



## BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY

# BUSINESS AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

PUTTING PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF CLIMATE ACTION

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CLIMATE CHANGE IS AFFECTING US ALL, BUT THE MOST SEVERE IMPACTS ARE BEING FELT BY THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE. EXISTING INEQUITIES - DUE TO FACTORS SUCH AS GENDER, RACE AND INCOME - EXACERBATE THE RISKS TO PEOPLE'S LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS. INEQUITY ALSO AFFECTS PEOPLE'S CAPACITY AND OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TRANSITION TO A GREEN ECONOMY. CLIMATE CHANGE IS THE DEFINING ISSUE OF OUR TIME. HOW WE RESPOND CAN PROTECT OR UNDERMINE THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD.

## CONTEXT

UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, has described 2021 as a “crucial year in the fight against climate change”.<sup>1</sup> The COP 26 Climate Summit is due to take place from 1 to 12 November in Glasgow under the Presidency of the UK. It will be the first time countries enhance their commitments under the Paris Agreement since it was adopted in 2015.

A new UN Climate Change Report<sup>2</sup> shows that greater ambition is urgently needed; the country commitments it reviewed would cut emissions by less than 1 per cent by 2030 (as compared to 2010 levels). This is far below the 45 per cent cut needed to reach the 1.5°C goal.<sup>3</sup>

While attention has understandably been on the mitigation actions needed to tackle global warming – including getting to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 – there is growing understanding of the social equity and adaptation dimensions of climate change and the need to ensure the transition to a green economy is also a just one. While governments must take the lead, business and civil society organisations have a crucial role to play in supporting climate justice.

*“THERE IS NO GOING BACK. NO MATTER WHAT WE DO NOW, IT IS TOO LATE TO AVOID CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE POOREST, THE MOST VULNERABLE, THOSE WITH THE LEAST SECURITY, ARE NOW CERTAIN TO SUFFER.”*

**David Attenborough**, Naturalist<sup>4</sup>

*“THE GLOBAL SOUTH IS NOT ON THE FRONT PAGE, BUT IT IS ON THE FRONT LINE.”*

**Vanessa Nakate**, Climate Activist<sup>5</sup>

## WHY THIS PAPER?

This paper sets out a **Business and Climate Justice Action Framework** to enable businesses to support fairness in climate action in three ways,<sup>6</sup> through:

1. *core business* capabilities and operations;
2. *philanthropy* and social investments; and
3. engagement in *policy dialogue and strengthening institutions*.

It is intended to spark a conversation about the actions companies can take individually and in partnership with peers, governments and civil society.

We publish this paper in the context of a number of transformational trends:

*First*, the world is still battling **COVID-19**, which has highlighted and exacerbated a number of deep inequities and vulnerabilities, just as climate change does.<sup>7</sup> The global pandemic has also highlighted our interconnectedness and galvanised large-scale and rapid collective action to respond, recover and rebuild better for people and planet. All this comes at the start of the Decade of Delivery for the Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 13 on climate change and its impacts.<sup>8</sup>

*“WITH INCREASING WARMING, MILLIONS WILL BE DISPLACED, MILLIONS MORE WILL BE IMPOVERISHED AND TRILLIONS WILL BE LOST DUE TO THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE...THERE IS NO TIME FOR DITHERING AND NO TIME FOR POSTURING – THIS IS OUR LAST CHANCE TO GET THE WORLD ON A 1.5°C COMPATIBLE TRAJECTORY.”*

**Carlos Fuller**, Lead Climate Negotiator,  
The Alliance of Small Island States<sup>9</sup>

*Second*, **political momentum** is building on climate justice. U.S. President Biden has placed tackling racial and economic disparities at the heart of his plan to tackle climate change.<sup>10</sup> UK

*“A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION – ONE THAT IS JUST, EQUITABLE, AND PROTECTS PEOPLE’S LIVELIHOODS – WILL REQUIRE BOTH TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND PLANNING OVER DECADES.”*

**Larry Fink**, CEO, BlackRock 2021 Annual Letter to CEOs<sup>11</sup>

*“WE NEED TO ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING GIGANTIC WE HAVE NEVER DONE BEFORE, MUCH FASTER THAN WE HAVE EVER DONE ANYTHING SIMILAR.”*

**Bill Gates**, from his book, “How to Avoid a Climate Disaster”<sup>12</sup>

Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, in his speech to the UN Security Council highlighted the need to support the most vulnerable and fragile nations feeling the effects of climate change.<sup>13</sup> Kenyan President, Uhuru Kenyatta, highlighted, during his chairing of a meeting of the African Union Peace and Security Council, the impact of climate change on livelihoods and socio-economic progress and called for a united African position at COP26.<sup>14</sup>

