

Introduction: Responding to the Climate Crisis in Eastern Africa

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'I cannot go back to Uganda because politically I'm not on the same page as the government, and that puts me in danger,' says Nyombi Morris, a climate activist forced into exile due to Uganda's *The Anti-Homosexuality Act, 2023* (Kimeu, 2024). The law imposes severe penalties, including life imprisonment and even the death penalty for certain same-sex acts, as well as 20 years for 'promotion' of LGBTQIA+ rights. Morris, who became vocal about LGBTQIA+ rights after his sister was outed and expelled from school, received threats of violence and arrest for his activism. With the support of Defend Defenders, he fled to Denmark, where he has applied for asylum. His story highlights the intersection of LGBTQIA+ rights and climate activism, as systemic oppression not only silences voices advocating for equality but also disrupts crucial environmental advocacy in regions like Uganda. Morris' experiences also speak more broadly to what Global Witness has termed a 'Climate of Fear' among environmental defenders and activists in Eastern Africa, particularly amidst large-scale resource extraction (Global Witness, 2023), and increasing targeting of climate activists through criminalization and antiprotest laws (Lakhani et al, 2024).

At an international climate policy-making level, Africa, and specifically Eastern Africa, has been a key site in recent years. In September 2023, the first Africa Climate Summit was held in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, and highlighted the continent's dual challenges: vulnerability to climate change despite minimal emissions and the reliance on unfulfilled promises from wealthier countries in the Minority World. Leaders adopted the Nairobi Declaration to advocate for Africa in global forums, emphasizing renewable energy potential and urban poverty. Kenya's President, William Ruto, in his opening speech to the Summit stressed he wants Africa to be seen as a provider of solutions to the climate crisis, not as victims (The Guardian, 2024). Activists criticized 'false solutions' like carbon markets, while US\$26

billion in financing deals marked some progress. However, scepticism remains about whether these outcomes will lead to tangible improvements for Africans or remain aspirational rhetoric (Muiruri, 2023). All of which leaves us at a difficult and challenge point in history – where more must be done urgently to address the climate crisis, but there exists a number of political, economic and structural barriers, which must be overcome, especially by activists and frontline communities who currently lead efforts in Africa and beyond.

Climate finance at the heart of climate justice

Climate finance is a fundamental indicator of climate justice. Initially agreed upon in 1992 in Article 4, Paragraph 3 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Minority World countries committed to providing ‘new and additional financial resources’ to cover the full costs incurred by Majority World countries in meeting their obligations under the Convention. In 2009, Minority World nations set a target to collectively mobilize US\$100 billion per year by 2020, a goal extended to 2025 under the 2015 Paris Agreement. This target is set to be replaced by a New Collective Quantified Goal, with discussions beginning in 2022. Synthesis reports revealed that the financial needs of Minority World countries to meet their mitigation and adaptation goals, as outlined in their Nationally Determined Contributions, were estimated between US\$5.1–6.8 trillion through 2030. In November 2024, a new target of US\$300 billion per year was agreed upon, a decision praised by Minority World countries but criticized by Majority World nations, who had called for a minimum of US\$1.3 trillion annually.

Setting a commitment is one thing, but fulfilling it is another. According to the 2024 data from the OECD, the target of US\$100 billion was only achieved once, in 2022, when an estimated US\$115.9 billion was mobilized by Minority World countries. This highlights that for every previous year, promises were left unfulfilled. This clearly reflects climate injustice, especially when sectors contributing to climate change receive far more financial support. Adaptation, a priority for many countries in Africa, remains severely underfunded. For instance, Africa alone requires US\$53 billion each year but received just US\$13 billion in 2021–2022 (Global Centre on Adaptation, 2024), 80 per cent of which was delivered in loans. In simple terms, Africa, which contributes less than 4 per cent to global greenhouse gases, is paying Minority World countries, which caused the problem, for most of the support provided, in order to adapt to the impacts that are rising.

