



December 2011

AFB Civil Society meeting: Towards a good partnership

The Adaptation Fund members met on Sunday 11st of December from 7-9 with representative of NGOs for its CSO dialogue. Members of the AF NGO network used the opportunity to report back on activities undertaken during the year in the AF funded projects countries as well as to make suggestions on some of the agenda items to be considered by the meeting.

Rachel Berger (Practical Action) in her capacity as a member of the Advisory committee of the AF NGO Network explained that the AF Network intends to support the innovative feature of direct access of the fund at the international level and to accompany the implementation of the AF funded projects with the aim of ensuring inclusive participation of all interested stakeholders particularly the most vulnerable in project countries. Moreover she made clear that the partners in developing countries could be seen as advisers and facilitators, who seek to collaborate with the implementing and executing entities rather than to act as a watchdog.

Indi Mc Mclymont-Lafayette Panos Caribbean Jamaica said that the AF NGO Network is a good forum to build capacity on the AF. Although only the concept proposal for her country has been submitted and endorsed, she is closely collaborating with the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), the NIE of her country. Initial consultations have been held between the PIOJ and potential executing entities, and a couple of those entities have started consultations with stakeholders in proposed project sites. Indi sees her role to help ensure the interests of the most vulnerable communities are reflected in the final proposal. The next steps are to develop a kind of baseline mapping - like those prepared for Honduras and Senegal by AF NGO Network members - on the prevailing situation in the area of the AF project, so that she can better understand the situation of the poorest people in the project area. She pointed out that the network is also looking for an NGO partner in Belize so through united action, at least two of the extremely vulnerable small island states will be in a better position to adapt to the impacts of climate change that they are experiencing.

Emanuel Seck from Enda, Senegal, said that project implementation by the CSE - the first ever accredited NIE - has started. Civil society wants to be more involved in the process. With the support of the AF NGO Network, Enda organized a workshop on Nov 16-17 with stakeholders to share information on the project progress. He also highlighted that with agreement of CSE, Enda will develop impact indicators to assess the benefits of the project for the communities.

Isaac Ferrera from Fundación Vida, Honduras, explained that since he became partner of the AF NGO Network, he is working closely with UNDP (the MIE) and the other executing agencies. All entities were very happy to share information with him. He has participated in some field visits as well. He has realized that there is a challenge to increase the understanding of climate change in the Honduras. Next year he will try to raise awareness about adaptation and the work of the AF.

Krystel Dossou, OFEDI, Benin reminded the Board members that the National Environmental Fund of Benin has newly been accredited as NIE. In his country there are ongoing discussions with NGOs and other stakeholders on the kind of the projects to be submitted to the Board. There is likely to be a project on eco-system adaptation submitted soon, that will benefit poorer impacted by the climate change.

The presentations were followed by a question and response session. Among the several questions posed, one related to why the partners think direct access is so important. In addition, Board members welcomed the idea of impact assessments in the case of Senegal, and suggested other partners of the AF NGO Network might undertake this as well. The NGOs pointed out that resources would make this difficult.

Alpha Kaloga from Germanwatch presented on behalf of CAN international the submission made to the secretariat containing comments regarding the project review criteria. He made clear that the focus on the most vulnerable in developing projects and programs is one of the innovative features of the AF. However, further clarifications should be reflected in both the project template as well as in the review criteria on who the most vulnerable communities in the target region are and how they benefit from the implementation of the project. NGOs recommend that the AFB ask more questions relating to the vulnerable communities and their inclusion in the projects submitted. In addition the focus on most vulnerable goes hand in hand with a consultative process.

The chair of the AF Board appreciated the NGOs for their support in the work of the board. She also acknowledged that the focus on the most vulnerable as contained in the strategic priority is critical for its work. She confirmed that one of the focus of her mandate, as chair is to formalize this fruitful exchange with CSOs.

Furthermore, the chair of the Board asked Alpha Kaloga during its 18th meeting, whether the AF NGO Network could assist the Board to help organize its photo contest. On behalf of the CSO present at the meeting, he thanks the Board for the proposition and mention that he understands this initiative as a commencement of a sustainable joint work. Accordingly, the Board requested its secretariat to consult with the Adaptation Fund NGO Network to help organize a second photography contest.

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