



ADAPTATION FUND

AFB/B.43-44/5  
7 November 2024

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Adaptation Fund Board

**ENDORSEMENT OF COP29 BAKU INITIATIVE ON  
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE**

## Background

1. The 29<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will be held from 11 to 22 November 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan.
2. As outlined in recent reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) such as the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) and others, there is evidence for an urgent need to address the complex challenges posed by climate change and its impacts on human development and acknowledging the significance of a multi-sectoral approach in tackling these challenges, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
3. In this context, the COP29 Presidency will convene within the framework of COP29 the first-ever Human Development Day on 18 November 2024 to launch the COP29 Presidency-led “Baku Initiative on Human Development for Climate Resilience” (“Baku Initiative”). This initiative aims to address intersectoral synergies and complementarities between greening education, health, social protection, decent jobs, and skills development to enhance climate resilience, with a special focus on workers at risk of losing their jobs, workers in the informal economy, women, children, youth, migrants, displaced people, and other vulnerable groups.
4. As part of this initiative, the COP29 Presidency has extended an invitation to the Adaptation Fund Board through its secretariat to endorse a Joint Statement on the Baku Initiative (“Joint Statement”) and the “Baku Guiding Principles on Human Development for Climate Resilience”, in partnership with the representatives of international organizations, multilateral development banks, and other international climate and environmental funds.
5. The proposed Joint Statement recognizes the importance of global partnership for integrating health, education, social protection, and decent jobs, as well as skills development, into climate action to enhance mitigation, resilience, adaptive capacities, and the overall well-being of current and future populations, particularly workers at risk of losing their jobs, women, children, youth, migrants, displaced people and other vulnerable groups. The Baku Initiative builds on previous commitments such as the Declaration on Children, Youth, and Climate Action, the COP26 Just Transition Declaration, the COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate and Health, and the Declaration on the Common Agenda for Education and Climate Change.
6. The Joint Statement also reaffirms the collective commitment to advancing human development as a cornerstone of climate resilience and pledge to work together to ensure that climate action is inclusive, promotes intergenerational equity, and is guided by the “Baku Guiding Principles on Human Development for Climate Resilience”. These principles are not legally binding but are intended to inspire and influence actions related to human development. The renewed approach to investing in human development focuses on equipping all people with the tools, support, and opportunities to live healthy lives, gain knowledge and skills, and access the resources necessary for achieving climate-resilient development.

## Secretariat's review of the invitation

7. At its thirty-ninth meeting, the Board adopted the second Medium-Term Strategy of the Fund for the period from 2023 to 2027 (MTS-2), as contained in Document AFB/B.39/5/Rev.2 (Decision B.39/61).<sup>1</sup>The MTS 2023-2027 includes three strategic pillars and six crosscutting themes that are reflected in the MTS 2023-2027 mission statement:

*“The Adaptation Fund serves the Paris Agreement by accelerating effective adaptation action and efficient access to finance, including through direct access, to respond to the urgent needs and priorities of developing countries. The Fund does so by supporting country-driven adaptation projects and programmes, innovation, and learning with concrete results at the local level that can be scaled up. All of the Fund’s activities are designed to promote locally based or locally led action, enhance access to climate finance and long-term institutional and technical capacities, empower the most vulnerable people and communities as agents of change, advance gender equality, encourage and enable the scaling and replication of results, and strengthen complementarity, coherence and synergies with other adaptation funders and actors.”*

8. The MTS-2 further states that “to further advance adaptation action and effectiveness within the Fund’s mandate, the Fund will enhance linkages between the action pillar and the innovation and learning and sharing pillars to:

- Capture co-benefits and learning of innovative and impactful areas of adaptation, such as nature-based solutions, regional and transboundary adaptation, urban development and integrated and cross-sectoral approaches, for system-wide innovation and learning;
- Identify and advance adaptation in sectors and themes with high potential for adaptation but relatively low representation in adaptation portfolios to date; and
- Capture synergies with and benefits for building broader resilience to compounding and more complex risks, including through exploring linkages between adaptation and related areas such health, biodiversity oceans and marine ecosystems, conflict and fragility, and losses and damages.