Take displacement, for example. The Sixth Assessment Report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) confirms with high

confidence that climate and weather extremes are increasingly driving displacement across all regions. One chapter in the report highlights this reality, noting that in Eastern Africa, cross-border migration is driven by a range of factors, including pastoralists' adaptability, climate events and persecution, often occurring simultaneously. Another chapter discusses water scarcity, which is also recognized as a climate-change impact in the IPCC report. While the chapter proposes solutions, such as water-production technologies and water-harvesting techniques, substantial financing is needed to implement these technologies. Vulnerable communities, who have contributed the least to climate disruption, lack the financial resources to address these issues, and their governments face competing priorities within limited budgets.

In addition to the challenges of accessing finance, research shows that only about 10 per cent of the funds allocated actually reach the community level, highlighting clear indicators of climate injustice. Climate activism plays a crucial role in exposing these gaps and pressuring decision makers to take corrective actions. This book highlights examples of climate activism in Eastern Africa, including the iconic legacy of Wangari Maathai, as beautifully explored by Wambua Muindi. Even after her passing, Maathai's work continues to inspire activists, with her efforts still visible in books and the Karura Forest, which she helped save. Karura, an urban forest spanning 2,500 acres in Nairobi, Kenya, stands as a testament to her work, which was assisted by traditional media. Maathai's story illustrates that climate activism is a multifaceted struggle – one against colonialism, patriarchy, corruption, and more. It is a fight for justice – climate justice and social justice. This book emphasizes how movements can outlast their founders, inspiring actions that often extend far beyond the original context of activism.

The Rise Up Movement in Uganda is one of the youth-led initiatives fighting against climate injustice, inspired by the legacy of Wangari Maathai, and explored within this book. Led by Vanessa Nakate, the movement draws additional inspiration from Greta Thunberg, whose global Fridays for Future movement grew through social media-driven protests. Hilda Nakabuye also played a key role in establishing the Ugandan chapter, further fuelling youth activism in the country. In this book, Antje Daniel argues that both the Rise Up Movement and Fridays for Future Uganda have become significant actors in global environmental politics as well as in Uganda's national context. Their advocacy for climate justice highlights the growing conflict in Uganda over the aspiration for an ecologically and socially just future. This struggle is often met with threats, intimidation and arrests. According to Fridays for Future Uganda's X account, in November 2024, youth activists protesting the East African Crude Oil project – funded by the fossil fuel industry – were arrested and imprisoned. Justice has yet to be served for their peaceful demonstration.

To the announcement of the US\$300 billion climate finance goal, Vanessa Nakate reacted with a statement on her X account that

the rich countries have thrown us crumbs once again. Leaders in developed countries have yet again tried to avoid their responsibilities. We, the peoples have been treated with contempt. We have been excluded. We have been abandoned. But we will hold them accountable. We will make them pay what they owe. We will never give up.

Activism for climate action is a crucial component in the fight for climate justice and should be supported, not challenged.

Unsettling climate justice

Climate justice has emerged as one of the latest floating signifiers in the long and winding debate about the consequences of global warming. At the core of climate justice is an understanding that we cannot treat climate change as simply an environmental crisis. Rather we should view it as an ethical, legal and political issue (Schlosberg and Collins, 2014). This broadens our approach to global warming to encompass issues to do with fairness and justice. Such a conceptualization of climate change enjoins us to move away from the narrow framing of the polycrisis facing humanity. By foregrounding fairness, justice and rights, we can centre ideas of environmental justice and fairness.

A number of definitions of climate justice have emerged in the last few years. Some of these definitions attempt to highlight the fact that all living beings have a natural right to access and obtain the resources needed to have an equal chance of survival and are entitled to exist free from harm (Anderson, 2004). Implicit in this definition is the idea of a rights-based approach to climate change. Informed by environmental justice discourse, climate justice – as explored across this book – seeks to illuminate, and act upon, the unequal, intersectional and disproportionate consequences of climate change on marginalized communities. Rather than assuming the environmental equilibrium will be restored without a fight, it seeks to push for legal and political redress. The idea of social justice is premised on a commitment to the achievement of a society that is equitable, fair and capable of confronting the root causes of injustice.

