United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Module 7: Best practices and lessons learned

7.1. Capturing and sharing best practices and lessons learned

LEG training workshops for 2012-2013
Asian LDCs workshop
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Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG)

A. In this module

Where are we?

Module 1: Setting the stage

Module 2: Implementation strategies under the NAPA

Module 3: Accessing financial resources

Module 4: The NAP process

Module 5: Addressing adaptation in the context of sustainable development

Module 6: Tracking progress, monitoring and evaluation

Module 7: Best practices and lessons learned

   7.1. Capturing and sharing best practices and lessons learned

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CASE STUDIES

Learning points:

• Understanding the methodology and tools used for capturing, sharing and disseminating BP+LL.

Guiding questions:

• What are the criteria that can be applied for the selection of best practices?

• Which channels are useful for the dissemination of BP and LL?

B. What is a best practice?

Definition

- Can be examples of processes or activities that yield success or at least meaningful results. Very often, best practices are seen as an innovation in comparison to what was done before.

Objective

- To provide stakeholders involved in the NAPA and NAP processes, and other adaptation initiatives, with a wider range of possibilities that they could eventually consider, tailor, and use for their specific situations.

C. What is a lesson?

Objective:

- To facilitate use in future areas and applications, and actively facilitate learning from experience in order to avoid repeating past mistakes or reinventing the wheel.

Definition:

- Highlight knowledge or understanding gained by experience. The experience may be positive, as in a successful test or mission, or negative, as in a mishap or failure.

Characteristics:

- According to UNEP a "good" lesson must 1) concisely capture the context from which it is derived, 2) be applicable in a different context, 3) have a clear application domain, 4) have clear target users, 5) and guide actions.

D. Methodology for capturing BP+LL

The LEG's criteria for the selection of best practices and lessons learned is based on:

- Effective efforts for addressing a common problem experienced by LDCs;

- Potential for long-term positive impact;

- Good management of interrelationships between different actors/issues;

- Potential for replication at a larger scale and/or in another country;

- Lessons learned aim to communicate insights and understanding in how to arrive or implement best practices.

E. Best Practices – Vol.1

Envisioning the involvement of NAPA teams in the long-term helps raise awareness and ensures continuity of adaptation programmes and activities in the country

Best Practice:

Countries that have maintained continuity in the institutional framework between NAPA preparation and implementation tended to be more effective in the implementation of their NAPA.

Lessons Learned:

Continuing support for the NAPA team to oversee the design of implementation, beyond the end of the NAPA preparation project, is widely seen as a critical need for many LDCs, to avoid any delays in implementation and to nurture the considerable capacity built in LDCs during the preparation phase.

Also, promoting local expertise is seen by many as a means of ensuring stronger national ownership of NAPA projects.

Photo credits: DCulberhouse

F. Best Practices – Vol.2

Aligning adaptation planning at the national level through effective institutional arrangements

Many LDCs have indicated that the coordination of the adaptation work in their country is greatly improved when the institution acting as climate change focal point has a clear mandate. This allows for the mobilization of other relevant stakeholders, including the civil society to address climate change adaptation in a coherent manner.

Photo credits: ESCAP

Best Practice:
Building on and integrating institutional structures for adaptation into existing national institutional arrangements can facilitate early success through the smooth integration of adaptation into ongoing national development planning and the effective use of resources.
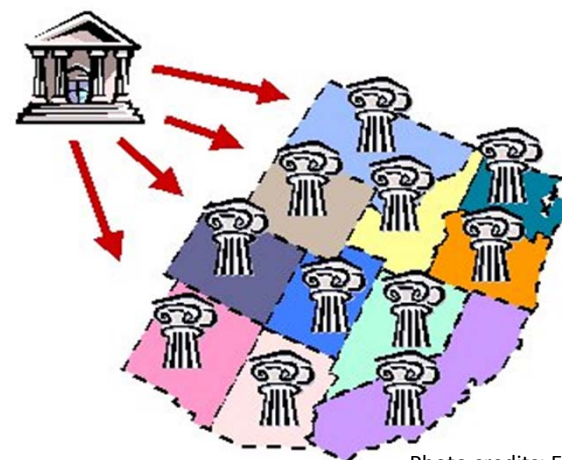
Lessons Learned:

When climate change adaptation initiatives are conducted in isolation of on-going national planning and implementation activities, resources are wasted in creating institutional arrangements that duplicate existing functions. Given limited technical capacity in many LDCs, this leads to reliance on external consultants or to local brain drain, as people are hired away from existing functions to manage the new adaptation initiatives.

