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ROAD TO CLIMATE RESILIENT PAKISTAN

CURTAILING THE CARBON FOOTPRINTS



Pakistan's Climate Conundrum: Navigating Vulnerability, Building Resilience

Pakistan, despite contributing less than 1% to global greenhouse gas emissions, remains highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, facing severe weather conditions and environmental challenges. Compounding these issues are the economic challenges that make it even more difficult for the country to cope effectively. Pakistan's economic challenges are deeply intertwined with climate change, forming a vicious cycle. Agriculture, crucial to the economy, is severely affected by unpredictable monsoons, droughts, and floods, reducing crop yields and disrupting industrial growth. Since 1960, rainfall has decreased by 10%-15%, impacting water security and exacerbating agricultural instability. Rapid population growth and urbanization strain resources and intensify poverty and unemployment, especially as rural migrants move to cities. Energy security is jeopardized by glacier melt affecting hydropower, leading to power shortages that hinder industrial productivity. Reliance on fossil fuels worsens air pollution and health issues, increasing medical costs and reducing workforce productivity. Climate change also escalates vector-borne diseases, overburdening the healthcare system and causing economic losses from sickness. Social instability arises from resource scarcity, deterring investment and further crippling economic growth. Urgent action is needed to address these interconnected challenges.

The floods of 2022, which submerged over one-third of the country, serve as a particularly stark reminder of this vulnerability. These floods displaced millions, destroyed infrastructure, and caused significant economic setbacks, highlighting the need for robust climate adaptation and mitigation strategies.

According to the 2022 reports by Generation Climate Europe, 2020 was the warmest year on record, highlighting the severe impact of human activities on the climate. As of May 2024, there is a 61% chance that 2024 will be the warmest year on record, according to the NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI).

The Global North, including affluent countries in Europe, North America, and other regions, is a major contributor to this crisis. Historically, these regions account for nearly half of all emissions since the Industrial Revolution. In 2019, the top 10% of global emitters, mostly from the Global North, were responsible for 48% of CO2 emissions, while the bottom 50% contributed only 12%. Although climate change affects everyone, poorer countries suffer the most, despite their low emissions.

Islamic Relief, one of the leading humanitarian organizations, has been at the forefront of tackling climate change in Pakistan. Through extensive disaster response and development efforts, Islamic Relief is playing a pivotal role in mitigating the impacts of climate change and reducing carbon footprints. We are focusing on enhancing community resilience, promoting sustainable development practices, and advocating for comprehensive climate action at national and international levels.

Pivoting partnership for climate action:

In an effort to raise awareness of the increasing impacts of climate change, Islamic Relief has been at the front lines battling all odds and helping communities build resilience. Islamic Relief Pakistan has been a significant force in addressing the climate change crisis in Pakistan, organizing key events and forging strategic partnerships to mitigate the impacts of environmental degradation.

Further recognizing the urgent need for collaborative action, Islamic Relief has organized several key events to bring together stakeholders from national and international organizations to discuss climate financing and changing perspectives towards tackling climate change and finding concreted

solutions. Previous events such as **“Race Against Time”**, **“Rhetoric to Reality”** and **“Coastal Resilience: A Case for Climate Financing”** have been instrumental in highlighting the issues and challenges faced by Pakistan, as well as in fostering dialogue and partnerships aimed at climate resilience.

Continuing this tradition of proactive engagement, Islamic Relief Pakistan, in collaboration with the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF), held another significant event titled **“Road To Climate Resilient Pakistan: Curtailing The Carbon Footprints”** on 30th May, 2024. The event emphasized on the pressing need for concerted efforts to combat climate change. Discussions highlighted the severe impacts of climate change on Pakistan’s vulnerable populations, emphasizing the critical need for collaboration between governmental and non-governmental organizations. The focus was on building resilience, adapting to environmental changes, and leveraging climate finance opportunities. This national-level dialogue was designed to address the need to enhance the country’s humanitarian capacities in confronting outlined climate vulnerabilities while fostering collaboration among federal and provincial governments, academia, UN agencies, civil society, international partners, and the private sector.

This collaborative approach is intended to generate practical solutions and forge partnerships that will drive Pakistan towards achieving its climate resilience goals. By bringing together diverse stakeholders, the event aimed to create a platform for sharing knowledge, experiences, and best practices, thereby facilitating a coordinated and effective response to the multifaceted challenges posed by climate change. The emphasis was on not only identifying and implementing immediate actions to mitigate climate impacts but also on developing long-term strategies that integrate environmental sustainability with socio-economic development, ensuring a resilient and prosperous future for Pakistan.



Recap of the Event



“Pakistan needs inter-sectoral cohesiveness and planning and above all the support of global north in new project types in agriculture, power storage, retiring fossil fuel assets, green hydrogen, green buildings and electric mobility.”

