



Save the Children

Save the Children Submission to the UNFCCC Secretariat

Save the Children is the world's largest independent child rights organisation and has operations in over 120 countries worldwide. We welcome this opportunity to respond to UNFCCC's consultation on the composition of, and modalities and procedures for, the Adaptation Committee, including on the proposed linkages with other relevant institutional arrangements.

At the Cancun Climate Change Conference in December 2010, world leaders established the Cancun Adaptation Framework with the objective of enhancing action on adaptation, including facilitating international cooperation and coherent consideration of matters relating to adaptation under the Convention.

There was an agreement to establish **an Adaptation Committee** to promote the implementation of enhanced action on adaptation in a coherent manner under the Convention, inter alia, through the following functions:

- (a) Providing **technical support and guidance to the Parties**, respecting the country-driven approach, with a view to facilitating the implementation of adaptation activities;
- (b) **Strengthening, consolidating and enhancing the sharing of relevant information, knowledge, experience and good practices**, at local, national, regional and international levels, taking into account, as appropriate, traditional knowledge and practices;
- (c) **Promoting synergy and strengthening engagement with national, regional and international organizations, centres and networks**, to enhance the implementation of adaptation actions, in particular in developing country Parties;
- (d) **Providing information and recommendations, drawing on adaptation good practices, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties** when providing guidance on means to incentivize the implementation of adaptation actions, including finance, technology and capacity-building and other ways to enable climate-resilient development and reduce vulnerability, including to the operating entities of the financial mechanism of the Convention, as appropriate;
- (e) **Considering information communicated by Parties on their monitoring and review of adaptation actions**, support provided and received, possible needs and gaps and other relevant information, including information communicated under the Convention, **with a view to recommending what further actions may be required, as appropriate**;

Save the Children sees the establishment of the Adaptation Committee as a significant outcome of the Cancun Climate Negotiations, that provides a basis to deliver on the global commitment to climate change adaptation.

Principles for the Adaptation Committee

The mandate and role of the Adaptation Committee to implement the Adaptation Framework should be guided by some overarching principles outlined below:

- a. Climate change infringes on Human Rights and directly affects the ability of world leaders to fulfill their obligations towards the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- b. Equity is a key underpinning of climate change adaptation. The groups that have contributed least to climate change are the most vulnerable to its impacts. The world's poorest children are ten times more likely to be vulnerable to environmental stresses than their richest counterparts¹. The differentiated needs and vulnerabilities of such at-risk groups therefore need to be effectively mainstreamed across climate change adaptation approaches.
- c. A child-centred perspective needs to be incorporated within the adaptation framework. Save the Children research shows that children are the single most vulnerable group to climate change². It is today's children who are the future generations that will inherit a considerably warmer world, and their rights, needs and capacities need to be properly accounted for³.
- d. It is important to recognize that climate change adaptation embraces a two-fold focus on 1) risk reduction and addressing vulnerabilities 2) turning risks into opportunities by enhancing the capacity and resilience of children and communities for long-term empowerment.
- e. A key prerequisite for the adaptation committee to be able to deliver on the implementation of the adaptation framework and enable long-term climate-resilience in the most vulnerable countries and communities is the availability of assured adaptation finance. It is imperative that 1) There is new and additional financing for adaptation that is not diverted from official development assistance 2) All adaptation financing is in the form of grants, not loans 3) The fund is fair and accessible so that vulnerable countries are able to draw on this funding directly without having to engage in overly lengthy processes, with several intermediaries.

Role and Composition of the Adaptation Committee

¹ 2010, Save the Children, Poorest Children hit worst by Climate Change
[<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/poorest-children-hit-worst-by-climate-change.htm>]

² 2009, Save the Children, Feeling the Heat: Child Survival in a Changing Climate
[http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/54_9516.htm]

³ 2010, Save the Children, Right to the Future: Climate Change Negotiations must be Accountable to Children
[http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/54_13428.htm]

The Adaptation Committee should be structured so that it is best positioned to operationalize the principles above, and deliver on its aims of enabling climate change adaptation for the most vulnerable groups in particularly vulnerable countries.

