

ADAPTATION FUND NGO NETWORK GUIDE

More than just words

A guide to effective community consultations

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Brief Summary

Community consultations are an important part of involving locals and giving them an opportunity to share their experiences, knowledge and opinions. Several methods can be used for community consultations, some including a broader group of participants while others focus on representatives or specific groups.

This guide offers information on four different methods of community consultation and tries to help along the process of preparing, conducting and analysing these consultations. The information presented in this guide can be used to facilitate the consultations, yet the conductor is free to choose which method is best used and how.

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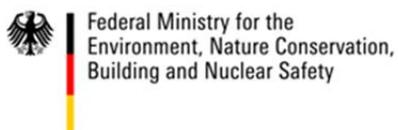
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1 Introduction

The Adaptation Fund NGO Network

The Adaptation Fund (AF) was established by the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol of the UNFCCC to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The AF is innovative in the way it is funded, managed and governed: Developing countries have a majority in the Adaptation Fund Board (AFB), the governing body who manages and supervises the AF. Moreover, the AF is financed with 2% of the Certified Emission Reductions (CERs) issued for projects of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Lastly, the AF offers the opportunity to access to its resources through direct access, which was until the establishment of the GCF a unique approach in the realm of international climate finance.

The Adaptation Fund NGO Network is a coalition of NGOs and interested stakeholders following the development of the Adaptation Fund and its funded projects. It strives to provide a sustainable and dynamic influence on politics and promote the engagement of civil society. It believes in the great chance to contribute to a successful implementation of projects funded by the Adaptation Fund (AF) in developing countries, especially for the benefit of people and communities particularly vulnerable to climate change. The Network directly supports NGOs in a number of developing countries, with a focus on AF direct access countries, by increasing their capacity to escort all relevant issues around the implementation of the project throughout the implementation period.

The Adaptation Fund NGO Network was established in 2010. The first phase lasted from 2010 to 2013, and the second phase is currently running until 2016. The Network is a supporting facility forum for NGOs in developing countries. Through this channel, developing countries can follow the development of the AF and specifically observe direct access and the implementation of the projects through National Implementing Entities. This approach aims to enable multi-stakeholder participation in the AF procedures. Through this open exchange and participation, the Network assists its NGO partners to contribute to a successful outcome of the funded projects in their own countries. Their participation during all stages of the project – from its design to its implementation – is in the interest of improving the conditions of those less privileged and most vulnerable to climate change.

Currently, the Adaptation Fund NGO Network is comprised of ten active partners in their respective countries: Fundación Vida in Honduras, Panos in Jamaica, ENDA in Senegal, Indigo in South Africa, Forum CC in Tanzania, Practical Action in Kenya, The Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan, Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement in Benin, Association pour la Conservation de la Nature in Rwanda and NGO Forum in Cambodia. In addition to these active members, the number of Adaptation Fund NGO Network members is constantly growing. To date, there are more than 130 member organizations that associate themselves with the Adaptation Fund NGO Network.

Introducing a guide to community consultations

As part of their work our 10 active partners are undertaking stakeholder consultations at the Adaptation Fund project sites. Those have the objective to reveal insights and peoples' views and concerns on the planning and implementation process of the Adaptation Fund project and particularly to give the most vulnerable members of the community a voice.

Community consultations are an important part of in-country accountability system, as well as of involving locals and giving them an opportunity to share their experiences, knowledge and opinions. Consulting local project stakeholders is seen as an approach that enables the participation of

community, involving the local population in certain projects and processes. Furthermore, community consultations provide the opportunity to listen to the opinions and needs of the local stakeholders affected by or interested in such projects. This should ideally lead to stakeholders voicing their concerns, ideas, and recommendations towards the implementing and executing entity, with the aim of incorporating their suggestions into the project. Several methods can be used for community consultations. Some methods include a broader group of participants while leaving the consultation on a rather superficial level. Other methods can only involve smaller amounts of participants but offer the advantage of in-depth discussion of particular issues, such as personal benefits or losses through the project.

