

Vertical Integration in National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Processes

Guidance Note



NAP
Global
Network

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The NAP Global Network is a group of individuals and institutions who are coming together to enhance bilateral support for the NAP process in developing countries. With participation from both developing countries and bilateral agencies, the Network facilitates peer learning and exchange on the NAP process, improve coordination among bilateral development partners, and support national-level action. Initial financial support for the Network has been provided by Germany and the United States. The NAP Global Network secretariat is hosted by the International Institute for Sustainable Development.

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Contents

Executive Summary	i
Acronyms	iv
1 Introduction	1
2 Using the Guidance Note	2
3 Vertical Integration in the NAP Process	4
Understanding Vertical Integration	4
Why Vertical Integration in the NAP Process?.....	6
4 Getting Started on Vertical Integration	8
Building Commitment for Vertical Integration.....	8
Integrating Vertical Integration in the NAP Roadmap.....	9
Enabling Factors for Vertical Integration	10
5 Planning	12
Enabling Factors for Vertical Integration in Planning.....	14
Recognizing Sub-national Diversity in Development Needs and Climate Vulnerabilities	15
Ensuring That Sub-national Perspectives Are Reflected in National Adaptation Plans	16
Ensuring That National Adaptation Plans Are Integrated In Sub-National Planning.....	18
6 Implementation	20
Enabling Factors for Vertical Integration in Implementation	22
Developing Sub-national Adaptation Implementation Strategies.....	23
Allocating Funds for Implementation of Adaptation Actions to Sub-National Actors	24
7 Monitoring & Evaluation	26
Enabling Factors for Vertical Integration in M&E.....	28
Capturing Sub-national Results and Lessons Learned	29
Ensuring Results and Lessons Learned Inform Sub-National Action.....	30
8 Summary of Key Points	32
References	34
Annex A:	
Overview of key issues, questions for consideration and relevant steps in the NAP technical guidelines	36

Executive Summary

Recognizing the key role played by sub-national authorities and local organizations in advancing adaptation to climate change, this note aims to provide guidance for country teams to strengthen vertical integration in National Adaptation Plan (NAP) processes. In the context of the NAP process, vertical integration is *the process of creating intentional and strategic linkages between national and sub-national adaptation planning, implementation and monitoring & evaluation (M&E)*. Vertical integration is not a single step in the NAP process—it is an ongoing effort to ensure that local realities are reflected in the NAP, and that the NAP enables adaptation at sub-national levels, including the local level. Vertical integration is relevant throughout the iterative process of NAP planning, implementation and M&E. It is enabled by institutional arrangements, information sharing and capacity development. The diagram below presents the outcomes of vertical integration in the NAP process.

Vertical integration in the NAP process



The key points to keep in mind for vertical integration in NAP processes are presented in the table below.

Key points for vertical integration in NAP processes	
Institutional arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where they are already in place, existing decentralization processes can provide entry points that facilitate effective vertical integration in the NAP process. • Establishing or building on mechanisms for dialogue, coordination and information sharing between actors at national and sub-national levels throughout the NAP process helps to ensure continuous and broad-based engagement in the NAP process. • Identifying which functions are best undertaken by actors at different levels, including non-governmental actors such as civil society organizations and the private sector, can help to delineate roles and responsibilities in adaptation planning, implementation and M&E. • Ensuring flexibility of institutional arrangements for the NAP process may help to respond to changes in the policy and governance context.
Information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of the information needs of different actors throughout the process of planning, implementation and M&E helps facilitate informed decision making at all levels. • Establishing mechanisms for ongoing information sharing between actors at national and sub-national levels can enable learning and coordination. • Provision of climate information at the appropriate scale and timeframe and in accessible formats will facilitate its application by sub-national actors. • Facilitating dialogue between actors at different levels can help to merge scientific and indigenous climate information, to share experiences with adaptation and to ensure that adaptation actions are mutually supportive.
Capacity development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For an inclusive and participatory process, consider what capacities are needed in the NAP team to facilitate vertical integration, including skills related to stakeholder engagement and provision of technical assistance. • To realize their roles and responsibilities in relation to adaptation, sub-national actors— including local organizations—may require capacity development, including technical knowledge on adaptation as well as process-oriented skills such as inclusive facilitation and M&E. • The integration of capacity development strategies for relevant actors within the NAP—including in implementation and resource mobilization strategies and M&E systems—can help to ensure that resources are allocated and progress is tracked.
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of how sub-national perspectives can best be integrated during the initiation of the NAP process enables appropriate design and sequencing of planning activities and outputs. • A commitment to take sub-national diversity in development needs and climate vulnerabilities into account in the NAP process can facilitate adaptation planning processes that are participatory, gender-sensitive and inclusive of vulnerable groups. • Where feasible and appropriate, integration of adaptation into sub-national development planning can increase sustainability and effectiveness of adaptation planning processes.

Key points for vertical integration in NAP processes

Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consideration of how adaptation options can best be prioritized for implementation at sub-national levels—in terms of the process, which stakeholders should be involved and how criteria for prioritization will be agreed—can help to ensure that the NAP process responds to needs.• Sub-national actors may require support in costing of adaptation priorities and elaboration of resource mobilization approaches in order to develop implementation strategies.• There may be opportunities to leverage existing mechanisms for local development funding to facilitate implementation of adaptation.• Establishing transparent mechanisms can help to create an enabling environment for sub-national actors to access adaptation finance.
M&E	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A comprehensive national M&E system incorporates data and information from sub-national levels, with due consideration to how it will be collected, aggregated and synthesized.• Linking M&E systems with updates to the NAP process helps to ensure that sub-national experiences and learning are captured.• Sharing of synthesized results and strategic lessons from the M&E system with sub-national actors can support learning and integration in ongoing adaptation planning and implementation.