At the core of climate justice is the quest to achieve an equitable distribution of both the burdens of climate change and the efforts to mitigate climate change. By putting concepts, such as equity, human rights, collective, justice and the historical responsibilities for climate change at the front and centre, climate justice advocates acknowledge that those who have benefited most from industrialization should carry the burden for the accumulation of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere and thus for climate change. It follows that countries in the Majority World are more likely to bear the brunt of

climate change when compared to their counterparts in the Minority World (Crawford et al, 2023). It also presupposes that rural areas are more likely to experience the vagaries of climate variability when compared to urban areas. Although this claim, usually coupled with a critique of urban areas as primary emitters of emissions and pollution, tends to miss that often the climate change literature has under-considered urbanism (Plänitz, 2019). The same can be said of women who are more likely to carry the burden of climate change when compared to men (Pearse, 2017), or sexual and gender diverse communities who despite disproportionate burdens are routinely excluded from climate research and action (McQuaid and Crawford, 2025). Similar comparisons can be made along other social categories and divisions – such as young and old, or rich and poor. Climate-justice advocates highlight that climate change accentuates existing inequalities but also brings into the picture newer and deeper forms of vulnerabilities (Sultana, 2022).

Building on Nancy Fraser's (2008) concept of 'abnormal justice', it is possible to advance theories of climate justice that shifts our attention away from the dominant discussion on how goods should be distributed in a just (and sustainable) society towards the very conditions that underpin how justice is understood, debated and advanced. Unlike other justice frameworks, Fraser's theorization invites us to unpack multiple experiences of climate injustice and to explore different ways of addressing them in the Majority World. The chapters in this book foreground injustices of maldistribution, misrecognition, misrepresentation, misframing and reprivatization. Under conditions of abnormal justice, claims about the distribution of resources and cultural recognition exist in tension (and are never fully resolvable) with claims about what Fraser (2008) terms 'representation', or inclusion and exclusion from democratic communities. This book invites us to ensure that those who have suffered due to processes of marginalization, exploitation, powerlessness, environmental imperialism and violence become visible, audible and knowable. In the context of climate justice, it is possible to make a case for 'recognitive, redistributive, rehabilitative, reparative, restorative, and representative forms of justice' (Mare, 2025). These underscore the importance of holding those who are emitting more greenhouse gas emissions to account. It also entails coming up with rehabilitative strategies to address deforestation, ozone-layer depletion and reforestation in Eastern Africa.

Climate justice also recognizes the intersectional nature of the impacts of climate change (Mikulewicz et al, 2023). Shying away from an approach where the consequences of climate change are presented as uniform and universal, it attempts to demonstrate how social and systemic factors are complicit in the differentiated effects of the ongoing polycrisis. Intersectionality is premised on the notion that social factors such as gender, race, class, age, disability and ethnicity intersect with each other to drive and exacerbate privileges, discriminations and oppressions (Amorim-Maia et al, 2022).

In the context of Eastern Africa, it is imperative to pivot intersectionality as an organizing principle for sustainable climate adaptation and mitigation action. In that way, policy makers, environmental and social activists, and civil society are able to ‘shift away from technocratic and exclusionary forms of climate change planning’ (Long and Rice, 2020: n.p.). Most climate-adaptation strategies have sought to treat the Majority World as *tabula rasa*. Instead of allowing those most affected by climate change to use their Indigenous knowledge systems to push back climate change, top-down approaches have tended to dominate. Dressed in the form of modern knowledge systems, climate change has been conceptualized from the narrow prism of ‘Western’ epistemologies, ontologies and methodologies. Although provincial, ‘Western’ methods, knowledges and theories have been largely presented in terms of universal claims or of claims to the universal (Mbembe, 2017). Therefore, what some pass as universal may in fact be particular to certain sociopolitical and cultural contexts as well as value systems. We must therefore question if such thinking about climate change is adequate to deal with the complexities borne of the sociopolitical, economic and technological entanglements constitutive of a modern and interdependent sociality.

From a decolonial framing of climate justice, it is arguable that it is a continuation of epistemic domination by other means. It builds on earlier forms of domination, which are primarily organized in terms of a hierarchical racial order, which privileges the Minority World and their ideas of what constitutes knowledge, ethics, justice, culture and correct methods of generating knowledge among other things (Quijano, 2007). Climate-change adaptation strategies put forward by those in the Majority World are invisibilized, marginalized and rendered irrelevant. In order to get out of this climate-justice interregnum, there is need for ‘intercultural translation’ (de Sousa Santos, 2007). This is based on mutual recognition between different forms of knowledge (about climate change, adaptation and mitigation) and ways of living among other cognate elements. As this edited collection seeks to do, it is a way of enabling dialogue across differences under conditions of mutual recognition.

