

Call for submission on human settlements and adaptation

According to the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, human settlements can be defined as the totality of the human community – whether city, town or village – with all the social, material, organizational, spiritual and cultural elements that sustain it.¹ During SBSTA 44, Parties highlighted that those making submissions should “bear in mind the unique challenges and scale differences in urban, rural and remote settlements, in particular in small island developing States and least developed countries.”² During SBSTA 46, Parties further underscored their interest in collecting information related to rural and coastal settlements, particularly remote settlements.³

We thank you in advance for filling out this template with concise, evidence-based information and for referencing all relevant sources. There are 5 sections in the template: please fill the sections that are relevant to the work of your government or organization. As you will see on the last page of the document, more detailed information on case studies, tools/methods and other knowledge resources for dissemination through the Adaptation Knowledge Portal is welcome, but optional.

Name of the organization or entity:

International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

Type of organization:

Please choose as appropriate:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local government/ municipal authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional center/network/initiative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intergovernmental organization (IGO) | <input type="checkbox"/> Research institution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National/public entity | <input type="checkbox"/> UN and affiliated organization |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-governmental organization (NGO) | <input type="checkbox"/> University/education/training organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private sector | |

Location

City: Winnipeg/Ottawa/Toronto; New York; Geneva

Country: Canada; United States; Switzerland

Scale of operation:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Global | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local | <input type="checkbox"/> Subregional |
| <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Transboundary |

City(ies)/Country(ies) of operation (if appropriate):

¹ See: <https://unhabitat.org/the-vancouver-declaration-on-human-settlements-from-the-report-of-habitat-United-Nations-conference-on-human-settlements-vancouver-canada-31-may-to-11-june-1976/>

² FCCC/SBSTA/2016/2, paragraph 15(b)(ii).

³ FCCC/SBSTA/2017/L.7, paragraph 13.

The role of national governments in supporting adaptation at the local level

Description of relevant activities/processes or research:

Please describe activities or processes that your entity took part in, or studied, and that illustrate the role of national government(s) in supporting adaptation at the local level.

As the Secretariat of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Global Network, IISD has been exploring the issue of vertical integration in NAP processes, which we define as a process of creating intentional and strategic linkages between national and sub-national adaptation planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Vertical integration is not a single step in the NAP process—it is an ongoing effort to ensure on the one hand that local realities are reflected in the NAP process and outputs, and on the other hand that the NAP enables adaptation at sub-national levels, including the local level. It is driven by recognition of sub-national diversity in vulnerability to climate change, as well as the important role played by sub-national authorities and local organizations in advancing adaptation. Effective vertical integration requires an explicit commitment from national actors to have an inclusive and participatory NAP process, with ongoing dialogue between national and sub-national actors throughout all stages.

Description of relevant national-level policies, programmes or projects:

Please describe relevant policies, programmes, projects (or other relevant initiatives) implemented by national government(s) to support adaptation action at the local level. Information on the implementing partners and financial mechanisms established would be particularly helpful.

Description of relevant tools/methods:

Please describe specific tools and/or methods that have been developed and/or used by national government(s) to support adaptation at the local level.

The NAP Global Network guidance note, [Vertical Integration in National Adaptation Plan \(NAP\) Processes: A guidance note for linking national and sub-national adaptation](#) provides guidance for country teams to strengthen vertical integration in NAP processes. It provides background on the rationale for linking national and sub-national adaptation efforts and presents the key questions for consideration throughout the NAP process. The guidance note presents a flexible approach that can be adapted to the country's context, capacities and the resources available.

Key outcomes of the action undertaken:

Please provide information regarding the outcomes of the actions described above, and do not hesitate to add qualitative assessment and/or quantitative data to substantiate the information.

Description of lessons learned and good practices identified:

Please consider the following points when describing lessons learned and good practices: (a) effectiveness/impacts of the activities/processes, national-level policies, programmes or projects (including measurability of the impacts), (b) efficiency in the use of resources, (c) replicability (e.g. in different locations, at different scales), (d) sustainability (i.e. meeting the current economic, social and environmental needs without compromising the ability to address future needs).

