Climate change is considered to be one of the biggest development challenges of recent times. People across the globe are getting affected due to extreme weather patterns, temperature change, melting of glaciers, increase in climate induced disasters and outbreak of diseases. Some parts of the world are also faced with food insecurity due to water scarcity and depletion of natural resources. In many parts of the world the patterns of flowering of trees and cropping is also showing deviation from the norm.

Climate changes are having notable effects on glaciers and sea level along the coast of Pakistan, resulting from an increasing concentration of Green House Gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere due to use of fossil fuels and other human activities. Therefore, it is posing a direct threat to its water, food and energy security. The country’s vulnerability to such adverse impacts is likely to increase considerably in the coming decades as the average global temperature, which increased by 0.6 °C over the past century, is projected to increase further by 1.1 to 6.4 °C by the end of the current century.

Karachi, Pakistan’s capital, industrial and trading hub is considered susceptible to a number of climate induced changes (extreme weather in the form of more intense cyclones, tidal flooding, monsoon flooding, sea-level rise, extreme hot days and increased heat events and drought). These pose threats to populations, settlements, infrastructure and remaining natural habitats. The Karachi City Climate Change Adaptation Strategy - A Roadmap (Anwar 2012) identifies more geographically specific climate change vulnerabilities of Karachi and coastal areas. The effects of these changes are exacerbated by poor urban planning, as well as loss of natural habitat and green space (mangroves, trees, wetlands), which provide buffers and a protective function in many instances against hydro-metrological phenomena.
Continued sea-level rise on the coast of Pakistan (approximately 1.2mm per year) is expected to have a number of effects: increased erosion of the shoreline (affecting both natural and urban systems); inundation and more frequent flooding on deltaic plains; salinization of aquifers and soils; and a loss of estuarine and associated wildlife habitats. There are identified to be the region’s most vulnerable to the adverse health effects of climate change. There will be health consequences from vector borne diseases (malaria, dengue, others), diarrhea, gastroenteritis, skin and eye infections, malnutrition and anemia among other risks that will stem from increasing temperature, flooding and droughts.

Globally, there is a debate on the causes of climate change. Some blame it on the effects of industrialization and other on depletion of natural resources and contamination of the atmosphere with chemicals generated through human activities.

Pakistan has taken fundamental steps toward institutionalizing the consideration of climate change and the risks it poses into its development planning. It has identified a range of climate mitigation and adaptation options. However, it still faces challenges with regards to its capacity to fully implement its climate change policy

Scientists across the globe are studying the causes and impact of the climate change, while also exploring ways and means for protecting human settlements from the catastrophic impact of natural disasters.

FOCUS appears to have numerous streams of work linked to climate change, including participation in public policy on climate change nationally. They also have active linkages with government institutions (Metrological Department and the Global Change Impact Studies Centre). There is an active desire to seek ways in with disaster risk reduction can be integrated with climate change adaptation.

The untapped research potential of Karachi-Sindh offer opportunities for researchers interested in studying climate change, its potential impact and, most importantly, adaptation strategies, in the context of mountain areas.

Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FOCUS) Pakistan, an affiliate of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), has joined hands with NED University, to arrange “Conference on Climate Change Adaptation”. The conference will bring together leading academicians and practitioners from the national and international horizon to share their knowledge and experiences. Also suggest ways and means for protecting lives and properties of the coastal communities, in particular, and the global community, in general. The conference is being held as part of a project “Harnessing Capacities in Disaster Risk Reduction in the Hazardous Areas of Pakistan”, supported by the Royal Norwegian Embassy
Conference Objectives

- Explore the science of climate change in order to have a shared understanding of the issue
- Discuss best practices in climate change adaptation at community and institutional levels
- Advocate inclusion of Climate Change Adaptation as a core component of future development

Themes

- Climate change adaptation (Practices and Strategies in the Coastal Areas)
- Climate Change impact on the life of local people in coastal/urban areas
- Climate change and Disaster Risk Reduction

Instructions for Presenters

- Each presenter will have 15-20 minutes for presenting the paper/case study
- Thematic discussions will be held at the end of each session for 20 minutes
- Mode of presentation, multimedia/poster, should be communicated to the secretariat at the time of submission of abstract
- Abstract should be two pages, single spaced, typed in Times New Roman, Font size 12, fully justified.
- Name of the paper should be written on top of the abstract, followed by name(s) of author(s) in APA Referencing style.
- Send abstract or PPT presentations in PDF format to climatechangeconference@focushumanitarian.org by 12th May 2014
- Final presentations should be submitted by 17th May 2014 conference
- English will be the preferred medium of communication at the conference