

EVALUATION OF THE 'TRACKING TOOL'

# Tracking Adaptation: Not An Easy Task

Experiences made by four AFN partner organizations

Mario Wetzel, Laura Schäfer and Julia Grimm



*Supporting the most vulnerable to climate change.*

## Brief Summary

In the context of the Adaptation Fund NGO Network a *Tracking Tool* was developed in order to provide an instrument to assess a country's current state of adaptation policies and frameworks regarding interplay and good adaptation. This paper not only provides a synopsis of the first four tracking results generated with the tool, but also insights on challenges and opportunities connected to the use of the *Tracking Tool*. Ultimately, this paper aims to show how the *Tracking Tool* can be modified and alternatively used in terms of generated data with the objective to enhance the international architecture for climate change adaptation to better assist the most vulnerable communities in adapting to the increasing adverse impacts of climate change.

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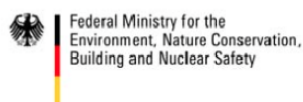
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## List of abbreviations

AF	Adaptation Fund
AFN	Adaptation Fund NGO Network
CBO	Community Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization

# 1. Introduction

Initiated in 2010, the Adaptation Fund NGO Network (AFN) is a social feedback mechanism, in which national civil society organizations accompany the Adaptation Fund (AF) project planning and implementation process to ensure positive project impacts for vulnerable groups and communities. It is the AFN's objective to be supportive to the innovative features of the AF such as its direct access modality and its developing country majority in the decision making structure. The Network enhances the constructive exchange among civil society and national decision-makers, which provides the basis for improved regional and international adaptation finance policies, particularly with respect to the AF.

As the financial volume for climate change adaptation has increased substantially in the last decade, the need for effective evaluation of the projects increased. Therefore, Germanwatch developed a 'Tracking Tool'<sup>1</sup> that helps to assess good adaptation practice and the current state and level of interplay between different implementing and financing entities of adaptation projects.

The *Tracking Tool* was developed to provide a common standard for the evaluation of the respective policies on climate adaptation in the partner countries. Its main focus is to assess the representation of three *Interplay Principles* and seven *Principles of Good Adaptation* within a country's adaptation policies and projects, focusing on National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and the Adaptation Fund projects.

The three *Interplay Principles* represent a set of factors and questions to detect, how communication and co-operation on adaptation is organised between different stakeholders on a structural level. The seven *Principles of Good Adaptation* aim to provide a set of indicators which are focused on, but not limited to, civil society engagement, transparency, participation and the inclusion of the most vulnerable to climate change in decision-making processes. (Figure 1)

This paper aims to analyse how the Tracking Tool was used by the AFN partner organizations, what kind of information was generated through this instrument and to generally summarise the key findings by AFN partners. Based on the analysis, possibilities for improvement of the tool will be described. Finally, different ideas of additional applications will be discussed to extend the benefits of the *Tracking Tool* and to give ideas about how the generated data can be processed in order to gain added value of the tool for the AFN.

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<sup>1</sup> Junghans, L., Kreft, S. & L. Schäfer (2015)