Asif Sherazi

Mr. Asif Sherazi, Country Director of Islamic Relief Pakistan, welcomed the guests and set the tone for the event by emphasizing the urgent need for a coordinated approach to reduce carbon footprints. He advocated for inter-sectoral cohesiveness and robust planning, calling for the support of the global north in pioneering projects across various sectors such as agriculture, power storage, retiring fossil fuel assets, green hydrogen, green buildings, and electric mobility. **“These projects will not only help us reach our climate goals but also spur economic growth and prosperity,”** he asserted. Mr. Sherazi urged for strengthened resilience, reduced vulnerabilities, enhanced adaptive capacities, and a unified call for both national and global actors to share responsibility in addressing this critical issue.

“Carbon market is a new frontier for Pakistan, where quality projects will compete for green financing. Resilience stands as a key pillar, and innovative approaches are strongly supported.”

Yong Ye



Mr. Yong Ye, Country Director of the Asian Development Bank Pakistan, highlighted that while climate change poses significant challenges, it also presents opportunities for Pakistan to innovate and thrive. He underscored the potential of the carbon market as a new frontier for Pakistan, where quality projects can attract green financing. **“Resilience is a key pillar, and innovative approaches are strongly supported,”** Mr. Ye stated, emphasizing the importance of competitive, high-quality projects in securing sustainable development financing.

The Diplomat Dilating Upon



“The emergence of new climate crises necessitates ongoing collaboration and innovative solutions to ensure a better future for all.”

Leslie Scanlon

Canadian High Commissioner Leslie Scanlon shared practical solutions for tackling the impacts of climate change. She highlighted the critical role of climate financing in enhancing community resilience against future shocks and endorsed carbon pricing as a viable solution for transitioning to a low-carbon economy. **“The emergence of new climate crises necessitates ongoing collaboration and innovative solutions to ensure a better future for all,”** she remarked.

Demystifying the Dynamics of Carbon Footprint

“Pakistan’s transition away from fossil fuels is achievable; we have the capacity to succeed.”

Sherry Rehman



Chief Guest Senator Sherry Rehman addressed the audience on the pressing issue of increasing carbon footprints. She pointed out that adaptation costs are four times higher than typical development initiatives, emphasizing the need for tailored resilience strategies that align with Pakistan’s unique dynamics. **“Pakistan’s transition away from fossil fuels is achievable; we have the capacity to succeed,”** she affirmed. Senator Rehman also addressed the battle against plastics, expressing skepticism about recycling being an effective solution, labeling it as more of a myth than a reality. She called for innovative solutions that directly address Pakistan’s specific challenges.

Looking for a complete and effective solution to the many problems caused by climate change in Pakistan

The event included an articulate panel discussion on the growing carbon footprints and strategies to mitigate their impact in Pakistan. Moderated by the esteemed media personality Ms. Sidra Iqbal, the panel brought together seasoned and diverse representatives from international humanitarian organizations, UN agencies, civil society, thought leaders, and state officials. Each panelist offered unique perspectives and practical solutions to the complex challenges posed by carbon footprints, highlighting the essential pillars needed for effective action. The engaging dialogue highlighted the collaborative spirit required to address climate resilience in Pakistan.

Decoding Climate Resilience



“Sustainable development should be the primary goal. Key actions include transitioning to cleaner fuels, improving infrastructure, sanitation, and waste management, adopting climate-smart agriculture, and fostering collaboration between public and private sectors”

Fawad Hayat

At the event, Fawad Hayat, DGM/Head of Climate Change at NDRMF, delivered an insightful presentation focused on reducing carbon footprints and offering practical solutions to address this critical issue.

Path to Climate Financing



“Government leadership and robust policies are essential to securing climate financing. Voices have to be much louder to secure the funds. Government needs to make significant efforts on both national and household level.”

Van Nyugen

Van Nyugen, Deputy Resident Representative of UNDP Pakistan, emphasized the pivotal role of government leadership in securing climate financing. **“Government leadership and robust policies are essential to securing climate financing. Voices have to be much louder to secure the funds. The government needs to make significant efforts on both national and household levels,”** she stated. His call to action highlights the necessity for louder advocacy and stronger policy frameworks to ensure the allocation of crucial climate funds.

Implementing Actionable Solutions

“While we have strong strategies in place for preparedness, we lack the necessary funds to implement them effectively.”

Ahmed Kamal



Ahmed Kamal, Federal Flood Commissioner, spotlighted the critical gap between strategy and implementation due to insufficient funds. ***“While we have strong strategies in place for preparedness, we lack the necessary funds to implement them effectively,”*** he pointed out. His insights underline the urgent need for enhanced financial support to translate strategic plans into actionable solutions, reinforcing the country’s climate resilience efforts.

Protecting the Future



“Globally, one billion children are at risk of survival due to inadequate measures taken to mitigate the impacts of climate change, a critical issue that needs to be addressed urgently.”

Dr. Inoussa Kabore

Dr. Inoussa Kabore, Deputy Representative at UNICEF Pakistan, brought attention to the dire impact of climate change on children. ***“Globally, one billion children are at risk of survival due to inadequate measures taken to mitigate the impacts of climate change, a critical issue that needs to be addressed urgently,”*** he stressed. This urgent plea underscores the necessity of prioritizing children’s safety in climate resilience strategies, ensuring their protection from climate-induced adversities.