G. Best Practices – Vol.2

Documenting the different elements of the national adaptation process

To ensure data and information are updated over time, countries that have relied on existing data management processes have fared better in terms of sustaining their efforts over time.

Maintaining these systems as opposed to creating new data arrangements, ensures long-term access to high quality data. Arrangements to share the data with teams conducting assessments are needed, and need to be facilitated by national data sharing policies.

Best Practice:
Effectively documenting the national adaptation process contributes to the building of a knowledge base for adaptation and facilitates subsequent adaptation assessments and future planning. In addition, mandatory regular reporting on the elements of the process, including on projects and activities, facilitates the documentation of the process and thus promotes the archiving and sharing of information.

Lessons Learned:
When documentation of the process is not done properly, it often becomes a challenge to make a case for the projects being proposed for implementation. In some cases, LDCs had to repeat a similar exercise to that which was done during the preparation of the NAPA while turning their project priorities into project proposals, part of this being due to lack of documented information.

H. Best Practices – Vol.2

Monitoring and evaluating adaptation planning and implementation at different levels

Best Practice:
Support by the LEG in terms of monitoring can assist the LDCs in the NAPA process. The LEG has worked together with the LDCs on the review and monitoring of progress in the NAPA process at both the national and international levels. At the national level the LEG undertakes regular interactions and surveys to LDC Party representatives, including during Subsidiary Body sessions. At the international level it collaborates with LDC Parties and the GEF and its agencies to discuss progress, bottlenecks and strategies to address challenges. To complete the exercise, the LEG provides feedback through its regular reports to the SBI to recommend further action, as appropriate.

Lessons Learned:
Although some work has been done to support LDCs in monitoring progress in the NAPA process, such as by the LEG, more needs to be done to promote effective monitoring and evaluation of adaptation activities at the national level. Challenges that have already been identified point towards the need for the continuous provision of leadership, technical capacity and resources.

I. Best Practices – Vol.2

Mobilizing financial resources

In general, it was found that the LDCs that have made the most progress in implementing their NAPAs are those that are also implementing various other adaptation projects outside the Convention.

Multiple sources of funding are available but it takes time and effort to mobilize available resources. To limit the number of requirements and constraints linked to accessing funds, in particular vertical funds, efforts could first be directed towards accessing the biggest sources of funding.

Best Practice:

The facilitation of resource mobilization through the organization of donor roundtables, the setting up of national trust funds and the mobilization of diverse organizations has proven to yield positive results in some LDCs. More resources were able to be mobilized, and more partners engaged in various roles, for the implementation of NAPA projects.

Lessons Learned:

Accessing funds from different sources is challenging for many LDCs, as is reporting on funding received, and adds an extra layer of responsibility on LDCs. Reporting to funding agencies and other partners is made easier when the supporting agencies coordinate their activities and such reporting is guided by clear national guidelines.

J. Best Practices – Vol.2

Accessing resources under the least developed countries fund: latest experiences

ACCESSING RESOURCES UNDER THE
LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FUND

In the early years of NAPA implementation (2005-2009), most LDC Parties were struggling to access the LDCF. They found the LDCF procedures very complex and not transparent enough. Some requirements such as the sliding scale were difficult for them to apply. Many LDC Parties which had initial difficulties eventually overcame these barriers, through a process of learning-by-doing and actions taken by the GEF to streamline the LDCF process. According to the GEF, 33 observed trends show that countries are making progress in accessing resources under the LDCF, particularly in increasing project size, decreasing time between NAPA completion and the approval of the first NAPA implementation project, as well as between project approval and CEO endorsement.

Lessons Learned:

LDC Parties have learned-by-doing to access the LDCF for NAPA projects, and many earlier difficulties and obstacles in accessing funds have been overcome. There are some limitations, however. Although it is now generally recommended to implement adaptation using a programmatic approach, the current modalities for funding of NAPA projects under the LDCF are not easily applied to support the development of national programmes on adaptation. Reasons include the current focus on capacity-building and piloting activities, and the much higher resource requirements for the application of the GEF programmatic approach.

K. Best Practices – Vol.2

Programmatic approaches:
tools to address medium- and long-term
adaptation needs

Lessons Learned:

A programmatic approach is widely promoted as more effective than project-based approaches but there are hardly any success stories in applying this to NAPAs. The programmatic approach seems to have a lot of value at the design phase where it enables an integrated approach and facilitates integration of activities into sectoral and national activities. The choice of a programmatic approach should be entirely benefit-driven especially since the implementation phase of a programmatic approach can be cumbersome, sometimes involving navigating through complex operational lines (multiple agencies, accessing different funding windows with different reporting requirements and complex flow of funds).

L. The LDC BP+LL Platform

http://unfccc.int/6491.php