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Capacity-building

Capacity-building under the Convention

Capacity-building under the Kyoto Protocol

Synthesis report on the implementation of the framework for capacity-building in developing countries

Note by the secretariat*

Summary

This report has been prepared to support annual monitoring and evaluation by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation of the implementation of the framework for capacity-building in developing countries annexed to decision 2/CP.7. This report draws on information synthesized from 16 second national communications, national adaptation programmes of action and annual submissions from Parties for the period September 2011 to December 2011. Information is presented according to the elements of the capacity-building framework. This report may assist Parties in the annual monitoring of the implementation of the framework for capacity-building in developing countries. Information submitted by United Nations organizations and other institutions on capacity-building activities undertaken during the above-mentioned period is available on the UNFCCC website at <http://unfccc.int/cooperation_and_support/capacity_building/items/1033.php>.

* This document was submitted after the due date owing to the need for internal consultations.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties, by decisions 2/CP.7 and 4/CP.12, requested the secretariat to produce a synthesis report on activities to implement the framework for capacity-building in developing countries (hereinafter referred to as the capacity-building framework), drawing upon information contained in submissions by Parties, national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties), national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs), technology needs assessments and national capacity self-assessments.

2. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, by decisions 29/CMP.1 and 6/CMP.2, requested the secretariat to take into account in its synthesis reports efforts made in capacity-building relating to the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol in developing countries, drawing upon information contained in submissions by Parties, reports of relevant multilateral and bilateral agencies and the private sector, and information on activities of the Executive Board of the clean development mechanism (CDM) relating to the regional distribution of CDM project activities and related capacity-building.

B. Scope

3. This synthesis report summarizes information on capacity-building activities undertaken in developing countries, including identified capacity needs and gaps, experiences and lessons learned. It focuses on activities undertaken and reported between September 2011 and December 2011. This report is in addition to the 2011 synthesis report, which covers the period from September 2010 to August 2011.¹

4. The information is drawn from reports of activities provided by non-Annex I Parties in their national communications and NAPAs. Reports from relevant United Nations agencies were also taken into account. National communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention were not submitted during the reporting period.

5. A submission on capacity-building under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol was provided by Denmark and the European Commission on behalf of the European Union and its member States.² That submission was also taken into account.

6. Information is presented according to the elements of the capacity-building framework. Information submitted by United Nations organizations and other institutions is available on the UNFCCC website,³ and there may be gaps in areas where information on activities was unavailable.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

7. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation may wish to consider the information contained in this report as part of the annual monitoring of the implementation of the capacity-building framework.

¹ FCCC/SBI/2011/15.

² FCCC/SBI/2012/MISC.9.

³ <http://unfccc.int/cooperation_and_support/capacity_building/items/1033.php>.

II. Overview of capacity-building activities

A. Capacity-building activities by Parties

8. Capacity-building activities reported by Parties in the period September 2011 to December 2011 cover all 15 priority areas of needs identified in the capacity-building framework, with a number of Parties reporting significant advances in capacity-building related activities. As further activities may have been undertaken since the submission of the source documents, the compilation in this report may not convey the complete picture of progress made, and should therefore be treated as indicative. Examples of progress on capacity-building in the 15 priority areas as reported by Parties are outlined below:

(a) Institutional capacity-building, including the strengthening or establishment, as appropriate, of national climate change secretariats or national focal points: many Parties indicated that national coordinating bodies and entities have been established to enable the implementation of relevant national action plans. Parties identified entities that are working on the design and application of environmental policies, plans and programmes;

(b) Enhancement and/or creation of an enabling environment: efforts to develop or upgrade legislation that addresses climate change have been made in many countries. Parties reported that improving the enabling environment within which greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation and other energy-sector activities take place will entail unifying some legislation or policies and in some cases additional legislation;

(c) National communications: the Global Environment Facility provided financial assistance to non-Annex I Parties to prepare their national communications, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank. Parties indicated that the second national communications built on the results of, and experiences and lessons learned from the preparation of, their initial national communications. That process has helped many countries to enhance capacity-building at the institutional, legal and technical levels;

