

**NAIROBI, KENYA**  
AUGUST 4-10, 2024



**GLOBAL CLIMATE REPARATIONS  
GOVERNANCE  
ASSEMBLY  
REPORT 2024**





# GLOBAL CLIMATE REPARATIONS GOVERNANCE ASSEMBLY REPORT 2024

ASSEMBLY AUGUST 4-10, 2024

REPORT PUBLISHED OCTOBER, 24, 2024

[\[Español\]](#) [\[Português\]](#) [\[Français\]](#) [\[اېب رڼا\]](#)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Rooted in a long history of liberation movements and struggles from the US South to the Global South, this assembly represents the culmination of over three years of work facilitating conversations and collective decisions with over 300 frontline partners on global climate reparations. Frontline leaders joined us from Senegal to Brazil to the US Gulf South to dance, laugh, and collaboratively set out a working statement for global climate reparations. This work was made possible through the dedication and work of the Global Facilitation Team, the intentional care of partners over the years, and the Taproot Earth Krewe and consultants energy and labor ensured that work was rooted in accountability, trust, and care at every level. Critically, the process, vision and statement within this document is the result of over 200 participants giving their time, leadership, and energy of their communities to the table in co-creation and collective governance. Together, we move toward the liberation horizon.

Peace,

**TAPROOT EARTH**



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# **GOVERNANCE ASSEMBLY REPORT 2024 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



# THE WORKING STATEMENT

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**[Global] Climate reparations** is the restoration of healthy and balanced relationships with all that comprise a shared global ecosystem. Reparative action begins with those who benefit most from the historic and current systems of oppression.

It requires the abolition of debt, restitution for injustice and the establishment of accountable systems rooted in Black and Indigenous liberation for all oppressed people and future generations.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Taproot Earth facilitated a Movement Governance Assembly of more than 200 leaders from global frontline communities in Nairobi, Kenya from August 4-10, 2024. Representatives from more than 22 countries participated in a collective process toward defining global climate reparations using the [People's Movement Assembly](#) process. This process, rooted in Southern Freedom, Black and Global South Liberation movements, established a working statement around global climate reparations that was affirmed by the global south participants.

## THE WORKING STATEMENT

**Developed at 2024 GCR Assembly**

[Global] Climate reparations is the restoration of healthy and balanced relationships with all that comprise a shared global ecosystem. Reparative action begins with those who benefit most from the historic and current systems of oppression. It requires the abolition of debt, restitution for injustice and the establishment of accountable systems rooted in Black and Indigenous liberation for all oppressed people and future generations.

## BACKGROUND

The Global Climate Reparations Movement Governance Assembly was facilitated by a Global Facilitation Team of 26 leaders from 12 countries. This process was facilitated and convened in partnership with significant local formations and leaders including: Lapid Leaders Africa, Sustainable Energy Access Forum-Kenya, Afrikki Movement, Africans Rising, ZanArts and Children's Environmental Health Network.

After the climate disaster flooded the informal settlements of Nairobi, killing hundreds and displacing thousands of people in Spring 2024, Taproot Earth, local partners and members of the global facilitation team made the collective decision to postpone the assembly for two months, from the original date in June to the new date in August. Both empathy and political solidarity, rooted in experiences of climate disasters surfaced a commitment to not add strain to local public services and infrastructure that otherwise should be focused on communities and their recovery.



## The Moment for Global Climate Reparations

As a result of this postponement, the Governance Assembly took place from August 4-10, 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya at the height of a climate recovery and political resistance movement that questioned the very existence of global financial systems and unaccountable governance. A powerful youth-led movement echoed across the world from Nairobi to West Africa to Bangladesh. The movement called for governance that is more accountable to the people, immediate abolition of debt and finance reform, and land justice for over one billion people continually displaced by extraction, neo-colonialism, and more frequent and extreme climate disasters.

Across the globe in 2024, from Gaza to Haiti and the Democratic Republic of Congo to Turtle Island, frontline peoples' struggles for land sovereignty, collective self-determination, freedom from authoritarianism, and the right to breathe clean air and freely access clean water acted as foundational roots for our movement.

This is the nexus and background for the Assembly and why a conversation on Global Climate Reparations is essential.

This current political and ecological moment mandates

- 1) the collective governance and stewardship of resources needed for life - including water, energy, and land
- 2) the redistribution and rebalancing relationships to resources (natural and financial)
- 3) support and advance the human right to remain, return, or migrate justly.

Rooted in Black liberation, Global Climate Reparations must be understood to be a set of acknowledgments and actions that stop and repair the legacy and current harms of colonialism, extraction, capitalism and anti-Blackness - all at the root of the global climate crisis. Climate reparations, therefore, is not narrowly about finances, but is more broadly and critically about power, governance, and culture. Climate reparations is about how we collectively steward our resources inside of a new climate reality. Climate reparations is a forward-looking vision for how we remake social, economic, and political systems in alignment with ecological justice and balance.

With the changes to global politics and to our climate, frontline communities continue to build collective





power and self-determination. Now is the time to create actionable strategies to return the resources for collective stewardship and governance so that people can exercise their right to remain or to migrate with care and dignity. Now is the time to create a reparative world so we can live, rest, and thrive in the places we love. We Choose Now to align and define global climate reparations at the frontlines.

### **Steps Towards the Movement Governance Assembly:**

While the Global Climate Reparations Movement Governance Assembly occurred over the course of a full week in Nairobi, the progress and work achieved in this space was built on centuries of resistance work led by frontline communities fighting against colonialism, capitalism, and imperialism. It is specifically grounded in the advancement of Black liberation and Indigenous sovereignty from the Gulf South in the US to the Global South within the context of a changing climate. Taproot Earth's own entrance into the conversation on global climate reparations is grounded in the impacts and outcomes of Hurricane Katrina in 2005.<sup>1</sup>

Leading up to the Assembly, Taproot facilitated three years of conversations to define and implement ways of repairing relationships with one another and with the earth. Foundational input came from frontline leaders, climate advocates, financial reform experts all working across borders and on the frontlines of climate impacts. Collectively examining the deep work and leadership of those who have come before and work beside us, it was affirmed that a definition of climate reparations must be created by the frontlines with Black and Indigenous liberation set by the people. The elements for this are rooted in accountability, repair, rebuilding, and redemption.

### **Goals & Outcomes of the Governance Assembly**

The goals of the Governance Assembly included:

1. Cultivate Vision & Define Global Climate Reparations;
2. Build Power through Relationships & Connection
3. Commit to move in alignment together.

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For all supporting documentation for this report, [refer to this folder](#) of notes, translations, and more.





## Goal 1: Cultivate Vision & Define Global Climate Reparations

### Outcomes Achieved

Through an intensive and intentional process, together participants came to a consensus to move forward a working statement on global climate reparations. Distilling over two-hundred ideas, values statements, and over 150 individual definitions of climate reparations, participants synthesized the following working statement to describe a broader understanding of global climate reparations:

**“Climate reparations is the restoration of healthy and balanced relationships with all that comprise a shared global ecosystem. Reparative action begins with those who benefit most from the historic and current systems of oppression. It requires the abolition of debt, restitution for injustice and the establishment of accountable systems rooted in Black and Indigenous liberation for all oppressed people and future generations.”**

### Important Recommendations: Creating a unified definition

**Language Justice:** The need for deeper and more robust conversations grounded in language justice to ensure that concepts are not only translated accurately, but that people have a full participation and inclusion in the understanding and meaning of a shared definition.