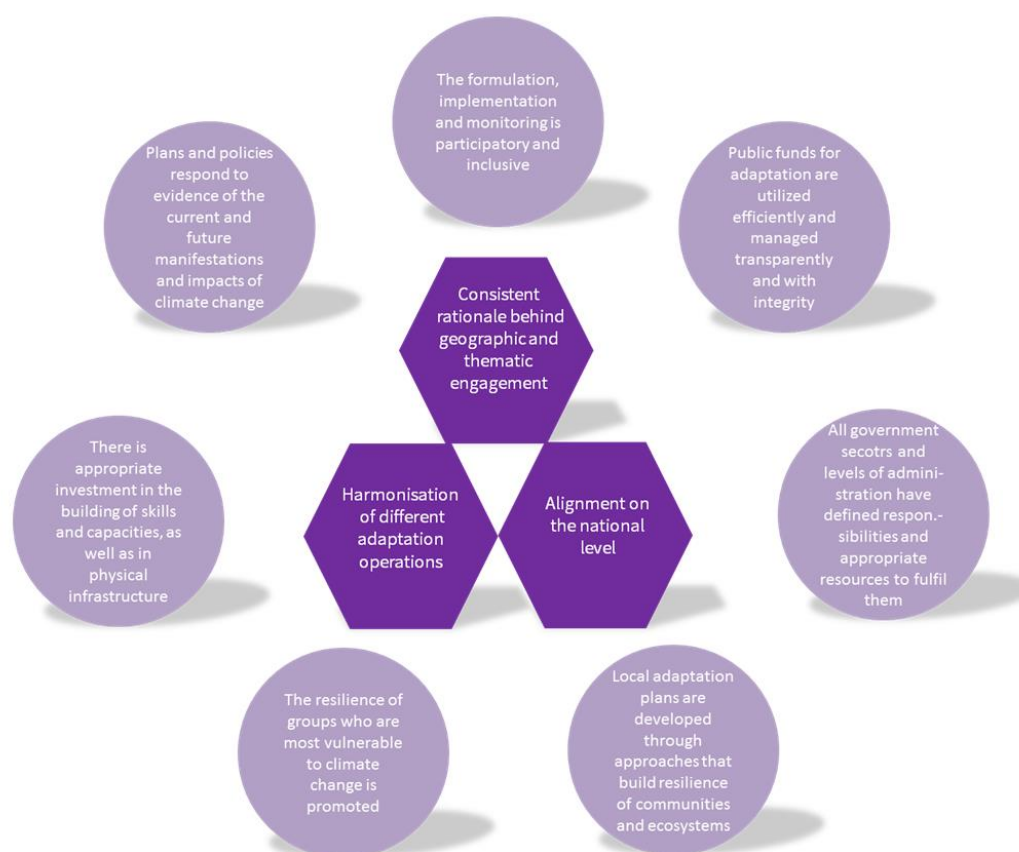


Figure 1: Principles for interplay and good adaptation (Source: Junghans, L., Kreft, S. & L. Schäfer, 2015).

## 2. Summary of the tracking results provided by AFN partners

For the assessment of the *Tracking Tool*, four reports<sup>2</sup> of AFN partner organizations in Benin, Cambodia, Jamaica and Senegal have been taken into account. It is noteworthy, that the received reports are comprehensive and include a wide range of information. Generally, information provided on the three *Interplay Principles* was more inclusive and wide-ranging than information on the seven *Principles of Good Adaptation*. However, the emphasis of the tracking results varies significantly between the four reports due to different local geographical and political contexts. This leads to certain limitations in comparability of the respective results.

Nevertheless, the application of the *Tracking Tool* generated valuable information for the analysis of the countries' adaptation frameworks and policies as well as current restructuring efforts regarding governance processes on national and subnational levels. To improve our understanding of the type of information generated by the tool, the following chapter provides a synopsis of the topics and answers provided through the *Tracking Tool*, based on the tracking results in the four aforementioned countries.

<sup>2</sup> ENDA Third World (n.d.); JVE Benin (2016); LONG, S. (2016); WILLIAMS-RAYNOR, P. (2016)

The first (2.1) and the second part (2.2) of this chapter systematically summarize and analyse the results produced within the three *Interplay Principles* and the seven *Principles of Good Adaptation*. Subsequently, the third part of this chapter (2.3) will summarise the recommendations formulated by the four partner NGOs based on their particular findings. Ultimately, the fourth part of this chapter (2.4.) will examine how the tool was applied by the partners including possible challenges using the tool.

## 2.1. Tracking results: The *Interplay Principles*

The *Tracking Tool* can be divided into two thematic parts: *Interplay Principles* and *Principles of Good Adaptation*. The first part, the so called *Interplay Principles*, are targeted towards the tracking of interplay structures between different implementing and financing entities that are involved in climate adaptation projects and processes. The three *Interplay Principles* are:

1. Consistent rationale behind geographic and thematic engagement
2. Harmonisation of different adaptation operations
3. Alignment on the national level

In turn, each principle contains subordinated attributes which are assessed separately. This attributes-based approach enables an in-depth evaluation of the particular aspects of interplay. In order to provide an intelligible access to the results, all aspects are individually evaluated.

### 1. Consistent rationale behind geographic and thematic engagement

The focus of this first *Interplay Principle* is on assessing the countries' strategic and consistent rationale in thematic and geographic engagement of different entities in the same country.

It includes the identification if an assessment of national vulnerabilities exists and if adaptation activities respond to these vulnerabilities on a sectoral and geographical level as well as an analysis of the division of labour between different actors working in the same country. In spite of the different regional dispersion, Jamaica, Cambodia, Benin and Senegal identify common risks in context of climate change. Floods, droughts, changes of rainfall patterns, increasingly devastating storms as well as rising sea levels are among the principle concerns. The main common denominator, in matters of affected and threatened sectors, is agriculture. Other sectors such as fishery, infrastructure and coastal protection are highlighted as well. Depending on the countries exposure to risk and their geographic features, the emphasis on the sectors, regarding adaptation measures, may vary. However, the majority of the assessed countries have, to different extents, national frameworks or guidelines under which adaptation policies and projects are organised. Partly, these frameworks are integrated in national development plans, National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and the NAP process. Although an effort to develop NAPs, which define sectors and regions of special vulnerability, exists, there is still a tendency towards a deficit respecting the sectoral and geographical division of labour. In other words, some sectors and geographic areas tend to present a profusion of adaptation projects and involved actors whereas other sectors and regions at high risk are rarely targeted with adaptation measures. In practice, different extremes were observed. For example, one partner NGO identified a tendency towards a clustering of adaptation projects in rural areas, while larger urban areas are being hardly addressed. The opposite case was described by another partner NGO, where remote, vulnerable, rural areas are barely subject to adaptation programmes.

