THE LIVING KITCHEN TABLE

A place where stories nourish action

MEETING BRIEF

22ND September 2026

Climate Story Café: Shared Lived Experiences

The Climate Story Café provided participants with an opportunity to share personal experiences and reflections on how climate and environmental change intersect with their everyday lives. The discussions highlighted the following:

- Environmental recovery during COVID-19: Participants reflected on the environmental changes observed during the COVID-19 period, including cleaner surroundings and the return of birds, such as flamingos, to some of their former habitats and lakes. These observations prompted reflections on the relationship between human activity and environmental degradation, and the need to reconsider how people interact with the natural environment.
- Climate grief among young people: Concerns were raised about increasing climate grief, anxiety and fatigue among young people. Constant exposure to information on climate change, including warnings about extreme events such as El Niño, can leave some young people overwhelmed and uncertain about the future. Participants noted that the proliferation of climate-related terminology and information can further contribute to this fatigue, creating a thin line between disengagement, apathy and hopelessness.
- Climate change and health: Personal experiences demonstrated the growing links between climate variability and physical and mental health. One participant shared their experience of developing atopic dermatitis associated with changes in climatic conditions, highlighting how such health impacts could become more frequent as climate extremes intensify. Discussions also explored the effects of extreme heat and cold on mental well-being, including seasonal depression, as well as the implications of poor indoor air quality. Particular concern was raised for vulnerable groups, including street vendors and others whose livelihoods require prolonged exposure to changing weather and environmental conditions.
- Yogic farming: Participants shared the example of Yogic Farming practised by Brahma Kumaris, which combines traditional organic farming practices with Rajyoga meditation. The approach seeks to channel positive mental energy towards crops, soil and water and has been practised on farms in countries including India, Japan and Italy.
- Climate change, pastoralist mobility and insecurity in Turkana: A deeply personal account from Turkana illustrated how climate change can intersect with existing insecurity and social vulnerabilities. One participant shared the loss of their father following pastoralist migration triggered by prolonged drought, during which he was attacked by bandits. The discussion further highlighted the heightened risks faced by women and girls, including sexual violence, as communities travel longer distances in search of water and other essential resources. These experiences demonstrated that the impacts of climate change extend beyond environmental and livelihood losses to issues of security, health, gender and human dignity.

Local Climate Lens: Mapping Priorities for the Nairobi Hub

The session provided participants with an opportunity to identify and discuss priority climate-related issues that could inform the focus and activities of the Nairobi Hub. Key priorities identified included:

- **Climate information, misinformation and communication:** Participants highlighted challenges related to access to reliable climate information, as well as the growing risk of misinformation and misinterpretation. There was a need to explore more accessible and unconventional approaches to climate information dissemination, particularly approaches that translate technical information into formats that communities can easily understand, relate to and use in decision-making.
- **Water scarcity and unequal climate impacts:** Water scarcity was identified as a major concern, particularly in drought-prone areas such as Kacheliba in West Pokot and parts of Turkana. Participants noted that the impacts of water scarcity are not experienced equally, with women and girls often bearing a disproportionate burden due to their roles in securing water for household use. This underscores the importance of considering gender and social inequalities when responding to climate-related water challenges.
- **Self-governance, preparedness and behavioural change:** Participants emphasized that climate resilience also requires individual and collective responsibility. Concerns were raised about practices such as dumping waste into drainage systems, including instances where drains that have recently been cleared or rehabilitated become clogged again through improper waste disposal. Behaviour-change campaigns, community awareness and stronger local/ community ownership were proposed as important approaches for encouraging responsible environmental practices and strengthening preparedness.
- **Waste management and supportive policy measures:** Waste management emerged as an important policy and environmental concern, particularly regarding plastics and difficult-to-manage waste such as used diapers and sanitary products. Participants discussed the need for stronger waste-management systems, alongside incentives that encourage responsible disposal and recycling. Examples such as deposit-return systems, where consumers receive a refund for returning beverage containers, were raised as possible approaches that could be explored or adapted to the local context.
- **Food access, food insecurity and food sovereignty:** Participants identified access to adequate, nutritious and affordable food as an increasingly important climate concern. Discussions extended beyond food availability to food sovereignty, including communities' ability to influence how food is produced, accessed and distributed. Strengthening resilient local food systems and supporting communities to maintain greater control over their food sources were highlighted as important areas for consideration.
- **Health and mental well-being:** The relationship between climate change and health was also identified as a priority. Beyond physical health impacts associated with extreme weather, pollution and changing environmental conditions, participants emphasized the need to recognise mental health impacts, including climate-related anxiety, stress, grief and uncertainty. Integrating mental health and psychosocial well-being into climate conversations was therefore highlighted as an important consideration for the Nairobi Hub.

Closing Circle: Seeds of commitment and Next Steps

The closing session provided participants with an opportunity to identify practical actions that could be taken forward through the Nairobi Hub. The following potential areas of action were identified:

1. Clean-up Initiative: Participants proposed organizing a community clean-up activity as one of the Hub's initial collective actions. Further planning will be undertaken to **identify a suitable location, develop communication and mobilization materials such as flyers and posters, and determine the stakeholders to involve**. Participants also emphasized the need to explore ways of making the initiative more innovative, impactful and sustainable beyond a one-off clean-up exercise. Potential partners could include local administration, churches and other faith-based organizations, relevant environment departments, and initiatives such as Green Anglicans.
2. Advocacy: The Hub will explore opportunities for joint advocacy around the priority climate and environmental issues identified during the meeting. This could include awareness creation, community engagement and engagement with relevant decision-makers to amplify local climate concerns and encourage action.
3. Decentralized Activities: Member organizations were encouraged to continue developing and implementing activities within the Hub's identified priority areas. Where appropriate, organizations can invite other Hub members to participate or collaborate, allowing activities to continue across different locations without requiring all initiatives to be centrally coordinated.
4. Hackathon: Participants proposed organizing a hackathon primarily targeting young people to provide a platform for developing innovative and practical solutions to identified climate and environmental challenges. The initiative could also provide an avenue for strengthening meaningful youth participation within the Hub.
5. Partnerships and Collaboration: The Hub will continue exploring strategic partnerships with organizations, institutions, government agencies, faith actors and other stakeholders whose work aligns with the identified priorities. Such partnerships could support knowledge sharing, resource mobilization, technical expertise and the implementation of joint initiatives.