

LOSS AND DAMAGE: LINKING SOCIAL PROTECTION AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE IN AZERBAIJAN



Introduction: Poverty, inequality, and discrimination are causes and consequences of growing vulnerability to the effects of climate change. Inequality creates the conditions that lead people to become exposed and vulnerable to climate change, whilst the impacts of climate change disproportionately impact the poorest and most at risk, thus furthering inequality. Current climate projections have already surpassed the capacity of climate mitigation efforts, rendering further losses and damages inevitable. It is estimated that by 2030, an additional estimated 37.6 million people will be living in conditions of extreme poverty due to the impacts of climate change and disasters.

Climate change will have dire consequences on the wellbeing of children everywhere, including in middle income countries. According to UNICEF's Children Climate Risk Index (CCRI), Azerbaijan is ranked 3.8 (medium to high) which measures children's exposure and vulnerability to climate and environmental hazards, shocks, and stresses. In Azerbaijan 33% of children live in very high-risk zones to climate changes and environmental stress. Dominant climate and disaster risk in Azerbaijan are droughts, floods, earthquakes, and landslides. The country is also a water-scarce country facing water stress conditions. Azerbaijan is forecasted to be one of the 13 countries in 2025 with least water resources per person (~972 cubic meters/year) according to estimations of World Water Resources Institute. It is critical to invest in strategies to ensure that the most vulnerable individuals, particularly children and youth who bear the least responsibility for climate change, receive the protection and support they deserve to reduce their exposure and vulnerability to harm in this new context of climate uncertainty.

Social protection, including cash transfer programmes, can play an important role in helping families and caregivers to prepare for, cope with, and recover from shocks and stresses, and manage associated loss and damage. In Azerbaijan, as the climate crisis worsens, the significance of linking social protection, whose main function is to buffer the vulnerable against such shocks, with climate resilience objectives, is becoming increasingly clear.

Themes: Shock Responsive Social Protection, Climate Change, Inclusive Social Protection, Loss and Damage

Target audience:

Governments, policy makers, and practitioners who are not yet very familiar with SRSP as a concept and its relevance in the context of the Loss and Damages

Format: Moderated panel discussion (60-120 minutes) and Q&A from the audience.

Below is the proposed agenda for the session:

AGENDA

Time	Agenda Point	Speaker/Panelist
5'	Opening	Moderator: Cristina Colon , Policy Specialist (Foresight & Policy), UNICEF HQ
Speakers 45 mins	Moderated panel with Q&A	Umayra Taghiyeva (Deputy Minister Ministry of Ecology), Sharlene Ramkissoon (international expert on SRSP, UNICEF)
15 mins for Q&A		Huseyn Huseynov (Secretary of National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development of Azerbaijan Republic)
5'	Closing	Moderator: Cristina Colon , Policy Specialist (Foresight & Policy), UNICEF HQ

Date: Friday 8th December 2023

Time: 14:00-15:00

Proposed Organizing Partners: UNICEF Azerbaijan in collaboration with UNICEF RO and government of Azerbaijan

KEY MESSAGES:

- Poverty, inequality and discrimination are causes and consequences of growing disaster risk.
- Inequality creates the conditions that lead people to become exposed and vulnerable to disasters, and disasters also disproportionately impact the poorest and most at risk, thus furthering inequality. Reducing vulnerability to disasters requires addressing these dimensions.
- By 2030, with current climate projections, the world will face some 560 disasters per year. An additional estimated 37.6 million people will be living in conditions of extreme poverty due to the impacts of climate change and disasters by 2030. A “worst case” scenario of climate change and disasters will push an additional 100.7 million into poverty by 2030.
- We must break the cycle of disaster > growing inequality > repeat.
- We can curb the destructive power of hazards—in other words, stop them from turning into disasters—through careful and coordinated planning that is designed to reduce people’s exposure and vulnerability to harm, and considerate of the different vulnerabilities, and barriers that different populations face.
- Social protection, including cash transfer programmes, can play an important role in helping families and caregivers to prepare for, cope with and recover from climate-induced hazards swiftly and economically, and build climate resilience in the face of loss and damage.
- Azerbaijan has committed to integrating shock-responsive social protection measures into the national social protection system, this event aims to foster cross-border collaboration, and drive action towards creating a more resilient and inclusive future.

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