Acronyms

CBO	Community-Based Organization
COP	Conference of the Parties (to the UNFCCC)
D&D	Decentralization and de-concentration (Cambodia)
IISD	International Institute for Sustainable Development
IPACC	Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
LAPA	Local Adaptation Plan of Action (Nepal)
LEG	Least Developed Countries Expert Group
LoCAL	Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MESD	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (Colombia)
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Program of Action
NCDD	National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (Cambodia)
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SIRE	Regional Environmental Information System (Morocco)
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
VDC	Village Development Committee (Nepal)

1 Introduction

The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process emerged from the 16th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancun in 2010, where Parties affirmed that “adaptation must be addressed with the same priority as mitigation” (UNFCCC, 2010, p.3). The Cancun Adaptation Framework established a national adaptation planning process to identify medium- and long-term adaptation needs and to develop and implement strategies and programs to address those needs. Since then, countries around the world have advanced their NAP processes, taking steps to assess development needs and climate vulnerabilities, analyze current climate and future scenarios and review and appraise adaptation options. Many have begun the process of integrating adaptation into policies and plans for climate-sensitive sectors, such as agriculture and water.¹ Most countries have also included adaptation objectives within their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the UNFCCC.²

Increasing attention has recently been placed on the role of sub-national actors in advancing implementation of adaptation in developing countries. For example, in the December 2015 Paris agreement, it was recognized that adaptation, while a global challenge, has local and sub-national dimensions (UNFCCC, 2015). To be effective, NAP processes must reflect these dimensions—with consideration of sub-national diversity—as well as the critical role of sub-national authorities and local organizations in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating adaptation.

This guidance note is designed for NAP teams and other stakeholders interested in strengthening vertical integration in the process. It provides background on the rationale for linking national and sub-national adaptation efforts, drawing on the policy framework and guidance for the process as well as experiences to date in facilitating adaptation. It presents the key issues for vertical integration, including questions for consideration throughout different dimensions of the NAP process. A summary of key points to keep in mind for effective vertical integration provides an overview of the entire process. The guidance note presents a flexible approach that can be adapted to the country’s context, capacities and resources available.



¹ See, for example, the experiences of [Jamaica](#), [the Philippines](#) and [Grenada](#), documented by the NAP Global Network.

² As of August 2016, 142 out of 162 (89%) submitted NDCs included adaptation, according to the CAIT Climate Data Explorer: <https://cait.wri.org/indc/>

2 Using the Guidance Note

This guidance note is designed as supplementary material to the [Technical guidelines for the NAP process](#), which were developed in 2012 by the UNFCCC Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG). It provides additional, focused direction that can be applied alongside the guidelines to strengthen vertical integration throughout the NAP process. Like the technical guidelines, this guidance note is not prescriptive; it is designed to be flexible, highlighting issues that can be addressed to different degrees based on the particular country context, the capacity of national and sub-national actors and the resources available to support vertical integration in the NAP process.

The remaining sections of the guidance note are structured as follows:

- **Section 3** introduces the **concept of vertical integration** and why it is important in the NAP process. This section also includes explanations for key terms used throughout the guidance.
- **Section 4** describes **how to get started** on vertical integration, focusing on building commitment, elements to be integrated in the NAP roadmap and the enabling factors for vertical integration throughout the NAP process.
- **Sections 5, 6 and 7** provide guidance on addressing vertical integration in planning, implementation and M&E, including **key issues** and **questions for consideration** and links to the relevant steps in the NAP technical guidelines.
- **Section 8** presents a **summary of the key points** that emerge from the preceding sections.

Practice examples demonstrating vertical integration in different contexts are included to further illustrate the issues and their importance. An overview of the key issues, questions and related steps in the technical guidelines is provided in Annex A.

Throughout the document, symbols will be used to point you to key elements of the guidance:

When you see...

Look for



Key questions to consider to improve vertical integration



Practice examples that demonstrate vertical integration in action



links to steps in the NAP Technical Guidelines

Table 1 provides an overview of key terms and concepts as they are used in this guidance.

Table 1: Key terms and concepts	
Decentralization	Decentralization is the process through which powers, functions, responsibilities and resources are transferred from central to sub-national authorities and/or to other actors operating at sub-national levels. The process of decentralization establishes a system of co-responsibility between central and sub-national institutions, according to the principle of subsidiarity (see below) (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2006).
Indigenous peoples	The United Nations does not have an agreed definition of indigenous peoples; however, it identifies a number of key characteristics, including: self-identification based on continuity of pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies; distinct language, culture and beliefs; and a strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources. Indigenous peoples often have distinct social, economic or political systems (United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, n.d.). They are key stakeholders in NAP processes, particularly at sub-national levels.
Local	Local refers to entities and processes that exist outside the formal governance system, often at a level below the lowest administrative structure within this system.
Local organizations	Local organizations are non-governmental institutions, including traditional authorities, community-based organizations (CBOs), private sector institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (either locally based or national/ international with localized operations). In contexts where decentralization is limited or where the capacity of sub-national authorities is weak, these organizations may play a leadership role in facilitating development processes.
Local communities	Local communities, while referenced in key decisions under the UNFCCC, are not defined. For the purposes of this guidance note, local communities are groups of people living in a geographic locality that are linked by social ties, common interests and/or joint actions (adapted from MacQueen et al., 2001).
Sub-national	Sub-national refers to institutions, systems and processes that exist at levels below the national level, including the local level.
Sub-national actors	Sub-national actors refer to the collective of different actors operating at sub-national levels, including sub-national authorities, local organizations and communities.
Sub-national authorities	Sub-national authorities are the government structures that exist in a decentralized governance system. Depending on the country, this may include regions, districts, counties, communes or municipalities. The power, responsibilities and capacity of these authorities differ based on the level and the degree of decentralization in the country. Sub-national authorities may include representatives of line ministries such as agriculture and water.
Subsidiarity	The principle of subsidiarity aims “to ensure that powers are exercised as close to the citizen as possible” (European Parliament, 2016, p. 1). In practical terms, it suggests that decision-making power should be employed and resources allocated at the lowest feasible or appropriate administrative level.