(d) National climate change programmes: some Parties noted that most developing countries contribute negligibly to global GHG emissions, but are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change. As a result, many Parties have put policies in place to set the national planning and development context for adaptation to climate change. Some countries have finalized a national climate change plan or policy, whereas in other countries plans are still in development;

(e) GHG inventories emission database management, and systems for collecting, managing and utilizing activity data and emission factors: all Parties updated and reported on their inventory of anthropogenic emissions and removals of GHGs. Capacity-building activities that have taken place include training sessions to prepare GHG inventories in accordance with the standards and methods set by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and maintaining inventory management systems;

(f) Vulnerability and adaptation assessment: action plans for vulnerability assessment and adaptation measures are being developed in most countries. Those assessments involve institutional and legal measures, identification and assessment of impacts, and training programmes for experts and local communities;

(g) Capacity-building for the implementation of adaptation measures: vulnerability to climate change not only depends on change in frequency or duration of climatic conditions, but also on the capacity to respond adequately to those changes. Parties reported that capacity-building activities are taking place to promote adaptation to the effects of climate change in different areas, such as water resources, food security, human

health, natural disasters, forests and coastal ecosystems, livestock production and physical infrastructure. Examples of activities taking place include training workshops to reduce vulnerability and enhance adaptive capacity to climate variability, developing and placing on the market climate-related agricultural insurance schemes, and support to smallholder farmers for adaptation;

(h) Assessment for the implementation of mitigation options: a mitigation assessment provides a national-level analysis of the potential costs and impacts of various technologies and practices that have the capacity to reduce GHG emissions. Mitigation action plans have been launched in some countries, with a focus on energy use, energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy. For some countries, energy policy is linked to the move towards a low-carbon economy. Although developing countries do not have emission reduction targets, some Parties indicated that building capacity on 'no regrets' mitigation activities, such as energy conservation and the development of renewable energy sources, can have positive economic, social and environmental impacts;

(i) Research and systematic observation, including meteorological, hydrological and climatological services: research on and systemic observation of weather and climate-related events and systems are important elements of a country's efforts to attain sustainable development and are essential to determining the extent of changes in weather and climate affecting the country. Many Parties reported that monitoring and research programmes took place, with reports given on, inter alia, the air, the sea, the environment and meteorological monitoring. Some countries reported that initial assessments of systematic observation systems have taken place, with a view to making recommendations on improvement of the observation systems in those countries;

(j) Development and transfer of technology: the need for technology transfer and environmentally sound technologies has been recognized as critical in averting the threat of climate change throughout the UNFCCC process. Some Parties reported that steps have been taken to facilitate the transfer of, or access to, environmentally sound technologies and know-how, including undergoing a technology needs assessment, purchasing, transferring and localizing technologies by public- and private-sector institutions, and promoting policies and programmes that support innovation;

(k) Improved decision-making, including assistance for participation in international negotiations: efforts have been made to increase knowledge and awareness of climate change among policymakers involved in the implementation of sustainable development programmes, so as to enable them to take informed decisions;

(l) CDM: some Parties reported significant progress on registered CDM project activities, while others identified the lack of a CDM office and associated supporting policies and legislation as a major gap;

(m) Needs arising out of the implementation of Article 4, paragraphs 8 and 9, of the Convention: least developed countries (LDCs) reported that they are working to identify measures to reduce climate change induced vulnerabilities of their poorest and most vulnerable communities. Capacity-building activities in LDCs included a scholarship programme for young people studying climate change, the production of a publication to share best practices and lessons learned in LDCs through the NAPA process and a project to help African LDCs to develop national strategies in order to take part in climate negotiations and target obstacles faced by LDCs in negotiations (e.g. linguistic difficulties owing to the use of English, lack of climate policy, and lack of coherent techniques and methodologies of negotiation);

