

# GREEN CLIMATE FUND READINESS AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

## PART 2

The Cases of Paraguay, Cameroon,  
Nepal, Bangladesh and Philippines





# Green Climate Fund Readiness and Indigenous Peoples (Part 2):

The Cases of Paraguay, Cameroon, Nepal,  
Bangladesh and Philippines

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The Cases of Paraguay, Cameroon, Nepal, Bangladesh and Philippines**

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## The Cases of Paraguay, Cameroon, Nepal, Bangladesh and Philippines

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*by Francesco Martone,*

*on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples' Advocacy Team on the GCF*

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*by Federation for the Self-Determination of Indigenous Peoples (FAPI)*

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# Acronyms

|                    |                                                                                               |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AE                 | Accredited Entity                                                                             |
| AFD                | Financial Development Agency                                                                  |
| ARP                | Rural Association of Paraguay                                                                 |
| BCP                | Central Bank of Paraguay                                                                      |
| BCCAP              | Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan                                            |
| BCCRF              | Bangladesh Climate Change Resilient Fund                                                      |
| BCCTF              | Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund                                                          |
| BDEAC              | Bank of Central African States                                                                |
| BMUB               | German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety |
| BNF                | National Development Bank                                                                     |
| CBD                | Convention of Biological Diversity                                                            |
| CCC                | Climate Change Commission                                                                     |
| CDM                | Clean Development Mechanism                                                                   |
| CONAMURI           | Coordinator of Rural and Indigenous Women                                                     |
| CONAPI             | National Coordination of Indigenous Pastoral                                                  |
| COP                | Conference of Parties                                                                         |
| CSOs               | Civil Society Organizations                                                                   |
| DGEEC              | General Directorate of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses                                       |
| DINCAP             | National Directorate of Project Coordination and Administration                               |
| ERD                | Economic Relations Division                                                                   |
| ESMP               | Environmental and Social Management Policy                                                    |
| ESP                | Environmental and Social Policy                                                               |
| ESS                | Environmental and Social Safeguards                                                           |
| FAO                | United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization                                              |
| FAPI               | Federation for the Self-Determination of Indigenous Peoples                                   |
| FEDERACION GUARANI | Federation of Associations of Indigenous Communities of the Eastern Region                    |
| FEPAMA             | Paraguayan Federation of Wood Producers                                                       |
| FPIC               | Free, Prior and Informed Consent                                                              |
| FVC/GCF            | Green Climate Fund                                                                            |

|          |                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| GIZ      | German Development Cooperation                                                                                                                                  |
| IEU      | Independent Evaluation Unit                                                                                                                                     |
| IFC      | International Finance Corporation                                                                                                                               |
| ILO      | International Labor Organization                                                                                                                                |
| INDI     | Paraguayan Institute of Indigenous Affairs                                                                                                                      |
| INFONA   | National Forestry Institute                                                                                                                                     |
| IPAG     | Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group                                                                                                                               |
| IPOs     | Indigenous Peoples' Organizations                                                                                                                               |
| IPRA     | Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act                                                                                                                                  |
| ITAP     | Independent Technical Advisory Panel                                                                                                                            |
| IUCN     | International Union for Conservation of Nature                                                                                                                  |
| LDCs     | Least Developed Countries                                                                                                                                       |
| MA       | Ministry of the Environment                                                                                                                                     |
| MAG      | Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock                                                                                                                           |
| MAS      | Ministry of Social Action                                                                                                                                       |
| MEC      | Ministry of Education and Science                                                                                                                               |
| MINEPDED | Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development                                                                                       |
| MINFOF   | Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife                                                                                                                               |
| MM       | Ministry of Women                                                                                                                                               |
| MS y BS  | Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare                                                                                                                    |
| NAPs     | National Action Plans                                                                                                                                           |
| NCIP     | National Commission on Indigenous Peoples                                                                                                                       |
| NDA      | National Designated Authority                                                                                                                                   |
| NDC      | Nationally Determined Contributions                                                                                                                             |
| NGOs     | Nongovernment Organizations                                                                                                                                     |
| NIE      | National Implementing Entity                                                                                                                                    |
| NTFP     | Non-Timber Forest Products                                                                                                                                      |
| PROEZA   | Poverty, Reforestation, Energy and Climate Change Project                                                                                                       |
| PSF      | Peoples Survival Fund                                                                                                                                           |
| PwC      | PriceWaterhouseCoopers                                                                                                                                          |
| R-PIN    | REDD Preparation Information Note                                                                                                                               |
| REDD+    | Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, including conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks |
| REDESPI  | Network of Non-Profit Entities at the service of Indigenous Peoples in Paraguay                                                                                 |
| RPSP     | Readiness and Preparatory Support Programs                                                                                                                      |
| SEN      | National Emergency Secretariat                                                                                                                                  |
| SNNA     | National Secretariat for Children and Adolescents                                                                                                               |
| STP      | Technical Secretariat of Planning                                                                                                                               |
| UNDP     | United Nations Development Program                                                                                                                              |
| UNDRIP   | United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples                                                                                                  |
| UNFCCC   | UN Framework Convention on Climate Change                                                                                                                       |
| UNICEF   | United Nations Children's Fund                                                                                                                                  |
| WWF      | World Wildlife Fund                                                                                                                                             |

# Executive Summary

*by Francesco Martone,*

*on behalf of the Indigenous Peoples' Advocacy Team on the GCF*

## Introduction

This report follows an initial scoping research commissioned in 2017 by Tebtebba to Elatia partners in five selected countries,\* This second part of the scoping research focuses on another five countries of Elatia<sup>1</sup> partners, namely, Paraguay, Cameroon, Nepal, Bangladesh and Philippines.

The research developed around some key lines to provide an assessment of current national legislation on climate change and on indigenous peoples' rights in the selected countries, climate finance, and capacity of the National Designated Authority (NDA)/Focal Point and relevant climate change institutions to effectively engage with indigenous peoples. Specifically, contributors were expected to provide an overall picture of climate finance to their country, projects that have been funded, and related impacts on indigenous peoples.

Further focusing on the Green Climate Fund (GCF), contributors were to provide data and analysis on the GCF readiness activities car-

ried out in their country, the type of activities and extent to which they benefit and/or involve indigenous peoples, with a particular focus on women and children. In addition, advice on the type of activities and safeguards needed to support indigenous peoples' engagement and respect their rights was sought for. Lastly, partners were expected to offer an overview of indigenous peoples' awareness and knowledge of the Green Climate Fund, access to information, and participation in the GCF process at national/subnational level.

This initial study was commissioned in a specific point in time when the GCF was still developing its indigenous peoples' policy later adopted at the GCF Board 19th meeting in 2018, and when the Board had agreed to commission an independent assessment of Readiness to the Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU). Hence it proved to be an important contribution to the development of the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy and an initial parallel assessment to be fed into the process of defining the terms of reference for the IEU assessment of Readiness and Preparation Programs.

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\* Green Climate Fund Readiness and Indigenous Peoples: The Cases of Peru, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo and Vietnam.

The findings of this first report point to the risk of undermining indigenous peoples' engagement in GCF activities at the national level, given the registered discrepancy in existing legislation on indigenous peoples in selected countries and the capacity of NDAs and Accredited Entities (AEs) to properly understand, own and fulfil obligations related to indigenous peoples. This is compounded by low awareness and information on GCF.

The strict application of country ownership—in the lack of a GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, not yet adopted at that time—would have also generated uneven and incoherent implementation of indigenous peoples' rights and related safeguards at the national level due to the gap between legal recognition of rights and their effective implementation and application at the NDA level. With the adoption of the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy and the pending related Operational Guidelines, these problems might be partially solved in theory, but more will need to be done to put these commitments and principles into practice, both in terms of awareness and implementation capacity.

The findings of the first five country case studies in fact point to low, if not non-existing, compliance of selected countries' NDAs to the requirements listed in the "Initial best-practice guidelines for the selection and establishment of national designated authorities and focal points."<sup>2</sup> This is most notable in relation to stakeholder consultation and engagement and access to information. Accordingly, NDAs in the selected countries have not yet shown adequate capacity to coordinate "multistakeholder" engagement for country consultations, in particular with indigenous peoples.

The report recommended that NDAs or focal points enhance their understanding and consideration of indigenous peoples' related issues and significantly improve the degree of engagement, consultation and information dissemination. It also proposed an Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities' specific component of Readiness under the stakeholder engagement area. Its goal is to support the capacity of NDAs and National Implementing Entities (NIE) to identify strategies and modalities to ensure

indigenous peoples' sustained engagement and effective participation, including full disclosure of information, meaningful consultation and informed participation process, and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC).

The NDAs accordingly would be expected to report on modalities and effectiveness of their outreach and consultation activities towards indigenous peoples. The GCF and other donors should identify and offer support to specific capacity building programs for indigenous peoples to ensure their full and effective engagement with GCF at all levels, from NDAs to Implementing or Accredited Entities, for activities related to consultation, advocacy, institutional building, formulating project proposals, and monitoring and evaluation, among others.

Indicators to monitor and assess the quality of engagement, both qualitative and quantitative, of NDAs/focal points and AEs with indigenous peoples, local communities, women, and civil society should be developed and adopted. The GCF, together with other donors supporting Readiness and Preparation programs, should develop a toolkit on best practice country coordination experiences building up on similar procedures. Information on GCF, NDAs and focal points, and AEs should be made available in-country with ample time and in local languages. Performance indicators to assess effectiveness and quality of engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities should also be formulated to allow for independent monitoring and feedback.

## This Report

The current report details findings and recommendations produced by partners in other five countries, notably, Maleya (Bangladesh), Tebtebba (Philippines), National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (Nepal), Lelewal Foundation (Cameroon), and Federation for the Self-determination of Indigenous Peoples (Paraguay) on the basis of the same terms of reference of the first one. Hence, this report can

be considered as an additional complement to substantiate, integrate or possibly rearticulate some of the general findings and recommendations. It has been commissioned after the adoption of the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, the commissioning by the Board of an external assessment of the GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support Program to Dalberg Consultancies, and the approval of the Terms of Reference for the Readiness assessment by the Independent Evaluation Unit. It therefore takes into account these crucial developments and reassesses some of the initial findings of the first report, in the light of the adoption of the Indigenous Peoples Policy, the Environmental and Social Policy (ESP), and related follow-up actions.

## **GCF's Indigenous Peoples Policy and Environment and Social Policy**

At its 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting and after almost two years of consultations, the Green Climate Fund finally adopted its Indigenous Peoples Policy.<sup>3</sup> Its significance can be better understood in consideration of how the GCF functions and to its multiple implications with regard to mitigation and management of potential impacts of its activities on indigenous peoples. Unlike other Funds or Multilateral Development Banks, here it is recipient countries that play the key role, in accordance to the consolidated principle of “country ownership,” notably the centrality of their climate and development priorities. These countries have set up competent authorities (Nationally Designated Authorities or focal points) that are expected, among others, to launch multistakeholder dialogues to define the framework within which the project proponents will elaborate their proposals.

Accredited Entities (both international and national) are in charge of project implementation, and hence required to comply with GCF's social and environmental safeguards (GCF has adopted the World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC) Performance Standards as interim safeguards pending definition of its own),

as well as their own. Hence, the Secretariat's task is to carry out due diligence to ensure compliance of safeguards, and the NDA's to organize consultations and enable the participation of civil society and other stakeholders. Implementing entities (that are accredited only if they have a safeguards and compliance system compatible with GCF's) will have to comply with their safeguards and hence those of GCF.

This is the context in which the Indigenous Peoples Policy will be implemented at various levels. The first one is participation. The policy envisaged the creation of the position of an Indigenous Peoples Specialist and of an Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (IPAG) composed of four self-identified indigenous peoples' representatives from four regions (Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific).

Furthermore, the policy defines the criteria to be followed to ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples in all GCF activities, acknowledging the central role of free, prior informed consent in accordance with international standards, such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). In the absence of FPIC, no project can be presented to the Board's consideration and possible approval. Project proponents will have to implement indigenous peoples' management and participation plans in case the proposed projects generate impacts on indigenous peoples.

The policy also recognizes the rights to self-determination, access and use of natural resources, land and territories. A central theme is represented by national agencies' capacity to fully grasp and implement best practices for participation and mitigation of potential impacts of projects and programs, in a manner that is respectful of indigenous peoples' rights and needs. For this purpose, Readiness and capacity building programs for the NDAs are envisaged.

The second element of the policy is the “do-no-harm” principle, notably the prevention of any form of negative impact on the rights of indigenous communities possibly involved or affected by the proposed activity. For this reason, specific operational guidelines will be developed on the basis of the policy's prescriptions and

connected to the GCF's safeguards and the Environmental and Social Management Policy (ESMP), also adopted in the Board's 19<sup>th</sup> meeting that provides the operational framework within which the Indigenous Peoples Policy will be implemented.

The third element is the "do-good" principle, notably ensuring social and environmental benefits and improvement of the communities' living conditions. The fourth element, which will have to be further spelled out and defined, relates to the direct contribution of indigenous peoples to the GCF's adaptation and mitigation goals and emission reduction targets by means of projects and programs drawn on the basis of traditional and ancestral knowledge systems and livelihoods. The Paris Agreement marks a significant progress in that regard by acknowledging the importance of indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge in pursuing its adaptation goals, and creating a platform of dialogue and exchange on best practices among indigenous peoples and states.

Finally, indigenous peoples' organizations have called for the establishment of a dedicated financial direct access window for their projects, a request that the GCF, in strict observation of the "country ownership" principle, would find hard to accommodate. However, the policy deals with this matter with great flexibility. It leaves the door open for the Board to decide at its own discretion to directly fund projects presented by indigenous peoples' organizations, in cases of particular vulnerability and always with the approval of the country in question.

The recent Independent Evaluation Unit's assessment of Readiness, as well as the findings of this and the preceding reports by Tebtebba, confirm the crucial importance of NDA capacity, knowledge and commitment to fully implement the relevant elements of the Indigenous Peoples Policy as well as to lay out the necessary conditions for its further application throughout the project cycle from its very beginning (notably preparation of concept notes and letter of no-objection).

In this sense, the Indigenous Peoples Policy envisages the possibility of NDAs (and Accredited

Entities) to:

*seek support through readiness and preparatory support proposals and funding proposals for various initiatives, including (a) support for the development priorities of indigenous peoples through programs, (such as community-driven development programs) developed by governments in cooperation with indigenous peoples; (b) preparation of participatory profiles of indigenous peoples to document their culture, demographic structure, gender and intergenerational relations and social organization, institutions, production systems, religious beliefs and resource-use patterns; and (c) facilitating partnerships among the government, indigenous peoples organizations, civil society organizations, and the private sector to promote the climate resiliency of indigenous peoples communities.<sup>4</sup>*

It further states that the GCF might allocate resources to support indigenous peoples' engagement at the national level,

*as part of readiness and preparatory support proposals or funding proposals to ensure their full and effective engagement with GCF at all levels. This support will include, at a minimum, activities related to consultation, advocacy, institutional building for project implementation and management, as well as the effective engagement of indigenous peoples in the formulation of project proposals and monitoring and evaluation.*

The first draft of the Operational Guidelines for the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy (being developed at the time of publication of this document) contains a series of useful proposals and recommendations on how Readiness plans and respective NDA activities can contribute to the policy's effective implementation. Among others, the Guidelines recommend that representatives of indigenous peoples are duly involved in stakeholder consultations related to establishing the NDAs and developing strategic frameworks for national engagement.

The strategic framework should include indicators and criteria related to expected development benefits for indigenous peoples, and accredited entities should be trained and supported with a view to include indigenous peoples in the development of assessments and action plans. Furthermore, indigenous peoples' perspectives and recommendations should be included in the initial screening of the projects/program.

Parallel to the adoption of the Indigenous Peoples Policy was the Board's adoption of the GCF Environmental and Social Policy and related Management Framework<sup>5</sup> that specifies the NDA's roles in terms of stakeholder engagement and issuance of the no-objection letter. The NDA's responsibility towards indigenous peoples is two-fold. On one hand, it has to comply with requirements related to full and effective participation of indigenous peoples as also specified in the Indigenous Peoples Policy, Independent Redress Mechanism, Information Disclosure Policy, and Monitoring and Accountability Framework. On the other, the no-objection procedure that would then generate the no-objection letter will have to be informed by the contribution and inputs of indigenous peoples, primarily those potentially affected or engaged in the project proposed by the accredited entity for Board approval.

The Environmental and Social Management Policy specifies also that the GCF,

*working with the national designated authorities and focal points of countries, will describe the process and set guidance to assist the accredited entities to put in place and implement a process for meaningful consultation with people affected or potentially affected by the activities, guided by the principles of transparency, inclusiveness, non-discrimination and accountability and by international best practices, and consistent with the best practice options for country coordination and multi-stakeholder engagement.*

An additional point needs to be made with reference to REDD+<sup>6</sup> and the related tasks the

NDA will have to carry out. The NDAs are expected to collaborate with the National REDD+ focal point to develop the REDD+ concept notes and then issue a letter of no-objection. In both cases, while the REDD+ Scorecard adopted by the GCF<sup>7</sup> does not imply that the Indigenous Peoples Policy is triggered at the "concept note" level, it is still relevant as regards the NDA's task to ensure indigenous peoples' full and effective engagement and participation as stated by the policy, throughout the cycle from inception of concept note preparation to issuance of letter of no-objection.

## **GCF Secretariat Evaluation of Readiness and Dalberg Report on Readiness**

At its 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting the GCF Board instructed the Secretariat to commission an evaluation of Readiness before disbursing further funds, thereby conveying a sense of concern on how Readiness programs are actually impacting on countries' capacities to properly use GCF funds. Secretariat reports that far were mostly focused on quantitative analyses on how much money was disbursed, how many programs were funded, but not so much on actual outputs and outcomes. This was also due to the lack of indicators to assess performance and outcomes. The Secretariat had asked for US\$150 million for the remaining Readiness programs for 2017 and 2018. The Board approved only \$50 million for the development of National Action Plans (NAPs) and other adaptation programs, asking for an assessment and presentation of a revised work program and new budget request for 2018 based on the assessment's results.

The assessment's goal, complemented by an external assessment commissioned to Dalberg Global Development Advisors, was therefore to better define the goals of Readiness programs and to assess performance, while providing advice on how to improve and strengthen the processes and structures.

The Dalberg report found that in general terms the Readiness program was addressing key needs for national level capacity building to implement GCF policies and programs. Most of the support provided that far was related to capacity building for NDAs and Direct Access Entities (DAEs) to properly establish no-objection procedures and to accredit entities. Readiness programs were expected to guide countries through more complex preparatory processes and the development of strategic frameworks and adaptation plans. As regards structured dialogues, these had not yet effectively supported knowledge sharing among country-level stakeholders.

However, the assessment comprehensiveness suffered from the lack of a specific theory of change, evaluation criteria, clarity on the program's scope, and the links between Readiness components and other GCF processes and mechanisms. It became clear then that a strategic long-term approach was needed, based on the assessment of needs at country level and on a solid institutionalization of processes at governmental level, the lack of which is affecting the program's sustainability.

The Dalberg report formulates a series of recommendations to improve Readiness program design, such as developing a Theory of Change that would provide a clear picture of outputs, outcomes and vision and of performance indicators to be used in future monitoring and evaluation. In addition, gap assessments should be carried out to identify specific needs that the Readiness program can address, and more flexible funding should be made available to applicants over longer periods of time.

With a view to improve execution of Readiness programs, the report advises to clarify roles and responsibilities of all program stakeholders and to support coordination at national levels with GCF, providing guidance on multi-stakeholder collaboration and coordination. Communication should be improved and clear guidance and assessment criteria provided in various languages, while more efforts should be put on peer-to-peer learning through structured dialogues and support platforms that enhance peer-to-peer sharing.

The report also suggested some actions to be undertaken as immediate priorities to be included in the 2018 Work Program, such as development of a theory of change, improvement of the Secretariat and regional advisors' capacity to reach out and support countries, and strengthening in-house capacity of national experts to deliver, as most of the consultancies for Readiness were given to external and international advisors and consultants.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) and indigenous peoples' organizations (IPOs) welcomed the Secretariat's report on implementation of readiness and preparatory support, noting the encouraging improvement and lessons generated but expressing concern at the poor degree of multistakeholder engagement, as evidenced in the report. Therefore, they recommended that the Board and Secretariat develop indicators to monitor and assess the quality of stakeholder engagement, both qualitative and quantitative, with NDAs/focal points and accredited entities.

The CSOs and IPOs also expressed concern that countries receiving Readiness support had no clarity on expected outputs and long-term outcomes of readiness and preparatory support, and at the strong reliance on external international intermediaries. Improving local capacity and training for technical experts at the national level should therefore benefit from expertise of women, indigenous peoples and local communities.

Further, CSOs and IPOs concurred on the need for a proper assessment of NDA capacity to engage, reach out and disseminate information to relevant stakeholders, as well as to improve quality of structured dialogues. They also recommended the adoption of specific Terms of Reference for the independent evaluation to be carried out by the Independent Evaluation Unit of the GCF. Furthermore, in order to ensure engagement of CSOs and IPOs in the independent evaluation, the GCF should convene a dialogue workshop on stakeholder engagement in Readiness, particularly targeted at them along with local communities and affected groups.

On its side, the Secretariat, also on the basis of the Dalberg report, formulated a series of rec-

ommendations for follow-up activities that have been undertaken since then, pending finalization of the IEU independent assessment. Since then various structured dialogues have been carried out in Latin America, Africa, Caribbean, Pacific and Asia from February 2018,<sup>8</sup> as well as a Direct Access Entities workshop.

The Secretariat produced a revised work program with proposals for some initial activities that was presented to the Board at B19 and a progress report at its 20<sup>th</sup> meeting in July 2018. In this report, the Secretariat summarized undertaken actions, such as the development of a theory of change, the improvement of the Secretariat's capacity to "support countries to engage more strategically with the Readiness Programme" and to improve processes and tools needed to align the Readiness program with a Secretariat-wide strategy. It also intended to revise the Readiness Framework and consider new initiatives such as:

*the possibility of an NDA direct access modality. Furthermore, the Secretariat will develop country programmes and pipelines of projects/programmes, supporting recipient countries in engaging with stakeholders in their countries, as well as with Accredited Entities and the Secretariat, to further develop their country programmes and pipelines.*

One of the purposes of Readiness Support is to enable NDAs to engage with stakeholders in dialogues and consultation, in particular on country programs. In that regard the Secretariat informs that a total of 103 out of 155 approved proposals envisage consultation with stakeholders once activities are completed. It is worth noting that the Theory of Change, elaborated by the Secretariat as a response to the Dalberg report recommendations, envisions the creation of an enabling environment for government and nongovernment stakeholders to address climate change. Relevant outputs are also listed, such as "stakeholder engagement consultative process." As regards institutional capacity and coordination for climate finance-related output, organizing participatory reviews are envisaged for local stakeholders, especially project-affected

peoples and communities, including women, CSOs and IPOs.

## **Indigenous Peoples' Experience and Perspectives on Structured Dialogues**

Indigenous peoples' experience with Structured Dialogues this far has been mixed. In Asia, for instance, only one Tebtebba representative attended two dialogues together with two CSO representatives. The Tebtebba representative was not invited as indigenous peoples' organization but as a component of the CSO delegation, and this reflects the fact that the GCF does not officially recognize indigenous peoples organizations as a separate constituency as the case is in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and in other Climate Funds. This situation could be partially solved with the establishment of the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group (envisaged by the Indigenous Peoples Policy) that could provide the space for "institutionalized" interaction between self-appointed indigenous peoples' representatives across different regions and the governance structure of the GCF and its activities and programs, Readiness included.

Therefore, it could be advisable that in the future, regional members of the IPAG be invited in the regional workshops together with representatives of indigenous peoples of the various countries of the given region. The situation is similar in Latin America. For instance, the Structured Dialogue organized in Colombia in March 2018 could not include indigenous peoples' representatives since invitations came too late.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, as part of its Readiness program, Nicaragua has offered to host a Structured Dialogue for indigenous peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean in 2019.<sup>10</sup>

In general terms, it should be pointed out that CSO participation to Structured Dialogues is indeed limited and restricted by the rigid eligibility criteria set by the Secretariat, such as a good knowledge of the GCF process. This prerequisite might end up hindering indigenous peoples organizations to attend the Dialogues and approach their NDAs in these fora, in case

access to their NDA at the national level is limited or non-existing. Furthermore, the design of Structured Dialogues is also per se a limiting factor to ensure indigenous peoples' full and effective engagement and participation, since these are meant for high level audiences comprising NDAs, government officials, Accredited Entities and private sector.

## **IEU Assessment of Indigenous Peoples and Civil Society Engagement in Readiness and NDA Capacity to Comply with Indigenous Peoples Policy: a Bleak Picture**

Following a decision taken at its meeting in July 2017, the Board recognizes the importance of Readiness and Preparatory Support Programs (RPSP) and the fact that these have undergone subsequent changes since first approval. At its 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, it adopted the Terms of Reference for the independent assessment of Readiness to be carried out by the Independent Evaluation Unit. It instructed the IEU to carry out an evaluation of effectiveness and efficiency of the RPSP, with a view to support the Board in its decisions on new allocations and more generally on decisions related to the new GCF Replenishment.

The IEU was also to “review approaches in the implementation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support programme with a view to making recommendations for improved alignment with the objectives of the RPSP; and recommend gains in effectiveness, efficiency, country ownership and sustained impact.” Additionally, it would evaluate the different phases of Readiness from the design and planning to implementation and expected results. It would use the IEU evaluation criteria established by the GCF Board. These include “(relevance of) mandate; effectiveness of programme and processes; efficiency of processes; sustained impact, coher-

ence in climate finance delivery; gender equity and inclusiveness; innovation and potential for paradigm shift; country ownership, potential for building scale and unexpected results (positive and negative).” Stakeholder participation is not explicitly spelled out but it can be encompassed in “country ownership.”

To that regard it is worth recalling that the first Tebtebba report on Readiness had a critical analysis of “country ownership” and on whether this would be only “state-centered” or also “people-centered.” This distinction is crucial in order to properly evaluate the effective engagement of indigenous peoples in country ownership or whether country ownership would just be relevant and pertinent for NDAs or focal points and, in the ultimate analysis, of governments.

The Tebtebba report specifies that:

*Country ownership therefore should be more than a state-centered approach, or an interaction with national government if not even ownership by a single ministry. It should be meant in a broader sense, as including local governments, affected communities, indigenous peoples, women, civil society and local private sector; and the Board should operationalize policies on country ownership to that effect. Nevertheless, the procedures of the Fund to verify that indigenous peoples are fully and effectively consulted and proposals based on application of indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge are left to the discretion of the NDAs, and there is no mandatory or binding language on multi-stakeholder engagement.<sup>11</sup>*

This point is very critical also with reference to what the IEU can assess when dealing with country ownership, pending finalization of specific GCF guidance on indigenous peoples' and CSOs' engagement in GCF, and finalization and adoption of the Operational Guidelines for the Indigenous Peoples Policy.

The need to have an explicit reference to assess the extent of NDA engagement with indigenous peoples, and hence to develop specific assessment criteria and indicators related to

country ownership, is also evident when going through the methodology selected for the IEU assessment. Most of the consultations and engagement activities are related to NDAs, GCF Board members, external experts, and focal points. The only possible opportunities for indigenous peoples and civil society to engage are via an online questionnaire or in structured dialogues if these include items related to the assessment. In the case of country and site visits, on the other hand, further consultations are limited to delivery partners (international and national) and potential delivery partners to document experiences related to effectiveness, relevance, coherence and country ownership.<sup>12</sup>

The report was expected to be presented to the Board in October 2018 to then be sent to the Conference of Parties (COP) of the UNFCCC, but debate and decision were postponed to its meeting B22 in February 2019.

## IEU Assessment Results

The Independent Evaluation Unit assessment<sup>13</sup> and subsequent Secretariat management response<sup>14</sup> offer a very detailed insight on key matters related to Readiness, access to information, stakeholder engagement, involvement of indigenous peoples, coordination among various ministries and synergy among various climate funds at the national level. Many of the findings echo those of the first Readiness Scoping study carried out by Tebtebba partners and those of the current study.

The findings offer a worrying picture of the effectiveness of Readiness to ensure full ownership and stakeholder engagement. However, the Secretariat's response appears very weak in comparison, and does not seem to properly acknowledge the IEU proposals. This is unfortunate, since the report contains some very important statements and findings that are accompanied by specific recommendations that are worth taking into due account and that either reflect or further complement those contained in this and the preceding Readiness Scoping Study.

While the IEU report recognizes that the “design of the RPSP strongly emphasizes a country-driven and country-owned approach for providing climate finance, by aiming—among others—to help beneficiary countries (iii) effectively engage stakeholders (including civil society organizations [CSOs] and the private sector),” in practice this works only partially. The report acknowledges that in spite of efforts undertaken to engage stakeholders at a high level, the participation of “civil society in the RPSP is still rudimentary and inconsistent.”

As regards country ownership, for instance, the IEU seems to acknowledge that NDAs should consider country ownership in full, notably in terms of “appropriate participation in climate action by the private sector, by CSOs, and by vulnerable, marginalized and indigenous peoples and local communities.” But again this is still very rudimentary, since the way the Readiness program is designed, while acknowledging the need to be participatory in theory, in practice it privileges government authorities. Partly this problem might be solved, according to the IEU, with the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Policy and other relevant guidance.

This finding is reason for further concern if read in conjunction with the role of NDA in providing letters of no-objection for projects presented to the Secretariat for approval, and its responsibility in the chain of custody related to applying and complying with GCF Environmental and Social Safeguards.

The IEU report recognizes that GCF's capacity and approach to incorporate “Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) with particular attention to vulnerable, marginalized and indigenous peoples and local communities is improving, but this expertise in the Secretariat is being under-utilized by the RPSP.” According to the IEU, while the system of allocation of responsibilities among GCF Secretariat, NDA and AE for the application and compliance to safeguards seems to be working in theory, it worryingly admits that “it is too early to say whether this will occur once GCF funding proposals start to get implemented.”

