
**Fifth meeting of the Adaptation Committee
Bonn, Germany, 5-7 March 2014**

**Concept paper on an ad-hoc group to propose modalities for facilitating
technical backstopping**

Recommended action by the Adaptation Committee

The AC, at its fifth meeting, may wish to:

- Consider the information contained in this paper;
- Finalize the terms of reference for the ad-hoc group, including agreeing on its size, tasks and qualification of members;
- Consider whether the ad-hoc group could serve as an expert group and develop a strategy to address gaps and opportunities identified in the provision of support for adaptation by regional institutions and UN agencies, as called for in activities 7 and 8.

Introduction

The Conference of the Parties (COP), by decision 1/CP.16, decided that one of the functions of the Adaptation Committee (AC) is to provide technical support and guidance to the Parties, respecting the country-driven approach, with a view to facilitating the implementation of adaptation activities, including those listed in paragraphs 14 and 15 of the same decision, where appropriate. Paragraph 14 invites all Parties to enhance action on adaptation under the Cancun Adaptation Framework [...] by undertaking, inter alia, planning, prioritizing and implementing adaptation actions, including projects and programmes, and actions identified in national and subnational adaptation plans and strategies, national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs) of the least developed countries (LDCs), national communications, technology needs assessments and other relevant national planning documents.

Within this context, the AC, by activity 16 of its three-year work plan and as part of its workstream on technical support and guidance to the Parties on adaptation action, agreed to establish an ad hoc group, in collaboration with relevant organizations and experts, to propose modalities to facilitate technical backstopping for projects for Parties, upon request, for consideration by the AC. As a first step, the AC agreed to decide on the size of the group and to identify its tasks and the qualifications of its members.¹

In addition, the AC agreed to initiate, taking into account the outcomes of the call to regional institutions and United Nations agencies (activity 5) and the list of regional centres and networks working on adaptation (activity 6), consideration of developing a strategy to address gaps and opportunities identified and consideration of establishing an expert group to address those gaps and opportunities (activities 7 and 8).

Scope of the paper

This concept paper seeks to facilitate the AC's consideration of the size and qualifications of the group and its tasks. First, the paper briefly outlines the scope and commonly used modalities of technical backstopping for adaptation projects, before providing initial thoughts on the possible composition of the ad-hoc group, including size and qualification of members. The paper then proposes draft terms of reference as well as next steps for consideration by the AC.

¹ More information on the workplan is available at <unfccc.int/7517>.

Scope and commonly used modalities of technical backstopping for (adaptation) projects

There is no agreed definition of the term “technical backstopping”. The general understanding of the term “technical backstopping” relates to the provision of technical assistance, and includes functions such as advisory services, supervision, support and a guarantee for a certain degree of continuity with regard to a project or programme.

Within the context of this particular activity in the AC’s three-year work plan, technical backstopping could be requested by Parties in relation to:

- a) Developing project proposals to access finance;
- b) Implementing projects; and
- c) Monitoring and evaluating (M&E) projects.

The following modalities are commonly used to assist Parties in their project development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation:

- a) Supporting the development and/or review of project documents;
- b) Training (e.g. on the application of a particular research/engagement methodology or specific tools).
- c) On-site/in-country support for implementation (e.g. conducting stakeholder consultations, holding policy dialogues, overseeing and monitoring project implementation);

Possible composition of the ad-hoc group, including size and qualification of members

In deciding on the composition of the ad-hoc group the AC may wish to consider if the ad-hoc group should consist of:

- a) AC members only (“core ad-hoc group”), with the possibility of inviting experts from relevant organizations to collaborate as needed; or
- b) AC members and experts from relevant organizations.