## 2. Harmonisation of different adaptation operations

This second *Interplay Principle* aims to identify the effectiveness of communication between different actors, the synergy effects of joint action and the exchange of experiences and lessons-learned among stakeholders. Notwithstanding that all of the four countries prepared national development plans, the communication between governmental and non-governmental actors on different governance levels is still rudimentary. Though there are efforts to develop common standards of communication, monitoring and evaluation as well as their inclusion in national adaptation policies. The involvement of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) is increasingly seen as a key factor to successful adaptation by the international community. However, the information on CSO and CBO involvement provided under this second *Interplay Principle* is limited due to restricted answers provided through the *Tracking Tool*.

## 3. Alignment on the national level

The aim of this third *Interplay Principle* is to detect whether there is efficient coordination between different adaptation actors (including national ministries), an existing strategy for adaptation on a national level and a strong political leadership to drive the adaptation process forward in a coordinated manner. On a national level, all of the four countries present governmental task forces for environmental issues and climate change. Furthermore, specific national strategies and plans have been elaborated or are currently under development. Partially, these plans follow sectoral approaches, which means, specific sectors of interest dispose of individual plans (e. g.: National Adaptation Plan for the fishery sector in Senegal). In addition, not all countries base their national strategies on the same international frameworks. In some cases the leading rationale is based on the NAPA framework, while other countries present an alignment of national strategies to the NAP process. This is also due to the fact that some countries have only recently started their NAP process, while other countries have made already significant progress in their NAP development. However, pertaining to strong political leadership, all partners have identified one key institution, which functions as a political leader in terms of response to climate change in their respective country.



## 2.2. Tracking results: The *Good Adaptation Principles*

The second part of the *Tracking Tool* is comprised of the seven *Principles of Good Adaptation*. These principles are defined by Southern Voices<sup>3</sup> as follows:

1. The formulation, implementation and monitoring is participatory and inclusive
2. Public funds for adaptation are utilized efficiently and managed transparently and with integrity
3. All government sectors and levels of administration have defined responsibilities and appropriate resources to fulfil them
4. Local adaptation plans are developed through approaches that build resilience of communities and ecosystems
5. The resilience of groups who are most vulnerable to climate change is promoted
6. There is appropriate investment in the building of skills and capacities, as well as in physical infrastructure
7. Plans and policies respond to evidence of the current and future manifestations and impacts of climate change

The assessment of these principles by the *Tracking Tool* follows a similar logic as the evaluation of the *Interplay Principles*.

### 1. The formulation, implementation and monitoring is participatory and inclusive

The role of CSOs is increasingly seen as a crucial factor for effective adaptation to climate change in all four countries. However, there is still a lack of formalised communication and decision-making processes on the higher stages of governance. In contrast, especially on local levels and in the planning of concrete projects CBOs and CSOs are consulted in the context of action towards adaptation. Still, the inclusion of CBOs and CSOs in decision-making processes is limited.

### 2. Public funds for adaptation are utilized efficiently and managed transparently and with integrity

Information on tracking this principle was limited in all four countries. The four AFN partner organizations detected the absence of effective monitoring mechanisms and databases on the national level. Nevertheless, the tracking results of one AFN partner organization identified that CSO initiatives are working on how to fill this aforementioned gap.

### 3. All government sectors and levels of administration have defined responsibilities and appropriate resources to fulfil them

As discussed above, in all four countries there are institutions and plans as well as specific strategies for adaptation to climate change. However, responsibilities of government sectors and levels

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<sup>3</sup> Southern Voices (2015)

of administration are often unclear and/or the available funds are insufficient. Moreover, a clear cooperation between local and national administrations and the availability of funds at different levels are missing or still in process.

#### **4. Local adaptation plans are developed through approaches that build resilience of communities and ecosystems**

In all four countries there are communities that developed plans in the context of specific projects or are supported to include adaptation in existing processes. However, national strategies to create incentives for local plans with focus on local needs are still scarce. Additionally, adaptation measures on a local level are of subordinated importance when it comes to the allocation of budgets.

