



**Green Economy and Sustainable Development:
Bringing Back the Social Dimension
CONFERENCE**

Social Dimensions of Climate Change

Elena Villalobos Prats

Task team on social dimensions of climate change, WHO

Social dimensions of climate change

"A people-centred approach"



The UN Task team on SDCC

- Started working as UN task team by June 2010
 - Co-conveners: ILO, UNDESA and WHO

 - Now composed of 19 UN agencies:
 - FAO, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDESA, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHABITAT, UNICEF, UNITAR, UNISDR, UNRISD, UNU, UN Women, WB, WFP and WHO.
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Objectives

Supports Governments and partners to:

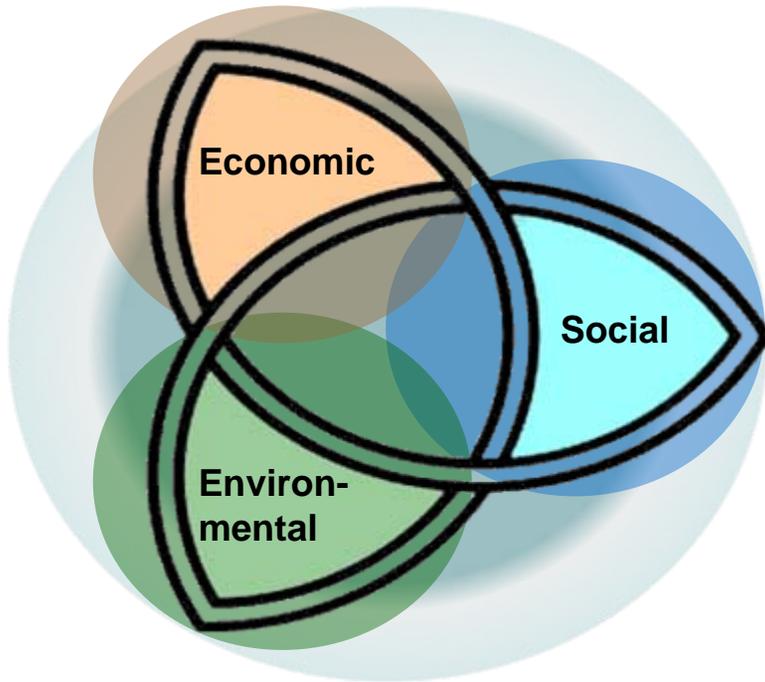
- ▶ **Develop a comprehensive and inclusive conceptual framework on the social dimensions** of climate change, drawing on the expertise of the UN system in related fields
 - ▶ **Advocate a multidimensional approach to climate change policies** to take into account the potential social co-benefits of effectively addressing climate change as well as opportunities to focus on the most vulnerable
 - ▶ **Develop climate-related policies and measures** to provide better living conditions in their societies as a whole
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Moving forward

The UN system will continue its joint effort to:

- ▶ Set an agenda that recognizes that **mitigation and adaptation should be designed to improve living standards** for all members of society, irrespective of gender, age or social status;
 - ▶ Support countries in developing appropriate adaptation and mitigation policies by promoting **coherent and holistic climate policies and programmes based on assessments of environmental and social impacts.**
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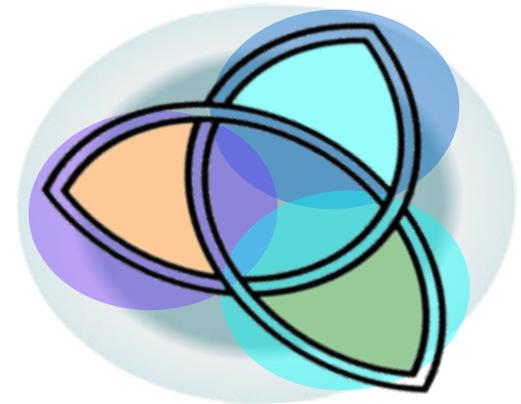
Social, Economic and Environmental interactions of Sustainable Development



Social dimensions to consider when addressing Climate Change

Social needs:

- Equity and social inclusion
- Human rights
- Participatory politics
- Governance
- Cooperation and solidarity
- Education



Individual needs:

- Health
- Decent work
- Social protection
- Empowerment
- Mobile assets

Basic needs:

- Water
- Food
- Energy
- Shelter
- Transport
- Security

Social dimensions of climate change:

- ▶ Social dimensions reflect the **social, economic, and behavioral aspects** of the human condition as critical components of climate policies' ultimate success
 - ▶ The understanding of social dimensions of climate change builds on the **principles of equity and social justice**, especially for the most vulnerable
 - ▶ The aim is to broaden and deepen policy makers' understanding of the **benefits of addressing and incorporating the social dimensions** of climate change into climate policies
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Social dimensions of climate change:

- ▶ **People are at the center of a successful transition** to a world of far-reaching and balanced global reduction in emissions and enhanced resiliency
 - ▶ Specific attention to the most **vulnerable groups**, and their role in crafting solutions and increasing resilience
 - ▶ The goals of this transition must include **fulfillment of basic needs, enjoyment of human rights**, health, equity, social protection, decent work, equal participation and **good governance**.
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Why Integrate Social Dimensions into Climate Change Policy ?

