



# INITIAL EXPERIENCES OF THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ON SUPPORTING DIRECT ACCESS TO CLIMATE FINANCE

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**LAST UPDATED:** ————— 03/2019

**ACTION AREA:** ————— Cross-cutting

**FOCUS AREA:** ————— Financing

**COUNTRY:** ————— Cross-country (Senegal, Kenya, Morocco, Benin, Costa Rica, Peru, South Africa, Namibia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Jamaica)

**SECTORS INVOLVED:** ——— Cross-sectoral

**TIMEFRAME:** ————— 2016 - Ongoing

**CASE SUMMARY:** ————— Developing countries are highly vulnerable to climate change and thus need financing for adaptation and low-carbon development. The international community has established multilateral funds to support mitigation and adaptation in these countries. The Adaptation Fund (AF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), two of the world's largest climate funds, are committed to providing accredited institutions in developing countries with direct access to climate finance. Direct access allows countries to access climate finance and manage all aspects of the project cycle, from design to implementation and monitoring, directly or through accredited national institutions (CSE et al., 2016).

The Community of Practice, which serves as a framework for South-South interaction for sharing and learning between AF and GCF direct access entities, has been initiated by several countries. The main objective of this initiative is to strengthen the capacity of African countries to access climate funds. Activities implemented or planned involve: developing an online platform for sharing experiences, developing a capacity-building program, organising sub-regional forums and a regional workshop for COPs, and organising a training of trainers. Entities seeking accreditation or developing funding proposals find it particularly useful to engage with peers and establish a Community of Practice to support direct access.

The case study qualifies as a good practice due to its strong stakeholder engagement that meets the needs of accredited entities, its technical and financial feasibility, and its innovative character. The progress made under this initiative has created an enabling environment for: sharing information on factors that contribute to success; transferring best practices; developing innovative solutions; and building the capacity of a wide range of institutions.



Figure 1: Side event at COP24 to explore the role of South-South cooperation in supporting direct access for climate finance in Africa, organised by the Centre de Suivi Écologique and Germanwatch (AfDB, 2018)





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**BACKGROUND:** Climate change is posing serious challenges to the international community. To maintain global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrialised levels, it is crucial to change consumption and production patterns. This requires a country-driven paradigm shift towards policies and technologies that catalyse green investments and integrate climate change into existing systems.

The adverse effects of climate change are felt in all countries and generate negative impacts on health, agriculture, economy, trade and transport, among others. The countries of the South are however most affected by these changes. Their populations are struggling to survive in the face of droughts, storms and floods. Rainfall is becoming erratic and extreme temperatures are becoming more frequent. Crops are declining year after year (ADT, 2015). In 2016, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has estimated that by 2030, up to 122 million people, many of them women, could be pushed into extreme poverty as a result of climate change.

While the developing countries' share of global greenhouse gas emissions is relatively low compared to that of industrialised countries, they have committed to contribute to reducing emissions by signing and ratifying the UNFCCC Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. Prior to the Paris Conference, developing countries such as Senegal, Kenya, Morocco, and Peru, submitted a national climate plan through their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), which outlines their (conditional and unconditional) commitment to address climate change. In Paris, it was agreed that all signatories submit progressively more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) every five years, detailing the activities, efforts and targets to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

However, given the degree of vulnerability of developing countries to climate change and often severe domestic resource constraints, significant international support is required to strengthen their contribution to reducing emissions and ensuring the resilience of their systems, particularly for the poorest and most vulnerable populations. The magnitude of the financial challenge to achieve this transformation is in the order of hundreds of billions of US dollars. Available funding and resource absorption capacity vary from country to country. While developed countries are more likely to possess the national capacity to use domestic resources and attract climate change finance, many developing countries lack the financial resources, institutional and political mechanisms and skills to effectively attract climate finance. These barriers have a greater impact on vulnerable groups, such as the poor and women, which compromises the achievement of poverty reduction objectives.