**Preamble:** Participants pointed to the need for deeper conversations and relationship-building around shared challenges and solutions to help frame why climate reparations are critical to their own communities’ vision as well as a global movement.

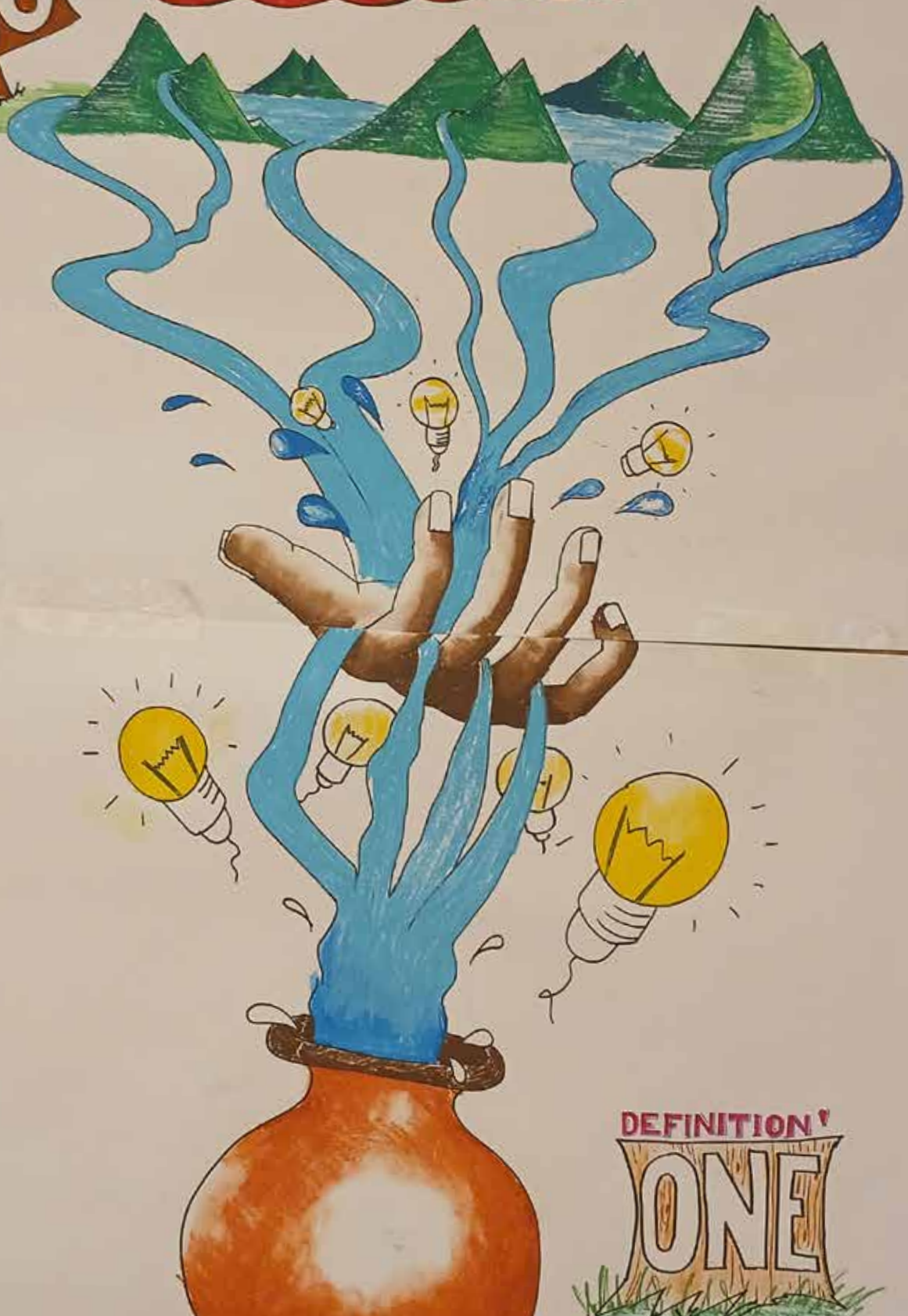
**Convene & Converge:** Participants named the need to get into details for how this could actually happen and what the steps are for the values to be implemented with accountability and structure. More time and space to build out the mechanism to implement this vision.



# GLOBAL CLIMATE

## REPARATIONS

PARTICIPANTS  
**250**







## Goal 2: Build Power through Relationships & Connection

### Outcome Achieved

From the opening to the closing activities, participants of the Movement Governance Assembly connected within and across regions and languages to deepen connections and grounding in our power and building relationships towards collective efforts.

**Welcoming as a Collective Community:** Elder Wahu of the Mau Mau Rebellion welcomed everyone home, grounded us in the power of resistance against injustice, and invited us to realize that this is the moment to choose our path. Introduced by a cadre of women drummers from the region, Elder Wahu opened the evening with a definition for climate reparations that helped shape the three days;

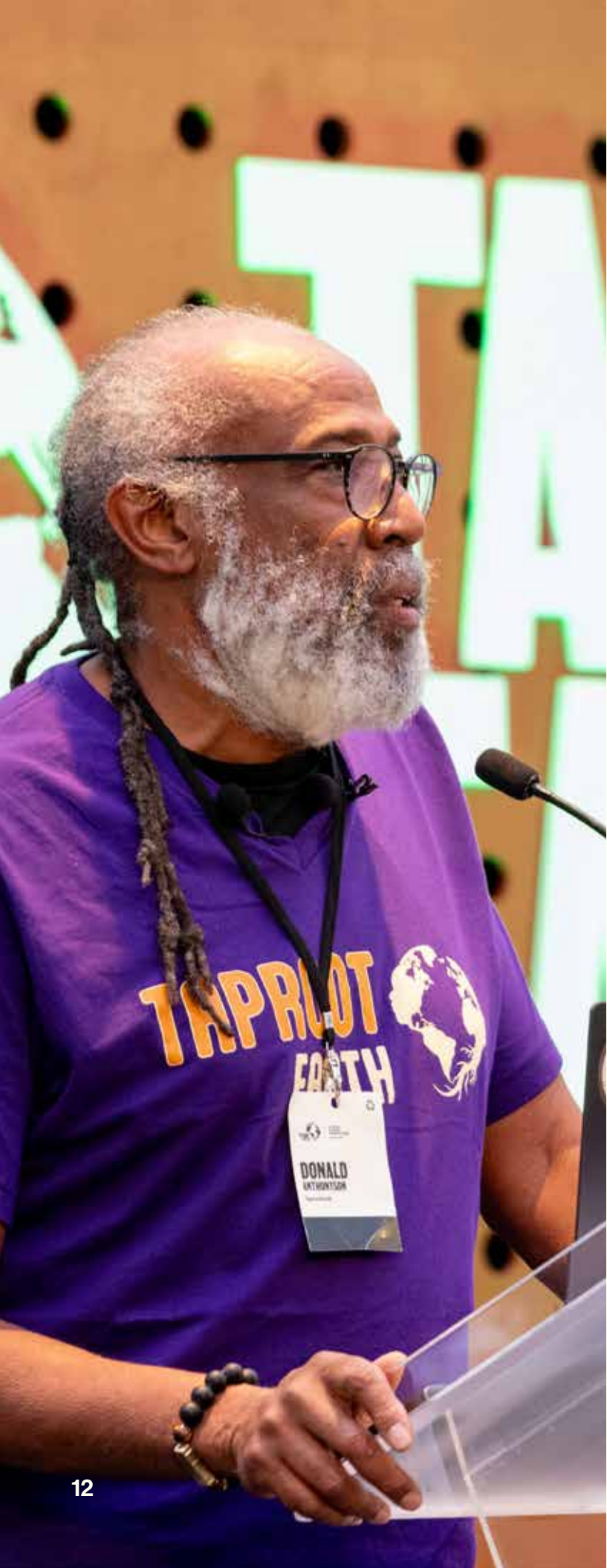
**Share Testimony of Liberation movements in Kenya and Beyond:** Frontline leaders in Kenya provided testimony, witness to fallen comrades and shared the inspiration from other leaders in this political moment to move people in solidarity with the people of Kenya.

