



Wolde-Giorgis says climate change devastating Africa more

By Ochieng' Ogodo

As much as climate change is a global phenomenon, Africa was feeling the heat more than any part of the world, Ethiopian President Girma Wolde-Giorgis said on Tuesday, officially opening the Seventh African Development Forum (ADF-VII).

He exhorted the world to recognize this, and take urgent action to address global warming.

"Failure to do so would mean serving injustice to millions of people in Africa, who by no fault of their own making are paying (a) heavy price including loss of lives, as a result of impacts exacted by climate change," he said.

The forum, with a running theme of *Acting on Climate Change for Sustainable Development in Africa*, was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in conjunction with the African Union and the African Development Bank.

Throwing a challenge to the forum attendees, Wolde-Giorgis asked them to deliberate and take a hard look at issues to identify the needs and close gaps between rhetoric and tangible action on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

"The leadership of Africa at the highest political level is fully aware of the magnitude of the threat that climate change poses, and the urgent and decisive responses needed," Wolde-Giorgis said.

Without unity of purpose, he warned, Africa will not come up with collective, meaningful and durable actions needed to counter climate change.

He said these were the overriding considerations that guided African leaders to a common negotiating position in climate change talks, including the establishment of the highest level political leadership on the issue - the conference of African Heads of State and Governments on climate change.

The forum, he noted, had provided a united political voice crucial in achieving optimal results in the global arena. It also provided effective mechanism for Africa to commit the industrialised coun-



President Girma Wolde-Giorgis addressing the ADF-VII.

tries to provide the finance, technology and capacity building needed on the continent to adapt to climate change and contribute to mitigation globally.

"Beyond providing finance, technology and capacity building support to Africa and indeed other developing countries, it is also important for industrialised countries to subscribe and adhere to ambitious cuts in green house gas emission. This holds key to forestalling a climate change related catastrophe on our planet," Wolde-Giorgis said.

He said whereas action and speed needed to address climate change seemed overwhelming, Africa is not short of formidable groups of people prepared to undertake the task.

He noted that the continent had already made heavy sacrifices to adapt and contribute to global climate change mitigation.

Such sacrifices include those of millions of mothers who watch their children succumb to famine and malnutrition because of frequent severe droughts induced by climate change, pastoralists across Africa losing their livestock-based livelihoods, and the private sector desperately in need of sustainable energy and technologies to keep their enterprises from collapsing.

"They represent millions in our world who yearn for a chance to live, succeed and prosper, even in changing climate," Wolde-Giorgis said.

And this, he pointed out, was the reality against which the forum will hold its deliberations in the next three days. The forum, therefore, should deepen Africa's reach and mobilisation of governments as well as a diverse range of actors in response to climate change.

Janneh urges Africa to unite for climate talks

By Brenda Zulu

The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) said it expected the Seventh African Development Forum (ADF VII), which opened on Tuesday, to help forge a common African position in ongoing international negotiations on climate change.

In his opening address to the Forum, United Nations Under-Secretary General, and ECA Executive Secretary, Abdoulaye Janneh said the timing and focus of the ADF-VII was critical in hammering Africa's consensus on climate change ahead of the global warming summit in Mexico in December.

"This forum is therefore an excellent occasion to generate and provide important contributions to strengthen Africa's preparation to effectively engage in these negotiations," he said.

He noted that at Copenhagen, the centrality of financing to underpin effective adaptation and mitigation action was recognized, and that industrialized countries pledged to mobilize US \$ 30 billion between 2010 and 2012, and US \$ 100 billion a year by 2020 for developing countries to finance projects and programmes related to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

"It was therefore imperative that decisive actions are made to deliver commitments promised at Copenhagen. The delivery of these resources will send a strong signal that the industrialized countries were serious and committed to the implementation of balanced adaptation and mitigation programmes by Africa as well as other developing countries and to cultivating a strong spirit of trust, compromise and enhanced collective action in the ongoing engagement between developed and developing countries," Janneh said.