Civil society is mobilising too. In the U.S., the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is campaigning for more to be done to recognise the disproportionate impact of climate change on communities of colour and low income communities.<sup>15</sup> Globally, the Women’s Environment and Development Organization (WEDO) campaigns on the disproportionate impact of climate change on women.<sup>16</sup> The NGO Trocaire supports people in low-income countries “who have done the least to cause this crisis [and] are suffering the most”.<sup>17</sup> The Human Rights and Climate Change Working Group brings together civil society organisations focused on the human rights dimension of climate change and feeds into

the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN Human Rights Council.<sup>18</sup>

*“CLIMATE CHANGE UNDERMINES THE MOST IMPORTANT HUMAN RIGHTS: THE RIGHT TO FOOD, WATER, HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND EVEN LIFE ITSELF.”*

**Mary Robinson**, Former President of Ireland, Former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights<sup>19</sup>

*CLIMATE JUSTICE “PUTS PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE AND DELIVERS RESULTS FOR THE CLIMATE, FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND FOR DEVELOPMENT.”*

—Declaration on Climate Justice, 2013<sup>20</sup>

And *third*, **businesses are increasingly being expected to step up and take action.** The 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer found that 86 per cent of people believe CEOs must lead on societal issues.<sup>21</sup> Investors are also paying closer attention to the material risks and opportunities posed by climate change, as reflected in BlackRock CEO, Larry Fink’s annual letter.<sup>22</sup>

CEOs, themselves, are taking notice. In October 2020, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development established new membership criteria, including requirements for its corporate members to “set an ambition to reach net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, no later than 2050, and to support the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights”.<sup>23</sup> The UN Global Compact’s Action Platform on Climate Ambition is providing a collaborative space for companies and key stakeholders to tackle both climate mitigation and resilience building.<sup>24</sup> In September 2020, The U.S. Business Roundtable produced a set of 11 principles to guide CEO climate change action including “minimizing social and economic costs for those least able to bear them”.<sup>25</sup>

Collective action platforms are also being established. In the run-up to COP26, for example, the UK is calling on business to join Race To Zero, and commit to net zero emissions by 2050 at the latest,<sup>26</sup> while the Race to Resilience is aiming to build the resilience of 4 billion people by 2030.<sup>27</sup> A number of companies have said they will go even further or faster.<sup>28</sup> **How can business now build on these ambitions to ensure climate justice?**

## WHAT IS CLIMATE JUSTICE?

Climate justice - a framing of the climate crisis through an equity and social justice lens - is not a new concept. Advocates have been calling for a rights-based, people-centered approach for at least 20 years. The UN Human Rights Council has been vocal on the threat climate change poses to human rights.<sup>29</sup> Yet, not enough is being done to recognise climate change as an issue of fairness and social justice. Existing inequities - due to factors including gender, race, and income - increase the severity of the **risks** people face and limit their access to the **opportunities** of a transition to a green economy. Climate justice recognises these inequities and injustices and seeks to address them by putting people at the heart of climate strategies.

## IMPACTS

Climate change impacts all of us, but the impacts do not fall equally. Some people are particularly vulnerable due to existing inequities - due to factors including gender, race, and income - or because they live in climate-vulnerable regions

*“PEOPLE WHO ARE SOCIALLY, ECONOMICALLY, CULTURALLY, POLITICALLY, INSTITUTIONALLY OR OTHERWISE MARGINALIZED ARE ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND ALSO TO SOME ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION RESPONSES.”*

—The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>30</sup>

or countries, like coastal zones and Small Island Developing States. The central injustice is that those least responsible for climate change, and least able to adapt and recover from its impacts, are the most affected.

In this paper, we focus on three areas of social impact. The first two, **lives** and **livelihoods**, relate primarily to the risks of climate change, while the third - access to **learning** - relates to people's ability to seize the opportunities of a green transition.

## BUSINESS BENEFITS OF A CLIMATE JUSTICE LENS

Climate justice is a human-centred approach that emphasises the social impacts of climate change, as well as the social impacts of actions designed to tackle climate change. Applying a climate justice lens has three key benefits for companies:

*First*, it encourages a more **holistic, joined-up approach** within the company that minimises the risk of unintended negative social impacts from climate actions. In addition to crucially reducing salient risks to people, this can also lower litigation and reputation risks for the company. It recognises that building social and economic resilience is a powerful way to build climate resilience, and vice versa. It incentivises working across often-siloed climate and social/human rights teams and functions, along with integrated targets and reporting, to deliver climate solutions that work for people *and* planet, as well as the company.<sup>31</sup> In practical terms, this might translate, for example, into greater resilience of supply chains, when viewed from a combined social and environmental perspective.