**Build within and across identities, regions, and affinities:** Partners connected within affinity sessions and spaces to share stories, struggles, and strategies. These included: Black Women & Black Femme Identified, Black Men, Generation Next (Gen Z), and self-organized spaces.

**Work across difference of region, language, and experience toward a collectively created definition and shared vision:** While all participants contributed to the working statement, over 50 frontline leaders actively participated and shaped the synthesis processes to develop the working statement, sharing stories of challenges and solutions; and working to align key concepts, language and vision rooted in the power of possibility with intentionality, determination, and care;

**Inform and shape the agenda in real-time to address issues raised by engaged participants and shifting context:** Participants shaped the agenda and shifted pieces of work to ground us more in accountability to language justice and regional concerns.





## **Goal 3 : Establish a commitment to move in alignment together.**

### **Important Recommendations: Moving Forward**

Together, frontline participants offered clear recommendations on how to build and strengthen these processes going forward, including:

- Offer time and tools for participants to reflect and process the intellectual, emotional and spiritual work of the assembly;
- Continue gathering after the assembly using technology and virtual convenings;
- Deepen conversations around perceptions of reparations and continue to refine the statement into a useful definition for frontline advocacy;
- Continue conversation on the purpose and scope of defining global climate reparations distinct but supportive of reparations for the trans Atlantic slave trade, unpaid wages during slavery, remedy for state violence and other initiatives focused on repair;
- Build out political education resources and training to support deepening the understanding of the context for global climate reparations in communities and movement formations;
- Ensure that the definition for Global Climate Reparations not only translates across contexts & geographies of specific languages, but also at a deeper level that ensures full inclusion across language and culture;
- Build out a collective movement glossary of key terms that allow for alignment and power building.



## Goal 3 : Establish a commitment to move in alignment together.

### Key Commitments Elevated by Participants

Frontline leaders from 22 countries offered clear commitments to move forward in alignment, including:

- Bring the global climate reparations working statement back to communities through regional gatherings and smaller assemblies;
- Gather to Brazil (2025) at or around the global climate talks and intentionally connect with frontline led movements in South America and Central America and the Caribbean.
- Implement the statement into local political education curriculum and toolkits;
- Build out definitions and mechanisms to ensure that global climate reparations happens and gets to the people;
- Integrate key values and concepts into culture and the arts as part of movement strategy;
- Bring the global climate reparations statement to various meetings, conferences, and sessions already taking place (including Climate Week NYC, UNFCCC/COP, women's conferences, church meetings);
- Incorporate the concept of global climate reparations into storytelling, bringing in children's input and vision;
- Incorporate ideas from rural and pastoral communities for deeper inclusion on the impacts of the climate crisis;
- Improve language justice - specifically the "meaning behind the words" - for translation to ensure that the statement meets the intended impact;
- Use the working statement on global climate reparation as a foundational reference tool to advance justice-based legislation, negotiations, and policy.







## OVERALL FLOW AND PROCESS

The Global Climate Reparations Governance Assembly was a practice in building collective governance and decision-making at a time in history where democracy is being challenged globally. Using the Peoples Movement Assembly process rooted in Southern Black Freedom and Global South Liberation movements and a standard of consensus-building, key elements of our governance assembly process included:

1. Grounding and integrating culture and the political and resistance history of place;
2. Using frontline experiences of struggle and challenge to build trust and connection;
3. Cultivating alignment through the shared creation of vision and solutions rooted in frontline wisdom, and power;
4. Facilitating and advancing collective decisions and shared process;
5. Making commitments to advance and implement shared values and collective decisions - namely, the working statement on global climate reparations.

Like tributaries of a river flowing into an ocean, the flow of the agenda for the assembly was designed to build

consensus around a collective solution for climate reparations, out of more than 200 realities and visions for a better world.

The days were designed to create space for participants to share their own experiences, see connections across communities, and to identify where there is commonality and alignment on solutions. The agenda was created to be emergent and flexible enough to change in real-time, able to shift based on people's feedback, energy, and ideas - which happened throughout the entire week-long process.

As with many other movement assemblies, the gathering was neither static nor was it devoid of political perspectives, realities or cultural celebrations. Woven throughout the four days were shared perspectives and celebrations of political leaders like Amilcar Cabral, Ana Maria Cabral and their daughter Ndira Cabral. Brigadier of the Mau Mau warriors spoke of the role and work for liberation and leaders of current struggles for pan-Africanism, Black and Indigenous liberation brought us their voices through drumming, street theater and song. In addition to these political conversations, the assembly was anchored by culture and love.