9. To achieve the Fund’s mandate and maximize its impact, the MTS-2 further highlights the role of synergies and partnerships with relevant initiatives under its crosscutting strategic theme “Strengthening complementarity and coherence, and synergies, with other adaptation funders and actors.”

10. Following the review of the “Baku Initiative on Human Development for Climate Resilience”, including the Joint Statement and Baku Guiding Principles, the secretariat finds that the initiative is well aligned with the Adaptation Fund’s mandate and mission of supporting effective adaptation action in the most vulnerable communities in developing countries. The initiative is well aligned with the MTS-2 three strategic pillars and six crosscutting strategic themes, and the objective of enhancing linkages between the three pillars to:

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<sup>1</sup> Available at: <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/document/medium-term-strategy-2023-2027/>.

- Capture co-benefits and learning of innovative and impactful areas of adaptation, such as integrated and cross-sectoral approaches for system-wide innovation and learning;
- Identify and advance adaptation in sectors and themes with high potential for adaptation but relatively low representation in adaptation portfolios to date; and
- Capture synergies with and benefits for building broader resilience to compounding and more complex risks, including through exploring linkages between adaptation and related areas such health, biodiversity oceans and marine ecosystems, conflict and fragility, and losses and damages.

11. The Baku Initiative on Human Development for Climate Resilience is also well aligned with the existing work of the Fund, such as financing concrete climate adaptation projects with linkages to sustainable development sectors such as health, education, social protection, and jobs and skills development. The Adaptation Fund, under its pillar of learning and sharing, has published several relevant knowledge products.<sup>2</sup>

12. The Baku Initiative's Joint Statement and Guiding Principles are framed broadly and would not entail any additional obligations nor financial commitments for the Adaptation Fund. Rather, participating organizations affirm their commitment to strengthening their respective and shared efforts, including through voluntary partnerships, initiatives, and coalitions towards the common objectives of addressing the intersection of climate change and human development.

13.

## Recommendation

14. Having considered the information contained in document AFB/B.43-44/6, the Adaptation Fund Board (the Board) may want to consider and decide:

- (a) To endorse the Baku Initiative on Human Development and Climate Resilience, including the related Joint Statement and the "Baku Guiding Principles on Human Development for Climate Resilience", as contained in Annexes 1 and 2 of document AFB/B.43-B.44/6; and
- (b) To authorize the Chair of the Board, supported by the secretariat, to communicate on behalf of the Board its endorsement of the Baku Initiative on Human Development and Climate Resilience to the COP29 Presidency.

## Annex

1. Joint Statement on COP29 Baku Initiative on Human Development for Climate Resilience
2. Baku Guiding Principles on Human Development for Climate Resilience

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<sup>2</sup> AF knowledge publications and studies are available on the AF website: <https://www.adaptation-fund.org/knowledge-learning/knowledge-products/af-produced-knowledge-products/>.



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## JOINT STATEMENT

REGARDING

### BAKU INITIATIVE ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE

We, the representatives of international organizations, multilateral development banks, and international climate and environmental funds, convened at the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held in Baku, Azerbaijan, on 18 November 2024,

**NOTING** the urgent need to address the complex challenges posed by climate change and its impacts on human development and acknowledging the significance of a multi-sectoral approach in tackling these challenges;

**RECALLING** the shared commitment to advancing the agenda on Human Development for Climate Resilience, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

**RECOGNIZING** the importance of integrating health, education, social protection, and decent jobs, as well as skills development, into climate action to enhance mitigation, resilience, adaptive capacities, and the overall well-being of current and future populations, particularly workers at risk of losing their jobs, women, children, youth, migrants, displaced people and other vulnerable groups, as recognized through commitments such as the Declaration on Children, Youth, and Climate Action, the COP26 Just Transition Declaration, the COP28 UAE Declaration on Climate and Health, and the Declaration on the Common Agenda for Education and Climate Change;

**UNDERLINING** the critical role of strengthening global partnerships and enhancing collaborative efforts to drive transformative change and build adaptive capacities at local, regional, and global levels, as seen in initiatives such as the Greening Education Partnership, the Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH), the Children's Environmental Health Collaborative and the Climate Action for Jobs Initiative;