3 Vertical Integration in the NAP Process

This section provides an introduction to the concept of vertical integration and why it is important in the NAP process.

Understanding Vertical Integration

In the context of the NAP process, vertical integration is *the process of creating intentional and strategic linkages between national and sub-national adaptation planning, implementation and monitoring & evaluation (M&E)*. Sub-national, by definition, comprises actors and processes that exist below the national level. In a given country context, this may include multiple levels, including the local level. Vertical integration is not a single step in the NAP process—it is an ongoing effort to ensure on the one hand that local realities are reflected in the NAP, and on the other hand that the NAP enables adaptation at sub-national levels. It is driven by recognition of sub-national diversity in vulnerability to climate change, as well as the important role played by sub-national authorities and local organizations in advancing adaptation. Effective vertical integration requires an explicit commitment from national actors to have an inclusive and participatory NAP process, with ongoing dialogue between national and sub-national actors throughout all stages.

There are three main dimensions to vertical integration in the NAP process, as shown in Figure 1. Planning, implementation and M&E are the main elements of the NAP process, and vertical integration is relevant throughout:

- In the **planning** process, vertical integration aims to facilitate dialogue among stakeholders at different levels, to ensure that adaptation planning processes at national and sub-national levels are informed and mutually supportive.
- Vertical integration in **implementation** focuses on ensuring coordination and collaboration among national and sub-national actors in their adaptation priorities and actions, in particular to enable sub-national authorities and local organizations to access the information, resources (including finance) and capacity they need to implement adaptation.
- Within **M&E** systems, vertical integration facilitates capture of sub-national adaptation processes, outcomes and learning, while ensuring that national-level results and lessons are shared to inform sub-national planning and implementation.



As shown in Figure 1, this is an iterative process, with each of the dimensions generating information and experience that feed into the others. At the centre of the process are the **enabling factors**—institutional arrangements, information sharing and capacity development—that facilitate vertical integration throughout these dimensions. The institutional arrangements provide the mechanisms for coordination, capacity development and communication between the different levels. Information sharing promotes efficiency and effectiveness of the process and ensures that both indigenous and scientific climate information are applied, while capacity development ensures that actors at different levels have the knowledge and skills they need to engage in the process. As with the NAP process itself, the approach to vertical integration is intended to be iterative and flexible, integrating new knowledge and responding to changes in the context over time.

Figure 1: Key Issues for Vertical Integration in the NAP Process



Why Vertical Integration in the NAP Process?

Recent decisions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) provide Parties with a strong imperative to create linkages between the national and sub-national levels throughout the planning, implementation and M&E dimensions of NAP processes. For example, the Paris Agreement calls on Parties to respect, promote and consider the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities and people in vulnerable situations throughout efforts to implement their commitments. It also calls for stronger and more ambitious climate action by cities and other sub-national authorities, local communities and indigenous peoples, while recognizing the need to enhance capacities at sub-national levels and to strengthen and support the efforts of local communities and indigenous peoples in responding to climate change (UNFCCC, 2015).

The decision from Cancun that established the NAP process highlights key principles that should guide Parties in taking adaptation forward (UNFCCC, 2010). Vertical integration is fundamental to several of these:

- **Participatory:** Participation is a key aspect of good governance (UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, 2016). The inclusion of people's right to participate in decisions that affect them in the Cancun framework is in alignment with other international agreements, including the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UN, 1948). Applying this principle to the NAP process involves more than consultation—it requires active engagement and empowerment of stakeholders throughout planning, implementation and M&E of the NAP. Sub-national authorities and local organizations are typically well placed to facilitate participation, as they are better connected to communities and are familiar with the particularities of the context at the local level.
- **Transparent:** Like participation, transparency is considered a fundamental principle of good governance (UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights, 2016). Transparency involves open and clear disclosure of information, plans, processes and actions (Transparency International, 2016). The sharing of information must be timely, accurate, relevant and accessible to enable different stakeholders at national and sub-national levels to analyze and use the information and engage with relevant processes and actions (Transparency Accountability Initiative, 2016). It helps to ensure that government actors are responsive and accountable to their constituents. Vertical integration can contribute to transparency by enabling sharing of information between levels, thereby bridging the gap between decision makers in the central government and the people they aim to support.
- **Gender sensitivity:** Vertical integration strengthens NAP teams' ability to take diversity into account. This includes ecological and economic differences within countries that influence vulnerability to climate change. Importantly, it also includes social diversity, including differences based on gender, recognizing that women and men experience the impacts of climate change differently, and they have differing needs and capacities for adaptation. Assessing needs and defining priorities with sub-national actors increases the likelihood that differences based on gender will be captured and that inequalities will be addressed in planning and implementation.
- **Consideration of vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems:** This principle relates to the concept of sub-national diversity, recognizing that countries are not homogenous in their vulnerability to climate change or their adaptation priorities. Vertical integration enables systematic recognition of this diversity, providing entry points for vulnerable groups and communities to participate in the process, as well as opportunities to consider adaptation needs and priorities at the ecosystem level.