This guide provides information on four different methods of community consultation: surveys, deliberative opinion polls, community gatherings and observations. It attempts to help along the process of preparing, conducting and analysing these consultations. The information presented in this guide can be used to facilitate the consultations, yet the conductor is free to choose which method is best used and how. It should be noted that those consultations should always be conducted in the language of the people living in the community. While this requires some handed-out documents about project processes and components to be translated, it ensures the participation of all groups of the community. Table 1 illustrates the different kinds of community consultations and gives advice on the pros and cons of those approaches.

Table 1: Pros and Cons of different community consultation methods

Method	Short description	Advantages	Disadvantages	To be used for...
Surveys / Interviews	Asking about peoples' opinions through clear questions by post, by tele-phone or face-to-face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known by most people • Can reach many participants • Can aim at certain groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly expensive and time-consuming • Inflexible answer possibilities • Sample could be too small or biased • No discussion of other possible issue 	...finding answers to simple questions when a large amount of participants is needed.
Deliberative Opinion Poll	Selecting and informing a group of people, inviting them to a discussion or meeting, then taking a poll	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can reach many participants • Gives participants time to consider information • Provides information and room for discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not known by most people • No room for participants' own suggestions/ ideas • Information given is limited • Participation might be small (no time etc.) 	...finding answers to more complex questions when the participants should receive information first.
Community gatherings	Discussion among locals and other individuals, possible to have expert presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows in-depth discussions • Room for participants' own suggestions/ ideas • Can use local knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few people able to participate • Not necessarily a clear outcome • Not necessarily representative, some view-points will be missing • Skilled facilitator needed 	...hearing different points of view from locals and enabling discussion and solution-finding.
Observation	Independent observation of a process or a group of people, sometimes followed by interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives independent insight • Can focus on important issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot use local knowledge • Does not directly involve community members • Behaviour observed may be unusual 	...providing an insight from an independent point of view but excludes the community's opinions.

2 Surveys and Interviews

One way of gathering opinions is through surveys or polls. They usually involve a high amount of people and through random selection can provide a representative picture of the community members' opinions.

There are several ways in which surveys can be done:

1. By post: Letters are sent to randomly selected participants who can then return the filled-in survey sheets.

Pros	Cons
Participants have some time to think about their decisions	The surveys might not be returned if the citizens are not interested in participating

2. Face-to-face (on the street, at home, etc.): People are directly approached and asked whether they would like to participate in a survey.

Pros	Cons
Community members can directly agree/disagree to participate	Difficult to assess whether different groups of community members are participating
Direct responses of the participants	No time to think about the questions

While the technique very much depends on the local context there are three main steps that should be taken in order to conduct a fruitful survey or interview and get the best results possible (Table 3). Generally it is essential to note that no matter what form of survey is chosen, the participants should not be asked to take more than 10 minutes of their time; otherwise they lose interest.

