

CIERP Policy Brief

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Implementing Paris Pledges: Highlights from African LDCs

By Rishikesh Bhandary and Mieke van der Wansem | December 2019



This policy brief reflects and builds on the South-South learning workshop for African Least Developed Countries (LDCs) organized by the Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Commission (EFCCC) of Ethiopia, which took place from July 25–27, 2019 with support from Norway and UNDP.

As countries begin implementing their commitments to tackle climate change, they are generating lessons on the actions that translating the nationally determined contributions (NDCs) really involve. Countries such as Sierra Leone are preparing “blueprints” to implement their NDCs. Some countries are confronting a host of challenges. For instance, cyclones Kenneth and Idai have deeply impacted Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Malawi and economic downturns in a number of countries are impacting resource availability.

This policy brief brings together insights from 14 of the Least Developed Countries in Africa. These insights are useful for countries as they deliberate raising the ambition of their existing pledges and prepare for a new round of NDCs. This brief organizes country experiences into four categories: institutional setup; resource mobilization; framework for measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV); and NDC revision status.

INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

Most of the countries have cross-ministerial steering committees on climate change as the primary means by which governments are providing institutional oversight for NDC implementation. Often, the secretariat of these high-level bodies are the focal institutions to the UNFCCC, such as environment ministries. A number of countries have nominated focal points in sectoral ministries to ensure effective coordination. In some cases, countries are relying on the institutional arrangements set up for REDD+ to provide the framework for NDC implementation. Ethiopia has a very progressive Climate-Resilient Green Economy Strategy (CRGE), which is housed under the Ministry of Finance. Together with the Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Commission, they coordinate the NDC and NAP. This strategy provides the foundation for all climate action across sectors.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Most countries highlighted the importance of finance to implement their NDCs. Their efforts to finance climate change actions include: identifying climate change as a separate category in the budget; widening the tax base to increase available finance; and establishing a national climate fund (Malawi and Ethiopia) to channel both domestic and international finance. Despite these efforts, countries such as Liberia and Sudan have noted challenging economic conditions and security concerns that have affected government expenditure on NDC implementation. For this reason, countries have also emphasized the complementary role international climate finance can play.

Internationally, countries have sought finance from the Green Climate Fund or are in the process of preparing proposals. Some countries, such as Senegal and Ethiopia, have been able to obtain financing for multiple projects, while others are in early stages of project preparation or accreditation. Countries are also receiving funds from UN agencies, such as UNDP and UNEP, as well as bilateral

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climate finance providers, such as the EU. Ethiopia funnels all of its current international resources through their national CRGE Facility and also receives funds from the GEF and the AF.

MRV FRAMEWORK

Most countries are in the design phase of instituting an MRV framework. Some countries have built-in systems to track finance along with mitigation and adaptation.

While some countries have already set up MRV systems, they remain to be made operational. GHG inventories are not updated on a regular basis because of financial and capacity constraints. A consistent message that comes across from the country experiences is the role of the first biennial update report and how that has created the baseline condition from which countries build out more elaborate MRV systems.

NDC REVISION STATUS

Many countries are in the process of revising their NDCs. Some countries are collecting more data to ground the NDC pledges in robust evidence. Other countries, such as Sudan, are increasing the scope

TABLE OF KEY LESSONS

	Institutional setup	MRV framework	Resource mobilization	NDC revision status
Angola	National Committee on Climate Change and Biodiversity	Under development	Government of Angola	35% unconditional, 15% conditional
Burkina Faso	Coordination Unit (Coordinating Entity, Adaptation Technical Cell, Mitigation Technical Cell)	Formalizing an MRV system; sectoral ones are present	Budget line on climate change; Widening the tax base; Mobilizing private sector (GCF accreditation process for Environmental Response Fund underway)	2025–2030 targets will be revised; agriculture is key sector
Central African Republic	National Climate Coordination (CN-Climate) under the Ministry of Environment	CN-Climate should develop MRV expertise, institutional arrangements, data collection procedures, improving capacity	UNDP and Commission of Central African Forests readiness projects	National Tree Day; 25 MW installation (solar); Integration of climate risks
Ethiopia	CRGE/NDC Inter-ministerial steering committee, with climate change units in sector ministries. EFCCC and MoF are lead coordinators of the NDC and NAP	MRV framework exists with NDC mainstreaming guidelines. MRV directorate at EFCCC verifies GHG emission reductions reports from line ministries.	MoF, where CRGE Facility is housed, is GCF accredited agency. Have GCF projects; GEF and AF readiness projects; and bilateral sources.	CRGE mid-term assessment is being conducted, which will determine NDC update. Current NDC has ambitious target of 64% emission reduction with 2010 as the base year.
Lesotho	MRV framework exists with NDC mainstreaming guidelines. MRV directorate at EFCCC verifies GHG emission reductions reports from line ministries.	Setting up MRV framework	No international access yet	Revised NDC to reflect better data in 2018
Liberia	MoF, where CRGE Facility is housed, is GCF accredited agency. Have GCF projects; GEF and AF readiness projects; and bilateral sources.	Safeguard Information System developed but not in effect	Discussions underway with the GCF	Review and revision process of key priority sectors initiated
Malawi	CRGE mid-term assessment is being conducted, which will determine NDC update. Current NDC has ambitious target of 64% emission reduction with 2010 as the base year.	Greenhouse Gas Inventory System established; adaptation and mitigation finance tracked; National Climate Change Management Policy in 2016	Establishing a national climate fund	Updating the NDC; data collection phase