- **Safeguard the rights of the people** — respecting human rights is a prerequisite to adequately address climate change; empowers them as actors
 - **Ensure a successful outcome** — effective policy relies on people changing their behaviours; people as end-users and their willingness to adopt 'clean' technologies
 - **It is in accordance with international conventions and declarations** — strong precedent already set by international instruments
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Legal basis

Relevant international instruments include:

- ▶ **UNFCCC [Articles 1 & 4]**
- ▶ Agenda 21
- ▶ The Hyogo Framework for Action
- ▶ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- ▶ The Convention for the Elimination for all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- ▶ Convention of the Rights of the Child
- ▶ Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Integration of social dimensions: ad-hoc and limited in scope

- National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs)
 - National Communications to the UNFCCC
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Social drivers of Climate Change

- The climate change that concerns the international community is “**anthropogenic**”.
 - It thus derives from **human activities** and is, indeed a reflection of the ways in which human societies function and change over time.
 - Human societies and the activities that take place within them **drive climate change in different ways.**
 - Sustainable options require an **understanding of the social structures that drive climate change** – as a set of social problems the solutions to which are also, necessarily, social.
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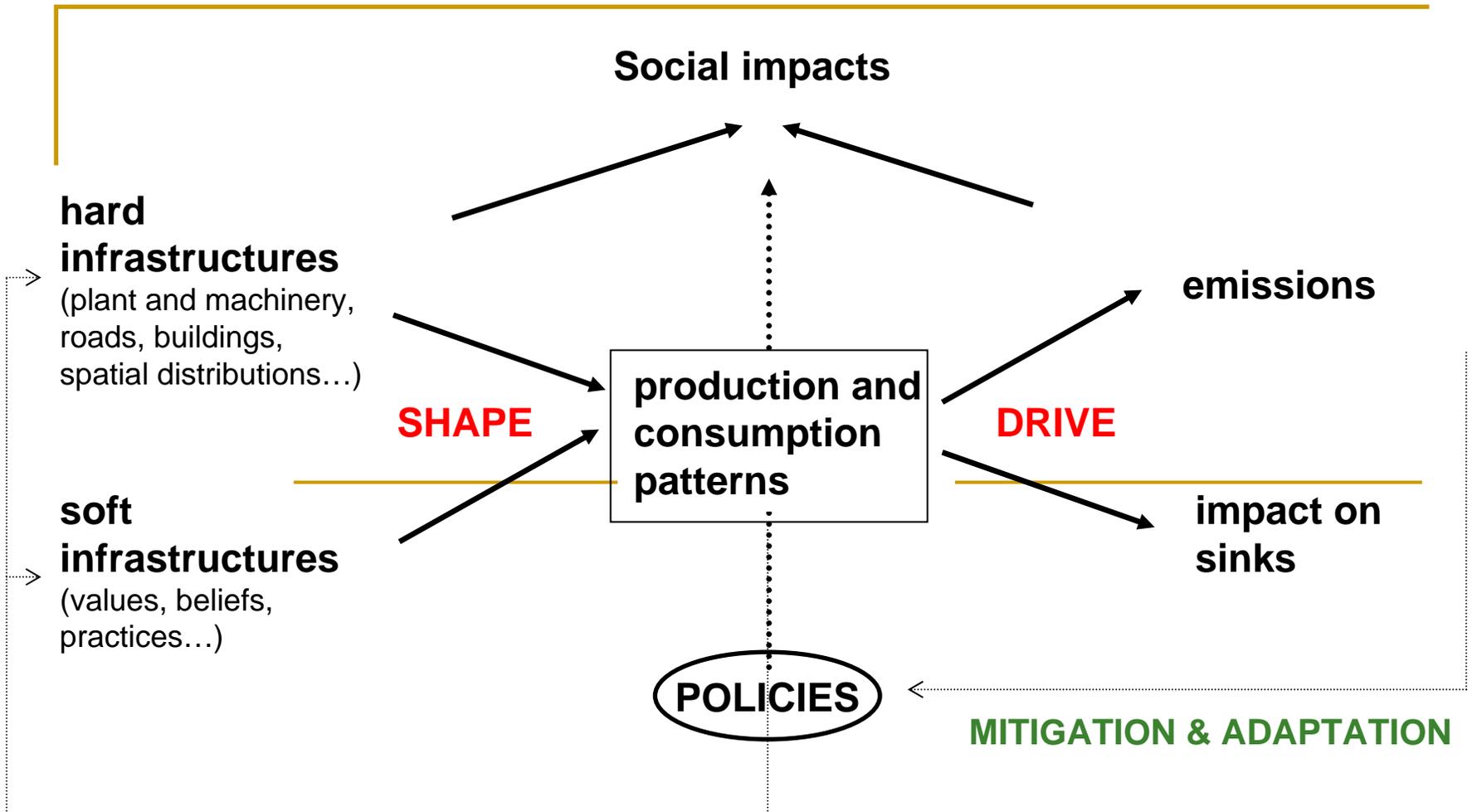
Production