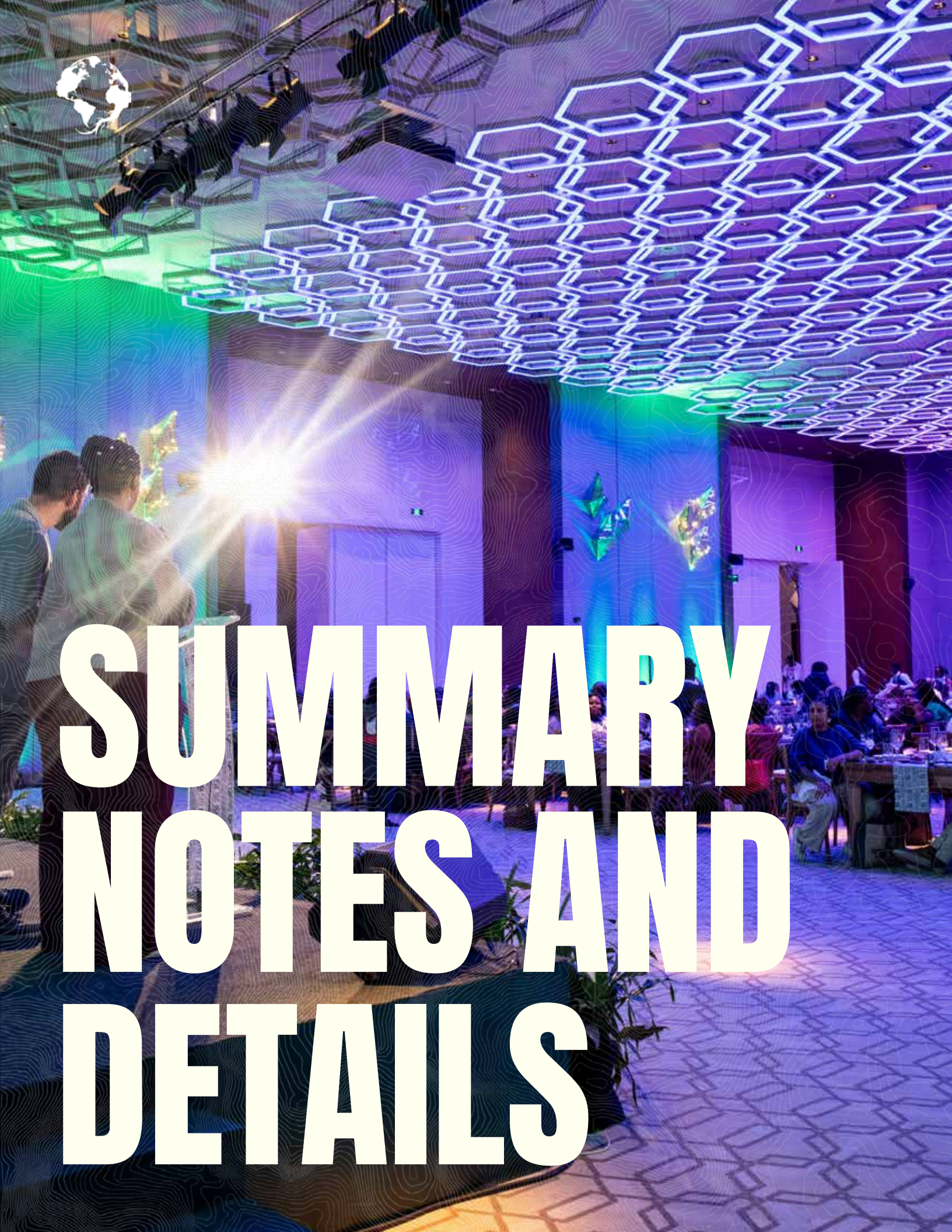




Throughout the entire process, participants practiced moving together - using collectively created choreography inspired by Taproot Earth's pillars of climate justice: water, energy, and land. The opening and consensus sessions were set with sacred drumming. Poetry and song were offered sharing celebration of history, culture, and truth.







# SUMMARY NOTES AND DETAILS





## Monday, August 4th

### Theme and Arc: Welcoming

Before communicating to each other with words, the Governance Assembly opened through the drumming rhythm of our souls and bodies calling in the past, present, and future generations. We gathered in community to physically move in alignment with each and sacred drumming before proceeding into a week of conversation, learning, and strategy.

We were welcomed by the love and power of Elder Wahu Kaara, a movement leader of the Mau Mau Rebellion and Ester Mwaniki, Foundrof Lapid Leaders who grounded us in the history of Kenya. Grounding us in a deeper political history of Kenya, Elder Wahu challenged the room to acknowledge the time is now and the moment is here to create our own path to the future. Esther reminded the room that the work for justice is like a marathon, it requires a clear goal, a steady and consistent pace, and persistence and determination to move through challenges and struggles.

As we closed the evening, we were gifted a definition of global climate reparations by Elder Wahu, which helped shape and frame the conversations for the rest of the week

### Global Climate Reparations defined by Elder Wahu Kaara:

“Economic emancipation. We must have sovereignty [over] our resources. [Global] Climate Reparations mean not only to be paid back but also having sovereignty [over] our resources. We must be the ones to decide, and we are beginning by saying no to the extraction of natural resources. We say no to slavery, we say no to colonialism, we say no to imperialism.”





## Tuesday, August 5th

**Theme and Arc: Grounding in Kenya and Black Liberation, Connecting through struggle and power, and identifying elements of climate reparations that are alive in each person and community.**

### Grounding in Kenya & Political History

#### **Brian Omenyi, Sustainable Energy Access Forum Kenya (SEAF-K)**

Brian began our day with an insightful overview of the political situation and movement taking shape in Kenya. In the weeks leading up to the Governance Assembly, Generation Z had taken to the streets to challenge a proposed finance bill that would burden an already economically strained population, rallying under the hashtag #EndBadGovernance. Despite facing harsh and violent resistance—resulting in over 40 protesters being killed or going missing—the movement achieved significant victories. These included concessions from the government and inspiring young people worldwide, from Nigeria to Bangladesh, to join in the struggle for justice. In this context, Brian called for a stronger sense of Global Solidarity and Unity in the fight against

imperialism, which is enforced through debts imposed by the International Monetary Fund, other global financial institutions, and the American government.

#### **Donald Anthonyson, Taproot Earth**

Donald provided valuable historical and political context for our work today by reflecting on the struggles for Black Liberation across the diaspora and drawing lessons for our current fight for Global Climate Reparations. He highlighted that while the Haitian Revolution is often celebrated as a pivotal moment in Black Liberation, Haiti was forced to repay debts imposed by Europe from the time of its liberation in 1804 until 1947. This pattern of exploitation has been replicated by new global financial institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Donald also put forward a definition of Liberation as “the act of getting free from or getting free of.” Inspired by Elder Wahu and Esther Mwaniki, and drawing on the teachings of Pan-African revolutionaries like Kwame Nkrumah and Amilcar Cabral, he emphasized the importance of being clear about our goals and ensuring we protect our victories against betrayal and maintain our vision for Black liberation.





### **Orienting to Power - Landscape Assessment**

In this session, we had the opportunity to move into Breakout Groups to connect across geographies and build out a collective assessment of what we're up against across our contexts.