Developing countries need significant funding to adapt to climate change and move towards low-carbon development pathways. In this context, direct access to international climate funds allows accredited national or sub-national entities to directly receive funding without going through an international intermediary (such as the World Bank or a regional development bank). The Green Climate Fund has initiated a readiness coordination mechanism, which all the major readiness providers are members of. The aim is to coordinate and consolidate efforts to achieve greater coherence and reduce a duplication of efforts.

However, there still remain significant gaps in order to effectively meet the needs of African direct access entities. In particular, few trainers or consultants with substantial experience on direct access to the GCF and AF are available. Most of the experience sits within the secretariats of the funding mechanisms (AF & GCF, Global Environmental Facility) and the accredited direct access entities that are already operating. Entities seeking accreditation or developing funding proposals have found it particularly useful to engage with peers that can share lessons, having gone through the processes themselves. Yet, there is no country-driven platform for cross-learning between entities,

including the documenting and sharing of experiences from different actors, different areas and on different issues.

These are the main reasons why developing countries are trying to build synergies and mobilise support in order to set up a virtual Community of Practice platform to foster South-South cooperation. The leaders of this initiative, the Centre de Suivi Écologique of Senegal (CSE) and the National Environment Management Authority of Kenya (NEMA), have mobilised the support of all those who support direct access, starting with the AF, the GCF, and readiness program partners. The process is also financially supported by partners such as the Africa Climate Change Fund (ACCF) of the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the World Resources Institute (WRI), among others.

**ACTIVITIES:** ————— The Community of Practice identifies areas of action needed and brings Direct Access Entities (DAEs), funds and development partners together to ensure that support is targeted towards country needs with the ultimate aim of strengthening direct access to funds. The Community of Practice engages and is planning to engage in a range of activities.

Activities already undertaken or in progress include a series of workshops:

- A first workshop organised in Nairobi in October 2016 by WRI and Kenyan National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) with the support of other partners;
- A second workshop later organised on the side of the COP22 in Marrakech, to broaden the exchange to include other National Implementing Entities (NIEs) and institutions providing readiness support to help African countries access climate finance;
- A third workshop organised in November 2017, a collaborative effort by the Centre de Suivi Écologique (CSE) of Senegal, NEMA, the Fund cooperation of Costa Rica, the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the Africa Climate Change Fund of the African Development Bank (AfDB). This event convened DAEs of Africa, Asia and Latin America as well as representatives of civil society, national designated authorities, fund secretariats, regional organisations, readiness providers, and candidate institutions for accreditation. It was organised with the view to:
  - share the objectives of the Community of Practice as well as progress to date;
  - to secure input from all DAEs on the way forward for the Community of Practice, including chairpersonship, membership and roles, financing strategy, etc.;
  - present and test the online platform developed by WRI and seek feedback from DAEs;
  - present the concept for the training of trainers programme developed in collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and seek feedback from DAEs on the content to be covered, trainees to be targeted, and training format.
- A side-event organised at the margin of COP 24 in Poland for DAEs to share lessons learned through their activities and on the way forward to strengthen readiness for direct access and to present the Community of Practice for direct access.
- A workshop will soon be organised in Senegal to formalise the community with a governance structure and charter.

Planned activities include the following readiness activities needed to support the scaling up of direct access in Africa:

- Further developing and implementing a capacity-building program with training modules in several languages on topics relevant to DAEs, with emphasis on direct access (accreditation), project development, project monitoring and evaluation.
- Organising sub-regional fora and a regional workshop at the margins of the COPs: These exchanges



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will provide both an exchange of experiences between NIEs, as well as a forum to consolidate feedback on the challenges encountered throughout the year during the application of the accreditation processes of funds, and on the development of projects in order to inform the financial mechanisms under the UNFCCC.

