**OFFICE FOR THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF**

**EL SALVADOR (PDDH)**

QUESTIONNAIRE: "Human Rights and climate change", related to the Resolution 44/7 approved by the Human Rights Council at the 44th period of sessions, to be addressed by the Open-ended Working Group on Aging in the framework of the 47th working session at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

1. **Describe the adverse effects of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights for the elderly. If possible share specific examples and stories.**

El Salvador has not developed to date specific studies to determine the impacts of climate change on population groups in situations of vulnerability, such as the elderly, who as part of the population, suffer the adverse consequences of recurring impacts and each time increasing numbers of phenomena associated with climate change and climate variability.

The phenomena that have affected El Salvador and that are associated with climate change, highlight the human rights of the Salvadoran population that are being affected, among them: the right to life, the right to health, the right to housing, the right to water, the right to food, the right to job security and the right to an adequate standard of living, among others.

El Salvador has suffered several climatic phenomena of great magnitude in the last three years, among them: the tropical storms Ida, Agatha, Alex and Mathew and the tropical depression 12E and only in the last year 2020 four climatic phenomena with enormous consequences have been reported for the most vulnerable population: tropical storms Amanda, Cristóbal, Eta and Iota; causing human losses, thousands have lost their humble homes and have been forced to shelter and causing millions in losses. The increase in temperatures and the subsequent loss of humidity and landslides, have reduced the availability of surface and underground water, which together with changes in monthly rainfall patterns and the increase in the occurrence of more intense rains and hurricanes, has impacted agricultural productivity and production, generating problems of food insecurity, abandonment of agriculture, increase in food prices and abandonment of rural areas. [[1]](#footnote-1)

Storms Amanda and Cristóbal have left heavy losses on Salvadoran crops. According to initial estimates made by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG)[[2]](#footnote-2) there are $ 22.1 million lost in the basic grains, vegetables and fruits sectors. To this figure are added damages in livestock items, such as livestock, aquaculture and poultry.

Between May 29 and June 5, the portfolio registered 22,476 affected basic grain producers in 65 municipalities where the inspection was carried out. They estimate some 15,121 cultivated apples of damaged corn that would have produced 284,411 quintals; in addition, 1,121 apples of beans that would have harvested 7,907 quintals; and 1,092 of rice, which imply a loss of 55,026 quintals (La Prensa Gráfica, June 7, 2020).[[3]](#footnote-3)

This implies a loss of $ 5.6 million in basic grains, at wholesale prices, most of it in corn production, with $ 3.9 million and almost one million in the case of rice. In the case of beans, the losses have not been so large since most are sown in the second season.

Like the rest of Central America, El Salvador has two very marked seasons: the dry season (November-April) and the rainy season (May-October), with a period called canicula that can appear between July and August, in the that there is a reduction or absence of rainfall. Agricultural production depends largely on the regularity of these cycles, especially basic grains (corn, beans and to a lesser extent rice), essential for the population's food security (García, 2009, cited by Luna and Cuellar, 2017).[[4]](#footnote-4)

Therefore, when observing the statistics on basic basket prices provided by the General Directorate of Statistics and Censuses DIGESTYC[[5]](#footnote-5) 2019 and 2020, it is possible to study the impact on food security that meteorological changes produce both in urban and rural areas.

Climate change influences the frequency and intensity of some extreme weather events, such as floods (related to heavy rains, hurricanes, and coastal storms). Older adults are more likely to die or suffer major losses from storm and flood-related causes. For example, **Juan Manuel Mendoza, 76** **years old**, lost his home as a result of Depression 2-E that became Tropical Storm Amanda. "My wife yelled at me:‘ Get out! ’, But a door would not let me out because I was spinning with the whirlpool that had been made, and with the water up to my chest I managed to get out," he said. The families had to walk, with the pets they rescued, to the Multiplaza mall area, to save themselves from the current of water (Carolina Amaya, June 14, 2020).[[6]](#footnote-6)

If an extreme event requires leaving a place, older adults are at higher risk of suffering impacts on physical and mental health. Some of the most vulnerable people are those with disabilities, chronic illnesses, or those who live in nursing homes.

1. **Describe any specific policy, legislation or strategic plan or practice that addresses the nexus between climate change and human rights of older persons. In particular, share some information related to policies that ensure that older people participated in their design, planning, implementation and monitoring, in the adoption of climate change mitigation measures, taking the leadership and knowledge and experience of older people, both how to support the independence and autonomy of the elderly. Please note and identify any relevant mechanism that guarantees responsibility for commitments, including the meaning for their implementation.**

For the moment, El Salvador has diverse general regulations that help promote a climate change mitigation and adaptation approach, including the following:

