

## **Food Justice Tip Sheet: Climate Change Financing**

### **A window of opportunity to influence Canadian policy to benefit hungry people**

#### **Which policy?**

In June 2010 Canada announced that it would provide \$400 million to help developing countries fight and adapt to climate change. While we commend the government for providing its fair share of the \$10 billion per year fund (\$30 billion for 2010-2012), the subsequent details are disappointing. Only 11% is going to adaptation. We need to send a message to the government to allocate a greater share toward adaptation next year. The decision on how to spend next year's money will be made before January 2011.

#### **Copenhagen Accord – what did it mean for Canada when it signed on?**

Last year's UN climate change conference in Copenhagen aimed to agree to a global strategy to address climate change post-2012 (when the current commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol ends).

Although not legally binding, Copenhagen reiterated a commitment by developed countries for climate change financing for developing countries: "Scaled up, new and additional, predictable and adequate funding as well as improved access shall be provided to developing countries..." which affirmed that:

- The financing should approach **\$30 billion for 2010-2012 (this is referred to as "fast start financing") globally.** Canada followed through on this, by providing its fair share. Excellent.
- Financing should be **balanced between adaptation and mitigation.** Here's the problem: only 11% of Canada's \$400 million is earmarked for adaptation. Of this, \$20 million is going to the UN's Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and \$10 million to the International Development Research Centre to support adaptation research centres in Africa. Another \$15 million will support projects in Haiti, Ethiopia and Vietnam through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). While we have no major concerns with how Canada's adaptation money is being spent, it is far less than what is needed.
- Adaptation financing should **prioritize the most vulnerable developing countries.** Most of the money is being given as loans through the World Bank. Very little of the money is designated for adaptation, which is necessary to assist those most affected by climate change.
- Developed countries accepted the goal of mobilizing \$100 billion a year by 2020 to address the needs of developing countries with money that would be "new and additional." Another problem: it looks like some of the money is coming out of the existing CIDA budget.

#### **What can we do?**

***Now is the time for supporters to write letters and talk to their MPs.*** We can influence how Canada spends the \$400 million on climate change financing so that it will benefit hungry people more effectively. Growing project or community groups, after learning about why Foodgrains Bank is promoting this action, can meet with certain MPs who are influential in this particular decision.

Others can send a personal, hand-written letter, which is proven to be significantly more effective than form letters. Churches usually have people on missions or outreach committees who can mobilize their parishioners or congregants to write letters or meet with MPs. Supporters can get information and

guidance from our letter/postcard, which can also be printed out and sent in if folks decide not to take the time to write a personal letter. The online letter/postcard, which is the least effective, can still help if enough of them are sent to MPs. See below for links.

**Our basic message** is that Canada should direct more of these funds toward adaptation in accordance with the international agreement and that it should not come out of existing aid budgets, since that jeopardizes other areas such as health or education. We're proposing a few changes:

- **Increase funding for adaptation** – to correct this imbalance, there are funding mechanisms available that target adaptation in developing countries and that Canada could support. The following two funds are under the UN umbrella and are urgently in need of more money:
  - *Adaptation Fund* – governed with developing country participation, it finances climate change adaptation projects in countries that have signed on to the international treaties, including agricultural projects
  - *Least Developed Country Fund* – helps these countries prepare and submit national adaptation plans and then provides funds to help implement these plans. Canada already committed to this fund, but we could and should do much more.
- **Give grants, not loans** – much of the financing in this announcement are given as loans through the World Bank. Copenhagen affirmed that financing be a way of giving assistance, and paying back loans may just be adding to the burden already experienced by developing countries.
- **Don't use aid money to finance climate change** – Canada's financing should remain "new and additional," in the sense of *additional to Canada's aid budget*. Canada's current definition of this phrase is that it had not planned on spending this \$400 million before going to Copenhagen, so therefore all the money is "new and additional," even if coming from existing budgets.

The changes we are proposing would benefit a great number of hungry people, and is an important part of a Christian response to hunger. The voice of Foodgrains Bank and its supporters carries weight with the government. Speaking up on this issue represents good stewardship of our resources (our time, energy, citizenship, etc) in our collective efforts to end hunger. *Foodgrains Bank's public policy work does not advocate for more funds for Foodgrains Bank programming.*

Past success in this work include the **untying of food aid**, which was possible due to the efforts of Canadian Foodgrains Bank supporters, resulting in the creation of the Food Justice Network. The flexibility in being able to purchase food locally meant Canada could feed more people and also saved millions of dollars in its food aid program, while a relatively small amount was spent on this campaign. Last year's announcement of CIDA's focus on food security was achieved by Foodgrains Bank's **aid for agriculture** campaign, and the benefits to household food security in the global south, which are yet to be determined, will certainly be significant. We are hoping for a similar outcome on the climate change financing issue.

### Helpful links on...

*How climate change will increase hunger:* <http://www.nytimes.com/cwire/2010/08/18/18climatewire-pakistan---a-sad-new-benchmark-in-climate-re-4283.html> and <http://www.foodgrainsbank.ca/uploads/A%20Primer%20on%20Climate%20Change%20&%20Hunger.pdf>

*Canada's Fast-Start Climate Change Financing:* <http://www.ec.gc.ca/Content/4/5/4/454E8F15-55C2-4A70-9FC0-249B35E5DD80/faststart.pdf>

*Letter/postcard, online postcard, & how to join the Food Justice Network:* [http://www.foodgrainsbank.ca/food\\_justice\\_network.aspx](http://www.foodgrainsbank.ca/food_justice_network.aspx)

*Copenhagen Accord:* <http://unfccc.int/home/items/5262.ph>