These commitments compel governments to invest in vertical integration, putting appropriate policies and resources in place to enable local action on adaptation.³

From a practical point of view, there is considerable evidence of the value of locally driven approaches to adaptation (see, for example, Ayers & Forsyth, 2009). While climate change is a global phenomenon, its effects are often experienced on a localized scale, in the form of changing rainfall and weather patterns and more frequent or intense extremes such as heavy rainfall, droughts and floods. This increased risk and uncertainty creates challenges for people's livelihoods and local development progress. Without understanding of and attention to these challenges, efforts to promote adaptation may be ineffective, or, at worst, maladaptive. The nature of adaptation, as an ongoing process, requires integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge, ensuring that adaptation efforts build on local knowledge and practices, and that local organizations and communities have the information they need for adaptive decision making. The most effective approach to the NAP process will therefore involve a mix of top-down and bottom-up approaches, recognizing that much of the implementation of adaptation will occur at sub-national levels, including the local level (UNFCCC, 2012).



³ There is also increasing attention to vertical integration in climate change mitigation. See for example, experiences from [South Africa](#), [Tunisia](#) and [Japan](#), as well as [recommendations](#) developed by GIZ's Vertically Integrated Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (V-NAMAs) project.

4 Getting Started on Vertical Integration

It is clear from the UNFCCC decisions and the NAP Technical Guidelines that sub-national actors play an important role in the NAP process. For effective vertical integration, the mechanisms for making it happen must be considered from the beginning of the process. This section discusses some of the issues that you should consider during the initiation of the NAP process and the development of the roadmap.



A1: Initiating and Launching of the NAP Process

Building Commitment for Vertical Integration

The best approach to vertical integration must be decided based on the particular circumstances in your country and your specific NAP process. In many contexts, the first step is to establish a mandate that includes sub-national engagement. What this looks like will depend on the country: in countries that are well-advanced in the process of decentralizing decision-making power to sub-national authorities, generating this commitment is likely to be easier, as there will already be regulatory frameworks and mechanisms in place for sub-national planning, allocation of resources and other functions that are useful for vertical integration in the NAP process. In other countries, more work may be required to generate political will and resources to engage sub-national stakeholders.

With a mandate to engage sub-national stakeholders in the NAP process, the next step is typically to identify which actors must be involved. This generally begins with the sub-national authorities. Different countries have a range of institutional structures at the sub-national level, and there may or may not be clear entry points for engagement in the NAP process. You will need to decide which institutions should be implicated based on the particular context in your country. Potential options include the local development planning authority, sub-national representatives of key line ministries such as environment, water and agriculture and/or multisectoral task forces focused on relevant issues (such as food security or ecosystem management). You will also need to decide how these actors will be involved, for example by including representatives from regional or provincial government in the NAP team. In many countries, there is more than one level of sub-national authority (for example, districts may be organized into regions)—you will need to consider which actors at these different levels are best placed to take on different roles within the NAP process. To the extent possible, you should build on existing mechanisms for collaboration between different levels of government.

Vertical integration is not only about collaboration between national and sub-national authorities. Ideally, it will involve other stakeholders, including local organizations and communities and vulnerable groups, who actively participate in the process. Where sub-national authorities already have strong relationships with these other entities, for example through participatory local development processes or stakeholder platforms on particular issues, involving them in the NAP process will be more straightforward. When these relationships do not exist, an investment in stakeholder mapping and awareness raising may be required to identify and engage the appropriate actors in the process. Ensuring common language and a shared vision for the process is key to building effective collaboration among the different stakeholders involved.

Integrating Vertical Integration in the NAP Roadmap

To ensure adequate attention to vertical integration throughout the NAP process, you should clearly indicate the strategy for involving sub-national stakeholders in the NAP roadmap. At a minimum, the roadmap should include the following elements related to vertical integration:

- Identification of the strategic points in the NAP process where sub-national stakeholders will participate.
- An outline of roles and responsibilities for elements of the NAP process related to vertical integration.
- A description of the institutional arrangements for vertical integration throughout planning, implementation and M&E.

A further developed strategy for vertical integration could include:

- Identification of existing information and resources that can be fed into the NAP to support vertical integration (for example, local adaptation plans that have already been developed or evaluation reports for adaptation projects), as well as gaps in information at sub-national levels that need to be filled.
- A strategy for building capacity to enable the process of vertical integration.
- A description of the mechanisms, roles and responsibilities for generating and sharing information between the different levels throughout the process.
- Identification of specific groups that will be represented in the process, such as women, indigenous peoples, socially marginalized groups and different livelihood groups (such as fishers, farmers or pastoralists).
- A strategy for ensuring gender sensitivity in terms of participants, facilitation approaches and identification of priorities.
- A description of the approach to managing sensitive issues and potential conflicts that may arise through participatory processes.
- Identification of the expected outputs in relation to vertical integration.

The aim in thinking through strategies for vertical integration during the development of the roadmap is to ensure active participation and representation of a wide range of voices while not creating an overly cumbersome process. The nature of the NAP, as an iterative and flexible process, allows for increasing attention to and investment in vertical integration as knowledge and capacity are built at all levels. The guidance in Sections 5 to 7 provides further details on how to address these elements at different points in the NAP process.

