

Monitoring and evaluation systems at the national and subnational level

Recommended action by the Adaptation Committee

The Adaptation Committee (AC), at its 19th meeting, will be invited to consider the information contained in this document and agree on the next steps for the event and the technical paper, as appropriate.

1. Introduction and background

1. One of the objectives of the AC's 2019-2021 workplan is to share experience and lessons learned from developing and implementing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. Activities to support this objective include organizing an event for sharing existing knowledge on, and tools for, M&E. This will be followed by the preparation of a technical paper featuring case studies on the development and application of M&E systems at various levels.
2. At its 15th meeting the AC agreed that the key themes for the event will be communicating M&E results; sharing existing knowledge and tools on measuring progress of adaptation actions, also addressing data. The event was scheduled to take place during the Adaptation Futures 2020 conference in New Delhi, India, which has been postponed to October 2021.
3. This document recalls the previous work on M&E undertaken by the AC so far, the preparations for the event, as well as possible next steps regarding the event and the development of the technical paper.

2. Work undertaken so far

2.1. Previous work undertaken by the Adaptation Committee and other bodies and work programmes under the Convention

4. The AC has long been gathering knowledge and experience and analyzing M&E systems in order to provide technical support and guidance to the Parties, including through workshops, expert meetings and reports, and working in partnership with the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change (NWP). This includes the AC's workshop on the M&E of adaptation in Fiji 2013¹ and its expert meeting on national adaptation goals/indicators and their relationship with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in Tokyo 2018.² Additionally, the AC has engaged experts in the field of adaptation M&E throughout its regular, biannual meetings, to present and discuss the topic among AC members and observers.³

¹ <https://unfccc.int/node/63381>

² <https://unfccc.int/node/180267>

³ For one example, see

https://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/cancun_adaptation_framework/adaptation_committee/application/pdf/8_m_and_e_patwardhan.pdf

5. The AC's partnership with the NWP and its partner network has also contributed to developing technical work on M&E issues. For example, the NWP prepared an inventory of ongoing monitoring and evaluation work of adaptation,⁴ which highlighted the challenges emerging in the national level practice, including that very little of the literature reviewed discusses impact evaluation, which confirms the difficulty in using indicators in monitoring the success of adaptation actions.
6. In a meeting of Party experts organized by the LEG in collaboration with the AC in February 2018 to assess progress in the process to formulate and implement NAPs,⁵ conclusions included that:
- It is necessary to have a plan against which to measure and assess progress, and baselines are useful in showing change over time;
 - The ability to measure and assess progress in reducing vulnerability is a key aspect of the process to formulate and implement NAPs and it requires further attention as countries move towards implementing the adaptation policies, projects and programmes identified in their NAPs;
 - Limited experience exists in measuring and assessing the impact of actions aiming to reduce vulnerability, as progress to date has primarily been in formulating NAPs rather than implementing actions specified therein.
7. In the aforementioned 2018 expert meeting on national adaptation goals/indicators and their relationship with the SDGs and the Sendai Framework for DRR, lessons and key conclusions from the meeting included:⁶
- Collaborative work between different levels of government to link their M&E systems is needed to understand the full picture of adaptation. Such collaboration strengthens understanding of the status of adaptation at sub-national levels, and ensures local results can inform national adaptation policy;
 - Enhancing individual and institutional technical capacity for data collection and assessment of adaptation is an ongoing task for many countries. National statistical offices could be more engaged in developing national indicator reporting systems on climate change, given their experience and expertise in data compilation and assessing data quality and availability. Linking data gathering and reporting systems for the SDGs, the Sendai Framework and on climate change adaptation will help avoid the duplication of effort;
 - In contrast to the top-down approach of the SDGs and the Sendai Framework, approaches to measuring progress on adaptation need to be individually defined in different countries because of the context-specific nature of adaptation. M&E systems should be designed to align with a country's overall objectives on adaptation.
8. In addition to this previous work, the AC and the LEG received concrete mandates from the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA) that relate to monitoring and evaluating adaptation. This relates in particular to the AC's mandate to "consider approaches to reviewing the overall progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation and to reflect the outcome of this consideration in its 2021 annual report",⁷ and the request "to the AC and the LEG in collaboration with the SCF and relevant experts, to contribute to further technical work by continuing to compile existing methodologies for reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support."⁸

The findings from the AC's and the LEG's previous work presented a foundation for the work on these two mandates. Findings were confirmed and explored in more detail through an analysis of submissions from Parties and organizations, a review of existing literature on global, national and subnational M&E work, as well as a range of approaches of methodologies to assess progress on adaptation, at all levels, ranging from subnational to global. The current status of this work is contained in the documents that the AC will be invited to consider at its 19th meeting: [AC19/SUM-INFO/6A](#) (Considering approaches to

⁴ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/ac10_5b_m_and_e.pdf

⁵ <https://unfccc.int/documents/65458>

⁶ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/ac14_indicators.pdf

⁷ Decision 1/CMA.2

⁸ Decision 11/CMA.1.

reviewing the overall progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation) and [AC-LEG/INFO/2](#) (Methodologies for reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support).

2.2. Preparations for event for sharing existing knowledge on, and tools for, M&E

9. At its 16th meeting, in September 2019, the AC agreed on two specific topics to be discussed at the event: Communicating M&E results; and b) Sharing existing knowledge and tools on measuring progress of adaptation and resilience actions, also addressing data. It also agreed that the event should serve as the AC's 2020 Adaptation Forum.

