

Climate Change Discussion Guide

This discussion guide is intended to facilitate deeper engagement and reflection on learning resources for Catholic Relief Services' Climate Change Campaign.

INTRODUCTION

In this discussion guide, participants will explore how climate change affects communities in different parts of the world, learn how communities are working to address and adapt to the challenges of climate change and understand the role we can play in the United States to respond with concrete action.

HOW TO USE THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE

This guide includes several resources to read or watch with a set of pre- and post-reflections and group discussion questions. Each section has optional resources for further learning, but individuals do not need to review those to fully participate in the discussion.

Each resource section takes about 30-45 minutes and can be done in separate sessions to allow more time for processing information and discussing the issues. Allow about 10-15 minutes for reflecting on pre-reading questions, reading or watching the resource and reflecting on the post-reading questions. This portion can be done individually or as a group. Allow an additional 20-30 minutes for the group discussion questions.

Finally, the last section of the guide includes action opportunities for your group to respond to what they've learned and mobilize their community through creative and meaning actions.

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Resource 1: Building Resilience from the Ground Up

Eulalio is a smallholder farmer who lives in an arid part of Honduras called the Dry Corridor. Because of increasing drought and erratic rainfall in the region, Eulalio is learning farming techniques to make his crops more resilient to climate change.

Resource 2: Adapting to Climate Change in Bangladesh to Fight Hunger

Shahadat Hossain lives in Bangladesh and grows vegetables to sell at the market and feed his family. Because of intense monsoon rains in his region, Shahadat learned skills to become more resilient to natural disasters, including protecting his crops from flooding.

Resource 3: Somalis Face a Widespread Food Crisis

After years of drought, Somalia is facing an urgent food crisis. Millions of people throughout the country are experiencing extreme food insecurity and malnutrition.

Resource 4: Climate Change Threatens Afghanistan Families

Mohammed Ali is a farmer that lives in Afghanistan. His crops—a main source of income—failed due to drought. Neighboring farmers lost their harvests as well and many in his community are now migrating to other regions in search of work.

Final Discussion Questions

Optional Resources for Further Learning

Action Opportunities

RESOURCE 1: VIDEO AND STORY

[Building Resilience from the Ground Up—Eulalio’s Story](#)

Summary: Eulalio is a smallholder farmer who lives in an arid part of Honduras called the Dry Corridor. Because of increasing drought and erratic rainfall in the region, Eulalio is learning farming techniques to make his crops more resilient to climate change.

Learning Goal

To examine how climate change significantly affects agricultural areas in Central America where communities depend on farming as a main source of livelihood.

Optional Additional Resources

[Water Smart Agriculture Video](#)

[Prosperity from the Ground Up Video](#)

[Climate Change is Driving Migration. Could Smarter Ag Help?](#)

[Living on the Edge of Climate Change—Part I](#)

[Living on the Edge of Climate Change—Part II](#)

Pre-reading Questions

How does climate change affect your local community or region?

How do you think climate change affects people around the world? Who do you think is most affected by climate change?

If you had to farm in an area with little rainfall, what creative techniques would you use? What type of equipment would you need?

How do you think farmers around the world are adapting to climate change?

Post-reading Reflection Questions

What is something new that you learned after watching the video and reading the story?

What is one thing that surprised you or that changed the way you think about how climate change affects others around the world?

Group Discussion Questions

What is one takeaway from the video or story you want to share?

What challenges do Eulalio and other farmers in the Dry Corridor face and how are they overcoming them?

How did weather patterns in the Dry Corridor change over time? What did that mean for farmers that depended on rain to grow successful crops?

How would you feel if the livelihood you had depended on for years was rapidly disappearing? What would you do to support your family?

Why is water-smart agriculture—a technique that improves soil health and retains water in the ground—so important for farmers? How does water-smart agriculture benefit the environment? How does it benefit people?

Why do you think Eulalio took the time to share his knowledge with his community? In what ways have you shared your skills, talents and resources with your own community?

What do you think will happen over time to crops—like corn, cacao or coffee—that are directly affected by climate change? How will that affect the rest of the world? How does CRS support farmers to adapt to a changing climate?

How can our community take action to support farmers in becoming more climate-resilient?

RESOURCE 2: STORY

[Adapting to Climate Change in Bangladesh to Fight Hunger](#)

Summary: Shahadat Hossain lives in Bangladesh and grows vegetables to sell at the market and feed his family. Because of intense monsoon rains in his region, Shahadat learned skills to become more resilient to natural disasters, including protecting his crops from flooding.

Learning Goal

To understand how climate change contributes to food insecurity in flood-prone areas like Bangladesh.

Optional Additional Resources

[Rising Waters, Rising Concerns in Bangladesh](#)

[Sustaining Resilience: Guatemala, Bangladesh, Vietnam](#)

Pre-reading Questions

How do you think severe weather or natural disasters affect communities experiencing poverty or vulnerability?

How does severe weather or natural disasters contribute to other humanitarian crises, such as food insecurity or displacement and migration?

Post-reading Reflection Questions

What is something new that you learned after reading the story?

What is one thing that surprised you or that changed the way you think about how climate change affects others around the world?

Group Discussion Questions

What is one takeaway from the story you want to share?

What challenges did Shahadat and his family face and how did they take the initiative to overcome those? How have you overcome difficult or stressful times in your life?