But he said Africa was not sitting on its laurels, just waiting for aid and alms from the developed countries.

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Prince Charles calls for partnership to tackle environmental threats

Prominent global environmental campaigner, Prince Charles of Britain, says the world needs to collectively 'act decisively and now' to slowdown climate change, and limit its impact.

In a video address to the Seventh African Development Forum (ADF-VII), he said failure to do so would plunge the world into unprecedented multiple crises, ranging from shortages of food and water, to conflicts over scarce resources.

"I cannot tell you how delighted I was to learn the discussions of the ADF-VII are focusing on the vital issue of climate change and how we tackle this immense challenge, while at the same time building sound economic development strategies," he said.

"All my experience, all my instincts tell me there is no more important question before the international community (than climate change). Our ability to tackle it will have a profound impact on our future and that of our children and grandchildren," Prince Charles said.

He advocated an urgent paradigm shift in economic and development planning in the world, a change that puts the protection of the environment,



Prince Charles

and slowdown of climate change, at the core.

"I believe that working together we can lay the foundation for a different style of development - one that meets the twin objectives of poverty reduction and economic sustainability," he said.

Citing frequent droughts and flooding, growing loss of wildlife species and looming conflicts over scarce resources, Prince Charles said time was running perilously short for the world to act on climate change.

This is particularly so in view of the projected increase in world population from the current 6.8 billion to nine billion by 2050.

"I'm afraid we have little choice but to do so given the toxic combination of the grinding poverty suffered by hundreds of millions of people, including across the African continent and the severe ecological decline that is seen nearly everywhere," he said.

"It is vital that we develop the foresight to act quickly because time is not on our side," he implored.

He suggested forging strong partnerships involving all key stakeholders - the private, public

and NGO sectors - to find ways to both adapt to, and slowdown, climate change globally.

Preliminary studies on climate change show temperatures would rise by up to four percent this century, a prospect which Prince Charles said would be devastating for economies and the environment, particularly in Africa.

Although Africa is the least contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for just 3.8 percent, it is the most vulnerable to climate change due to several factors, including heavy dependence on export of agricultural products, and economic inability to quickly adapt.

Saying caring for the environment was a prerequisite for future economic development and sustainability, Prince Charles said greenhouse gas emissions should be 'rapidly reduced by all major sources.'

On the other hand, he said small emitters such as Africa should be encouraged and funded to embrace more eco-friendly practices and projects like conservation and sustainable farming, citing Ethiopia's region of Tigre as a successful example of the latter.

AU, ECA, ADB in pact to develop

Africa

Three of Africa's foremost institutions, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Union Commission (AUC) have established a Joint Secretariat to enhance coherence and cooperation in support of Africa's development agenda.

A statement issued on Monday by the ECA said the Joint Secretariat would enhance knowledge sharing and foster stronger institutional and programme links between departments and divisions in the three institutions for the benefit of Africa.

The institutions agreed to collaborate on the basis of some key principles, including mutual respect and recognition of the mandates of the three institutions and their comparative advantages.

They also recognize that since the three institutions were set up to serve the same African cause, "areas identified for joint activities shall not be add-ons to the regular programme activities, but part of the approved work programme of each institution.

The Joint Secretariat is headed by the heads of the three institutions --- the Chairperson of AUC, the UN Under-Secretary General/Executive Secretary of the ECA and the President of the AfDB--- who have agreed to meet, at least, twice annually to review progress and approve joint work programmes.

The Secretariat also has a Steering Committee which is made up of the AUC Deputy Chairperson, ECA Deputy Executive Secretary and the AfDB Vice President, who are supported by the relevant



From left; Abdoulaye Janneh, UN Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of ECA, H.E. Jean Ping, Chairperson of the African Union Commission and Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank.

Commissioners, Chiefs of Staff and Directors from the three institutions.