*Second*, it provides a **framework for consultation and dialogue** with key stakeholders, including around potential tradeoffs. This will help build trust and reinforce companies' social license to operate. It demonstrates a commitment to people-centred climate action that balances the economic and social priorities of employees and external stakeholders with the imperative to address climate change.

*Third*, it will spur commercial **innovation and investment**, that drives social impact and climate action as well as business competitiveness. Investment and innovation in new technologies, products, services, processes and business models also has the potential to deliver solutions that build the resilience of communities as well as the business in the face of climate and other systemic shocks.

## LIVES: HEALTH AND SAFETY

Climate change threatens people's lives, health and wellbeing. Our news feeds regularly feature extreme weather events that cause sudden-onset disasters resulting in death and injury. There are also long-term systemic impacts, such as the impact of increased droughts and floods on water access and food security,<sup>32</sup> of global warming on air pollution,<sup>33</sup> of rising temperatures on vector-borne diseases<sup>34</sup> - all of which put the lives and health of millions of people at risk.

These impacts are not being felt equally. Low-income communities living in urban slums and smallholder farmers face greater climate-related risks to their lives, safety and wellbeing. For instance, in Bangladesh many lower-income households live in slums in low-lying areas, increasing their vulnerability: 1 in 4 poor households were impacted by Cyclone Aila in 2009, compared to 1 in 7 non-poor households.<sup>35</sup> Many women and girls in Africa have responsibility for collecting water; severe droughts worsened by the climate crisis mean that they have to travel further, risking their health and safety.<sup>36</sup> In Small Island Developing States, sea-level rises have already increased tidal flooding and increased the salinity of coastal aquifers - the only source of freshwater in low-lying Pacific islands and atolls, for example.<sup>37</sup>

In the U.S., almost half of African Americans live in the eight South Eastern states that are most susceptible to storms, floods and sea-level rise, leading to higher risks of death or injury.<sup>38</sup> According to research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, low-income and other disadvantaged



people in the UK are particularly vulnerable to negative effects on their wellbeing from the direct consequences of climate change, including flooding and heatwaves.<sup>39</sup>

There are hidden impacts, too. Recent studies in South Sudan and Uganda on the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on the lives of women and men found an increase in gender-based violence associated with climate change.<sup>40</sup>

The negative implications of climate change for the lives of marginalised and low-income populations are amplified by a complex mix of socio-economic conditions - such as poor access to health services and insurance, or poor quality housing and infrastructure. Research shows that in middle- and low-income countries, women's lower social status increases their risks of dying during extreme weather events.<sup>41</sup>

Even clean technologies can have negative consequences for the health and well-being of vulnerable people. Take for example the surge in demand for lithium and cobalt for electric vehicle batteries. Mining lithium - over half of which is under the salt flats of Argentina, Bolivia and Chile - consumes vast amounts of water and contaminates the soil, impacting indigenous farmers. Meanwhile, close to half of the world's cobalt is in the DRC, with 20 per cent mined in informal artisanal mines where 40,000 children work in dangerous conditions.<sup>42</sup>



### TEXAS, CLIMATE AND EQUITY

*Interview with Bridgette  
Murray, ACTS Founder  
and Tides Network  
WE LEAD Grantee<sup>43</sup>*

As a retired nurse, I am passionate about the health of my local community in Pleasantville, a neighborhood in Houston, Texas. I have seen first-hand how deep inequities impact on people's lives, most recently in the face of a devastating winter storm that led to rolling blackouts that left about 4 million people across the State without power in freezing temperatures.

Among the first and hardest hit were marginalized communities, including Pleasantville, a community of 3,000 people that is 75 percent African American and 25 percent Latino. Not surprisingly, these communities were among the last to be reconnected. Given that many are low-income households, most residents could not afford to temporarily relocate during the crisis and are struggling to recover from the power and water disruption.

The unequal impact of the storm reflects historic inequities. Most families do not have private medical insurance. The closest county hospital is ten miles away; the local hospital was closed down after flood damage during Hurricane Harvey. The proximity to several chemical and manufacturing plants has contributed to the health risks related to air pollution, with facilities releasing large amounts of pollutants when they shut down and restart.

Right now we're focused on assisting with food distribution since we are also in a food desert, and supplying individuals and families with water because a lot of people suffered from plumbing issues related to the freeze. That's typically not something that we see a lot of here in eastern Texas. And not everyone is recovering at the same rate.

More broadly, the organisation that I founded - Achieving Community Tasks Successfully (ACTS)<sup>44</sup> - is driving community-based solutions to the climate crisis - including by providing education resources to underserved communities, gathering data that will reveal the vulnerabilities, and identifying the resources needed to address them.

