was highlighted.
- Human health and wellbeing will decline as the temperature increases due to heat stress, an increase in diseases, and lower levels of productivity.
- Biodiversity loss is not solely caused by climate change but the biodiversity economy is crucial in Africa, and compared to the rest of the world will be an increasingly important competitive advantage, thus it is crucial for our long-term development in Africa to protect and maintain our biodiversity economy.

Disaster management capacity is crucial as extreme weather events such as floods, fires, storms, and droughts become more frequent and intense and Africa will need to prepare for these events.

### 'Science tells us that Africa is vulnerable to climate change'

From the perspective of an international negotiator who had participated in the Paris Agreement negotiations, the vulnerability of Africa to the impacts of climate change was highlighted. So too was the emphasis on the global responsibility of climate change in terms of both mitigation and adaptation. The ideological difference from an international negotiation perspective regarding resilience and adaptation was also highlighted. From this perspective, resilience is seen as a once-off incident or disaster that countries are able to fund themselves, whereas adaptation is seen as reducing countries' vulnerability to climate change. Reducing vulnerability to climate change is a costly exercise that most developing countries are unable to afford and that under the Paris Agreement, developed countries have a responsibility to support.

Adaptation was included in the Paris Agreement at the insistence of developing countries. Rather than just international agreements and efforts focusing on climate mitigation, adaptation was added because it is recognised as a question of climate justice – those countries that have had the least influence on climatic changes are those who are the most vulnerable to its effects, whilst conversely those countries whose emissions have contributed to climate change are the countries who tend to be least vulnerable to climate change. Thus, the Paris Agreement acknowledges developed countries have a responsibility to pay for adaptation and not just mitigation efforts.

For this reason, the third point highlighted was that adaptation and resilience require collective action and while Africa will have its own voice on issues of climate change policy (adaptation and resilience), there is a need to explore new ways of working together - new partnerships are important in order to resolve these challenges.

## VULNERABILITIES AND RESILIENCE – THE REALITIES

### 'Multiple threats can pose complex risks to sustainable development'

The reality is that climate change poses additional risks to a continent that is already vulnerable. However, risk-informed development takes cognizance of these threats. Thinking about complex risks in a risk-informed way allows us to identify the best solutions to foster economic development and resilience to climate change in a world facing multiple threats, while acknowledging that development pathways can create trade-offs (as well as uncertainty and spill-overs).

Resilience was conceptualised in this context as resilient development, which enables people and systems to cope with shocks through crisis response development and re-organising in ways that maintain function and structure, while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation and transformation. That means being able to anticipate, adapt to and absorb risks.

Individuals and societies who are most at risk of climatic change need to be part of the decision-making process on how to respond to climate vulnerabilities and

resilience due to how climate change interacts with socio-economic issues. The need for increased skills and capacity in adaptation and transformation (such as planning, participation and preparedness) for Africa was emphasised. Experience from working in the field of resilience highlights the importance of being sensitive to religion and culture as well as working together with indigenous knowledge practitioners.

Also noted were the realities of increasing tensions amongst Africans due to key resources being impacted on by climate change. As a result, water shortages, rising sea levels, increasing urbanisation and competing land uses and climate migrants are leading to increased levels of conflict in Africa. For these reasons, promoting adaptation mechanisms and forming global partnerships by all actors is indispensable to the future of all Africans.



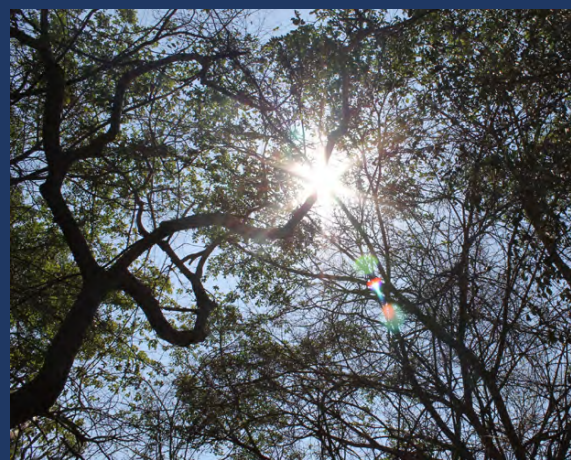
Images sourced from the Resilient 40

'There isn't really a hard boundary between okay climate change and apocalypse'



## A Dazzle of Zebras

An early morning walk through the conference venue allowed changemakers to connect with each other and with nature as we strolled together with a dazzle of zebras for company and along the edge of the second oldest mountain range in the world, the Magaliesburg Mountains.



