

Africa bears an increasingly heavy burden from climate change and disproportionately high costs for essential climate adaptation, according to a new report from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). On average, African countries are losing 2–5 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and many are diverting up to 9 percent of their budgets responding to climate extremes. In sub-Saharan Africa, the cost of adaptation is estimated to be between US\$ 30-50 billion annually over the next decade, or 2-3 percent of the region's Gross Domestic Product.

By 2030, it is estimated that up to 118 million extremely poor people (living on less than US\$ 1.90 per day) will be exposed to drought, floods and extreme heat in Africa, if adequate response measures are not put in place. This will place additional burdens on poverty alleviation efforts and significantly hamper growth, according to figures cited in the report.

As highlighted in “The State of Climate in Africa 2023 Report”, African countries need to prioritize increased investment in National Meteorological and Hydrological Services and accelerate implementation of the “Early Warning For All Initiative” to prepare for escalating high-impact hazardous event - save lives and livelihoods. This will help mitigate risks, build adaptive capacity, boost resilience at local, national, and regional levels and guide sustainable development strategies. Aggressive public and private investments in Africa are needed to enhance data collection and improve forecasting capabilities in order to strengthen the ability of these institutions to issues early warnings and advisories for extremely events.

There is a particular need to invest in cutting-edge technologies and systems to enhance the accuracy and lead time of weather, climate, and hydrological forecasts. As the impacts of climate change continue to manifest globally, the African continent stands at a critical juncture.