With the support of Tides Foundation's Women's Environmental Leadership Fund (WE LEAD)<sup>45</sup> - we are one of many organisations across the U.S. driving change for a new era of environmental justice and racial equity.

## LIVELIHOODS: JOBS AND INCOMES

Climate change will have its most direct impact on those sectors and livelihoods that rely on natural resources, such as agriculture, forestry, fishing and tourism. Climate impacts - from storms to extreme temperatures - will affect the working conditions of many more.<sup>46</sup>

The World Bank has recently estimated that up to 132 million people will be pushed into extreme poverty by climate change by 2030.<sup>47</sup> On top of this, there is increased risk of displacement and the disruption that this causes to livelihoods. In 2019, 24.9 million people were displaced by disasters such as landslides, hurricanes and drought, three times the number of displacements caused by conflict and violence.<sup>48</sup>

Climate change has particularly significant impacts on agriculture and associated livelihoods. Rising temperatures and disrupted rainfall patterns affect crop yields, increasing the risk of harvest loss and pushing up food prices. Agriculture represents 65 per cent of African employment.<sup>49</sup> In most countries in sub-Saharan Africa, around 80 per cent of farms are small,<sup>50</sup> and the majority of small-scale farmers are women: 78 per cent in Zambia, for instance.<sup>51</sup> In India, 80% of economically active women work in agriculture.<sup>52</sup> Many smallholder farmers in Central America farm on steep lands with thin soils and crops that are sensitive to unstable rainfall and high temperatures.<sup>53</sup>

Coastal-based tourism makes up between 20 and 50 per cent of the GDP of Small Island Developing States. Combined with the relatively small size of their economies and populations, hurricanes can be devastating. In 2017, the damage associated with Hurricane Maria was equivalent to over 225% of Dominica's annual GDP.

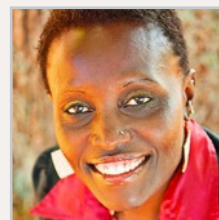
The green transition brings important livelihood opportunities, including in terms of new jobs. It is predicted that the shift to a green economy could have a net positive effect on employment, such as by studies in the European Union<sup>54</sup>. However, the impacts will be uneven.<sup>55</sup> Some sectors will see growth - the manufacturing of renewable technologies or services related to the circular economy, for instance - but fossil fuel-related industries will be severely impacted. In the UK, for

example, the dismantling of the coal industry in the 1980s devastated towns and communities.<sup>56</sup>

Given the inequity of impacts, many place particular focus on ensuring a “just transition” - a shift to a low-carbon economy that does not leave these workers and their communities behind. A just transition focuses on securing the future livelihoods of workers, through engaging them in meaningful discussions about the interventions needed to support them and ensuring they have access to education and training for new skills and technologies.<sup>57</sup>

Other strategies to tackle climate change can have negative impacts on livelihoods, too. For instance, policies that push up energy prices to reflect their environmental costs can exacerbate energy poverty; competition between crops and biofuels can push up food prices; and renewable energy projects can impact on the land rights of local communities where there is inadequate community consultation.<sup>58</sup>

### SMALLHOLDER RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE SHOCKS IN KENYA



*Interview with Dr  
Esther Ngumbi,  
Assistant Professor of  
Entomology and African-American Studies  
at the University of Illinois at Urbana-  
Champaign, and Founder, Oyeska Greens*

I grew up in Kenya in a farming family. I noticed at an early age that half-way through the season, insects and drought would destroy over half of our crops - meaning we would go hungry. This was a recurring issue in our community and, as I later learnt, for many across the developing world.

What are some of the critical challenges that women smallholder farmers face? Critically, women lack access to land ownership, which in turn affects their ability to access financial services needed to invest in improving crop productivity. They have limited access to knowledge about technological innovations

and to profitable markets. Further, women lack access to improved agricultural inputs, such as climate-smart seeds that are more drought-, flood- or insect-tolerant. They also lack reliable access to water; many African women smallholder farmers depend on rain-fed agriculture and are vulnerable to the impact of climate change on rainfall patterns.

I have a strong passion for ensuring that women, who work so hard, women who are in the frontline of agriculture, have what they need to make it, because when they make it, their families make it, communities make it and nations will make it.

That is why I founded Oyeska Greens, which is committed to revolutionising agriculture on the Kenyan Coast. We engage, inspire, mobilize, and empower smallholder farmers, enabling them to be dynamic players in agriculture. We provide innovative training, marketing, and capacity building in order to promote sustainable crop production, increase the acreage of horticultural crops under production, and spur entrepreneurship.

## LEARNING: EDUCATION AND SKILLS

The transition to a green economy will fundamentally reshape labour demand and the skills, knowledge and competencies required - whether related to the greening of existing industries or the emergence of new green jobs and sectors.<sup>59</sup> People from disadvantaged communities have unequal access to the education, training and skills development needed to secure these opportunities, putting them at risk of being left behind.

