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| **Committee:** United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change |  |
| **Country:** Burkina Faso | Isabel Cronin |
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A significant portion of the world’s population has come to the conclusion that the earth is experiencing a steady increase of temperature, estimated to have risen by approximately 0.85oC since 1880 (NCAR, 2016). These can have a variety of severe impacts on humans across the globe, with significant damage being done to those living in third-world countries. These damages include increased deaths relating to higher temperatures, increased injuries and deaths relating to environmental events, increased risk of contamination of drinking water due to flooding, loss of crop and livestock due to rising temperatures or loss of land, and displacement due to uninhabitable conditions caused by climate change (EDF, 2016).

Burkina Faso is a low-income nation with a limited amount of natural resources, and is located in a land-locked region with an arid environment. Over 90% of the population works in agriculture, and this sector contributes 30% of its GDP (FAPDA, 2014). Increases in temperature in tandem with reductions in rainfall can cause significant loss in crop production, subsequently harming a large portion of the population. The country’s farmers have already suffered significant over the past few decades, with the average temperature rising 0.8oC since 1975, and average annual rainfall dropping by 200mm over the past 30 years (Eeckhout, 2015). With 26.2% of the country’s population under 5 being malnourished (CIA, 2010) and farmers in some provinces only producing half the amount of food they need to survive (Eeckhout, 2015), Burkina Faso cannot afford any more losses in crop harvest and subsequent revenue.

Burkina Faso also faces a variety of problems relating to its supply of drinking water. Water scarcity has been a problem facing the country for decades because of its proximity to the equator and being landlocked. Only 400 km2 of the country is covered in water (CIA, 2016), and the recent increase of droughts is making this water more difficult to access, with a variety of wells across the country having dried up. Over 17% of the population of Burkina Faso does not have access to improved drinking water sources and 80.3% do not have access to improved sanitation facilities (CIA, 2016). This lack of appropriate facilities drastically increases the transmission of waterborne diseases. Droughts can increase the concentration of pathogens in drinking water sources due to less water to spread out in. Even if an individual has access to a proper water source, increase in pathogens can occasional overwhelm treatment plants, leading to increased risk of contamination in major population centres. Fluctuations in pH can also increase the breeding rates of pathogens in drinking water sources (NIEHS, 2013). If the conditions in Burkina Faso become too harsh, it is likely that large portions of the population will be forced to leave the country, becoming climate change refugees. This operation would be both incredibly dangerous and difficult, due to large portions of the country living on around $3 a day (IndexMundi, 2015).

Burkina Faso will likely be one of the countries in the world that will experience some of the most imminent and serious impacts of climate change, despite doing almost nothing to contribute to it. The country releases just 0.1 tonnes of carbon emissions per capita, ranking the 12th lowest in the world (COTA, 2016), but limited resources have resulting in difficulties surrounding the development of projects that help reduce these damages. Burkina Faso continues to search for ways to aide its population so that they survive in these times of harsher weather and difficulty of harvest.

Burkina Faso has signed international agreements relating to climate change, desertification and ozone layer protection (CIA, 2016). Burkina Faso was one of the first countries to join the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992 and has adapted the National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) drafted by the Ministry of Environment in 2006 (Sawadogo, 2007). Despite to being a low-income nation, the government has succeeded in carrying out a variety of actions to help minimize the damage done to the population and their agriculture industry. Announced in 2007 by the then Prime Minister Paramanga Ernest Yonl, these actions include 26,000 hectares of land being developed into small-scale irrigation projects, replanting 13,000 hectares of trees, construction of two dozen dams and water reservoirs, building a 1,660km “living hedge” that helps prevent wind erosion and desertification, the rehabilitate of close to 4,000 hectares of degraded land, helping villagers living in rural locations build wells to help deal with scarce water resources, and encouraging farmers across the country to produce crops that require less water and are more likely to survive harsh temperatures, such as cassava (Sawadogo, 2007). Several non-government organizations also travel the country; training farmers to increase yields, conserve water and harvest in an environmentally sustainable way (Sawagodo, 2007). Although temperatures have continued to increase, these endeavours have seen moderate success in the country.

In terms of healthcare, Burkina Faso is in desperate need of major improvements to its drinking water sources. Water-borne diseases are prevalent in the country, and climate change will increase this problem. Burkina Faso’s population is already spread out and very poor, and some areas are too dry to build proper sanitation and treatment facilities (CIA, 2016). A better option would to distribute water-purification tablets, such as AquaTabs, to rural areas of the country. These tablets are used by disaster relief organizations to help prevent a variety of water borne illnesses such as cholera, typhoid fever and dysentery (MedenTech, 2016). The people of Burkina Faso will also likely be facing mass displacement due to large portions of the country becoming inhabitable due to increased temperatures and decreased rainfall. There are very few places to escape to from Burkina Faso, as it is a landlocked country with the surrounding country’s also facing similar climate issues. Sending refugees to western countries is problematic, as a significant amount of the population cannot read and do not have the skills required to live in a western country. A better option would be to erect several refugee camps across the country for displaced individuals. These camps will provide shelter, food and water to those seeking refuge, and will be provided by major disaster relief foundations.

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