Living the double life: to please or to be pleased

Living the double life – this is what Ugandan environmental activist JulietGrace Luwedde often thinks about when she allows her imagination to run wild to the angelic world, the climate movement, and where things stand right now. At the time of writing, COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan has just concluded. Her personal take, drawn also from conversations with colleagues, was that many people were unhappy with how things turned out – how decisions that impact all our lives have been handled. She explains how that

feeling of ‘we have a decision, but that isn’t what we all wanted’ engulfed many of us. This was her third COP, having previously attended COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland and COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, but the one that generated the greatest sense of disappointment. Before its close, she vividly remembers meeting fellow participants in the corridors outside of meeting rooms, demonstrating and voicing their concerns over insufficient financial commitments from Minority World countries to support vulnerable countries in addressing climate change. These protests highlighted the frustrations of many who felt that the agreed-upon US\$300 billion annual funding by 2035 fell short of the necessary resources to effectively combat climate challenges.

Additionally, some delegates from the Majority World staged walkouts during finance meetings, expressing anger over the lack of progress and perceived inadequacies in the financial commitments being discussed. Truth is, these actions underscore the critical role of civil society and vulnerable nations in advocating for more ambitious climate action and equitable financial support during international climate negotiations. This raises questions for JulietGrace: where exactly are we going with all of this? What are we trying to achieve, and why do we keep coming back to this vicious cycle of endless discussions? We continue to talk, to deliberate, but at the end of the day, we seem to agree to disagree. What does that mean for the future? What does it mean for our communities, especially those represented in these rooms yet whose realities are rarely truly reflected in the decisions made?

As a young person, JulietGrace enjoys working with other young people within communities – it’s something she hasn’t done in a while. She misses being able to go Bwise in Uganda’s capital, Kampala, and have conversations about proper waste management or even hold creative art sessions where participants had the opportunity to express themselves through a medium that speaks to everyone. Lately, she finds herself in big rooms – and by big rooms she means the United Nations – (not like it’s a bad thing, as this is a privilege in itself being here), speaking to people who understand the issues, people she’s confident should be able to find solutions to our global crises. But at the end of the day, despite our collective understanding of what needs to be done, we all leave with different agendas. At the same time, JulietGrace claims to be pushing for better outcomes for her communities. The sentiment is shared: we all want to see the world improve, to ensure the ‘elephant in the room’ is addressed properly. Yet, we are approaching it differently. We have been given different terms of reference, shaped by where we come from. There’s the Majority World versus the Minority World. The Majority World argues – rightfully so – that wealthy countries are responsible for the current state of the planet and must pay their dues. The Minority World, on the other hand, often acknowledges their historical

responsibility but implies that it's time to move on. 'We've heard you,' they say, 'but let's move forward now'.

For all the contributors to this book, climate justice is the recognition that those least responsible for climate change are bearing its brunt and that they, especially those from the Majority World, must lead the solutions. Adaptation, therefore, is not just about survival – it is about dignity, empowerment, and equity. Yet as activists, ones who often feel left out and unheard, we then wonder: 'what needs to change for activist voices to be heard in climate policy and politics?' This is the wrong question, JulietGrace argues. From personal reflections and experience, the question instead should be: What aren't activists doing to ensure their voices are heard and included?

As a global youth focal point for the UNCCD, JulietGrace has worked to amplify youth-led initiatives addressing desertification and drought. She has seen a shift: young people are no longer waiting for a seat at the table – they are building their own. However, these efforts often face systemic barriers, such as limited access to financing and exclusion from policy-making processes despite the very significant disconnect between activists and advocates for issues such as climate change. On one hand, advocates often focus on shaping policies, saying things like, 'Policies should address A, B, and C, and include X, Y, and Z'. On the other hand, activists are more focused on bringing attention to the real, on-the-ground issues and sharing lived experiences.