China is a leader in renewable energy, accounting for nearly 40% of the global jobs in the sector in 2019. One study estimates a total of 2.2 million renewable energy jobs will have been created in the country by 2020. A key challenge will be absorbing older and less skilled workers among the 1.8 million who are set to lose their fossil-fuel related jobs, many in China's North East.

In the U.S., Black workers fill less than 10 per cent of the jobs in clean energy production and energy efficiency sectors, while less than 20 per cent of workers in these sectors are women.<sup>60</sup> Women make up only a third of global wind and solar power jobs.<sup>61</sup> One factor that employers point to is the difficulty in finding people with the relevant training, experience, and technical skills.<sup>62</sup>

However, there are also deeper systemic challenges. Girls are underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, reflecting deep-seated unequal gender norms.<sup>63</sup> Blacks and Hispanics in STEM jobs in the U.S. highlight a lack of access to quality education and discrimination in recruitment as key barriers.<sup>64</sup>

For those impacted by climate change - not least smallholder farmers in the Global South - there is a need to deepen knowledge and skills to better manage climate variability and build resilience as part of a shift towards "climate-smart" agriculture.<sup>65</sup> Timely climate information - that blends the latest scientific research and indigenous knowledge - is key to enabling farmers to plan and adapt.<sup>66</sup> One study in Ghana found that over 25 per cent of farmers were not receiving any climate information.<sup>67</sup>

At a deeper level, access to education, skills and information are key to building the voice of those most affected by climate change and climate change policies, so that they are able to participate in a meaningful way. Decision-making that is participatory, transparent and accountable is a key principle of climate justice.<sup>68</sup>

The Escazú Agreement, for example, aims to ensure across Latin American and the Caribbean "the right of all persons to have access to information in a timely and appropriate manner, to participate significantly in making the decisions that affect their lives and their environment, and to access justice when those rights have been infringed."<sup>69</sup>

## WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GREEN ENERGY

*Interview with  
Monique Ntumngia,  
Founder, Green Girls  
Organisation*



I believe that clean energy is an important driver of social impact and a lever for empowering women. First, clean energy is key to increasing energy access for rural communities in Africa - with direct benefits for women's lives. African rural women and girls are the most impacted by a lack of access to energy, and our research shows that COVID-19 has made this situation worse.

Second, clean energy provides opportunities for women entrepreneurs - building and selling solar lamps, installing and maintaining solar panels, constructing and operating biodigesters to produce biogas for cooking and organic fertiliser. This can help build their economic resilience, and break barriers by placing women at the forefront of innovative technology and sustainable energy, working to close the gender gap in STEM, and ensuring women in rural communities are included in the green economy.

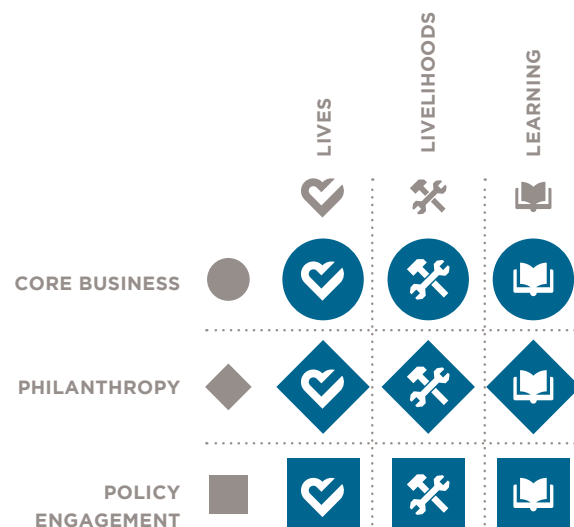
This is why I founded Green Girls. We train rural women and girls in clean energy technology, empowering them to provide renewable energy to rural communities and at the same time to become financially independent and sustain their households. We have trained over 4,500 women and girls across 48 communities in West Africa.

We use our work to raise awareness of climate change. Through 48 Green Girls Clubs we have trained women and girls to act as peer educators to others in their community.

Skilling women and girls in clean energy technology makes their lives safer, healthier and more secure. More than this, it helps them unlock their potential through education and employment.