Prioritizing Women in Disaster Risk Reduction

“The percentage of women suffering from climate disasters is higher.”

Kenta Kawamura



Kenta Kawamura, Counsellor/Head of Economic and Development Section at the Embassy of Japan, emphasized the disproportionate impact of climate disasters on women and the importance of their inclusion in disaster response initiatives. **“The percentage of women suffering from climate disasters is higher. To address this, we must prioritize Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) efforts. Including women in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) initiatives is crucial for effective and inclusive disaster response,”** he said. This advocacy highlights the critical need for gender-sensitive approaches in climate resilience planning.

Taxing the Carbon Emitters

“It is challenging for the people of Pakistan to grasp the severity of climate change. The threat is already present, yet we often view climate change as a future concern.”

Aneel Salman



Aneel Salman from the Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) discussed the challenge of perceiving climate change as an immediate threat. **“It is challenging for the people of Pakistan to grasp the severity of climate change. The threat is already present, yet we often view climate change as a future concern,”** he explained. He also advocated for carbon taxation, stating, **“Carbon tax increases the GDP.”** His perspective urges the recognition of climate change as a present danger and promotes economic instruments like carbon taxation as viable solutions for climate resilience.

Focusing on Adaptation and Resilience

“While mitigation efforts are crucial, climate adaptation and resilience are paramount necessities at present. Pakistan faces similar climate challenges as India and Bangladesh, but our funding is insufficient to combat the climate crisis effectively.”

Anam Rathore



Anam Rathore, Technical Advisor-Climate Finance at the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), highlighted the pressing need to prioritize climate adaptation and resilience in Pakistan. Her insights shed light on the critical requirement for increased financial support and strategic planning to enhance the country’s resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Proactive Climate Advocacy

“Pakistan, often overlooked in the global climate narrative, is actively working to showcase its expertise and address gaps on an international scale. We are actively engaged in Loss and Damage conversations, advocating for our needs and challenges on the international stage.”

Asma Saleem



Amidst the global discourse on climate change, Pakistan’s efforts often go unnoticed, overshadowed by larger narratives. Asma Saleem, Deputy Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific at the International Council for Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), sheds light on Pakistan’s proactive stance.

NDRMF: The Commitment to Resilient Pakistan

Our mission is to reshape and make Pakistan resilient, utilizing all available tools to achieve this goal.

CEO of NDRMF



In his closing statement, Mr. Bilal Anwer, CEO of NDRMF, noted, ***“our mission is to reshape and make Pakistan resilient, utilizing all available tools to achieve this goal.”*** He added ongoing efforts to develop a policy framework integrating solutions for carbon markets, demonstrating a proactive stance in tackling climate challenges.

Culmination with Course of Action

Islamic Relief Pakistan is steadfast in its commitment to mitigating the climate change crisis in Pakistan. Summarizing the event’s insights, it is clear that amplifying our voice for securing essential climate financing is crucial. Acknowledging the urgent requirement for policy reforms and heightened awareness, Pakistan has to be vocal on both national and global fronts.

Reducing the carbon footprints on international level is highly crucial. Our collective actions today will determine the quality of life for future generations. By adopting sustainable practices and promoting clean energy, we can effectively reduce our carbon emissions and pave the way for a resilient and sustainable future. Implementing these measures requires collaboration across all sectors, highlighting the importance of a unified effort to address this pressing issue. Today, countries like Pakistan are suffering due to the carbon emissions produced by first-world countries. Eventually, the entire world will feel the consequences. It’s crucial to take action now to reduce these impacts, or it might soon be too late. Despite Pakistan’s robust strategies, securing adequate financing remains a significant challenge. Securing climate financing is the need of the hour to ensure that Pakistan can implement its comprehensive climate action plans effectively and build climate- resilient communities.

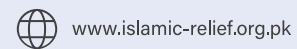
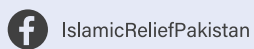
Reevaluating budget allocations at the national level to ensure that sufficient resources are dedicated to combating climate change. Additionally, harmonization of all policies to prevent policy paralysis and ensure cohesive and effective action against climate challenges. This includes aligning climate adaptation policies and strategies with Pakistan’s unique cultural and geographical context, making them both effective and appropriate.

Amplifying the Actions

Islamic Relief's is working tirelessly to build resilience among communities through our initiatives. We envision empowered communities equipped with the knowledge and tools to implement climate-smart practices effectively. To achieve this, we are committed to collaborate with government agencies, international organizations, UN bodies, academia, think tanks, and local partners. Together, we will develop and execute climate adaptation and mitigation projects tailored to address the diverse needs of Pakistan's regions, turning discussions into tangible actions.

Stay tuned for updates on our new projects and initiatives in the coming months.

Follow us on our social media channels to stay informed about our work.





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