

Build and Sustain Capacities Through Institutionalizing Data and Information Processes for NDC Implementation

Concept idea by the NDC Support Cluster

On behalf of:



Federal Ministry for the
Environment, Nature Conservation,
Building and Nuclear Safety

of the Federal Republic of Germany

Summary / Overview

In the post-2020 international climate regime, developing countries face the challenge of both reducing GHG emissions, scaling up their ambition and meeting sustainable development goals at the same time. To achieve these efforts, countries' capacities and institutions are needed to manage effectively GHG and emissions reductions activities. However, it is worth noting that countries are at different stages of development and levels of capability. For the new international climate agreement to be universally effective, capacity building is an enabler to contribute to global efforts of reducing emissions and adapting to climate change.

According to the Paris Agreement, all countries will not only have to report on the implementation of their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and update or communicate more ambitious NDCs every 5 years, but will also have to formulate and communicate long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies by 2020. At present, countries have to report on their climate actions under the Convention, which in the case of developing countries is through the national communications and biennial update reports (BURs). However, many countries, in particular developing countries struggle in meeting existing reporting requirements and in elaborating their climate change actions, which is mainly being done using external or internal consultants. This approach has proved to be a major disadvantage to the countries themselves when it comes to building and retaining information and capabilities within the respective institutions in the countries. These consultants, who have over years not only build-up technical knowledge and capacities but also the necessary networks and collected valuable national data information as part of the elaborating process of climate change actions or projects, retain this special information in their personal capacity that is crucial to the government in terms of information, transparency and building capacities of national personnel in the respective national institutions.

The implementation of NDCs will be an ongoing effort that includes coordination and engagement across governments and different stakeholders. The bulk of the implementation activities is likely to be undertaken at the sectoral and subnational level and many actions, including the related information to meet transparency requirements under the Paris Agreement, will need to be delivered by non-state actors.¹ For most countries, there will be a need for additional capacity to support NDC implementation.

For example, one can observe that there are many climate change processes that take place in the subnational level that are a rich source of new data, more accurate information, that never flows upwards to the national level and that the same occurs also the other way round. All this information that remains either with the consultants at a national or subnational level must be institutionalized in order to build up and strength capabilities related to climate change processes.

The process of capacity building and the retaining of these capacities in the respective institutions will ensure that the climate change knowledge and know-how from subnational actors could be used to guarantee transparency and coherency at the national level. Having said that, it is important that any capacity-building plans or processes should be developed in line with the UNFCCC requirements and according to guiding principles that ensure that capacity-building is country-driven, involving learning by doing, and being supported by existing national institutions. Although this approach focuses on

¹ Planning for NDC Implementation - Quick Start Guide and Reference Manual, Climate & Development Knowledge Network and RICARDO.

capacity building for developing countries, this is also highly relevant for developed countries that may not have comprehensive engagement at the subnational level on transparency.

Therefore, this approach aims to address a number of critical challenges related to the long-term retention of capacity gains to support the necessary institutional arrangements and structures that need to be in place for NDC implementation at different levels (national and subnational). This approach aims to support the establishment of:

- Concrete communication channels that foster free flow of information, both within national or subnational level and between them;
- Systematized documentation to retain knowledge and know-how abilities within governments;
- On the job coaching of internal staff/ shadowing on systematic inventory development including national methodologies and approaches;
- Recording particular steps of climate change data and information to deliver specific products; and
- Instruction for institutionalizing data and information processes through
 - Establishment of repository institutions
 - Effective contracts, TORs, or MOUs for short-term staff
 - Effective use of international funding
 - Legal mandates and guidance