## Synthesis from Breakout Groups

### 1. Who controls natural resources in your community?

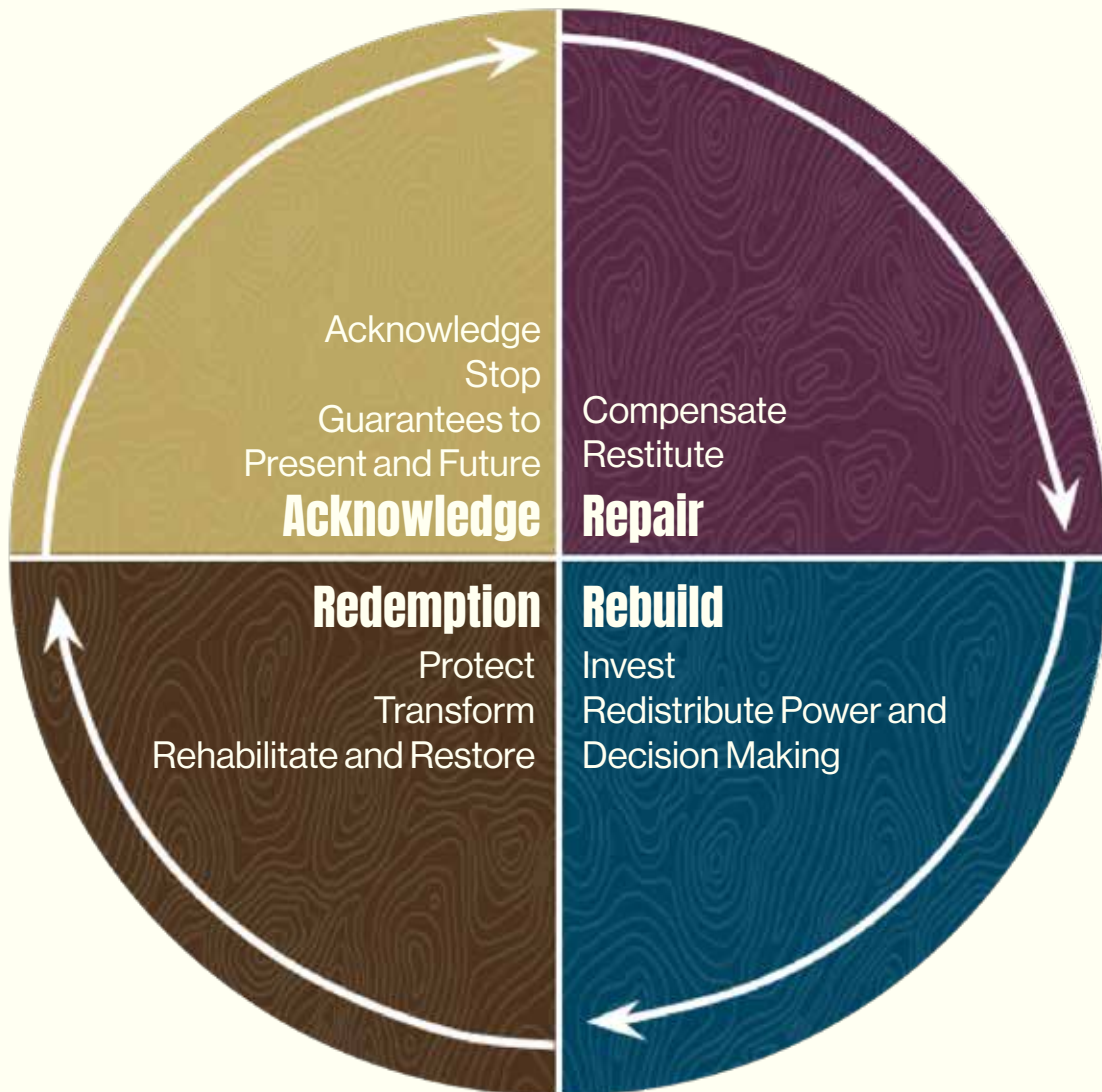
- What was evident across our discussions was that our communities, organizations, and people harmed by the climate crisis and environmental degradation were not the ones making decisions about natural resources. Instead, groups cited the following as having control over natural resources:
  - **Corporations & Private Investors**
  - **Foreign Powers** (e.g., former and new colonial powers)
  - **Governments** that are corrupt and serve the interests of foreign powers and corporations, not their communities
  - The **Political class and Economic Elites**,

### 2. How can your community hold and maintain wins on liberation and economic freedom?

- **Educating Communities** about issues impacting them is emphasized
- **Establishing Community Meetings** to promote discussion informed participation for and Self-Determination
- Leaning into **youth leadership** and gaining political power to protect community control of resources reflect a focus on strategic political engagement and advocacy.
- Civic and political education to understand the political economy are crucial for building effective resistance and movements. This includes documenting victories and lessons learned to educate future generations.
- The need to **decolonize systems and government structures** to enable effective self-governance and economic independence is mentioned.
- Communities need to **control their resources** and recognizing resources as power underscores the importance of local autonomy and self-management.







## Four Elements of Global Climate Reparations

Taproot Earth shared a framework for Global Climate Reparations around 4 core elements: accountability, repair, rebuild, and redemption. These elements were commonly identified in academic, governmental, and community definitions of reparations and climate action. These elements were offered in the session to build upon the work already done and to provide some tangible anchors and a collective orientation for people to think through what climate reparations could be.

During this activity, we broke into table discussion to reflect on the following questions (below). For each question, participants were given a corresponding card/color. All answers were captured in put into a word cloud to see which elements were critical for inclusion in a definition for Global Climate Reparations



# Discussion Questions & Responses

Yellow: What is the one value needed for accountability?



Green: What does repair look like in your community?





**Blue: What is one value needed for rebuilding to happen in your community?**







## Global Facilitation Team Synthesis Team Round 1

Before the program ended, one final prompt was given to participants: "My definition of Global Climate Reparations is..." Using the mentimeter technology, over 120 responses were captured and then synthesized by members of the Global Facilitation Team

After the official session, members of the Global Facilitation Team met to review all written and submitted responses from the day and began to prioritize core elements that needed to be included in a collective definition for Global Climate Reparations. The team put forward a first draft of the definition for the assembly participants to review and build from on the following day.





## Wednesday, August 6th

**Theme and Arc: Moving from many definitions and ideas to one collective definition and building relationships within affinities and identities.**

In the morning, we shared three different definitions that had been synthesized from different definitions and ideas that people shared on Tuesday. The three definitions were as follows:

**Option 1:** Global climate reparations mandates governments and corporations return the stolen resources to communities to collectively self-determine how to restore, regenerate, and repair the injustice and damage caused by colonization and the extractive economy towards black liberation and ecological balance.

**Option 2:** Global Climate Reparations roots in Black liberation to redeem the sovereignty of people, repair our ecosystems, and rebuild our economies and communities, to abolish extractive systems of governance and control.

**Option 3:** Pay us back. Return the land. Leave us alone.

### Morning Session: Collectively Defining Global Climate Reparations

**Overview:** In the morning session, the Global Facilitation Team shared out the synthesized definitions of Global Climate Reparations which participants were able to collectively unpack during breakout sessions

In four breakout groups, participants reflected on the following:

- What words and concepts were essential in the definition?
- Which words didn't work?
- Which words did they have questions about?

The notes captured from this session were carried into the Afternoon Synthesis Session held by members of the Global Facilitation Team and participants of the Governance Assembly.





## Afternoon Synthesis Session

First round of synthesis - taking what was discussed in the morning breakouts and weaving into a definition to put forward to the larger group, over 20 leaders from Ethiopia, Zambia, Nigeria, Ireland, Columbia, Ghana, Italy, Kenya, Uganda, Cape Verde, Liberia, US (Turtle Island) came together to put forward our first synthesized definition of Global Climate Reparations.

### Round 1: Core Elements to Define Global Climate Reparations

- **Step 1:** The Synthesis Team reviewed the notes from the morning's Breakout Sessions. Looking across all of the pages, we did a go-round identifying the top 2 elements that were underlined across the sessions. These words were captured in Blue.
- **Step 2:** We repeated the process, this time naming top 2 elements of a definition that the breakout groups wanted to strike from the definition. These words were captured in Red.
- **Step 3:** In a final go-round, our go-round lifted up the top 2 elements that groups had questions about

or proposed changing. These words were captured in Green.