In fact, the excessive discretion in the hands of the NDA in terms of how to operationalize the Gender, Indigenous Peoples and Environmental and Social Safeguards policies will have to be addressed in order to ensure quality of projects and compliance. One option proposed by IEU is for the GCF to enhance capacity to integrate gender and environmental and social aspects in country processes. And this indeed has to do with the integration of training and capacity building modules for NDAs in Readiness programming, while strengthening ESS systems of NDAs and focal points.

On capacity building, the IEU report recommends that financial support and advice be provided to countries to, among others, ensure that “countries are able to develop RPSP and Funded Project proposals in line with the gender, ESS and indigenous peoples’ policies of the GCF.”

The IEU refers to the “guidance note” on stakeholder engagement in project planning currently under elaboration that could also be complemented by the Indigenous Peoples Policy’s operational guidelines. These two tools and their proper and effective application are key to ensure that indigenous peoples are effectively engaged with the NDA also in the development of concept notes (i.e., the initial note sent by NDAs to GCF for preparation of a full project funding proposal), as well as in stakeholder consultations.

The IEU points to the fact that “commitments derived from the ESS Policy, the Indigenous Peoples Policy, and even the Gender Policy and Action Plan are not reflected in the proposal template.” It proposes to use some re-adapted “Risk and Mitigation Measures” although “this does not as yet amount to a clear and strong ESS, indigenous peoples and gender commitment and requirement of the RPSP.”

Furthermore, specific performance criteria and indicators that would apply to all countries should be envisaged, in order to assess RPSP contribution in strengthening NDA/FPs capacity to fully and effectively engage and consult in-

digenuous peoples at all levels. The IEU stresses that “Countries retain a lot of flexibility in institutionalizing their own processes, and therefore determining what country ownership means to them.” This is very problematic since it would mean that unless some minimum common criteria and standards are clearly adopted and implemented, there might never be a homogenous level of compliance on stakeholder engagement, even less on indigenous peoples’ engagement across the various countries.

The need for criteria and benchmarks for assessing and evaluating readiness activities and stakeholder consultation (possibly tailored to indigenous peoples, if needed) comes up clearly also from another IEU finding, notably that existing progress reports on RPSP do not include an assessment of achievements, of what is working, and what are the RPSP results.

An additional IEU finding—that reflects those of the first Tebtebba Scoping Study and partially also those of this report—is that RPSP programming is too focused on engagement with GCF rather than with other sources of climate finance. This means that Readiness has not yet contributed to ensure coordination among various climate funds at country level. Rather, the fact that NDAs are located either in Environment ministries or Finance ministries is the source of tensions among them, and this affects both stakeholder consultations and the No Objection Procedure.

The Tebtebba study also acknowledged this bottleneck and the negative impact of frequent staff turnover in indigenous peoples’ capacity to consolidate a continuous exchange and dialogue with national authorities and the NDA. On top of this, it should be pointed out that countries still have a significant degree of flexibility in deciding the institutional setting and the way coordination is ensured among different ministries and government bodies, especially concerning the No Objection Procedure and the way stakeholder consultations are carried out.

## Climate Funds and Governance Structures in Selected Countries: Indigenous Peoples' Participation and Engagement Still Poor

The case studies commissioned for this report provide an overview of climate funds and related governance structures, as well as the degree of indigenous peoples' participation and engagement.

**Cameroon** has engaged in REDD+ since 2005, and the REDD+ Readiness plan was approved in 2013 with a USD3.6 million grant. The REDD Preparation Information Note (R-PIN) was developed with little involvement of civil society and without the free, prior and informed consultation with indigenous peoples. Pygmies were not included in REDD+ consultations in spite of the well known fact that their exclusion might have resulted in the violation of their human rights, nor is any plan for consultation with indigenous peoples and forest dependent communities envisaged.

With regard to the institutional structure for climate funds management, the Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development has oversight and heads the REDD+ Steering Committee, in collaboration with Ministries of Planning, Forestry, NGOs/CSOs (FPP, IUCN, WWF). The Ministry of Social Affairs that has competence for indigenous peoples is excluded. Therefore, apart from a National CSO Platform on REDD and Climate Change, civil society organizations and more so indigenous peoples, local communities and NGOs are excluded, and transparency remains low and information sharing is very limited.

It should also be recalled that since Cameroonian authorities do not consider traditional rulers of indigenous peoples as official counterparts of the administration, they are systematically left out.

Cameroon has no policy framework that enhances participation of indigenous peoples and women, while laws on access and use of resources do not recognize the specificity of

indigenous peoples as separate groups.

As regards inter-ministerial coordination, interaction between government ministries and NGOs is poor, due to inadequate funding, coordination, transparency and public participation. In this condition and with existing laws and institutional arrangements, the promotion of an integrated approach and of synergies between adaptation and mitigation is very difficult if not impossible to achieve.

**Bangladesh** has a varied structure of instruments and tools to manage climate funds. The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), currently under review, was developed in 2008 and updated in 2009 with the engagement of various ministries and the Prime Minister's office. Its medium/long-term actions include: food security, social protection and health; disaster management; infrastructure; research and knowledge management; mitigation and low carbon development; and capacity building and institutional strengthening. The Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) is funded from the national budget, while the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilient Fund (BCCRF) has been established with the purpose of channelling funds from development partners.

Indeed, while this institutionalization of climate finance represents an improvement from the past, institutional capacity of BCCTF and BCCRF is still low, and coordination among climate finance stakeholders very weak. Structural reforms are therefore needed to tackle corruption and money laundering, while ensuring proper implementation and monitoring of projects and programs,

The BCCRF has some safeguards, but there is no clear mechanism for their application and compliance. Civil society organizations' engagement in project selection is very poor, due to short timeframes given for providing inputs and limited access to information.

The Ministry of Finance is stepping up efforts to increase transparency of climate budget, in particular as regards climate adaptation. A report (the Climate Financing for Sustainable Development: Budget Report 2018-19), pub-

lished in late 2018 and welcomed by NGOs, recommended, among others, to prioritize the needs of marginal communities, including women, children, indigenous persons and disabled persons and to set up a joint monitoring task force.<sup>15</sup>

The precedent of UN-REDD programs in the country and the assessment made by indigenous peoples provide a very useful insight on procedural shortcomings that might also replicate themselves in other cases. While UN-REDD related dialogues helped in opening a space for indigenous peoples in the Forest Department, the lack of a proper mechanism to support their participation in policy making as well as the lack of knowledge transfer mechanisms among ministries created a situation where indigenous peoples have to rely on officials' predisposition or personal goodwill. This means that when staff is turned over, indigenous peoples will have to start again developing good relations with newly appointed officials compounded by low capacity of engaging.

The interesting consideration to make about UN-REDD in Bangladesh is that, regardless of criticisms, it was characterized by a proactive attitude towards including indigenous peoples in project planning. For instance, responding to indigenous peoples' demands, UN-REDD invited them to appoint a representative and an alternate to sit in the Project Executive Board of the program.

Nevertheless, key concern of indigenous peoples is that their engagement and consultation might end up being a simple tick-box exercise or a mere formality. Direct experience reported by indigenous peoples shows that after being consulted, they were not kept informed about follow-up and outcomes. Furthermore, the Project Executive Board meets only twice a year, thereby making it difficult for indigenous representatives to keep track of progress and to ensure the effective inclusion of their perspectives and concerns in projects and other activities, due to lack of a mechanism for bottom-up consultation.

**Nepal** has developed and rolled out a number of plans, policies, strategies, guidelines

and frameworks in response to climate change. Major policy documents include: National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management (2009), National Adaptation Program of Action (2010), National Climate Change Policy (2011), Priority Framework for Action on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction in Agriculture (2011), National Framework of Local Adaptation Plans for Action (2011), Climate Resilient Planning Tool (2011), Climate Change Budget Code (2012), Environment Friendly Local Governance Framework (2013), Nationally Determined Contribution (2016) 13<sup>th</sup> Plan (2013/14-2015/16) and 14<sup>th</sup> Plan (2016/17-2018/19) (MoF, 2017). The Government of Nepal is currently in the process of formulating a National Adaptation Plan, Low Carbon Economic Development Strategy and National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and Action Plan.

Although they are often consulted, indigenous peoples are hardly considered for their important role and contributions in the development of relevant policies and programs at the national level. Indeed the country has signed or voted for various international conventions and instruments, such as the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169 in 2007 and in support of the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Still, no legislative or administrative changes have yet been implemented to ensure the rights of indigenous peoples over natural resources and to recognize their customary laws and practices.

A similar situation is registered in **Paraguay**, a country with a fragile public policy favorable to indigenous peoples and where the absence of the State is a constant. Progress in the national and international legal framework in favor of indigenous peoples, such as ratification of ILO Convention 169 or Paraguay's support for UNDRIP is not yet reflected in public policies or programs for indigenous peoples' communities at the local level. As regards climate funds coordination, Paraguay has adopted a National Adaptation Strategy in 2015, followed by a National Adaptation Plan in 2016 and a

National Mitigation Plan in 2017. The UN-REDD program was implemented between 2011 and 2016, and a second phase with funds from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility is under development.

The **Philippines'** National Framework Strategy on Climate Change provides a basis for a national program on climate change and ensures multistakeholder partnership, financing, valuation, policy planning and mainstreaming. It also explicitly mentions indigenous peoples as regards multistakeholder participation and partnerships in climate change initiatives. However, the Climate Change Act that created the Climate Change Commission has no provision for engagement of indigenous peoples in the Commission or its Advisory Board. The National Climate Change Action Plan acknowledges the relevance of indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge in adaptation, similar to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management established by the Philippines Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act (2010).

As regards the legal framework related to indigenous peoples' rights, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) established the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). According to an administrative order indigenous peoples are granted mandatory representation in all policy-making bodies. However, this far, very few indigenous peoples organizations have participated in climate change programs and activities due to lack of information.

## **A Look into Selected NDAs, Readiness Activities and Level of Engagement of Indigenous Peoples: A Challenging Situation**

**I**n **Cameroon** the National Designated Authority is the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED), the only entity in charge of climate change matters and with limited capacity and support from other ministries. The level

of knowledge on climate matters is very low and limited to few officials in MINEPDED and MINFOF (Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife). The Ministry of Social Affairs is consulted randomly, and climate change financing is focused on capacity building for the NDA secretariat and enhancement of the capacity of the Bank of Central African States (BDEAC) to accredit at GCF. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and other accredited entities (WB, AfDB, JICA, KFW-GIZ, AFD) act in synergy with the National Observatory on Climate Change.

Indigenous peoples have little knowledge of GCF and are unaware of the existence of the NDA, although the NDA acknowledges that indigenous peoples' issues are relevant. Cameroon submitted another readiness proposal in September 2018 focused on capacity building that will, if funded, have an indigenous peoples' component.

The Readiness program for the establishment of the NDA in Cameroon amounts to US\$300,000 and was prepared by the IUCN in collaboration with the National Observatory on Climate Change and a related cross-ministerial working group. It includes activities for capacity building, elaboration of program priorities, elaboration of an initial program and project pipeline, and training on international procurement, accounting, oversight and evaluation.

The NDA for **Bangladesh** is the Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Ministry of Finance.

Its role is to identify and nominate national implementing entities for accreditation. Four full-fledged project proposals are currently under GCF secretariat review and ITAP (Independent Technical Advisory Panel) scrutiny, and 31 project ideas are in the pipeline. One of the projects under proposal, "Enhancing Adaptive Capacities of Coastal Communities especially women to cope with the climate change induced salinity," will be relevant for indigenous peoples' communities in the southwestern coastal districts of Khulna and Satkhira. Furthermore, several of the projects in the pipeline focus on indigenous communities in the plains and Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Readiness activities are carried out in four different projects: two by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (for adaptation planning and for country programming), one by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) on “entity support,” another by German Development Cooperation (GIZ) for NDA strengthening.

The Ministry of Finance is the NDA in **Nepal**. It has a technical committee composed of representatives of different ministries that provides feedback on concept notes and proposals. Four projects are currently in the pipeline led by the Food and Agriculture Organization, UNDP, and IUCN. Most of these projects are in collaboration with the Ministries of Environment or Forests. A gap in communication and coordination between these and the NDA has been registered, and the same applies to relations with indigenous peoples and other stakeholders. Although one of the NDA’s mandates is to convene national stakeholders, generate awareness and provide capacity to engage with the GCF, indigenous peoples, women and local communities have no presence in the Steering and Technical committees, which compose the governance structure of the NDA.

Broadly speaking, excessive reliance on consultancies and poor consultation with indigenous peoples and local communities result in a very limited and restricted public awareness and knowledge of climate policies and programs in the country. Accredited entities like IUCN, UNDP and FAO have tried to engage indigenous peoples at the national and subnational levels while developing their proposals. However, this has not meant that indigenous peoples’ perspectives and priorities were duly taken into account. Rather, those of the implementing agencies were prioritized.

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) is engaged in developing a specific project (Resilient sub-watersheds generating mitigation co-benefits in the West Seti basin), and its concept note was developed without consulting indigenous peoples who would be involved at a later stage when the proposal will be further developed. The IUCN developed a project concept note and then a full proposal of a project on ecosystem based adaptation, water management and forest

management in the Gandaki river basin, with some consultations with indigenous peoples and local communities during preparation. No specific program is put in place to ensure that indigenous peoples’ demands and needs are fully captured and taken into due account.

Language barrier, insertion of communities and traditional customary practices in markets, and lack of awareness of the serious consequences of climate change by relevant authorities are particularly challenging. As regards the UNDP’s “GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support Program” (mostly focused on support for accreditation and funding proposals), this has been developed in consultation with selected indigenous communities, and UNDP expects, in line with its own indigenous peoples policies, to engage indigenous peoples throughout the project cycle and in decision making structures.

Indeed, lack of awareness by indigenous peoples of their rights and responsibilities, and poor coordination among local, regional and national government levels represent serious hurdles. The NDA is aware of the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, but indigenous peoples are not aware of GCF or other climate projects, and the NDA does not yet have a proper framework for consultation with them. However, indigenous peoples and women will be invited in GCF awareness raising initiatives, while a stakeholder engagement strategy is in progress; the NDA technical committee does take indigenous peoples’ issues into due account in line with what is recommended in relevant GCF policies.

As regards Readiness, the first readiness fund was supported by BMUB (German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety) and implemented by UNEP and UNDP throughout almost two years (from July 2016 to April 2018). Key deliverables were the support for the development of concept notes and proposals, and facilitation for the nomination of both public and private national institutions for accreditation as Direct Access Entities. The ongoing 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the readiness fund (UNDP - \$2.9 million) pursues the strengthening of national government’s capacity to plan, access, manage, use and monitor climate finance, in particular

from GCF, by strengthening the institutional capacity of national institutions including the NDA and DAEs. It also aims to prepare the country program and develop project pipelines for DAE access, including climate change mitigation and adaptation

The Ministry for the Environment and Sustainable Development is the focal point for climate change in **Paraguay**. Unlike what happened in UN-REDD program in the past, thanks to a different predisposition of government authorities, indigenous peoples now have limited access and participation opportunities in governance. The Federation for the Self-determination of Indigenous Peoples or FAPI has recently been invited to join the National Climate Change Advisory Body. The NDA was selected by the government, and the President of the Republic sits in the Technical Secretariat for Planning, notably one of the Presidency's secretariats.

Stakeholder engagement and public awareness of the GCF Readiness Program are very poor, and indigenous peoples do not officially participate in the NDA structure. However, FAPI was occasionally engaged in the process of development of the PROEZA (Poverty, Reforestation, Energy and Climate Change Project). Three consultation workshops were also held with public, national and local entities, as well as with organized civil society. As many as 54 public and private institutions participated, with a total of 117 representatives, but no representative of indigenous peoples was present and no record of the meetings was made available. Also, NGOs working with indigenous peoples were not included, and this led to a serious participation gap in the elaboration and management of the project.

The Climate Change Commission of the **Philippines** was initially elected to be the NDA, but the role was handed over to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in 2017 and back to the Climate Change Commission in 2018. Following sustained advocacy from Tebtebba, indigenous peoples were initially included in the National Steering Committee and Technical Working Group together with government agencies, private sector, academia

and civil society. Tebtebba was also fully engaged and consulted in various procedural aspects such as the establishment of the no-objection procedure. However, when the NDA role was shifted back to the Climate Change Commission, the National Steering Committee and Technical Working Group became an advisory body, and indigenous peoples can now be consulted at NDA discretion and on an ad hoc basis.

It should be noted that the Climate Change Commission co-organized with Tebtebba, a national workshop for indigenous peoples within the Readiness program in November 2018 where the importance of having indigenous peoples actively engaged was recognized and the Commission committed to integrate recommendations from the workshop in the country program. In more general terms, indigenous peoples have no knowledge of the GCF. The Commission needs to be more proactive in disseminating information on how indigenous peoples can engage as well as on their mandate.

## Mixed Picture of Challenges and Opportunities

The overall picture that derives from the country studies as well as from a comparison between these, the initial findings of the preliminary Scoping Study published by Tebtebba and the findings of the Independent Evaluation Unit's assessment offer a mixed picture of challenges and opportunities.

In **Cameroon**, for instance, a key challenge is represented by the strong influence of international organizations to promote Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action/ National Adaptation Plan of Action/REDD+ (WB and UN). Furthermore, increased reliance on international accredited entities constrains capacity building and does not contribute to ensure readiness and direct access to GCF. With regard to indigenous peoples, key challenges are the lack of common awareness and perception of the specific nature of indigenous peoples, and the fact that the Ministry of Social Affairs

that is competent for indigenous peoples' matters is not directly involved in climate finance and has no role in implementing the Cameroon Forest Investment Plan. However, on the one hand there exists the possibility of calling for a diversification of the GCF portfolio to address adaptation and development needs, and on the other to call for new legislation on land reform and food security that is currently less focused on mitigation and more on use and access to land.

Indigenous peoples' concerns in **Bangladesh** focus on the repercussions of their exclusion in decision making as well as of the opportunistic consideration of indigenous peoples only in order to ensure disbursement of funds, resulting in their not being properly considered and engaged in the project cycle. Experience with the Green Climate Fund could be similar. Another outstanding issue is socio-cultural barriers. Project documents are not easy to access and are mostly online and in English. Hence indigenous peoples not only find it difficult to access climate finance, but also to access emergency relief in case of disaster. Further, project and program implementation is hindered by corruption and lack of political will by bureaucracy and political leaders.

In spite of the NDA's intention to engage with indigenous peoples, they have not yet been duly consulted in **Nepal**. Most government officers in charge of GCF related matters are still unaware of the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy. Accredited Entities like IUCN, UNDP and FAO in Nepal who have already presented projects to the GCF have and tried to engage, to a limited extent, indigenous peoples at the national and subnational levels to make sure their proposals are in line with the policy.

Climate change remains a very technical issue for the **Philippines**. While there are laws and mechanisms in place for planning down to the local level, even local government units seem to have a low understanding of what climate change is all about, beyond creating infrastructures and coping with impacts of climate change. Indigenous peoples' capacity to engage at the national level is still low. So far, only Tebtebba is an active member of the Climate Change

Network (Aksyon Klima). All other CSOs are either working with or for indigenous peoples, but indigenous peoples organizations are not directly engaged. An additional challenge is represented by the lack of sufficient resources for indigenous peoples to engage at the national level as most of the action/ engagement/ meetings are held in Metropolitan Manila.

As regards the governance structure, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples is not mainstreamed in many climate change-related mechanisms, and its capacities are questioned by many indigenous peoples' organizations. More importantly, the Philippines is the country that has recorded the highest level of killings of environmental defenders in 2017, mostly indigenous peoples.<sup>16</sup> This factor needs to be taken into account when dealing with stakeholder engagement and the application of the Indigenous Peoples Policy in the country and by government authorities.

On a more optimistic note, established relations between indigenous peoples and the Climate Change Commission as well as the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act provide a good basis for indigenous peoples' engagement. Opportunities exist therefore to improve the situation, starting from the possibility of indigenous peoples to provide input in ongoing development of country programming. Various national support NGOs have expressed interest in developing an indigenous peoples program towards full funding proposals to the Green Climate Fund or a community proposal for the Peoples Survival Fund (PSF).

Potential support may come as financial grant for funding proposals development or knowledge transmission from experts on how to develop proposals for PSF. In addition, various indigenous peoples' organizations are working at subnational levels and have developed good relations with local governments. Many indigenous peoples'-led climate and development activities (either self-supported or supported by external actors—Church and other development NGOs) need to be scaled up and documented so that they become part of the national data of the country.

## Recommendations

The registered delays and lack of institutional capacity to fully engage indigenous peoples at the national level and to develop knowledge and capacity to properly implement and comply with the Indigenous Peoples Policy and other relevant GCF policies should be addressed at various levels, from national to GCF.

At the national level, the country case studies prepared for this report point to a series of proposals and recommendations that can help improve the quality of indigenous peoples' engagement, national level coordination of different climate funds, compliance with GCF policies and due consideration of indigenous peoples' perspectives in country programming.

In **Cameroon**, a national technical committee should be established to oversee and provide scientific guidance on synergies between adaptation and mitigation. Community awareness and public outreach activities should be undertaken to ensure the full and effective engagement of stakeholders in decision making at all steps and various aspects of mitigation and adaptation.

Furthermore, private sector investment and sponsorship should be promoted and funding allocated for joint mitigation and adaptation projects.

As regards **Bangladesh**, an indigenous peoples' national consultative panel/network should be set up to include representatives from plains and Chittagong Hills Tract at all stages of climate finance. An indigenous peoples' monitoring mechanism for climate finance also needs to be developed and implemented. Clear procedures to ensure full and effective engagement of indigenous peoples in consultations and discussions need to be envisaged, including 10 days' notice to allow their representatives to properly prepare before meetings and coverage of their transportation costs.

A dedicated funding mechanism for indigenous peoples should be established in **Nepal** to help them improve awareness of the concept notes and proposals developed by Accredited Entities as well as to identify opportunities to

formulate proposals. Concerned government agencies should be informed of the Indigenous Peoples Policy and related operational implications in order to ensure full and effective participation of indigenous peoples at national and community levels, including in project monitoring and evaluation.

The NDA's awareness and understanding of the Indigenous Peoples Policy and its operational implication needs to be ensured in **Paraguay**. And in the case of the PROEZA project, the Steering Committee, Technical Committee and FAO, which will administer the NDA resources, will have to ensure the proper application of the policy at the project level.

An indigenous peoples' program within the GCF country program will have to be developed in the **Philippines**, and capacity building for indigenous peoples and local government units carried out to improve understanding of the GCF and other national opportunities for climate funding (such as Peoples Survival Fund). Data in the Climate Change Expenditure Tagging system should be disaggregated to show how much funds go to different sectors including women and indigenous peoples.

In more general terms, as far as programming, planning and implementation of the Readiness and Preparatory Support Program are concerned, there are various steps the GCF should undertake both in operationalizing the Indigenous Peoples Policy and the ESMS, and to address the concerns expressed by indigenous peoples and the shortcomings identified by the Independent Evaluation Unit.

First and foremost, an **indigenous peoples' specific component of Readiness**, under the stakeholder engagement aspect, should be adopted, with the goal of supporting the NDA and NIE capacity to identify strategies and modalities to ensure indigenous peoples' sustained engagement and effective participation, including full disclosure of information, meaningful consultation and informed participation process, and free, prior informed consent. Already envisaged in the Indigenous Peoples Policy, this should therefore be explicitly defined in the workplan and deliverables of the next phase of Readiness.

Furthermore, the GCF should invite States to request **readiness and preparatory support** from it to enhance their capacity to implement the Indigenous Peoples Policy. In line with what is recommended by the Independent Evaluation Unit's report, the GCF will have to enhance capacity to integrate gender and environmental and social aspects in country processes, by integrating training and capacity building modules for NDAs in Readiness programming while strengthening the Environmental and Social Safeguards systems of NDAs and Focal Points. The ESS, Indigenous Peoples Policy and gender policy commitments should be clearly included in the RPSP proposal template.

The announced **guidance on stakeholder engagement and the operational guidelines of the Indigenous Peoples Policy** will have to be adopted as a matter of urgency to provide guidance to NDAs to put in place and implement a process for meaningful consultation with people affected or potentially affected by the activities.

**Criteria and benchmarks for assessment and evaluation of readiness activities and stakeholder consultation** (tailored to indigenous peoples if needed) will have to be developed and adopted, since progress reports on RPSP still do not include an assessment of achievements, on what is working and what are the RPSP results. **Improvement of local capacity and training** for technical experts at the national level should also be ensured, drawing on the expertise from women, indigenous peoples, local communities.

The GCF, together with other donors supporting Readiness and Preparation programs, should develop a **toolkit on best practice country coordination experiences building up on similar procedures**. A possible option to improve country coordination could be

represented by the IEU assessment proposal of drawing from the experience of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, whose existing mechanisms allow for direct participation of local communities and also envision possibility of direct grievance by affected communities. The Global Fund in fact has now mandated strict requirements governing the composition and operating procedures of each Country Coordination Mechanism, such as requiring meaningful voting representation from CSOs and affected communities.

Furthermore, **clear guidelines for country programs** should be provided, with a focus on developing clear priorities and concrete concept notes, taking into account fully the GCF policies on gender, environmental and social safeguards and indigenous peoples. **Information on GCF, NDAs and focal points and accredited entities should be made available in-country in a timely and culturally appropriate manner.**

With regard to Structured Dialogues, **separate dialogues for indigenous peoples should be organized** with GCF financial support at 1) country level (as part of the country readiness and country programming) or 2) regional level (under GCF Secretariat) or (3) back-to-back of the regular GCF structured dialogues.

In addition, **regional members of the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Group should be invited in the regional workshops** together with representatives of indigenous peoples of the various countries of the given region. **Annual participatory reviews** should also be organized for local stakeholders, especially project affected people and communities, including women and CSOs, with the active engagement of indigenous peoples organizations.





## PHILIPPINES

- Global Environment Facility (46 projects, 16 on climate change)
- Climate Investment Funds (CIF) – 6 projects
- German IKI initiative
- NICFI
- Global Climate Change Alliance
- Peoples Survival Fund (PSF)

### *Readiness Framework Agreements*

Countries may choose to work with partner organizations to implement their readiness activities. Readiness Framework Agreements enable organizations to serve as Readiness support delivery partners with the Fund. Organizations that have signed such agreements can then deliver readiness support in response to demands from developing countries. The organizations that have this far signed framework agreements are CAF (Corporacion Andina de Fomento) FAO, GIZ, UNEP, UNDP, Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), Global Green Growth Initiative (GGGI)

<https://www.greenclimate.fund/library/-/docs/list/574042>

### *GCF Projects and Programs in Selected Countries (object of this study)*

Source: Green Climate Fund, 2018.

## BANGLADESH

- Readiness Activities
  - » UNDP      Adaptation Planning
  - » PwC      Entity Support
  - » GIZ NDA    Strengthening
  - » UNDP      Country Programming
- Projects
  - » Global Clean Cooking Program
  - » Enhancing Adaptive Capacities of Coastal Communities, especially women, to cope with climate change
  - » Climate-resilient infrastructure mainstreaming
- Concept Notes
  - » GIZ      Promotion of Climate-Friendly Cooking Bangladesh, Kenya and Senegal
  - » PKSf      Extended Community Climate Change Project (ECCCP)
  - » WMO      Enhancing Climate Resilience in the Third Pole
  - » UNDP      Enhancing Women and Girls' Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change in Bangladesh

## CAMEROON

- Readiness
  - » PwC      Entity Support
  - » IUCN      NDA Strengthening and Country Programming

- Projects
  - » Climate Investor One
  - » Transforming Financial Systems for Climate
  - » Program for integrated development and adaptation to Climate Change in the Niger Basin
- Concept Note
  - » Regional Program linking climate knowledge to action for resilience in the Sahel

## NEPAL

- Readiness Activities
  - » UNDP NDA Strengthening and Country Programming
  - » UNEP Adaptation Planning
- Concept Notes
  - » WWF Resilient sub-watersheds generating mitigation co-benefits in the West Seti Basin
  - » IUCN Improving climate resilience of vulnerable communities and ecosystems in the Gandaki River Basin Nepal
  - » UNDP Protecting livelihoods and assets at risk from climate change induced flooding in glacial river basins of Nepal
  - » UNOPS Sanitation and Hygiene for Communities Vulnerable to Climate Change
  - » WMO Enhancing Climate Resilience in the Third Pole

## PARAGUAY

- Readiness
  - » Fundación Avina Strategic Frameworks
  - » CAF NDA Strengthening and Country Programming
- Projects
  - » Promoting private sector investments in energy efficiency in the industrial sector
  - » Poverty, Reforestation, Energy and Climate Change Project (PROEZA)
- Concept Notes
  - » Promoting sustainable practices in the soy and cattle ranching sectors to mitigate climate change

## PHILIPPINES

- Readiness n.a.
- Projects n.a.
- Concept Notes
  - » UNDP Strengthening the Resilience of the Most Vulnerable Coastal Communities to Climate Change in the Philippines' Eastern Seaboard

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Elatia, the Indigenous Peoples Global Partnership on Climate Change, Forests and Sustainable Development, was organized on August 2008 by Tebtebba. It is currently composed of 19 indigenous peoples organizations, networks and NGOs from 14 countries from Africa, Latin America and Asia.

<sup>2</sup> Initial best-practice guidelines for the selection and establishment of national designated authorities and focal points (GCF/B.08/45, Annex XIII, page 89). These also specify the nature and modalities of a consultative process that: “should aim to be an ongoing process rather than a discrete activity only occurring once without the possibility of follow up, continuous update and regular assessment of progress. 6. These consultative processes should be inclusive and seek to engage all relevant actors within the government, the private sector, academia, civil society and other relevant stakeholder groups or sectors.”

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.greenclimate.fund/safeguards/indigenous-peoples>.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/574763/GCF\\_policy\\_-\\_Indigenous\\_Peoples\\_Policy.pdf/6af04791-f88e-4c8a-8115-32315a3e4042](https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/574763/GCF_policy_-_Indigenous_Peoples_Policy.pdf/6af04791-f88e-4c8a-8115-32315a3e4042).

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/574763/GCF\\_policy\\_-\\_Environmental\\_and\\_Social\\_Policy.pdf/aa092a12-2775-4813-a009-6e6564bad87c](https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/574763/GCF_policy_-_Environmental_and_Social_Policy.pdf/aa092a12-2775-4813-a009-6e6564bad87c).

