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Discussion Group 2 Summary Report:

Adaptation, Adaptive Capacity and Development

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Introduction

This paper summarises the debate that occurred in two sessions of the adaptation, adaptive capacity and development discussion group. There was by no means consensus on all of the issues raised - the session provided all participants with the opportunity to identify the challenges they are feel are key in achieving adaptation to climate change, in building adaptive capacity and in seeking equitable development, and to identify potential solutions. This was followed by a lively debate and the findings are presented below.

Key challenges and potential solutions

The challenges that were identified during the session can be grouped into eleven main themes:

1. Challenges in the production, use and communication of climate change data and knowledge at global, national and local levels.

- Persistent uncertainty in scientific information and a lack of information that is appropriate for different audiences.
- Inter-disciplinary work between climate sciences and social sciences is needed so that adaptation is not framed as a purely technological issue - proper consideration is given to livelihoods and human development issues.
- Disconnection was also identified between the sites of knowledge production and the communities that need not only to have access to this information, but to be able to understand it and put it to practical use.
- A lack of consistency and clarity in defining adaptation and the various terms that are associated with it was highlighted as another barrier to achieving a shared understanding of how to move forward. Defining adaptive capacity for the different stakeholders in developing countries and the larger international community is needed.
- A need was identified to reduce uncertainty in global climate change scenarios and for some consensus to be achieved as to which scenario would be used as the basis of adaptation decision-making. It was suggested that global scenarios need to be downscaled to the regional level. Furthermore, a methodology for setting baselines from which to measure and monitor adaptation is important.
- More needs to be done in modelling at country level, and not just at the regional level.
- Getting an improved evidence base to help less developed countries in identifying effective adaptation.
- Understanding the implications of climate change at different levels of analysis (multi-scale) was highlighted
- Communicating to society at large the linkages between climate change and impacts and importance of climate decision making was recognised.

Possible responses

- Climate change adaptation information should be made accessible, with an emphasis on identifying those that need it, how to make information relevant to them without sacrificing quality; and on empowerment and facilitation in government, communities and other users to employ both their own and external knowledge effectively.
- Use needs to be made of both existing technology, knowledge and communications channels in developing countries, but also to work out what are resilient institutions and what changes are required in institutions in the light of climate change.
- Work out a range of scenarios (maximum/minimum, 2^{o} to $6^{o),}$ and from this devise modelling solutions for the different scenarios that will inform policy makers at the national level.
- Once there is a credible scientific base, the challenge is to communicate this evidence in an equitable way to most affected communities and to explore local understandings of climate variability/change and potential responses.

2. Recognition of audience-specific interpretations of adaptation

- The issue of audience-specific interpretations of adaptation (i.e. varying interpretation of a loose term) and how knowledge is received by different audiences was raised;
- The challenge of communicating climate change adaptation and impacts to the general public was emphasised.

Possible responses

- There is a need to recognise cultural barriers that may prevent climate change information from being utilized, such as different perceptions of the relation between climate and society. The appropriateness of adaptation knowledge for different audiences therefore needs to be considered. It is important to broker knowledge and synthesize information – and to understand the social and cultural context within which local people gain access to this information – which in turn influences their livelihood options and agency.
- Public meetings, mass media and innovative media (radio, animation, participatory video) should be used for creative knowledge generation and brokerage.
- Efforts should be directed towards local-level training in data production.

3. Scaling-up of learning and learning from experience

- Current scaling-up studies lack integration, because they are fragmented, and this has lead to limited lesson learning.
- It is important to take advantage of potential opportunities arising from climate change (e.g. in the form of new finance), but also to recognise that the types of responses and methods are not necessarily new to development. The challenge of climate change adaptation is thus not to start something fundamentally new, but to build on what has been achieved in development so far.

Possible responses

- Identify best processes for learning lessons in a more integrated thinking.
- Global organizations should pause and think through CC adaptation as a "super-narrative" issue.
- Learn from existing knowledge and concepts, as adaptation frameworks are still developing.