While both roles are critical, the divide between them creates a gap. Activists live the reality of climate impacts and highlight pressing concerns, while advocates translate these issues into actionable policy recommendations. However, for meaningful progress, these two groups need to communicate and collaborate better. In Uganda, for example, during the update of the Nationally Determined Contribution Two (NDCII), the government intentionally involved civil society in the process and this allowed for an inclusive NDC that has now gone on to be adopted by all. Reflecting on this, perhaps the key is for both activists and advocates to recognize their interdependence. Activists provide the foundation – the raw, lived realities – that advocates rely on to craft policies. By working together more effectively, they can ensure that lived experiences inform policies in a way that leads to real, actionable change.

Centring Eastern Africa

Our book seeks to ground our understandings of climate justice within Eastern African discourses and lived experiences. By attending to the conceptual, the legal, the political but most importantly the practice – and praxis – of climate justice in action, our authors seek to foreground the collective essence, and spirit, of climate justice actions in Eastern Africa. As

the chapters addressing climate activism note, and we can see in JulietGrace's reflections above, it is both the work of individuals speaking at global scales, but also the grassroots coalitions that build international, national and regional networks, that are shaping the climate-justice movement in Eastern Africa. The region is defined loosely here, with scope given to our authors to self-identify: given that 'Eastern Africa' or 'East Africa' tends to be understood slightly differently by different institutions, organizations, communities and individuals. All countries under focus here are part of either the United Nations Eastern African geoscheme, the African Union's definition of Eastern Africa, or members of the East African Community.

The climate crisis in Eastern Africa is marked by extreme weather events, including severe floods, droughts and erratic rainfall patterns, which are increasingly devastating the region. Taking one example, floods in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya, fuelled by heavy rains in late 2023, have displaced millions, while droughts and food insecurity have worsened in many areas. Climate change is also intensifying challenges, such as water scarcity and agricultural damage, impacting livelihoods across the region. These effects disproportionately affect the most vulnerable populations, and the region's capacity to adapt is limited by insufficient resources. Despite being at the forefront of the climate crisis, Eastern Africa has received comparatively limited attention within the climate-justice literature, which still tends to centre cases from the Minority World or other parts of the Majority World.

A focus on how this is mobilized, resisted and challenged across this diverse region compels us to confront the intersectional and complex entanglements at play in demanding climate justice. Taken together, our chapters creatively call for a relational, situated, political and historical approach to – and enactment of – climate justice that celebrates feminist and intersectional perspectives and begins from lived and collective experience. Climate justice, we are reminded, is inherently and deeply political; entwined with individual and collective freedoms, and disproportionately burdening those already multiply marginalized communities. In their chapter, Schroeder and Fransen, for example, highlight a concerning oversight of displaced populations in recent climate adaptation plans of host countries and need for more comprehensive and empathetic approaches in climate-adaptation policies. They note the increasing convergence of climate change and displacement in Eastern Africa necessitates urgent and focused attention from policy makers, researchers and international organizations. Indeed, our cover features a digital artwork by Ugandan artist, Philip Kairu, entitled 'Bidi Bidi', that aims to draw attention to the precarious environmental and social conditions facing refugees and asylum seekers encamped in rural refugee settlements.

Intersectionality is therefore at the heart of our book, as is attention to lived experience and plural ontologies and epistemologies. As Muindi reminds us in his chapter, this calls for not just the recognition and naming of injustice,

but proceeds to (and leads) remedy ... the emerging field of intersectional climate justice has much to learn from Maathai: that climate action must have politics, freedom, feminism at its heart; it must be grounded and historical and situated; it must be holistic, grounded in collaborative activism, rights, planetary consciousness ... [and] embrace epistemologies and experiential indigenous knowledge and systems.

Climate Justice in Action is a celebration and showcasing of inclusive action, from the scale of grassroots communities to the mobilizing of collective and regional movements and legislative precedents. Krishnan, Wambui and Lohan's chapter highlights how women-led organizations and grassroots movements are leading responses to overlapping and multiple conflict- and climate-related challenges in South Sudan, while Ronoh's chapter highlights what we can learn from how Kenyan and Ugandan grassroots movements mobilize intangible resources, building local coalitions as networks of resistance to advocate for climate justice through various means such as media campaigns, protests and litigation within unique political and historical contexts. At the same time, our authors highlight the importance of climate action addressing key ongoing and interrelated issues including sexual and reproductive health, displacement and food security.