## BUILDING RESILIENCE TO MANAGE THE SHOCKS AND STRESSES

*'The major question is: How do you bounce back as a country, and as a continent?'*

*'Who is actually responsible for building resilient systems and are they in tune with the people's needs on the ground?'*

The topic of building resilience to manage the shocks and stresses was illustrated using an example from the Limpopo Province of South Africa. Shocks are unexpected extreme weather experience such as a flood or a drought. And with these unexpected weather events there are high levels of damage - especially in developing countries which are vulnerable because they lack infrastructure, support, and technology to withstand the impact. The increasing severity of extreme weather events outstrips the ability of society to cope. These shocks become more complicated because of the underlying complex emergencies that exist in developing countries such as HIV, land degradation, poor governance, and a general lack of resources.

The example from Limpopo Province illustrated how funding was used to provide valuable mechanisms such as early warning systems for small-scale farmers; however, it illustrated the misfit between what was funded versus what was needed on the ground. This suggests that a top-down approach without consultation of the affected people didn't result in the required solutions. The learning opportunities from this case study highlighted questions such as whose job is it to build resilient systems, how do we ensure an African voice and build trust for future interventions, and how do we ensure research is directed to support resilient outcomes?

*'This is a deeply emotive subject'*

Climate change, together with a combination of human induced factors such as mass loss of species especially the insect population, topsoil erosion, forest felling, and ocean acidification have resulted in a complex, dynamic process of environmental destabilisation or collapse that has reached critical levels - and this destabilisation is occurring at speeds unprecedented in human history.

This environmental collapse threatens to destabilise society and the global economy. The resulting consequences are famines, forced migration, economic crises, conflict, and a new "domain of risk," unprecedented in its complexity and the potential severity of its impact. Furthermore, the consequences will impact hardest on the poorest, who are most vulnerable to its effects, and the least responsible for the problem. Thus, environmental collapse is not just about climate change, but is also about justice.

The window of opportunity to avoid catastrophic outcomes is rapidly closing and there is therefore an urgent need to transform our social and economic systems in response to environmental breakdown. Two overall transformations are needed to confront environmental breakdown - socio-economic and structural systemic change. The socio-economic

transformation is needed to make societies sustainable and equitable, bringing human activity within environmentally sustainable

limits. The structural systemic transformation is to prepare societies for environmental breakdown, making them more resilient.

Five major challenges were noted which millennial and younger generations face in managing environmental breakdown and shape the way resilience is built up:

- **The leadership challenge:** Millennial leaders will be the first to face the full consequences of environmental breakdown - and lead the response, while continuing efforts to mitigate. Many of these leaders will have little to no understanding of this reality, nor have developed the insights, skills, and experience that would maximise their chances of providing adequate leadership. It is anticipated that a large 'leadership gap' will exist between the challenges faced by future generations and the likely capabilities of their leaders as they respond to the consequences of environmental breakdown.
- **The emotional challenge:** Leaders will increasingly experience an emotional toll resulting from the process of stewarding societies through the required transformations – to become more sustainable, just, and prepared – while maintaining resilience in the face of the growing severity and frequency of environmental shocks.
- **The political challenge:** Under conditions of environmental breakdown, a politics that exploits fear, uncertainty, and scarcity which offers a panoply of false solutions, poses a severe threat, and crowds out cooperation from the community to the global level. Without increased levels of cooperation, we will be unable to prevent environmental breakdown. We need to grow a countervailing political system, and fast. It should be rooted in communities, the realisation of the co-benefits of action and justice.
- **The economic challenge:** A new economic paradigm is required to build more sustainable, equitable and democratic societies. The new economic paradigm will require us to challenge the existing hegemony.
- **The moral challenge:** Certain interests in countries across the world, including industries whose business model depends on continued environmental degradation, use their considerable power and wealth to influence political debates and policy decisions on environmental breakdown, with many recorded instances of groups blocking or reversing progress. This is a moral challenge that young leaders will have to face.

