

Monitoring and evaluation systems at the national and subnational level

Updated information note on an AC event on communicating M&E results; and sharing existing knowledge and tools on measuring progress of adaptation and resilience actions

Recommended action by the Adaptation Committee

The Adaptation Committee (AC), at its 20th meeting, will be invited to take note of the information contained in this document and provide further guidance as needed, including proposals for contributing Parties and organizations.

This item will not be discussed during the virtual meeting time and the AC is invited to discuss on the AC's MS Teams space. Observers are invited to send their comments to AC@unfccc.int.

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 16th meeting the AC agreed that the key themes for the event will be *communicating M&E results; and 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 rescheduled to take place virtually from 4-8 October 2021.
3. This document recalls the previous work on M&E undertaken by the AC so far and an updated concept for the event.

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 in 2013¹ and its expert meeting on national adaptation goals/indicators and their relationship with

¹ <https://unfccc.int/node/63381>

the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in Japan in 2018.² Additionally, the AC has engaged experts in the field of adaptation M&E in some of its regular meetings to present and discuss the topic among AC members and observers.³

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:

- a) It is necessary to have a plan against which to measure and assess progress, and baselines are useful in showing change over time;
- b) 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;
- c) 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

- a) 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;
- b) 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;
- c) 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 (GGA) 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

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.

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.

continuing to compile existing methodologies for reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support.”⁸

9. The findings from the AC’s and the LEG’s previous work presented a foundation for the work on these two mandates that are aimed at assessments at the global level. Findings were confirmed and have been explored in more detail through two dedicated work areas by the AC, and jointly by the AC and the LEG, respectively. Progress made to date regarding the consideration of approaches to reviewing the overall progress made in achieving the GGA is available in a summary note⁹ and a technical paper¹⁰ that the AC will consider at its 20th meeting. The joint AC-LEG work, in collaboration with the SCF, on methodologies for reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support is summarized in an information note that was considered at LEG 39 and will be considered at AC 20.¹¹

2.2. Outcomes of the consideration of AC19 on the AC’s planned M&E event, and status of preparations

10. At its 16th meeting, in September 2019, the AC agreed on two specific topics to be discussed at the event: a) 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.

11. At AC19 the AC requested the secretariat to explore possibilities to hold the event in the new setup of the 2021 Adaptation Futures conference and to contact the partner organizations to explore whether they are still available and interested in participating as planned. The AC welcomed the interest from observers to contribute to the event. The secretariat subsequently contacted the organizers of Adaptation Futures and secured a 90-minute time slot for the event. The secretariat also reached out to organizations that had previously indicated their interest in contributing and received positive feedback from UNEP and UNDP. The secretariat will additionally reach out to NWP partners to join.

12. The AC further requested the secretariat to collect case studies for the technical paper from the national/ regional/transboundary level and to include the technical paper in the AC’s new draft workplan for the years 2022-2024.

13. Due to the long delay and the change from in-person to virtual meeting, the secretariat revised the concept for the event as shown in section 3 below.

3. Draft revised concept for the AC event on monitoring and evaluating adaptation

14. The below is a draft revised concept for the event. The main differences to the previously discussed concept are:

- a) The Flow: The event will now first look at available tools, and then dive into ways to impactfully communicate results.
- b) The focus of part I: While previously part I looked at tools for measuring progress of adaptation actions, it is now expanding the focus to also look at measuring the impacts these adaptation actions have. The total available time for the event will be 90 minutes.

⁸ Decision 11/CMA.1.

⁹ <https://unfccc.int/documents/302879>.

¹⁰ <https://unfccc.int/documents/302881>.

¹¹ <https://unfccc.int/documents/302837>.

Opening and introduction - 10 min

The Adaptation Committee will welcome participants and provide a brief framing of the event

Part I: Sharing existing knowledge and tools on measuring progress and impacts of adaptation actions – 40 min

Iterative monitoring and evaluation of progress made by adaptation interventions is an integral part 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.

In this first part of the event the Adaptation Committee will first share insights from previous work undertaken under the UNFCCC on M&E, including reflections on the existing experience in measuring and assessing the impact of actions aiming to reduce vulnerability.

Countries and organizations will then highlight additional perspectives and dimensions of M&E, focused on exchanging knowledge and existing tools for measuring impacts and outcomes of adaptation actions to eventually enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change. The exchange will focus on experiences made so far.

Examples of possible contributors:

- Countries that have national tools/systems for measuring the impact and outcomes of adaptation actions (e.g. Bolivia in its NDC included information on measuring the impacts of adaptation interventions in areas including health and agriculture)
- Representatives from the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism (e.g. the Adaptation Fund who has been assessing the sustainable development benefits of projects)
- Scientists working on M&E (e.g. from the IPCC WG II)

Part II: Communicating M&E results – 40 min

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.

The second part of the event will recall the importance of ‘back casting’ in tailoring the communication efforts: The goals, objectives and anticipated outcomes of the adaptation interventions must be clearly defined from the onset, against which monitoring and evaluation will be applied, and only then can the correct target audience be identified and the messaging on experiences and lessons learned tailored to them accordingly.

Governments, agencies, and other actors who have carried out M&E will then 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? Who are the various target audiences to benefit from learning about experiences made? What are challenges related to communicating M&E? What are some methods or techniques that have succeeded?

Examples of possible contributors to share experiences:

- A representative of the scientific community? (to frame the concept of back casting)
- European Union? (to share experiences how learning from the first EU Adaptation Strategy was communicated to inform the new strategy adopted in 2021)
- New Zealand?
- Korea? (to share experiences how learning from its first and second NAP were communicated to inform the third cycle of its NAP)

- India?
- Jamaica?

4. Next steps:

The AC will be invited to take note of the information contained in this document and provide further guidance as needed, including proposals for contributing Parties and organizations.

Document information

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Description</i>
01.0	2 September 2021	AC 20 The AC is invited to take note of the information contained in this document and provide further guidance as needed.
01.0	8 March 2021	AC19 This information document is for consideration and for agreement on next steps by the AC.

Keywords: Adaptation monitoring and evaluation, knowledge, tools, progress, Resilience, information