* Constitution of the Republic, which recognizes the human person as the origin and purpose of the State and that it is the duty of the State to protect natural resources, as well as the diversity and integrity of the environment, declaring the protection, conservation, use of rational, restoration or substitution of natural resources and that it is the obligation of the State to ensure to the inhabitants of the Republic, the enjoyment of freedom, health, culture, economic well-being and social justice; that "Every person has the right to life, physical and moral integrity", among others;
* United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) ratified by El Salvador in August 1995;
* The 1998 Environmental Law, amended in 2012, to which a full title was added referring to "Adaptation to Climate Change";
* National Environmental Policy (2012); Its general objective is to reverse environmental degradation and reduce vulnerability to climate change;[[7]](#footnote-7)
* The First National Plan for Climate Change has as its main objective: “to build a society and an economy that is resilient to climate change and low in carbon”;[[8]](#footnote-8)
* National Climate Change Strategy, is one of the instruments of the National Environmental Policy;[[9]](#footnote-9)
* Environmental Strategy for Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change of the Agricultural, Forestry, Fishing and Aquaculture Sector;
* National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (suspended as of June 2019);
* Climate Change and Health Policy Proposal, aimed at preventing, adapting and mitigating the effects of climate change;
* National Program for the Restoration of Ecosystems and Landscapes (PREP), which seeks to establish agricultural production systems that are more resilient to the climate and friendly to biodiversity.
1. **Share a summary with relevant data that captures the adverse effects of climate change, and how they affect older people. Take into account the multiple forms and intersectionality of discrimination - (example: discrimination based on the combination of multiple vulnerability groups, including disability, gender, race, color, sex, language, religion, nationality and immigration status) - including discrimination based on age cohort.**

Older Adults suffer to a greater extent the impacts of natural disasters caused by the effects of climate change, a situation that worsens when the affected people have physical limitations that prevent them from accessing information on early warnings, when they have not been Census and mapped, they reside in high-risk areas without any company or their relatives work far from their homes, live in poverty and disasters damage or destroy their homes, crops, livelihoods, farm animals, among others, and they also reside in places with difficult access, which makes it difficult to evacuate quickly in an emergency situation.

1. **Describe some mechanisms and tools that can be used to measure and refer to the impact of climate change on the full and effective enjoyment of human rights by older people.**
* Include a human rights approach and in particular the participation of elderly people, in the formulation of policies, strategies, plans and projects designed to monitor and measure the impacts of climate change.
* Include in the monitoring of the impacts of climate change in a specific and transversal way, the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of Older Adults.
* Develop specialized training processes for care in the event of disasters for Older Adults and their families.
* Active participation of Older Adults in mitigation, resilience and adaptation activities and measures to the effects of climate change.
* Carrying out mapping, censuses and direct interviews with Older Adults, with the purpose of knowing and measuring first-hand the impacts of climate change on their human rights.
1. **Identify and share examples of good practices and challenges in promoting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of older persons in the context of the adverse effects of climate change, including a service, that is provided, of appropriate and sensible support to people old.**

An initiative related to the issue has been the preparation of the **“Practical Guide for the planning, assembly and coordination of temporary shelters”,** which has a human rights approach that takes into account the specific requirements of the groups in the greatest condition of vulnerability, such as Older Adults, childhood and adolescence, gender, sexual diversity and people with disabilities, thus integrating an inclusive approach to the guide.

At the level of Organizations of Older Adults, different instruments have been developed to promote inclusive climate action of people with disabilities and older adults in the comprehensive management of disaster risk at the Central American level, being the following: **Community Guide on Inclusion of People with Disabilities and Older People in the Comprehensive Management of Disaster Risks in Central America; Minimum Standards for the Inclusion of People with Disabilities and Older People in emergencies and disasters. Adaptation to Central America; and Inclusive Disaster Risk Management in Disability and Older Adults, a book for primary and secondary school students**. Documents that pose the barriers that people with disabilities and older adults face when faced with the response of the State and the community to the risk of Disasters.

1. **Please include examples and good practices that highlight international cooperation and multilateral approaches, which are implemented by close consultancies with older adults, who are also actively involved including leaders and representatives of organizations.**

As a complement to the efforts mentioned in question 5 of this questionnaire, the aforementioned documents have been prepared within the framework of the Project *"Inclusion of People with Disabilities and Older Adults in Disaster Risk Management in Central America", executed by Arbeiter- Samariter-Bund Deutschland eV (ASB)*, together with the Nicaraguan Federation of Association of People with Disabilities (FECONORI) and the Association “Foundation for Cooperation and Communal Development of El Salvador” (CORDES),[[10]](#footnote-10) with the financial support of the Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, whose terms of incidence are: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua.

The first document within the good practices: Community **Guide on Inclusion of People with Disabilities and Older People in the Comprehensive Management of Disaster Risks in Central America**, the objective of this guide is aimed at rural and urban communities in the Central American region, People with disability and older adults, their caregivers and family members, as well as public and private authorities and institutions related to disaster prevention and management, whose purpose is to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities and older adults as active and participatory people in the processes of comprehensive disaster risk management, and to improve the quality of care and humanitarian response in emergency and / or disaster situations.