“It is ... very important for a wide range of stakeholders to be involved in the process of planning and implementing adaptation activities to ensure that the assessment and subsequent results are understood and are useful in decision-making. In this sense, adaptation can be seen as a way to help stakeholders to achieve their collective development ... goals considering a changing climate.”

Technical guidelines for
the NAP process
(UNFCCC, 2012)

Enabling Factors for Vertical Integration

In this guidance, we highlight three key enabling factors that support vertical integration throughout the entire NAP process:

- **Institutional arrangements:** The mechanisms that facilitate dialogue between the national and sub-national levels and ensure engagement of sub-national actors in the process.
- **Information sharing:** Generation and sharing of information, including climate information⁴ as well as information on the NAP and related processes, to ensure that all actors are acting in an informed manner.
- **Capacity development:** Ensuring that actors at national and sub-national levels have the capacities needed for vertical integration in the NAP process to occur.

As shown in Figure 1, these factors are at the centre of the vertical integration process, providing a basis for everything else that needs to happen during planning, implementation and M&E. Figure 2 demonstrates the importance of these enabling factors in each of these dimensions. Questions to consider for the enabling factors are integrated throughout the guidance to follow (see also Annex A).

Figure 2: Enabling factors for vertical integration

	Planning	Implementation	Monitoring & Evaluation
Institutional Arrangements	Mechanisms exist to link national and sub-national adaptation planning processes	Mechanisms exist and resources have been allocated for ongoing coordination between national and sub-national actors	Mechanisms exist for linking national and sub-national M&E systems
Information Sharing	Relevant information is shared between national and sub-national levels to facilitate adaptation planning	Actors at all levels have the information they need for efficient and effective implementation of adaptation	Information is generated and exchanged between national and sub-national levels on an ongoing basis
Capacity Development	Actors at national and sub-national levels have capacity to engage in coordinated and mutually supportive adaptation planning processes	Sub-national actors have capacity for long-term planning and implementation of adaptation	Sub-national actors have capacity to monitor and evaluate adaptation

⁴ In this document, climate information refers to a range of different types of information that are useful in informing adaptation decision-making, including data on key weather and climate variables, analysis of drivers of vulnerability to climate change, future climate scenarios, etc.



Colombia's Climate Change Regional Nodes: A multistakeholder platform linking national and sub-national adaptation planning and action

A key message for Colombia's NAP process is that informed decisions for adaptation are cost-effective. The country has taken a multipronged approach to its NAP process, aligning it with the National Development Plan for 2014–2018. A key element of the process is the incorporation of adaptation in sectoral, territorial and municipal planning processes (National Planning Department, Government of Colombia, 2016). To facilitate this, nine regional nodes have been established, comprising government representatives as well as private sector actors, research institutions, universities and civil society stakeholders.

Colombia's governance system comprises 32 departments (the level below the national government) and municipalities, which are the local administration (both urban and rural areas are referred to as municipalities). The regional nodes group together departments in the same area with similar characteristics. The model emerged organically, when three departments in the coffee region decided to work together on adaptation planning. The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MESD) recognized the value of this approach and established nine regional nodes across the country. These remained informal bodies until February 2016, when a decree was approved officially integrating the regional nodes into the national climate change governance system. The nodes are currently in the process of formalizing their structures, including definition of roles and responsibilities and planning for the coming years.

The regional nodes are not decision-making bodies: their main objective is providing a multistakeholder platform for information sharing and collaboration on climate change, including both adaptation and mitigation. They act as a link between the national and sub-national levels. The MESD ensures the flow of information between the nodes and the intersectoral climate change commission, which is the highest decision-making body, led by the MESD and the National Planning Department. The intention is for the nodes to provide an overarching framework for planning at the departmental level, with the ultimate objective of integrating climate change into the municipal development and land-use plans, which drive allocation of resources to local governments. The formalization of the nodes has been an important step in moving away from a strictly top-down approach, creating a platform for different stakeholders to participate in adaptation planning at the sub-national level (M. Rojas-Laserna, personal communication, August 16, 2016).

5 Planning

Planning is a critical step in the NAP process. It is the stage where vulnerabilities are analyzed, adaptation options are identified and the foundation is laid for implementation, monitoring and evaluation of adaptation. In the NAP process, planning is a flexible approach, which often involves integrating adaptation into existing plans or strategies, rather than or in addition to creating a new, stand-alone plan or NAP document. It is an iterative process, with new information, knowledge and lessons integrated over time and at different levels. Vertical integration in planning aims to ensure that planning processes at national and sub-national levels are mutually supportive, with dialogue among actors at different levels throughout the process.