Focusing on climate justice in action in Eastern Africa compels us to ensure that our climate thinking is neither siloed nor relegated to the sole dominion of Minority World 'experts'. Our book instead is a call to ground approaches to climate justice within broader counter colonial justice work, embracing, among others, women's advocacy, Indigenous rights, antipoverty and corruption, education, sustainable livelihoods, loss and damage, and so on. It is a weaving together of multiple actions to tackle systemic change while maintaining a commitment to the collective values of Ubuntu.

Our chapters

Wambua Muindi's chapter launches our book with a discussion on intersectional climate justice as both an action and a process, drawn from the discursive context of the life writing of Wangari Maathai. Drawing on her autobiography *Unbowed* (2006), Muindi examines how Maathai successfully mapped out with temporal and spatial sensibility ideas of intersectionality, climate justice and environmental politics as they relate to nuances of femininity, freedom and political forces in African womanhood, focusing on how this triumvirate negotiates climate crises with particular attention to Kenya and Eastern Africa. The chapter suggests that in literature, specifically women's life writings, of those in and around the climate space, and as personified in *Unbowed*, offer critical lessons to climate action approaches.

Sheila Ronoh's chapter empirically examines how environmental and climate movements in Kenya and Uganda have harnessed resources and

leveraged both local and international alliances over time to pursue justice. Using Ubuntu philosophy to frame her analysis, her chapter explores how environmental and climate activists use public awareness campaigns and formation of local coalitions to resist environmental and climate injustices in both countries. She discusses how international coalitions have supported local movements in their pursuit of justice, the importance of African values in the international campaigning space, and the power of local organizing and the importance of African cultural perspectives in shaping more meaningful and inclusive climate action worldwide.

In her poem ‘Voice of the Heavens and the Bowels’, Arinda Daphine summons those in charge and calls out ministries, individuals, companies, organizations and agencies charged with roles and duties related to the extractives industry. Written for performance, this poem borrows from *Ekyevugo*, an indigenous performative poetry among the Bantu tribes in Uganda. She blends innuendo, intimacy and politics in this searing indictment of how mineral wealth discovery so often translates into dire risks to lives and communities.

Robert Birungi’s chapter argues for prioritizing the cultural authenticity, attachment and knowledge of Indigenous communities in climate action. He asks, how do we historically link African identity with ecological balance? How are pre-colonial African traditional practices relevant to the prevailing 21st-century environmental challenges? He explores how the marginalized Indigenous Banyoro community of Bunyoro has utilized local knowledge systems that encompass cultural norms, clan systems, values and belief systems traceable to the precolonial era, to respond to and resist the adverse climate-change risks posed by the recent oil and gas discovery in the area. These cultural resistance measures embedded within the clan system are crucial, he argues, to the fight against climate change in Bunyoro, as the community is obliged culturally to abide by the customary rules to protect the sanctity and sacredness of nature.

Eileen Jahn’s chapter examines Beth Koigi’s invention *Majik Water*: a breakthrough technology that addresses water scarcity by harvesting potable water from the air. Using advanced air-to-water technology, the system operates by capturing humidity from the air and using advanced condensation techniques to produce clean drinking water, making it particularly valuable for off-grid communities, where water sources, such as groundwater or piped water from elsewhere, are scarce or unreliable. Addressing the profound social, economic and political implications of water scarcity in Eastern Africa, her chapter critically examines innovative technological solutions, the colonial roots and contemporary forms of resource exploitation, and the importance of simultaneously addressing systemic challenges, including governance, infrastructure and the equitable and inclusive distribution of resources.