The statement said the Steering Committee would be responsible for harmonizing the calendar of meetings of the three institutions to avoid date clashes and monitoring progress in the implementation of agreed programmes.

It also has a Thematic Working Group, composed of experts from the three institutions who will address specific sectoral issues.

The Secretariat, which is headed by a Coordinator, is based at the ECA headquarters in Addis Ababa and will be supported by staff seconded from the three institutions.

Janneh urges...

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He said a new programme dedicated to climate change, known as ClimDev-Africa and jointly run by the ECA, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank had been set up, and become operational.

Among its functions, he said the programme will 'deliver well-packaged and targeted knowledge and policy advice to support formulation and implementation of effective policies, programmes and practices for climate change adaptation and mitigation.'

It will advise governments, and strengthen their capacities in generating and applying climate information for development, Janneh noted.

The programme, which had already done a considerable amount of work, will be launched during the ADF-VII.

Janneh urged participants at the forum to tackle all climate change issues, and ensure that the outcomes of the meeting were action, and also that people examine options for responding to the urgent threats posed by climate change and put forth an implementable action agenda.

Africa pursuing green economy, UN official

Africa is increasingly seizing every opportunity to pursue a green economy, UN Under-Secretary General, and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Archim Steiner said on Tuesday.



Archim Steiner

Speaking at the High Level Seminar on Environmental Diplomacy, he said Africa was one of the regions most endowed with natural resources, including wildlife, plants, humble life forms such as fungi and genetic resources

that could support a green economy.

"Many leaders here have glimpsed a future based on transition to low carbon, resource efficient economy in which environmental sustainability is the engine room," he said.

Steiner said abundant natural resources in Africa, such as forests and sunshine, make it easier for the continent to develop green economies which assist in combating climate change.

"When you look across this continent, leaders and business, communities and citizens are seizing opportunities to re-define and re-focus their development paths along green economy lines," he said.

He said with support from regional development banks, bilateral and multilateral partners, and backed up by a strong transformational public policy, Africa could draw massive domestic and international investment for its green economy.

Steiner cited Kenya as an example of a country which was successfully attracting investment in green projects, singling out wind power projects in the Lake Turkana region.

A number of wind farms have been established in the area, with capacity to produce 300 megawatts of power.

He said the agency had developed sector-based programmes and initiatives on green economy which it was showcasing to interested African countries.

"In Africa, around seven countries have requested or are signaling request for such support through the UNEP-UNDP's Poverty and Environment Initiative.

In Uganda, where 85 percent of the working population is in the agricultural sector, Steiner said organic farming was taking root, and boasting exports and incomes.

"Since 2004, the number of certified organic farmers has grown from 45 000 to over 200 000 and the area of land under organic cultivation from 185 000 hectares to close to 300 000 hectares," he said.

Find opportunities in climate change, Janneh tells researchers

By Brenda Zulu

Climate change should not only be seen as a catastrophe, but also as an opportunity to re-orient Africa's social, human and economic development, UN Under Secretary General, and Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Executive Secretary, Abdoulaye Janneh said on Monday.

In an address to a cluster meeting on climate change and population, health, gender and youth, he said there could be a silver lining in the multiple challenges that climate change has brought, and this should be explored.

"Rather than wring our hands in despair, we must see the challenge posed by climate change as an opportunity to re-orient Africa's social, human and economic development," he said.

He challenged the cluster meeting to come up with recommendations on how the continent could draw benefit from climate change, especially in the form of adaptation strategies and programmes.

"These recommendations and actions will also strengthen the common African position, and serve to inform future climate change negotiations," Janneh said, referring to ongoing global talks on greenhouse gas emissions.

"On its part, ECA values the push towards greater awareness and action on social and human development issues in Africa," he noted.

But the ECA boss said debate on climate change should now focus more on the practical impact of the phenomenon, and less on its origins.

This, he said, would allow countries to come up with adaptation strategies tailor-made to the problems on the ground.