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of their NDC to include sectors like transportation, which they had not included in their original submission. Lesotho revised its target from 45% reduction to 35% in light of better data: the unconditional component (10%) did not change, but the conditional component was lowered from 35% to 25%. Senegal intends to announce a revised NDC at COP25. Somalia has prepared a revised NDC, but it needs to be validated. Ethiopia already has an ambitious target of 64% emissions reduction from 2010. The current assessment of their NDC will determine any revisions or additional details.

SUCCESES AND CHALLENGES

There was overwhelming consensus that governments are paying close attention to climate change and are more sensitive to how climate impacts can affect their development trajectories. Countries also highlighted a number of challenges that they have been encountering as they seek to implement their NDCs. First, there is wide agreement on the need for finance to support implementation. Second, there has to be a concerted effort to improve the institutional capacity of the actors responsible for climate change. Third, there is a need to build information and data management systems to keep track of progress, noting that some countries have started to put in place the institutional arrangements. Fourth, scientific information should be incorporated into long-term planning exercises. Finally, there is a growing recognition that capacity gaps continue to persist, especially at the level of junior negotiators, which inhibit their effective participation at the international climate negotiations and beyond. 🌟

TABLE OF KEY LESSONS *(continued from page 2)*

	Institutional setup	MRV framework	Resource mobilization	NDC revision status
Mozambique	National Strategy on Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation	Framework exists; GHG inventory not done in a systematic way due to capacity constraints; National System of Monitoring and Evaluation of Climate Change	National Sustainable Development Fund	No revisions yet
Niger	National Council for the Environment for Sustainable Development (CNEDD)	In the process of planning for an automatic computerized inventory system	Have received GCF funds for developing a NAP and Readiness	Not being revised at this time
Senegal	UNFCCC Focal Point: Directorate for the Environment and Classified Establishments (DEEC)	In the process of setting up national MRV system (sectoral MRV, mitigation, adaptation and finance)	Center for Ecological Monitoring is accredited; National Agricultural Credit Fund (CNCAS) and Sovereign Investment Fund (FONSIS) being accredited; Three projects approved by GCF	Updated NDC expected at COP25, mostly to reflect data requirements; validation of sectoral data done
Sierra Leone	Climate Change Council formed; coordinating role assigned; national climate change focal points in ministries; alignment with existing plans	Environment Protection Agency, Meteorological Department	Working to accredit the Ministry of Finance with the GCF	Blueprint formulated; raising funds to revise NDC
Sudan	National committee set up	No MRV framework but a proposal in the NAMS project exists; GHG inventory within National Communications Reports	No direct access; sanctions have impeded access	Revising NDC to include transportation which was missing
Somalia	Directorate of Environment in the Office of the PM; establishing a working group from line ministries	Established a GHG Framework; informed initial national communications report; adaptation needed	Domestic allocations not enough; security sector receiving it	Revised NDC 2018; not yet validated
Zambia	Technical Committee on Climate Change; Council of Ministers on Climate Change; National Policy on Climate Change	In the process of setting up national MRV system	Two projects approved from the GCF; domestic resources also allocated	Stocktaking planned which will inform revisions; 3rd national communication

This policy brief was issued in preparation for an NDC Pavilion side event titled “Lessons and Challenges in NDC Planning and Implementation in LDCs” at the UNFCCC COP25 in Madrid, Spain in December 2019, which was organized by the Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Commission (EFCCC) of Ethiopia and co-hosted by CPL.



PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CPL AND EFCCC

Following a Climate Diplomacy and Negotiation training for CVF countries, Fletcher’s Climate Policy Lab (CPL) and the Ethiopian Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Commission (EFCCC) signed an MOU in October 2018 to continue our collaboration on climate policy implementation, related research, and training of professionals in Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Ethiopia is a forerunner in Africa with its Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy, its relatively progressive Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), and its determination to find a green growth economic model. Together with the Commission, CPL is looking at potential projects in a variety of areas, including the development of metrics to measure climate policy and green growth performance; diesel-to-solar conversion of pumps for water supply and irrigation; green finance and green industrialization; energy efficiency standards; clean energy access; and additional professional training programs..



From left: Easwaran Narassimhan, CPL Predoctoral Fellow; Rishikesh Bhandary, CPL Predoctoral Fellow; Professor Fekadu Beyene, Ethiopian Commissioner for Environment, Forest, and Climate Change; Professor Kelly Sims Gallagher, CPL Director; Mieke van der Wansem, CIERP Associate Director; Michael Northrop, Rockefeller Brothers Fund; Muluneh Hedeto, Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Commission