- **Step 4:** We placed the new flip charts with the core elements on the ground. First taking a look at the words and elements that there was agreement to remove.
- Elements With Clear Consensus to Remove: "Apology" & "Abolish the Nation-State"

### Round 2: Synthesized Definitions for Global Climate Reparations

- **Step 1:** Now, get in groups of 3. Look at values, words, virtues and write a definition as a group of 3 that uses the words in blue (underlined); and does not use words in red (strike) ie. apology and abolish the nation state.
- **Step 2:** Breaking into groups of 3, created a definition.
- **Step 3:** Combine two groups, put definitions together.
- **Step 4:** We put forward three definitions for Global Climate Reparations side-by-side - seeing what was similar and different. Essential words and concepts to carry across all of them.



# GLOBAL CLIMATE REPARATIONS IS...

These three definitions were then consolidated into one final definition by four members of the Global Facilitation Team in order to share a consolidated version to the full room.

*catalyze **systems** change that will culminate in an effective sovereignty of our states, decolonization of minds for equal allocation and distribution of resources advancing inclusion of Black and Indigenous people in the economic system.*

is a transformative **system** that restores **sovereignty**, community, & Black Liberation and provides *acknowledgement* of harm while exhibiting accountability through debt cancellation and the redistribution of [wealth vs. resources vs. water, energy land?]... preservation of culture without being forced to assimilate.

*Reclaiming political and economic **sovereignty** (OR collective self determination) of the people through **systemic** transformation and decolonization to pursue restorative justice and emancipation with a commitment to accountability, healing and regeneration of [ecosystems] human communities in the web of life for present and future generations.*



# DRAFT #2 GLOBAL CLIMATE REPARATIONS IS...

Global Climate Reparations heals and restores the human relationship to one another and our shared ecosystems. It acknowledges and repairs past harms, reclaims self-determination and decolonizes political and economic systems to advance sovereignty and liberation taking a committed stand to repair and build accountable systems rooted in Black and Indigenous liberation for present and future generations.





## Practice: Decolonizing Space to Build Consensus

Colonized processes and spaces often lead to reactionary responses, mental analysis, and decisions devoid of spirit, context, and community. With efforts to lean into decolonial and feminist approaches towards the assessment of collective work, we had to ready the space for a holistic review of the working statement.

Consensus and collective decision-making can often be a sacred process rooted in ritual and energy. Identifying for consensus requires people to move beyond their head and into the heart and soul. To set the space for right intention and energy, we opened the consensus through powerful and intuitive African drumming and integrated our pillar (water, energy, and land) dances to help people move through tensions.

The following process was used ready the space for consensus:

1. We grounded the space intentionally drumming true to the indigenous culture for 10 minutes to create a space of sacredness, energy, and focus.

2. We introduced the process for consensus (see below) and then we invited drumming for a few more minutes

3. We read and projected the draft definition out loud and on the screen for all to hear and sit with - three times.

4. We then invited drumming again to let people sit with what they read and heard.

5. We read and projected the draft definition again and reintroduced the process of consensus.

6. We assessed for consensus (see below).

7. After each round - we invited Movement Makers to provide us with instruction on dance rooted in the pillars of climate justice so that our bodies would move through the contradictions, tensions, and challenges that people felt in their reaction to the definition, but also to embrace the joy, celebration, and affirmation that people felt in the definition.

A similar process was repeated again on the next day (Thursday).





## Consensus Process

To Assess for Consensus, we moved forward with a Hold to Five Process.

Responding to the question: “Do you agree with this definition?,” participants used their hands to indicate their position while the Global Facilitation Team flanked the room to scan for any 1s or 2s, which would indicate that we needed to pause the process. There were several in the room so we paused and opened for discussion.

### First Assessment for Consensus 1s and 2s

What questions need to be answered or changes need to be made to move to a 4 or Higher?

- Defining Black and Black Liberation
  - Trying to incorporate everything to Black and POC but have we defined this?
  - Black is a bit limiting - trying to define global climate reparations - with global it should be inclusive - emphasizing the need of black vs other minorities

- Black liberation is limiting - let people decide what they are.
- “Universal human liberation”
- What about a timeline - where is demand to stop now with extractive and harmful practices?
- What about the person who has caused harm who is living today – who is it? Maybe not asking the right question of the source or harm? Who is the root?
- Who caused suffering or harm. There is no justice. Aspects of justice are good - add. They need to be punished.
- Decolonizing which political and economic system? Existing political and economic system should be emphasized and deconstructed.
- Treating this as a human issue - but the climate crisis is a problem for humanity and all living species
- Heals and restores a healthy & balanced human relationship



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# Reflections Across the Diaspora on Black Liberation

## Do we need to see Black Liberation and Indigenous Sovereignty in our definition for Global Climate Reparations?

**New Orleans, LA** - I hear what everyone is saying. Coming to you as a Black American with African roots - I understand the difference in philosophy. Black Liberation is important to me, because I look at the existence of my people's existence - there is still harm being done in this room. Should we be excluded as Black people? Excluding this is not an option. Know and understand the reparations - Blacks are the only ones not given reparations. Other races are allowed in. Ex: not in the U.S. Realize it is constantly excluded because of the color of our skin.

**Unknown:** While I understand and fully support all racial minorities. Let's not get to the point of generalizing. Minorities have different experiences. See my color and identity in the definition. Are you in support of Black liberation or not – Yes, and also add other racial minorities\*. (\*Discussion Point: We (Black people) are not the global minority in numbers. We may have to come up with another way to identify)

**Congo:** I did not want to be emotional. I am in agreement that we keep the notion of Black liberation, this is one of the only ways to acknowledge the problem - white supremacy. Don't take BL out. Should be an acknowledgement of concern. Agreement in entirety. Perhaps there is a need for an explanation before definition.

**Mali** - This is not food for thought - Black liberation and indigenous sovereignty is a fact. Black people are on the frontlines now. Rate of GHG and those who suffer from CC, you know the fact. Brother from Congo - multinationals from the west exploit. In Africa, everyone remembers 1970s fights carried out by Elf Petro. Niger Delta - remember. Media belongs to the same fellows. Let's look problems in the eye and lay groundwork for Black and Indigenous peoples. They are victims of the effects of climate change. Presumption - to say Black

and Indigenous is to exclude others. We have to explore this philosophy.

**Brazil** - Philosophical model - definition was created and also linguistic matter because in the PR - there is a matter of translation. Negro is not necessarily Black. Our translation includes all of the minorities. United fight between us and Indigenous peoples. Ancestors were enslaved - and this has shown us how enslaved we are. So we need to have this liberation. Translation - any human relationship. Brazil - already includes animals and nature. For instance, we need a better relationship between humans and nature. Not sure if it's a matter of language. This definition needs to be translated in many languages. A political identity is different from physical identity. In addition to context, we need to define who we're talking about.

**Kenya:** Support BL. Blackness as political - less interested in explanation of Black liberation at the surface and more interested in getting to the point on what's the political point of talking about this. What does Black liberation mean? What has it meant for those in the past and us today? It's important to get it right today. Don't align with all Black - no Black imperialism and those that exploit Black people.