## The Best Time to Plant a Tree

*'The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.  
The second-best time is now' – Chinese Proverb*



In celebration of the International Day of the Forest (21 March) and acknowledging the carbon emissions we create in our own lives; we planted a symbolic tree at the conference. The tree planting was a lively event with many changemakers volunteering for different roles including digging the hole, massaging the roots of the tree and watering it. Our intentions for change, friendships and commitment were planted with the symbolic tree which we hope to see grow over the years!



## BUILDING THE TOOLS FOR RESILIENCE: PUTTING GOOD SCIENCE TO WORK

*'It's important to share meaningful information with people on the ground...and it requires a multi-agency approach.'*

Accurate forecasting of the weather and communicating it are key tools for resilience. There has been substantial institutional capacity building taking place between the UK Met Office (the national weather service or meteorological office) and the SADC region Met offices to improve and develop forecasting systems, helping national weather agencies to forecast more accurately and meaningfully. The Met Office has established partners across Africa, sharing skills, expertise and developing strategies that aid in building resilience to climate change. There has been an important shift in communication strategies by the Met Offices: from what the weather will be to how the weather will affect people to keep people safe. Early warning systems in particular are crucial to support disaster risk management and relief efforts, making them crucial for resilience.

This work was further reinforced by the work of the BBC Media Action which is working with journalists in East Africa, working out how best to communicate weather risk to rural people to enable them to move when necessary. The collaboration with local partners such as community radio stations highlights the importance of telecommunications in building climate resilience, as they build capacity of local journalists to understand weather forecasting and increasing capacity

to communicate extreme weather events with communities in an accessible way. One of the key issues was the importance of building trust between the media and scientists as well as between scientists and the public.

The UK national mapping agency, Ordnance Survey, has a long history in working with African nations to develop their mapping and geospatial data, dating back to the 1950s and continued ever since. The value of geospatial information in the digital world is becoming increasingly important, driving economic growth, supporting the environment and delivering social outcomes. This is crucial information for countries to have in the context of climate change, where Africans need a better understanding of how climate change, especially sea level rise, will change their land use patterns and impact on people's livelihoods and homes. Up to date geospatial information can assist in making countries more resilient. In recent years Ordnance Survey has worked with countries as diverse as Tanzania, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Namibia, developing long-term partnerships with nations wishing to take advantage of our experiences and established platforms. Our voluntary work with the United Nations is helping to develop the framework for geospatial information globally, and as such we are often called upon to advise at ministerial and higher levels in Africa.

## BUILDING RESILIENCE IN PRACTICE

Four key themes were explored when unpacking what resilience looks like in practice: water; food security; cities; and preparing for extreme weather events. Participants were led by experts in each field, but these were exploratory conversations rather than comprehensive solutions to each of these problems. Common themes that arose included the need for capacity development; research opportunities to learn from 'mistakes'; identifying and sharing solutions implemented in other countries; awareness raising; issues around funding to solve these problems and leadership opportunities for the Resilient 40 in Africa.



Fossil Fuel Fossils - image sourced from Hannelie Coetzee

### Fossil Fuel Fossil

An integral part of the conference, an artwork was created by Hannelie Coetzee, a contemporary artist based in Johannesburg, South Africa. Coetzee uses the arts in transdisciplinary partnerships to draw attention to global warming, climate change, adaptation, mitigation and resilience, from a Southern perspective. As part of the conference, Coetzee invited changemakers to bring a stone with significance to them, that was worked into an artwork over the period of the conference. Coetzee recorded participants stories about the rocks and shared these over social media. These stones took a vertebrae shape. 'A new spine of sorts' and named by Coetzee the Fossil Fuel Fossil.



