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Building capacities for national adaptation plans (NAPs) implementation strategies

Outcome Article

PCCB Regional Thematic Dialogue at MENACW 2023



United Nations
Climate Change

in collaboration with



NAP
Global
Network

As the impacts of climate change continue to challenge nations worldwide, the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region stands at the forefront of adaptation efforts. One vital tool in this battle is the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), a comprehensive strategy to address climate change impacts at the national level. During the 2023 MENA Climate Week, experts and practitioners gathered at the regional thematic dialogue organized by the Paris Committee on Capacity-building (PCCB) in collaboration with the NAP Global Network, to discuss the intricate process of “building capacities for NAP implementation strategies”. This outcome article summarizes the key insights shared during the dialogue.

Key capacity needs and gaps in NAP implementation in the MENA region

The first question posed to the panel addressed the capacity needs and gaps faced by MENA countries in implementing NAPs. The panelists highlighted various critical points:

- Capacity-building is crucial, of which the key is to improve the quality and integration of efforts such as stakeholder engagement, local expertise building, and vertical integration of local practice and national planning into adaptation processes.
- A mechanism is needed to bring together diverse stakeholders, including vulnerable groups, in a multi-sector, multi-stakeholder process.
- The availability of finance for adaptation is essential throughout the entire process, from planning to implementation and to monitoring and evaluation stages.

- Involving both senior and junior personnel in capacity-building initiatives is important for the effective implementation of NAPs.

These insights underscored the need for comprehensive, inclusive, and well-funded capacity-building efforts to implement NAPs.

Building and scaling up capacities in NAP and implementation

The second question delved into strategies for building and scaling up capacities in the implementation of NAPs. Speakers shared similar views on creating incentives and leveraging investments to drive engagement:

- Framing NAPs and adaptation strategies as investment opportunities can attract stakeholders and mobilize resources.
- Initiating discussions at the local level, involving communities and governments, is a crucial first step.
- Extracting investment projects from NAPs, tied to real needs, creates a persuasive business case for investment.
- Investment programs with substantial budgets often have robust monitoring and evaluation systems, making progress tracking and reporting more likely.

This approach of aligning adaptation needs with clear returns on investment can incentivize stakeholders and drive progress in NAP implementation, prioritizing environmental sustainability and food security.

Monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) for NAP effectiveness

The third question explored the importance of monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) processes in tracking NAP progress. Panelists provided the following valuable insights:

- Effective MEL requires well-defined indicators and KPIs closely linked to measurable activities and investment programs.
- Integrating actual projects and their assessments into the NAP process can provide valuable insights, making the plan more informed and effective.
- Comprehensive MEL approaches, involving both top-down and bottom-up methods, can enhance transparency and mutual accountability.
- Engaging stakeholders in data collection, analysis, and sense-making is crucial for robust MEL.

These insights underscored the importance of data-driven decision-making, transparency, and stakeholder engagement in monitoring and evaluating NAPs for effective climate adaptation.

Engaging vulnerable groups in NAP implementation

The fourth question centered on the inclusion of marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as women, youth, children, and indigenous communities, in NAP implementation. Panelists offered valuable insights on capacity-building measures to facilitate their meaningful engagement:

- Building trust and confidence among vulnerable groups is crucial, and using simple language and real-life examples can enhance understanding.
- Engaging vulnerable groups requires consideration of their unique needs, including language, cultural considerations, and digital gaps for marginal groups or in remote areas.
- Techniques like role plays and examples can be effective in engaging these groups in the NAP process.

These insights emphasized the need for tailored, inclusive approaches to ensure that vulnerable groups actively participate in NAP implementation.

The Q&A and comment session added depth to the discussion:

- The Iraqi government's commitment to engaging local NGOs in capacity-building was highlighted, with a focus on capacity-building for the vulnerable sector and NGOs to encourage their participation.
- UNICEF's query on involving children effectively emphasized the importance of child-specific consultation processes and understanding their diverse needs.
- Comments emphasized the need for data and evidence in discussions, along with enabling environments that facilitate data availability. Institutional capacities, sustainability, and addressing challenges in NAP implementation were also key points of discussion.

In conclusion, the PCCB regional thematic dialogue held at the MENA Climate Week provided a platform for experts and practitioners to share insights on building capacities for NAP implementation strategies. The discussions highlighted the importance of inclusive, data-driven, and comprehensive approaches to effectively tackle climate change adaptation. As nations in the MENA region continue their efforts to build resilience to climate impacts, these insights will prove invaluable in shaping their adaptation strategies and ensuring a sustainable, climate-resilient future.