#### **5. The resilience of groups who are most vulnerable to climate change is promoted**

The tracking results of two partner organizations of the fifth principle on good adaptation indicate that vulnerable groups are identified and, at least partially, addressed in adaptation plans. Especially women and people depending on agricultural activities are highlighted as vulnerable groups. However, information about the participation of vulnerable groups in the planning, implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of climate change adaptation measures is lacking. From the recommendations, formulated by the partner NGOs, it can be derived that there is still room for improvement in this regard (see also 2.3.).

#### **6. There is appropriate investment in the building of skills and capacities, as well as in physical infrastructure**

Though in all four countries there are some programmes and mechanisms to support capacity building for climate change adaptation, more resources have to be facilitated for concrete capacity building activities, whereas investment in physical infrastructure is promoted through existing projects and development plans.

#### **7. Plans and policies respond to evidence of the current and future manifestations and impacts of climate change**

Research on the effects of climate change is constantly conducted in all four countries. In order to maintain an efficient generation of data and knowledge, scientists need access to sufficient resources and tools to investigate possible scenarios of the consequences of climate change. A special importance can also be seen in the communication of knowledge to different stakeholders and a permanent dialogue between academia, governmental and non-governmental actors. Although in all four countries there is already an exchange of information, the communication still needs to be intensified.

## 2.3. Recommendations formulated by the four AFN partner organizations

By using the *Tracking Tool*, the four AFN partner organizations have identified a broad range of aspects which still need to be improved to increase the impact of adaptation measures. Taking into account the different political and structural backgrounds of the four countries, surprisingly, the assessment of the reports proved a high number of overlapping challenges.

- **Capacity building:** All partners highlighted the importance of strengthening communities' and local actors' capacities in order to improve their adaptive capacity. Especially capacity building and education of relevant stakeholders were noted as imperative for good adaptation. However, not only capacities of non-governmental but also governmental institutions, which are involved in climate change relevant processes, should be strengthened.
- **Financial means:** Another critical aspect is the adjustment of financing. The four AFN partner organizations suggest different foci and measures. First, establishing strategic national and international investment frameworks to enable climate change financing and the allocation of budgets for climate adaptation programmes. In addition, national and local funding mechanisms should be developed to complement international climate related funds. Third, monitoring climate funding on different levels and the use of budget needs to be easier to track in order to facilitate an easy access to climate finance related data.
- **Role of CSOs:** All partners highlighted that the role of CSOs, CBOs, academia and other non-governmental actors in the planning and implementing of adaptation policies and projects should be strengthened to assure that the needs of all involved and represented stakeholders are incorporated. Additionally, the communication and sharing of information among different stakeholders should be enhanced.
- **Local adaptation plans and division of labour:** The partner countries identified a need to develop local adaptation plans or align existing local plans to national strategies as well as to define clear responsibilities in terms of geographic areas and socio-economic sectors to ensure that all areas and sectors are addressed according to their vulnerability.

## 2.4. Observations on how the *Tracking Tool* was used

To assess the experiences of the AFN partners who have used the *Tracking Tool*, two methods were applied. First, based on the responses provided in the reports, inferences were made about possible difficulties in accessing information in the particular countries. Second, a questionnaire about the experiences with the *Tracking Tool* was elaborated and sent to the partner NGOs.

As mentioned earlier, all reports differed in format and content. Regarding layout and information one report was strictly based on the template given by JUNGHANS, KREFT and SCHÄFER (2015) whereas another report used a modified template in terms of layout and questions asked. The other two reports utilised an open layout which means the information was communicated via a technical paper. Although the four reports were very different concerning the layout and the provided data, coincidences were conspicuous. All partner NGOs had difficulties to assess data about financing on national and subnational levels. This might be due to an overall lack of data on the national

level, but also due to a general lack of transparency regarding adaptation finance processes. According to one partner NGO it is generally *"difficult to have information especially with the agencies of the State and even the NGOs since there is no formal mechanism of monitoring climate financing or Monitoring & Evaluation system established to evaluate the performance of adaptation"*. Another limitation formulated by a partner NGO was the *"availability of project reports or the difficulty to know project promoters"*. Although these quotes refer to one particular tracking experience, the lack of information on climate finance processes in all of the four reports show that similar hurdles might be experienced in several countries. In spite of the difficulties due to a lack of information, the *Tracking Tool* was described by the partner organization as a helpful instrument to gain deeper insights of the topic of adaptation. Additionally, partner organizations see it as an useful tool to positively influence the process of good adaptation.

