



**WOMEN'S
CLIMATE
ASSEMBLY**

DECLARATION OF THE 2ND WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICAN WOMEN'S CLIMATE ASSEMBLY

**24 - 28 September 2023
Lagos, Nigeria**





We, the two hundred women participating in the West and Central African Women's Climate Assembly, held between 24-28 September 2023 in Lagos, Nigeria are at the frontline of the climate crisis, carrying extreme burdens not of our making, and resisting mega development projects which continue to fuel climate warming. We are the strong and true voice of women in not less than sixty-two communities from twelve countries in West and Central Africa.

Looking ahead to the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP28), scheduled for 30 November-12 December 2023 in Dubai, African women organised under the banner of the Women's Climate Assembly (WCA) have come together to present a different understanding of and different solutions to the climate crisis than those offered by the governments and corporations sitting in the COP. We are more knowledgeable because we daily live through the growing crisis; we have deep wisdom as we farm and produce the food that most rural Africans eat daily; and we live in harmony with nature and therefore know how best to support her restore so we can all live a better life in the world.

Our main goal as an assembly of women is to bring together women-led movements in Africa against dirty energy, the new 'green' exploitation of Africa's resources, and false climate solutions that allow big corporations to keep harming the planet and make more money. We are determined to send a strong message to our governments across West and Central Africa to stand with us in our call for climate justice, reparations, and sovereignty for Africa! We, women leaders, have brought women together in our sixty-two communities to talk about our experiences and put forward our demands, which we present here:

WE SAY NO TO:

- The exclusion of African women, like ourselves, who live through the climate crisis every day and who have important knowledge to solve the crisis, from decision making about development, climate change, and real climate solutions.
- The theft and pollution of our land, forests, and water by corporations, supported by our governments. This destroys our livelihoods and makes women and their families sick.
- The destruction of mother nature – her forests, her rivers, the seas, and the land - by these dirty industries destroys the small and large animals, the plants, and other living beings we live with and depend on for life and livelihood.
- So-called development, imposed on our communities by our governments and the companies, which we have not chosen for ourselves and does not meet our needs.
- The false promises and lies of the companies and our governments, and the bribing of our traditional and community leaders which creates conflict in our communities.
- The threats and use of force, including rape and murder, against those of us that are saying NO to this deathly development. We say NO to the use of our countries' police and military to protect the companies and harm us.
- The world leaders of powerful countries who stand with their dirty industries and make decisions about development which destroys our lives on the other side of the world.
- These 'green' projects which lead to our forests being fenced, our land being taken, and our lives destroyed so that companies can go on polluting while we suffer more.
- The disasters like flooding, storms, and drought and the war, conflict, displacement and forced migration we see all around us.
- The discrimination, violence, and death our country women and men face when they leave our continent in search of a better life in the rich countries, the countries that have only brought death and destruction to our continent over hundreds of years.
- The seeds (genetically modified) which companies, sometimes with the support of our governments, bring into our countries which trap us in debt, destroy our soils, and pollute our waters.
- The destruction of the Congo Basin, the “Lungs of Africa and the World” in pursuit of oil, gas, timber, and minerals used by rich countries and the new countries which oppress us.

WE SAY YES TO:

- Development which respects community land, and the rules we have, and gives the community, and women especially, a voice in decision-making about their land and lives. We demand respect for women's land rights.
- Respect for the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) always, and the right of communities to say NO to projects which do not meet their needs. Our consent can be given or withheld at any stage of a project when we see it is taking a bad turn. Women and young people in our communities must be supported to have a strong voice.
- A development which respects and protects all living beings, from the smallest ant to the elephant and all species in between. We know that humans cannot live without nature, and we demand that any development holds the same respect and care.
- Protecting the forests that give us the air we breathe and the foods we need. But forests must not be turned into reserves which are fenced and guarded by armed men. These are the forests of indigenous and local people who know best how to protect them. It is the companies that must be stopped and not the people!
- Respect for our (community) beliefs and practices, our ancestors, and our sacred places. None should be violated in development projects.
- Full respect for our knowledge about land, forests, rivers, and water bodies and what is needed to keep them safe for us now and for the generations to come.
- Restoration, control and rights to our own indigenous seeds, and support for the recovery of lost seeds, none of which may be sold for profit.
- Support for local and indigenous approaches to cultivation, including agroecology and organic farming, both of which will allow us to eat despite the warming weather.
- Infrastructure development projects - micro-dams, roads, access to markets, and clean energy - which are at a smaller scale and meet our needs, instead of the needs of big companies.
- Clean energy solutions that serve us, as women, and our communities, and which we have full control over.
- Corporations paying for the damage they do to our environment, our health and well-being. The rich countries have long benefited from stolen land, labour, and knowledge. This has been happening since the 'white man' arrived in Africa and has not ended. Now, with the climate crisis, we are feeling most of the impacts, but we are not responsible for the damage. We demand that all these debts be paid in full by corporations and the rich in Europe, Britain and the United States.

