



People are feeling the impacts of climate change right now that affect their food security and way of life, according to a new UN University research report published today. [The report](#) finds that despite adaptation efforts, vulnerable communities are experiencing loss and damage that are threatening their most fundamental needs, livelihood and food security.

“These negative effects will only grow unless we take action. Maintaining the status quo is no longer an option,” says Dr. Koko Warner of [the United Nations University’s Institute for Environment and Human Security](#).

The institute today released the report in the lead up to the high-level [Climate Conference COP 19](#) in Warsaw, Poland. It focuses on the loss and damage that climate change is already causing.

“Our research findings clearly show that current levels of adaptation and mitigation efforts are insufficient to avoid negative impacts from climate stressors. Policy responses are needed now,” explained Dr. Warner, Scientific Director of the Loss & Damage in vulnerable countries initiative at the United Nations University.

Despite applying a variety of coping and adaptation measures to mitigate the damage caused by climate change, 96 per cent of households surveyed in selected districts in Ethiopia, 78 per cent in Nepal, 72 per cent in Burkina Faso and 69 per cent in Mozambique still experienced severe negative impacts on their household budgets.

Three out of four surveyed households across the study sites reported that they have to cut down on the number of meals or reduce portion sizes - a clear sign that coping capacity is inadequate.

“Following a severe flood in Ethiopia in 2007, 94 per cent of respondents reported that their crops were severely damaged or entirely destroyed. Large-scale destruction of crops also lead to higher food prices, which made staple foods such as maize unaffordable”, stated Dr. Fatima Denton, Coordinator of the African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC), a partner for the African case studies.

Background

The Loss & Damage in vulnerable countries initiative at the United Nations University assesses a broad range of both extreme weather events and slow onset climatic changes in vulnerable countries around the world. The four case studies presented in this report, Volume 2, focused exclusively on droughts and floods.

Photo: Mozambique, UNU Bonn.