

OECD-PCCB NETWORK WORKSHOP SERIES

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND AMBITION

May – June 2022

Background, context and proposal

The OECD and the UNFCCC Paris Committee on Capacity-building's Network, in short the PCCB Network, are convening a series of workshops on capacity development and climate change, a key theme to ensure implementation of the Paris Agreement. Indeed, the right capacity in the right place and with the right stakeholders can speed up action and drive up ambition and foster low-carbon, climate-resilient development. The workshops are an opportunity to foster dialogue and the exchange of information, ideas and experiences acquired in the design and execution of projects and programmes on climate-related capacity development across all regions.

Climate change is widespread, advancing rapidly and intensifying.¹ Despite decades of warnings, emissions have kept increasing, while most developing countries still fail to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and change.² Climate impacts are already undermining growth and causing poverty across much of the developing world³ - especially in the most vulnerable countries, such as the least developed countries (LDCs) or the small island developing states (SIDS).⁴ Against this background, many are calling for transformative, ambitious climate-related action.⁵ But any effort will fail if it is unable to build upon countries' individual, organisational and systemic capacities.⁶

Donor engagement in climate-related capacity development has been unwavering. A recent OECD report provides an overview of donor activities in this space and estimates that up to USD 10.7 billion in Official Development Assistance (ODA) on average over 2018-19 – or 44% of climate-related commitments of OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members – have a climate-related capacity development dimension.⁷ In some partner countries, such as LDCs or SIDS, these commitments amount to virtually all ODA activities by DAC donors. The importance of capacity development investments for climate change is reflected in a myriad of donor initiatives, guidelines and international frameworks.

Notwithstanding this support, partner countries still lack sufficient capabilities to promote low-carbon climate-resilient development. In part, this owes to a number of generic obstacles to capacity development in partner countries. Additionally, it is the result of specific features of climate change that make planning for capacity development in this area more challenging: the uncertainty of impacts, technology-related uncertainties, or the scale and urgency of the challenge. Although donors have been working to address some of these obstacles and challenges, recent project and programme evaluations show that current practice may not always be fit-for-purpose, effective or sustainable.

¹ IPCC (2021), Climate change widespread, rapid, and intensifying – IPCC, https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2021/08/IPCC_WGI-AR6-Press-Release_en.pdf.

² Ziervogel, G. et al. (2014), "Climate change impacts and adaptation in South Africa", Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change, Vol. 5/5, pp. 605-620, <https://wires.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/wcc.295>.

³ Hallegatte, S. et al. (2016), Shock waves: Managing the impacts of climate change on poverty. Climate Change and Development, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/22787>.

⁴ Hsiang, S., P. Oliva and R. Walker (2019), "The Distribution of Environmental Damages", Review of Environmental Economics and Policy, Vol. 13/1, pp. 83-103, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/reep/rey024>.

To enhance capacity development for climate action, the OECD report noted that donors could prioritise actions in three areas, namely: (a) unlocking access to climate-related financing, notably in LDCs and SIDS; (b) fostering climate services and information; and (c) enhancing the sustainability of capacity development through partnerships with academia, the private sector and South-South networks. The proposed series of workshops target these priority areas to support more effective climate-related capacity development. The goal of these workshops is to provide an opportunity for donors and other stakeholders to engage with a broad range of practitioners working on capacity development issues (e.g. bilateral and multilateral donors, civil society, academia, international experts). To do so, the workshops highlight and disseminate positive experiences and current practices that emanate from the country-level and that are available today for donor replication and scaling up.

The workshops will inform on-going OECD work on capacity development and climate change adaptation and resilience, which is framed around the *OECD Guidance for Governments and Development Co-operation on Strengthening Climate Resilience*.⁸ While the onus of the workshops is to organise a constructive dialogue around successful initiatives, approaches, good practices and experiences derived from concrete case studies and projects, workshops also include speakers from partner countries and other stakeholders, such as capacity-building stakeholders from the PCCB Network, providing an overview of current challenges and barriers in the three areas identified, notably in LDCs and SIDS. Each workshop is framed by a short background note and annotated agenda, providing the latest research and data, as well as questions for discussion on the particular issue area.

OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) is a unique international forum of many of the largest providers of aid, including 30 members. The overarching objective of the DAC is to promote development co-operation and other relevant policies to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, poverty eradication, improvement of living standards in developing countries, and to a future in which no country will depend on aid. Through the **DAC Network on Environment and Development Co-operation (ENVIRONET)**, members ensure that development co-operation contributes to sustainable development, by building on and integrating principles of sound environmental management and thus contributing to low carbon, climate-resilient and equitable growth and development pathways.

The **UNFCCC Paris Committee on Capacity-building (PCCB)** addresses current and emerging gaps and needs in implementing and further enhancing capacity-building in developing countries. The committee set up the **PCCB Network** in April 2020 as a voluntary association of interested stakeholders engaged in climate-related capacity-building. Through the network, members can share information on good practices of their work, contribute to the work of the PCCB in fulfilling its mandate, and seek to connect with their peers across sectors and regions. Activities of the PCCB Network align with the PCCB's work areas, namely: coherence and coordination on capacity-building under and outside the Convention; identifying capacity gaps and needs in climate change related capacity-building; awareness-raising, communications and stakeholder engagement on climate change related capacity-building; and cross-cutting issues in climate change-related capacity-building.

⁵ Pelling, M. and M. Garschagen (2019), "Put equity first in climate adaptation", *Nature*, Vol. 569, pp. 327-329, <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-01497-9>.

⁶ OECD (2006), *The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working Towards Good Practice*, <http://dx.doi.org/www.oecd.org/dataoecd/34/29/42389282.pdf>.

⁷ OECD (forthcoming), *Strengthening Capacity for Climate Action in Developing Countries: Overview and Recommendations*.

⁸ OECD (2021), *Strengthening Climate Resilience, Guidance for Governments and Development Co-operation*, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/environment/strengthening-climate-resilience_4bo8b7be-en