**RECOGNIZING** that investments in human development not only build and enhance resilience to climate change but also fuel solutions to tackle it;

**EMPHASIZING** the need to foster technological and community-based innovations and leverage collective expertise to create scalable solutions that address both the immediate and long-term impacts of climate change on human development;

**STRESSING** the importance of social dialogue among governments, workers' and employers' organizations, along with relevant stakeholder engagement, in the design and implementation of climate policies to ensure adequate health, education, skills

development, and social protection, all of which are essential for building climate-resilient populations;

**EXPRESSING** a shared vision of empowering communities and ensuring that climate action strategies are inclusive, equitable, and designed to promote sustainable development and facilitate a just transition, leaving no one behind;

**WELCOMING** the first-ever Human Development Day within the framework of the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the COP29 Presidency-led “Baku Initiative on Human Development for Climate Resilience.” This initiative aims to address intersectoral synergies and complementarities between greening education, health, social protection, decent jobs, and skills development to enhance climate resilience, with a special focus on workers at risk of losing their jobs, workers in the informal economy, women, children, youth, migrants, displaced people, and other vulnerable groups;

We affirm our commitment to strengthening our respective and shared efforts, including through voluntary partnerships, initiatives, and coalitions. We will work collaboratively and expeditiously to pursue the following common objectives:

- Enhancing cooperation to address the impacts of climate change on human development, focusing on education, health, social protection, decent jobs, and skills development, with particular attention to the needs of children and youth;
- Promoting human development as a key lever for building climate resilience, with particular focus on women, children and youth, migrants, displaced people, workers who have lost or are at risk of losing their jobs, workers in the informal economy, and other vulnerable groups, through integrated and coordinated actions that are age- and gender-responsive;
- Bridging global efforts on climate and human development for greater synergy, complementarity, and maximum impact;
- Strengthening dialogue at the intersection between climate policy and human development, including Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans;
- Scaling up age- and gender-responsive climate finance for investments in human development, including education, health, social protection, decent jobs, and skills development, while promoting synergies and efficiency in funding through multi-stakeholder partnerships and coordination.

In order to realize the objectives mentioned above, we aim to cooperate in the following areas:

- Engaging in systematic and coherent activities that address the intersection of climate change and human development. This includes joint initiatives and efforts to maximize impact across relevant sectors;
- Actively supporting and facilitating dialogue and collaboration among social partners and relevant stakeholders, including both public and private sectors, in order to effectively address the emerging challenges and opportunities at the intersection of climate change and human development;

- Continuing to support the mobilization and catalyzation of climate finance that is age- and gender-responsive, to promote strategic initiatives in education, health, social protection, employment, and skills development.

With this joint statement, we reaffirm our collective commitment to advancing human development as a cornerstone of climate resilience and pledge to work together to ensure that climate action is inclusive, promotes intergenerational equity, and is guided by the COP-29 Presidency-led “Baku Guiding Principles on Human Development for Climate Resilience”.

We commit to working together to ensure that each partnership, initiative, or coalition enhances the coordination of actions, promotes the sharing of information, knowledge, and good practices at national, regional, and global levels, and enhances the impact of investments in human development. In doing so, we can maximize synergies, avoid duplication of efforts, and ensure the efficient use of our collective resources, contributing to a climate-resilient future for all.



The purpose of this document is to highlight guiding principles across the areas of education, health, jobs and skills, and children and youth, with the aim of enhancing ambition and elevating action of the **Baku Initiative on Human Development for Climate Resilience**. These principles are not legally binding but are intended to inspire and influence actions related to human development. The renewed approach to investing in human development focuses on equipping all people with the tools, support, and opportunities to live healthy lives, gain knowledge and skills, and access the resources necessary for achieving climate-resilient development.

**Principle 1 – Align climate action with human development for a resilient future**

This principle emphasizes integrating human development as a cornerstone of climate action to strengthen resilience. It calls for national climate policies, including Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), to prioritize human development through greater focus on education, skills, health, the labour market and social protection measures, with specific attention to the needs of children and youth in the vulnerable communities. By aligning these priorities with economic and climate objectives, policies can drive the creation of quality jobs, and support just transition to low-carbon, resource-efficient economies.