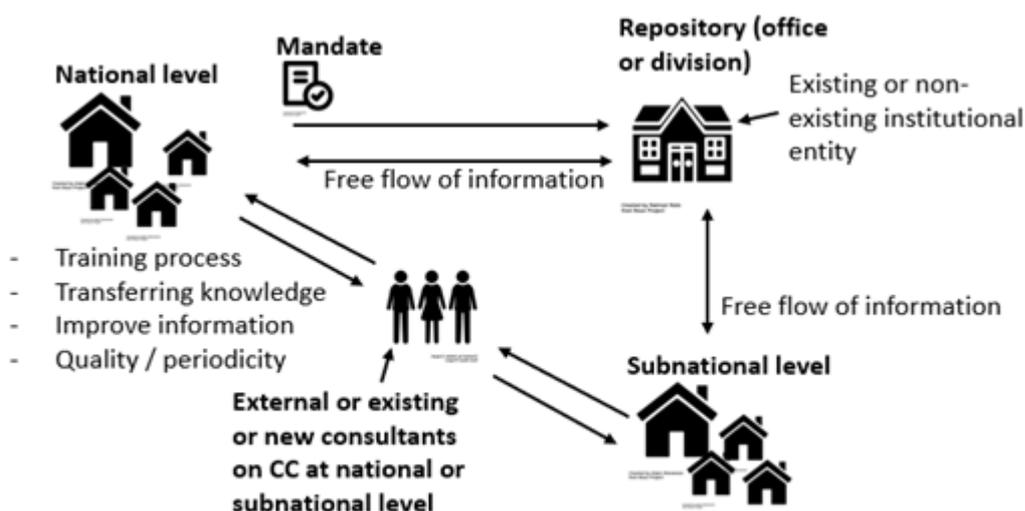
Challenges and Barriers

This approach aims to address a number of critical challenges related to capacity retention and strengthening of data and information processes. These include:

- Challenges to the free flow of information on the side of government staff and consultants
- Lack of will to share specialist knowledge and contribute to a common understanding of processes
- Within the government, unwillingness to take on more responsibilities / work closely with external consultants
- Lack of skills to capacitate and train others
- Lack of awareness on the importance to deliver institutional processes instead of products only
- The proper allocation of budget
- Lack of capacities and of human resources trained on CC, unit often understaffed
- Lack of institutions/divisions that are officially responsible to retain valuable climate change data and information that is generated in consultancies both at the national and the subnational level
- Lack of communication and guidance from the national government to subnational governments to facilitate integration of policies in both levels
- Lack of data management systems to facilitate the flow of information

The Approach

Our offer



The diagram above represents this NDC implementation approach which provides guidance to integrate subnational data into national reporting systems through institutionalizing data and Information processes. The integration can be realized in the following key areas.

a. Repository Office

This approach encourages countries to allocate the formal function of a repository office or division in an existing or non-existing institution at a national level. This will, on the one hand, help to centralize the official climate change information from national and subnational level, and on the other hand will improve national and subnational MRV Systems in terms of the principles of transparency, consistency, comparability, completeness and accuracy (TCCCA) of UNFCCC guidelines. This formal repository function should be created from a legal mandate from the national government. Each government will know best to which existing national entity this could be allocated or whether there might be a need to create a new legal entity to take the formal function for this repository office.

The role of this repository office is to guarantee a free flow of the centralized climate change data, required by decision-makers at the subnational and national level. In addition, due to the fact that the repository office will centralize a lot of climate change data from different sources, it should also be in charge of the quality of the data, so as to guarantee consistency and comparability across different sectors and levels.

The Repository Office will have the responsibility to organize the information in the way that it best suits the needs and conditions of the country, and to be a central part of and transfer the information within the National MRV System. A way to ensure that flow climate change data occurs among the Repository Office and other national or subnational institutions could be through the establishment of national guidance to assure subnational actions follow the steps and process necessary to be integrated in the overarching climate change policy at the national level.

It might be helpful to prepare a common template for the repository itself that could be adapted to national circumstances, but could facilitate collection and presentation of more accurate and relevant data.

b. Contracts/MOUs for Short-term Staff

Another way to facilitate the flow of information is through a specific clause on the contracts that occur at national and subnational level. Contracts related to climate change processes, e.g. when hiring consultants, e.g. for preparing GHG inventories, developing base lines and projections and designing climate change actions, the national hiring authority should consider the following good practices:

- Systematized documentation to retain knowledge and know-how abilities within governments;
- On the job coaching/ shadowing of internal staff on systematic inventory development, including national methodologies and approaches;
- Recording particular steps of climate change information to deliver specific products;
- Clear MoU that specifies the outcome/delivery of the consultancy;
- Such MoU should, beyond specifying the final product that should be delivered, also include requirements as to:
 - where and how to document and archive the information and data obtained;
 - which sources of data and which procedures to be followed;
 - which national institution and national staff to involve;
 - work with national staff using “shadowing” approach to ensure that national staff is fully involved in the process;
 - regular reporting to the national hiring authority on progress, not only with respect to the final product but with regard to how the information is obtained, processes and documented, including challenges encountered;

c. International Funding

Allocation of budgets received from international funding sources (e.g. from GEF for BUR and national communication preparation, CBIT etc): a greater share for internal activities that help to establish clear processes and structures with involvement of national staff (which could equally be supported by consultants) as compared to using the funding as salary for the final product.