"Most climate change discussions and deliberations to date have neglected the interface between climate change and the day-to-day life of the ordinary Africa. Too often we are concerned with



ECA Executive Secretary, Abdoulaye Janneh

debating on whether or not climate change is man-made, or how best to mitigate future changes to our climate," Janneh said.

He added: "Too seldom, however, do we look at how changing climate patterns are affecting people's lives and livelihoods, and what the future impacts of a changing climate at the local level may be."

He said the cluster meeting was convened to address this anomaly, and "our expectation therefore is that participants will take the opportunity

to highlight key elements on the interface between climate change and social and human development in Africa."

"We need solid, evidence-based research on how climate change interacts with key areas of social and human development such as poverty, population dynamics, health, education and employment in order to make better informed choices on how to strengthen these areas," Janneh said.

As an example of such evidence-based research, he cited studies which had indicated increases in climate change-induced malaria cases in Rwanda and Tanzania, and prospectively in South Africa in coming years.

"We also need to evaluate the differentiated effects of climate change on socially vulnerable groups - women, children, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and forcibly displaced persons," he said.

"The ultimate success of our collective efforts would be when every African woman, child and man enjoys a life of good health, with decent jobs and equal opportunity in the face of climate change," said Janneh.

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Paradigm shift needed in climate change fight - expert

By Ochieng' Ogodo

There is need for an urgent paradigm shift in the way Africa approaches adaptation to climate change if the most vulnerable people, who form the majority of the continent's population, are to be helped to cope, an expert said on Monday.

Dr. Anthony Nyong, manager, compliance and safeguard division of the African Development Bank, said data and information on possible adaptation scenarios was readily available in Africa, but was not packaged in ways which can be easily used by the vulnerable people.

He said there was a general tendency to ignore local knowledge, at community level, on how to deal with the impact of climate change, some of which could be easily implemented, and was practical and cost-effective.

Instead, policy-makers and scientists alike often put emphasis on complex research and studies, results of which take time to cascade down to the end-users - the poor and vulnerable - and were in most cases incorrectly packaged.

"At the conceptual and philosophical levels we have different concepts making it difficult to move in the same direction on adaptation," he told a meeting of the UNEP-Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Climate Change Adaptation Collaborative Programme on Monday.

Nyong said there was also a tendency in Africa to leave out some key players in the planning process for adaptation, resulting in the failure of the programmes.

Citing the National Adaptation Programme of Action on the continent as an example, he said, this had "failed because those involved in adaptation in ministries of water and agriculture were not included in planning."

Nyong said Africa was also suffering from misdirection of aid for adaptation, with 85 percent of this going to capacity building.

"Africa is the most capacitated continent in the world. Eighty five percent of the money coming to Africa is used for capacity building in hotels when nobody has ever built capacity in a hotel," he said.

Nyong said instead, the bulk of the resources should be invested in communities at household level, where much of the work needs to be done.

"Resources that are being put in real climate



A farmer watering his onion crop

change programmes are minuscule, (with the bulk going to) studies leaving out the real issues. If Africa is to adapt, then it must change the way it is doing things," he told the meeting.

"When will Africa do the real work on adaptation and not pilot projects by scientists?" he asked.

Knowledge does not have to be western-driven. Indigenous knowledge is also important, in some cases more so than the former, he noted.

Dr. Liser Schipper, a senior research fellow at SEI, said the institute was working with UNEP to come up with a knowledge package based on eco-

system adaptation.

She told the meeting that among the objectives would be building and strengthening the capacity of the most vulnerable people to adapt to climate change through eco-system adaptation.

It would also help institutions at local and national level in developing countries to develop organisational capacity to sustainably manage the environment.

"We need better knowledge to adapt but there are limitations," Schipper noted.

Call to incorporate human rights in search for climate change solutions

By Brenda Zulu

Human rights should be incorporated in the search for solutions to climate change, Zimbabwe's Deputy Minister for Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development, Fungayi Jessie Majome, said on Monday.