**Principle 2 – Enhance social dialogue, partnership and collaboration on human development policies for climate response**

Social dialogue and partnership are key to the effective design, planning, implementation, and evaluation of policies on just transition pathways to a climate-resilient and sustainable future for all. Climate action requires robust coordination and synergy among all stakeholders, including representatives of governments, employers and workers, international organizations, civil society, academia and other relevant actors, including children and youth. The meaningful participation of all relevant stakeholders should facilitate collaboration, aligning resources, sharing best practices and ensuring their collective climate action in education, decent jobs, skills and health.

**Principle 3 – Invest in integrating quality climate change education at all levels and regularly assessing student competencies to address climate change**

This principle aims to ensure that all learners, including children, youth, adults, in particular girls and women, migrants, and vulnerable groups, acquire essential knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes on climate action and resilience, addressing the cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral domains of learning. It seeks to integrate climate change education across all relevant subject areas, including social, economic, and



environmental dimensions, at all levels of formal, informal, and non-formal education and learning, including knowledge and values from indigenous systems and practices, from early childhood to technical and vocational education and training, and higher education. Achieving this requires collaboration on greening curriculum, schools, teacher training and education systems' capacities, and communities. Assessment plays a key role in guiding educational priorities. It is crucial for education systems to gather data on learning outcomes related to environmental sustainability and climate change. Through the integration of climate literacy into national and international assessments, countries can monitor progress against benchmarks and learn from the practices of top-performing systems.

#### **Principle 4 – Build climate-resilient and low-carbon education systems**

This principle aims to enhance the climate resilience of education systems, including schools and other educational infrastructure. It seeks to both ensure that education systems will continue to function or quickly recover from disruptions caused by climate events through resilience-strengthening measures (adaptation) as well as reduce emissions from the education sector, encouraging low-carbon facilities, activities and supply chains (mitigation). Strategic investments in green, safe and adaptive educational infrastructure and systems are crucial for enabling uninterrupted access to essential services for the most vulnerable and shielding them from further harm.

#### **Principle 5 – Enhance support to greening skills, qualifications, and occupational standards for priority sectors**

This principle aims to scale up the creation of decent green jobs by equipping workers, including women and youth, with the necessary knowledge and skills through targeted skilling, reskilling, and upskilling. It involves anticipating future skills needs, developing qualifications and occupational standards relevant to the labour market requirements in green economies, and closing the gender gap in access to skills in collaboration with enterprises, industry, training institutions and workers' organizations. This helps industries, workers, and communities mitigate and adapt to climate change. The principle encourages climate-responsive enterprise development and job creation, including the decarbonization of employment-intensive sectors such as transport (road, rail, maritime), agriculture, construction, and manufacturing. Green industrial transitions, supported by gender-inclusive and accessible financing for enterprises, would facilitate the shift toward e-mobility, climate-resilient agriculture, smart cities, and other green initiatives.

#### **Principle 6 – Invest in entrepreneurship, innovation, and talent for the application of new and green technologies with job creation potential**

This principle seeks to promote entrepreneurship, innovation, and investment in clean technologies to accelerate the transition to climate-resilient development and unlock jobs for youth and workers in transition, including women and caregivers. It also aims to inspire adaptive and dynamic research to inform innovations and new developments to address systemic gaps and promote equity of the benefits of climate-resilient development. Achieving these goals requires the development of enabling pathways for economic

participation of all, including targeted subsidies, incentives, and incubators that support green and social impact entrepreneurship.

### **Principle 7 – Promote integrated climate and health surveillance and early warning systems**

With increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events, health systems must integrate tools that enable the timely prediction, prevention, detection, diagnosis, and treatment of climate-sensitive health risks into primary health care. Moving towards integrated systems requires a close and coordinated approach to data collation and analysis for decision-making that encompasses the integration of meteorological and health data. Anticipatory action, leveraging early warning systems and health response protocols, including in the education and training activities of health professionals and occupational safety and health measures, should be enabled to protect workers and communities and address the health risks of climate change, including injuries, heat stress-related illnesses, productivity loss and the spread of infectious diseases. The age-related and gendered dimensions of these climate-related health risks should be understood, and measures developed in an age- and gender-responsive manner.