## BUSINESS ACTION

Businesses have an important role to play in each of these impact areas, through their *core business* capabilities and operations, *philanthropy* and social investments and their engagement in *policy dialogue and strengthening institutions*. This can be visualised as a three-by-three matrix:<sup>70</sup>



In developing their strategies, businesses need to take into account:

- The *inequity of risks* faced by people across their business, their value chain and the communities they serve, in terms of their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. Businesses need to minimise these risks and build people's resilience.
- Ensuring *equity of opportunity* for people across their business, their value chain and the communities they serve, in terms of their access to the benefits of the climate transition: access to clean energy, sustainable farming practices, and green skills and jobs.
- The *voice of those who are most vulnerable* to climate risks and transitional risks; listening to those most impacted by climate change and climate policies, building skills and knowledge and ensuring their participation in the design of climate actions.



# BUSINESS ACTION FRAMEWORK

ACTIONS	LIVES: HEALTH & SAFETY	LIVELIHOODS: JOBS & INCOMES	LEARNING: EDUCATION & SKILLS
 <p><b>CORE BUSINESS</b></p> <p><i>Put people first. Identify vulnerable stakeholders in the company's operations, value chain and communities. Identify the most salient human rights, environmental and economic risks they face and develop plans to address these through enhanced policies, processes, products, services, technologies, financing mechanisms and business models.</i></p>	 <p>Identify vulnerable groups among employees and across the value chain, to mitigate and quickly respond to health and safety risks posed by climatic events.</p> <p>Add a social lens to climate actions, to avoid the risk of unintended impacts on people's lives and well-being. Engage in dialogue with affected communities.</p> <p>Partner with other companies to develop comprehensive, location-based approaches for the communities and households that are most vulnerable to climate change.</p> <p>Support actions to prevent gender-based violence and promote gender equality across the value chain.</p> <p>Use brands and marketing to promote consumer awareness of climate justice issues among employees, suppliers, consumers and peer companies</p> <p>For ICT companies, improve reach and protect communications infrastructure in vulnerable communities susceptible to extreme weather, and invest in early warning systems.</p>	 <p>Understand impacts of climate commitments, such as net zero, on workers. Through dialogue with and involvement of workers, plan strategies for retention, redeployment and new job creation or compensation and early retirement, for people most likely to be vulnerable to job loss.</p> <p>Invest in the resilience of smallholder farmers in supply chains, including access to climate-smart inputs and insurance. Promote environmentally sustainable practices.</p> <p>Support women's economic resilience across the value chain, including through, for example, procurement from women-led enterprises, or for financial institutions, gender-lens investing.</p> <p>In scaling up renewable energy, create opportunities for individuals and small enterprises to access jobs, economic opportunities and energy services.</p> <p>Develop and/or increase accessibility to essential and affordable products and services to support livelihoods in the face of climatic events, (eg insurance), by loosening usage or financing terms, offering flexible refund policies and waiving late fees.</p>	 <p>Understand the skills needed for a low carbon transition and support reskilling for workers to access new green jobs and enterprise opportunities.</p> <p>Support awareness and knowledge of vulnerable communities - including among smallholder farmer communities - by providing access to climate information and knowledge. Incubate and invest in ideas and solutions generated by vulnerable communities.</p> <p>Increase access to internet and digital learning platforms.</p> <p>Partner with skills providers to deliver climate-related content to vulnerable consumers.</p> <p>Work with employees, communities, suppliers, customers and other stakeholders to build capacity to optimise their participation in climate decision-making at the company level.</p> <p>Make climate commitments and progress made in achieving them publicly accessible.</p> <p>Ensure board members have the skills necessary to assess and plan for climate action, including through a climate justice lens.</p>
 <p><b>PHILANTHROPY</b></p> <p><i>Explore ways to leverage corporate philanthropy, employee engagement and social investment to support the most vulnerable and ensure that community voices are heard.</i></p>	 <p>Support local organisations working on the health and safety impacts of climate change, based on the voices and needs of vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Support community projects that enhance food security and water access, including through climate-resilient agricultural practices, projects to tackle food waste and improve logistics and support for community food banks and water projects.</p> <p>Strengthen the resilience of vulnerable people and communities to climate shocks and their ability to adapt to slow-onset impacts.</p>	 <p>Support communities most impacted by climate change with social investment projects to protect jobs and livelihoods or to create new ones.</p> <p>Foster the creation of climate-resilient livelihood opportunities-from green jobs to enterprise development.</p> <p>Invest in community regeneration and economic diversification in those areas impacted by a move away from carbon-intensive industries, with a focus on low-paid workers.</p>	 <p>Invest in the skills of vulnerable groups to participate in clean energy and other opportunities, particularly around STEM.</p> <p>Support programmes to promote the participation of women, people from minority backgrounds and vulnerable communities in climate decision making.</p> <p>Support efforts to integrate climate justice into education programmes for schools and universities.</p>