- Organising training of trainers (TOT): This would involve forming a group of resource persons in Africa who would then be able to provide support to countries and institutions according to their needs. The goal would be to establish a list of experts available to assist national institutions in the accreditation and project development process.
- Developing a South-South learning and training platform: This will allow cross-learning and experience-sharing between DAEs.
- Collecting lessons learnt and giving feedbacks to the funds on implementation of policies and procedures

### INSTITUTIONS

#### INVOLVED:

- Centre de Suivi Ecologique (CSE);
- National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) of Kenya;
- Fund cooperation of Costa Rica;
- South African National Biodiversity Institut (SANBI);
- Development Bank of South Africa;
- Agency for Agricultural Development of Morocco (ADA);
- National Environment Fund from Benin (FENEC);
- Environmental Investment Fund (IEF);
- Africa Climate Change Fund (ACCF) of the African Development Bank (AfDB);
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (MOFEC);
- Ministry of Natural Resources (MINIRENA) of Rwanda;
- Peruvian Trust Fund for National Parks and Protected Areas (PROFONANPE);
- Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ).

### COOPERATION

#### WITH:

- Africa Climate Change Fund (ACCF)/African Development Bank;
- Adaptation Fund (AF);
- World Resources Institute (WRI).

#### FINANCE:

Approximately USD 15,000 was invested in funding so far by ACCF for the various workshops. ACCF has also secured a USD 390,000 funding from KOAFEC (Korea-Africa Economic Cooperation) for the TOT project.

### IMPACT OF

#### ACTIVITIES:

The activities of the Community of Practice already have and are anticipated to have the following impacts:

#### **- ENHANCING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF THE INSTITUTIONS**

**INVOLVED:** The sharing of experiences through the platform allowed to upgrade the institutional capacities of accredited entities and to create a pool of certified experts.

**- INCREASED SOUTH-SOUTH LEARNING:** Through a South-South learning and training platform, the

initiative will constitute a lever for mobilising financial resources leading to policies that are better adapted to the needs of developing countries. The importance of the activities has raised the interest of the AfDB, which has mobilised resources to initiate the development of a training of trainers program. The resources of the AF have also been mobilised to pilot the platform with WRI.

- **ENHANCED CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE:** Through development/project formulation training with modules on the resilience of various sectors, the latter can be strengthened over the long term.
- **IMPROVED PROCEDURES AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES:** In the long run, the institutional procedures will be better formalised and aligned with the standards necessary to access funds.

## WHY IS IT

### GOOD PRACTICE:

- **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:** The establishment of a Community of Practice presents a response to the real needs of accredited entities, which justifies broad stakeholder engagement. This commitment has been consolidated and strengthened through a series of meetings and workshops that have been organised to exchange with all stakeholders on the orientations and modalities of the initiative's implementation.
- **TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL FEASIBILITY:** One of the major components of the Community of Practice consists of the development of a capacity-building and training of trainers program on relevant themes such as accreditation, project development and monitoring and evaluation. The web-based technical support tools facilitate the implementation of the initiative. In addition, the implementation of the process, in particular through the organisation of forums and workshops, does not require significant financial resources.
- **INNOVATION:** The establishment of a framework for interaction and experience-sharing between the direct access entities of the AF and the GCF is the result of a prospective support to accredited entities in developing countries. This initiative is a unique opportunity for institutions in developing countries to demonstrate their capacities in fiduciary and project management, environmental and social safeguards, and gender mainstreaming (CSE, 2017) as well as to improve their standards, procedures and policies through learning practice. Similarly, the exchange platform facilitates the search for climate financing and training partners.
- **MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE:** South-South cooperation is part of a multi-scale process. At the international level, entities benefit from multilateral cooperation mechanisms. At the regional level, cooperation is dynamic between entities and finally at the national level, the Designated National Authority (DNA) and project leaders are the main partners of accredited entities.