<sup>6</sup> Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/751020/GCF\\_B.17\\_13\\_-\\_Pilot\\_Programme\\_for\\_REDD\\_Results-based\\_Payments.pdf/8e3e9bf8-c02a-478b-b26f-f0743da2395c](https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/751020/GCF_B.17_13_-_Pilot_Programme_for_REDD_Results-based_Payments.pdf/8e3e9bf8-c02a-478b-b26f-f0743da2395c).

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.greenclimate.fund/what-we-do/dialogues>.

<sup>7</sup> <http://docplayer.net/78849138-Structured-dialogue-with-latin-america.html>.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.el19digital.com/articulos/ver/titulo:85239-nicaragua-fortalece-relaciones-bilaterales-y-con-el-fondo-verde-del-clima-en-la-cop-24-?fbclid=IwAR01hhp-9iM2MykmmoTX\\_vhFs0gYfgLc3J43Li5RDblYp-K5onTJxqagrYY](https://www.el19digital.com/articulos/ver/titulo:85239-nicaragua-fortalece-relaciones-bilaterales-y-con-el-fondo-verde-del-clima-en-la-cop-24-?fbclid=IwAR01hhp-9iM2MykmmoTX_vhFs0gYfgLc3J43Li5RDblYp-K5onTJxqagrYY).

<sup>9</sup> Tebtebba Foundation: “The Green Climate Fund Readiness and Indigenous Peoples: THE CASES OF PERU, NICARAGUA, KENYA, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO AND VIETNAM” 2017, page 5 <http://www.tebtebba.org/index.php/content/421-the-green-climate-fund-readiness-and-indigenous-peoples>.

<sup>10</sup>

- Key informant interviews: Key stakeholders including experts, selected stakeholders at the GCF Board, representatives of other agencies that are doing similar work, selected country stakeholders including but not restricted to NDAs, delivery partners and focal points, members of the Readiness Working Group, members of the RPSP team and others inside and outside GCF. The readiness coordination mechanism will also be assessed. Inputs from other agencies will also be sought while considering that other agencies are also likely to have their own interests in mind while providing inputs.
- Focus group discussions at key events such as scheduled structured dialogues or specific events held for accredited or to be accredited entities.
- Online perception survey: The online perception survey will be directed at NDAs, focal points, delivery partners, CSOs and other stakeholders. It will seek to get an overview of the perception of the Readiness and Preparatory Support programme and will be confidential. A qualitative analysis will be undertaken of the comments in the responses and special or outlier comments will be followed up on, with follow up conversations for clarifications and explanation.
- Site visits and specific case studies for process tracing. Specific countries will be identified for site visits and for process tracing specific questions that the evaluation team may want to address. Countries/cases will be chosen to ensure that there is adequate representativeness especially for stage of engagement with RPSP as well as country groups (SIDS, LDCs, Africa, others) and that each case has specific questions it will address. Since there are multiple delivery partners, this will also include a comparison of processes by different delivery partners. Since there are several challenges to making this comparison and drawing inferences, such as not having sufficient sample sizes to make robust conclusions, this comparison will be restricted to the main delivery partners. The method for selecting country case studies and delivery partners will be laid out in the inception report.

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/1270184/GCF\\_B.21\\_28\\_-\\_Report\\_of\\_the\\_independent\\_evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_Readiness\\_and\\_Preparatory\\_Support\\_Programme.pdf/9178b95a-332c-06ba-326f-8064182f2e32](https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/1270184/GCF_B.21_28_-_Report_of_the_independent_evaluation_of_the_Readiness_and_Preparatory_Support_Programme.pdf/9178b95a-332c-06ba-326f-8064182f2e32).

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/1270184/GCF\\_B.21\\_28\\_Add.01\\_-\\_Report\\_of\\_the\\_independent\\_evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_Readiness\\_and\\_Preparatory\\_Support\\_Programme\\_\\_Addendum\\_I\\_\\_Secretariat\\_management\\_response.pdf/077c9067-a420-2413-2e36-4b01457443b9](https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/1270184/GCF_B.21_28_Add.01_-_Report_of_the_independent_evaluation_of_the_Readiness_and_Preparatory_Support_Programme__Addendum_I__Secretariat_management_response.pdf/077c9067-a420-2413-2e36-4b01457443b9).

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/politics-climate-change/news/making-climate-budgeting-transparent-1665871>.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/press-releases/deadliest-year-record-land-and-environmental-defenders-agribusiness-shown-be-industry-most-linked-killings/>.

<http://unsr.vtaulicorpuz.org/site/index.php/en/documents/annual-reports/251-report-hrc2018>.

# PARAGUAY

## Green Climate Fund Project in Paraguay: Its Impact on Indigenous Peoples

*by Federation for the Self-Determination of Indigenous Peoples (FAPI)*



## Introduction

This case study focuses on a project that has been approved for funding as a grant by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to the government of Paraguay. Called the Poverty, Reforestation, Energy and Climate Change (PROEZA) project, it involves various institutions of the executive branch of the government.

As of the date of this study (July-September 2018), the PROEZA project had not received any specific disbursement for its implementation. It should be noted that its approval came only in March, 2018; thus the project was still in the internal organization phase considering the change of government. In countries like Paraguay, this is not a minor detail, since the new authorities took over only on August 15, 2018<sup>1</sup> and generally establish changes in the institutions according to the main positions of trust, both technical and administrative. After accommodating people in key positions, each institution is expected to continue with its institutional tasks and purposes, among which is the PROEZA project. Therefore, it is also considerable that when the first disbursement of the Green Climate Fund for the implementation of the project had been issued, the institutions involved would have concluded this transition

stage of the command. It should be noted that at the end of this study (September 30, 2018), the disbursement receipt had not yet been announced.

It is in this context that the PROEZA project was analyzed, drawing from interviews with indigenous leaders and technical staff of the Executive Committee, among others. Since the approval of the project, specific “advance” activities were carried out with indigenous peoples. The activities were informative, and those conducting them had wanted to call them a consultation, which the indigenous leadership rejected. The PROEZA project was then agreed upon and approved by the GCF and was to be implemented in the following months.

The assessments in this study have no other intention than to show the opinions of the indigenous peoples to the project, which, if taken into account, could have positive effects for all the institutional actors involved in the attempt to improve the living conditions of indigenous peoples and to mitigate the effects of climate change in their communities. The study was carried out at the request of the Federation for the Self-Determination of Indigenous Peoples (FAPI). FAPI is an indigenous organization

that brings together 13 departmental and regional organizations belonging to eight of the 19 indigenous peoples or approximately 187 communities of the Nivaê, Angaité, Ayoreo Totobiesode, Enlhet Norte, Enxet Sur, Mbya Guaraní, Ava Guaraní and Pai Tavytera, settled in both regions of the country.

The objective of the study was to gather operational and financial information from the National Designated Authority (NDA) of Paraguay on projects financed by the Green Climate Fund and their impact on the indigenous peoples. The study was qualitative, involving review of secondary sources and interviews with key informants grouped into four institutional actors. In the case of indigenous peoples, prioritized were those in whose territories the PROEZA project is being implemented.

## Green Climate Fund Project

Paraguay is a landlocked country with a population of 6,337,127 inhabitants, mostly young people, 66 percent of them under the age of 30. The rural population continues to be significant at 43 percent of the total population, which represents more than 2.5 million people. Indigenous peoples represent 1.7 percent or 117,150 people, grouped into five linguistic groups and distributed into 19 ethnic groups. The country has two official languages, Guaraní and Spanish, both of widespread use. The Chaco region also has a variety of indigenous languages widely used by their peoples.

Paraguay has 493 indigenous communities with access to a total of 1,163,127 hectares of land. Of this number, 351 communities or approximately 70 percent have declared ownership of their properties. In terms of the number of places (communities, villages, neighborhoods) in which indigenous families reside, the III Indigenous Census 2012 reveals a total of 711 “communities.” (STP / DGECC, Atlas of Indigenous Communities, 2015)

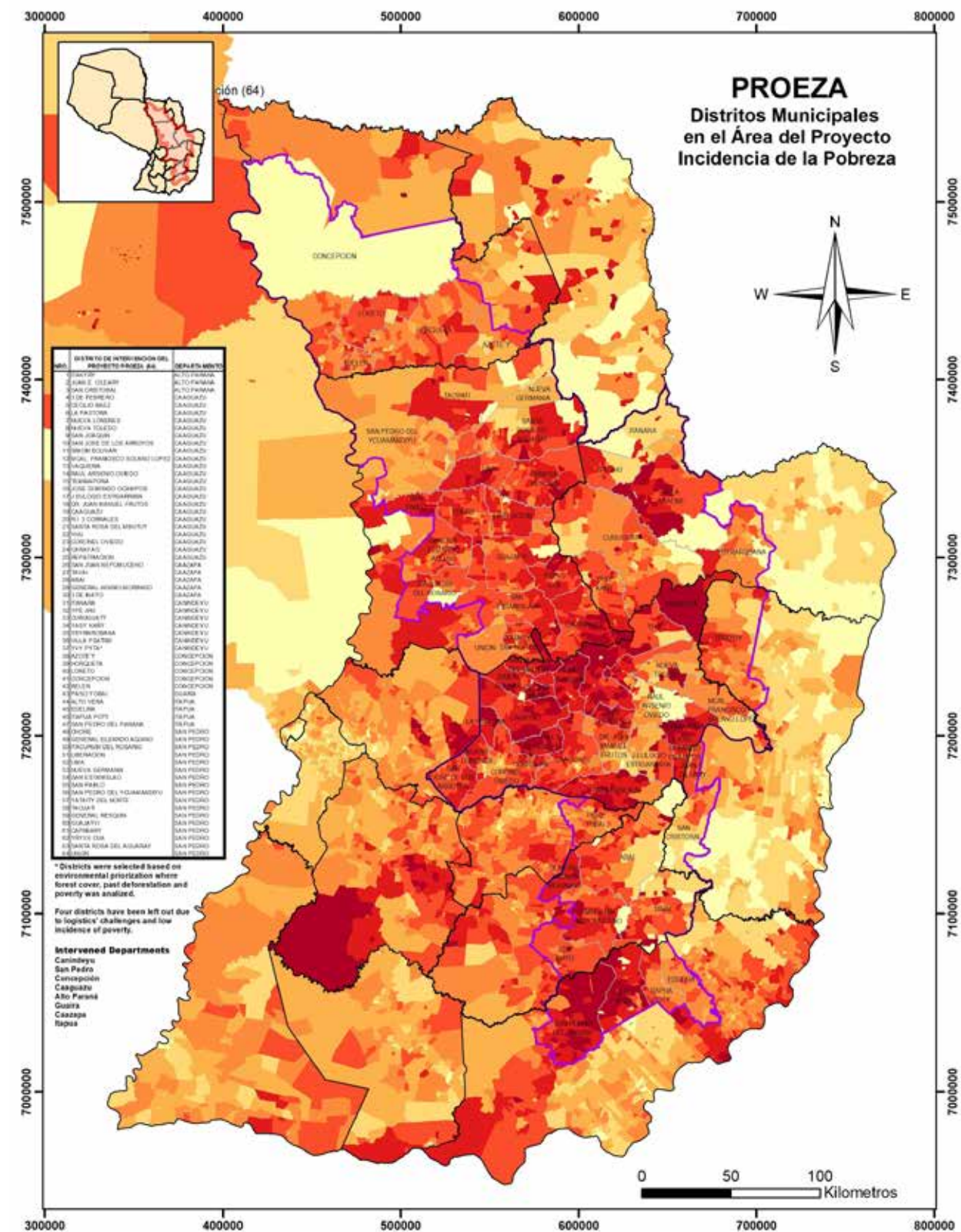
The Paraguayan government through the Technical Secretariat for the Planning of Economic and Social Development (STPDES) is the National Designated Authority and thus the head and representative of Paraguay for management of the funds from GCF. The STPDES was chosen for its role and technical institutional profile and as a process facilitator with other institutions of the executive branch. The accredited entity responsible for the implementation of the project is the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The Poverty, Reforestation, Energy and Climate Change project is a large project with a duration of 10 years, divided into two phases of five years each for its implementation. Its objective is to improve the resilience of families living in poverty and extreme poverty to the impacts of climate change and increase forest cover in environmentally sensitive areas in eastern Paraguay. The beneficiaries and location of the project are 17,100 families in 64 districts of Alto Paraná, Itapúa, Concepción, San Pedro, Canindeyú, Caaguazú, Caazapá and Guairá. The total cost of the project is US\$90.3 million.

The project has three components:<sup>2</sup>

- Component I: “Planting the future:” Monetary transfers conditioned on reforestation for rural families living in poverty and extreme poverty;
- Component II: “Sustainable landscapes and responsible markets:” Concessional credits with national resources provided to landowners in the project area to promote the establishment of “New Generation Forest Plantations” (NGFP);
- Component III: Governance and law enforcement: Technical assistance and institutional strengthening will be provided the forestry, land use, environmental and energy sectors in support of sustainable development of bioenergy.

The non-reimbursable fund has a direct link with components 1 and 3, and component 2 is the State's own funds.

[illegible]

## Box 1 PROEZA Components and Activities

*Component I: "Planting the Future:"* Monetary transfers conditioned on reforestation for rural families living in poverty and extreme poverty

Models of forest systems:

- Reforestation with 20% of native species
- Reforestation with 50% of exotic species
- Natural regeneration of native forests
- Yerba mate in native forests
- Agroforestry with citrus
- Agroforestry with yerba mate

The project will provide:

- Forestry technical assistance
- Expenses for reforestation (including labor)
- Monetary transfer conditioned by the environmental service of the plantations carried out effectively from year 1-5 until maturity of the system

It will be carried out in 64 municipalities located in 8 departments of the Eastern Region of Paraguay. The majority of poor and extreme poor households in the selected municipalities receive support from the social protection program TEKOPORA through monthly cash payments conditioned by social indicators (CCT), mainly education and health.

*Component II: "Sustainable landscapes and responsible markets:"* Concessional credits with national resources provided to landowners in the project area to promote the establishment of "New Generation Forest Plantations" (NGFP)

- Financial instruments (credits) with funds from the Financial Development Agency of Paraguay
- Establishment of "New Generation Forest Plantations" in medium-sized properties (around 24,000 ha) including protective forests of watercourses (4,800 ha with native species)
- Focused on production of bioenergy, wood and silvopastures

It will be carried out in areas with the greatest potential for establishment of wood plantations due to the proximity of the firewood industry. Phase 1 of the project aims to cover 24,000 ha of fast-growing plantations and the inclusion of 20% of protective forests of watercourses with native species.

*Component III: Governance and law enforcement:* Technical assistance and institutional strengthening will be provided the forestry, land use, environmental and energy sectors in support of sustainable development of bioenergy

- Institutions such as INFONA, SEAM, SAS, VMME. Public entities are key to the supervision and audit of the companies that implement the project components.
- It will focus efforts on promoting participation of small and medium-sized owners in regional bioenergy markets.













## GCF Preparation Phase and Indigenous Peoples

The PROEZA project, while presenting challenges for working with indigenous peoples, also represents opportunities to be considered. Taking into account the multiple needs of the indigenous communities at the country level and especially in the area of project implementation, it is evident that in the preparatory stage, the entities involved are looking at an approach of rights and interculturality.

Since the project's approval, the entities involved have managed to hold two meetings with representatives of indigenous organizations. From what is left of the year, with the new authorities in their new positions, and with the first disbursement expected to be made before the year's end, the following aspects are to be considered: a) how to consolidate the formal space for participation of the community authorities of the indigenous peoples; b) that the indigenous families accept the benefits and responsibilities inherent to the initiative; c) given this initial em-

powerment, how the social mobility necessary for starting the project can be generated; and d) as a consequence, how to sustain the shared co-responsibility needed for the continuity of the project into the second 5-year phase.

The two meetings held with indigenous organizations, although significant, are still insufficient for the PROEZA project to begin implementation. As the MAG technician noted in an interview, starting it in the communities requires engendering the necessary governance that allows its successful execution.

The indigenous leaders underline certain steps and actions, such as dialogues, project awareness, understanding and acceptability in communities, to help ensure the project is executed well. Sindulfo Miranda said:

*I like the PROEZA project; I think it will give results depending on how the work is carried out in the communities. I think it can be achieved, but it must be taken care of so that it goes well. For example, dialogues should happen, in-depth project talks in the*

### Box 2 PROEZA project in the eyes of an indigenous leader

*I must make it clear that I only participated in a single meeting and what I know about the project is still very little, but I understand a little bit. This PROEZA project should and can be a good project. What we do not understand well yet is how it is proposed to remove people from extreme poverty by doing reforestation, and even more so, when to expect reforestation. In the case of eucalyptus that can be sold in 5 years, it is a long time for the people to wait. In the meantime and while it occurs, how will families support themselves? So for this project they must speak very well with the people. What happened with the Paraguay Bio6 cannot happen again; they brought the seedlings when these could no longer be planted, these were out of season and all the plants dried up; and again, they said that we do not want to do anything, something like that.*

*Indigenous participation did not occur in the elaboration of the project. Now that the project is ready, we find out. In the case of Paraguay Bio, in four years of being implemented, they did not let us participate as an indigenous organization. We understood that what was done in Oviedo was a pre-consultation. The main points to be solved are that people assume the project as their own, that they understand the responsibilities and that the entities involved fulfill their commitments with the people in a timely manner. And I say it again, it cannot happen again as it did in Paraguay Bio that the deadlines were not met. In a certain way their reforestation plan was a failure. Money is spent for no reason, and in the end they want to blame us.*

*Finally, I believe that poverty can be fought, but not only by reforesting our land are we going to overcome poverty. It must be accompanied by other initiatives so that people accept the project. Those are many years and this is not clear, I think we will not do so well.*

- Alberto Vázquez, Indigenous leader, Itapúa

*communities must be given, that's the way it should be. Otherwise, I see it as very difficult, quite complicated for it to go well.*

*The project must be installed with great patience and efficiency; otherwise, it will not work, and at this instance we should already see the capacity and above all institutional will of the entities involved. In addition, we must take into account the issue of the time of the project: how will they manage it with the people since in the communities people want quick results without going around the bush too much?*

*We believe that there should be a good dialogue, good training on setting up the project. People should understand well what the project is, and what is to be achieved. There are families that will accept and others that will not, that is why it will depend on how the project is installed. Finally, the family criterion applied to the project does not seem right to me. No, in our case, it is a community criterion and even in a community, there may be people who accept it and others who do not.*

When asked “who was responsible for the project” in the indigenous peoples’ view, he said,

*For us, FAO is responsible for the project, and the others will help (MAG, INDI, INFONA, SEAM).*

With regard to participation of other civil society actors as active observers in the PROEZA initiative, the project held three consultation workshops in December 2016 with public, national and local entities as well as with organized civil society. Fifty-four public and private institutions participated with a total of 117 representatives. It is striking that representatives of indigenous peoples did not participate in those meetings. The NGOs that work with indigenous peoples were also not part of the civil society organizations that joined the workshops. This indicates a gap in participation of active observers in the process of elaboration and management

of the project by the government authorities that managed the initiative. No other meetings were recorded after approval of the project.

## Challenges and Opportunities

Considering the experiences described above, a challenge and at the same time an opportunity is to formalize the consultation and participation of indigenous peoples in the framework of the implementation of the PROEZA project. The opportunity opens in two concrete directions: first, for the institutions that will implement it, which includes those of the public sector and the entity that will manage the resources, which is FAO; and second, for the peoples and communities affected by the project, with special consideration to their organizations.

In the case of indigenous peoples, various organizations at the local level should be given space and the opportunity for dialogue, with equal participation for all including women and youth organizations of the different affected departments. As the list of participating indigenous organizations to date is very limited, it is necessary to expand and deepen it under clear action commitments.

As MAG technician Petrona Fretes declared:

*The Proeza project must be adjusted, such as component 1, according to what the indigenous issue is... It is also said that what the community decides to do will be respected. This respects the participation of people based on prior consultation.*

When such level of participation, organization and implementation of the PROEZA project is reached, it is expected that the contribution of the indigenous communities will be valued. Their most important capital, their knowledge and resources such as land, are tangible and intangible contributions that they can bring to the quality of the project.

## Recommendations of Indigenous Peoples

### For the Green Climate Fund:

1. **Encourage the participation of indigenous peoples before the approval of the project.** In any project presented by the Paraguayan Government that affects indigenous peoples, the Green Climate Fund should corroborate whether it had been submitted to the consideration of the indigenous peoples and their organizations. This step is key to avoid misunderstandings and such a procedure should form part of the joint setting up of the project. Although this step has been taken with organizations such as FAPI, there is no record of encounters with other organizations in the different departments affected by PROEZA.
2. **Ensure active participation.** The indigenous organizations conceive of indigenous peoples' participation in the elaboration and formulation phase of the project; they want to contribute as active actors in this process. The idea is to overcome the stage of only knowing a project prepared by qualified persons.
3. **Strengthen the process of setting up the PROEZA project in the cultural territories** in the affected departments and districts in which the indigenous communities are located. This implies weighing resources, time and use of appropriate or culturally appropriate languages to explain the project to the communities affected by the initiative.
4. **Local, cultural and social knowledge** and governance on the part of the indigenous organizations can be important elements at the time of project elaboration. This implies overcoming the view that indigenous peoples are vulnerable groups.
5. **Open a space for inclusion** of indigenous peoples in the governance structure

of the PROEZA project. The PROEZA governance structure or scheme is in the hands of the Executive and Steering Committees, concomitantly with the implementing entity of the project, such as FAO. Indigenous peoples and their organizations are significantly absent in the spaces of power within the framework of implementation of the initiative.

6. **Dimensioning poverty or extreme poverty** beyond the traditional income criteria and analyzing them from a multidimensional perspective can benefit and enrich the project formulation stage.

### For the National Designated Authority, Steering Committee and Executive Committee

1. Encourage the participation of indigenous peoples and their organizations in the process of conception and preparation of the project. A project document submitted to the consideration of indigenous peoples will bring multiple benefits in the short, medium and long term for its implementation.
2. Consider local contexts for the implementation of the PROEZA project and the territorial governance of indigenous organizations in each affected area, department or region.
3. In addition to the local, territorial and cultural context, the National Designated Authorities should consider that with regard to the proportion of space to be reforested, the family criterion applied in the implementation of the project (nuclear family) is not very clear in the indigenous area. In most of the communities, the culturally valid criterion is to understand, know and consequently operate under the criterion of the extended family. Considering this issue will imply that the people in charge of the project have or seek greater transparency and creativity in implementing the project.

4. A problem inherent to the project is its great territorial coverage. It affects eight departments and 64 districts. Although this can be understood as an opportunity for many families in extreme poverty, it is also their main problem, given that they put pressure on the entities involved, especially in terms of logistical aspects for coverage, leadership and governance in the execution of the project.
5. In view of the project's 10-year period and that this total duration is subject to the success of the first five years, the effective empowerment of indigenous families and communities assumes great importance for the project to be sustainable over time. Therefore, it is necessary to launch the project at an appropriate time in the communities, such as starting in those communities with better conditions of project receptivity and not where the major threats are. It is important to overcome the district or departmental view of the project, and to look at the religious leadership and/or inter-community alliances existing throughout the social and cultural territory of the communities involved. In this sense, the participation of the indigenous peoples and communities involved will be of vital importance, including the women especially those in the leadership, since in many communities women are the support of the local economy of extended families.
6. Considering that the project's potential benefits will be felt in the medium and long term, an issue not easy to explain to affected communities, shared responsibilities are vital which can be sustained over time with sufficient governance between parties.
7. The particularities of the institutions involved both in the Steering and Technical Committees must be taken into account, including weaknesses in terms of technical support and changes in leadership and membership, in setting up the project with the affected communities and their local organizations.
8. Space should be opened to the indigenous organizations to participate in carrying out implementation and management of the project, which is currently the responsibility of two Committees—Steering and Executive—and an entity, FAO. This should include prior discussion with them about instances and mechanisms of representation.
9. On the application of the social and environmental safeguards of the GCF Policy, it is proper to indicate that the NDA is aware of the policy's existence and given its recent approval, the NDA has not yet been able to apply it, nor are mechanisms or instances for its application envisaged. However, this activity, according to the Project Coordinator, would be one of the lines to work on within the framework of implementation in the remaining months of this year.
10. With the approval of the GCF social and environmental safeguards, the Steering and Technical Committees and FAO, which will administer the NDA resources, should study these safeguards and develop the mechanisms and instances for their application.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Date of inauguration of the current government.

<sup>2</sup> PROEZA Project Summary provided by the Project Coordinator, July 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Based on the previous work of the UN-REDD and FAO in 2016, statistics on biomass carbon density, poverty index, future risk of deforestation and proximity to the wood consuming industry were evaluated.

<sup>4</sup> Obtained from the PROEZA Project Summary. Project Coordination, July 2018.

<sup>5</sup> [Http://www.abc.com.py/edicion-impresalocales/recortaron-24000-millones-al-indi-1737063.html](http://www.abc.com.py/edicion-impresalocales/recortaron-24000-millones-al-indi-1737063.html).

<https://www.ultimahora.com/soja-deforestacion-y-narcotrafico-expulsan-nativos-las-ciudades-n2705186.html>.

<sup>6</sup> [Http://www.paraguaybio.com.py/det\\_proy\\_descripcion.html](http://www.paraguaybio.com.py/det_proy_descripcion.html). It refers to the Project "Improving the Conservation of Biodiversity and the Sustainable Management of the Earth in the Atlantic Forest of Eastern Paraguay" (PARAGUAY BIODIVERSITY), elaborated in the framework of a grant proposal presented by the Government of Paraguay to the Environment Fund, Global Environment Facility (GEF), with the World Bank as implementing agency, the Itaipu Binational Entity as executing agency, the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock through the PRODERS Project ("Sustainable Rural Development Project") as technical co-executors.

# CAMEROON

## Voiceless in GCF Readiness Support Program

*by Bouba Njobdi Amadou and Dr. Gabriel Enchaw Bachange*



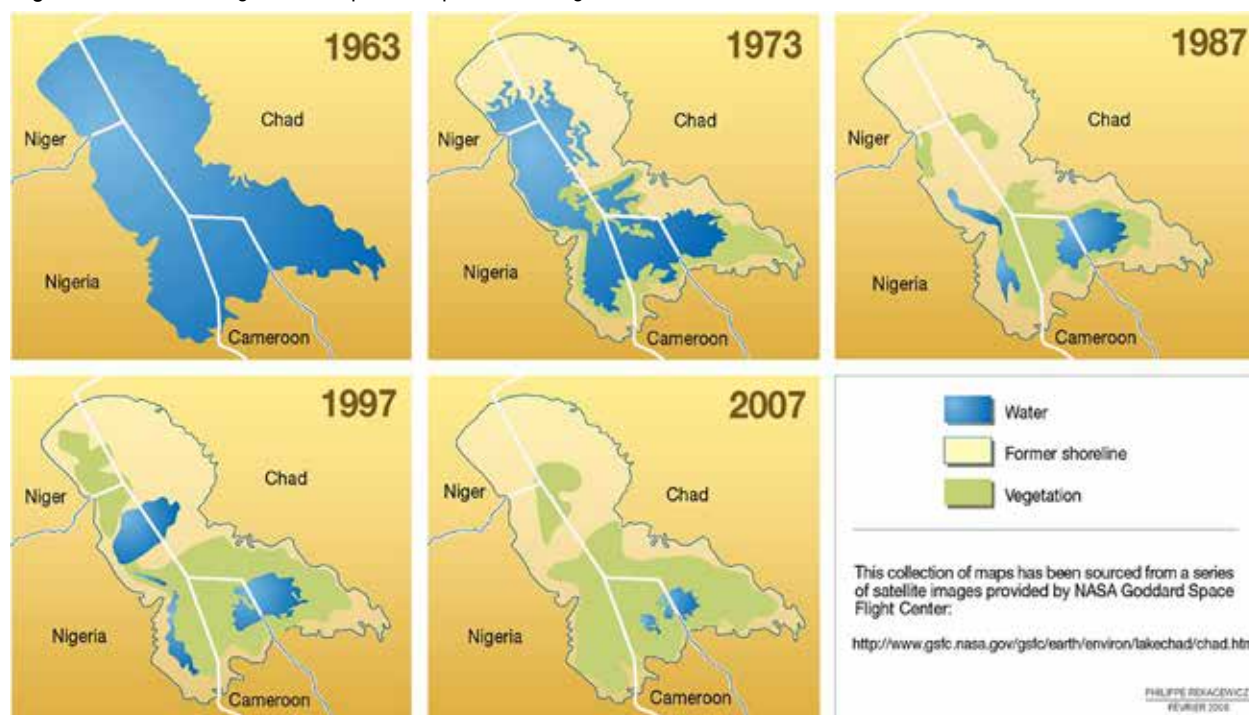
## Introduction

The impact of climate change both at global and country levels leaves no one indifferent. Global climate change has an impact on peoples and their cultures as it affects freshwater supplies, agriculture (food security), human settlement (sea level rise and devastating floods), human health (increased transmission of diseases) and causes fish extinction, soil erosion, heat waves, drought and desertification. These physical and natural impacts are experienced more by poor peoples in developing countries, with indigenous peoples being hardest hit. It has been forecast in Cameroon that climate change threatens to disrupt or scale back the country's economic development and amplify the factors that keep Cameroonians, particularly indigenous peoples, in the poverty trap. Its impact on Lake Chad, a shared resource among many countries including Cameroon, is severe (Fig. 1).

These global, national and local climate related challenges have aroused interest in seeking pathways through which climate change impacts can be mitigated and at the same time spur humans to develop adaptation strategies. In an effort to translate words into actions, various conventions, protocols, carbon markets or climate financing mechanisms have been put in place to be exploited. Such is the Green Climate Fund (GCF) whose purpose is to make a significant and ambitious contribution towards the global efforts to combat climate change.