## THE CRITICAL QUESTIONS: HOW TO MAKE IT WORK? WHO PAYS FOR RESILIENCE?

*'There is no shortage of available funding... Well-designed infrastructure can be pro-growth, pro-poor, and pro-climate'*

When faced with the question of what finance is available for climate change in general or resilience specifically, it seems there really is plenty of finance... the trick is how to unlock this.

There is currently a large gap between the commitments to the Paris Agreement and what is required to reach the 1.5°C target. The challenge is to accelerate action to close the gap, and for this, the next decade is critical. Investment choices made will either lock us into high emissions, or set us on a low-carbon growth path, which can be sustainable and inclusive. To reach 1.5°C target, we need to reduce our emissions by 50% by 2030. Furthermore, strong investment in sustainable infrastructure is at the core of meeting the Sustainable Development Goals and supporting social inclusion. Thus, well-designed infrastructure can be pro-growth, pro-poor, and pro-climate.

There is no shortage of available finance, but it needs to be directed where it is most needed. Mobilising the required capital requires unlocking a number of pools to work together in a complementary way for example domestic public resources, international public finance (such as multilateral development banks and development finance institutes) as well as the domestic and international private sectors. Policy-related uncertainty is the biggest deterrent to investment and these are both related to governance and political issues, which need to be resolved.

Supporting finance for resilience requires the right kind of support, at the right scale, at the right time. Financing for resilience and climate change needs to be considered from a cost-benefit perspective and seen as an investment rather than a cost. In order to see climate finance as an investment, the impact needs to be measured. This in turn holds implementers and governments accountable and provides important political and governance signals.

*'Energy and resource efficiency drive economic growth'*

In asking how we can make climate resilience work from an economic perspective the assumption is that the neo-liberal model continues where economic growth is prioritised. Resilience was conceptualised, not just as climate resilience but in this instance, economic resilience – and economic resilience generally equates to political resilience. At the core of modern politics is the promise to the people that they will be prosperous, a promise that politicians have historically delivered on through economic growth. It is likely that the focus on economic growth as the driver of increased prosperity will continue as the fundamental driver within politics into the foreseeable future, despite facing a world of environmental breakdown.

Two hypotheses were put forward. Firstly, that sustained economic growth will be directed towards climate mitigation (through resource decoupling) and secondly, that economic growth will be designed to create resilience. Some examples of resource efficiency have already been seen in industries in the UK where it was considered difficult to create resource efficiencies for example construction, vehicles, food and drink industries. The resource efficiencies – or decoupling growth from resources – has resulted in increased economic growth while at the same time, resource and energy efficiency have delivered passive resilience as supply chains are less easily disrupted or at risk from extreme weather events. New technologies, skills, and industries are arising from these low-carbon industries. Consequently, resilience is not about incremental initiatives that can be attached to an existing development or industrial plan but rather deep structural and systemic change, implemented over many decades.

However, as developed countries such as the UK decarbonise to meet their own mitigation goals, they will impact other countries with whom they trade. The downside is the impact on jobs in developing countries, for example as developed countries use fewer resources sourced from developing countries. It is crucial for economies servicing this demand to prepare for this and to develop new trade partnerships. Conversations on win-win situations need to happen in order to benefit Africa and the West.

Institutionalising climate change is crucial and yet climate change is still not a priority for many African politicians and thus it has not yet become institutionalised within the

various levels of government. In Africa, climate change competes with issues such as youth unemployment, increasing population growth, inequality, public transport systems, and urban migration. Prioritising climate change under The Presidency and the Mayor in each country and city would assist in institutionalising climate change.

Two further ways of institutionalising climate change include having more Africans lobbying for climate change concerns with their governments and to hold officials accountable by including climate change in their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), ensuring they are measured against these KPIs every year. Having climate change issues incorporated into law would be a crucial step for each country.