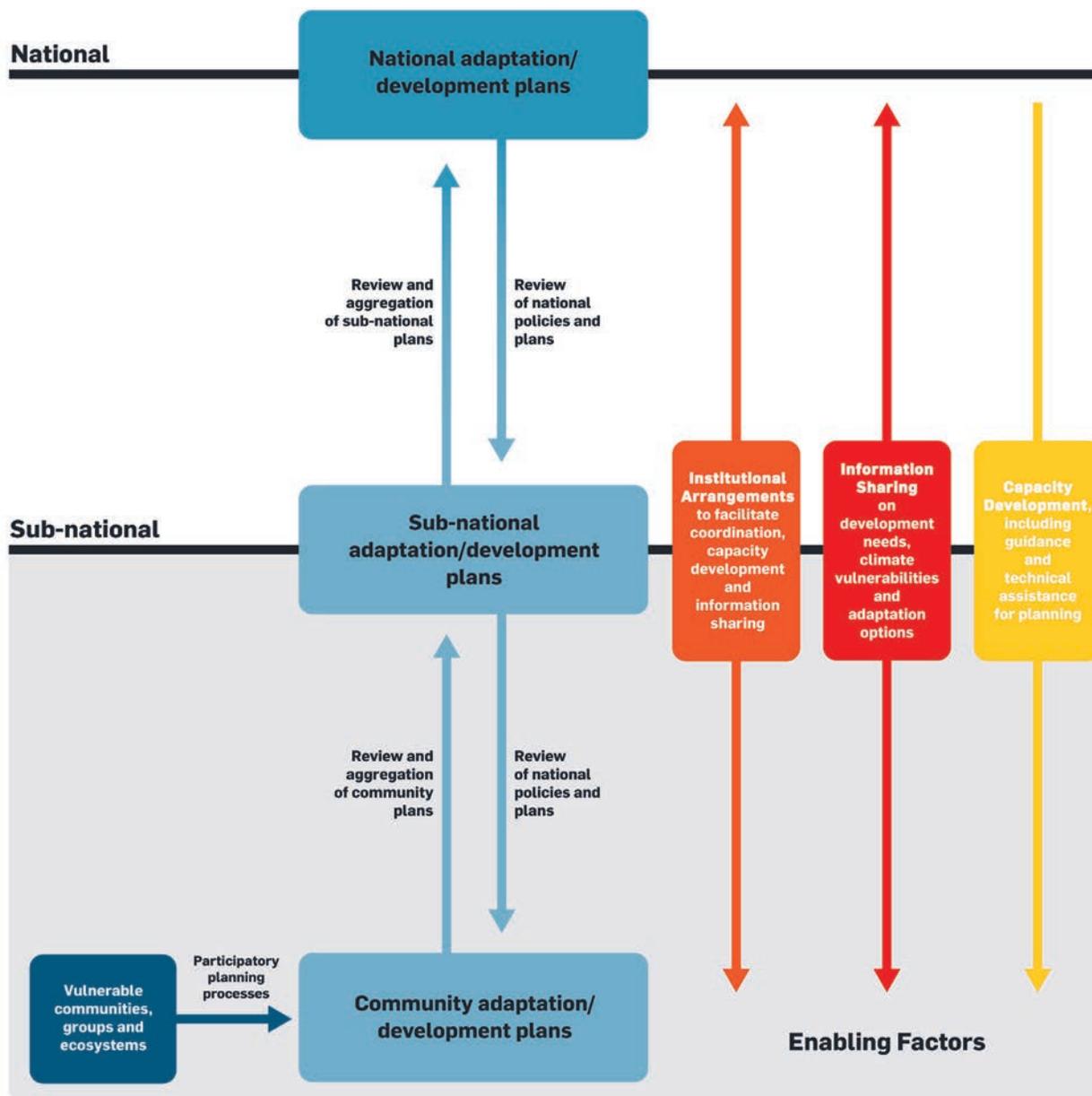
Figure 3 provides a simplified representation of the relationships and processes that link the national and sub-national levels during the planning stage. Because NAP planning is an iterative process, there is flexibility in the sequencing of steps for vertical integration. In some contexts, national-level planning is conducted first, for example through the development of sectoral adaptation plans, which provide a framework for sub-national planning. In others, sub-national planning is completed first and these plans are compiled and synthesized to generate national plans. Most countries will likely end up with a mix of these two approaches, pursuing national and sub-national planning processes concurrently, with each informing the other. This iterative approach is illustrated by the blue arrows, which show the bi-directional linkages between planning processes at the different levels.

To be effective, the planning stage must be grounded in and consider the realities of vulnerable communities, groups and ecosystems, which are captured through inclusive and gender-sensitive participatory planning processes—this will be crucial for the implementation stage, as explored further in Section 6. These processes bring different stakeholders together in dialogue on development needs and climate vulnerabilities, to generate, access and analyze climate information and to identify adaptation options to be included in community adaptation and/or development plans. Similar processes are conducted by sub-national authorities, with participation of relevant institutions, including civil society and private sector actors, to generate sub-national government plans. At each level, the available information from planning processes conducted at the other levels is reviewed and integrated into the plans.



Vertical integration in planning is facilitated by the three enabling factors. As shown by the orange arrow in Figure 3, institutional arrangements must be in place to connect the different levels, facilitating coordination of planning processes, capacity development and information sharing. The national level will often invest in capacity development, for example by providing guidance and technical assistance for planning at sub-national levels, as shown by the yellow arrow. The red arrow depicts the ongoing information sharing that is necessary between the different levels throughout the planning process. This includes sharing of climate information as well as information on the planning process itself.

Figure 3: Vertical integration in planning



Guidance on addressing the issues and questions for vertical integration in planning is provided in the following sections.

Enabling Factors for Vertical Integration in Planning

What mechanisms already exist to facilitate linkages between national and sub-national planning processes? How can these be leveraged for the NAP process?

In many countries, institutional arrangements already exist for linking national and sub-national planning, for example through local development planning processes undertaken within the framework of national strategies for poverty reduction and economic growth. Where they exist, NAP teams should consider how these mechanisms can be leveraged to support vertical integration in the NAP process, for example by using existing planning platforms to undertake assessment and prioritization for the NAP. This will enable efficient engagement of sub-national actors, while also creating awareness and understanding about adaptation among sub-national authorities and local organizations. Where these mechanisms do not exist, you will need to consider what institutional arrangements are needed to facilitate this engagement.

A1: Initiating and launching of the NAP process

What information needs to be generated and shared between national and sub-national actors to facilitate adaptation planning at different levels?