### **Principle 8 – Build climate-resilient, low carbon health systems and health care facilities, including supply chains**

Building climate-resilient and low-carbon, sustainable health systems and health care facilities that are responding to the impacts of climate change should be approached comprehensively. The climate crisis is also a health crisis, and therefore health systems and health need to adapt to and address the increasing health risks posed by climate change, especially for vulnerable groups, including children, youth, women, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, migrants and displaced people. To build more resilient health systems, including climate resilient health care facilities and infrastructure is crucial. It is critical to promote decarbonization of health, implement increasing energy efficiency and ensure access to reliable, clean energy sources, as well as to reduce the impacts of global supply chains, product packaging, and environmental waste from pharmaceuticals. Many health care facilities globally still lack access to power, and advancing sustainable energy solutions such as solar power will not only increase access but do so in a lower carbon way. Expanding energy access will also yield improvements in quality of care, reduce costs, and enhance efficiency. Similarly, enhancing appropriate waste management solutions and improving recycling and product recovery schemes will reduce not only carbon footprints but also the risk of dangerous waste products affecting health outcomes.

### **Principle 9 – Prioritize children’s unique vulnerabilities in climate action, including through investment in climate-resilient and sustainable essential services**

Children are disproportionately vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to their unique physiological development, behavioral traits, and dependence on caregivers. There are unique and differentiated impacts for both girls and boys, although young and adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable. Ambitious and child-responsive climate

policies, actions, and climate finance are necessary to meet their specific needs, including targeted measures that ensure continued access to climate-resilient and sustainable essential services, which children rely on to survive and thrive. These services include health, education, water and sanitation, nutrition, child protection, and adaptive social protection. Additionally, empowering children through education, meaningful participation in climate decision-making processes, and access to justice – while promoting the interests of present and future generations – is essential to promoting the rights of children in climate action.

**Principle 10 – Strengthen adaptive social protection systems to build resilience for all, especially for the most vulnerable**

Climate change exacerbates the vulnerabilities and risks people face throughout their lives and erodes progress in education, healthcare, and employment, with differentiated consequences for children, youth, women, and other vulnerable and marginalized groups. Governments should provide access to universal child-sensitive social protection systems to reduce inequalities, eliminate exclusion, prevent poverty, and protect vulnerable groups from the impacts of climate change and workers' transition to climate-resilient development. Social protection systems should be adequate, flexible, crisis-ready and coordinated with care services and learning provisions for climate resilience, including psychosocial support and risk-informed education. It is also critical to provide income security for people of working age, including caregivers, and to ensure that education, healthcare, and income support are sustained to facilitate the empowerment of both current and future generations. Such strategies and associated investments can shield households, enterprises, workers, and communities from the impacts of climate shocks and stressors, thereby enhancing adaptive capacity and human development.

**Principle 11 – Invest in solutions for communities and migrants affected by climate change**

It is critical to prioritize comprehensive adaptation planning and implementation to enhance climate-resilient development, ensuring access to education and other essential services, so that people have the choice to live in dignity and safety in their areas of origin, including areas affected by disasters and conflicts, as underlined in the COP28 Declaration on Climate, Relief, Recovery and Peace. Ensuring the right to education, decent work and facilitating pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration is essential for strengthening people's resilience. To enable this, it is necessary to facilitate countries' and communities' access to finance for responding to climate mobility, and to promote the participation of migrants and displaced persons in decent work, including in climate action, paying particular attention to the needs and priorities of women and girls. This involves planning for skills anticipation, training and retraining while ensuring access to essential services, including health and education along the migration routes and in destination countries, and investing in migrant-sensitive health systems.

**Principle 12 – Scale up public-private and innovative financing solutions to strengthen human development for climate resilience**

This principle calls for scaling up financing, including through new and holistic climate financing solutions, to enhance the quality and equity of education, health, jobs and skills, and initiatives focused on children and youth. Adopting innovative financing approaches that are age and gender-responsive – alongside partnerships with and incentive mechanisms for private sector investments, social impact investors, and philanthropy partnerships – is fundamental for ensuring the long-term sustainability of innovative solutions and climate resilience.