

# International Adaptation Assistance Policy Principles



**Mennonite Central Committee:** MCC is the relief, development and peace agency of the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in North America. The following principles are derived from the experience of MCC staff in the United States in their attempts to demonstrate God's love by working among people suffering from poverty, conflict, oppression and natural disaster.

1. **Commit to assisting nations impacted by climate change.** Since the United States has historically been the largest emitter of greenhouse gases, we have a moral obligation to help populations suffering from increased drought, famine, and natural disasters. The United States should also help developing nations to develop renewable and efficient sources of energy so that they can reach their full potential without greatly increasing greenhouse gas emissions.
2. **Include adaptation assistance to developing nations as part of a larger effort to address climate change.** Adaptation is only part of the broad campaign that is needed to reduce climate change and deal with its consequences. It is also essential for developed nations to reduce carbon emissions, create clean technologies, and mitigate damage to the natural environment.
3. **Target assistance toward the most vulnerable populations.** Women, children, indigenous people, and the poor suffer the most from food shortages and other humanitarian crises. Assistance programs should target these groups through nutrition programs, micro-loans, health care, disaster risk management, sustainable agriculture programs, and community development.
4. **Give adequate funding to ensure assistance programs are successful.** To have a significant impact, the United States should commit a fair percentage to assistance funds, including the Least Developed Countries Fund. The UN Development Program estimates that global adaptation assistance needs will reach \$86 billion annually by 2015. Various major NGOs have recommended that the United States should contribute at least 25% of these funds. Funds could come from the sales of industrial cap and trade permits for carbon emissions.
5. **Allow flexibility and include diverse types of assistance programs.** A single model will not adequately address the unique challenges and resources in different countries. Assistance programs work best when they are country-based and include both short-term and long-term efforts. It is critical to incorporate local voices in program planning and implementation.
6. **Strengthen international partnerships.** Climate change is a global issue that can only be solved by international cooperation. The United States must support climate change treaties, build partnerships, and allow international oversight for aid programs and emission reduction.
7. **Adaptation should be included in the broader development framework.** Adaptation projects must not replace or undercut existing development projects. For new development projects, adaptation needs should be considered as part of the planning process.