Key to vertical integration are the enabling factors—institutional arrangements, information sharing and capacity development—that facilitate vertical integration throughout planning, implementation and M&E. The institutional arrangements provide the mechanisms for coordination, capacity development and communication between the different levels. Information sharing promotes efficiency and effectiveness of the process and ensures that both indigenous and scientific climate information are applied, while capacity development ensures that actors at different levels have the knowledge and skills they need to engage in the process. As with the NAP process itself, the approach to vertical integration is intended to be iterative and flexible, integrating new knowledge and responding to changes in the context over time.

Description of key challenges identified:

Please describe the key challenges associated with those actions, that policy-makers, practitioners and other relevant stakeholders working either at the national or at the local level should know about.

Challenges that may present barriers to vertical integration include:

- A lack of effective institutional structures for adaptation, such as working groups or cross-sectoral coordination committees, that link the national and sub-national levels
- Limitations in decentralization of sectoral and development planning and decision-making
- Capacity constraints at national and sub-national levels to facilitate vertical integration of adaptation

Planned next steps (as appropriate):

Based on this experience or research, have next steps been planned to address/study some of the identified challenges, scale up or scale out such actions.

The NAP Global Network is working directly with a number of countries to support strategy development and practical steps towards vertical integration. The learning from these experiences will be compiled and shared over time.

Relevant hyperlinks:

Please provide hyperlinks to sources of information.

[Vertical Integration in National Adaptation Plan \(NAP\) Processes: A guidance note for linking national and sub-national adaptation](#)

[Webinar | Vertical Integration in NAP Processes: Linking national and sub-national adaptation](#)

[sNAPshot | Information Sharing for Adaptation Planning at Sub-national Levels: South Africa's Let's Respond Toolkit](#)

[sNAPshot | Developing Capacity for Sub-national Adaptation Action in the Republic of the Sudan](#)

[sNAPshot | Getting Started on Vertical Integration: Linking national and sub-national adaptation planning processes](#)

Cross-cutting issues and linkages to the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs)⁴

Description of relevant activities/processes or research:

Please describe activities or processes that your entity took part in, or studied, and that illustrate cross-cutting issues and/or linkages to the process to formulate and implement NAPs.

The NAP Global Network has launched an initiative that aims to promote gender-responsive investments in climate change adaptation, in line with the ambitions of the Paris Agreement. Building on previous guidance, including the LEG guidance on strengthening gender considerations in adaptation planning and implementation in LDCs, we have developed a working framework that outlines what a gender-responsive NAP process looks like. This framework focuses on:

- Recognition of gender **differences in adaptation needs, opportunities and capacities**
- Equitable **participation and influence** by women and men in adaptation decision-making processes
- Equitable **access to financial resources and other benefits** resulting from investments in adaptation between women and men

We are focusing on three key streams of work:

1. Technical support for countries in integrating gender in their NAP processes
2. Synthesis of progress on integrating gender in NAP-related planning documents
3. Documenting and sharing learning on integrating gender in NAP processes

Description of relevant national-level policies, programmes or projects:

Please describe specific tools and/or methods that have been developed and/or used by national government(s) to address cross-cutting issues and/or foster linkages with the process to formulate and implement NAPs.

Key outcomes of the action undertaken:

Please provide information regarding the outcomes of the actions described above, and do not hesitate to add qualitative assessment and/or quantitative data to substantiate the information.

Description of lessons learned and good practices identified:

Please consider the following points when describing lessons learned and good practices: (a) effectiveness/impacts of the activities/processes, national-level policies, programmes or projects (including measurability of the impacts), (b) efficiency in the use of resources, (c) replicability (e.g. in different locations, at different scales), (d) sustainability (i.e. meeting the current economic, social and environmental needs without compromising the ability to address future needs).