d. Mandates and Guidance

Directives and standardization of the process may be achieved through mandates, guidelines and training processes that aim to engage external/internal and/or existing/new consultants that work both national and subnational level in preparing or updating GHG inventories, or developing MRV and M&E systems to national or subnational climate change actions. Mandates may also be used to develop regular communication channels and instruct various entities to provide data and information to the repository office.

e. Capacity Building

Capacity building activities will be critical to both impart knowledge and skills into the MRV system and to institutionalize the retention of knowledge. Examples are described in the section below.

Building on good practice

This NDC implementation approach draws on a number of good practices in the field of subnational-national integration on transparency. A number of countries have already made significant progress through the following activities:

a. Repository Office

- Permanent Office mandated to handle CC actions

b. Contracts/MOUs for Short-term Staff

- Training of trainers for government staff
- Job-shadowing or secondments to foster knowledge and exchange of skills, building capacity among different institutions
- Institutional strengthening and knowledge transfer programmes, 'train the trainer' programmes, and coaching and mentoring during on-the-job learning
- Participation of national and subnational staff/consultants in regional and international trainings, capacity-building activities or conferences is linked to the condition of sharing the knowledge with the national staff and putting it into practice. This could be in form of holding a brief workshop and bilateral meetings with those for whom the results of the training would be relevant (beyond a mere formal mission or back-to office report)

c. Mandates and Guidance

- Manual for subnational government on CC
- A national guidance entitled to drive subnational action and MRV processes aligned with the UNFCCC TCCA principles

d. Capacity Building Activities

- Capacity needs assessments to analyse country and stakeholder capacity-building requirements in order to develop actionable interventions and strategies
- Capacity development strategies that ensure that interventions are designed to develop institutional, technical, and individual to meet immediate and long-term capacity building objectives
- A national programme of climate change education, such as inclusion in school curricula can strengthen awareness of all stakeholders
- Learning exchanges between countries to share insights and emerging practices, and explore common challenges and questions on NDC implementation
- Stakeholder workshops to provide updates on global changes in legislation, policies and tools to ensure that stakeholders are kept abreast of latest best practices, guidance and approaches
- Organizing a group of actors from sub-national level to form a national level organization that will be committed to support the country's goal in bringing up NDC goals and objectives, i.e. Philippine League of Local Environment and Natural Resources Officers, Inc (PLENRO), which is a group of all environment officers of all cities, municipalities and provinces that is in the frontline of mentoring co-officers from each city concerning CC.

Innovative characteristics

This NDC implementation approach has several unique characteristics including:

- This approach encourages a domino effect of continuously transferring knowledge.
- Persons working in the system are able to apply and retain knowledge and information gains directly into the institutional process.
- This approach is flexible and could be realized through an online platform.

- This approach focuses first on keeping data and information within the system and its processes rather than focusing on producing documents and reports which may not be sustainable.

Success factors and replicability

- Applicable in each country since the establishment of the structures for the repository office will be designed according to the countries' needs
- Products owned by government
- Established procedures that retain the knowledge and skills in the national institutions, which allows delivery of products in a systematized and routined manner (and faster, with less efforts from product to product or from year to year)
- Faster extraction of information and data (that is coherent across the country) for different purposes and audiences (e.g. for designing climate actions in a given sector)
- Key assumptions:
 - Repository should be an existing institution
 - Repository will serve as a library
 - The present approach does not provide IT solutions (e.g. databases)
 - Host institution has the skills to understand and operate the repository

Key stakeholders

- National institutions responsible for GHG inventory compilation
- Statistics office / Ministry
- Sector Ministries and Institutions that gather relevant information & data, such as Ministry of Environment / Energy/ Transport/ Housing/ Agriculture/ Forestry
- Mayor's Office
- Municipalities / provinces
- Consultants
- Office from the cities, municipalities and provinces in-charge of environmental concerns

Implementation / Taking it forward

- Pilots in different countries at different capacities
- Development of brief manual to implement this approach targeting policy-makers
- Development of a common template for the data repository that facilitates collection and presentation of more accurate and relevant data

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