### SUCCESS FACTORS:

- **INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND GOOD GOVERNANCE:** The initiative is led by the entities themselves, leading to a strong legitimacy on the one hand, and to the facilitation of its adoption and implementation on the other hand. The definition of consensual governance was identified from the outset as a requirement to move the process forward and promote direct access.
- **EXCHANGE VISITS, A DRIVING FORCE FOR EXPERIENCE SHARING BETWEEN ACCREDITED INSTITUTIONS:** The idea of setting up a South-South cooperation platform was born from an exchange visit between two accredited entities, CSE and NEMA. The discussions during this exchange visit enabled a debate on the need to develop an initiative that would allow entities to learn from each other.
- **BETTER KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS MANAGEMENT:** The Community of Practice becomes a „school“



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through practice and sharing of experiences, thus enabling accredited entities to be better equipped on key concepts such as climate finance, direct access, backup system, etc. In addition, South-South cooperation presents an opportunity for accredited entities, which often rely on external experts and consultants to build their capacity.

- **LONG-TERM IMPACT:** The Community of Practice is a process that will be permanent and will renew its expertise but also face many challenges. Sustainability is also based on sharing lessons learned and challenges encountered with a view to improve the process going forward.

### OVERCOMING BARRIERS / CHALLENGES:

#### WHAT WERE THE MAIN BARRIERS / CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY?

**CAPACITY:**

Accredited entities come from different countries (in which different languages such as English, French, and Portuguese are spoken) and often face the difficulty of using a common language.

**INSTITUTIONAL:**

There exists a lack of synergies between "readiness providers" who, to ensure their visibility, want to work individually. It is difficult to get them to synergise their efforts.

**TECHNOLOGICAL:**

Some CoP partner countries lack the capacity to update information on policies and procedures that are evolving quickly.

**FINANCIAL:**

The main barrier to implementing the initiative is financing, limited buy-in from the GCF secretariat, and the fact that the DAEs are already over-committed, thus not having been able to dedicate much time to it.

#### HOW WERE THESE BARRIERS / CHALLENGES OVERCOME?

To date, workshops are organised mainly in English and participants who can speak other languages facilitate the translation for those who cannot understand English.

The CoP has advocated for readiness providers to pool and synergise their resources in order to be more effective. In this sense, flexibility is favoured in order to take advantage of the individual opportunities offered by each readiness provider and subsequently pool resources.

It is foreseen to develop a monitoring mechanism and mobilise resources for required updates.

It is planned to develop an advocacy plan towards the GCF Secretariat and other readiness providers, including GIZ.

### LESSONS LEARNED:

- **DESIGN CONSENSUS GOVERNANCE AT AN EARLY STAGE:** The need for the timely definition of the governance process of the Community of Practice was identified as one of the key requirements to move the process forward. This requires addressing important issues related to coordination, composition, functioning, etc.

### HOW TO REPLICATE

**THIS PRACTICE:** ————— This specific case is less about replication and more about expanding the number of participants of the Community of Practice. A number of factors are relevant in this respect:

- **IDENTIFY COMMON NEEDS AND SHARED CHALLENGES:** The initiative must meet the differing needs of all stakeholders.
- **PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT OF A CONCEPT NOTE ON THE INITIATIVE:** To formalise the vision of the Community of Practice, it is necessary to develop a concept note that defines priorities. This concept note will be the result of a joint effort by all direct access entities involved in the process.
- **MOBILISE RESOURCES** to organise meetings and define the governance of the initiative at an early stage.
- **GAIN THE SUPPORT OF KEY POLITICAL PARTNERS** in order to implement the priority areas of action.

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**WEBSITES:** ————— Not available

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#### CASE STUDY

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### IMPRINT GPD

#### PUBLISHED BY:

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH (in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme – UNDP)

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<https://www.transparency-partnership.net/good-practice-database>  
<https://www.ndc-cluster.net/good-practices>

This product is being published by GIZ in cooperation with UNDP under the framework of the Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement and the NDC Support Cluster. The analysis has been funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) under its International Climate Initiative (IKI), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Commission (EC).



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