She said at government level, social policy was no longer only concerned with the delivery of basic services, but also with the provision of social protection and the promotion of human rights, dignity and citizen participation.

"Rights-based approaches to social protection are grounded in social justice and equal rights and entitlements, and thus provide a safety net to all those that may be affected by climate change," she said.

"Measures meant to improve climate change related adaptive capacity must be responsive to the needs of those who it is meant to benefit," she said.

Jessie Majome observed that violations of human rights, especially of women rights, were frequent in Africa particularly in weak and conflict-ridden countries on the continent.

"Various individuals and groups in Africa have their economic, social, political, cultural and civic rights violated because of their identity," she said.

She explained that one of the persuasive arguments in favour of social protection policies were their spill-over effect to Millennium Development

Goals (MDGs). "As climate change intensifies and its impact deepens, adaptation will become increasingly difficult. Correspondingly, achieving targets set by the MDGs will become more challenging," Jessie Majome said.

She observed that climate change is making it difficult to achieve MDGs. "Accordingly," she noted, "Social protection regimes can be the keystone of further advancing on the MDG in the context of a changing climate."

Majome said there was need for Africa to sustain local resilience, and to re-enforce individuals' and families' coping strategies.

She pointed out that communities need ownership over the necessary means for the day-to-day management of their lives, which may shift due to changing climate patterns and new environmental conditions.

"Community based adaptation could become the most important pillar of the adaptation response, and social protection could contribute to this," she noted.

She emphasized the need for social protection policies and schemes that were gender sensitive in order for their impact to be maximized.

This was because rarely do policy makers carry out gender analysis of social protection programmes, although research has established that men and women are affected differently by climate change, poverty and social protection programmes.

Africa most vulnerable to climate change - experts

By Brenda Zulu

Although Africa contributes the least to global warming, it suffers the most from climate change, mainly due to the continent's heavy reliance on the export of primary agricultural products, and inability to finance adaptation projects and programmes, experts said on Monday.

Droughts and floods, increasingly alternating in occurrence in most parts of Africa, are destroying livelihoods of millions of people, leaving them vulnerable to food and other social insecurities.

At national level, experts say exports of agricultural products are declining due to the twin phenomenon of droughts and floods, reversing economic and social gains that African countries had made in crucial areas such as health and education.

As a result, experts note that Africa needs to urgently craft and collectively implement policies and measures that both slowed down climate change, and mitigated its effects.

Speaking at a parallel session of ADF-VII on Monday, Nzomo Mulatya, senior programme officer at Kenya's National Co-ordinating Agency for Population and Development, said Africa should consider even drastic measures such as population control as part of its adaptation to climate change.

Greenhouse gas emissions

He said it was important for the environment if population growth was matched to available resources, which in Africa predominantly include such things as wood-based energy needs.

"This (population control) was expected to contribute to future greenhouse gas emissions reduction," he noted.

Mulatya said family planning should therefore become a key part of Africa's climate change strategy, as should the development of sustainable forms of energy.

He said the continent also needed to restrain its consumption patterns and levels, particularly of fossil fuels which contribute the most greenhouse gas emissions.

This, he noted, can be filtered to the citizenry through education.

Mulatya also advocated for the overall mainstreaming of climate change issues and concerns in development policies, strategies, programmes and practices at national level in Africa, with special emphasis on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry and tourism.

Mohammed Guennoun, an official of the National Department of Statistics in Morocco, noted that growing rural to urban migration in most African countries was putting a heavy burden on the environment in towns and cities, degrading them in the process.

It was important, therefore, to come up with strategies that both protected the environment, and slowed down the rural to urban drift which most African countries were experiencing.

Much of the migration created urban slums which also posed, in addition to environmental dangers, health and security risks.

Professor Sosten Chiotha, director at Leadership for Environment and Development Southern and Eastern Africa, said harnessing climate change adaptation knowledge was in some ways crucial in finding sustainable solutions to the problem.