In his chapter, Zimbabwean journalist Lungelo Ndhlovu introduces the climate leadership of Mother's Haven, an LGBTQIA+ grassroots organization in rural Zimbabwe. In conversation with its founder, he explores how climate-related crises are disproportionately impacting sexual and gender diverse mothers, who are experiencing increased social exclusion and discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people. The chapter examines how Mother's Haven is advocating for the well-being of lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBT) mothers and their children, combining workshops on leadership, self-awareness, sensitizing LBT mother's families, alongside agricultural adaptation including cultivation of sweet potatoes, sugar beans, and tomatoes to assist them in adjusting to the economic impacts of climate change.

In her chapter, Josepha Wessels explores the perspectives of young Sudanese environmental activists and graffiti artists on a sustainable future to provide a broader outlook on the ongoing changes on a political and social level. She asks how revolutionary Sudanese artists and environmentalists can work together to develop visions for a sustainable Sudan. Using participatory methods, her study documented Sudanese revolutionary street art, and conducted ethnographic fieldwork and interviews in 2022, bringing together Sudanese graffiti artists and environmentalists for a workshop on sustainable future visions for Sudan. The chapter focuses on transformative anthropological interventions in the ongoing ontological turn from anthropocentric extractivism to life-sustaining and more-than-human perspectives for a sustainable future. It describes a cocreative methodology that brings to the surface grassroots perspectives on human-environment relations and sustainable futures to better understand how these perspectives help to the undoing of simplistic apocalyptic or utopian narratives.

Starting with a focus on a recent photoessay, Antonio Kalyango and Neil J.W. Crawford's chapter considers the critical importance of urban trees for both ecological and social benefits. Trees provide shade, improve air quality, reduce stress and contribute to biodiversity. In rapidly urbanizing cities in Uganda, like Masaka, however, these green spaces are often sacrificed for development. Activists and civil society groups like Masaka-based Biodiversity Conservation Foundation have fought to preserve historic trees and advocate for sustainable urban planning. Their efforts highlight the need for a balanced approach to urban growth, one that incorporates green spaces to mitigate climate change and enhance the liveability of cities.

In their chapter, Sneha Krishnan, Philomena Wambui and Nitesh Lohan offer an intersectional analysis of humanitarian and government climate-change adaptation policies and disaster-response interventions in South Sudan, with a focus on women's empowerment. They highlight the country's humanitarian landscape, which has been shaped by historical and contextual challenges such as protracted civil wars, severe environmental

crises, and gender-based violence. Using empirical evidence from key informant interviews and focus group discussions, their chapter investigates adaptive strategies and policy responses by local, national and international actors. They examine the roles of women-led organizations and grassroots movements in promoting resilience and transformative change in the face of overlapping crises, emphasizing the critical importance of gender-sensitive and intersectional approaches.

In their chapter, Douglas Nyathi, Samukeliso Khumalo, Keith Phiri, Joram Ndlovu and Munyaradzi Dzvimbo examine the nexus between climate change and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in rural Zimbabwe. They explore how climate crises exacerbate gender inequalities and undermine women's SRHR in humanitarian settings, investigating how multiple and intersecting social, economic, political, and cultural factors and backgrounds aggravate women's discrimination and vulnerability to health and climate change. They highlight how current levels of climate finance directed towards meeting the needs of women and girls impacted by climate change are extremely low and insufficient. There is a need, they argue, for governments and other stakeholders to support and empower women's resilience and adaptation to climate impacts through political and financial support for SRHR services, family planning and education to ensure that families and communities can respond better to climate impacts, build resilience and ensure gender and climate justice.

Antje Daniel explores how youth activists frame the climate crisis. She asks, Who are the young people engaged in the climate justice movement? What motives drive activists, given the fact that the climate crisis in Uganda is not only a natural crisis, but also linked to social conflicts and injustices? How do activists frame the climate crisis in relation to youth, gender, or global inequality? She argues that the framing of youth climate activism is important to comprehend the relevant climate conflicts and their political negotiation by young people in Uganda. She explores how Vanessa Nakate and Hilda Flavia Nakabuye frame the climate crisis from an intersectional lens. She argues that activists perceive youth, gender and their situated experience in Uganda as overlapping dimensions of inequality, which shape their understanding of climate crisis and therewith their activism. Of particular importance to the chapter is how youth acknowledge that climate crisis is embedded in global dynamics of climate inequality, which are partly framed as 'climate colonialism'.