- a. Vision: The Adaptation Committee is envisaged as the nodal coordinating body to consolidate the various fragments of UNFCCC's adaptation work and steer a cohesive and effective implementation of the Cancun Adaptation framework on a global level.
- a. Role of the Adaptation Committee is to enhance international cooperation on issues formally recognized within the adaptation framework such as the participation and inclusion of vulnerable groups; Article 6; climate-induced forced migration; the importance of climate-resilient Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and the Hyogo Framework for Action principles.
- b. Composition of the Adaptation Committee should extend beyond the government to include representation from academia, research institutions, civil society and communities.
 - i. The Adaptation Committee should have a multidisciplinary board that reflects a breadth of expertise including education, health, social development, disaster risk reduction, social protection, urban planning, agriculture and livelihoods.
 - ii. The Adaptation Committee should be representative of the interests of the most vulnerable groups affected by climate change. This can be enabled by including a representative from key recognized constituencies within UNFCCC that represent the interests of vulnerable groups such as children and youth, for instance, YOUNGO and child-rights organisations that safeguard the interests of young boys and girls.
 - iii. The Adaptation Committee should invite all relevant stakeholders including governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, academia and research institutes, as well as civil society as observers to Adaptation Committee meetings and proceedings to ensure accountability and feedback on implementation of the Adaptation Framework. It is important that vulnerable groups such as young people can participate, and this should encompass both youth (18-25) as well as boys and girls under 18 years of age.

Engagement of the Adaptation Committee with UNFCCC Institutional Structures

The ability of the Adaptation Committee to play its role effectively as a global nodal point for adaptation depends on its ability to act as a bridge and conduit for knowledge exchange, coordination and consensus building across the currently fragmented UNFCCC mechanisms, processes and structures for adaptation.

- a. The Adaptation Committee should solicit specific inputs from the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) on cross-cutting adaptation issues. For instance, the Adaptation Committee should participate in the biannual SBI meetings and actively seek feedback from the SBI on relevant national communications on access to and deployment of adaptation finance, vulnerability of developing countries to climate change, response measures and other administrative matters that have a bearing on the effectiveness of the Convention.
- b. The Adaptation Committee should bring in the input of expert groups such as the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) and Consultative Group of Experts who can bring in significant scientific and technical knowledge and expertise on climate change adaptation.
- c. The Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) has developed a significant knowledge base for the modalities and guidelines of National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAS) in the Least Developed Countries. The Adaptation Committee should share widely the knowledge gained by the LEG on the process of development of NAPAS, national adaptation strategies and adaptation best practices with non-LDC developing countries.
- d. The Adaptation Committee could bring in inputs from the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP) partner organisations to aid developing countries to better utilize the information products and tools provided by the NWP. This would enable them to improve their understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation and make informed decisions on implementing practical and participatory adaptation actions.
- e. Locally generated knowledge and wider awareness of climate change adaptation among vulnerable groups is critical for effective implementation of the adaptation framework. Save the Children calls for structures and mechanisms for the regional, sub-regional and national focal points for Article 6 to be able to feed in recommendations to the Adaptation Committee on effective engagement of boys, girls, young women and young men in the implementation of the Convention of Article 6. Engaging young people at all levels as equal partners in the implementation, monitoring and review of local and national adaptation plans of action (LAPAS and NAPAS) will also help to provide bottom-up evidence-based learnings to the Adaptation Committee for the monitoring and review of adaptation actions.
- f. The Adaptation Committee should interface and coordinate with the established institutional structures for technology development and transfer such as the Technological Executive Committee and Climate Technology Centre and Network to ensure a coherent implementation of adaptation strategies such as Early Warning Systems for climate-resilient Disaster Risk Reduction in vulnerable countries.

- g. To ensure continuous, progressive and iterative capacity building in developing countries as agreed within the Adaptation Framework, it is important that the Adaptation Committee engages with the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action to provide recommendations on the institutional arrangements for capacity building on existing and emerging needs in developing countries. It is important for the Adaptation Committee to engage with the UNFCCC Secretariat and the SBI to review regularly the national communications submitted by developing countries on the progress made towards achieving enhanced capacity to address climate change. This would enable the Adaptation Committee to strengthen its knowledge base on capacity gap areas and best practices in adaptation.
- h. The smooth implementation of the Adaptation Framework is contingent on adaptation finance as disbursed through the Financial Mechanism (FM) agreed in the COP. The Adaptation Committee should provide recommendations on the performance of the climate funds and other adaptation funding instruments such as bilateral, regional and multilateral channels, as well as other special funds established by the parties. The Adaptation Committee should have a regular information exchange with the funds (or their Boards), as well as operating entities of the FM such as the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund on the performance of these funds to develop its recommendations.
- i. In relation to finance, the Adaptation Committee should also actively seek information and inputs from the Standing Committee on Finance established in COP16. This input on finance needs to be taken on board by the Adaptation Committee as it provides recommendations to the COP on the means of implementation linked to adaptation.