# BUSINESS ACTION FRAMEWORK (CONT.)

ACTIONS	LIVES: HEALTH & SAFETY	LIVELIHOODS: JOBS & INCOMES	LEARNING: EDUCATION & SKILLS
 <p><b>POLICY ENGAGEMENT</b></p> <p><i>Engage in policy dialogue, awareness raising and institution strengthening partnerships to support those who are most vulnerable.</i></p>	 <p>Engage in policy dialogue, awareness raising and partnerships to support systems strengthening, including with respect to food systems, water access, and health care and insurance.</p> <p>Partner with authorities to provide real-time data on key climate trends as they relate to the health and safety of vulnerable populations.</p> <p>Engage in policy dialogue on the injustice of climate change and promote equitable and inclusive climate solutions.</p> <p>Connect policy dialogue on human rights with dialogue on climate action to promote people-centred climate decision-making.</p>	 <p>Engage in policy dialogue, awareness raising and partnerships to support systems strengthening, including for vulnerable workers and businesses. This includes strengthening land and resource rights for women and other marginalised groups.</p> <p>Support community engagement in policies around climate-related migration and relocation.</p> <p>Advocate for equitable recovery efforts after climate-related disasters, such as extreme weather events.</p> <p>Advocate for government policies that support those negatively impacted by a low-carbon transition, including through targeted social protection, job creation and community regeneration programmes.</p>	 <p>Engage in policy dialogue, awareness raising and partnerships to achieve more equitable access to STEM education and other skills to transition to a green economy.</p> <p>Partner with others to share learning and data on key trends as they relate to vulnerable populations.</p> <p>Support policies that enable and empower vulnerable and under-represented people and communities to have a voice in climate decision-making.</p>

## GET INVOLVED

This paper is intended to support a process of rapid shared learning and co-creation. We hope that it will provide a useful framing for practical conversations with peers, stakeholders and policy makers, and will inform coalition-building and local action.

The paper forms one part of a wider programme that Business Fights Poverty and its partners are convening to crowdsource and share best-practice examples and insights from a variety of companies, industry sectors and countries. It is accompanied by a series of online events and virtual peer group convenings.

We are developing a live database of business case studies, mapped across the Action Framework, as well as topic- and sector-specific practical toolkits to guide immediate and longer-term decision-making. Companies can submit

their case studies for inclusion in the database at [climatejustice@businessfightspoverty.org](mailto:climatejustice@businessfightspoverty.org)

We are working with an international coalition of partners, businesses and business networks. We invite other individuals, businesses, civil society organisations, government agencies and networks to get involved to scale this collective effort to drive global learning and local action.

**Get involved at:** [businessfightspoverty.org/climatejustice](https://businessfightspoverty.org/climatejustice)



## RESOURCES

### [Toolkit: The Climate Justice Playbook for Business](#)

A practical guide for social enterprises and purpose-driven businesses by B Lab, the COP26 Climate Champions Team, Provoc, and the Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship at the University of Oxford.

### [Yale Experts Explain Environmental Justice](#)

Researchers from Yale University discuss the link between social justice and environmental health, and how we cannot move forward without addressing both. They explain environmental justice, list some of the main causes and consequences of environmental injustice, and what people and organisations can do to help tackle these issues.

### [Just Transition: A Business Guide](#)

This guidance from the B Team contains operational advice and tactics, several case studies and analysis of the risks and opportunities of climate action on a company's workforce. It provides ways for companies to engage with workers, unions and governments on building a clean energy economy that benefits all.

### [Just Transitions for All: Business, Human Rights, and Climate Action](#)

This paper by the Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB) explores the implications that climate change has for human rights, and argues that integrated approaches can strengthen human rights protections, climate justice, and sustainable development.

### [Climate and the Just Transition](#)

This report by BSR examines the concept of the "just transition" to the low-carbon, climate-resilient economy. It provides recommendations for business on how to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, while enabling

economic vitality and ensuring adherence to global labour standards; how to enhance climate resilience for communities; and how to cultivate effective participation in the social dialogue, which will accelerate such a transition.

### [Why Climate Change and Human Rights Are a Business Issue](#)

This report by the UN Global Compact highlights the central role businesses play in determining whether or not global temperature increases can be limited to 1.5°C by 2050, and identifies key issues that businesses should consider when assessing climate change and human rights.

### [Understanding Human Rights and Climate Change](#)

This is the submission of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This document provides a good overview of the impact of climate change on human rights, including the rights to life, self-determination, development, food, health, water and sanitation and housing.

### [Framework Principles on Human Rights and the Environment](#)

This report by John H. Knox, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment, sets out the main human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.

### [Linking Health Justice, Social Justice, and Climate Justice](#)

Researchers at the Lancet describe how individuals who are the hardest hit by the climate crisis are also the ones who suffer the most from social inequity and vulnerability. The authors stress the interconnectedness between health, social, and climate justice.