Actors at different levels have differing but related information needs for adaptation planning. A key input to the process is climate information, including on observations, changing trends and future projections. Vertical integration provides the opportunity to merge national and sub-national data and projections with local and indigenous knowledge. This process requires communication of the scientific information in ways that are accessible and relevant to local stakeholders. This integration of local knowledge with scientific information enables assessment of climate vulnerabilities and identification of adaptation options that are context-specific and robust in relation to future scenarios. Information sharing between the different levels should also include communication generated through the planning process itself, in terms of analysis of development needs and climate vulnerabilities and identification of adaptation options.

B2: Assessing climate vulnerabilities and identifying adaptation options at sector, sub-national, national and other appropriate levels

What are the capacity needs and gaps for engaging sub-national stakeholders in adaptation planning processes?

Even in countries where significant progress on decentralization has been achieved, there may be capacity gaps at the sub-national level that will present challenges to vertical integration in the NAP process. Adaptation planning involves an understanding of climate change and the range of appropriate responses, as well as skills such as vulnerability assessment and scenario planning. These capacities may not exist at sub-national levels, in which case the planning stage of the NAP process will need to include a strong emphasis on capacity development for sub-national actors. At the same time, the processes involved in engaging sub-national stakeholders in NAP planning will likely differ from those employed at the national level. Effective stakeholder engagement requires particular skills, including inclusive and gender-sensitive facilitation, conflict resolution and effective communication. You will need to consider whether your NAP team has the appropriate mix of skills, and if not, how these can be accessed to ensure an effective and truly participatory process.

A3: Addressing capacity gaps and weaknesses in undertaking the NAP process

Recognizing Sub-national Diversity in Development Needs and Climate Vulnerabilities

? What analysis has been done to generate understanding of sub-national diversity in development needs and climate vulnerabilities?

Detailed climate vulnerability analysis across all the different socioeconomic and ecological contexts within a country may be beyond the scope of the NAP process; however, in some countries a significant amount of analysis may already have been done at sub-national levels. The stocktaking stage is an opportunity to seek out information on development needs and climate vulnerabilities that has been generated by other actors and/or within the context of specific government projects. This may include: vulnerability assessments undertaken during the planning stage of climate change adaptation projects implemented by the government or NGOs, disaster risk assessments developed by UN and other humanitarian agencies and/or research on climate impacts and adaptation responses conducted by universities or other institutions, among others. These analyses can represent important sources of information to generate an understanding of the national situation to inform the NAP process.

↗ A2: Stocktaking (identifying available information on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation) and assessing gaps and needs of the enabling environment for the NAP process

? What additional sub-national analysis is needed?

The stocktaking stage may also identify gaps in the data and information needed to assess vulnerabilities and identify adaptation options at different planning levels. To inform vertical integration, you may need to conduct further analysis on these issues, ideally with participation of the people concerned, through an inclusive and gender-sensitive process. To ensure a quality analysis, you will likely need to collaborate with sub-national authorities, local organizations and/or research institutions. The units of analysis should be defined in a way that allows consideration of sub-national diversity in terms of vulnerable groups, ecosystems or livelihood systems.

↗ B2: Assessing climate vulnerabilities and identifying adaptation options at sector, sub-national, national and other appropriate levels





How will sub-national diversity be accounted for in identification of adaptation options?

The vulnerability analysis provides a basis for identifying adaptation options. The disaggregation applied in the vulnerability analysis should be carried over into this step, recognizing that in many contexts the administrative divisions may not represent the most effective units for taking sub-national diversity into account. You may want to consider identification of adaptation options for particular livelihood systems, ecosystems or social or ethnic groups, with due consideration to how these options will then be integrated in sub-national and national adaptation and/or development plans. Again, the identification of adaptation options will ideally be done through a participatory process, with local organizations, vulnerable communities and groups represented. The process should build on existing experiences, recognizing that sub-national actors may already be engaging in adaptive actions (consciously or unconsciously), for example through local development investments, adjustments to livelihood strategies and/or efforts to improve sustainability of natural resource use and management.



B2: Assessing climate vulnerabilities and identifying adaptation options at sector, sub-national, national and other appropriate levels

“National adaptation platforms need to include a diverse range of rural and urban communities, with particular attention to participatory approaches to facilitate the contributions of pastoralists, hunter-gathers, farmers and fisherfolk.”

N'Djamena Declaration on Adaptation to Climate Change, Indigenous Pastoralism, Traditional Knowledge and Meteorology in Africa (2011), cited in Crawhall, (2016).



Ensuring That Sub-national Perspectives Are Reflected in National Adaptation Plans



How will existing sub-national adaptation planning processes (if any) be incorporated in the NAP process?

In many countries, some sub-national adaptation planning has already taken place. Often these processes have been driven by adaptation-focused projects that included a component of community or sub-national government planning. Where they exist, these plans are a very useful resource for the NAP process, as they represent an efficient way of identifying adaptation options at sub-national levels. As part of the compilation process, you should collect, analyze and aggregate existing adaptation plans for incorporation in the NAP, taking care not to lose important aspects of sub-national diversity through the aggregation process. You will need to review these existing plans to ensure that they integrate scientific climate information and that the adaptation options identified are feasible and robust. It may also be helpful to review these existing plans with a gender and vulnerability lens, to ensure the process was inclusive and that benefits are shared with women and vulnerable groups.



B4: Compiling and communicating national adaptation plans



How will adaptation options be identified and assessed at sub-national levels?