## Building self-resilience

The former UN climate negotiator, Christiana Figueres, credits mindfulness practice as a source of inner strength that sustained her through negotiations at the 2015 Paris Climate Accord. Not only did mindfulness help Figueres maintain calm during the negotiations, it also helped her cope with the realities of climate change. For young people who are faced with a variety of challenges related to the climate crisis, mindfulness may help build self-

resilience and coping mechanisms to face the climate crisis and tools to manage conflict.

During the conference, one tool that was taught was loving-kindness meditation, a meditation that develops compassion and mend relationships. Although loving-kindness comes from the Buddhist tradition, it can be practiced by anyone, regardless of religious affiliation. The loving kindness meditation is:



**May I be safe from harm.**

**May I be happy just as I am.**

**May I be peaceful with whatever is happening.**

**May I be healthy and strong.**

**May I care for myself in this ever-changing world graciously, joyously.**

**May all beings be free from suffering**

**May all beings be safe, happy, healthy, live joyously.**

## COMMUNICATING CLIMATE CHANGE

### *'Local people perhaps recognise that weather is changing but do not understand WHY the weather is changing'*

A practical session offered participants advice on how to communicate climate change at the local level. BBC Media Action provided insights into the development journalism work they are doing in East Africa between journalists and scientists working in the climate change field.

Advice on how best to communicate climate change and turn knowledge into messages included recommendations to:

- ➔ Conduct research to understand what the local or target audience in each area understood or needed before starting
- ➔ Build relationships of trust with the target audience
- ➔ Work with respected traditional leaders
- ➔ Build the concepts of advocacy and citizen journalism whereby the public become gatherers and disseminators of news and create wider awareness
- ➔ Share accurate information rather than fake news in order to ensure credibility.

### Social Media recommendations

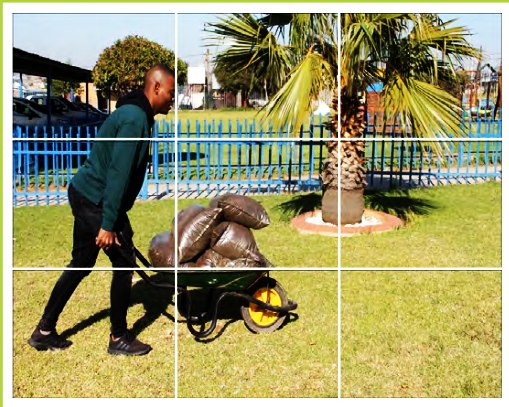
You can be a citizen journalist and can advocate for change by using social media. However, it is recommended that when creating content or posts you should use these three categories to make your messaging effective:

- ➔ What you/ the organisation is doing (campaigning, policy work, writing submissions on draft legislation)
- ➔ What you are doing and what you can do (Sharing the stories of your volunteers/funders/stakeholders/sharing action opportunities for others to participate in)
- ➔ External information (facts, reports, evidence to support citizen media).

To increase the reach and engagement of your social media platform, use trending hashtags and topics – for example, using international days of environmental significance and link your content to those days. However, it is important to remember that most Africans do not use social media and do not have access to these platforms and so other media formats should generally be used in Africa such as community radio or even sharing content such as photographs via WhatsApp.

### Tips for better photographs

Photographs can be used for social and traditional media and every photograph can send a specific message to the viewer or audience. To help convey the message and to take better photos, follow these tips:



Imagine your image is divided into 9 equal 'blocks'. Position the most important elements in your scene along these lines that divide the blocks, or at the points where they intersect to balance your photo and make it interesting. Place your main subject off-centre (not in the middle of photograph) creates a more interesting photo, but you must balance the importance of your subject by including another less important object to fill the space.

We are surrounded by symmetry and patterns, both natural and man-made., They can make for very eye-catching compositions, particularly in situations where they are not expected. Another great way to use them is to break the symmetry or pattern in some way, introducing tension and a focal point to the scene.