Cameroon is a signatory to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) and Kyoto Protocol. It has been credited for contributing enormously in the inclusion of the last "D" (forest degradation) and the "plus" in what is currently known as REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks). More recently, the country participated in the Conferences of the Parties (COP) although it has not yet signed the Copenhagen Accord and it is not clear whether the government will do so in the near future. Civil society representatives in Cameroon lobbied the government against signing the Accord which they consider to be "not right for Africa" due to weaknesses such as:

1. The mobilization of US\$100 billion per year to developing countries will not be fully in place until 2020;
2. There is no agreement on how much individual countries would contribute to or benefit from any funds;
3. The head of G77 has said it will only secure the economic security of a few nations;
4. There is no international approach to technology; and
5. It shows biases in silent ways such as promotion of incentives in low gas-emitting countries.

**Figure 1.** Climate change related spatio-temporal shrinking of Lake Chad.

Source: [www.unep.org/](http://www.unep.org/)

The effort of Cameroon needs to be supported and in that respect it is creating an enabling environment for such support. In conformity, Cameroon submitted a set of Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) to the UNFCCC in 2010 and has developed a REDD Readiness Preparation Plan (RPP) and a National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) in preparation for future climate change financing. It has no formal joint assistance plan but coordination between donors and government is facilitated to some extent by the relatively small number of donors active in the country.

Traditionally, coordination has taken place through consultative forums and is the responsibility of the Directorate-General for Cooperation and Integration at the Ministry of Economic Planning and Regional Development (MINPLADAT). A multi-donor Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) Monitoring Committee (MDC) was established in 2001 to provide a platform for dialogue and coordination around Cameroon's key development issues. Since 2005 the MDC has formed technical sub-committees to help increase harmonization

and alignment processes across a number of thematic development areas. This work is guided by the Aid Effectiveness principles set out by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Three main investment programs were identified:

- Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in the southern forested plateau (AEZs 4 and 5);
- Resilience and adaptation to climate change in the northern woodlands (AEZs 1 and 2);
- Integrated management of watersheds in the western plateau (AEZ 3).

There is a broad spectrum of climate related financing mechanisms, some of which are known to indigenous peoples and others not. Cameroon has been engaged actively with the Green Climate Fund from its inception. But the most disturbing issues are that the rights of indigenous peoples are seldom recognized in such mechanisms, and indigenous peoples are as of now conspicuously absent in the Green Climate

Fund at the international level. These are the reasons for which they have been pushing hard for the setting up of seats for indigenous peoples to engage and participate in funding mechanisms such as the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, Forest Investment Program Climate Investment Fund and UN-REDD. This scoping study, undertaken by Lelewal Foundation, sought to have an overview of country level of engagement and the situation of indigenous peoples vis-à-vis the Green Climate Fund.

## State, Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples

Cameroon is one of the countries in the Central African Region, in particular in the Gulf of Guinea. It is a unitary presidential republic with ten regions (Fig. 2). The President of the Republic is the head of the state, and the Prime Minister is the head of government subject to the President's prerogatives. The legislative process is shared by the Government and Parliament, which consists of the Senate and National Assembly. The Constitution, adopted in 1996, is the highest level of legal norm. The constitutionality of laws is determined by the Constitutional Council, which has 11 members appointed by the President for nine years (renewable).

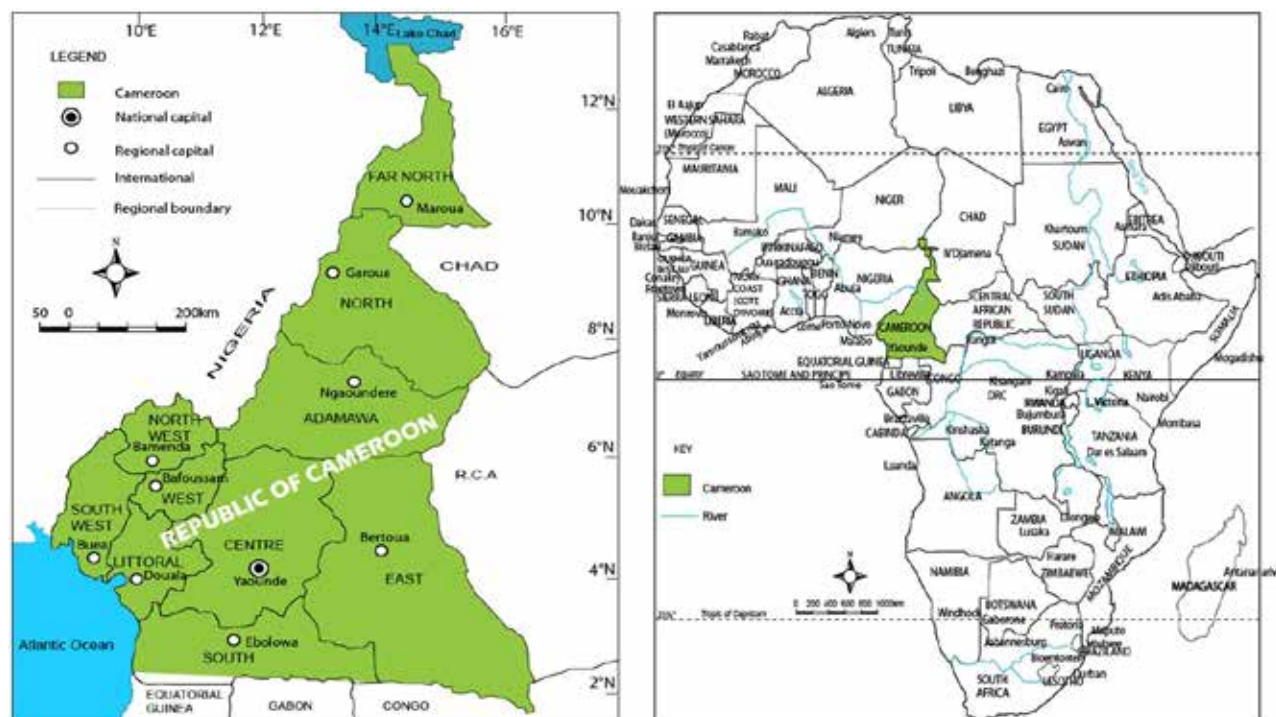
Macro-economically, Cameroon is a lower middle-income country with a population of 23.3 million people (World Bank, 2016). Its economy is characterized by dependency on natural resources ranging from forest and forest based resources, subsoil resources to agriculture. The country is endowed with abundant natural resources distributed in five key agro-ecological zones. A large expanse of dense tropical rainforests is predominantly in the southern part. Cameroon forest covers approximately 23 million hectares representing 47 percent of the total land area (MINFOR and FAO 2005). In addition are 15 million hectares of wooded land in the more arid central and northern parts. In the

late 1990s, productive forests comprised about 17 million hectares, representing 78 percent of the total forest area in exclusion of protected forest areas. This forest has enormous potential for climate change mitigation due to the huge nature of the trees, which are a characteristic of the Congo Basin Forest. That notwithstanding, people-friendly climate change legislation associated with REDD+, Green Climate Fund and indigenous peoples is needed for this forest to play an effective mitigation role.

After the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Cameroon was inspired by Agenda 21 to create the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MINEF) from the forest and wildlife sectors in the Departments of Agriculture and Tourism. Since then, profound institutional and legislative reforms have been made, such as the establishment of a forestry policy, creation of new forestry laws, wildlife and fisheries regulations, and development of all the applications of these forestry laws. All these actions have significantly modified regulations governing the entire sector. The forestry policy is one component of the national strategy to enhance rural economic activities. It falls within the framework of land use planning (zoning plan) and goes a long way toward boosting the agricultural policy. It is also an important component of the National Environment Management Program (NEMP), which emphasizes sustainable management of forest resources, and a complementary part of the National Energy Program.

One of Cameroon's concerns in forest management has always been the involvement of the population surrounding protected areas to enable them to have a fair and equitable share of the proceeds from the exploitation of forest resources. Although the population enjoys usufruct rights, they do not benefit directly from such exploitation and consequently do not worry about the conservation of these resources. The forest policy seeks to address this.

The forest policy further acknowledges the important role Cameroonian women play in resource exploitation and considers them a privileged target group in conservation strategies. Women make up more than 51 percent of

**Figure 2.** Cameroon and its location in Africa.**CAMEROON**

Political capital: Yaounde  
 Economic capital and largest city: Douala  
 Official languages: English and French  
 Total area: 475 650 km<sup>2</sup>  
 GNI (current US\$) (billions): 3080 (2015)  
 GDP growth (%): 5.9 (2015)  
 Currency: FCFA  
 French speaking regions: 8, Independence: 1<sup>st</sup> January 1960  
 English speaking regions: 2, Independence: 1<sup>st</sup> October 1961  
 by joining the French speaking part

Population: 23.3 million peoples (World Bank, 2016)  
 Population density: 49 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup> (2016)  
 GDP (current US\$) (billions): 28.4 (2015)  
 Type of government: Unitary presidential  
 Legislature: Bicameral Parliament  
 Upper house: Senate  
 Lower house: National Assembly

Cameroon's total population and 38 percent of the working force. A large percentage of them (84.5%) live in rural areas and an even higher number (92%) live off the land. Rural women are the main consumers of natural resources. They gather hay, firewood, leaves, fruits, bark, and small animals that go into the meals of their families. They are the custodians of traditional pharmacopoeia and harvesters of forest products for craft work. Women and indigenous peoples are the most affected by climate change, yet Cameroon has few or no climate change policies to check their vulnerability.

## Climate Change-Related Policy Framework

The Cameroon Senate was put in place on 14 April 2013 to give the country a practical bicameral parliamentary system. This means that many of the country's laws and regulations related to climate change were legislated and promulgated in the absence of the Upper House and the Constitutional Council.

The phenomenon of climate change is quite a recent issue in most of Africa and coupled with

the influence of climate change sceptics, the climate change policy framework of many countries in the continent such as Cameroon still lags behind. For now, Cameroon does not have any specific national climate change policy framework that guides its effort to address climate change mitigation, adaptation and vulnerability. The laws that may have some link with climate change are the general environmental laws, particularly those regulating the domains of energy, conservation, agriculture and water resources (Box 1). Cameroon, therefore, relies on previously existing environmental policies and action plans to implement climate change initiatives and activities in the domains of REDD+ and land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF),

conservation, mining, energy, transport, agriculture and water resources management.

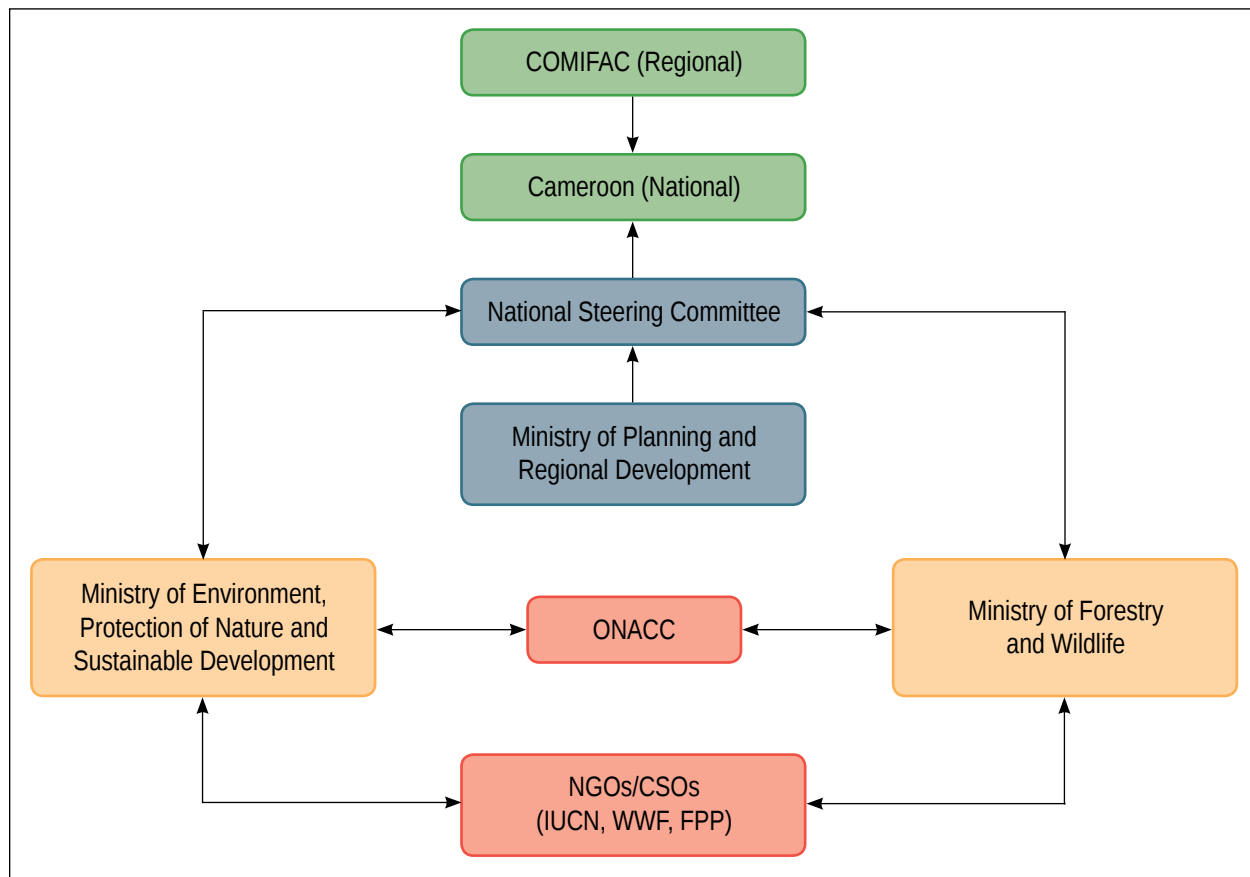
Cameroon has been engaged in REDD+ since 2005 and actively participates in international discussions on it. It has a REDD+ Readiness Plan, and REDD+ activities are overseen by the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED).

The country currently participates in a number of international and national frameworks aimed at strengthening management of forests and tackling land use challenges. It was one of the earliest countries to sign a Voluntary Partnership Agreement of the European Union's Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade

### **Box 1** Climate Change Legislation in Cameroon

While there are no legislative measures dedicated to addressing climate change, the government response to climate change issues is reflected in the country's executive portfolio of national and international policies, and in the inclusion of climate change considerations within key development plans.

1. Law n° 94/01 of 20 January 1994 on Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries
2. Framework Law n° 96/12 of 5 August 1996 on Environmental Management
3. Decree n° 2001/165/PM of 8 May 2001 fixing modalities for the protection of surface and underground water against pollution
4. Decree n° 2005/0577/PM of 23 February 2005 fixing the modalities for carrying out environmental impact assessment
5. Arrête n° 0070/MINEP of 22 April 2005 fixing the different categories of operations related to environmental impact assessment
6. Arrête n° 100/PM of 11 August 2006 creating an interministerial committee facilitating the execution of forests/ environment sectoral program
7. Decree n° 2008-064 of 4 February 2008 fixing the modalities for management of national environmental and sustainable development funds
8. November 2009 Cameroon Position Document on international discussions concerning climate change
9. Cameroon Vision 2035 of June 2009. Climate change is identified in Vision 2035 as one of the two major challenges to Cameroon's economy.
10. Presidential Decree n° 2009/410 of 10 December 2009 creating and organizing the functioning of the National Observatory on Climate Change (ONACC)
11. Law n° 00211/008 of 6 May 2011 orienting management and sustainable development in Cameroon
12. Decree n° 2011/2582/PM of 23 August 2011 fixing the modalities for the protection atmosphere
13. Law No. 2011/022 of 14 December 2011 Governing the Electricity Sector in Cameroon. Part IV of the law sets out general goals for promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency.
14. Prime Ministerial Decree No.103/CAB/PM of 13 June 2012 regarding the creation, organization and operation of the Steering Committee for activities to reduce emissions from deforestation, degradation, sustainable management and conservation of forests, REDD+

**Figure 3.** REDD management institutional framework.

program. Signed in May 2010 and ratified into national law soon thereafter, this Agreement between the EU and Cameroon is directed at combatting illegal logging. Cameroon is also an active member of the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) and the COMIFAC's Working Group on Climate Change. The COMIFAC countries generally engage in the UNFCCC negotiations with a common position regarding REDD+, as this increases the weight of their arguments.

Within this context Cameroon has contributed to the preparation and communication of five Congo Basin country submissions to UNFCCC that helped to highlight the role of forest degradation and sustainable forest management in the REDD+ discussions. In line with COMIFAC's position, Cameroon supports a historical reference emission level with development adjustment factors. The COMIFAC countries recently agreed that agriculture should be given a more

prominent role in UNFCCC, as it is among their priority areas for climate change adaptation. Given that the majority of their populations rely on agriculture for their livelihoods, COMIFAC generally considers climate smart agriculture as a key option for REDD+.

In 2012 Cameroon set up the REDD+ Steering Committee, the body that approves and pilots activities geared towards reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation at the national level. This Committee is headed by the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development and works in synergy with the Ministry of Planning and Regional Development, Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF), National Observatory on Climate Change (ONACC) and NGOs/CSOs such as International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and Forest Peoples Programme (FPP) (Fig. 3).





gation to respect the fundamental principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) under the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

### Other Policy Frameworks

Other important policy frameworks of Cameroon include the 1997 first National Communication to UNFCCC and the 2007 National Communication to UNFCCC, with the latter being prepared following a Cooperation Project Agreement between UNEP and MINEPDED. The Project was approved by the Global Environment Facility on 3 October 2007 for a duration of 36 months and was to extend up to 30 November 2011. The project cost was \$631,000 of which \$405,000 was from the GEF Trust Fund and \$226,000 was in kind contributed by the Executing Agency.

Major policy documents in Cameroon, such as the 1994 Forest Law, 1995 Forest Policy, 1996 Framework Law on Environment, Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 1999 Agricultural Policy, REDD + Readiness Preparation Proposal and the first National Communication to UNFCCC, pay little attention to climate change adaptation. With the exception of the REDD+ RPP, sectorial policies, laws and strategies are void of tangible reference to climate change but make provisions for some activities that directly or indirectly address climate change.

Although Cameroon has no specific law on climate change, the 1996 Framework Law on Environment sets a basis for all environmental policies, including steps taken to reduce GHG emissions. According to this framework law, “every person shall have a right to a healthy environment, the protection and improvement of which shall be the duty of the state and every citizen.” Furthermore, the forest law and policy oblige the state to “protect the national forest heritage” and “ensure resource (forest) renewal through regeneration and reforestation so as to sustain its potential.” The interpretation of this has been stretched to include carbon sequestration and thus climate change.

Although government action and commitment still need to be visibly strengthened through adoption of an integrated climate change policy option, the submission of the REDD+ RPP in 2013, the National Adaptation Program of Action to UNFCCC, and the GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support Proposal on 20 April 2017 is expected to “position” the country for future access to climate change financing for addressing synergy challenges at the national level. This effort of Cameroon towards climate financing can be attested by the scoping mission for the preparation of the Investment Plan for the Forest Investment Program in Yaoundé on 21-25 September 2015. The mission aimed to initiate dialogue with the government and to plan together the activities of developing an Investment Plan. Led by the government through the designated FIP focal point in MINEDPED, it resulted in the elaboration of an Action Plan, which included the organization of two joint missions. Participants included representatives of government ministries, National REDD+ Committee/ REDD+ Technical Secretariat, state universities, national CSOs, African Development Bank and World Bank.

The mission met the key actors involved in the REDD+ process, including the Ministers of MINEDPED, MINFOF and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Director General for Cooperation at MINEPAT, members of the Technical Secretariat of the National REDD+ Coordination Office, representatives of civil society, and the main technical and financial partners. The mission also met with the United Kingdom’s High Commissioner to Cameroon. These meetings provided forums to share information on the Forest Investment Program. Areas of information sharing included the context of the Cameroon FIP, its objectives, expected outcomes, implementation procedures and methods to be used to ensure sound understanding and shared vision of the program among the actors. It was agreed and confirmed that a participatory approach involving the private sector would be adopted to carry out the investment plan preparation process.

## Climate Change Synergy, Institutional Arrangements and Indigenous Peoples

Climate change is just coming to the forefront in Cameroon and the government is still preoccupied with putting in place the different institutions whose collective effort can serve as an appropriate response to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Interviewees pointed out that Cameroon had no national committee/institution in charge of climate change until 10 December 2009 when the National Observatory on Climate Change was created and the national REDD+ steering committee (co-chaired by MINEPDED and MINFOF) was formed. Before then, the responsibility of climate change was embedded within MINEPDED.

Recently created institutions related to climate change include the Pan-African Parliamentarians Network on Climate Change (PAPNCC) and the International Association of Parliamentarians for Peace (IAPP-Cameroon) hosted in the Cameroon National Assembly, as well as the National Designated Authority (NDA) who has also been selected and associated still with MINEPDED. Thus, the responsibility of climate change is wholly embedded within MINEPDED, with limited coordination and support from other relevant ministries to mainstream climate change across sector programs. The interviewee in the National Assembly noted that most knowledge and capacity on climate change is restricted to a small number of people/staff within MINEPDED and to a lesser extent MINFOF, and it will therefore take time for other ministries and sectors to incorporate climate change into their strategies and development plans. In this regard, it will take some time for indigenous peoples to be an integral part of the synergy, since the Ministry of Social Affairs, which addresses their issues, is only consulted at times without being at the center of climate change policy negotiations.

The literature indicated that institutions (such as MINFOF and MINEPDED) take charge of the design and implementation of climate change projects, environmental planning and

reporting, national communications on climate change, implementation of guidelines for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), advice and monitoring of documents linked to REDD+ and climate change. In addition to these are capacity building and elaboration of projects, monitoring and measuring carbon fluxes, and addressing issues linked to climate change. Other key institutional mandates highlighted by respondents include facilitating participation of communities in activities linked to climate change and defining forest policies with greater incidence on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The Cameroon Academy of Science in collaboration with the Biodiversity Development and Conservation and the Cameroon National Assembly have produced “A simplified communication guide on climate change for parliamentarians and councillors in Cameroon.” The National Council of Traditional Rulers of Cameroon also signed a partnership protocol agreement with the Pan-African Parliamentarians' Network on Climate Change on 15 March 2011. This protocol served as a synergy for these parties to jointly fight against climate change and mitigate its effects. Unfortunately, the traditional rulers of indigenous peoples are excluded systematically due to the fact that Cameroon authority does not recognize them as auxiliaries of the administration.

Although the interviewees stated that their institutional mandate was focused on both mitigation and adaptation with no bias for either strategy, awareness of climate change both inside and outside of government as of now is largely limited to an understanding of environmental and climate related impacts at the local level. A similar scenario was observed with climate change financing and the Green Climate Fund. At the NDA level, focus is still on building capacity and equipping its secretariat as well as enhancing capacities of the Bank of Central African States (BDEAC) to progress in the accreditation process of GCF.

A critical examination of these analyses shows that the government and other relevant institutions are making some efforts to promote synergies between climate change mitigation

and adaptation. Though it is evident that existing policies, laws, strategies and institutional arrangements relevant for promoting an integrated approach to climate change are insufficient, some promising projects and activities that harness great potential for synergies exist. Furthermore, interviewees were unanimous that interaction between government ministries and NGOs was poor, and that inadequate financial resources or funding was the major challenge stakeholders have and would continue to face as a result of adopting integrated approaches to climate change.

Other challenges that may impede the adoption of integrated approaches to climate change include inadequate coordination, insufficient sensitization and capacity building, ineffective implementation, inadequate compliance, lack of proper transparency and inadequate public participation. In terms of public participation, there is basically no policy framework that enhances the participation of women and indigenous peoples. The laws on access to and use of resources are gender neutral and void of indigenous consideration, since the philosophical underpinning holds that all Cameroonians are indigenous in Cameroon.

### **Stakeholders' Engagement in Climate Change Synergy and Indigenous Peoples**

Appropriate response to climate change is a collective effort coming from diverse stakeholders and sectors. From 2015 to 2017, the Cameroon Forest Investment Plan programming took place within the framework of the earlier cited Scoping Mission in 2015, after which a number of joint missions with national and external partners intervened for comprehensive reporting.

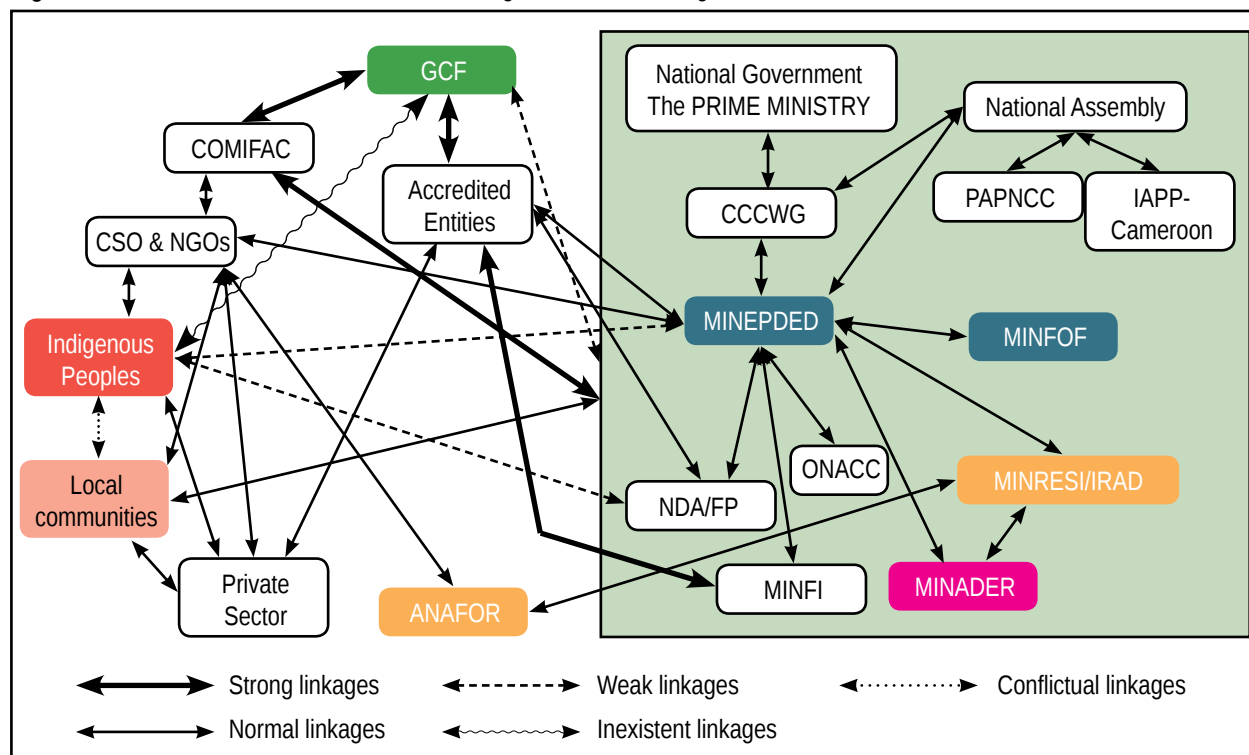
The interviewees acknowledged that many actors or stakeholders participate either formally or informally or consciously or unconsciously at the national level to address climate change. These are state and non-state actors who have the opportunity of networking and to exploit GCF financing mechanisms to acquire funds

and facilitate climate change mitigation and adaptation in the country.

At the formal or conscious level, the roles of some of these stakeholders include providing technical support, acting as focal point on issues related to climate change, serving as the president or chairperson on climate change issues, crafting the REDD+ plan of action and strategic coordination of mitigation activities. These activities are performed by research establishments, such as the National Forestry Development Agency (ANAFOR), Institute of Agricultural Research for Development (IRAD) and local populations including women and indigenous people through the use of agroforestry and indigenous knowledge. It is important to note that, although communication of members of national level committees addressing climate change such as the Cameroon Climate Change Working Group (CCCWG) is done on a monthly basis, climate change response faces weak information dissemination and support between actors, especially state actors, and weak institutional links between state and non-state actors (Fig. 4).

The linkages actually show the level and/or frequency of interaction between relevant national level actors and between state actors and non-state actors. Interview data revealed that the government through MINEPDED and MINFOF is the most influential actor in integrated climate change policy implementation.

Furthermore, under the theme "Stakeholder consultations on climate change legislation in Cameroon" the CCCWG organized four meetings in different cities of Cameroon (the inland capital Yaoundé, its commercial centre Douala, the beach resort and seaport Kribi and Idenau or Idenao), a small town at the foot of Mount Cameroon in the southwest) between July 2017 and February 2018. The overall goal was to gauge stakeholders' views on priorities for domestic climate change legislation, appropriate approaches and potential barriers. The findings of the consultations only provide a snapshot analysis and do not claim to represent public opinion in Cameroon. They are based on very limited stakeholder consultations which do not

**Figure 4.** Current and future inter-institutional linkages on climate change in Cameroon.

represent the wider societal dialogue required to determine priorities in a transparent and democratic manner.

The general approach, however, may provide a blueprint to undertake such consultations on a larger—properly resourced—nationwide scale. It influences political debates, supports programs and projects relating to climate change, lobbies and mobilizes funds. For example, the government is carrying out its nationally determined contributions (NDCs) in conformity with the new agreement on climate change adopted in Paris. To some extent and for now, it is the government (state actors) that has the knowledge and mastery of the climate change negotiations, institutional mandate and expertise, and is the official authority responsible for REDD+ implementation and preparing Readiness Proposals.

Although MINEDPED or Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development is the major institution defining and implementing all climate response policies and actions within the national and

international arenas, with forest taking central stage in the present and future climate change regime, MINFOF or Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife has become a relevant actor. But how the two ministries and other sectorial ministries operate to guarantee better climate response relating to mitigation and adaptation in the forest sector still remains a big challenge.

International organizations such as the UN and World Bank have also been rated as the most influential organizations currently promoting the National Appropriate Mitigation Action, National Adaptation Plan of Action, REDD+ and national climate change policy. This is true, but the strategies used by many of these global organizations and their perception of how such strategies should be implemented take many African/developing countries aback. Transposing the realities of one geographic space to another will acquire longer time lapses for adaptation. The rate at which the concepts used evolve also needs much time for appropriate interpretation and application. This is reflected in the engagement of developing countries with the Green Climate Fund.





violations during REDD implementation in their territories.” Indeed, the R-PIN gave a list of the “main preoccupations of native populations dependent on the forest.” But the R-PIN does not contain any specific plans for consultation with indigenous peoples and forest dependent communities. At best, local consultation seems to be left to ad hoc NGO initiatives rather than an integral part of FCPF-related REDD readiness planning; it did not detail how or even if these issues were identified by rights holders.