Gomes, Reilly, Murray, Sinnott and Sadlier's chapter examines the impact of the Sustainable Accountability Uniting Tanzanian and Irish Youth (hereafter SAUTI-Youth) project in Tanga (Tanzania). Focusing on the voice of young people participating in SAUTI-Youth, they examine the nuanced relationship between youth participation, climate action and local government decision making, exploring the project's impact on young

lives through the lens of climate change, climate crisis and sustainability actions. From a research design perspective, their chapter demonstrates the importance of youth-centered methodologies whereby young people become active participants in addressing climate change, moving beyond capacities as mere environmental guardians to encompass a broader role as agents of change in society. Through community initiatives like Citizen Voice and Action (CVA), the SAUTI-Youth programme enables young people to influence policy decisions and advocate for environmental sustainability.

Margaret Wagana's chapter takes an interdisciplinary approach of law, social sciences and anthropology, to centre climate and environmental justice in order to address the needs of refugee children. She interrogates the interconnection between displacement, environmental and climate injustice, and food (in)security. Focusing on the Young African Leaders Initiative – Green Refugees Community Project, her chapter explores the challenges and successes experienced by refugee children in western Uganda. She investigates how these factors impact the well-being of refugee children and examines the role of nongovernmental organizations and external partners, as well as constitutional and judiciary responses, to addressing these challenges through climate action.

Jana Kaufmann and Sonja Fransen's chapter examines the inclusion of displaced populations in climate-change-related laws and policies across 11 Eastern African countries by analyzing 55 legal and policy documents sourced from the Climate Change Laws of the World (CCLW) Database. Displaced populations are often located in climate 'hot spots' – areas highly vulnerable to environmental risks – yet they are largely underrepresented in national climate adaptation strategies. Using a combination of frequency and frame analysis, their chapter finds that displaced populations are primarily mentioned in documents from Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda, often framed negatively as burdens or threats. Positive frames, such as those advocating for inclusion and humanitarian support, are less frequent. Their chapter underscores the need for more comprehensive inclusion of displaced populations in national climate-adaptation policies, particularly in the context of increasing climate risks and displacement trends in the region.

Dalia Malek reflects on migrants from Somalia to Ethiopia, examining the multiple overlapping factors that can drive migration in Eastern Africa, a characterization of migration that contrasts with the standards of international refugee law where persecution is ordinarily considered the sole motivator. She demonstrates how under international refugee law, migrants in Eastern Africa who seek international protection from the harms of climate change across borders must fulfil a 'legal ideal' where their displacement is also attributed to persecution in conjunction with climate change. Achieving this standard should be considered beneficial for some, but its exclusionary rigidity contradicts the calls for flexibility and

resourcefulness that are necessary and practical for addressing climate-change displacement. Although the African regional system does not necessarily offer a straightforward or comprehensive answer to these calls, its hallmark flexibility, she argues, can facilitate innovation. The legal tools it provides, alongside other regional efforts, can help circumvent the restrictiveness of international refugee law when applied to the climate-change context. She examines the unique acknowledgements of climate-change displacement in the subregional IGAD Transhumance and Free Movement Agreements, as well as considering tools including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and its potential for strategic litigation before the African Commission and African Court, as well as the regional 1969 Organisation of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969 OAU Convention) and its expanded refugee definition.

The final chapter of the book reflects on key learnings from our nearly 39 contributors, a majority of whom are based in Africa. Drawing on the wealth of practical and grounded examples, we highlight the importance of intersectional climate actions that not only seek to curb environmental catastrophe triggered by erratic weather, heatwaves, floods and droughts in one of the most climate vulnerable regions in the world, but focus on transforming the inequalities that drive present and historical social and economic injustices. We centre the direct voices of climate leaders on the frontline of the movement for intersectional climate justice to underscore not just how climate change compounds existing inequalities, but the urgent need for intersectional, inclusive actions led by local researchers, activists, practitioners and movements, that focus on the root causes of inequality and injustice, and the interconnections between multiple forms of marginalization and oppression. In doing so, this final chapter, and the book more generally, shift our gaze beyond vulnerabilities, to action and response, celebrating local diversity and highlighting myriad creative pathways to activism and adaptation.

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