Table 2: Three steps to develop and conduct a survey¹

1. Planning the survey
Decide on the survey content: What is the objective of your survey? What questions do you want to pose?
Budget and resources: How much money do you have at hand for the survey? Who in your team can support you?
Decide on your sample size: How many participants do you want to ask?
Decide on the survey method: Would you like to do surveys by post or face-to-face?
Prepare a project timetable with deadlines for the next steps: see example below
2. Conducting the survey
<p>Prepare survey questions: Find a sample survey in the Annex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the questions short and simple; use plain language to be easily understood. • Try to ask closed questions that can be answered by ticking boxed; they are much easier to analyse than open questions. • The start of a questionnaire should include questions about the participants themselves (e.g. age, gender, marital status, etc.). • Do not use leading questions which seem to have a "right" answer (e.g. "Do you agree that smoking is bad for you?"). This will change the results of the survey. • Avoid subjective questions and try to be specific. Give options for time frames etc. (e.g. "How often do you read the newspaper?" - "Never", "less than once a week", "once or twice a week", etc.) • Provide background information if needed. You can provide the information yourself or put a short (!) paragraph before a question.
Print the questionnaire
<p>Select the participants: Make sure you have select different stakeholders of the community, e.g. the ones that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are affected by adverse climate change effects (direct or indirect) – in case of AF funded projects/ programmes those who are the most vulnerable • are affected by the adaptation measure (direct or indirect) • have the potential to influence the project/ programme (direct or indirect) • “interests” in the adaptation activities (direct or indirect)
3. Evaluation
<p>Compile and analyse your data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can present your results in several descriptive statistics (e.g. percentages, cross tabulations, frequencies). • For open questions: All answers to each open question should be kept together. You can analyse them using the following method: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Organise the answers by grouping similar ones together ○ Look for themes or headings for each group ○ Count the number of comments in each theme ○ Select the answers which are most representative to quote in your report
4. Empowering members of community
<p>Support community members to voice their concerns and ideas to relevant stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stakeholder: Implementing Entity (IE), Executing Entity (EE), e.g. community members can raise concerns during a stakeholder dialogue organised by the IE or EE
Write a report and present your findings to Germanwatch

¹ adapted from Fife Council. Consultation Handbook 3rd edition. Accessed 12th March 2015 at http://publications.1fife.org.uk/uploadfiles/publications/c64_consultation_guide_02.pdf

3 Deliberative Opinion Polls

A deliberative opinion poll builds upon normal polls or surveys. However, it is advanced since it offers information to the participants and room for discussion. For this method, a representative sample of the population is selected and contacted. They are then given information on an issue and invited to a meeting or group discussion later on. In the meeting they will have some initial knowledge around the project in order to actively participate in a discussion. After the meeting, they are asked to take part in a poll to show their views.

Table 3: Eight steps to develop and conduct the poll¹

Planning and conducting a poll	
1	<p>Select the participants: Make sure you have select different stakeholders of the community, e.g. the ones that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are affected by adverse climate change effects (direct or indirect) – in case of AF funded projects/ programmes those who are the most vulnerable • are affected by the adaptation measure (direct or indirect) • have the potential to influence the project/ programme (direct or indirect) • “interests” in the adaptation activities (direct or indirect)
2	<p>Prepare the information you are going to give to the participants: This could be a hand-out featuring the basics of the Adaptation Fund project</p>
3	<p>Send out the information to participants</p>
4	<p>Plan and prepare the meeting: Organise speakers, venue, format, etc.</p>
5	<p>Plan and prepare the questionnaire: See Annex for this</p>
6	<p>Perform the Deliberative Opinion Poll: Hold a discussion with the participants (e.g. accompanied by a presentation) and subsequently hand out the prepared questionnaire</p>
7	<p>Compile and analyse your data: see section on Surveys and Interviews</p>
8	<p>Write a report and present your findings</p>

4 Community Gatherings

There are several forms that community gatherings can take: stakeholder workshops, focus group discussions or community hearings for example. Led by an interviewer, a group of individuals meets up to discuss a particular issue. The participants should ideally be already involved in the issue (e.g. interest groups, support groups, other stakeholders) which would mean some prior knowledge. Since the Adaptation Fund NGO Network particularly aims to support the most vulnerable community members and make their voices heard, participants should also include most vulnerable people of the community.

Through limiting the discussion to a smaller group of people, some viewpoints might not be heard. However, these community gatherings provide an opportunity for the participants to discuss an issue and present their own ideas. Alternatively, it is also possible to have several parallel groups in order to hear more opinions.

For community gatherings, a facilitator is needed that can moderate and guide the discussion. Oftentimes, a small presentation on the topic is good to initiate discussion.

Table 4 below provides some insights into the steps to take to conduct community gatherings.