A second document: Minimum **Standards for the Inclusion of People with Disabilities and Older People in emergencies and disasters. Adaptation to Central America.** This document is a follow-up to the previous one, promoted by the same cooperant and institutions, aimed at providing guidelines for comprehensive care in the event of disasters for people with disabilities and the elderly. The origin of these standards provided by UNICEF for the protection and care of people with disabilities in emergencies, also elaborated in conjunction with USAID, and also has its pilot version in 2015 of Minimum Standards for the inclusion of elderly and disabled people in humanitarian action, prepared by ADCAP.

Third and Fourth document: Inclusive **Disaster Risk Management in Disability and Older Adults, a book for primary and secondary school students**, both documents pose the barriers that people with disabilities and older people face in the response of the State and the community to the risk a Disasters.

1. **Provide any additional information that you consider useful to support actions against climate change that promote the full and effective enjoyment of the guarantee of human rights of the elderly.**
* We can highlight from Civil Society the development of the Institutional Policy of the Association "*Foundation for Cooperation and Community Development of El Salvador- CORDES-*"[[11]](#footnote-11) towards the Elderly, which considers as one of the axes and actions of the Policy "Inclusive Risk Management", whose actions are framed in the following: i. Promote that all Risk or Emergency Management Plans, at different levels (national, departmental, municipal and communal), include the approach to work with the Elderly Population (before, during and after) of an event, not only as beneficiaries but as subjects of rights; ii. Seek training in Comprehensive Risk Management, with an emphasis on prevention; iii. Promote the performance of diagnosis and risk management plans disaggregated by age; iv. Apply the regulations of SENDAI, Minimum Standards and Central American Plan for Comprehensive Risk Management, in the inclusion of older people in risk management.
* Also, the first Comprehensive Development Policy of the Elderly Person of the Municipality of Tecoluca, which belongs to the Department of San Vicente, with an adult population greater than 2,066 people, representing 8.6% of the total population, 962 men and 1,104 women; whose general objective is to promote from the Municipality plans, programs, resources and services to help guarantee full compliance with the human rights of the Older Adults of the Municipality.
* In addition to the above, said Policy has a transversal axis of "Risk Management", under which the Municipality of Tecoluca undertakes that in the event of emergency situations that arise in said Municipality, special treatment will be given to Adults Seniors in all actions that are developed, recognizing the vulnerability and specific conditions of the elderly.
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1. FES Central America (2020) “Climate Change” rescued from <https://www.fesamericacentral.org/el-salvador/cambio-climatico.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Orellana, J (June 7, 2020) Amanda and Cristóbal leave large losses in Salvadoran agriculture La Prensa Gráfica. Rescued at <https://www.laprensagrafica.com/economia/Amanda-y-Cristobal-dejan-cuantiosa-perdidas-en-el-agro-salvadoreno-20200607-0025.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Orellana, J (June 7, 2020) Amanda and Cristóbal leave large losses in Salvadoran agriculture La Prensa Gráfica. Rescued at <https://www.laprensagrafica.com/economia/Amanda-y-Cristobal-dejan-cuantiosa-perdidas-en-el-agro-salvadoreno-20200607-0025.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Luna, F. and Cuellar, N. (2017) Climate change in El Salvador: Impacts, responses and challenges for reducing vulnerability. Regional Program for Research on Disasters and the Environment. PRISMA Retrieved from: <https://www.prisma.org.sv/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Cambio_climatico_El_Salvador.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Dirección de Estadísticas y Censos DIGESYC (octubre 2020) índice de precios al consumidor (ipc), canasta básica alimentaria, Ministerio de Economía de El Salvador. Rescatado de: <http://www.digestyc.gob.sv/index.php/servicios/en-linea/canasta-basica-alimentaria.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Carolina Amaya (June 14, 2020) Civil Protection did not promptly alert about storm Amanda. <https://gatoencerrado.news/2020/06/15/proteccion-civil-no-alerto-oportunamente-sobre-la-tormenta-amanda/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. UNDP El Salvador (December 11, 2018) "El Salvador launches Climate Change Policy for the public works, transportation and housing sector" <https://www.sv.undp.org/content/el_salvador/es/home/presscenter/articles/2018/12/el-salvador-lanza-politica-de-cambio-climatico-para-el-sector-de.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Yvette Aguilar (August 2015) “El Salvador's First National Climate Change Plan: Criteria and recommendations for its effective implementation, monitoring and updating” https://www.fesamericacentral.org/files/fes-america central / activities / el\_salvador / Activities\_ES / First% 20Plan% 20Nacional% 20de% 20Cambio% 20Climatico% 20de% 20El% 20Salvador / First% 20PNCC% 20de% 20El% 20Salvador.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources El Salvador (MAY 4, 2016) "National Climate Change Strategy" <https://www.marn.gob.sv/estrategia-nacional-de-cambio-climatico/> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Alberler- Samariter- Bund (ASB), Nicaraguan Federation of Associations of People with Disabilities (FECONOR) and Foundation for Cooperation and Community Development in El Salvador (CORDES) (August, 2017) (First edition) Multiple prints. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Alberler- Samariter- Bund (ASB), Nicaraguan Federation of Associations of People with Disabilities (FECONOR) and Foundation for Cooperation and Community Development in El Salvador (CORDES) (August, 2017) (First edition) Multiple prints. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)