Have you ever experienced flooding in your community or witnessed it on the news? How did you or the community overcome the challenges it brought?

Reflect on the experience of not being able to feed your family. What would that be like and how would you overcome obstacles to secure food for them?

Why is having a safe, secure home and livelihood important for living a healthy and full life?

Did you know that by 2050, an estimated 1 in 7 people in Bangladesh will be displaced because of climate change? How would you feel if you had to leave your home and community to support yourself or your family? What would be the most difficult part about moving somewhere new?

How can our community respond so that people like Shahadat and his family can build a hopeful future for themselves?

RESOURCE 3: STORY

[Somalis Face a Widespread Food Crisis](#)

Summary: After years of drought, Somalia is facing an urgent food crisis. Millions of people throughout the country are experiencing extreme food insecurity and malnutrition.

Learning Goal

To understand how climate change contributes to food insecurity in Somalia and other countries in the Horn of Africa.

Optional Additional Resources

[World Food Program: A global food crisis](#)

[Somalia Food Crisis: Facts and How to Help](#)

[CRS First-Person Report from Somalia](#)

[Responding to the Hunger Crisis in Ethiopia](#)

[What is Famine Fact Sheet](#)

Pre-reading Questions

What does it feel like to be hungry?

How do you think the continuous effects of climate change over time can contribute to food insecurity?

What do you think it would be like to go several years without rain? How would your life change?

Post-reading Reflection Questions

What is something new that you learned after reading the story?

What is one thing that surprised you or that changed the way you think about how climate change affects others around the world?

Group Discussion Questions

What is one takeaway from the story you want to share?

How does long-term hunger and malnutrition affect communities over time?

How have people like Faiza found support in the nutrition programs operated by CRS? What other types of support might be needed for people affected by drought?

Millions of people are facing hunger in the Horn of Africa after four failed rainy seasons. Have you ever experienced drought in your area? If so, what was the most difficult part? If not, imagine yourself in that situation—what would the greatest challenges you might face?

[Certain criteria must be met to declare famine in a country.](#) However, even if famine does not get declared in a country suffering from hunger and malnutrition, why do you think it would still be important to provide food aid and development assistance?

In Somalia, an estimated 1.4 million children under the age of 5 face severe malnutrition. Have you ever worried about the health and nutrition of your child or the child of someone you know? How did that affect you and what did you do to find support?

How can our community take action to ensure people like Faiza can receive lifesaving support?

RESOURCE 4: STORY

[Climate Change Threatens Afghanistan Families](#)

Summary: Mohammed Ali is a farmer that lives in Afghanistan. His crops—a main source of income—failed due to drought. Neighboring farmers lost their harvests as well and many in his community are now migrating to other regions in search of work.

Learning Goal

To understand how climate change is a contributing factor to other humanitarian issues such as food insecurity and migration.

Optional Additional Resources

[Hunger in Afghanistan’s Central Highlands](#)

[Natural Resource Management in Afghanistan](#)

Pre-reading Questions

How do you think climate change drives urgent humanitarian issues such as food insecurity and migration?

What would you do if the main source of water in your region was starting to run out? How would you plan for the future?

Post-reading Reflection Questions

What is something new that you learned after reading the story?

What is one thing that surprised you or that changed the way you think about how climate change affects others around the world?

Group Discussion Questions

What is one takeaway from the story you want to share?

What challenges do Ali and his community face? How has climate change contributed to food insecurity in the region?

What happened to Ali’s harvests and what measures did he take to provide food for his children? How will that affect his future livelihood and income opportunities?

Reflect on the experience of living with financial uncertainty. What would that be like and what would you have to do to overcome that challenge?

Almost a third of the world's population live in arid regions that are more susceptible to droughts and flooding. Have you ever lived in an arid region and if so, what were some of the issues your community faced?

How are climate change, food insecurity and migration interconnected humanitarian issues?

What other humanitarian issues do you think are directly impacted by climate change?

How can our community respond so that people like Ali and his family can continue to live and work in the place they call home?

FINAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Pope Francis tells us in *Laudato Si'*, “Our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God.” How has your faith inspired you to step up on behalf of our sisters and brothers and the common home we share?

CRS focuses on a “people centered” approach to climate change, ensuring that those who are most vulnerable are kept at the center of climate change discussions. What stories have you encountered today that have affected you the most? How will you share those stories with others?

OPTIONAL RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING:

- [CRS' Climate Change Campaign Website](#)
- [CRS' Climate Change Campaign Overview](#)
- [Climate Change Campaign Video](#)
- [CRS' Climate Change Toolkit](#)
- [Caritas Together We campaign](#)

ACTION OPPORTUNITIES

What individual or communal actions can you take to respond to what you learned about today?

Advocacy

Join a movement of people working together to create transformative change. Text “CLIMATE” to 677-68 to receive CRS campaign information along with ways to pray, learn and take action to address the impacts and root causes of climate change.

Visit the [CRS Action Center](#) for resources and tools to advocate and mobilize your community.

Community Giving

Host a fundraiser using ideas and toolkits from the [CRS community giving site](#) and invite your family, friends and community to participate.

Mobilize Others

Mobilize your community to learn more about CRS' campaign issues and take action. Visit the [CRS campaign communications and social media kit page](#) for sample messaging you can use on social media, in bulletins, newsletters or other communications.