LIST OF COMMUNITIES AND ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED AT THE 2023 WOMEN'S CLIMATE ASSEMBLY

BURKINA FASO COMMUNITIES (4)

Bomboré, Sahel, Kokologo, Centre

CAMEROON COMMUNITIES (6)

Mebassa Village, Ndzi Village, Ndowe Village, Campo Ville, Souza, Edea Ville

CÔTE D'IVOIRE COMMUNITIES (5)

Aboisso, Affery, N'Zianouan, Yapokoi, Jacquerville

LIBERIA COMMUNITIES (3)

Sackie Town, New Ceezohn, Anastasia

GUINEE CONAKRY COMMUNITIES (4)

Sangaredi, Parawol, Dabis, Parawi

MALI COMMUNITIES (2)

Sanso, Sanamadougou

NIGERIA COMMUNITIES (32)

Korokoro Tai, Ogbema, Okwuzi, Akata; Obelle, Afaha Eket, Gelegele, Ikot Antono, Otuabagi; Afaha, Kolouma, Kegbara-Dere, Erema, Rumuekpe, Aleto, Opuoko, Ibesikpo, Itam, Anakpa, Mkpanak, Iko; Orubum, Gwara, Mogho, Wiiyaakara, Ughelli, Ekunuga, Ogwashi-Uku, Ikot-Out, Odi, Ukpenekan, Makoko

SENEGAL COMMUNITIES (7)

Marwandié, Marsoulou, Foundiougne, Joal Fadiouth, Keur Moussa

SIERRA LEONE COMMUNITIES (5)

Njaima Nimikoro, Tongo Fields, Lunsa, Kenema, Freetown

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC) COMMUNITIES (2)

Communauté Kongo Centrale (Muanda), Communauté Autochtone

NAMES OF SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS (ALPHABETICALLY)

- Association pour la Défense des Droits des Aides Ménagères et Domestiques (ADDAD) - Burkina Faso
- Centre de Commerce International Pour le Développement (CECIDE) - Guinée Conakry
- Organisation pour le Renforcement des Capacités de Développement (ORCADE) - Burkina Faso
- Centre de Recherche et d'Action sur les Droits Économique Sociaux et Culturels (CRADESC) - Senegal
- Committee for the Abolition of Illegitimate Debt (CADTM) - Pan African
- The Coalition of Female Leaders for the Environment and Sustainable Development (CFLEDD) - DRC
- Femmes Solidaires (FESO) - DRC
- Femmes Autochtones et Communautés Locales pour le Développement Durable et Participatif (FACID) - DRC
- Green Development Advocates (GDA) - Cameroon
- Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement (JVE) - Côte d'Ivoire
- Kebetkache Women Resource and Development Centre - Nigeria
- Les Femmes S'engagent - Mali
- Lumière Synergie pour le Développement (LSD) - Senegal
- Natural Resource Women Platform - Liberia
- Nous Sommes La Solution (NSS) - Senegal
- Réseau des Femmes Braves (REFEB) - Côte d'Ivoire
- Réseau des Acteurs Pour le Développement Durable (RADD) - Cameroon
- Savannah Women Integrated Development Agency (SWIDA) - Ghana
- Synergie Nationale des Paysans et Riveraines du Cameroun (SYNAPARCAM), Cameroon
- Tano Women Empowerment and Development Association (TWEDA) - Ghana
- Tin Hinane - Burkina Faso
- Women on Mining and Extractives (WOME) - Sierra Leone
- WoMin African Alliance - Pan African



LONG LIVE THE WOMEN'S CLIMATE ASSEMBLY! SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN IN RESISTANCE ALL OVER AFRICA!

Issued by the Steering Committee of the Women's Climate Assembly.

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