- Production systems “feed” societies in response to their perceived needs
 - While production systems are part of the climate change problem, they are **also part of the solution**
 - The way in which production systems drive climate change is closely related to a **quantitative approach** in which “**more**” **serves as a proxy for “better”**
 - Hence need for an alternative proposal
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Consumption

- The **trend in consumption patterns** over recent decades **increased**.
 - Not only are there **more consumers**, but **each consumer consumes more**.
 - There is a connection between prosperity and consumption:
in many socially relevant areas, improved unit efficiency (e.g. of energy consumption, agricultural production etc.) may be overtaken by a countervailing tendency to consume more for any given level of material prosperity
 - **Changes need in consumption and productions patterns** to reduce climate change will have **major impacts on how the whole society “ works”**: on enterprises and workers, migration flows, infrastructure needed, etc
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SOCIAL DRIVERS OF CLIMATE CHANGE



RECONFIGURE OVER TIME

Social impacts and vulnerability

■ A “social dimensions lens” asks:

- What are the socio-economic conditions that make people vulnerable in the first place?
- How does climate change impact peoples’ lives, health and livelihoods?
- What are entry points for adaptation to address impacts on lives and livelihoods?

■ Vulnerability is shaped by the socio-economic conditions people live in:

- Employment and working conditions, level of education, health, gender equality/ inequality
 - Access and control over resources/ assets such as food, water, shelter, energy, information, social networks, farming tools, land, technology, infrastructure, financial capital etc.
 - Access to social protection and public services and institutions
 - Entitlements, human rights, governance, policies
 - Cultural and historical factors etc.
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The Way Forward: Integrating SDCC in climate change policies

- **Climate change** poses a challenge to established policy frameworks because it **cuts across institutional sectors and issues** that are traditionally addressed separately
 - Compartmentalizing climate change policy responses into a **series of sectoral agendas**, such as energy, transport, water, agriculture, health etc., omits some of the key features of climate change
 - An **integrated approach**, that incorporates the social analysis of causes, impacts and benefits would be a useful way of overcoming this barrier
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Seizing opportunities

- Climate change requires an **unprecedented challenge to international governance**, requiring governments to address traditionally disparate issues in an interlinked manner and transforming the way in which they approach economic and development policies.
 - The cross-cutting nature of climate change offers **multiple secondary opportunities**, also known as social co-benefits: job creation, gender equity, access to social protection, food security, etc.
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Improving Climate Policy: the framework

- Social policies and institutions must be “**inclusive, responsive and accountable**” to effectively empower people to be agents in the fight against climate change and to transform “from subjects and beneficiaries into **citizens with rights and responsibilities**”
 - Needed procedural principles for the design and implementation of CC policies and programmes:
 - Participation
 - Accountability
 - Non-discrimination and equity
 - Empowerment
 - Transparency
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Some policy recommendations

- Complement global and regional climate analysis with **social impact assessments** to properly identify how climate change will impact health, employment, gender equity, might trigger migration, increase vulnerability, etc
 - Develop more frequent and better informed social impact assessments, including criteria, methodologies and **monitoring and evaluation models**
 - Promote **inter-ministerial policy coordination/dialogue** in order for decisions on climate to be taken in a coherent manner with social priorities.
 - **Dialogue** between decision makers and stakeholders
 - Identify **research gaps**
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Some policy recommendations

- Ensure **social safeguards** are in place to protect the interests of all, in particular the most vulnerable when fashioning climate solutions
 - **Invest in human capital**: invest in education and skills
 - Include **Social Dimensions Responsive Budgeting** – SDRB – in climate finance at national and global levels. This should be applied to the different finance windows: adaptation, mitigation, REDD, capacity building, etc.
 - Ensure that **climate funding is in addition** to current Official Development Aid (ODA) to avoid funding getting diverted from essential development goals
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