Choose your composition carefully to convey a sense of depth. When we look at a photo our eye is naturally drawn along lines. By thinking about how you place lines in your composition, you can affect the way we view the image. There are many different types of line - straight, diagonal, curvy, zigzag and radial - and each can be used to enhance your photo's composition.



Sometimes you may want to create movement and action in your composition. One way to do this is to focus on where the action originates from – usually from people's hands.





Before photographing your subject, think about which angle you take the photo from as this will impact on the composition and message the photo will send. Rather than just shooting from eye level, consider photographing from high above, down at ground level, from the side, from the back, from a long way away, from very close up, and so on.

Take note of what is in the background of your frame. This works on several fronts. You would not want to go home after taking pictures of volunteers for example, to find that an overflowing rubbish bin is in the background or every photo – or something that we have encountered, is only noticing the many single use plastic bottles being used by participants in a workshop. But it can also work if you want to deliberately place things in the background to further convey your message.



### Tips for radio interviews

Phoning in to radio talk shows or getting the opportunity to be interviewed on radio can help share information about your organisation and activities you are doing. Here are some tips to prepare you for radio interviews:

- Be confident in articulating what you and your organisation do – it helps to have a short paragraph that you can memorise beforehand
- Smile while you speak – you will sound much better (and if it's a TV interview, you will look better as well)
- Know your audience – this will allow you to tailor the language of your discussion to the knowledge levels of the audience
- Know your time allocation so that you can answer questions in the appropriate amount of time
- Listen very carefully to the questions you are being asked, and make sure to answer them. The interviewer will ask you follow up questions if you answer questions in a focused and to-the point manner.
- Remember that radio is a medium for the spoken word – you are not expected to speak perfectly or in full sentences. However, do be mindful of too much 'umming' and 'aahing'. Try not to get in a fuss if you jumble your words, laugh it off, and carry on with your point – remember you're on live radio and there is no second take
- Try to repeat part of the question in your answer particularly for pre-recorded content
- If faced with a question you are not sure how to answer or would prefer not to answer, you can divert the topic with different phrases such as 'Yes, while that's important I would like to talk more about...' or "I can't comment on that particular aspect, but.." and in this way stay in control of the interview progression

Some questions on resilience you could share with the radio interviewer to help them prepare for the interview include:

- What does it mean to be climate resilient?
- What impacts do we personally face from climate change?
- Why is this important for our community, and Africa as a whole?
- How will we be affected in our community if it is not achieved?
- What are the first steps for developing climate resilience in our country?
- What is being done at a policy level to make sure that we have a climate resilient future?
- How does your organisation fit into this?
- What can we do as a community to contribute to our climate resilience?

### **'Leave no one behind'**

A climate change activist shared advice on mobilising people, advocacy and lobbying as well as campaigning. When mobilising people, it is important to consider important groups of people within communities such as traditional and religious institutions; community associations and professional bodies. The aim should be to strengthen existing groups although in some cases, forming new groups such as eco clubs at schools, may be useful to mobilise more people. Tools to mobilise people include music, art, theatre and the media. The messages should always communicate hope and opportunities and not just disaster and hopelessness.

## *'Politicians don't create political will; they respond to it'*

Lobbying and advocacy for climate change are key, and require you to contact politicians and law-makers in order to build political will. Building political will for climate action should be approached by focusing on shared values rather than partisan divides and by starting from a position of respect and appreciation, avoiding a confrontational approach. Campaigning is defined as organised and effective strategic action for change towards a social, environmental or political goal. Ingredients of an effective campaign include:

- ➔ The ask needs to be clear
- ➔ There needs to be an urgency and an opportunity for change
- ➔ The target must have power to make the change asked for happen
- ➔ Campaigners must have strong reasons and talk to the mind of people to convince them
- ➔ Campaigners must have a strong story to talk to the hearts of people
- ➔ The goal should not be just to protest, but suggest a concrete change to create a social benefit.

Before embarking on mobilising people to campaign for climate change action, it is important to conduct a power analysis in order to understand who can make the change or who has an influence on those who can make the change. Understanding who your allies are as well as those who will be against the change, and the role of media, public, voters, consumers, influencers etc. The tactics of each campaign will vary although they should escalate gradually from meetings to non-violent direct actions, taking advantage of technology and the media as important components in each campaign.