Furthermore, in order to allow for the ad-hoc group to fulfil its objective, the AC may wish to reflect on the variety of different qualifications/perspectives that the group should provide, such as:

- a) The **recipients’ perspective**, i.e. needs and demands for technical backstopping during project preparation, implementation and M&E. This perspective could be provided by the AC’s non-Annex I members, who could consult with their respective constituencies.
- b) The **providers’ perspective**, i.e. the supply of technical backstopping. This perspective could be provided by the AC’s Annex I members, who could consult with their constituencies and bilateral channels providing support, as well as by experts from organizations, who have long-standing experience in implementing and executing projects in countries, e.g. UN agencies and multilateral development banks such as UNDP, UNEP or the World Bank, or regional institutions and networks such as SPREP, CCCC or the ACPC.²
- c) The **facilitators’ perspective**, i.e. the bridge between the demand for, and supply of, technical backstopping. This perspective could be provided by experts from constituted bodies, for example from the CTCN, given their role in managing requests from national designated entities of developing countries and delivering responses, or from the LEG or CGE, who have experience in undertaking training initiatives.

² Please note that many UN agencies and regional institutions have expressed their willingness to support the work of the AC and that could be engaged in the ad-hoc group. See, for example, document AC/2014/7: Information paper to strengthen the understanding of the roles of regional institutions and United Nations agencies in supporting enhanced adaptation actions in developing countries available at <unfccc.int/8012>.

Regarding the size of the ad-hoc group, the AC may wish to consider balancing the need for ensuring a broad representation of the different perspectives while at the same time ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in the operations of the ad-hoc group and being mindful of the workload of AC members.

Possible terms of reference, including tasks

In order to specify both the procedural elements (such as size, duration, mode of work) and the substantive ones (such as tasks of the group, expertise required), the AC may wish to agree on terms of reference (ToRs) for the ad-hoc group. Draft ToRs are attached in the annex.

Next steps for the AC

The AC, at its fifth meeting, may wish to:

1. Consider the information provided in the paper;
2. Finalize the ToRs for the ad-hoc group, including agreeing on its size, tasks and qualification of members;
3. Consider whether the ad-hoc group could serve as an expert group and develop a strategy to address gaps and opportunities identified in the provision of support for adaptation by regional institutions and UN agencies, as called for in activities 7 and 8.

Annex. Draft terms of reference for an ad-hoc group

Objective*	To propose modalities to facilitate technical backstopping for projects for Parties upon request as well as to develop a strategy to address gaps and opportunities identified in the provision of support for adaptation by regional institutions and UN agencies, for consideration by the AC.
Tasks*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Undertake a review of technical backstopping being provided by relevant organizations and experts for adaptation projects; – Identify the gaps and needs in the current provision of technical backstopping, in terms of the geographic coverage, types and degree of technical assistance, and associated institutional and financial arrangements; – Taking into account the above gaps and needs, the gaps and opportunities identified in the provision of support for adaptation by regional institutions and UN agencies (see document AC/2014/7) and the expertise available in the pool of Nairobi work programme partner organizations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop a strategy to address gaps and opportunities identified in the provision of support for adaptation by regional institutions and UN agencies; ○ Consider the niche area(s) for the AC to provide added value in assuming a facilitative role in the provision of technical backstopping for projects for Parties; ○ If feasible and desirable, propose modalities to facilitate technical backstopping for projects for Parties.
Size* and composition	A total of 7 members, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 2 non-Annex I AC members; – 2 Annex I AC members; – 2 members from organizations, e.g. one from a UN agency and one from a regional institution; – 1 member from the CTCN, CGE or LEG.
Qualification of members*	First-hand experience in developing, implementing and/or managing adaptation projects or in facilitating technical assistance/backstopping in projects.
Duration of the ad-hoc group	Until AC8, at which the AC will consider the proposed strategy and modalities and finalize and adopt them for subsequent implementation.
Reporting	The group will report, through its AC members, at each AC meeting up till AC8, on progress made in undertaking its tasks.
Mode of work	The group will work mainly through electronic means of communication. Members of the ad-hoc group who are not members of the AC could be invited to AC meetings, as necessary and appropriate, and subject to the availability of resources.

* According to the AC's 3-year work plan, this item requires agreement of the AC during the first quarter of 2014.