**Ghana:** Look in room - who is here? Those here have something in common. It's common suffering that's been created by a system which continues today. We are trying to find a way to liberate ourselves so we can move forward. We are also here supporting our communities. Are we here to make a general definition for everyone or one to help us free ourselves so we can take our place in the world?

**Antigua and Barbuda:** No more apologies for being Black. We need our place in society as Black people. If you have a problem with us saying that we are Black people, you should not be here. Black is here to stay and not just be a silent voice - starting it in Africa. Black will no longer be just a minority. Indigenous means people who are to a land - can be Black or Brown. Maybe we need a political definition of Black.





## Evening Synthesis Session

Reflecting on the feedback from the earlier assessment, the process required another round of synthesis to reflect and incorporate the direct feedback that was named as it related to the definition. At this third synthesis session, over 40 participants joined 8 members of the Global Facilitation to incorporate the day's feedback.

### **The critical items that identified by participants in the assessment included:**

- Specific about action
- Timeline
- Justice
- Acknowledging past harms and movements, struggles, movements that got us to this place and the solidarities that are needed - Speak to the context of solidarity and movements - reparations also means engaging with development/economic systems - what does the future look like
- Action
- Human relationship - specifically the relationship between african people across the diaspora

- Inclusive
- Vulnerable and frontline comes somewhere else - black and indigenous liberation is central to vision

During this two-hour session, participants discussed and deliberated suggestions to incorporate the ideas above. A unique aspect of this synthesis session was a healthy practice of group accountability with each other. For example, in addressing concerns around acknowledging harm, some participants offered up words or phrases that were "crossed out" in earlier sessions and other participants and facilitators named this challenge and countered with a different option. In addition, this synthesis process also elevated additional considerations that could not be reflected in the definition because it was not raised in the broader room, but were brought into the facilitation agenda on Thursday.





Some of the additional ideas that were raised and documented for Thursday's agenda and beyond included:

- Conversations around how climate reparations can be implemented - specifically around the value of transparent governance;
- A call for a manifesto and preamble to allow for people to speak the truths and context of their communities so the definition can live beyond a paper;
- More time for regional sharing and power-building assemblies in order to create more space to test the ideas in the definition with community;
- More time and intentional space to communicate in non-English dominant languages so that the process can move with better inclusion and words can be more adequately discussed and considered in different languages.

At the end of the synthesis session, which participants affirmed as a good direction, members of the Global Facilitation Team provided light grammatical edits to finalize the second definition.

## **The third definition shared over WhatsApp in English that evening (and again on Thursday):**

**[Global] climate reparations is the restoration of healthy and balanced relationships with all that comprise a shared global ecosystem. Reparative action begins with those who benefit most from the historic and current systems of oppression. It requires the abolition of debt, restitution for injustice and the establishment of accountable systems rooted in Black and Indigenous liberation for all oppressed people and future generations.**





## Thursday, August 8th

**Theme and Arc: Affirming our collective work and identifying critical next steps and commitments we can take to build alignment around the collective vision created.**

### Draft #3: Global Climate Reparations

[Global] Climate reparations is the restoration of healthy and balanced relationships with all that comprise a shared global ecosystem. Reparative action begins with those who benefit most from the historic and current systems of oppression. It requires the abolition of debt, restitution for injustice and the establishment of accountable systems rooted in Black and Indigenous liberation for all oppressed people and future generations.

## Lessons Learned: Creating Space for Language Justice

Coming into our final day of the Governance Assembly, we wanted to be clear with the room around our

limitations with Language Justice from the inception. Due to this, we wanted to slow down the process and create space for leaders who did not speak English as a primary language to have space to offer feedback on our definition of Global Climate Reparations. Sometimes you have to slow these processes down.

## Key Reflections from this Discussion

- Shorter sentences would make this easier to understand.
- The definition does not yet capture all expressions of the fight. This could be captured in a manifesto, preamble or context setting statement.
- There is a need to ensure a clear element of justice in the definition.

### Grounding for Global Climate Reparations

As we prepared to move into the second and final consensus session for the draft definition, members of the Global Facilitation Team offered a broader context for the opportunity of Creating and Advancing a shared definition for Global Climate Reparations in 2024.





## **Muhammed Lamin Saiddykhan: Working Draft at COP29 in November 2024.**

Lamin provided a rousing agitation to participants about a full definition or at least a “working draft” of Global Climate Reparations given key convenings happening in the coming months, including the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP29) in Baku Azerbaijan set for November 2024. These global climate talks are a moment where global state leaders representing governments and capital markets will be part of the prioritized agenda item of Climate Finance and addressing calls for climate reparations. Several participants from the Movement Governance Assembly plan to attend and there is a critical opportunity to bring forward a broader definition of global climate reparations as created by the climate frontlines. The advocacy opportunity would be to ensure that Black and Indigenous leaders’ voices guide and direct the conversation.

## **Vanessa Nakate: Now Is the Time for Global Climate Reparations**

Vanessa emphasized the urgency of creating a definition for Global Climate Reparations, drawing on her five years of climate activism in Uganda. Highlighting the devastating consequences of the climate crisis on frontline communities, sharing stories of preventable loss and damage from Turkana County, illustrating the severe obstacles in accessing basic needs in a changing climate crisis. The global climate conversation currently lacks representation and influence from frontline communities, while Black communities suffer the most despite contributing the least to global emissions. Extractive industries are not wasting time, and neither can the frontlines. We cannot allow Climate Reparations to be defined by a Eurocentric movement.

## **Taysha DeV Vaughan: Defining Reparations in Comanche Nation**

Speaking from her own experiences in building definitions, Taysha suggested that a definition doesn’t need to be overly complex or include every detail. Instead, it can be straightforward and still convey intricate ideas. In her work with the Comanche Nation, they sought reparations as part of the larger Land Back Movement. They developed a definition of “landback” that reflects their matriarchal culture and values, calling it “Rematriation.” Rematriation was very succinctly defined as “restoring a people to their rightful place and their sacred connection to ancestral land” which is achieved through indigenous, women-led stewardship of the land.



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## A Second Assessment for Consensus

Once more, we moved through the First to Five Consensus Process on our updated definition of Global Climate Reparations. Most of the room held up 4s and 5s but with three 2s in the room, we were unable to move forward with a definition but instead there was consensus to move forward with a Working Draft of Global Climate Reparations.

## Commitments

### Where do we go from here?

The work doesn't end at the Governance Assembly! From this point we moved into Breakout Groups Based on Language where are leaders were able to collectively respond to the following questions (with synthesized responses):

What are the suggestions you have for the next steps of this process together?

- **Time to Process:** Important to take a step back to reflect and process on the work from this week. We can return to this with a fresh perspective
- **Virtual Convening:** After processing, we could come back together and build deeper clarity around the purpose and scope of this definition (compared reparations for slavery, for example) Taking this Back to Our Communities: Regional gatherings
- **Understanding the Context for GCR:** Building out resources that address the political history, how we got here, and the power that has been built through our work to advance GCR
- **Language Justice:** Ensuring that the definition translates across contexts & geographies of specific languages
- **Creating a Dictionary/Glossary:** A resource like this can help us guarantee that we all have a shared understanding of the concepts (and their contexts) used in the definition



Do you plan to use this working definition in your work? If yes, how and where do you plan to use it?