We have developed a framework—available in this brief—that presents the key issues to be considered for integrating gender considerations during planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the NAP process, as well as ways to move towards

⁴ For additional information on NAPs, see: <http://www4.unfccc.int/nap/Pages/Home.aspx>

gender-responsive institutional arrangements, capacity development and information sharing related to the NAP process.

Building on this, we have identified three key areas where action is needed to promote gender-responsive NAP processes:

- **Gender-balanced participation in decision making:** As NAP processes advance—and particularly as decisions are made about specific climate change adaptation actions and allocation of finance and other resources—the question of who participates in decision-making processes and how their views are incorporated becomes increasingly important. NAP teams will need to make a concerted effort to ensure gender balance among individuals participating in these processes, as well as representation of particularly vulnerable groups. It will also be important to bring in expertise on these issues, for example by involving organizations promoting gender equality and women’s rights.
- **Building skills of gender and adaptation specialists:** In order for gender-focused organizations and representatives of vulnerable groups to effectively participate in decision making on adaptation, some capacity development may be required. Climate change and adaptation may be new areas for these actors, requiring an investment in learning and analysis to apply their lens to climate issues. At the same time, the actors coordinating the NAP process—often from environmental or sectoral ministries—may not have a lot of experience with gender issues, so they will likely also need some capacity building to facilitate gender-responsive processes.
- **Knowledge sharing among countries on gender considerations in the NAP process:** Our analysis found that countries are not only at different stages in their NAP processes, but they have varying depths of understanding of the intersection between adaptation and gender equality, and how these issues can be holistically addressed. Although each country process is specific, it will be extremely valuable for countries to exchange knowledge, approaches and lessons learned from the integration of gender considerations in NAP processes, to increase the effectiveness of individual country efforts, build the collective body of knowledge on the topic and scale up good practices.

Description of key challenges identified:

Please describe the key challenges associated with those actions, that policy-makers, practitioners and other relevant stakeholders working either at the national or at the local level should know about

Based on a review of NAP-related planning posted on NAP Central, where we assessed the degree of integration of gender issues, we identified the following gaps:

- **Women are being positioned as a vulnerable group, not as stakeholders or agents of change:** Within the planning documents, women are most often positioned as a group that is particularly vulnerable to climate change; there is less emphasis on their role as stakeholders in adaptation planning. Gender-responsive approaches actively seek to promote gender equality, requiring us to move beyond the vulnerability framing to recognize women’s potential as agents of change in adaptation processes.

- **More transparency about who is participating in NAP processes is needed:** In general, the documents provide inadequate information on the organizations and individuals that participated in adaptation planning processes. This makes it difficult to determine the gender balance in participation and to assess the degree of influence that organizations promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment may have had.
- **More effort is required for consistent and deeper integration of gender:** Even where gender has been identified as a cross-cutting issue in the planning documents, there is limited attention to the issue as the different aspects of the plans are elaborated, such as the descriptions of adaptation options or monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks. Deeper and more consistent integration requires consideration of gender throughout all dimensions of the NAP process.

Planned next steps (as appropriate):

Based on this experience or research, have next steps been planned to address/study some of the identified challenges, scale up or scale out such actions?

The NAP Global Network will be working with countries to better understand the opportunities and challenges for integrating gender considerations in NAP processes. We will be providing targeted analysis on gender as an input to the UNFCCC assessment of progress on NAPs later this year.

Relevant hyperlinks:

Please provide hyperlinks to sources of information.

[A Framework for Gender-Responsive National Adaptation Plan \(NAP\) Processes](#)

Further information:

Please do not hesitate to submit more detailed information on case study(ies), tool(s)/method(s) and/or other relevant knowledge resource(s) that are relevant to adaptation in human settlements. The latter will be shared through the [Adaptation Knowledge Portal](#):

- [Case study\(ies\)](#)
- [Tool\(s\)/method\(s\)](#)
- [Other knowledge resource\(s\)](#) (online portals, policy briefs, training material, multimedia material, technical reports and scientific publications)