(n) Education, training and public awareness: education, training and public awareness is a key component of any climate change programme. Progress is being made in training and raising awareness. In addition, educational programmes on environmental

issues and climate change are being introduced at all levels, from primary schools to universities. Educational initiatives are also being implemented by civil society and within targeted community groups in order to increase awareness of the causes of climate change. Many Parties have introduced initiatives that will make significant contributions to education and awareness-raising on climate change;

(o) Information and networking, including the establishment of databases: the global nature of climate change requires the exchange and sharing of data, information, expertise and financial capacity at all levels in order to enhance appropriate and effective responses. Capacities have also been developed in the private sector, among non-governmental organizations and in local community groups. National climate change policies in some countries make provisions for international cooperation, collaboration and networking, including the promotion of international North–South and South–South collaborative research that will facilitate the generation of climate change adaptation and mitigation evidence-based information.

B. Summary of capacity-building needs identified in reports from Parties

9. Parties stressed that proper and adequate capacity is fundamental to addressing climate change. Appropriate capacity should cover the wide range of activities and issues relating to the root causes of climate change as well as ways and means to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Additionally, there should be enough capacity to ensure that climate change considerations are included in the development agenda, the educational curriculum and the daily activities of all segments of the population.

10. Despite a great deal of progress, Parties reported that many gaps in knowledge and understanding still exist, and those need to be addressed if responses to climate change are to be made more effective.

11. In particular, many developing countries report that climate change and its impacts are not well understood. That is partly due to the fact that climate models still suffer from great uncertainty in projecting the future climate. Research into climate change impacts, adaptation and mitigation responses also needs to be strengthened. Climate change research needs to be properly coordinated and the benefits optimized to meet the needs of policymakers.

12. Parties identified a series of barriers that may affect the implementation of adaptation measures at all levels. The principal constraints are related to the lack of material and financial resources, as well as limited human capital and institutional coordination. Other constraints include the following: the lack of scientific data, historical climate information, monitoring networks and analytical capacity; extreme poverty, poor health and low levels of education; lack of experts with the skills to translate strategies into action at the community level, where the impacts of climate change are evident; the lack of involvement by the private sector; and limited capacity among non-governmental actors to comprehend and engage on climate change issues.

13. Successful adaptation to the threats of global climate change is likely to require levels of international and regional cooperation of unprecedented scope. At the national level, reduction of risk will need to be increasingly factored into the development policy and planning process.

14. The shortage of climate change professionals in Africa trained at the PhD and postdoctoral levels was identified by one Party as a critical capacity gap, and support is needed in that regard. One obstacle is the lack of employment opportunities available to PhD graduates, many of whom leave the research and education sector. Doctoral and

postdoctoral trained climate change scientists can support the furthering of education by contributing to the pool of supervisors available for postgraduate study. Furthermore, those scientists can play a key role in ensuring the dissemination of research findings through publication in the scientific literature and teaching undergraduates, and can contribute to the leadership and management of climate change projects and programmes.

15. Some Parties noted that climate change tends to be perceived to pose little risk relative to other hazards and stressors and is therefore given a low priority. In order to address that, Parties identified the need to invest in increasing awareness on climate change, particularly for those whose livelihoods depend heavily on climate stability.

16. Parties expressed a strong need for the development of new technologies and the transfer of existing technologies. New and clean energy technologies need to be developed to reduce GHG emissions, while technologies to address climate change issues related to shortages of water for agricultural production, drought-resistant crop varieties and livestock breeds, and food security must be developed. Parties stressed the need to include both the 'hard' issues of accessing technologies and the skills and capabilities necessary to use them and the 'soft' issues that are associated with their adoption or non-adoption. Soft issues include the cost of the technologies, market failures that impede their implementation, technology design issues, such as poor adaptation to local conditions, and consumer preferences. Constraints that hinder technology adoption in many countries include inadequate integration in long-term development plans, policies and strategies, and insufficient institutional cooperation. Those constraints can be overcome with the support of the international community.