The current FCPF-related REDD process is thus failing to uphold commitments in its Charter, which states that the: Facility shall (...) comply with the World Bank’s Operational Policies and Procedures, taking into account the need for effective participation of Forest-Dependent Indigenous Peoples and Forest Dwellers in decisions that may affect them, respecting their rights under national law and applicable international obligations. In a FCPF memorandum of information issued in 2008, the Facility further specified that indigenous and community participation should occur early on in the readiness process. In late 2010, effective community participation in REDD planning had not taken place.

As existing literature holds, there are no specific government plans for community consultation on REDD, and it was difficult to verify if local consultation plans were being developed as part of the more detailed R-PP proposal. It is thus unclear at this stage how or if participation issues were really addressed in the R-PP. It is also important to note that prior consultation and respect for free, prior informed consent are also minimum standards set out in the United Nations Declaration on Indigenous Peoples, which was formally endorsed by Cameroon in 2007. The UNFCCC focal point at MINEPDED advised the Forest Peoples Programme in September 2010 that the R-PP is currently being drafted by MINEP and the World Bank, with the involvement of many ministries and with input from WWF, IUCN, and German development cooperation agencies (KfW, GTZ). This was purely a top-down process, which was reproduced in the structure for REDD governance planned in Cameroon.

In the same top-down perspective, the government created a “National REDD Steering Committee” that has been overseeing REDD policy making and actions. In late 2010, the establishment of this body still needed to be signed by the prime minister. The top-down process is also often perpetrated by local organizations, which speak on behalf of and reason for the indigenous peoples, when they are mere civil society construct with no mandate from these indigenous peoples. Some of such ‘civil society organizations’ remotely control the advancement of indigenous peoples and do not build their leadership capacity for it will lead to the creation of purely indigenous peoples organizations. The forest indigenous peoples in the southeast forest zone have been victims of such human-induced injustices for so long, as they are not part of the decision making bodies in forest governance despite their absolute dependence on it for existence.

Up to the close of 2008, there were no indications of any meaningful involvement of indigenous peoples and mainstream local communities in the process of REDD, although mainstream local communities were receiving 10 percent of forestry royalties as proscribed by the law. Their non-involvement continued and was replicated in the National REDD Steering Committee as it was modelled after a structure with the same name created in December 2008 for the “pilot REDD project” led by the German remote sensing consulting firm GAF-AG. Apart from the co-chairs MINEPDED and MINFOF, the other members of this committee are drawn from the

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Mines, Ministry of Planning and Regional Development, COMIFAC, WWF, World Bank, KfW, and GTZ. The conspicuous absence of the Ministry of Social Affairs in this list confirms the exclusion of indigenous peoples and mainstream local communities in the REDD+ process in Cameroon.

## Cameroon GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support

Cameroon began getting ready to engage with the Green Climate Fund by nominating the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development as the National Designated Authority /Focal Point represented by Inspector Number 1 in MINEPDED. The International Union for Conservation of Nature was designated as the Accredited Entity to implement the Readiness and Preparatory Support project under the guidance of the IUCN-Cameroon Program Director. The NDA, however, noted that Cameroon now counts many Accredited Entities, among which are IUCN, World Bank, African Development Bank, JICA, KfW/GIZ, and AFD.

The challenging nature of the GCF readiness process necessitated engaging other stakeholders besides the NDA and accredited entity, such as the National Observatory on Climate Change, to synergize actions in preparing the

### Box 2 About the Green Climate Fund

- An operating entity of the Financial Mechanism of the UNFCCC and Paris Climate Change Agreement
- Promotes the PARADIGM SHIFT towards low carbon and climate resilient DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS
- Largest fund globally that is fully dedicated to climate change: US\$10.3 billion pledged from 43 Governments
- Host country: South Korea
- Board: 24 members, half developed/developing countries and 4 observers (2 from civil society, 2 from private sector)
- Trustee: World Bank interim. Permanent trustee selection is in process
- Access modality: direct and international access (53 accredited entities as at October 2017)

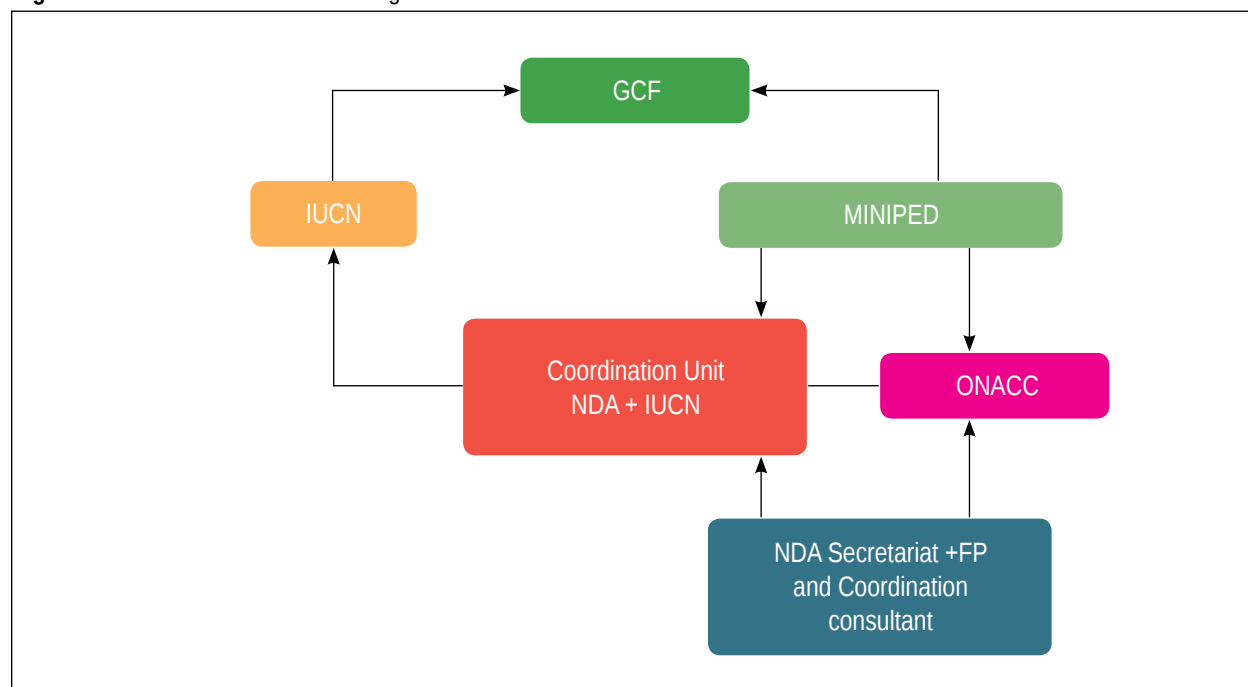
Readiness and Preparatory Support Proposal. A secretariat for the NDA/FP was created, and a small coordination unit put in place to oversee project implementation. The coordination unit comprised the NDA and project focal person from MINEPDED, IUCN and project coordinator consultant. The members meet every two months to discuss progress and any modifications in planned activities including other management and institutional backstopping required in ensuring project delivery. These components together with ONACC are within the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (Fig. 3).

Through the MINEPDED, Cameroon has been engaging with the Green Climate Fund since 2017. The NDA/FP together with the other stakeholders prepared a 16-page GCF Readiness Proposal comprising five sections and submitted it to the GCF Board on 20 April 2017. Section 1 is a summary of the readiness proposal; section 2, the country readiness logical framework; section 3, additional information; section 4, budget, procurement, implementation and disbursement; and section 5, implementation arrange-

ments and other information. It was captioned establishing and strengthening the National Designated Authority and Focal Point, developing strategic framework for engagement with the GCF, including preparation of country program and initial pipelines of programs and projects. Country proposals emanate from the NDA and its coordination team, while the accredited entity is the implementing agency. As the accredited entity, IUCN receives and manages the funds on behalf of NDA, ensures technical and financial reporting that will be transmitted to NDA and GCF secretariat, supervises work of the coordinator consultant, and provides technical and strategic guidance in project implementation including financial accounting in accordance with required procedures.

The NDA is the main beneficiary of this project and has the following tasks: 1) to provide necessary support for project implementation; 2) to facilitate planning and implementation of approved activities; 3) to ensure inter-sectorial collaboration between the various technical ministries such as MINFOF and Ministry of Finance (MINFI) and other institutional requirements to enhance project delivery. The MINFI is in

**Figure 3.** Cameroon GCF readiness logical framework.



charge of lodging and putting finances at the disposal of the technical ministries concerned (MINEPDED/MINFOF) to execute activities.

The Readiness Proposal's requested amount was \$300,000 for a 12-month duration. This money was intended to:

- Set up a transversal and cross-ministerial working group to constitute NDA (including at least 2 staff + FP as Permanent Secretariat);
- Prepare and submit the nomination decree of the NDA;
- Build capacity (equipment to support the new tasks, development of website, trainings, meetings);
- Elaborate country program priorities in line with GCF requirements;
- Train on international procurement, accounting, oversight, and evaluation processes (for FP and 2 NDA staff members).

## Engagement of Indigenous Peoples with Government

The engagement of indigenous peoples with the government appears vague. The Preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon makes mention of indigenous and minority peoples but with reference to no particular groups. In Cameroon, communities of forest indigenous peoples (Pygmies) and indigenous Mbororo pastoralists have been subsumed under Bantu and semi-Bantu villages/authorities respectively. The government has also imposed a moratorium on the creation of villages, which has impeded the recognition of indigenous villages as legal entities and their traditional authorities as auxiliaries of the administration.

Statutorily, villages are considered as legal entities and the traditional leaders of these villages have been classified into 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> classes in order of hierarchy. These traditional authorities are recognized as auxiliaries of the administration while those of forest indigenous peoples (Pygmies) are not. Very few Mbororo chiefs were recognized as 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> class chiefs by the state. The simple reason is that communities of indigenous peoples are not legal entities.

The implication is that indigenous communities cannot access any developmental assistance directly except through the village community and authority to which each is subsumed.

A ministerial order No.0076/MINADT/MINFI/MINFOF of 26 June 2012 that allocated 10% of the forest incentives to communities in forest exploitation areas was supplemented by circular No 004/MINFI/DGI/L of June 2015 by the general directorate of taxation, spelling out procedural requirements for the tax provisions of law (No 2014/026 of 23 December 2014 relating to the 2015 finance law of Cameroon). On the contrary, however, this controversial circular allocated 10 percent of the proceeds of annual forestry royalties to tax recovery agents of the Ministry of Finance as a form of motivation.

Though studies revealed that finance officials refused to speak on the subject, development activists said that the officials justified the suppression of the 10 percent of annual forest royalties destined to indigenous communities on grounds that indigenous communities are not legal entities. Further saying this suppression on such grounds is uncalled for, they describe the decision as a breach of Cameroon's 1994 land tenure law. "If the argument is that communities are not legal entities, then communities in mining areas will likely be deprived of their quota of taxes. That is money that is used to fund local projects of the communities and if they are deprived of it, they have been deprived of their right to livelihood as stipulated in the 1994 land tenure law," said Samuel Nguiffo, Director of the Centre for Environment and Development (CED) in Yaounde (Solomon Tembang, 7/8/2018). In effect, the existing statutory arrangements in Cameroon have stifled indigenous peoples from contributing substantially to national development, and they are monetarily poorer than mainstream communities and socially and politically disadvantaged.

Far from being pessimistic, the statutory situation of the indigenous peoples may not make any significant positive shift even with the ongoing stakeholder consultation, as theory and practice are seldom brought into synergy. It has been observed that appropriate implementation of the Paris Climate Change Agreement at na-

It was still too early for the NDA to make its impact felt outside the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development. The first \$300,000 GCF financing was for NDA capacity building and to enable Cameroon to have a GCF country program (Mr Wagnoun Tchoukap Valentin, pers. com.). The NDA, however, noted that Cameroon submitted another readiness proposal on 1 September 2018 still for capacity building, which when funded will consider indigenous peoples' organizations.

The forest indigenous peoples however do not have any organizations of their own, which is critical since they are not recognized as an entity by the government. During three separate focus group discussions with indigenous peoples in Djoum-South Region, the participants unanimously said they had no community based organizations (CBOs) that could make their voices heard in matters of forest ownership and governance. They, however, acknowledged that some civil society organizations are striving for their voices to be heard. On the GCF, they heard the concept of the Green Climate Fund for the first time in 2016 from Lelewal partners but were categorical that they do not know what it means. Lelewal Foundation-Cameroon, an indigenous peoples organization (IPO) working with indigenous peoples, has been working for the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples and has also been lobbying to increase their opportunities to engage with GCF and the NDA. It was one of the 40 signatories to the Indigenous Peoples' Letter to the GCF Board B.13 on 16 June 2016 that drew the Board's attention to many challenges faced by indigenous peoples the world over.

Quite often, the Green Climate Fund focuses mostly on procedural matters, which have little potential impact on the ground, particularly as indigenous communities in almost every region in the world are still grappling with issues of rights to land, territories and resources. The GCF needs to develop its own capacity to fully assess and ensure compliance with international human rights standards and obligations relevant to indigenous peoples. In order to be accountable and apply appropriate standards, it needs

to adopt a robust policy on indigenous peoples, which must fully recognize the relevance of international standards and obligations such as those enshrined in the UNDRIP. It must adopt the core FPIC standard and also enable direct access by indigenous peoples to GCF funding for their own projects and climate initiatives.

## Challenges

Cameroon faces similar challenges like the other African countries in terms of engagement of indigenous peoples with the GCF, although with some specificities which hinge on the legal status of indigenous peoples in the country. These challenges will be examined at the level of Africa and at national level.

At a general perspective, international organizations such as the UN and World Bank have been rated as the most influential organizations currently promoting the National Appropriate Mitigation Action, National Adaptation Plan of Action, REDD+ and national climate change policy, which African countries including Cameroon depend on for external financing. This is true with the increasing reliance of African countries on International Accredited Entities. This is critical as it constrains capacity building, thereby reinforcing a lack of both readiness and direct access to the GCF.

Similarly, the strategies/guidelines used by many of these global organizations and their perception of how these should be followed and implemented is a concern for many African/developing countries. This is reflected by widespread non-compliance with guidelines due to limited experience of National Coordination Units. To reiterate, transferring the realities of one geographic space to another would necessitate a longer period to adapt and replicate. The pace at which the concepts develop also needs time to be appropriately interpreted and applied. This is also a critical issue, which has hampered the engagement of Cameroon indigenous peoples vis-à-vis the GCF up to now.

At the national level, key challenges concerning engagement of indigenous peoples with GCF are associated with the issue of indigeneity, which Cameroon is still grappling with and is yet to be addressed statutorily. Two of the interviewees were of the view that the concept of indigenous peoples is alien although referring to groups such as Pygmies and Mbororo also found in Cameroon. They, however, noted that though all Cameroonians are indigenous in the country, these two groups need special attention. It is probably this notion of “special attention” that instigated the government to place the group of UN-defined indigenous peoples and all other groups classified by government as minority and vulnerable peoples under the Ministry of Social Affairs.

There is a missing link in the institutional structure vis-à-vis the climate-related plight of indigenous peoples and climate resilience in Cameroon. The Ministry of Social Affairs that addresses issues of the indigenous peoples is not directly involved with forest governance, climate change and climate financing. For instance, from literature on government programs, MINAS is not among those ministries mandated to implement the Cameroon Forest Investment Plan. According to the FIP Final Report of 11 November 2017, the National Implementing Agency is the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development and the co-implementing agencies are the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries, and the Prime Minister's Office. The same applies to the Central African Forest Initiative Multi-Partner Trust Fund. In this particular case, the four Implementing Partner(s) are:

- Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development assigned to piloting cooperation agreements, signature of contractual arrangements related to external funding and overall supervisory role in execution of all externally funded projects;

- Ministry of Finance charged with lodging and putting the finances to execute activities at the disposal of concerned technical ministries (MINEPDED/MINFOF);
- Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development assigned with technical and administrative competence in the domain of Climate Change and REDD+;
- Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife assigned with technical competence in the forest sector and REDD+.

This is a clear indication that the institutional structure does not allow for easy engagement of indigenous peoples in climate financing in general and the Green Climate Fund in particular, though they are victims of social and environmental impacts of climate change.

## Opportunities

Africa has opportunities to diversify its GCF portfolio, adhere to international commitments, and address its adaptation and development needs by identifying and capitalizing linkages between GCF funding priorities, mitigation, and adaptation. There are also leverage points within existing climate finance and governance systems that could catalyze a shift in Africa's engagement with the GCF to generate positive, cascading effects on institutional strengthening, direct access accreditation and securing funding.

Cameroon has no legal framework on climate change. Its environmental legal framework addresses many climate change issues implicitly but not in a comprehensive and structured manner. While the lack of adequate legislation may hinder immediate and effective responses to the adverse effects of climate change, it can also be considered as an opportunity for new and "better" laws. In this context, a meaningful public consultation process was identified as an important tool to fill existing gaps and also help to address people's concerns regarding further

regulatory interventions. In this respect, the outcomes of the four consultation meetings in Cameroon confirm the premise of this study: that a "bottom up" process is key for equitable outcomes.

The results of the focus group discussions and survey were largely congruent. The priority areas for climate action identified during the consultations (agriculture, coastal protection, health) also broadly confirm the vulnerability assessment in the Cameroonian Nationally Determined Contributions (agriculture, water sanitation and health). In the public perception, mitigation issues (such as emission controls or renewable energy) appear to play only a minor role, while use and access to land is clearly the priority area for adequate climate change legislation. Legal reform efforts could cover a wide range of issues such as land reform, food security or subventions for the sector.

Stakeholder consultations on climate change legislation provide a wonderful opportunity to include the concerns of indigenous peoples in the upcoming laws on climate change and Green Climate Fund in the country. Ample care should be taken for the consultation of all categories of stakeholders. The views of indigenous peoples should not be collected from the mainstream local communities under which they have been subsumed. If that error is committed, their concerns will still not be addressed in the awaited climate change legislation.

## Recommendations

To overcome these constraints/challenges and to promote synergy between climate change mitigation and adaptation in Cameroon, these specific recommendations are made:

1. Cameroon has pinpointed consultations as an important first step to understanding how legislation that works for people and the environment could be developed bottom up. These consultations should be broad based and inclusive in order to address indigenous peoples' concerns,

particularly those related to community recognition as legal entities, recognition of their authorities as auxiliaries of the administration, and defining and acknowledging of their rights and access to land and resources. With such legislation the indigenous peoples will be able to contribute to the development of the country and to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

2. For effective engagement of the indigenous peoples with climate change mitigation and adaptation, climate financing and the Green Climate Fund, they should be removed from the Ministry of Social Affairs and put under the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development.
3. A national technical committee must be created to oversee and provide scientific guidance to the government on the synergies between climate change adaptation and mitigation. This is fundamental, as this will go a long way to inform relevant governmental bodies about relevant scientific information they are not aware of.
4. Private sector investment and sponsorship must be promoted and funding committed for joint mitigation and ad-

aptation projects by relevant ministries and international organizations. The involvement of the private sector is important as they are quite keen in investment in a sector that will benefit them in a long run.

5. Effective and creative community awareness and enforcement programs must be developed and mass media coverage integrated to communicate the right message on climate change adaptation and mitigation.
6. Stakeholders must be involved in joint decision making at all stages and various aspects of mitigation and adaptation projects. As Rosenbaum (2000) explained, the merit of involving all stakeholders in climate change-related issues is that it paves the way for faster and cost effective results.
7. Networks and partnerships must be created and knowledge shared with countries having initial experience in designing and implementing integrated strategies to climate change. Implementation of these key aforementioned recommendations will help in promoting synergies between climate mitigation and adaptation practices in Cameroon.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Engaging with the Green Climate Fund, A resource guide for national designated authorities and focal points of recipient countries. Issue 01, May 2015.

<sup>2</sup> The study undertook primary and secondary data collection through desk review of existing literature on government programs and policies, semi-structured interview, focus group discussion and field observation. Three focus group discussions were held with the Baka Indigenous Peoples in Djoum, South Region. These research methods intended to generate data on avenues created by country policies and programs for indigenous peoples to engage with the National Designated Authority for GCF readiness, how the GCF readiness proposal's activities will affect the indigenous peoples and whether Cameroon has accessed any GCF financing. Data were also gathered on the indigenous peoples' level of awareness and engagement in the GCF process so far.

<sup>3</sup> Climate change legislation in Cameroon, an excerpt from the 2015 Global climate legislation study: a review of climate change legislation in 99 countries. Nachmany et al. 2015, available at [www.lse.ac.uk/GranthamInstitute/legislation/](http://www.lse.ac.uk/GranthamInstitute/legislation/).

<sup>4</sup> Interactive Forest Atlas of Cameroon - Version 3.0. Available at [http://pdf.wri.org/interactive\\_forest\\_atlas\\_of\\_cameroon\\_version\\_3\\_0.pdf](http://pdf.wri.org/interactive_forest_atlas_of_cameroon_version_3_0.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Cameroon National Environmental Management Programme, MINEF, 1996. Available at <https://www.adaptation-undp.org/>.

<sup>6</sup> Cameroon (Intended) Nationally Determined Contribution. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2016.

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<sup>7</sup> Forest Investment Program (FIP)– Cameroon First Joint Mission October 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Government of Cameroon (GoC), 2017. Cameroon Readiness and Preparatory Support proposal.

<sup>9</sup> Forest Investment Program (FIP) – Cameroon Second Joint Mission 15-26 May 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Republic of Cameroon Forest Investment Program (FIP – Cameroon) FIP Scoping Mission – Cameroon Yaounde, 21-25 September 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> GoC 2017, Cameroon Readiness and Preparatory Support proposal.

<sup>13</sup> Cameroon (Intended) Nationally Determined Contribution. International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank, 2016.

<sup>14</sup> World Bank Development Indicators, 2011.

<sup>15</sup> Cameroon Human Development Index, 2010.

<sup>16</sup> GoC, 2017.

<sup>17</sup> GoC, 1996, The Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon.

<sup>18</sup> Bottom-up climate legislation in Cameroon, 2018.

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# NEPAL

## Recognizing Indigenous Knowledge and Practices in Climate Discourse, Strategies and Action

*by Pasang Dolma Sherpa, PhD. and Pasang Sherpa, PhD.*



## Background

Climate change poses a major global concern due to the rapid change in mean temperature and its impacts on the livelihoods of people resulting from melting of ice and snow cover, glacial lake outburst floods, landslides, sea level rise and frequent changes in rainfall patterns all over the world (UNFCCC, 2006). It is caused by the massive exploitation of natural resources in the process of development and modernization in the developed countries.

The resulting impacts of climate change are visible both in developed and developing countries, but people in the latter are more susceptible to them. And these are especially pronounced in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) like Nepal due to low awareness on climate change and poverty. The climate change policy of Nepal states, “Despite having only 0.4 percent of the total global population and being responsible for only 0.024 percent greenhouse gas emission in the world, Nepal will be affected disproportionately, especially from increasing atmospheric temperature; glaciers recede from rapid snow and ice melting, glacier lakes are expanding, millions of Nepalese are estimated to be at risk of climate change” (MoE, 2011, p.3).

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted in 1992 because of the threat global warming poses to human beings and ecosystems (COP20 2014, p. 9). A signatory to this Convention since 1992,

Nepal is mandated to follow up its agreements to address the effects of climate change through both adaptation and mitigation measures (UNFCCC, 1992). The topic of climate finance is important for Nepal because of its vulnerability; a study ranks it 4<sup>th</sup> of 170 countries vulnerable to the effects of climate change (Maplecroft, 2011).

Climate change impacts especially hit rural areas where indigenous peoples have been sustaining their livelihoods in a symbiotic relationship with forest and other natural resources. They have an intricate relation with ecosystems where they have thrived for thousands of years for their nutritional, economic, cultural and spiritual existence; but because of the unsustainable development paradigm, they are among those who have suffered the most adverse consequences of climate change (Tauli-Corpuz, et al., 2009). Indigenous peoples in Nepal live in the mountains, hills and plains, which are greatly affected by the effects of climate change. They suffer from the melting ice from mountains and glaciers, landslides in the hills and floods in the plain regions.

The indigenous peoples in Nepal number 9,267,870, accounting for 34.97 percent of the country’s total population (Dahal, 2014). The majority of them depend on natural resources for their livelihoods and have continued their traditional knowledge and cultural practices by maintaining their customary institutions and

governance systems. This is especially true in the mountain areas where they keep alive their traditional system of managing natural resources despite being undermined by Nepal's new regime of forest management.

The government has recognized 59 indigenous groups with unique traditional knowledge, cultural practices and language (NFDIN Act, 2002). Since their traditional knowledge and cultural practices are symbiotically linked to their forest and natural resources, these peoples historically have been contributing to the sustainable management of the natural forest, ecosystem and biodiversity (Trosper & Parotta, 2012) and to climate change adaptation and mitigation (IPCC, 2014). However, the underpinning customary institutions and governance systems of these indigenous peoples are hardly recognized in the current forest regime of community forest management and other forms of conservation (Sherpa, et al, 2018). Their roles and contributions are little considered in the climate discourse and development of climate change strategies and actions. Consequently, indigenous peoples are scarcely visible in the structure of climate related finance including of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) in Nepal.

## Policies and Structure of Climate Related Funds

The government of Nepal (GoN) has started to mainstream climate change in planning and budgeting processes by providing the different ministries the opportunity to prioritize, allocate and track Climate Finance (CF) allocation and expenditure. Nepal's Climate Change Policy (2011) prioritizes awareness programs for building capacity for climate change (CC) resilience and addresses vulnerability to the impacts of climate change (GoN, 2011). This is in line with the Cancun Agreement which tackles the long term challenge of climate change collectively, with the objective to keep the global average temperature rise below two degrees centigrade (COP 16, 2010).

Nepal ratified the United Nations Framework on Climate Change Convention in 1994 and the Kyoto Protocol in 2005. After becoming a formal member of these Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA), it has undertaken a number of climate change actions both domestically and internationally. As a member of the Least Development Countries, Nepal has submitted a National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) in 2010 and 2012 and contributed to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. Further, it has implemented a National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA), a Local Adaptation Plan of Action (LAPA), and a Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR), Mountain Initiatives, Emission Reduction Programs under the REDD+ Program, and a number of other clean energy projects. It has also submitted Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) to the UNFCCC Secretariat (GoN, 2016).

However, these national programs on climate change have negligible research on indigenous knowledge for adaptation and mitigation in line with climate change policy and international commitments. Although the newly drafted Climate Change Policy (2019) cites the importance of research on the best practices of traditional knowledge and cultural practices to address climate change resilience, there is no specific focus on indigenous communities, and protection and promotion of indigenous knowledge and cultural practices related to climate change resilience. Moreover, how this can be realized is doubtful, with the ongoing disregard of indigenous peoples' meaningful engagement in the climate discourse in Nepal. Engagement of indigenous peoples in the planning and implementation phases of climate action is hardly prioritized.

## Nepal Constitution and National Plans

The new Constitution of Nepal states, "Every citizen shall have the right to live in a clean and healthy environment and open for the necessary legal provision to balance the environment and development of the country" (MoLJPA, 2015, p.19). The development of relevant policies and

programs to tackle climate change by creating a sustainable environment and balanced development as provided for in the new Constitution is a positive effort. But it is inadequate to address the concerns of indigenous peoples and the protection of their traditional knowledge and cultural practices that have been contributing to climate change resilience.

### 13th National Plan

The government's 13<sup>th</sup> Plan (2013/14-2015/16) linked climate change adaptation with sustainable development. It introduced the concept of "green development" and adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change through the implementation of National Adaptation Program of Actions at the community level in coordination and collaboration with concerned stakeholders. Thus, Nepal has already begun to deal with climate change through the implementation of NAPAs, Local Adaptation Plan for Actions and hundreds of Community Adaptation Plan of Actions (CAPAs) that incorporate capacity building and awareness programs on climate change (GoN, 2013). However, the 13<sup>th</sup> Plan on climate change initiatives does not have a particular focus on indigenous peoples and their traditional knowledge and cultural practices for adaptation and mitigation.

