

sNAPshot

Monitoring and Evaluation in the NAP Process: Opportunities, challenges and emerging solutions

Overview Brief

This Overview Brief explores the topic of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process. It focuses on key opportunities, challenges and lessons learned by developing countries in the design and implementation of M&E systems of adaptation, highlighting solutions to address those challenges. This **sNAPshot** is the first of a series exploring the approaches that different countries have taken to M&E in their NAP process.

As the design and implementation of NAPs advance throughout the world, there is an increasing focus on monitoring, evaluating and learning from the adaptation process and its outcomes (Box 1).

National M&E of adaptation seeks to identify the achievements in the implementation of adaptation-related policies, plans, interventions and investments, as well as the results of those achievements. M&E helps determine if and how adaptation interventions are reducing vulnerability and improving countries' capacity to prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change across sectors and levels.

The design and implementation of a robust M&E system of adaptation is at the core of the NAP process.

The wide diversity of NAP experiences show that there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to the design and operationalization of M&E systems of adaptation (Hammill & Dekens, 2014). Adaptation planners are seeking better-tailored, more resource-efficient approaches to M&E of adaptation, in order to strengthen their capacity to report on and learn from pathways of change.



This overview examines the evolving opportunities, challenges and emerging solutions linked to M&E in the NAP process, based on the analysis of M&E perceptions and experiences from developing countries.¹

¹ Data gathered at the NAP Global Network Targeted Topics Forum on M&E held in Malawi, and at the NAP Assembly held in Bogota, Colombia. Further information about these events can be found at <http://napglobalnetwork.org/>

Box 1. M&E System Focus

M&E may focus on *process* or on adaptation *outcomes*. **Process** refers to advancement in the implementation of policies, plans or interventions that aim to promote adaptation, while **adaptation outcomes** refer to the impacts that these may have; that is, actual changes that result from implementing adaptation policies and plans.

M&E adaptation often requires data and information across multiple sectors, and about interventions taking place at both the national and the subnational levels (e.g. municipal, community and project levels) (Price-Kelly et al., 2015).

M&E of Adaptation: Opportunities and Challenges

The opportunities and challenges related to M&E of adaptation are constantly evolving. Experiences from NAP Global Network suggest that the development and implementation of M&E systems is transitioning to a deeper technical level, influenced, among other factors, by:

- Higher awareness about the **complexity of adaptation measurement** and, related to that, the need for increased engagement with M&E experts.
- Clearer understanding of the **resources** (human, technical and financial) required to sustain and use M&E data effectively towards the achievement of adaptation goals and reporting.
- Increasing efforts to ensure **more inclusive NAP processes** by integrating sectoral priorities and subnational-level stakeholders, and ensuring gender-responsive approaches.
- Growing interest in ensuring the viability and relevance of M&E systems of adaptation and their **articulation with international reporting commitments** and processes, particularly with the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Box 2. Country Examples

South Africa identified the need for ongoing assessment to ensure synergies/linkages of the M&E framework with new adaptation plans and strategies. Synergies were identified between the desired adaptation outcomes for M&E climate resilience, as well as the strategic priorities of the National Adaptation Strategy, the NDC adaptation goals and the SDG strategic objectives and indicators.

Source: Makholela, 2017

Morocco developed and implemented the process in a cost-efficient manner, integrating adaptation monitoring into an existing system and using available data. The process was supported by GIZ, as well as national and international consultants.

Kenya linked the system with existing national M&E structures, using existing data and information from ministries, departments and agencies responsible for measurement.

Source: Hammill & Dekens, 2014



Table 1 presents some of the key opportunities and challenges faced by developing countries working in national M&E systems of adaptation.