- Bringing this into Brazil for COP30 and making this big. Linking up with movements on the continent Implement the statement into curriculum and toolkits;
- Work on building out definitions and mechanisms to ensure that reparations happens and gets to the people
- Integrate this into dance, culture, and the arts
- Bring this back to various meetings, conferences, and sessions that are already taking place (including Climate Week, COP, Women's Conferences, Church meetings)
- Incorporate this into storytelling and and bringing this to children for their input and vision Incorporate ideas from rural and pastoral communities for deeper inclusion on the impacts of the climate crisis
- Improve language justice - specifically the "meaning behind the words" for translation to ensure that the statement meets the intended impact
- Use as a reference tool for legislation, negotiations, and other policy matters



# THE WORKING STATEMENT

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**[Global] Climate reparations** is the restoration of healthy and balanced relationships with all that comprise a shared global ecosystem. Reparative action begins with those who benefit most from the historic and current systems of oppression.

It requires the abolition of debt, restitution for injustice and the establishment of accountable systems rooted in Black and Indigenous liberation for all oppressed people and future generations.

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# APPENDICES





## Appendix 1: Resource & Grounding Documents

Building upon past learnings and convenings, Taproot Earth convened and facilitated strategic sessions on global climate reparations, specifically as it relates to Black liberation from 2021 - 2024). A broader overview of the last three years of work can be found here. The synthesis of these learnings shows that climate reparations should:

- 1. Redistribution of Power.** Decision-making processes and systems must change in order for frontline communities to have self-determination in their own futures.
- 2. Eradicate all Debt and End neocolonial greenwashing.** Advance complete debt cancelation and an end to climate colonialism, greenwashing, and carbon market schemes that continue to harm the most impacted;
- 3. Build new models of community governed climate justice finance.** Cultivate new community governed models of global finance to redistribute resources, specifically investing in the Black

diaspora that can be an alternative to current climate and global financial systems;

**4. Create Opportunities for redemption, repair, and accountability.** We must hold accountable the actors at the root causes (colonialism and land theft, anti-Blackness, capitalism, and fossil extraction) of the climate crisis. Raised during our sessions included: the Catholic Church, the European Crowns, and Global North (US) corporations.

**5. Challenge Political Borders.** Build relationships that challenge political borders and end border politics and laws that impinge on human rights and rights of nature.

**6. Practice the collective stewardship** of resources that go beyond border walls and lines: (water, energy, and land);

**7. Support the human right to remain or migrate** with dignity in the face of the climate crisis;

**8. Advance a culture and narrative rooted in shared liberation,** power, joy, and collective possibility over extraction, individualism, fear, and anti-blackness.

## Appendix 2: Critical Documents of Reference

In our collective work, we have referenced multiple documents and leaders that have come before and alongside us. These included:

1. [People's Agreement of Cochabamba](#),
2. [M4BL's Reparation Toolkit](#),
3. [Movement Generation Just Transition](#) framework, and
4. and the [Global Campaign to Demand Climate Justice](#).

The following are links and top-level overview of definitions and frameworks that specifically address reparations and climate reparations that should be considered.





## Current Academic and International Definitions

### Dr. Maxine Burkett, [Climate Reparations](#)

Climate reparations is the effort to assess the harm caused by the past emissions of the major polluters and to improve the lives of the climate vulnerable through direct programs, policies and/or mechanisms for significant resource transfers, to assure the ability of the climate vulnerable to contemplate a better livelihood in light of future climate challenges.

### Dr. Olufemi Taiwo, [Reconsidering Reparations](#)

Climate reparations are better understood as a systemic approach to redistributing resources and changing policies and institutions that have perpetuated harm—rather than a discrete exchange of money or of apologies for past wrongdoing. Climate reparations are about worldmaking as it were. We must acknowledge that the climate crisis is rooted in a global racial empire of extraction - this extraction has oppressed and made vulnerable the Global South and Black and Indigenous peoples of the Global North - over generations and centuries - creating a series of disadvantages that must be addressed.

### The United Nations Office of High Commission of Human Rights, [Reparations](#)

- 1. Cessation**, Assurances and Guarantees of non-repetition: Under international law, a state responsible for wrongfully injuring a people “is under an obligation to a) “cease the act if it is continuing, and, b) offer appropriate assurances and guarantees of non-repetition...”
- 2. Restitution & Reparation**, which should restore the victim to their original situation before the violation occurred, e.g. restoration of liberty, reinstatement of employment, return of property, return to one's place of residence.
- 3. Compensation**, which should be provided for any economically accessible damage, loss of earnings, loss of property, loss of economic opportunities, moral damages.
- 4. Rehabilitation**, which should include medical and psychological care, legal and social services.
- 5. Satisfaction**, which should include the cessation of continuing violations, truth-seeking, search for the disappeared person or their remains, recovery, reburial of remains, public apologies, judicial and administrative sanctions, memorials, and commemorations.





## Frameworks for Reparations

### Caricom 10 point plan for Reparatory Justice, [10 Point Plan](#)

1. A Formal Apology and Establishment of a African Holocaust (Maafa) Institute
2. The Right of Repatriation and Creation of an African Knowledge Program
3. The Right to Land for Social and Economic Development
4. Funds for Cooperative Enterprises and Socially Responsible Entrepreneurial Development
5. Resources for the Health, Wellness and Healing of Black Families and Communities
6. Education for Community Development and Empowerment
7. Affordable Housing for Healthy Black Communities and Wealth Generation
8. Strengthening Black America's Information and Communications Infrastructure
9. Preserving Black Sacred Sites and Monuments
10. Repairing the Damages of the "Criminal Injustice System"

### The Gulf South to Appalachia Climate Action Strategy, [WeChooseNow](#)

To leverage community voices to challenge the status quo and build solidarity from the Gulf to Appalachia, the South to the Global South, we must first stop participating in our own exploitation in order to regain sovereignty. Four vision alignments resonated so strongly across frontline communities from Texas to Pennsylvania. These alignments presented the most potential to leverage existing opportunities and are considered key in charting our river's path towards climate justice:

1. Community Stewardship of scared resources of water, energy, and land;
2. Affordable climate resilient housing for all;
3. Dignity of labor and freedom to be on this planet;
4. Right to self-determination and a climate just future.

### Africans Rising, [Re-write history campaign](#)

1. Honest acknowledgements of the harm and human cost of slavery and colonialism
2. Truth and Healing Commissions
3. Reparations





### **La Ruta del Climate, [Right to Climate Reparations due to Loss & Damage](#)**

This offers a legal claim using the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to advance legal restitution and acts for loss and damage as it impacts frontline Afro-indigenous and indigenous women and communities the most, despite not causing the harms.

### **The United Frontline Table, [The Peoples Orientation to a Regenerative Economy](#)**

We must invest in solutions that protect our communities today, while building the world we want to live in tomorrow and beyond. These four categories often blend together. For reparations to exist it requires that our policies and social and economic structures must:

1. Protect,
2. Repair,
3. Invest,
4. Transform

### **The Southern Movement Assembly, [Blueprint](#)**

The SMA Blueprint for repair and justice includes building:

1. A new social economy
2. Peoples democracy
3. Protect and defend communities



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