



PS 1.5

CLIMATE INACTION: POWER, POLITICS, AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

| BACKGROUND

Climate change and biodiversity loss are existential threats to humanity but in most countries the mitigation and adaptation measures implemented thus far have been exceedingly modest. In communities living in vulnerable circumstances in low- and middle-income countries climate change is already real. For instance, the Pacific Islands' very existence is threatened by rising sea-levels and in Bangladesh flooding is more extreme and threatening to lives and livelihoods. Extreme weather, rising water levels, and other effects have already changed lives and livelihoods for the worse. By contrast, in rich countries urgency is felt mainly by specialized groups of activists and researchers that thus far lack the political influence to drive large-scale change. The distribution of vulnerability is not well correlated with carbon emissions, either, which means that the largest contributing nations and populations are less motivated to act by the changes already apparent to others. Within countries similar dynamics mirror those of the international story. Using a lens of power, politics, and political economy this session explores reasons why countries are having difficulty acting against climate change even as it is manifested in deadly or harmful ways in many settings.

| OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this session include clarifying some of the major political and political economy problems that currently frustrate action that could counter climate change and providing a forum for amplifying views on these topics. For example, the session will discuss lobbying activities of fossil fuel industries and explore the difficulties of making the plight of communities in vulnerable circumstances salient in national and global politics.



Speaker

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Julieta Kavetuna has been a community activist her entire life. Her activism is centered on the promotion of gender equity and the provision of quality health care for all, especially in the area of mental health. She has been a Parliamentarian for the last 15 years, where she was politically assigned for two terms of 5-years each as Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Youth, and then the Ministry of Health and Social Services. During her tenure in the Ministry of Youth, she launched a campaign “Operation Hope”, which successfully inspired hundreds of unemployed young people to identify their passion and pave their own ways to take up studies or create their own employment. While with the Ministry of Health she became a Mental Health champion. She has also served as Secretary General of the National Youth Council, where she established the Credit for Youth in Business Scheme and the Young Women Leadership structures. She is a Registered Nurse and holds a string of post-graduate qualifications including; a diploma in gender and development, an Honors Public Management and Policy Planning certificate, and a Master of Philosophy in Public Mental Health from the University of Cape Town. She was one of the five fellows of the 2021/2022 cohort at Harvard Global Health Institute and the Women and Health Initiative at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. As part of her fellowship she did the following Executive course: Behavioral Insight and Public Policy, Digital Health, Leadership, Organization and Action, Women and Power and Delivery Public Service: Efficiency, Equity and Quality. Her mission is to help Namibian Health sector improve and succeed in achieving SDG Goal 3, Target 3.1, 3.2 and 3.4., by designing policies and conduct extensive researches in effective ways of integrating a number of pertinent issues in primary health care, with special consideration of mental health in all policies.