## BUILDING INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES AND ACTIONS

### *'The overall aim for this part of the summit is to fundamentally change the way we plan and invest'*

The Climate Action Summit taking place in New York in September 2019 aims to significantly increase climate ambition as the world community is currently not on track to meet the reduction in emissions targets set for 2020. A number of countries are working together for the global effort to ensure the experiences and needs of all countries are heard. The United Kingdom aims to use this opportunity to drive significant change to collectively build resilience to the impacts of climate change to ensure a more secure and prosperous future for all, including those countries disproportionately vulnerable to climate change. While resilience, adaptation, and mitigation need to take place concurrently, there is a need to prioritise resilience as an economic issue that affects everybody, as well as being a development issue that is already affecting vulnerable countries.

The UK has identified that climate risk is not considered effectively when making economic decisions at local, national, and international levels. There is a call to fundamentally change the way we plan and invest – firstly to build resilient economies and incentives, and secondly, to build resilient people by getting the money to where it is needed and giving people the skills to build climate resilience. The UK wants governments to make public commitments to factor climate risks into their decisions. This offers an opportunity for Africans to envision a direction and to work together to meet that vision.

When asked for input to The Summit on behalf of Africa's youth, respondents noted:

- 'Africa should have its own stream; it is a continent and a voice that hasn't normally been heard and this would provide opportunity for Africa to make decisions for itself...'
- 'The narratives and impact around climate change are often built by western states and vulnerability mapping will allow for effective intervention.'
- Since the Paris Agreement, the UN agenda has been signed to recognise the role of southern governments as important. The Summit should acknowledge this as there has been a movement away from the Paris Agreement
- We hear there is a lot of money for building resilience but how do we get the money? How do we make sure the right people get the money? What about those countries endowed with oil and coal – will they be helped to transition to a more sustainable source?
- Africa wants to see clear commitments from financial institutions to support resilience.
- Mainstream resilience by using local and indigenous knowledge in order to help resilience make an impact on the ground
- International moments come along and need to be grasped. As the global community prepares for international moments, there's a role we can all play in connecting local to global.

## We are the Changemakers

A vegetarian dinner around a boma with a clear view of the Southern Cross constellation above us allowed us time to think about the impacts we are having on the climate crisis as individuals. Dignitaries from the UK and a representative from the NGO 'Africa Matters' joined the dinner. The clear message to participants was that climate change is crucial for Africans to focus on and that delegates have both the right and the responsibility to be changemakers.

## INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENTS AND ACTIONS

The group identified the need for increased communication about climate change and resilience in order to empower and educate Africans. This would give them agency to create their own solutions at a local level while being able to lobby politicians and leaders at national and regional levels. The importance of mainstreaming climate change into all aspects of our lives and projects was highlighted as key, but the reality is that the problem has become too big to deal with in isolation. Cooperation, coexistence and collaboration will be critical factors to solving these issues. Capacity, money, and technology will all be needed to support Africa in coping with climate change.



Participants called themselves 'The Resilient 40' with individuals making commitments towards supporting climate resilience. Some of the commitments on an individual basis were:

- build an army of change makers
- mobilise youth
- use social media and mainstream media to create awareness of climate change and resilience
- work with journalists to create media content to adopt practices that build resilience in Africa
- community engagement and dialogue
- influence climate policy both locally and internationally
- influence my leaders to bring climate change and resilience further up our agenda
- Explore partnerships opportunities with other organisations
- Advocate for mainstreaming of climate change policies in agriculture, land use, construction and education
- Create a platform for change makers. Connecting civil society with a united front
- I will look, listen and learn from the voices here in Africa and build these into our advocacy in the UK
- I will start my own company to build climate resilience capacity in Africa
- lobby government in increase budgetary provision for climate action and make laws that protect the environment
- Building and disseminating lessons to be learnt and best practices on resilience in co-creation and partnership with local experts
- Network and develop leaders capable of responding to the challenges of environmental breakdown
- hold policy makers accountable
- Make climate change a political issue