### [Human Rights and Environmental, Social and Health Impact Assessments](#)

This guide by the Danish Institute for Human Rights provides advice on integrating human rights into environmental, social and health impact assessments. It was developed in collaboration with the global oil and gas industry association for environmental and social issues (IPIECA).

### [How Can Businesses Deliver a More Inclusive Economy on the Road to Net Zero?](#)

This article argues that companies face a challenge to ensure that their commitments around building back better - to align their cultures and strategies with fighting climate change and social injustice - remain after the pandemic and that these commitments move from ambition to action.

### [The Road to Net Zero Finance](#)

This report, produced by a panel of experts from world-leading financial institutions, critically assesses the United Kingdom financial system's ability to deliver a 2050 net zero target. The report comprises key advice to the Climate Change Committee to accompany its Sixth Carbon Budget.

### [The People's Transition: Community-led Development for Climate Justice](#)

This guide from the Foundation for European Progressive Studies and the Think Tank for Action on Social Change proposes a participative decision-making model for climate action. It includes a case study focused on rural communities in Ireland.

### [Gender-Based Violence and Environment Linkages: The Violence of Inequality](#)

This report establishes that gender-based violence can be observed across environmental contexts

and that it affects the security and well-being of nations, communities and individuals while also risking the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## Video: Doughnut Economics

Economist, Kate Raworth, provides an analysis of the social and planetary boundaries we need to navigate, and a compass for human progress. In this discussion at *Business Fights Poverty Oxford 2017*, Kate describes her idea.

## Transforming How Business Impacts People: Unlocking the Collective Power of Five Distinct Narratives

When it comes to conversations about how people are affected by business conduct and the global economy, a number of distinct narratives are influencing decision-makers today. This working paper proposes that the narrative of business and human rights – grounded in global normative standards and a focus on those people most at risk of harm from business practices – can be of central relevance in bringing these narratives together, and helping them achieve a goal they all share: a world in which business gets done with respect for the basic dignity and equality of everyone.

# ENDNOTES

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2 <https://unfccc.int/news/greater-climate-ambition-urged-as-initial-ndc-synthesis-report-is-published>

3 <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>

4 Speech to UN Security Council, 23 Feb 2021 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sswe4iNJQjs>

5 <https://www.euronews.com/living/2020/10/22/vanessa-nakate-the-global-south-is-not-on-the-front-page-but-it-is-on-the-front-line>

6 Based on an original framework developed by Jane Nelson.

7 The impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable people was the focus of the Business

and COVID-19 programme led by Business Fights Poverty, in partnership with the Corporate Responsibility Initiative at Harvard Kennedy School, and launched on 12 March 2020: <https://businessfightspovetry.org/covid-19-response-centre/>

8 <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/decade-of-action/>

9 <https://www.aosis.org/2020/11/23/aosis-remarks-climate-dialogues-opening-2020/>

10 <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2021/01/26/biden-environmental-justice-climate/>

11 <https://www.blackrock.com/uk/individual/2021-larry-fink-ceo-letter>

12 Gates, B. (2021). How to Avoid a Climate Disaster, p.51

13 <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-boris-johnsons-address-to-the-un-security-council-on-climate-and-security-23-february-2021#:~:text=Please%2C%20make%20no%20mistake%2C%20climate,There%20is%20no%20going%20back>

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19 Speech on 4 February 2020 at Edie Sustainability Leaders Forum <https://www.edie.net/news/7/WATCH--Mary-Robinson-on-net-zero--climate-justice-and-being--prisoners-of-hope-/>

20 Statement by the High Level Advisory Committee to the Climate Justice Dialogue, an initiative of the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice and the World Resources Institute: <https://www.mrfcj.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Declaration-on-Climate-Justice.pdf>

21 <https://www.edelman.com/trust/2021-trust-barometer>

22 <https://www.blackrock.com/uk/individual/2021-larry-fink-ceo-letter>

23 <https://www.wbcsd.org/Overview/News-Insights/General/News/New-membership-criteria>

24 <https://www.unglobalcompact.org/>

take-action/action/climate-health

25 <https://www.businessroundtable.org/business-roundtable-market-based-solutions-best-approach-to-combat-climate-change>

26 <https://racetozero.unfccc.int/>. Business Fights Poverty has joined this commitment.

27 <https://racetozero.unfccc.int/race-to-resilience/>

28 For example, the B Corp Climate Collective is a group of Certified B Corporations working together to take action on the climate emergency. A number of B Corps (including Business Fights Poverty) have committed to net zero by 2030. For more information, visit <https://www.bcorpclimatecollective.org/net-zero-2030>.

29 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/hrandclimatechange/pages/hrclimatechangeindex.aspx>

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36 <https://www.weforum.org/>



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