He cited two cases in Malawi and Senegal where local communities turned a dried river and lake - which previously provided fisheries-based livelihoods - into thriving rice fields.

In his view, this is an example of successful community-led climate change adaptation which should be encouraged and replicated where similarities occur.

In the two cases, the effects of climate change have been less severe than otherwise could have been the case had the local communities not taken the initiative to adapt.



Tips for travelers

- Hours of the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia at ECA: 9-12:45, 14-16:30
- Sweet tooth: Bilo's pastry at the Old ECA building has delicious millefoglie, fruit tarts and tiramisu for less than Br10. Open 8:30-5.
- Top the pastries with a machiatto or expresso from Kaldis, just above Bilo's.

Use own means to adapt to climate change – expert tells Africa

African governments have been called upon to develop local strategies to adapt to climate change in spite of the absence of internationally-binding treaties on greenhouse gas emissions.

The call was made on Monday by Andy White, co-ordinator of the US-based Rights and Resources Institute, at a workshop on Africa Regional Dialogue on Forest, Government and Climate Change, a parallel session of ADF-VII.

He said Africa had local resources and knowledge that it could use to press ahead and adapt to climate change, while waiting for an international treaty on global warming, and possible financial and other assistance from the developed world.

The continent, while being the least contributor to greenhouse gas emissions – at just 3.8 percent – is the most vulnerable and ill-equipped to deal with the consequences of climate change.

For instance, its agricultural industry – the backbone of much of Africa's population and economies – faces collapse from intermittent droughts and floods.

"Africa is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, and it is discouraging that not much progress at the global level either on funding or negotiations has been made to ameliorate the issue," White noted.

However, he said it was not all doom and gloom for the continent.

He said the first step African authorities should take, in partnership with civil society, is to conscientise the citizenry on climate change, its effects, manifestations and best possible locally-based adaptation solutions.

"African governments at the local level should help their people adapt to the effects of climate change since at global level nothing much has been achieved," White said.



An example of the impact of global warming.

"There are a lot of steps to be taken by governments and civil societies in Africa and around the world even if there is no treaty. By recognizing local people's rights, you can do more regardless of (the absence of an) international treaty," he noted.

He said the key strategy for Africa should be adaptation and resilience at community level.

Preliminary studies show up to 200 million people in Africa will be negatively affected by climate change in Africa directly by as early as 2020, especially in the key agricultural sector.

Dr Josue Dione, director, Food Security and Sustainable Development Division at the United

Nations Economic Commission for Africa, said apart from agriculture, climate change was also threatening other economic and social sectors in Africa, citing dangers that rising sea levels posed to most coastal cities, for example.

Studies indicate about a quarter of Africa's population lives within 100 kilometres of the coast, making them vulnerable to the rising sea levels.

"Not long ago, the Gambia spent millions of dollars to re-claim the beaches that are so crucial to the country's tourism. Today, the sea has fought back, re-possessing the re-claimed land, and the sea is now a few metres away from many hotels," Dr Dione said.

EU says will honour climate change aid to developing countries

The European Union (EU) said on Tuesday it will fully honour a pledge to give €50 million annually in climate change assistance to developing countries.

EU Head of Delegation to the African Union (AU), Koen Vervaeke said the group will honour, in full, all its commitments to developing countries to help them adapt to climate change.

Speaking at a meeting of the Global Climate Change Alliance, Africa Region, he said the EU hoped assistance pledges from other sources would also be forthcoming to enable developing countries to grapple with the growing effects of greenhouse gas emissions.

He said the private sector should also be enlisted in programmes to combat climate change, particularly provision of financing.

"It is also important to note that the EU is the biggest provider of official development assistance, and is also the biggest donor regarding climate change finance to developing countries," Vervaeke said.

But Fatou Gaye, co-ordinator of Shared Vision, African Group said other things, apart from financing, were also critical to ensure developing countries tackled climate change-related problems successfully.

She put technology transfer and capacity building top of the list.