### 14th National Plan

The 14<sup>th</sup> Plan (2016/17-2018/19) covers the topics of environment and climate change, with the vision of promoting clean and environmentally friendly sustainable development and climate change adaptation. It is also geared towards environmental conservation, minimizing emissions from developing cities, and continuing the adaptation initiatives under NAPAs, LAPAs, and CAPAs. Nepal has already adopted the Paris Agreement of 2015, and its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions aim to reduce its level of emissions, thus joining hands with other countries to achieve the global mission to minimize the rise of global temperature. The plan aims for collaboration and coordination

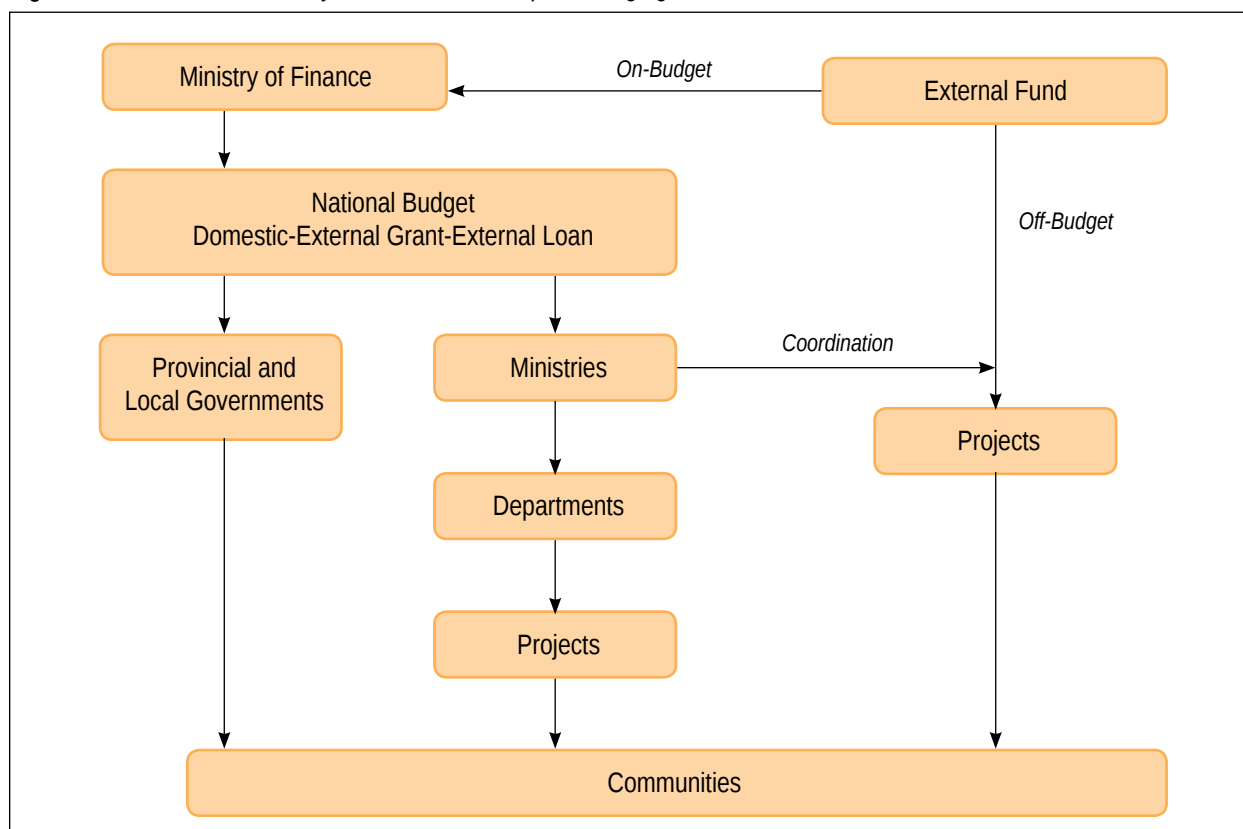
with concerned stakeholders including donor agencies, nongovernment organizations, local communities, and community-based organizations working on environmental and climate change-related activities.

The plan further provides for revision of policies, rules and regulations, developing human and institutional capacity, and research for adaptation and mitigation for sustainable development. The most important part of the 14<sup>th</sup> Plan is its focus on environmental education and education materials related to climate change, which promote environment friendly technology, maintain a clean environment, and help with the establishment of climate smart villages (GoN, 2016). The plan does not directly mention identifying best practices of indigenous knowledge that have contributed to adaptation and mitigation. However it does broadly open the space for exploring the best practices of climate change-resilient program activities and the best indigenous knowledge and other cultural practices to deal with climate change adaptation and mitigation in the future.

The 14<sup>th</sup> Plan further aims to fulfil Nepal's commitment to the Paris Agreement by providing quality education for all by increasing school enrolment in marginalized communities, especially of women, dalits, indigenous peoples, and disabled through child friendly education and by providing necessary materials and mother tongue education. However space for indigenous peoples is not provided in the governance structure of climate funds for the implementation of NAPA, LAPA and CAPA except in cases in the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), Forest Investment Program (FIP) and Dedicated Grand Mechanism (DGM) projects in Nepal by the World Bank.

## Climate Finance Structure and Indigenous Peoples

The existing Climate Change Financing Framework (CCFF) lays out plans for improvements in the planning, execution and

**Figure 1.** Fund flow from Ministry of Finance to the implementing agencies.

Source: MoF, 2018

reporting of climate finance, engaging with civil society organizations and parliamentary committees to improve accountability of climate finance (MoF, 2018). The Ministry of Finance (MoF) is the central budget authority from which flows the national budget comprising domestic funds, external grants and loans through sector ministries and local governments, which then allocate the funds to respective projects. In the case of externally funded projects, donors directly engaged in coordination with sector ministries as shown in Figure 1. Although funds are targeted to reach the local communities, without indigenous peoples' presence in decision making bodies and relevant climate dialogue during formation of climate strategies, the concerns of indigenous peoples in relation to climate change adaptation would unlikely be addressed, especially recognition and promotion of indigenous knowledge and cultural practices for climate change resilience in Nepal.

## Sources of Climate Funds

Nepal has access to different sources of climate funds for climate actions, both mitigation and adaptation. Among these are the Adaptation Fund (AF), Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN), Climate Investment Fund (CIF), Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA), Global Environment Facility Trust Fund (GEF), Global Resilience Partnership, Green Climate Fund, International Climate Initiative (IKI), Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), Nordic Climate Facility (NCF), Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), The International Climate Fund (ICF), UN-REDD, and United States Agency for International Development (USAID), with support from bilateral and multilateral agencies (Figure 1).

However the total approved amount of the climate projects in Nepal funded by international sources (off-budget funding only), such as GEF,



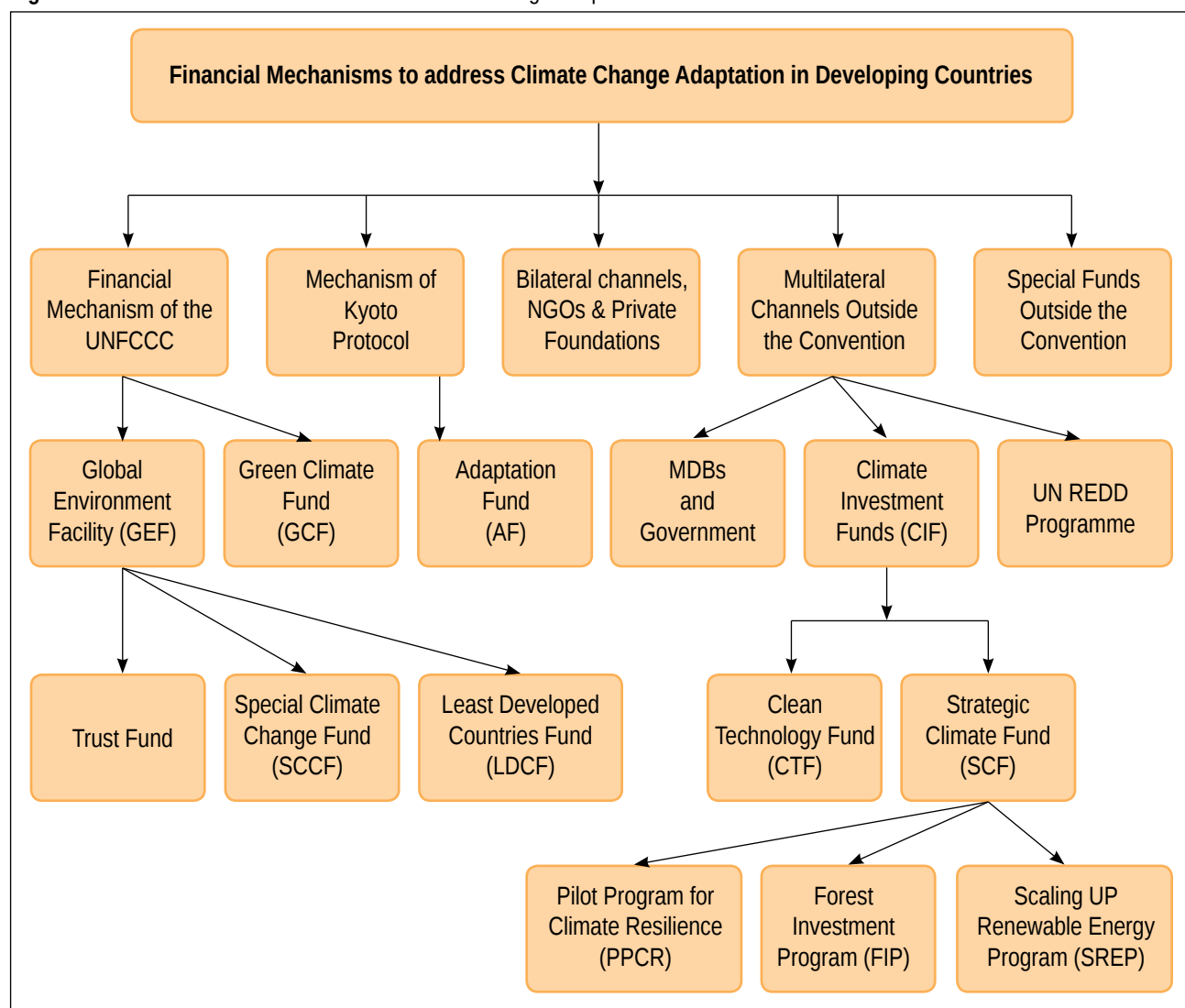


communities who have been struggling in the rural areas for being unable to understand the changes in rainfall patterns and temperature are the ones mostly hit by climate change. Indigenous peoples whose traditional livelihoods and cultural practices rely on forest and other natural resources are experiencing difficulty in sustaining their livelihoods. In such a case, a dedicated fund should be provided for indigenous peoples and other marginalized local communities to maintain their livelihoods and to protect their knowledge and values for the next generations. However, the current climate fund, either through domestic sources, external grants, external loans or external finance, does not have such a fund to improve the livelihoods of indigenous peoples.

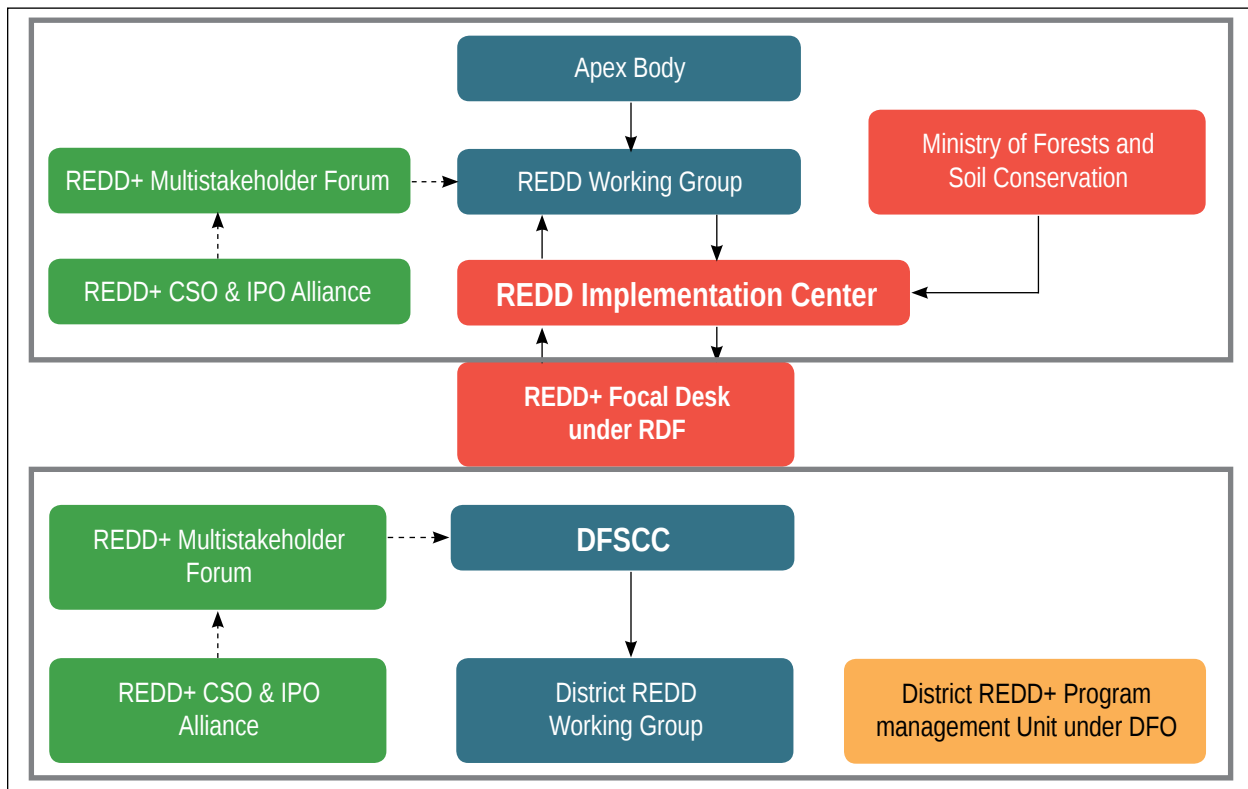
### Climate Finance Channels and Sources<sup>1</sup>

As mentioned earlier, there are different sources of climate finance channels and sources for adaptation and mitigation programs in Nepal. Since the UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol (1997), Bali Action Plan (2007), Copenhagen Accord (2009) and Cancun Agreement collectively committed developed countries to provide additional climate financing to developing countries, Nepal as a least developed country has been receiving funds through different bilateral institutions. Among these are UK Aid, USA Aid, European Union, multilateral institutions like World Bank and Asia Development Bank (ADB), UN agencies' dedicated climate fund administered by UN bodies under the UNFCCC Framework

**Figure 2.** Financial Mechanisms to address Climate Change Adaptation.



Source: Baral & Chhetri, 2014.

**Figure 3.** REDD+ Governance in Nepal.

Source: MoFSC, 2010.

such as AF, GCF and LDCF through the Global Environment Facility. Nepal has also been accessing funds through different international nongovernment organizations (INGO), among these, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Care and Oxfam (Baral & Chhetri, 2014).

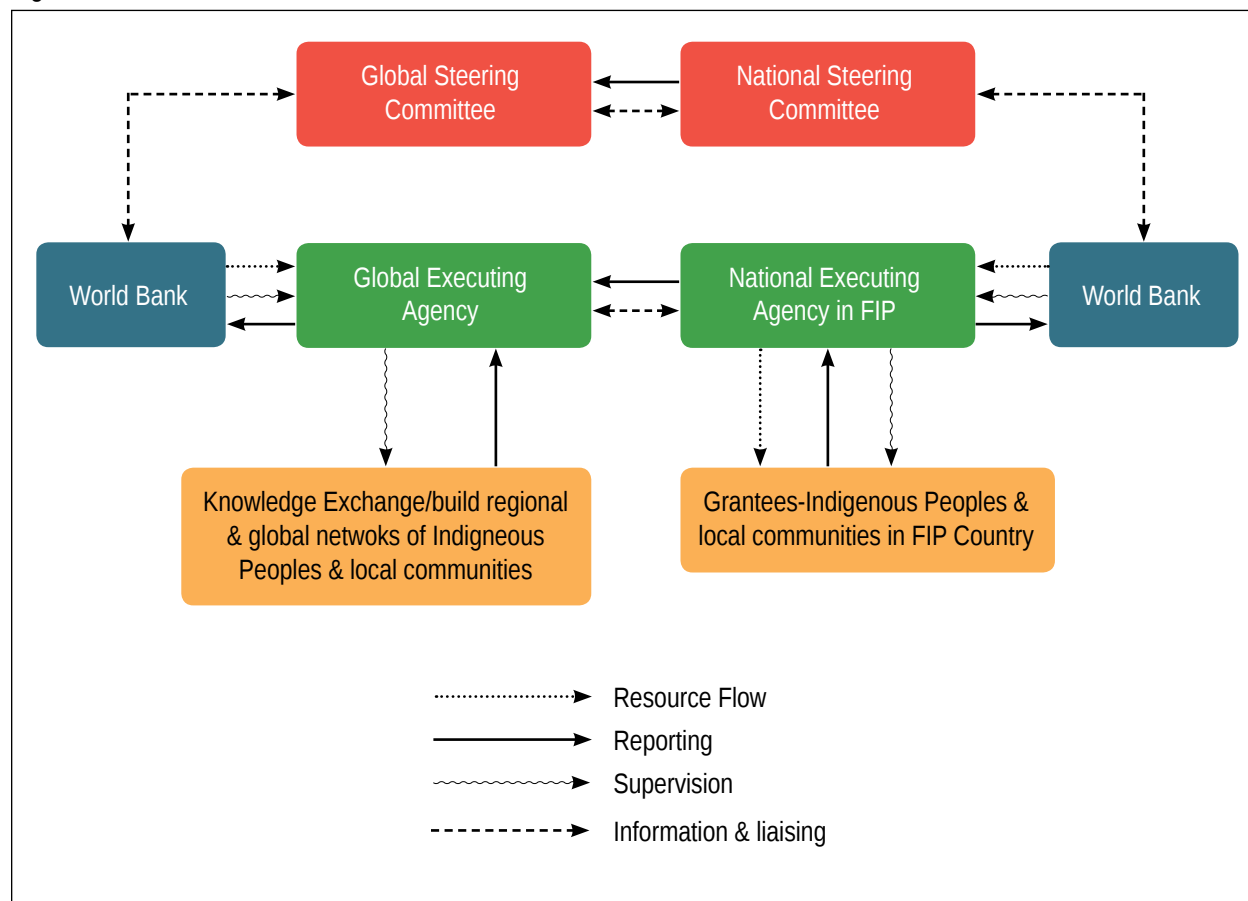
### ***Adaptation Fund***

Purely adaptation projects in Nepal are supported by dedicated climate funds and multilateral agencies, while combined adaptation and mitigation projects are supported by bilateral funds (Figure 2). The majority of climate adaptation funding is received from financial mechanisms outside of the UNFCCC amounting to \$239.88 million, while UNFCCC has contributed only \$6.56 million between 2009 and 2012 (Baral and Chhetri, 2014). The Global Environment Facility through the Least Developed Countries Fund is the only mechanism within UNFCCC that has funded adaptation projects in Nepal to date.

### ***Mitigation Funds: REDD+***

Nepal formally entered the UNFCCC REDD+ program in 2008 with the submission of a Readiness Plan Idea Note (R-PIN) to the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. Some of the readiness activities include capacity building and development of forest reference level, and the national REDD+ strategy implemented under the Readiness Funding Framework of FCPF with \$3.4 million. After completion of the readiness phase, Nepal has proceeded to result-based REDD+ such as the Emissions Reduction (ER) program with its Emission Reduction Program Document (ERPD) (MoFSC, 2017).

Unlike in the governance structure of the bilateral and multilateral funded adaptation and mitigation projects in Nepal, REDD+ projects for the first time have provided space for indigenous peoples along with local communities to share their issues and concerns in REDD + during the readiness preparation phase (Figure 3).

**Figure 3.** DGC Governance.

Source: GSC, 2019.

## Climate-Related Funds and Indigenous Peoples

The above figures and information show that the flow of climate funds and development and implementation of policies and programs have targeted adaptation and mitigation. The funds channelled through UNFCCC have to follow the Cancun Safeguards for indigenous peoples and local communities that explicitly state respecting traditional knowledge and skills of indigenous and local communities and international agreements, such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and others, while implementing projects at country level. The climate financed adaptation and mitigation activities by bilateral and multilateral institutions (WB, ADB and UN

agencies) and INGOs similarly have their own safeguards and mechanisms for indigenous peoples and other concerned stakeholders while developing and implementing project activities. However, apart from the few global initiatives of indigenous peoples, the different projects and activities funded by these different sources show hardly any dedicated funds or activities for indigenous peoples that allow them to address their climate change issues and concerns.

In addition, the indigenous peoples are scarcely taken into account for the important role and contributions they can make in the development of relevant climate related policies and programs in the country. They are consulted to fulfil the obligations of donors rather than genuinely consulted and meaningfully engaged. While the governance system of REDD+ has space for indigenous peoples compared to that of other adaptation funds, it is inadequate for their full and effective engagement in the climate change discourse and decision making process.

Nepal has ratified and signed various international conventions and treaties that are against the spirit of its previous policies and acts. Signing the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169 in 2007 and voting for UNDRIP and Paris Agreement are favorable actions in regards to the rights and identity of the indigenous peoples to promote and protect indigenous knowledge and cultural practices. However, these are not truly reflected in the revision of its national laws and policies.

The establishment of the Facility Working Group (FWG) of Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform (LCIP) by the Conference of Parties (COP) 24 in Katowice, Poland for the implementation of the platform's three functions—knowledge, capacity for engagement and climate policies and action—is also a positive step by UNFCCC for indigenous peoples to share their knowledge and cultural practices and contributions to climate change resilience. The FWG recently worked in Bonn (UNFCCC, 2019) on the development of a 5-year work plan with specific priority for two years at global, regional, national and local levels. This

FWG work is the first time in UNFCCC history that acknowledges indigenous peoples on the same table as the state parties to understand the values of indigenous knowledge and cultural practices that have contributed to ecosystems, sustainable resource management, biodiversity and livelihoods and are to be shared at all levels inside and outside of UNFCCC's constituent bodies. This gives hope for indigenous peoples to be visible in all future climate funded actions in Nepal.

## Green Climate Fund Readiness

The Green Climate Fund was established by 194 countries party to the UNFCCC at the 16<sup>th</sup> COP in 2010 under the Cancun Agreements with formal commitments to mobilize \$100 billion per year by 2020 from a variety of sources to address adaptation and mitigation to climate change impacts by the developing countries. Developing country parties to the UNFCCC including Nepal are eligible to receive resources from the GCF. Nepal received the readiness fund from the GCF in 2016.

The GCF requires a National Designated Authority (NDA) to play the important role to interface between the country and the GCF and communicate the country's priorities for financing low-emission and climate-resilient development. Thus, the NDA plays a contact point for the GCF in Nepal. Nominated by the government as NDA is the Ministry of Finance as the chief of the International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division (IECCD).

The NDA helps to provide broad strategic oversight that is aligned to national priorities for developing the GCF country program in line with existing policies and strategies, such as the national climate change policy, NAPA, sector policies and the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions to the UNFCCC.

The NDA also convenes national stakeholders' forums that include indigenous peoples, local communities, women and other marginalized communities to raise the level of awareness on the GCF process and to provide necessary support. The majority of these groups however are

not aware of the GCF process and believe they have so far not participated in any of the NDA's awareness raising and capacity building initiatives. With the GCF adoption of an Indigenous Peoples Policy and the effective advocacy of indigenous peoples in the GCF Board meetings, the meaningful participation of indigenous peoples including their free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) has been compulsory in developing the concept note and proposal to be submitted to GCF. This has resulted in the extension of consultation of indigenous peoples by different Accredited Entities (AE) while formulating their concept note and proposal for GCF in Nepal.

The NDA is responsible for facilitating the accreditation process for national institutions and providing nomination letters to process their application for accreditation under the GCF. It also facilitates the development of GCF funding proposals and their implementation in coordination with Accredited Entities. It issues an expression of interest for the concept note preparation and a no-objection letter for a full funding proposal to GCF, but the process has been lengthy and lacks timely support to push the proposal. This may be one of the main reasons why AEs, which have been in the process of submitting a full proposal, believe that national priorities on GCF have not yet been established. No GCF projects have yet been approved for Nepal. Moreover, for indigenous peoples to have the concept note approved by the NDA and get support has been challenging. Indigenous peoples are perceived differently from NGOs, and their climate change concerns are not seen from a content perspective but linked to other social and political issues. Consequently, indigenous peoples have been struggling to convince concerned authorities on the importance of protecting and promoting their traditional knowledge and cultural practices and adaptive measures to impacts of climate change.

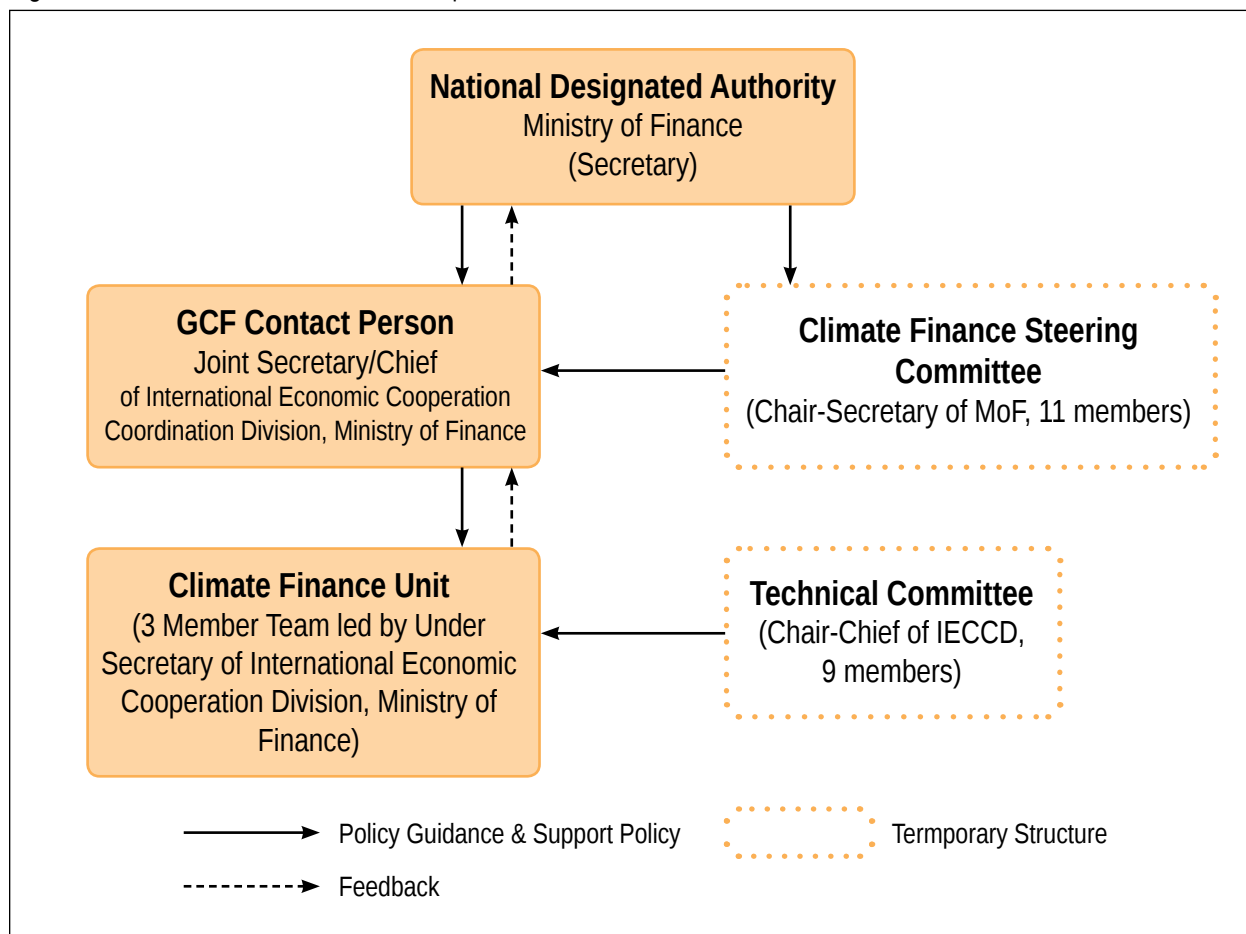
The NDA provides leadership in the deployment of the readiness and preparatory funding in the country. The GCF Readiness support is geared to strengthening the national implementing agencies and the NDA, along with preparation of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Project

Preparation Facility and REDD+ activities. However, specific support for strengthening indigenous peoples' organizations (IPOs) for their full and effective engagement is not included.

The first two years of the Readiness activities was supported by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) with a grand total amount of \$2,935,350 for national adaptation planning and process starting on 14 November 2016. The Readiness fund was used for developing the concept note and proposal of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as well as for facilitating the nomination for accreditation under GCF of both public and private national institutions—the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPIC), National Trust for Nature Conservation (NTNC), Town Development Fund (TDF) and Nepal Investment Bank Limited (NIBL)—as Direct Access Entities (DAEs) (UNDP, 2017& GCF Country Profiles, 2019).

The ongoing Readiness fund with total amount of \$898,509 with support from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) starts from 23 February 2018 for two years. The project aims to strengthen institutional capacity of the national institutions including the NDA and DAEs. It also aims to prepare the country program and develop project pipelines for DAE access including climate change mitigation and adaptation investment priorities through active involvement of the private and financial sectors.

In order to fulfil the mandate of the NDA, a governance mechanism has been set up to facilitate effective communication, coordination with relevant stakeholders, and assurance of the nomination letter, expression of interest and no-objection letter for full funding proposals to be submitted to GCF. As mentioned earlier, inclusion of indigenous peoples during the stakeholders' engagement of the readiness phase has started but has been more to fulfil the requirements than meaningful participation and full engagement to address their issues and concerns on the climate change actions. Thus, the GCF Readiness fund should also be geared to build the capacity of indigenous peoples for

**Figure 5.** Governance Structure of NDA in Nepal.

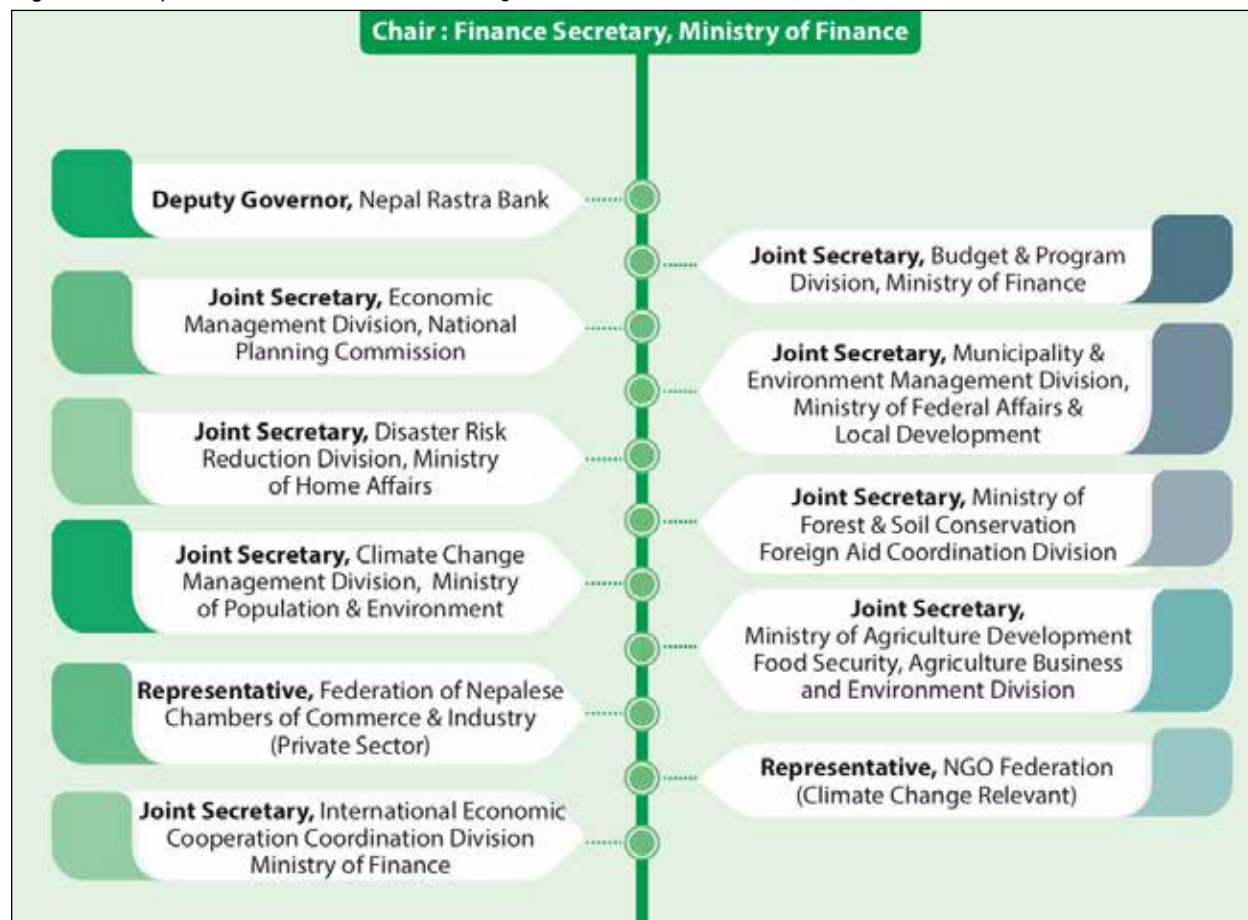
Source: MoF, 2017.

their meaningful participation as well as raise awareness of the NDA on the values, role and contributions of their traditional knowledge and cultural practices for adaptation measures to climate change in Nepal.