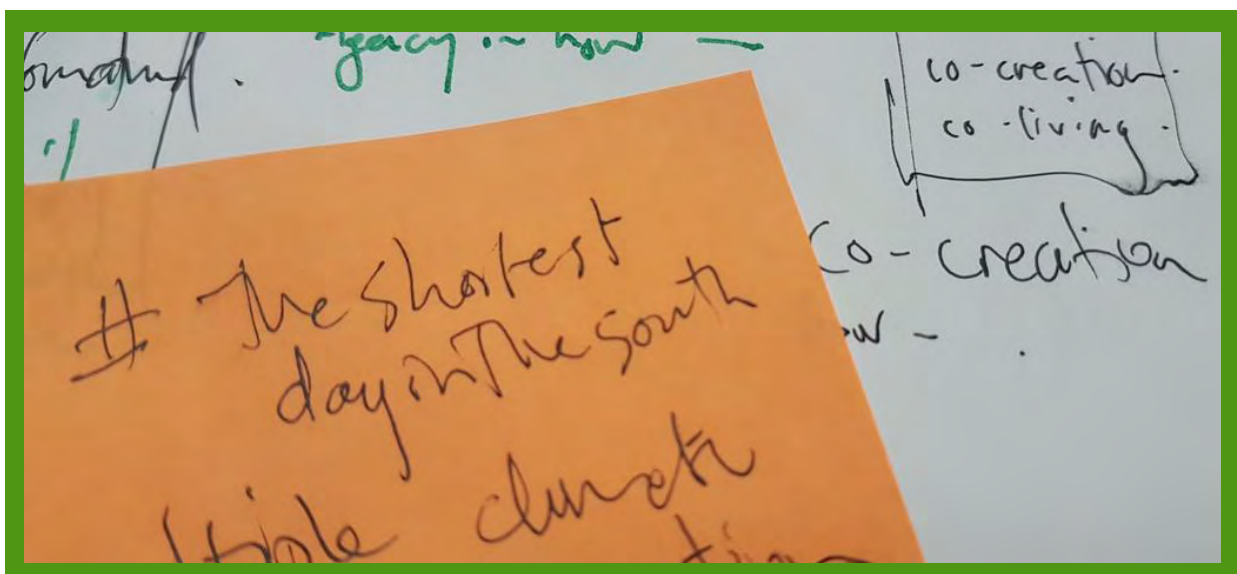


Image sourced from Hannelie Coetzee

## CONCLUSION

The Resilient 40 attended an extraordinary conference to discuss adaptation and resilience related to climate change. The emerging generation of leaders not only provided input towards the Climate Action Summit which will take place in September 2019, but underwent a process themselves, to emerge as changemakers and committed to taking individual action in various ways.

This conference was extraordinary because it acknowledged the importance of youth for global decision-making; laid foundations for an excellent and much needed partnership between Africa and the UK, while allowing the changemakers an opportunity to co-create solutions to climate resilience and provided opportunities for these emerging leaders to develop relationships and reciprocal opportunities for knowledge building amongst the delegates.

Crucially, the Resilient 40 conference allowed people to leverage an opportunity

to drive significant change to collectively build resilience to the impacts of climate change in order to ensure a more secure and prosperous future for all, especially on the African continent which is extremely vulnerable to the climate crisis.

Each individual committed to taking their own actions to build resilience to climate change, equipped by the conference with knowledge, insights, and tools to allow them to mobilise their communities to increase resilience to climate change.

The UK, as a partner with Africa, is committed to lead on building resilience to climate change for the UN Secretary General ahead of his 2019 Climate Summit. Increasing the connections between the UK and Africa on climate is of enormous mutual benefit and this conference built on the existing partnerships and stimulated new ones. This renewed and modern UK-African partnership in turn can strengthen the case for international action.



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All images, unless stated otherwise, have been taken by Nicole Rodel.

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