Gaye also advocated for the inclusion of adaptation and climate change-related issues in national development plans to ensure they received the priority attention they deserved.

Youths say future at stake with climate change

By Gabriel Sunday

As the Seventh African Development Forum (ADF-VII) dedicated to climate change opened on Tuesday, youth groups said the future of their generation was hugely at stake, and want to see urgent action taken to reduce, or better still, eliminate the effects of global warming.

Esther Agbarakwe, a young climate change activist from Nigeria, said present and future leaders on the continent should collaborate to find solutions to climate change, and called for 'cultural transformation that enables a shift towards a more sustainable world.'

"We have indeed come of age, we are no longer in our childhood stages, and the time of maturity has arrived, this year is marked as the International Year of Youths and now, more than ever before, the youth are taking a stand, more than anyone else, we, the youth, face unprecedented challenges as a result of global climate change," she said in a statement.

"We also share the responsibility of addressing it, as a group, we are key stakeholders in the international processes to tackle the most important challenge of our generation, as it is our future, we will be disproportionately affected by the catastrophic impact of climate change," she added.

Agbarakwe said efforts to find solutions to climate change should be 'a process guided by principles of compassion, integrity and justice.'

"We need to pragmatically re-think our behavioural patterns, to enable a paradigm shift that is based on an ongoing process of action, reflection and meaningful participation, awareness; education and empowerment are fundamental pre-requisites to enabling this process, and the youth are energetic and passionate about holding governments and all relevant stakeholders involved accountable for their actions; we are equal partners in this process and commit ourselves fully to achieving the objectives as decided by this Forum," she said, referring to ADF-VII.

According to her, young people could play a



Climate change poses a threat to their future.

more dynamic role in framing and implementing anti-climate change policies, beyond just advocacy.

For instance, Agbarakwe said youths could use song, internet and stories, which are popular mediums of communication, to advance efforts to curb climate change.

She said decision-making over climate change should be gradually shifted 'towards the generation that would manage this unwanted inheritance, to make political and economic decisions that can span a generation, and to enable real inter-generational and inter-cultural dialogue about climate change to be realized in institutions where the youth generation can learn.'

At the same time, she said African governments

should begin to mainstream youth voices and perceptions in tackling the problem, 'because climate change projections indicate that effects will begin to be most felt in the next 20-30 years.'

"Therefore younger generations should begin to be part of the solution to enable them cope when disaster calls," Agbarakwe noted.

Involving the youths will ensure those who will be affected have direct knowledge of the challenges and strategies for coping as well as the ability to mobilize communities to respond to and prepare for the impact of climate change and natural disasters.

She pleaded with African governments to prioritise higher learning on the continent, particularly increased research on climate change to better equip the young generation to deal with the problem.

Nigeria says good governance vital for climate change adaptation

Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan said on Tuesday good governance in Africa could be an effective weapon against climate change.

In a speech to the Seventh African Development Forum (ADF-VII), read on his behalf by Nigerian Environment Minister John Odey, President Jonathan said it was imperative for leaders to involve ordinary people in formulating policies to tackle global warming and climate change.

He said this was vital to ensure the policies were understood and accepted, particularly at community level.

"Good governance that is people-oriented would help to position our people and the continent to contain the negative impacts of climate change through robust adaptation mechanisms and effective mitigation measures," he said.

Jonathan said climate change presented serious developmental challenges to Africa, including insecurity and poverty, and urged unity.

"The challenges of climate change are beyond the capacity of any one country in Africa to tackle; it's shared developmental and security implication would be best resolved through co-operation to develop comprehensive continental strategies to manage migration," he said.

He said Africa needs to put in place skills and infrastructure to cope with increasing natural disasters, and health-related problems resulting from climate change.

Africa should unite to demand a legally binding treaty on greenhouse gas emissions at the Mexico summit in December, and also ensure the continent secured adequate compensation, including technology transfer, and funding for adaptation and capacity building, Jonathan said.