The governance structure of the NDA (Figure 5) is led by the MoF Secretary in coordination with the GCF contact person headed by the Joint Secretary/Chief of the International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division (MoF), Climate Finance Unit with three members led by the Division Undersecretary, Climate Finance Steering Committee and Technical Committee members to fulfil the abovementioned mandates of the NDA.

The Climate Finance Steering Committee (Figure 6) chaired by the MoF Secretary has

11 members representing different ministries. Although one of the NDA's mandates is to convene the national stakeholders and develop awareness and capacity building on the GCF process, indigenous peoples are not represented in both Steering Committee and Technical Committee (Figure 7) of NDA. The Technical Committee is supposed to give advice on submitted concept notes and proposals to GCF before these are forwarded to the GCF Board. In the absence of indigenous peoples' representatives there, the concerns of indigenous peoples in both concept notes and proposals cannot be assured in line with the indigenous peoples' policy of GCF.

**Figure 6.** Composition of Climate Finance Steering Committee.

Source: MoF, 2017.

lands, territories and resources. Further, it promotes and respects indigenous peoples' culture, spiritual heritage, values, traditional knowledge as well as natural and economic resources systems, practices, occupations and livelihoods, and customary institutions.

The policy's guiding principles are to implement free, prior informed consent; respect and enhance the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, territories and resources; recognize international human rights and principles such as those contained in ILO Convention No. 169 and UNDRIP; respect and recognize their traditional knowledge and livelihood systems; and enhance their capacity within GCF. These also include facilitating their access to GCF resources.

## Status of Indigenous Peoples in GCF Readiness Phase

As presented in Figures 5, 6 and 7, the governance structure and composition of the climate finance steering committee and of the technical committee provide no space for indigenous peoples to share their issues and concerns in the climate finance mechanism led by MoF as NDA. This includes their contributions as reflected in the values and role played by their traditional knowledge and cultural practices in climate resilience. Another concern is the urgent need to develop adaptive strategies that would protect their customary institutions that contributed to sustaining the resources, ecosystem and biodiversity in Nepal through their own governance systems.

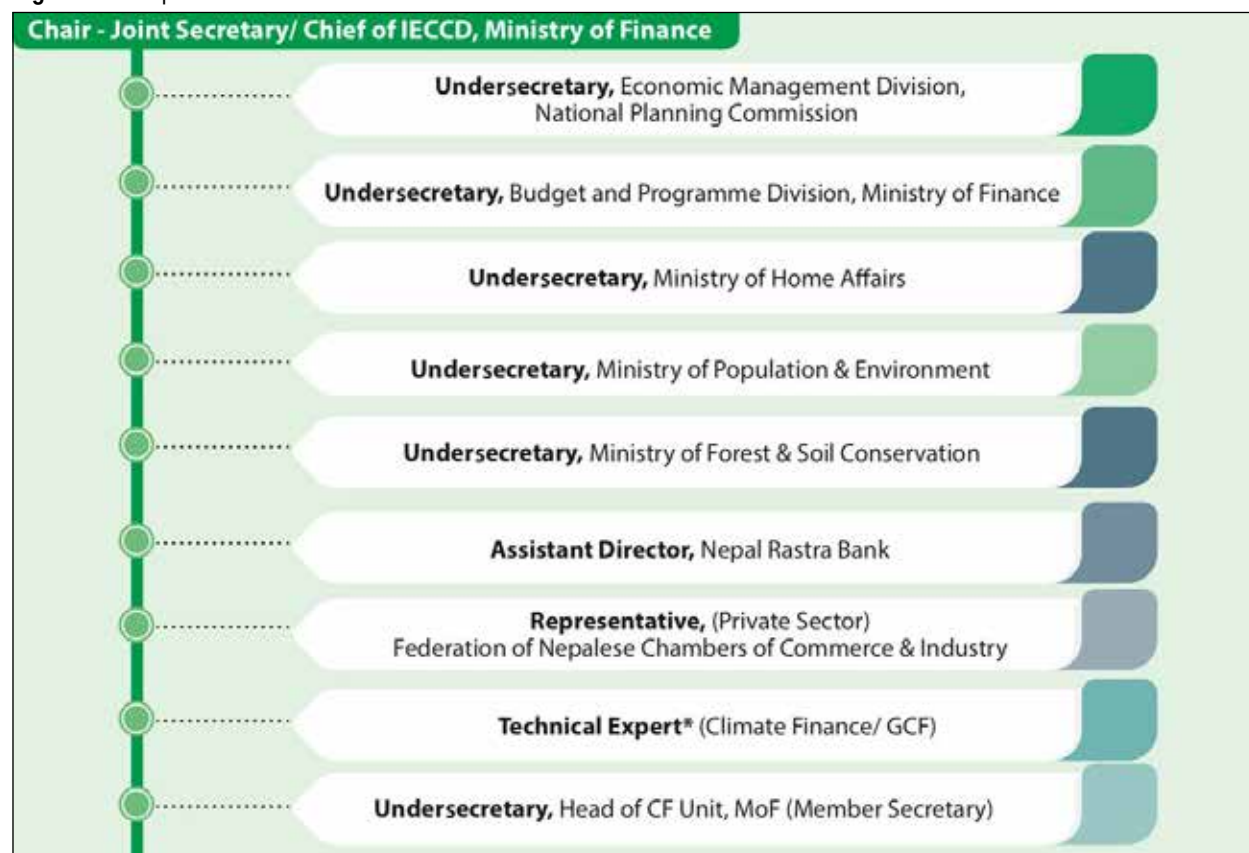
Since the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy was adopted only in 2018, most of the govern-

ment officers who are directly and indirectly involved in the GCF process and mechanism are still unaware of it. Accredited Entities like IUCN, UNDP, WWF and FAO, whose concept note and proposals to GCF are already in the pipeline for approval, know about it and have tried to engage indigenous peoples at the national and subnational levels to make their proposals acceptable. The GCF concept notes and proposals from Nepal are in different stages (Table 4).

### *IUCN Proposal*

The IUCN proposal is ahead of those of other accredited entities, having already been submitted and the comments from the GCF secretariat being worked on. It is hoped to be on the list for approval in the GCF board meetings in 2019 or early 2020.

**Figure 7.** Composition of Technical Committee.



Source: MoF, 2017.





not a climate concern but more of social and political issues; thus their engagement is hardly encouraged in the climate discourse and climate strategy planning process. This may be one of the reasons why indigenous peoples' representatives have no presence in any governance structure of climate finance led by NDA in Nepal.

- Apart from their engagement to articulate and incorporate their concerns and suggestions in UNDP's full proposal to GCF, indigenous peoples were consulted both at national and subnational levels by IUCN and FAO. But the latter agencies shared their projects' objectives rather than collected the indigenous peoples' issues and concerns to be addressed by their projects. Although both IUCN and FAO cited deeper levels of consultation after approval of their projects and while developing the full proposal activities, indigenous leaders are skeptical about such promises.
- Throughout the history of climate actions in Nepal, indigenous peoples have scarcely been considered in the climate discourse and climate strategy development process. The establishment of the FWG-LCIP Platform in UNFCCC as well as GCF's adoption of an Indigenous Peoples Policy are opportunities for indigenous peoples to make the NDA aware that indigenous knowledge and cultural practices have already been valued by the UNFCCC and GCF Policy and urgently need to be protected by climate actions at the country level.
- Nepal has been receiving millions of dollars both inside and outside the constituent bodies of UNFCCC through different sources. However, indigenous peoples and their representatives are absent in the governance mechanism of climate funded projects including the steering and technical committees of the

NDA that make the major decisions in selection and approval of concept notes and proposals for GCF.

- The governance mechanism of REDD+ and DGM are progressive in engaging indigenous peoples in climate funded projects in Nepal. Indigenous peoples' presence in the REDD+ working group under the chairmanship of the secretary of the Ministry of Forest and Environment as well as their engagement in multistakeholder forums provide them a chance to share their concerns and recommendations. Moreover, DGM, which has dedicated funds for indigenous peoples and local communities, has also given more opportunity to indigenous peoples to develop and implement their own action plan at the community level. However, such trend is not present in other climate finance mechanisms and projects including GCF in Nepal.
- Due to the rigorous process of writing and selecting GCF funded project concept notes and proposals that can be accessed only through accredited entities, indigenous peoples feel the need for the opening of a separate window to access the GCF fund so they can work directly with their communities without any prejudices.
- GCF's adoption of an Indigenous Peoples Policy is a great opportunity for indigenous peoples, as the policy values the rights of indigenous peoples enshrined in UNDRIP including their FPIC before any project is promoted in their communities. However, most of the concerned stakeholders including government agencies and accredited entities are not aware of this policy as well as indigenous peoples' crucial issues and concerns in relation to climate actions in Nepal.

## Recommendations

Considering the opportunities and challenges for indigenous peoples in climate financed actions particularly GCF funded activities, the recommendations are as follows:

The presence of indigenous peoples' representatives in the climate finance governance structure is necessary not only to enable them to share their concerns, inputs and recommendations but also for the transfer of knowledge and skills to indigenous leaders and young generations to continue proactive actions.

Different studies including the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report present how indigenous knowledge and cultural practices have contributed to climate change adaptation and mitigation; to enhance these knowledge and practices for climate change resilience, dedicated funds and a sepa-

rate window of funding opportunities should be established for indigenous peoples.

Indigenous peoples have often been presented in the reports as having been consulted, but for them in line with the UNDRIP principles and human rights-based approach, consultation is not enough. They should have meaningful engagement with their full and prior informed consent in any project that would have direct and indirect impacts on their livelihoods. Meaningful engagement is possible only through improving the level of awareness and building the capacity of indigenous men and women both at national and community levels.

Although the GCF Board has adopted an indigenous peoples' policy, concerned government agencies including Accredited Entities and Readiness activities need to be sensitized and awareness raised on the values of indigenous knowledge and cultural practices in climate change actions.



## Endnote

<sup>1</sup>The study collected data through key informant interview and focus group discussion among government officers directly and indirectly connected to GCF in Nepal, particularly in the Ministry of Forest and Environment, which is the UNFCCC focal person, and Ministry of Finance (MoF) as the National Designated Authority. The study team also met indigenous men and women leaders and other climate finance experts to understand their views on the GCF processes and mechanisms from the lenses of indigenous peoples.

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# BANGLADESH

## Challenges of Real Engagement in Climate Initiatives

*by Maleya Foundation*



## Introduction

As one of the most climate vulnerable countries, Bangladesh is one of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that has mobilized the attention of the international community. Although it has not received as much funds as it requires, it has been able to marshal climate finance from internal resources and donor funding for several programs and projects.

Based on the 2011 census, indigenous peoples in Bangladesh comprise approximately 1,586,141 or 1.8 percent of the entire population (BBS 2011). Indigenous peoples, however, claim the total number to be around three million belonging to more than 47 ethnic communities (IP-NCC for Climate Change, 2015). They reside in the southeastern, northwestern, northcentral and northeastern regions, in particular the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Sylhet Division, Rajshahi Division and Mymensingh District. Most of the indigenous communities live in the plains, and 11 communities are concentrated in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Climate change and its severe impacts have been a reality for the indigenous peoples for several decades. Many of the areas they inhabit fall under the category of extremely climate vulnerable zones of the country. The indigenous communities in the hills face water scarcity, less rain in monsoon season and lesser harvest every year, and devastating landslides especially in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The severity and intensi-

ty of tidal surges, cyclones, salinity intrusion and water logging have jeopardized the livelihood of indigenous peoples in the southern parts—Khulna, Satkhira, Potuakhali and Cox's Bazar districts, while extreme drought in summer and cold in the winter have affected productivity of lands and livelihoods of those in the north.

The adverse impacts of climate change have further disrupted the programs and projects intended to address climate change. These include the prohibition to accessing forest resources, eviction in the name of conservation, and criminalization of indigenous peoples for collecting forest resources (IP-NCC for Climate Change, 2015). Most climate change-related programs and projects, however, take a neoliberal development approach by commercializing land and forest resources, which the indigenous peoples depend on for their livelihoods and have thus protected for generations.

Indigenous women in particular are most vulnerable to climate change, which the government and civil society groups are yet to realize. Due to climate change and other anthropogenic factors, increased pressure on land and natural resources forces them to work harder and walk longer distances to find food, water and firewood. These have tremendous impact on their health and nutrition status and risk of physical violence on their way to collect water and fuelwood. In many cases, indigenous women and their families migrate to cities for better livelihood options (Maleya Foundation 2012).

Climate change's destructive effects in different regions are worsened by indigenous peoples' lack of access to basic facilities and infrastructures, denial of rights and entitlements, economic marginalization and social discrimination, and further imposition and invasion of neoliberal development projects. Their practice of adaptive capacity has consequently declined drastically.

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has invested in many projects and programs to address the adverse impacts of climate change. While some initiatives are subject to appreciation, a number of mitigation measures led to evictions or displacement of indigenous peoples from their ancestral lands. These include projects that have declared the forests around indigenous communities as reserved forests, national parks, and eco-parks in the name of forest conservation (Islam and Hyakumura 2019). Therefore, indigenous peoples' participation at all levels—policy making, program/project planning, implementation and evaluation—is crucial in any climate change-related activities that may potentially affect their lives.

## Climate Finance in Bangladesh: Scope and Limitations

Bangladesh spends about US\$1 billion per year, over one percent of GDP, to combat the direct or indirect impacts of climate change (Ministry of Finance 2014). Realizing its critical vulnerability, the country has taken a major step towards accessing climate finance through developing its National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) as early as 2005. The NAPA consisted of lists of 'urgent and immediate' adaptation needs and stand-alone adaptation actions. Realizing the need to strengthen the adaptation measures, the NAPA was updated in 2009 with four pillars: 1) food security; 2) energy security, 3) water security, 4) livelihood security (including right to health).

The inadequacy of the NAPA led the government to commence a more comprehensive

planning process by mobilizing its own financial and intellectual resources. As an outcome, the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) was developed in 2008 and updated in 2009. Powerful ministries and departments, including Finance, Planning, Agriculture, Water Resources, Foreign Affairs, Local Government and the Prime Minister's Office, were involved in the planning. The BCCSAP focuses on medium- and long-term actions (it lists 44 such actions) based on the following six thematic pillars: 1) food security, social protection and health; 2) comprehensive disaster management; 3) infrastructure; 4) research and knowledge management; 5) mitigation and low carbon development; and 6) capacity building and institutional strengthening. The BCCSAP is the basis for climate investment in Bangladesh and is treated as part of the country's overall development strategy for which it was integrated in the government's Sixth Five Year Plan.

Despite all these efforts, the uncertainties and insufficiencies of international adaptation finance from both multilateral and bilateral sources to implement the actions under BCCSAP led the government to create the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF). The BCCTF has a legal mandate under the Climate Change Trust Act passed by Parliament in 2010, and its funding comes from revenue from the national budget. Simultaneously, by reforming the Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF), the government established the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilient Fund (BCCRF) to channel funds from development partners. The BCCTF and BCCRF, which have differing governance and management arrangements, are both meant to support the implementation of the BCCSAP. The establishment of BCCTF and institutionalizing climate finance at the national level are a considerable departure from previous models of fragmentary contributions by developed countries to support separate and stand-alone projects (Khan, Huq and Shamsuddoha 2012).

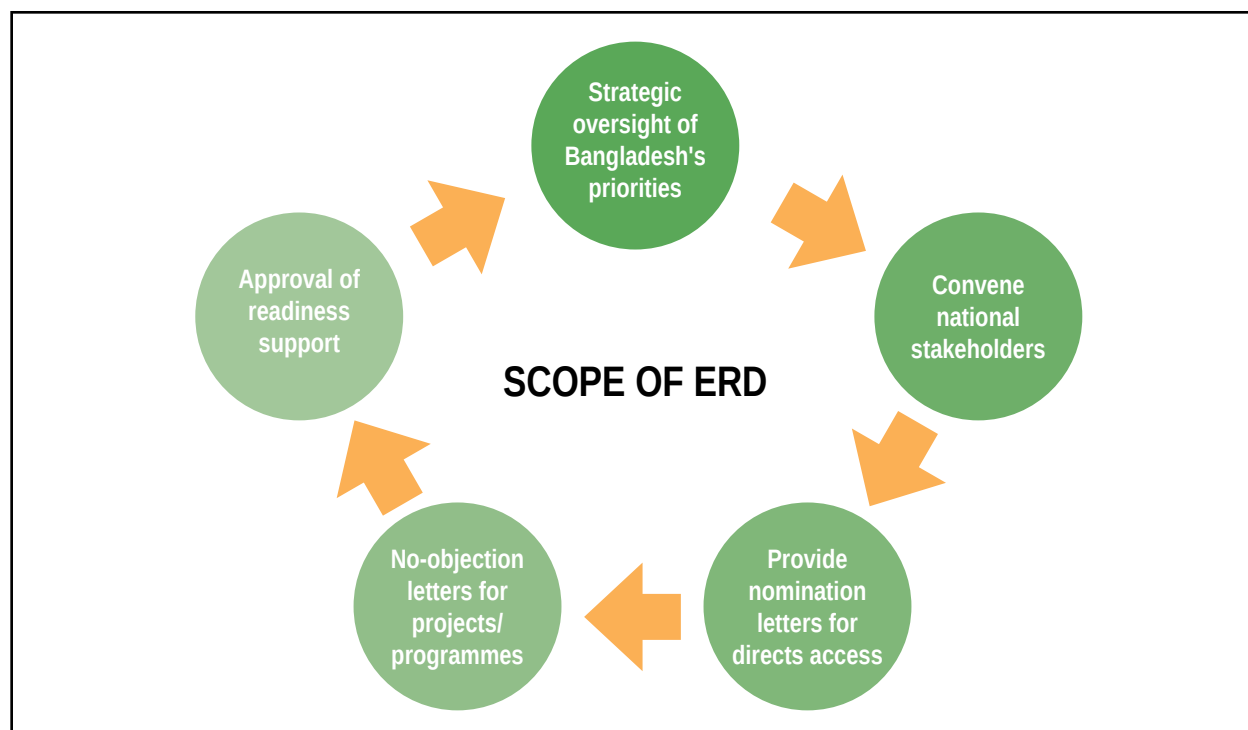
Currently, Bangladesh has six main sources for climate change-related financing: 1) revenue budget, 2) Annual Development Program (ADP), 3) BCCTF (government funds), 4) BCCRF (donor funds), 5) multilateral climate funds, and









**Figure 2.** Key Roles and Functions of Economic Relations Division, NDA Bangladesh.

Source: Ray and Soanes 2015.

Multilateral Implementing Entity (MIE) is the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Implementing Entity (IE) is the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA); it will be implemented with the assistance of partner organizations such as Palli Karma Shohayak Foundation, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Local Government Institutions (LGI), and local NGOs. Among the 31 project ideas that are in the country pipeline, several focus on indigenous communities in the plains as well as in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (NDA Secretariat 2018, pages: 34-56).

## Key Findings: Climate Finance and Indigenous Peoples' Participation

The Green Climate Fund has created a Dedicated Grant Mechanism for indigenous peoples' institutions to gain direct access to funding. It has also adopted an Indigenous

Peoples Policy. Yet, for the indigenous peoples of Bangladesh, climate finance and its potential impacts are a new reality.

## Exclusion of Indigenous Peoples in Policy Making

At a country level, various central policies to address climate change have been adopted and heavy investments made in adaptation measures. The most significant ones include the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Act 2010, Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, Bangladesh Climate Change Gender Action Plan, and Seventh Five Year Plan, among others. While most laws, policies and strategies focus on building climate change resilient and improved lives for the most vulnerable communities and sections of society such as women, children and elderly, little or no acknowledgement has been made of the special need for attention to indigenous communities

due to sociocultural differences. The Seventh Five Year Plan is one of the major documents that includes indigenous peoples' issues in many relevant sections. However, indigenous peoples' experiences of the previous Sixth Five Year Plan showed that its similarly favorable provisions for indigenous peoples were barely implemented (Tripura and Chak 2015).

In effect, some general trends regarding existing national policies relating to the indigenous peoples may be described as follows:

- The policy formulation process in Bangladesh is not very participatory and has little room at present for involving indigenous peoples or their representatives;
- Although a number of national policies have several special provisions for indigenous peoples, these are not properly implemented;
- The Constitution of Bangladesh does not lay out clear directions for formulating laws and policies in favor of the indigenous peoples in Bangladesh;
- Organizations and institutions representing the interests of indigenous peoples need to build capacity and be more active in addressing policy issues (Tripura P. 2013 & 2015).

### **Indigenous Peoples' Participation in REDD+**

Non-inclusion of indigenous peoples' issues in policies and lack of participation in policy making processes have been identified as a major challenge responsible for ineffective and inappropriate program or project design and implementation. In the group discussions and interviews, leaders and representatives of indigenous peoples pointed out that readiness measures taken by the UN-REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) program in Bangladesh provide an example of the effort to include indigenous peoples at policy level. Although this effort has been contested and recognized as limited, they assert that it can at least provide some guidance to a process of inclusion of indigenous peoples at various levels of project planning and execution.

Bangladesh joined as a partner country of the UN-REDD program in 2010. From 2011, it began initial activities such as forming key policies, procedures and institutions. Two separate national level consultations and dialogues on REDD+ were held for indigenous peoples in 2014 and 2016. The 2014 consultation was organized by the Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Network on Climate Change and Biodiversity (BIPNet), with support from Tebtebba. The BIPNet along with Maleya Foundation, Kappaecing Foundation and Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF) hosted the national consultation in 2016 in cooperation with UN-REDD and Asia Indigenous Peoples' Pact (AIPP). In the dialogue held on the fourth day after a 3-day consultation, a working group of indigenous representatives submitted a position paper on REDD+ and indigenous peoples' concerns to the Forest Department and Ministry of Environment and Forest.

The position paper and dialogues in 2016 opened a door for the indigenous peoples to interact directly with the Forest Department. The then Chief Conservator of Forest (CCF) Unus Ali initiated and responded positively to the invitations for dialogues on indigenous peoples' key concerns on key acts and policies on the environment and forests, such as the amendment of the Forest Act and reform of the Forest Transit Rules. However, the process has been halted since a new CCF was appointed. The indigenous peoples' leaders and representatives asserted that this is a recurrent problem faced by indigenous peoples in continuing any constructive interactions with government bodies in other sectors.

In the absence of any proper mechanism for indigenous peoples to participate in policy making processes and of any proper knowledge transfer mechanism within various government bodies including ministries and special departments, the indigenous leaders and representatives have to rely heavily on people with authority who are willing to listen to indigenous peoples. The process of sensitization about indigenous issues has to be carried out with every newly appointed official prior to initiating interactions on key concerns. The main challenge here is that





**Figure 3.** Climate resilient house built under the housing project Asroyon Prakalpa-2.



Photo credit: Cho Khan, Community Researcher, Climate Justice – Feminist Participatory Action Research (CJ-FPAR), Maleya Foundation and APWLD.

sponsored climate resilient housing Asroyon Prakalpa-2. The local contractor took the money in the name of pleasing higher government officials. The construction began in 2014 but even after four years, the houses were still without any side walls or proper flooring (Fig 3). In October 2018, the beneficiaries paid once again to the contractor and at that stage they were offered to get the side walls done with corrugated tin.

Similar findings were highlighted by Transparency International Bangladesh in other housing projects under climate finance in different parts of the country (Haque, Rouf and Khan 2014). Beneficiaries complained that not only were the houses unusable but were also taking up unnecessary spaces in their small frontyards which they could have used for productive purposes.

## **Sociocultural Barriers and Access to Climate Finance Benefits**

### *Language barrier*

Indigenous leaders and representative have repeatedly raised the issue that most of the climate change-related documents, climate finance in particular, are available online and written in English. Hard copies are rarely accessible for the public, and few documents are translated into Bangla, official language of Bangladesh, for public dissemination. Many indigenous leaders and representatives are still unfamiliar with online navigation tools, posing a serious challenge in accessing available information. In addition, English is the third or fourth lan-

guage for many indigenous communities and their representatives. As a consequence, even if relevant documents are available both online and in hard copy, they remain inaccessible to indigenous peoples.

This is the case for reports or other outcome documents of workshops and consultations to which indigenous peoples' representatives are invited. This is a serious challenge for indigenous peoples to keep track of whether their opinions during workshops or consultations had been addressed in the report or appropriated.

### ***Other sociocultural barriers***

The need for special measures for indigenous peoples has not been attended to in climate change programs and projects. Due to sociocultural barriers, indigenous peoples not only face difficulty in accessing climate finance or most other benefits but also fail to avail access to emergency responses and appropriate shelters during a natural disaster.

The experience of coastal Rakhain communities during natural disasters demonstrates how sociocultural differences constrain their access to public facilities. The villagers of the aforementioned Kabiraj Para village said that in recent years flood reached the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the two-storey primary school in the village that serves as the main shelter for three adjacent Rakhain villages during natural disasters. They worry that the school might not be a good shelter in the coming year if the flood rises higher every year. While a proper cyclone center is accessible, they prefer not to avail of it as they claim they are treated as an inferior race by the mainstream Bengali due to their food habit, clothing, language that is close to Burmese, and distinct physical appearances compared to the majority Bengali population.

They argue that while some Bengali members or leaders understand their struggle as an indigenous and marginalized community, most treat them with ethnic prejudice and based on existing stereotypes rooted in sociocultural differences. Such treatment has reportedly escalated after the Rohingya influx to Bangladesh from

Myanmar. Consequently, the primary school is a more comfortable shelter for them than the cyclone center.

## **Conclusion**

The policy procedures and practices of Bangladesh generally tend to exclude people in planning and implementation. Most often, they are perceived as subjects to be dealt with by experts, consultants and representatives of the relevant government agencies. Similar trends have been followed in the development and implementation of climate change policies and procedures. However, the concurrent climate policy procedures tend to include various stakeholders' participation, including indigenous groups and communities, due to strong international advocacy regarding significance of engagement of multistakeholder perspectives for holistic planning, proper implementation and successful outcomes of development programs and projects including those related to climate change and environment. Therefore, the processes involve multistakeholder consultations where relevant indigenous representatives are seen as important stakeholders too.

However, from the interviews with indigenous peoples' representatives who participated in these consultations and dialogues, it is evident that the engagements are apt to practice tokenism, and therefore their opinions and concerns often are not reflected in the policy outcomes. On the other hand, the low capacity of the indigenous activists and representatives in understanding technical issues related to climate funds including the Green Climate Fund hampers full participation. This is an important area that the governments and pertinent international agencies should focus on but that is often paid insufficient attention to. The fact that the National Designated Authority could not be reached after so many attempts to contact the official for the purpose of this report shows either a low interest by the NDA office in consulting indigenous peoples in GCF related activities or extreme limitation of time for such matter.

## Recommendations

Considering the study's findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

### *Maintaining Indigenous Peoples' Rights Standards in GCF Country Programs and Projects*

- For indigenous peoples, a key area of concern is the degree to which the Green Climate Fund safeguards will be aligned to international standards and obligations set out in the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and related human rights instruments, including the right to free, prior and informed consent.

A clear mechanism should be set up for assessment of compliance with safeguards and GCF rules, backed by a GCF recourse mechanism and participatory systems for Monitoring, Reporting and Verification.

### *Indigenous Peoples' National Consultative Panel/Network*

- An indigenous people's consultative panel should be set up comprising appropriate representatives from both the plains and Chittagong Hill Tracts for consultation at all stages of climate finance: policy making, program design, implementation and evaluation. The panel may include indigenous leaders and representatives who have knowledge and experience in climate finance or climate change issues. This should include resources to build capacity to monitor compliance of projects to the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy and to set up redress mechanisms and evaluation. The Bangladesh Indigenous

Peoples' Network on Climate Change and Biodiversity can play a strong role in relation to this.

### *Procedures of Participation in Consultations and Discussions*

- Prior to any consultation, relevant indigenous peoples' leaders, representatives and activists should be given at least 10 days for preparation. Most of them do not reside in the capital city where important national level consultations are conducted, and some of their work areas are not even reached or have weak mobile network coverage.
- In invitations to consultations, the indigenous peoples' representatives should be informed clearly about what the consultation is about, and potential impacts of the consultation on the policy or program, implementation and evaluation, as most key materials are in English and technical even when translated.
- Transportation costs for indigenous peoples attending consultations, workshops or discussions should be provided.
- On the conduct of consultation with indigenous peoples, power dynamics among different actors should be considered. Focus group discussions are preferable to discussion in bigger groups as indigenous participants may not open up if they feel intimidated by the presence of a government official, and for indigenous women by the presence of both indigenous and non-indigenous men.

