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# CLIMATE—POVERTY CONNECTIONS:

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR SYNERGISTIC SOLUTIONS AT THE INTERSECTION OF PLANETARY AND HUMAN WELL-BEING

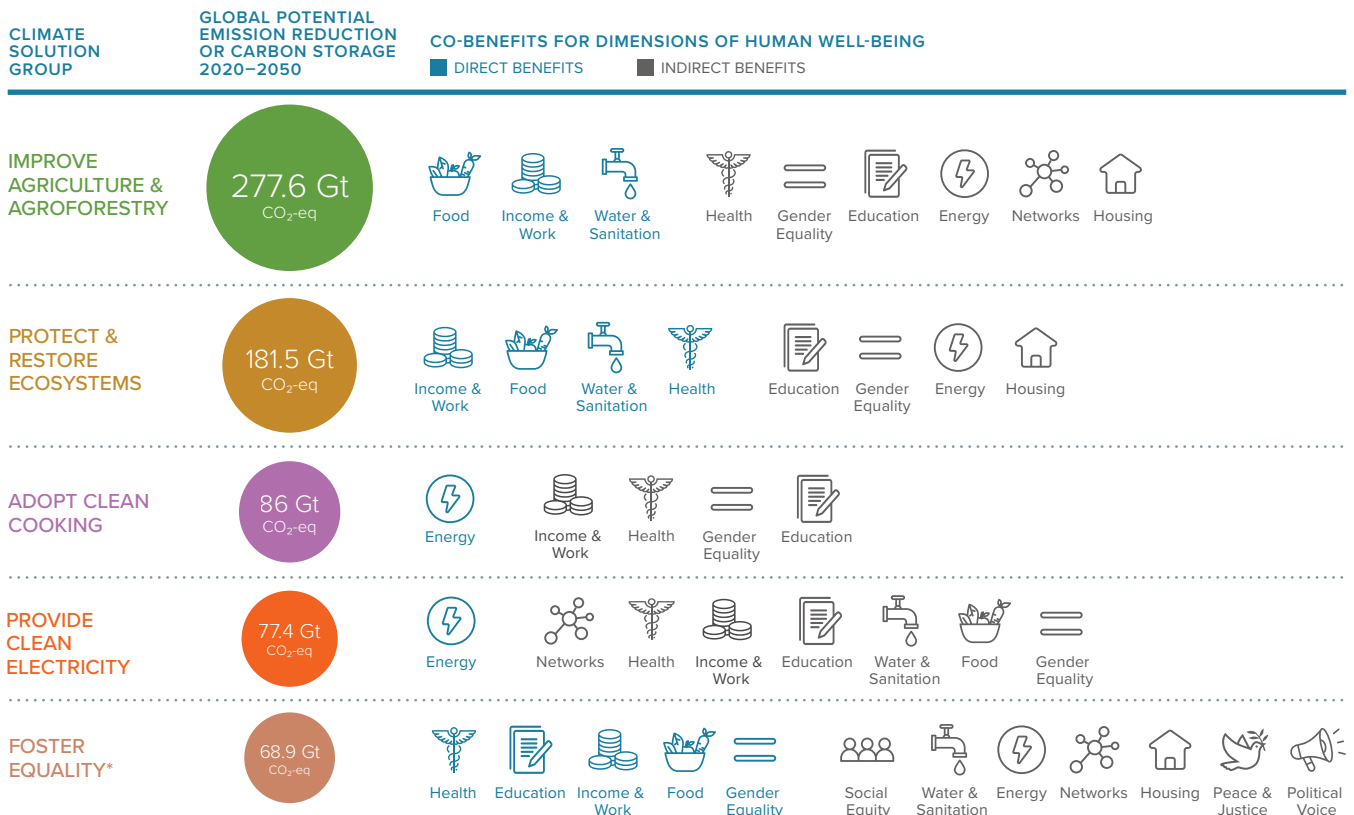
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Approaches to address climate change and improve the well-being of people experiencing extreme poverty can and must be complementary. A new report provides decision-makers with concrete evidence of how climate solutions also contribute to meeting development and human well-being (HWB) needs while boosting prosperity for rural communities in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and South Asia.

Every day it becomes more clear that regions of the world experiencing widespread poverty and food insecurity are also the most vulnerable to climate change. Urgent and

timely interventions and policies that address inequalities related to gender, Indigenous communities, and access to resources can significantly reduce vulnerabilities and climate risks.

*Climate–Poverty Connections: Opportunities for Synergistic Solutions at the Intersection of Planetary and Human Well-Being*, a landmark report from the *Drawdown Lift* program at Project Drawdown, reveals many ways that proven, readily available, and financially viable climate solutions that mitigate greenhouse gas emissions also contribute to increasing income, generating jobs, improving food security, and fostering gender equality and overall well-being in rural communities in low- and middle- income countries (LMICs).