Table 1. M&E of adaptation: Opportunities and challenges

Opportunities	Challenges
<p>PURPOSE AND USE OF M&E OF ADAPTATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening accountability and reporting, including showcasing results on the international stage (e.g., National Communications to the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties). Utilizing M&E as an enabler for adaptive management and course adjustments, and informing strategic decisions. <p>LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning and strengthening capacities on evolving adaptation contexts, needs and experiences. <p>CROSS-SECTORAL PARTNERSHIPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building support for adaptation from taxpayers, constituents and/or development partners. Developing new partnerships, demonstrating progress and results within and across sectors. <p>RESOURCE EFFICIENCY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on what already exist to avoid duplication of efforts, save resources and benefit from available data, proven systems and tools. Gathering evidence on the costs saved by adaptation measures; developing the “business case” of adaptation. Gathering evidence on adaptation/mitigation co-benefits, scaling-up successful approaches. <p>OWNERSHIP AND SHARING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring collective/cross-sectoral construction of indicators to foster ownership and knowledge sharing. Using M&E systems for adaptation as a platform for coordination and dialogue cross sectors and levels. <p>NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND INVESTMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying gaps to inform new investment decisions and articulate efforts with development partners. Decentralizing information and processes to involve subnational authorities, territories and communities, as well as non-traditional sectors (e.g., defense) in adaptation. Ensuring effective communication of M&E results as part of a broader NAP communication strategy. 	<p>DEVELOPMENT OF SMART INDICATORS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of a common metric to measure adaptation across scales and to determine “success.” Long timescale over which climate change unfolds and uncertainty regarding its actual impacts. Unavailability of data on the changes to be monitored. <p>HIGH-LEVEL SUPPORT AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Securing political will and commitment for the process. Engaging and articulating efforts among stakeholders across sectors and scales (national, regional, local). <p>REPORTING OVERLOAD AND MISALIGNMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoiding overload and misalignment of reporting requirements for different agendas (e.g., sectoral, national) and purposes (e.g., NDCs, SDGs, NAP measurement). <p>CROSS-SECTORAL/MULTI-LEVEL COORDINATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring buy-in and coordination to gather data across sectors and levels. Identifying indicators that are transversal to all sectors (vis-à-vis isolated measures focused on particular sectors or projects). <p>RESOURCES TO SET UP AND SUSTAIN THE M&E SYSTEM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Securing financial and technical resources needed to design robust national M&E systems. Inadequate technical capacity to support and adjust the M&E system over time (e.g., staff turn over). Securing the “next level” of political/high-level buy-in after the stage of M&E design: commitment on follow-up mechanisms. <p>GENDER INTEGRATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designing gender-responsive M&E systems to monitor, evaluate and learn from the adaptive capacity of women, men, girls and boys. <p>DATA REQUIREMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrating effectively both quantitative and qualitative measurements. Measuring and learning from “negative change” (i.e., maladaptation)

While these opportunities and challenges are not exhaustive, they provide an indication of the types of issues that need to be considered by adaptation planners

as they advance in the design and implementation of their NAP process (Box 2).

The Road Ahead: Emerging M&E Solutions

Developing country planners and practitioners are continuously identifying innovative solutions to overcome the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities related to M&E of adaptation, particularly in three areas:

- a. Stakeholder Engagement and Alignment
- b. Resource Strengthening
- c. Data Quality and Effective Use

Table 2 presents examples of emerging solutions in each of these areas.

Adapting to climate change impacts is a highly dynamic process that involves planning, monitoring and measuring impact. Most importantly, it is a process that involves continuous learning about pathways of change. M&E systems play an essential role in the ability of developing country adaptation planners and decision-makers to identify and address gaps in a timely manner, to build upon success and, ultimately, to strengthen national adaptation processes.

Table 2. M&E of adaptation: Emerging solutions

Emerging Solutions
<p>A. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND ALIGNMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform and articulate the development of the M&E system with relevant legislation and policies/plans. • Consult and coordinate with existing cross-sectoral working groups focusing on climate change adaptation and mitigation to avoid duplication of efforts. • Ensure the early involvement of a range of stakeholders in the design of the M&E system, to foster ownership and collaboration from the start. Forming a working group focused on the M&E of adaptation is one option for ensuring sustained involvement of different sectors and levels. • Conduct ongoing awareness raising about the role of M&E in adaptation, including training of adaptation technical staff as well as decision-makers.
<p>B. RESOURCE STRENGTHENING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a realistic assessment of the capacities required for actors to design and implement M&E of adaptation, provide capacity-building opportunities to address gaps (e.g., courses, webinars, online training). Consider developing guidance and/or templates to help new staff understand the role they play in the M&E system. • Ensure redundancy of M&E of adaptation capacities, fostering M&E-related roles and responsibilities across various sectors, levels and scales. • Participate actively in knowledge sharing on M&E of adaptation through existing networks (e.g., NAP Global Network); seek peer exchange opportunities regionally or globally. • Encourage relevant ministries to consider the resources required for M&E as part of their planning and budgeting processes. • Explore and mobilize a diverse range of funding sources for M&E. For example, consider international funding opportunities (e.g., Green Climate Fund Readiness Programme) to establish the M&E system.
<p>C. DATA QUALITY AND EFFECTIVE USE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish mechanisms to validate the results from the M&E system. • Build opportunities for feedback to improve the system and to inform adaptation planning. • Foster reflection processes about the M&E outputs, involving stakeholders from multiple sectors and the scientific community as appropriate. • Use a process of prioritization to select the data that needs to be collected and the indicators to monitor. Start small, expand and complement the indicators over time. • Implement gender-responsive M&E for adaptation, building upon existing indicators and resources, and learning from sex-disaggregated data. • Articulate with open government strategies to strengthen transparency. • Consider the use of Information and Communication Technologies (e.g., mobile phones) as part of data collection efforts. • Design innovative communication strategies to disseminate M&E findings, considering different target audiences and novel visualization techniques. • Seek the standardization of indicators to foster regional comparisons and strengthen articulation.



References and Further Reading

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About the NAP Global Network and sNAPshots series

The NAP Global Network is a group of individuals and institutions who are coming together to enhance bilateral support for the NAP process in developing countries. Based on experiences and lessons shared through the activities of the NAP Global Network, sNAPshots highlight examples of how countries are currently approaching different aspects of the NAP process. If interested in participating the NAP Global Network, please [sign up online](#).

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