4. Integration and communication of adaptation efforts across spatial scales.

- Both communication of climate change knowledge and adaptation governance in general needs to be integrated across scales, between governments, communities, civil society organisations and the private sector. There is seen to be a governance disjuncture between National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs) and scattered local adaptation initiatives.
- Specifically, it was suggested that systems thinking is needed for effective adaptation. For example, the challenge of getting policy makers and researchers to think about food security in more holistic way rather than considering agriculture alone was highlighted.
- Maximizing synergies between adaptation and mitigation was thought to be central in considering adaptation in a systematic way.
- One solution cannot be designed to fit all contexts. Adaptation is a local process. The challenge lies with facilitating contextually appropriate adaptation alongside the drive for generalizable adaptation information, given the limited capacity available.

Possible responses

- Use of multiple communications channels is important in order to build resilient communication networks for disseminating adaptation information.

- An important first step for integrating governance efforts is to get ministers from different departments in the same room to start them talking to begin an inter-sectoral dialogue, begin to understand institutional cultures and constraints and work towards more holistic adaptation solutions. Increasingly intensity of climate change impacts *might* drive these groups to work together (e.g. resolving crises in freshwater supply will necessitate cooperation between agencies concerned with such issues as health, agriculture and livestock as well as water resources).
- The means to implement a systems approach to adaptation should be identified and promoted, through process thinking, learning from past experiences and across disciplines and pooling data. Holistic policy on agriculture and food security are especially important.
- Process oriented adaptation that is driven by participatory decision-making is also thought to be the most promising means to make solutions fit local contexts.

5. Identifying the synergies and trade-offs between adaptation and development agendas.

- There is a time-scale misfit between development projects that are usually funded over 2 or 3 years, and the need for long-term adaptation programmes. Related to this issue is that of securing funding for new, longer-term projects/programmes, but also how to integrate in on-going policy and planning.
- At the other end of the time-scale, a mismatch between urgent need for good quality information and conventional multi-year timescales for academic research was identified.
- The question of whether and in what ways building adaptive capacity is different to 'business-as-usual' capacity-building for development was raised.

Possible responses

- Further work is needed to identify the ways in which adaptation and development can work effectively together.
- Focus on getting the research process speeded up to ensure that information is available for decision-makers to begin planning for adaptation soon.

- Is doing development well the best way to build adaptive capacity? The most important additional activity may be raising awareness about potential climate change impacts, particularly where local livelihoods are dependent on climate-sensitive activities.

6. The need to frame adaptation within the context of broader development issues, such as equity.

- Concern was expressed that adaptation is not approached in a blinkered manner but within the broader development context, with a particular sensitivity to issues of equity and power relations.

Possible responses

- Adaptation goals should be identified within a development framework that pays close attention to fundamental issues of power, equity and political economy; and which is based on dialogue and process.
- The importance of social science research feeding into the adaptation debate alongside the natural sciences is therefore clear.
- Before engaging with adaptation it was suggested that the development community should take stock of the bigger picture: not only of what adaptation is but of how to 'do' development itself, with an emphasis on the fundamental issues mentioned above.

7. Securing adaptation and development funding.

- It was agreed that lack of finance is a key issue in terms of capacity to respond to climate change in developing countries. A particular issue is how to ensure that the UNFCCC's Adaptation Fund reaches those who most need it.
- A parallel challenge is how donors, NGOs and research bodies secure funds for adaptation. There was difference in emphasis between the groups here: some were clear that adaptation should not be separated from the development agenda, and therefore that the division of development funds for adaptation and development is problematic.
- Others also raised this issue, but emphasised the need to look into how additionality of adaptation efforts may be proved, assuming that donors are likely to continue separating funds. This raised the question of how or whether adaptation and vulnerability should be quantified. It also raised the issue which is emerging of development work being 're-branded' as adaptation initiatives to secure funding, but not being rigorous about defining it – as many jump on the bandwagon adaptation activities could lose credibility as a result.