Project Drawdown’s climate solutions offer substantial co-benefits for human well-being dimensions included in the Drawdown Lift Human Well-Being Index, from **Income and Work** (greatest) to **Political Voice** (least). (Gt CO<sub>2</sub>-eq is gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent.) \*Note: Family planning and education are not in themselves climate mitigation strategies. Rather, it is the outcome of *Fostering Equality*, slower population growth, that is a climate solution.

The report introduces the Drawdown Lift Human Well-Being Index, an adaptation of the Doughnut Economics framework, which utilizes 31 indicators to assess 12 dimensions of HWB<sup>i</sup> for every country. It then synthesizes 450 articles and reports to identify the HWB co-benefits arising from 28 of [Project Drawdown climate solutions](#)<sup>ii</sup> for rural and underserved communities in South Asia and SSA. We excluded solutions that were 1) not applicable to rural under-resourced regions in LMICs and/or 2) did not provide clear co-benefits for the dimensions of HWB and geographic focus of this report.

The analysis provides solid evidence for enormous direct and indirect HWB co-benefits and ripple effects arising from the 28 solutions in five climate solutions groups—*Improving Agriculture and Agroforestry*, *Protecting and Restoring Ecosystems*, *Adopting Clean Cooking*, *Providing Clean Electricity*, and *Fostering Equality* (see figure above). The HWB co-benefits are particularly strong around solutions for **Income and Work**, **Health**, **Food**, **Education**, **Gender Equality**, and **Energy**. If implemented synergistically, these climate solutions could be transformational in helping alleviate poverty and increasing resilience to climate change. In addition, the *Providing Clean Electricity* solution group has strong co-benefits for **Networks**, while *Fostering Equality* has co-benefits for **Social Equity** and **Peace and Justice**.

Investments in low-carbon development must prioritize countries that are first and worst impacted by climate change—particularly LMICs. There is an immediate window of opportunity to align strategies, complement

i The 12 dimensions of human well-being used in the Drawdown Lift Human Well-Being Index are: **Education**, **Energy**, **Food**, **Gender Equality**, **Health**, **Housing**, **Income and Work**, **Networks**, **Peace and Justice**, **Political Voice**, **Social Equity**, and **Water and Sanitation**.

ii Project Drawdown solutions groups and solutions used in the report include: **Improving Agriculture and Agroforestry**: *Abandoned Farmland Restoration*, *Conservation Agriculture*, *Farm Irrigation Efficiency*, *Improved Rice Production*, *Multistrata Agroforestry*, *Nutrient Management*, *Reduced Food Waste*, *Regenerative Annual Cropping*, *Silvopasture*, *Sustainable Intensification for Smallholders*, *System of Rice Intensification*, *Tree Intercropping*. **Protecting and Restoring Ecosystems**: *Coastal Wetland Protection*, *Coastal Wetland Restoration*, *Forest Protection*, *Grassland Protection*, *Indigenous Peoples' Forest Tenure*, *Peatland Protection and Rewetting*, *Temperate Forest Restoration*, *Tropical Forest Restoration*. **Adopting Clean Cooking**: *Biogas for Cooking*, *Improved Clean Cookstoves*. **Providing Clean Electricity**: *Distributed Solar Photovoltaics*, *Geothermal Power*, *Micro Wind Turbines*, *Microgrids*, and *Small Hydropower*. **Fostering Equality**: *Health and Education*.

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## TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE–POVERTY SOLUTIONS

- 1 **IMPLEMENT THE 28 CLIMATE SOLUTIONS**  
in synergistic ways that maximize co-benefits for boosting multiple components of human well-being.
- 2 **LISTEN TO AND PARTNER WITH DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS**  
to identify and carry out activities that simultaneously advance climate and poverty solutions.
- 3 **INCLUDE HUMAN WELL-BEING**  
when developing multisectoral climate finance.
- 4 **ACCELERATE THE DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE FINANCE**  
for climate solutions that also advance human well-being.
- 5 **RESEARCH, DISCOVER, AND SHARE**  
additional climate-poverty co-benefits.

funding, and harmonize policies to simultaneously address climate change, alleviate poverty, and boost HWB. By working together, decision-makers, policymakers, and funders—informed by, and in collaboration with women, youth, Indigenous peoples, and local communities—can ensure a brighter future for people and the planet.

This report reveals a tremendous opportunity to simultaneously benefit HWB and planetary health. Implementing the climate solutions presented here could make a dramatic difference for people and the planet.

## DRAWDOWN LIFT

Drawdown Lift deepens collective understanding of the links between climate change solutions and poverty alleviation, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. The Lift team works to break down disciplinary walls and find solutions that can address climate change and extreme poverty and lead to enhanced human well-being around the world. We work alongside academic researchers, practitioners, and changemakers interested in achieving evidence-based, high-impact climate and poverty alleviation solutions.

**PROJECT DRAWDOWN**

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