10. The AC requested the secretariat to explore the availability of potential partners to offer a hands-on training session on M&E back-to-back with the event. Subsequently, the NAP Global Support Programme (NAP GSP) agreed to demonstrate one of its M&E tools for the training, and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) contacted the secretariat with an expression of interest to contribute to the session. Partner organizations of the Nairobi work programme will be invited to contribute to the event. The concept for the event, as elaborated in late 2019, is contained in the annex.

11. The event was scheduled to be held at the 2020 Adaptation Futures conference, New Delhi, 27-30 April 2020, which is currently re-scheduled from April 2020 to 4-8 October 2021. The current planning envisages a hybrid event to combine virtual and in-person experiences.

3. Considerations on the way forward and next steps

12. In light of the delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and recent developments in terms of the AC's thematically related mandates from the CMA, the AC may wish to consider if and how it wishes to proceed with the planned next steps:

- a) With regard to the event, the AC may wish to consider whether the 2019 concept as contained in the annex is still valid and desirable, and whether it still wishes to go ahead with the event. Pending the outcomes of this consideration, the AC may wish to request the secretariat to contact the partner organizations on their availability, and the Adaptation Futures steering committee to explore possibilities to hold the event in the new setup of Adaptation Futures.
- b) With regard to the technical paper, the AC may wish to note that the workplan foresees the paper to feature case studies on the development and application of M&E systems at various levels. Again, the AC may wish to consider whether this paper is still needed and desirable, and, if so, which levels should be addressed in the call for case studies (local/subnational/national/regional?). Pending the outcomes of these considerations, the AC may wish to include the technical paper in the AC's new workplan for the years 2022-2024.

Annex: Concept for an event on communicating M&E results

As of November 2019

1. The AC suggested to book two 90-minute time slots for the event, so that the two topics selected by the AC can be addressed and supplemented by the suggested training session. It could therefore consist of three parts:

1. Part I: Communicating M&E results

2. Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation is not conducted as an intellectual exercise – it is intended to inform future adaptation interventions and thereby improve the capacity of communities, businesses, and governments to mount effective responses to the changing climate. To have this effect, the results of M&E efforts must be communicated to different stakeholders in a meaningful and understandable way, noting that to successfully communicate results and facilitate learning, these actors have to be engaged early on in the adaptation process.

3. Governments, agencies, and other actors who have carried out M&E can reflect on their experiences of explaining the results, including offering insights on questions such as: How can we effectively tailor our communications about adaptation M&E to different groups? What are challenges related to communicating M&E? What are some methods or techniques that have succeeded?

2. Part II: Sharing existing knowledge and tools on measuring progress of adaptation actions

4. Monitoring and evaluation of progress made by adaptation interventions is the final step of the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans. It is also recognized as one element of the adaptation communications under the UNFCCC process and the biennial transparency reports, following the modalities and guidelines adopted by the 2018 UNFCCC Conference of the Parties in Katowice. The Adaptation Committee will share insights from previous work undertaken under the UNFCCC on M&E, including on measuring adaptation progress in vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, including concrete examples. The session will highlight additional perspectives and dimensions of M&E, focused on exchanging knowledge and tools on measuring progress of adaptation with a view to contributing national capacity to respond to the new possibilities emerging from the Katowice Conference.

3. Part III: Masterclass on monitoring and evaluation of adaptation efforts.

3.1. M&E of Adaptation Projects (GIZ)

5. M&E of adaptation measures can be conducted for a variety of purposes, be it to monitor specific adaptation projects, the implementation of a national adaptation plan, or the achievement of NDC goals. Besides M&E systems on the national level, it is equally important to have solid M&E systems for adaptation projects in place, in order to show clear evidence of the project towards the reduction of vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.

6. This masterclass on M&E will therefore offer a learning experience on the design and development of results-based monitoring systems at project level, applying a five-step approach developed by GIZ. The masterclass is addressing representatives of governments, other bilateral and multilateral donors and NGOs engaged in planning and implementing adaptation projects. Practice examples from GIZ India (further country cases tbd.) will be featured to facilitate the participants' understanding of the context specificities of M&E systems.

3.2. M&E of adaptation at different scales- experiences, implications and lessons for practitioners UNDP-UNEP National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme (NAP-GSP),

7. There is no one blue-print for M&E of adaptation in national and local planning systems. On the contrary, M&E of adaptation is occurring with significant variations depending upon institutional context, level of governance and scale at which adaptation is happening – national, sectoral and local. This masterclass is an interactive session geared towards providing examples of real cases of adaptation M&E at national and sub-national levels with opportunities for reflection. It will present an example on the design and development of results-based monitoring framework for an Urban Ecosystem Based adaptation initiative, as well as a framework for assessing status of adaptation, sharing results from five sub-regions of Asia and the Pacific. It will highlight an example of a national level M&E effort in agriculture and reflect on the implications for a long-term system change that is required.

8. Through its one-on-one country-level and regional trainings, the NAP-GSP has sensitised LDCs and other developing countries to M&E and its importance. This session builds on the experiences of the NAP GSP with UNDP and UNEP as its two leading agencies to highlight M&E approaches at the subnational levels, as well as the draw in lessons from sectoral work undertaken by UNDP in association with FAO.

Document information

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01.0	8 March 2021	AC19 This information document is for consideration and for agreement on next steps by the AC.

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