17. Some Parties currently do not have a designated institution that is tasked with the collection, storage and analysis of greenhouse emission and removal data. As a result, that work is currently undertaken through a consultancy process only when required, and the data required are not managed centrally on a continuous basis.

18. Several Parties indicated that long-term investment in research and development is required to enhance capacity in research, development and innovation.

19. Parties listed public awareness and the development of communication strategies as a priority in order to make climate change science accessible to the public. Despite progress on education and awareness-raising, the level of awareness on climate change is still considered low in many developing countries. Awareness and information gaps and constraints still exist. That, in turn, obstructs the effective implementation of the Convention. High illiteracy rates in some developing countries causes difficulty in understanding messages. So too does the complex and technical character of the Convention. It is therefore considered imperative to invest in increasing awareness on climate change.

20. In addition to building awareness at the local level, Parties stressed the importance of targeting high-level policymakers in communication strategies in order to ensure that climate change is integrated into national development policies.

21. With regard to systematic observation, systems for, inter alia, meteorological, atmospheric, climatological, satellite and hydrological observation are the basic elements essential to studying the planet's climate. However, those systems do not exist in some countries. The greatest obstacle is budgetary constraints and other more urgent national priorities that lower the priority of systematic observation programmes. That has significantly reduced the maintenance and monitoring of systematic observing systems in network stations. Improvements in the national observing networks have been extremely slow.

22. Some Parties reported they have not had success with efforts to develop CDM projects, owing to the lack of technical capacity and political understanding and will. Most successful CDM projects in emerging economy countries have complementary technical assistance components to help to ensure the achievement of programme objectives. Technical assistance support can include marketing, training, information dissemination, market development and consumer outreach.

C. Capacity-building activities by United Nations organizations and other institutions

23. Areas and needs listed in the capacity-building framework are being addressed by several United Nations organizations and other institutions. Tables containing information on the activities undertaken are available on the UNFCCC website.⁴ Each table covers a corresponding priority area in the capacity-building framework.

24. In planning and providing capacity-building support, United Nations organizations generally take a country-driven approach. In particular, United Nations organizations are fostering South–South cooperation initiatives that have contributed to building and strengthening broad-based partnerships between Parties and to the design, formulation and implementation of capacity-building projects.

25. Experiences, lessons learned and best practices of African countries in the development and implementation of nationally appropriate mitigation actions were shared during a workshop organized in November 2011 by the secretariat and UNEP in Nairobi, Kenya.⁵

D. Capacity-building activities under the Kyoto Protocol

26. The CDM Executive Board, in its role as the regulatory body of the CDM, continued to undertake measures to enhance the geographical distribution of CDM project activities and to widen stakeholder participation. Regular activities include a CDM Executive Board question and answer session open to all interested participants at each session of the subsidiary bodies and an informal meeting of the CDM Executive Board and stakeholders during each Board meeting.

27. UNEP, in cooperation with the secretariat, continues to operate the ‘CDM Bazaar’ – a web portal designed to facilitate the exchange of information among buyers, sellers and service providers engaged in the CDM.⁶

28. Another major capacity-building effort is the Nairobi Framework,⁷ jointly implemented by the secretariat, the African Development Bank, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNDP, UNEP, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the World Bank. Activities under that framework continued to build capacity in the CDM process within African countries, focusing primarily on assisting countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In particular, the Nairobi Framework enhanced its efforts in increasing interest in developing and implementing CDM projects, strengthening the capacity of the designated national authorities (DNAs) to become fully operational,

⁴ <http://unfccc.int/cooperation_and_support/capacity_building/items/1033.php>.

⁵ <<http://www.transport2012.org/transport-climate-change-news/2011-11-15,nama-workshop-nairobi.htm>>.

⁶ <<http://www.cdmbazaar.net/>>.

⁷ <http://cdm.unfccc.int/Nairobi_Framework/index.html>.

promoting investment opportunities, improving outreach activities and fostering inter-agency cooperation.

29. The DNA Forum, which was set up to help to broaden participation in the CDM and enable DNAs to share views and experiences, met once during the reporting period.