Table 4: Ten steps to develop and conduct the community gathering¹

Conducting community gatherings	
1	<p>Select the participants: Make sure you have select different stakeholders of the community, e.g. the ones that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are affected by adverse climate change effects (direct or indirect) – in case of AF funded projects/ programmes those who are the most vulnerable • are affected by the adaptation measure (direct or indirect) • have the potential to influence the project/ programme (direct or indirect) • “interests” in the adaptation activities (direct or indirect)
2	<p>Decide on the precise topic, the approximate number of participants and the format: Length of the meeting, several groups</p>
3	<p>Find a facilitator and a note-taker: It makes sense to develop some questions to guide the discussion</p>
4	<p>Arrange a venue and prepare the equipment: e.g. flip chart, projector, paper & pens</p>
5	<p>Prepare refreshments/snacks: Participants cannot be expected to always have time for a meeting. An incentive for them to take the effort and participate could be to provide refreshments and/or snacks at the meeting (and advertising this)</p>
6	<p>Invite the participants</p>
7	<p>Conduct the community gathering: take notes during gathering for later analysis</p>
8	<p>Analyse your results</p>
9	<p>Empowering members of community: Support community members to voice their concerns and ideas to relevant stakeholders (inter alia Implementing Entity (IE), Executing Entity (EE), e.g. community members can raise concerns during a stakeholder dialogue organised by the IE or EE)</p>
10	<p>Write a report and present your findings</p>

Generally, community gatherings seem to be the most useful form for the Adaptation Fund NGO Network community engagement approach. It can be used to easily and in a reasonable amount of time collect information. At the same time setting-up a standing dialogue process can in the long-run serve as a very suitable format for NIEs and EE to engage with the community.

5 Observation

Independent observation or field observation provides additional insights into a topic because one does not only rely on other peoples' opinions. However, it also excludes the community members' opinions, so it is very much advised to be best used jointly with one or more of the other approaches described above. Observations are especially helpful if community members are unwilling to discuss specific issues or in order to get acquainted with the situation.

Table 5 provides some insights on the steps to conduct observations in a community.

Table 5: Six steps to develop and conduct an observation

Conducting an observation	
1	Develop a plan for your observation: Decide on the precise topic and information you need
2	Choose a site and gain access: Ask for permission to observe, possibly additional permission to take pictures
3	Prepare for the observation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment: pen and paper, camera and audio recording equipment • Information about your project: leaflets, short introduction • Contact information (business cards) in order to get in touch with you for further comments or questions
4	Conduct the field observation: take notes, record interviews etc.
5	Analyse your results
6	Write a report and present your findings

Sources

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Annex

Sample survey

Survey on the Adaptation Fund Project

Thank you for taking part in the survey. The survey should take around 10 minutes and will be used to make community voices heard in order to give feedback to implementing entities.

Question 1

How old are you?

- Under 21 21 - 35 35 - 50 50 - 65 65 - 80 Over 80

Question 2

What gender are you?

- Female Male Others

Question 3

Are you a local resident?

- Yes No

Question 4

Are you aware of the Adaptation Fund project in the community? (If the person is not aware, the interviewer should take some time to explain the project to the interviewed person!)

- Yes No

Question 5

Does the project benefit the most vulnerable people of the community? (Please name the most vulnerable groups of the community)

- Yes No

Most vulnerable groups:

Question 6

What are your personal benefits from the AF project?

Question 7

What are overall benefits for the community?

Question 8

Do you see any disadvantages through the AF project, personally and/or for the community?

Yes No

If yes, please specify:

Question 9

Do you have any suggestions to bring the project towards a success? Do you have anything to report that relates to the project that concerns you?

Question 10

How satisfied are you with the overall implementation of the project?

Very satisfied Satisfied Quite satisfied Not satisfied

Question 11

How satisfied have you been with the consultation process that the executing entity has been undertaking in advance of the project start?

Very satisfied Satisfied Quite satisfied Not satisfied

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