Possible responses

- In response to lack of financial capacity in developing countries, additional and innovative finance mechanisms should be explored, and existing mechanisms reviewed. Specifically, private sector finance should be engaged in a creative way: learning from examples such as the securing of at-cost/ free services for HIV/ AIDS sufferers. Given that the UNFCC Adaptation Fund is likely to be over-subscribed, it should not be relied upon as the only source of funding.
- In order to ensure that funds are used efficiently, mainstreaming adaptation at a national level is important. Both donor governments and the Adaptation Fund could have key roles in ensuring that adaptation is not approached in an uncoordinated, project-based way.

- Those who thought that funding for adaptation and development should definitely not be separated proposed that the false nature of this division be flagged in further policy and research work, given that it has important implications for implementation. They suggested that further work is needed on how development work can routinely factor in adaptation.
- Those who focused on how to work with separate adaptation/ development funds suggested that more research is needed on how to secure additional funding for adaptation, perhaps through measures and metrics of vulnerability and adaptation; and proposed that awareness-raising is needed on the importance of adaptation.

8. Adaptive capacity problems are not limited to finance, but include a lack of human resources, institutional capacity and political commitment at the local level. Training was identified as a particularly challenging area.

- It was observed that there is not enough scientific research capacity to generate Climate Change (CC) adaptation data locally.
- Gaps in key ground-level data were also identified, thus policy makers base their decisions on data emerging from Europe/America, and not in the places where adaptation needs are greatest.
- Also emphasized was the importance of addressing uncertainty of local knowledge and the interactions between local and scientific knowledge, and finding the level at which uncertainty can be absorbed and managed most appropriately.

Possible responses

- Increased international aid should be sought and more external pressure placed on countries to take action on adaptation.
- Capacity building through knowledge transfer and training is a challenging area: a distinction was made between superficial 'workshop cultures' and fundamental training that is directed at specific needs. Using a wide variety of more innovative approaches such as on-the-job training is important, while realising that different types of training will be appropriate in different contexts.
- It is also important to build appropriate institutional and governance capacities to enable adaptation for a range of potential impacts. Address gaps in knowledge (including uncertainties) of climate change impacts on livelihoods and ecosystems at the local level to enable communities to adapt.
- There is the need for shifts in mindset to recognize the skills and capacity of people on the ground. This will lead to a funding change. Capacities at the local level could be addressed once funds are provided. For every one dollar given to an organization in the north, the same should be given to organizations in the south.

9. How to motivate behavioural change that will lead to adaptation

- The need to incorporate incentives and motivations for change into capacity building was pointed out as key in order to achieve changes in behaviour. Cultural and social barriers are extremely important in this area.

Possible responses

- Focus more on the decision making process. Also ascertain what drives people to change. It is important to understand the incentives and motivations for change by integrating into capacity building. Changing behaviour, or 'climate-smartening', our own organisations was identified as a crucial first step to this process.

10. Irrigation

- An area of increasing importance in the light of climate change, but it has been neglected recently, and in which radical reform is urgently needed to meet the challenges of climate change.

Possible responses

- Major awareness raising initiatives are needed, as well as innovative thinking and increased human resource capacity. Involving the private sector could be very important, although it is acknowledged that privatisation of water resources is a controversial area. However, the private sector might be engaged in such innovative ways as local irrigation companies being set up, in which farmers are shareholders with a board of managers and consultants whose knowledge can be drawn upon.

11. How to assess the value of environmental services effectively

- Natural resources such as soils and forests need to be valued in way that more realistically reflects the vital environmental services that they provide.

Possible responses

- No final answers were found for how to achieve this, but it was suggested that the process should be participatory, prioritising local valuations of natural resources.