### *Monitoring Climate Finance*

A monitoring mechanism should be set up for indigenous peoples to track proper implementation of climate finance projects. Indigenous leaders and representatives acknowledge the low capacity of most indigenous peoples organizations and networks in monitoring climate finance activities in Bangladesh.

## Communication Materials

- All climate finance including GCF materials should be translated in Bangla and gradually in other common dialects and languages of the country for greater awareness. Communication innovations

such as audio and audio-visual materials in local languages can be more useful than written forms of communication. Contents should cover all necessary information required for indigenous peoples to uphold their due rights.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> At Dhaka Integrity Dialogue-3: Equity and Transparency in Green Climate Funding held on 18 September 2018 and organized by TIB. Md. Taskin Ahmed's speech did not make it to the newspapers or in the outcome document. The authors were present during his speech.

<sup>2</sup> Drawn from meetings and interviews with leaders and representatives of indigenous peoples, Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples' Network on Climate Change and Biodiversity (BIPNet-CCBD), civil society organizations, and the international accredited entity UNDP.

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# PHILIPPINES

## Philippines Climate Change Policies and Programs

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The Philippines, an archipelago and one of the 18 mega-biodiverse countries in the world,<sup>1</sup> has been in the throes of climate change over the past decades to the present. It suffers multiple loss and damage to life, ecosystems, biodiversity and infrastructure from about 20 tropical cyclones that enter the country every year.<sup>2</sup>

The warming of the earth's climate from anthropogenic activities that induce greenhouse gas emissions has not spared the country from climatic changes. For instance, an increase of 0.6°C in the country's annual mean temperature has been observed from 1951 to 2010, with more hot days and warm nights and less cold days and nights.<sup>3</sup> Also, in many parts of the country, an increasing trend was seen in the intensity and extreme frequency of rainfalls from 1951 to 2008 with significant increases in certain cities such as Baguio, Tacloban and Iloilo.<sup>4</sup> Projections indicate that annual mean temperature will rise up to 2.2°C in the 2050s, with the dry season (March-March) predicted to be drier over most areas and the wet or southwest monsoon season (June-November) to be wetter with rainfall increase.

## Policies and Legal Instruments to Address Climate Change Challenges

Although contributing an insignificant amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emis-

sions, the Philippines recognizes its obligation to contribute to the global efforts to curb the impacts of climate change to humanity and the whole world. It has been and continues to be active in designing policies, programs and laws that address this global crisis. The Philippines' climate change policies and programs are basically founded on the 1987 Constitution on the mandate of the State "to protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature" (Section 16, Article II). Initial and successive policy formulations and government bodies<sup>5</sup> on climate change are premised on the fact that the country is located in the typhoon belt, its high vulnerability to multiple adverse impacts of climate changes, and the already huge damage and losses experienced as well as potential threats on the horizon.

True to its commitment, the government adopted the Philippine Agenda 21 framework, which is the basis for sustainable development initiatives that consider the maintenance of the quality of the natural environment for the present and future generations. Having recognized the need to join hands with the international community to address the climate phenomenon of global warming and its adverse impacts to the country in particular, an administrative order<sup>6</sup> was issued by then President Corazon Aquino to create the Inter-Agency Committee on Climate Change. Formulating climate change policies and response strategies to climate change was the Committee's foremost function.

Climate change principles and policies are subsequently stipulated clearly in the Climate Change Act of 2009. These are the principle

of protecting the climate system for the benefit of humankind on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities and the precautionary principle in climate risk management. The ultimate objective<sup>7</sup> of the United Nations Framework on Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) to which the Philippines is a Party as well as the Hyogo Framework for Action<sup>8</sup> are also explicitly adopted in the Act as part of the country's springboard for climate change actions.

The State, in pursuing the objective of resolving the global problem of climate change, is supposed to undertake the following climate change policies stated in the Climate Change Act of 2009:

1. Shall cooperate with the global community in the resolution of climate change issues including disaster risk reduction;
2. Shall enjoin the participation of national and local governments, businesses, nongovernment organizations, local communities and the public to prevent and reduce adverse impacts of climate change and maximize the benefits of climate change;
3. Shall incorporate a gender-sensitive, pro-children and pro-poor perspective in all climate change and renewable efforts, plans and programs;
4. Shall strengthen, integrate, consolidate and institutionalize government initiatives to achieve coordination in the implementation of plans and programs to address climate change in the context of sustainable development;
5. Shall integrate disaster risk reduction into climate change programs and platforms;
6. Shall systematically integrate the concept of climate change in various phases of policy formulation, development plans, poverty reduction strategies and other development tools and techniques by all agencies and instrumentalities of the government.

In furtherance of the climate change policy formulation, the Climate Change Act of 2009 also created the Climate Change Commission,

an independent and autonomous body with the status of a national government agency attached to the Office of the President. The Commission is a policy making body to coordinate, monitor and evaluate the programs and action plans of the government relating to climate change. It is worth noting that there is no clear provision on the participation or representation of indigenous peoples in the Commission nor in its advisory board. If the indigenous peoples in the country is one distinct sector, the provision for at least one sectoral representative from the disaster risk reduction community is not a guarantee for indigenous peoples to be represented in the Commission.

Following the enactment of the Climate Change Act, the Commission formulated the National Framework Strategy on Climate Change. The Framework, anchored on adaptation and mitigation, is the basis for the national program on climate change for the period 2010-2022. With adaptation being the anchor strategy, equal and equitable protection of the poor, women, children and other vulnerable and disadvantaged sectors is sought to be given special attention in adaptation measures, and along this idea, the indigenous peoples would be expected to be included among such groups. It is in this particular Framework where indigenous peoples are particularly mentioned in relation to the value of multistakeholder participation and partnerships in climate change initiatives.

The National Framework Strategy on Climate Change was translated into a National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP).<sup>9</sup> The action plan lays the strategic direction for all climate change initiatives towards food security, water sufficiency, ecological and environmental stability, human security, climate-smart industries and services, sustainable energy, and knowledge and capacity development. It outlines specific strategies and programs for adaptation and mitigation from 2011 to 2028 in the identified seven priority areas. Indigenous knowledge is one element cited in some adaptation measures identified.

Cognizant of the benefits of a clean and healthy environment to all and recognizing the rights of the citizens to breathe clean air,

Congress passed Republic Act No. 8749 or the Clean Air Act of 2009. This law focuses on pollution control rather than prevention and provides the policy framework for air quality management.

At risk and already experiencing numerous climate change-related disasters, the Philippines has been proactive in coming up with a law that spells specific disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) policies and a national DRRM framework as well as institutionalizes a national DRRM plan. Republic Act No. 10121 known as the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 also created the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) with policy making, coordination, integration, supervision, monitoring and evaluation functions. In view of its given function, the NDRRMC came up in 2011 with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Framework,<sup>10</sup> which serves as the overall guide or direction in national and local DRRM efforts. In the same year, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP)<sup>11</sup> covering 2011 to 2028 was adopted, which sets the expected outcomes, outputs, key activities, indicators, lead agencies, implementing partners and timelines under four thematic areas.

Again, it can be noted that the composition of the NDRRMC has no representation of indigenous peoples, and even if it provides for representation from CSOs, it is no guarantee for inclusion of indigenous peoples. On the other hand, indigenous knowledge in disaster risk reduction and management is one of the non-monetary resources identified in the NDRRMP which can help attain the Plan's identified targets.<sup>12</sup> Use of indigenous knowledge is also one of the factors of the paradigm shift the government is undertaking in DRRM initiatives.<sup>13</sup> Even indigenous learning institutions along with formal and non-formal schools are enjoined to integrate DRRM education in their curricula.

Other key national policies related to climate change are contained in the following:

1. Republic Act No. 9513 or the Renewable Energy Act of 2008 intends to accelerate exploration and development of renewable energy in the country to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. It is also meant to encourage development and utilization of renewable energy resources as a tool to effectively prevent or reduce harmful emissions even as the country pursues its sustainable development paths.
2. Executive Order 881, Series 2010, authorized the Climate Change Commission to include programs and actions plans relating to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) in its scope of coordination. In view of this EO, the Philippine National REDD+ Strategy (PNRPS) was adopted in 2010 after several multistakeholder consultations with 2010-2020 timeline for development of REDD+ activities. The strategy aims for a dedicated policy framework on REDD+ that would ensure an enabling policy environment for REDD+ implementation and also the creation of a National Multistakeholder REDD+ Council which would be the primary body for coordinating REDD+ efforts in the country. Under REDD+ Readiness, several REDD+ sites have been identified around the country. The PNRPS has several components: enabling policy, governance, resource use, allocation and management, research and development, measurable, reportable and verifiable conditions, capacity building and communications, and sustainable financing.

It can be noted that one project, Preparation of a National REDD+ Mechanism for Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Conservation of Biodiversity in the Philippines, located in Davao Oriental was chosen because of the presence of indigenous peoples.

## Indigenous Peoples as Stakeholders in Climate Change Initiatives

With over 100 million population<sup>14</sup> with an estimated 14-17 million indigenous peoples,<sup>15 16</sup> the Philippines has lost thousands of its citizens and suffered billions of dollars in damage to agriculture and infrastructures from the onslaught of typhoons. Topmost of the ten worst typhoons to hit the country in terms of destruction to life and property was super typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in November 2013, which left 6,300 casualties, more than a thousand missing, 28,688 injured and colossal damage to infrastructures.<sup>17</sup>

No specific comprehensive study has been done on the impacts of climate change to indigenous peoples in the country, despite the fact that they are major contributors to ecological balance and conservation of biological diversity. The few existing studies show multiple climate change impacts in varying degrees as well as heightening risks and vulnerabilities of indigenous communities. In Mindanao in southern Philippines, indigenous peoples in several provinces still suffer from the impacts of typhoon Pablo which hit the south in December 2012. Recent accounts of women in Davao Oriental tell of Pablo's devastating impacts to their food security. Relying on their traditional knowledge and practices, the indigenous communities show remarkable resilience and adaptation, which need to be strengthened.

The stakes of the indigenous peoples in whatever climate change efforts are undertaken are high, as they are in most diverse yet fragile ecosystems in the country. Thus, their participation or representation in climate change programs and bodies or in sustainable development as a whole is crucial.

The Philippine Constitution recognizes the presence and the rights of indigenous peoples in the context of national development. Several articles provide several strong references to indigenous peoples not only as stakeholders in any sustainable national development initiatives but

as significant component of society. The rights of indigenous cultural communities are recognized and promoted by the State within the framework of national unity and development (Section 22, Article II). The rights of indigenous cultural communities to their ancestral lands shall also be protected by the State to ensure their economic, social, and cultural well-being (Section 5, Article XII). In the formulation of national plans and policies, the State shall recognize, respect and protect the rights of indigenous cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions and institutions (Section 17, Article XIV).

An enabling law considered a landmark and comprehensive legislation, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) or Republic Act 8371, acknowledges not only the rights of indigenous peoples over their ancestral domain, to social justice and human rights, self-governance, empowerment and cultural integrity.<sup>18</sup> It also provides for how the State should recognize indigenous peoples' rights to development.

- Section 17. The ICCs (Indigenous Cultural Communities)/IPs (Indigenous Peoples) shall have the right to determine and decide their own priorities for development affecting their lives, beliefs, institutions, spiritual well-being, and the lands they own, occupy or use. They shall participate in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of policies, plans and programs for national, regional and local development which may directly affect them.
- Section 13. The State recognizes the inherent right of ICCs/IPs (Indigenous Peoples) to self-governance and self-determination and respects the integrity of their values, practices and institutions. Consequently, the State shall guarantee the right of ICCs/IPs to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.
- Section 36. The State shall recognize the right of ICCs/IPs to a sustainable agro-technological development and shall formulate and implement programs of action for its effective implementation.













## Green Climate Fund

### GCF Readiness Program

The Philippines GCF Readiness program was initiated in December 2013 by International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and jointly implemented with UN Environment Program (UNEP), UNDP and World Resources Institute (WRI). The Readiness program of the country is also part of the Readiness program of nine other beneficiary countries including Fiji, Nepal, Uzbekistan, Benin, Ghana, Kenya, El Salvador and Colombia.

The National Readiness Plan of the Philippines has identified the needs and priorities to effectively generate and use climate finance. The priorities are the following work areas:

- a. Technical assistance in the selection process of an Accredited Entity (AE) for direct access to the Green Climate Fund, and technical support to the selected AE during the GCF accreditation process;
- b. Preparation of pipeline of prioritized climate change programs and projects ready for submission to the Green Climate Fund;
- c. Support for development of public-private partnerships to implement climate mitigation and adaptation solutions. The private sector has expressed their desire to build a community of resilient social entrepreneurs who are well equipped to manage climate impacts and develop business opportunities by addressing climate change.<sup>27</sup>

The Philippines had a series of changes in its focal point for the Green Climate Fund. The National Designated Authority (NDA) was initially the Climate Change Commission, which was replaced by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in 2017 and assumed by CCC again in July 2018. Under the DENR, national mechanisms were set up to ensure that the readiness program of the Philippines would

take off. The NDA then facilitated the establishment of a Technical Working Group (TWG) to serve as the technical committee and a National Steering Committee (NSC) to serve as oversight and advisory body.

The National Steering Committee has the following roles:

- a. Provide overall strategic guidance/oversight on the management and access of the fund, including, but not limited to, the development of guidelines for project screening, assessment, endorsement and monitoring, and identification and nomination of potential entities for accreditation by GCF;
- b. Provide recommendation on the issuance of No Objection Letter (NOL) on:
  - Climate adaptation and mitigation project proposals to be submitted to GCF for funding,
  - GCF facilities proposals (i.e., Readiness and Preparatory Support program, Private Sector Facility and Project Preparation Facility) to be submitted to GCF for funding;
- c. Endorse issuance of Letter of Support on other support/assistance from development partners including, but not limited to, capacity building, proposal preparation, and accreditation support;
- d. Ensure complementation of GCF with other climate financing sources; and
- e. Other guidance and direction as deemed necessary.

The Technical Working Group provides the technical support and recommendations to the National Steering Committee. It shall:

- a. Review and recommend to NSC the assessment criteria and protocols to be used for evaluating concept notes and funding proposals to access GCF and its facilities, including funding support from development partners;
- b. Review and assess the technical merits of concept notes and funding proposals based on the preliminary assessment of DENR as the NDA vis-à-vis Screening

and Prioritization Tool, including the GCF Country Program and other national development priorities; and

- c. Review and endorse to the NSC proposals to access GCF facilities based on GCF quality standards, including strategic impact objectives, proposal format and timelines.

The creation of both the TWG and NSC in November 2017 marked the establishment of a national coordinating mechanism for GCF in the Philippines. Since their establishment, the Philippines has undergone a variety of activities that would lead to a number of achievements as reported by the new NDA, the Climate Change Commission. The vision of the Commission is a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines with highly adaptive communities. Its mission is to “take the lead in the development and mainstreaming of evidence-based climate adaptation and mitigation policies through optimum coordination among key stakeholders towards achieving a climate-resilient and climate-smart Philippines with healthy, safe, prosperous, and self-reliant communities.”<sup>28</sup>

One of the processes the country has undertaken is the development of its own prioritization and screening tool to guide the evaluation of potential climate change adaptation and mitigation projects. This tool was largely based and guided by the Green Climate Fund investment criteria and aims to identify the greatest need of the country in terms of climate finance based on its climate investment priority plan. A number of seminars and training for government agencies, private sector and civil society were also carried out under the Readiness and Support Program to deepen the understanding of key actors, including the National Designated Authority, about the Green Climate Fund architecture and policies, and the roles each stakeholder can play.

The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP)<sup>29</sup> is the first Philippine entity to be accredited to the GCF. The LBP submitted its application for accreditation for direct access to the GCF in October 2016, which was approved at the 21st GCF board meeting in October 2018 in Bahrain.

The LBP, wholly owned by the government, is a national public sector entity with a long track record of working with farmers and fisherfolk. The Land Bank applied for medium size, high risk category projects, according to GCF/B.21/17, Consideration of Accreditation Proposals, a document published by GCF prior to considering the accreditation of Land Bank and other entities. This means that the Bank can carry out programs or projects costing a maximum of \$50 million. According to GCF standards, LBP is expected to include substantial financial exposure to activities with potential significant adverse environmental and/or social risks and/or impacts that are diverse, irreversible, or unprecedented, hence the accreditation.

Land Bank has a remarkable track record in financing climate change-related projects including but not limited to community forestry, renewable energy and geothermal projects. It however indicated in its GCF application that it has currently no specific policies on information disclosure and approved policy on monitoring and evaluation, and while it practices project based redress and grievance mechanisms, these are not codified in its own policies. Hence, the approval of its accreditation comes with conditions to fulfill the above-mentioned policies. The Bank has drafted its gender policy and procedure which are yet to be formally approved by its management, but the document does not say whether the Bank has the same plans to develop its own indigenous peoples’ policy consistent with the GCF’s own policy.

## Country Programming

To access the Fund, the Philippines is developing a country program for 2018–2022 with support from the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF). The ICRAF through the support of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety has designed and conducted a series of meetings and dialogues towards developing a country program of the Philippines to the GCF.





## Indigenous Peoples' Needs and Priorities in Relation to Climate Change

### *Recognition, respect, promotion, and fulfillment of indigenous peoples' rights (Full implementation of IPRA)*

#### Right to Culture

- Recognition of indigenous knowledge, systems, and practices including but not limited to rotational farming system and traditional livelihoods
- Respect and recognition of indigenous belief (as well as sacred sites)
- Recognition and sensitivity to culture in creation of plans (e.g., LUPs, DRRP)

#### Right to Land

- Issuance of Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title
- Recognition of ICCA
- Recognition of Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Protection Plan (ADSDPP) in Forest Land Use Plan/Comprehensive Land Use Plan
- Funding of ADSDPP
- Recognition of communal forests and communal lands

#### Right to Self-Determination (Full and effective IP participation)

- Proper representation in political and other decision-making processes
- Full involvement and not just tokenism
- Support IPs' self-determined Development
  - » Hasten validation of community-initiated projects
  - » Reconfiguration of permitting processes (to be sensitive of IP realities)
- Recognition of Indigenous Political Systems
- Observance of free, prior informed consent

### *Community strengthening*

#### Awareness building and Information dissemination

- Environmental rights
- GCF and other climate financing mechanisms

#### Capacity Building

- Target: Youth, Women, Leaders, Indigenous Peoples Mandatory Representative
- Possible topics: Conservation Trading Approach, farming technologies, ICCA documentation mapping, skills needed for specific climate financing mechanisms
- Establishment and promotion of enterprises

#### Funding support for IP educational centers

#### Support to continue traditional livelihoods through funding of relevant programs

- Sustainable [traditional] farming practices
- Indigenous food crops
- Handicrafts

### *Genuine forest and environmental rehabilitation and protection*

- Promote sustainable forest development
- Rehabilitate threatened ecosystems and other areas destroyed by extractive industries
- Biodiversity enrichment (e.g., planting of endemic species)
- Support renewable energy projects such as solar and micro hydro

The workshop participants also agreed on a Framework<sup>30</sup> for an Indigenous Peoples' Program on Climate Change in the Philippines. This framework could serve as a guide for both the government and other actors in planning, implementing and evaluating climate change programs and activities or policies related to indigenous peoples. The framework's vision is to "develop an enduring indigenous peoples' led programme that provides resources to indigenous peoples in the Philippines to address climate change in the context of their own vision, needs and sustainable development."

The Climate Change Commission assured that the workshop results would form part of the country program. It acknowledged the importance of having an indigenous peoples program for GCF because of the high dependence and close relationship of indigenous peoples with the environment and its resources and their need to strengthen their adaptive capacities.

### **Indigenous Peoples' Engagement on National Level**

It was evident in this national workshop that prior to it, indigenous peoples had zero knowledge about the Green Climate Fund. Most, if not all, participants said it was their first time to hear about the GCF. While they knew about the Climate Change Commission from a variety of sources (including TV), they had not heard about the GCF and what it does. They were grateful to the Climate Change Commission and Tebtebba for organizing the event for them to know that such climate funds exist; they asked for more such forums to be held for indigenous peoples to participate and engage in more meaningfully.

It was also evident from this consultation that the CCC still has a lot to learn from and about indigenous peoples. The workshop participants noted that CCC as the focal point needs to be more proactive in sharing information not only about GCF but about their mandate as a

government agency and how indigenous peoples can participate or engage in climate change programs and activities. They also apparently realized that many of the problems they experience in their communities are aggravated by climate change. Hence, they said that national climate change data should be translated into information that could be understood and appreciated at the local level.

Indigenous peoples are barely seen in climate change related programs, activities and formations at national level whether initiated by the government and/or NGOs. The reasons still need to be verified but one is surely the lack of information that flows down to indigenous and local communities. Given this low level of participation, a few organizations advocating for indigenous rights are proactively engaging on behalf of indigenous peoples. Tebtebba, for example, has been an active member of Aksyon Klima Network (AK) or Climate Change Network, a recognized national formation of CSOs, academe, professionals and experts working on different issues with a common goal to address climate change. It is very active in trying to influence national climate change and disaster risk management processes that include national action plans on climate change, nationally determined contributions, climate finance, technology transfer, among others.

The AK network has become one of the vehicles for indigenous peoples' issues and concerns on climate change to be delivered to the national government and their attached agencies for consideration in their climate change and disaster risk programs, activities and plans. In addition, it is a source of information for climate change and disaster risk management related policies and updates, among others.

The workshop also drew out the challenges felt and perceived by indigenous peoples regarding GCF Readiness and climate finance in the country, as well as opportunities and recommendations, which this study has largely built upon.

## Challenges

- a. Climate change remains a very technical issue for the Philippines. While there are laws and mechanisms in place for planning down to the local level, even local government units seem to have a low understanding of what climate change is beyond setting up infrastructures and coping with impacts of climate change.
- b. The capacity of indigenous peoples to engage at the national level is still low. So far, only Tebtebba is the only indigenous peoples' organization (IPO), which is an active member of the Climate Change Network or Aksyon Klima. All other CSOs are either working with or for indigenous peoples but are not IPOs. In addition, availability of resources remains a challenge for indigenous peoples to engage at the national level as most forms of engagement such as meetings and activities are held in the national capital, Metropolitan Manila. Even an organization like Tebtebba for example has to contend with scarcity of financial resources in the effort to engage meaningfully. This is a real challenge because of the high tendency of indigenous peoples to be left out or conveniently forgotten if they are absent from a meeting.
- c. The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples as the mandated government agency to oversee the implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act is not mainstreamed in many climate change related mechanisms. The NCIP also has limited human resources and expertise to influence the national processes. It further suffers a credibility problem to some extent, as it is seen by indigenous peoples as incapable of fulfilling its functions.
- d. The criminalization of environmental defenders is a problem in the Philippines

(tagged as the most murderous country for defenders in Asia in 2017, The Guardian, 2017) especially for indigenous peoples.<sup>31</sup>

## Opportunities

- a. There is strong legal basis for indigenous peoples to be engaged with the law on the rights of indigenous peoples (IPRA) and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples. The indigenous peoples and the Climate Change Commission have a strong rapport.
- b. The ongoing crafting of the country program is an opening for indigenous peoples' inputs.
- c. A number of national support NGOs have already expressed willingness to support the development of an indigenous peoples program towards full funding proposals to the Green Climate Fund or for a development of a community proposal for the Peoples Survival Fund. The expressed potential support may come as financial grant for funding proposals development or knowledge transmission from experts on how to develop proposals for the PSF.
- d. A significant number of indigenous peoples' organizations are working at the subnational level. Some of these IPOs have a relatively strong relationship with their local government units and are open and willing to work with the government. There is a lot of indigenous peoples-led climate and development activities that are either self-supported or supported by external actors (church, other development NGOs). These initiatives need to be scaled up and documented so that they become part of the national data.

## Recommendations

- a. An indigenous peoples program should be developed within the GCF country program to create an opening for indigenous peoples to access GCF funds.
- b. Capacity building should be conducted for indigenous peoples and local government units to enable them to understand what the GCF is and other national opportunities for climate funding (such as Peoples Survival Fund).
- c. Data disaggregation should be included in the Climate Change Expenditure Tagging system to be able to track funding flows to different sectors including women and indigenous peoples.



## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Convention on Biological Diversity. Philippines-Country Profile. Accessed at <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/default.shtml?country=ph#facts>.

<sup>2</sup> Villarin, J. T., Algo, J. L., Cinco, T. A., Cruz, F. T., de Guzman, R. G., Hilario, F. D., Narisma, G. T., Ortiz, A. M., Siringan, F. P., Tibig, L. V. (2016). 2016 Philippine Climate Change Assessment (PhilCCA): The Physical Science Basis. The Oscar M. Lopez Center for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management Foundation Inc. and Climate Change Commission.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Administrative Order No. 171 issued on February 20, 2007 created the Presidential Task Force on Climate Change. The Climate Change Commission was created through Republic Act No. 9729 enacted in 2009. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council was created through Republic Act No. 10121 passed into law in 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Administrative Order No. 220 created an Inter-Agency Committee on Climate Change promulgated on May 8, 1991.

<sup>7</sup> Stabilization of the greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system which should be achieved within a timeframe sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner. UNFCCC Article 2.

<sup>8</sup> Adopted in 2005 during the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, it is a global strategy for risk reduction efforts from 2005-2015 with its main goal of reducing disaster losses by 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Available at <http://climate.emb.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/NCCAP-1.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> Available at [http://www.adrc.asia/documents/dm\\_information/Philippines\\_NDRRM\\_Framework.pdf](http://www.adrc.asia/documents/dm_information/Philippines_NDRRM_Framework.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> Available at [http://www.ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/41/NDRRM\\_Plan\\_2011-2028.pdf](http://www.ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/41/NDRRM_Plan_2011-2028.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> Stated in the Executive Summary of the NDRRMP 2011-2028.

<sup>13</sup> Stated in the NDRRMF.

<sup>14</sup> Philippine Statistics Authority. Philippine Population Surpassed the 100 Million Mark (Results from the 2015 Census of Population), June 30, 2017. Accessed at <http://www.psa.gov.ph/content/philippine-population-surpassed-100-million-mark-results-2015-census-population>.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Development Program. Fast Facts. Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines. Accessed at <http://www.ph.undp.org/content/dam/philippines/docs/Governance/fastFacts6%20-%20Indigenous%20Peoples%20in%20the%20Philippines%20rev%201.5.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> The population of the indigenous peoples in the country is more than 11 million according to data shared by NCIP regional office for Regions VI and VII available at <http://www.ncipro67.com.ph/indigenous-peoples-of-the-philippines/>.

<sup>17</sup> NDRRMC. NDRRMC Update, Final Report Re Effects of Typhoon “Yolanda” (Haiyan). Accessed at [http://ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/1329/FINAL\\_REPORT\\_re\\_Effects\\_of\\_Typhoon\\_YOLANDA\\_\(HAIYAN\)\\_06-09NOV2013.pdf](http://ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/1329/FINAL_REPORT_re_Effects_of_Typhoon_YOLANDA_(HAIYAN)_06-09NOV2013.pdf).

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.scirp.org/journal/PaperInformation.aspx?paperID=81228>.

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.thegef.org/projects>.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Jonathan Mayuga. DENR, UNDP embarks on \$6.78 million program to protect 'sacred' tribal grounds. Retrieved from <http://www.ph.undp.org/content/philippines/en/home/presscenter/articles/2016/06/28/denr-undp-embark-on-6-78-million-program-to-protect-sacred-tribal-grounds.html>.

<sup>22</sup> Danessa Rivera. DOE donates 900 e-trikes to 4 Metro LGUs (2018, June 02), PhilStar. Retrieved from <https://www.philstar.com>.

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.dof.gov.ph/index.php/finance-secretary-carlos-dominguez-signed-on-march-7-2018-the-financing-agreements-of-four-innovative-climate-change-adaptation-projects-between-the-psf-board-and-the-beneficiary-lgus/>.

<sup>24</sup> Victor V. Saulon. Climate fund soliciting more projects. Business World. <https://www.bworldonline.com/dotr-signs-co-development-deals-for-4-airports-with-defense-dept/>.

<sup>25</sup> Danica Marie Supnet. 2017. Accessing the People's Survival Fund. Business World Online. <http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=Opinion&title=accessing-the-people&8217s-survival-fund&id=147300>.

<sup>26</sup> [https://sdghelpdesk.unescap.org/sites/default/files/2018-02/Scoping\\_Study\\_Philippines.pdf](https://sdghelpdesk.unescap.org/sites/default/files/2018-02/Scoping_Study_Philippines.pdf).

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.gcfreadinessprogramme.org/philippines-gcf-readiness-programme>.

<sup>28</sup> Climate Change Commission. <http://climate.gov.ph/about-ccc>.

<sup>29</sup> GCF/B.21/17. Consideration of Accreditation Proposals. [https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/1270184/GCF\\_B.21\\_17\\_-\\_Consideration\\_of\\_accreditation\\_proposals.pdf/a3ec2acd-01c2-0fb4-cc78-25ff8cf871d0](https://www.greenclimate.fund/documents/20182/1270184/GCF_B.21_17_-_Consideration_of_accreditation_proposals.pdf/a3ec2acd-01c2-0fb4-cc78-25ff8cf871d0).

<sup>30</sup> This framework was drafted and finalized by Elatia (Tebtebba and 18 indigenous peoples' organization partners from 13 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America) in 2016. This was also presented, discussed, contextualized and agreed on by indigenous representatives during the National Indigenous Peoples Consultation on Upscaling Climate Resilient Indigenous Communities in the Philippines on November 8-9, 2018 in Mandaluyong City, Philippines.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/02/almost-four-environmental-defenders-a-week-killed-in-2017>.





**T**his report follows an initial scoping research commissioned in 2017 by Tebtebba to partners in five selected countries: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Vietnam, Peru, Nicaragua, and Kenya.

In the second part of the research, the country case studies point to a series of proposals and recommendations that can help improve the quality of indigenous peoples' engagement, national level coordination of different climate funds, compliance with Green Climate Fund policies and due consideration of indigenous peoples' perspectives in country programming.