### 3. Options for different applications of the *Tracking Tool*

This section aims to develop ideas on how the *Tracking Tool* can be improved and applied in additional ways to increase its added value for the AFN and its users alike. Although, examples for the use of the *Tracking Tool* are provided, this section must not be considered as a finalized analysis. In fact, the examples are meant as an incentive for further development of the tool's use and to give a practical illustration of alternative ways to use the tool.

There is a variety of data, which can be generated through the *Tracking Tool*. Depending on the actor who uses the tool as well as the topic on and the context in which the tool is applied different observations concerning the area of adaptation can be made. It is noteworthy, that not only explicit data, meaning the content of the answers to the questions asked in the tool, but also meta-data can be a valuable asset to gain information on a country's state of play regarding adaptation. Meta-data in this context describes the implicit information generated by the *Tracking Tool* and includes for example records of methods used to access the information, interferences about information which could not be provided and why/what data was not available as well as experiences made by the person who conducted the research. Consequently, the generated data can be used and processed in different ways. To give an example of a possible use of the generated data, the information provided through the reports of the four AFN partner NGOs was assessed concerning the conditions for civil society engagement, especially on a structural level, in the respective countries. To evaluate how civil society is represented in the countries' adaptation processes the *Interplay Principles* and *Principles of Good Adaptation* were evaluated and ranked corresponding to their ability to allow inferences and provide information regarding the status of civil society in the adaptation process. Based on this ranking an index (referred to as "Country Index") was created to serve as a template analysing the four reports and to process the existent data.<sup>4</sup>

By using the "Country Index" in combination with other data, various comparisons and operations can be made, in order to gain information about different aspects of adaptation.

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<sup>4</sup> It is important to note that this is no judgement or evaluation of the quality of civil society engagement in the different countries, but rather an analysis of the current state of opportunities and institutional frameworks for civil society participation in the respective countries.

- One possible benefit is the comparison of different countries regarding their current state of play of opportunities for civil society engagement in the context of adaptation. Based on this information, the AFN partner organizations can relate to organizations in other countries with similar participatory structures and therefore can exchange strategies and experiences of their work.
- This data on existing institutional frameworks and other opportunities for civil society engagement in adaptation policies could, e. g., be compared to democracy indices in order to analyse if there exists a possible co-relation between opportunities for civil society engagement in adaptation measures and levels of democracy. The analysis of a countries' state of democracy and the role of Civil Society Organizations in adaptation processes could be used as a starting point to engage in a discussion on a human rights based approach to climate change adaptation, especially taking into account the most vulnerable groups of society.

It is noteworthy that the examples, given in this chapter, rather aim to demonstrate how data can be processed than to provide conclusions on the content. The actual data used for this chapter is based on four country reports, UNDP <sup>5</sup>, OECD <sup>6</sup>, The Economist <sup>7</sup> and an own evaluation of the authors.

## 4. Recommendations

The *Tracking Tool* provides a comprehensible approach for the systematic evaluation of a country's state of play regarding adaptation to climate change. The analysis integrates a variety of factors, which allow the user an in-depth approach to relevant aspects of effective adaptation, in terms of *Interplay Principles* as well as *Good Adaptation Principles*. Consequently, the *Tracking Tool* enables local actors to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of national and subnational structures of climate adaptation and to formulate practical advice, based on the results of the tracking. However, the tool is still in its early stage and the first applications through AFN partner countries helped to detect some challenges that countries encountered in applying the tool. Following, concrete recommendations how to improve the tool and its application, thereby increase its value-added for the AFN, are listed:

- **Standard layout:** The evaluation of the reports provided by the AFN partner organizations in the four countries differed in terms of the format, which complicated the comparison of the documents. Especially when more actors use the *Tracking Tool*, a common standard of layout should be discussed to improve the comparability of results.
- **Capacity building:** In order to assure a continuous improvement of the AFN's impact on national adaptation frameworks in partner countries, it is crucial for the network to develop guidelines and to conduct capacity building on how to apply the *Tracking Tool* in a next phase in order to facilitate other AFN partner organizations the smooth application of the tool. Especially in order to collect more information on the status quo of national adaptation policies and frameworks.
- **Use of Data:** The AFN and its partner organizations have to elaborate a concrete concept of how to use and process the data obtained through the *Tracking Tool* in order to im-

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<sup>5</sup> UNDP (2015)

<sup>6</sup> OECD (2017)

<sup>7</sup> The Economist (2017)

prove the national, regional and international adaptation finance architecture so that it better assist the most vulnerable communities in adapting to the increasing adverse effect of climate change.

- **Regular revision:** To enable a consistent progress of the Adaptation Fund NGO Network's work, a regular revision of the applied methods is essential for success.

## 5. Literature

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