If sub-national government or community adaptation plans already exist, they can provide an initial identification of adaptation options for the areas covered, assuming that they have been produced through participatory processes and that they have sufficiently incorporated scientific climate information. If plans do not already exist, it may be useful to facilitate adaptation planning processes or workshops at relevant levels to identify options and assess their feasibility and robustness in relation to potential future scenarios. During these activities, you will need to make efforts to ensure that both the process and the results are gender-sensitive and inclusive of vulnerable groups.



B3: Reviewing and appraising adaptation options



How will inputs from sub-national stakeholders be integrated into national adaptation plans?

Following from the above questions, you will need to consider how inputs from sub-national stakeholders will be integrated into the NAP process at the national level. In addition to incorporating the results of community and sub-national government planning processes, sub-national representatives will ideally be involved in the planning process at the national level. You will also need to decide how sub-national perspectives will be presented in documents resulting from the NAP process. There are a range of options for this, such as the development of sub-national adaptation plans to complement the national plans or mapping of sectoral adaptation options to different regions, groups or ecosystems, for example. The best solution for integrating sub-national perspectives will depend on the context and the planned outputs from the NAP process. The goal is to ensure that sub-national issues receive adequate attention in the NAP and are presented in a way that facilitates implementation and M&E. Having sub-national representatives involved in the planning process at the national level will help to confirm this.



B4: Compiling and communicating national adaptation plans

Ensuring That National Adaptation Plans Are Integrated in Sub-National Planning



How will information related to the NAP be communicated to sub-national actors to inform planning?

As the NAP process is led from the national level, it is critical that key outputs from the process, such as sectoral adaptation plans, are communicated to sub-national actors, both for transparency in the NAP process and to guide adaptation planning and implementation at sub-national levels. You will need to consider the best ways to do this, using tailored communication strategies for different types of actors at different levels. Generally speaking, disseminating documents is not the best way to communicate—sharing of documents is often more effective when accompanied by meetings or workshops that provide opportunities for different stakeholders, including sub-national authorities and local organizations, to ask questions, provide feedback and build a common understanding of the information and the way forward.



B4: Compiling and communicating national adaptation plans

“Creating a climate-aware citizenry requires sustained efforts, and to be useful, the information should relate to the needs of the people, distinguishing carefully between short-term weather forecast(s) and medium- to long-term climate scenarios.”

Technical guidelines for the NAP process (UNFCCC, 2012)



What sub-national planning processes represent the best entry points for integrating adaptation?

The ultimate aim of the NAP process is for adaptation to be integrated into development plans and strategies at different levels, including sub-national levels. The particular process for this will depend on a number of factors, including the degree of decentralization of development planning, the technical capacity on adaptation at sub-national levels and the timescale for sub-national planning. You will need to determine the best entry points for this integration in your particular context, taking these factors into account. The best approach will likely involve an iterative process, whereby adaptation priorities are increasingly integrated over progressive planning cycles.



B5: Integrating climate change adaptation into national and sub-national development and sectoral planning



How will guidance and support be provided to sub-national actors for integrating adaptation into development planning?

To facilitate the process of integrating adaptation into sub-national development planning, you may need to consider developing guidance. Again, the most appropriate approach will depend on your NAP process and the decentralization context. For example, if a guideline for local development planning already exists, it may make sense to revise this to incorporate adaptation issues. If such a guideline does not exist, you'll need to consider whether dedicated adaptation guidance is useful, or whether you should work with others to develop a broader local development planning approach that integrates adaptation. In either case, it is likely that sub-national actors will require some support in undertaking this process, in the form of preparatory analysis, technical assistance or training on adaptation concepts and their application in development planning, for example.



B5: Integrating climate change adaptation into national and sub-national development and sectoral planning



Nepal: Integrating learning from local adaptation planning in the NAP process

Nepal has pursued a community-driven approach to adaptation planning, in line with its commitment to disburse the bulk of financial resources available for adaptation at the local level (Government of Nepal, 2011). A manual for developing Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPAs) was developed by the Government of Nepal in 2012, under the National Framework for LAPAs (Ministry of Environment, Government of Nepal, 2011). LAPA development is undertaken through Village Development Committees (VDCs) or municipalities, which are the lowest administrative units in Nepal, operating beneath the district level. It is designed as a highly participatory process, with seven steps: sensitization of local people on climate change; vulnerability and adaptation assessment; prioritization of adaptation options; development of an adaptation plan; integrating the LAPA into development planning at local to national levels; implementation of LAPAs; and M&E of LAPAs. In summary, the process involves local people analyzing vulnerability to climate change and identifying adaptation priorities for their locality, which are then integrated into development plans at district and national levels through an iterative process (Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, Government of Nepal, 2012).

To date, over 100 VDCs and municipalities have developed LAPAs (R. Chhetri, personal communication, August 28, 2016), with the process facilitated by both government and civil society actors. While some challenges have been encountered in rolling it out, the LAPA process has been recognized as valuable, particularly in terms of the awareness raised through engagement of community members in dialogue on climate issues and adaptation options (Peniston, 2013) and the mobilization of key government and civil society actors toward adaptation action (Chaudhury, et al., 2014).

Nepal launched its NAP process in September 2015, with a strong commitment to a participatory process (Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, Government of Nepal, 2015). The Ministry of Population and Environment (MoPE), which leads the development of both the NAP and the LAPAs, is committed to applying the learning from LAPAs in the NAP process. This is facilitated by ongoing dialogue between the two teams, which will continue through the advancement of the NAP process and the continued support for LAPA development and implementation in the coming years through the National Climate Change Support Programme (R. Chhetri, personal communication, August 28, 2016).

6 Implementation

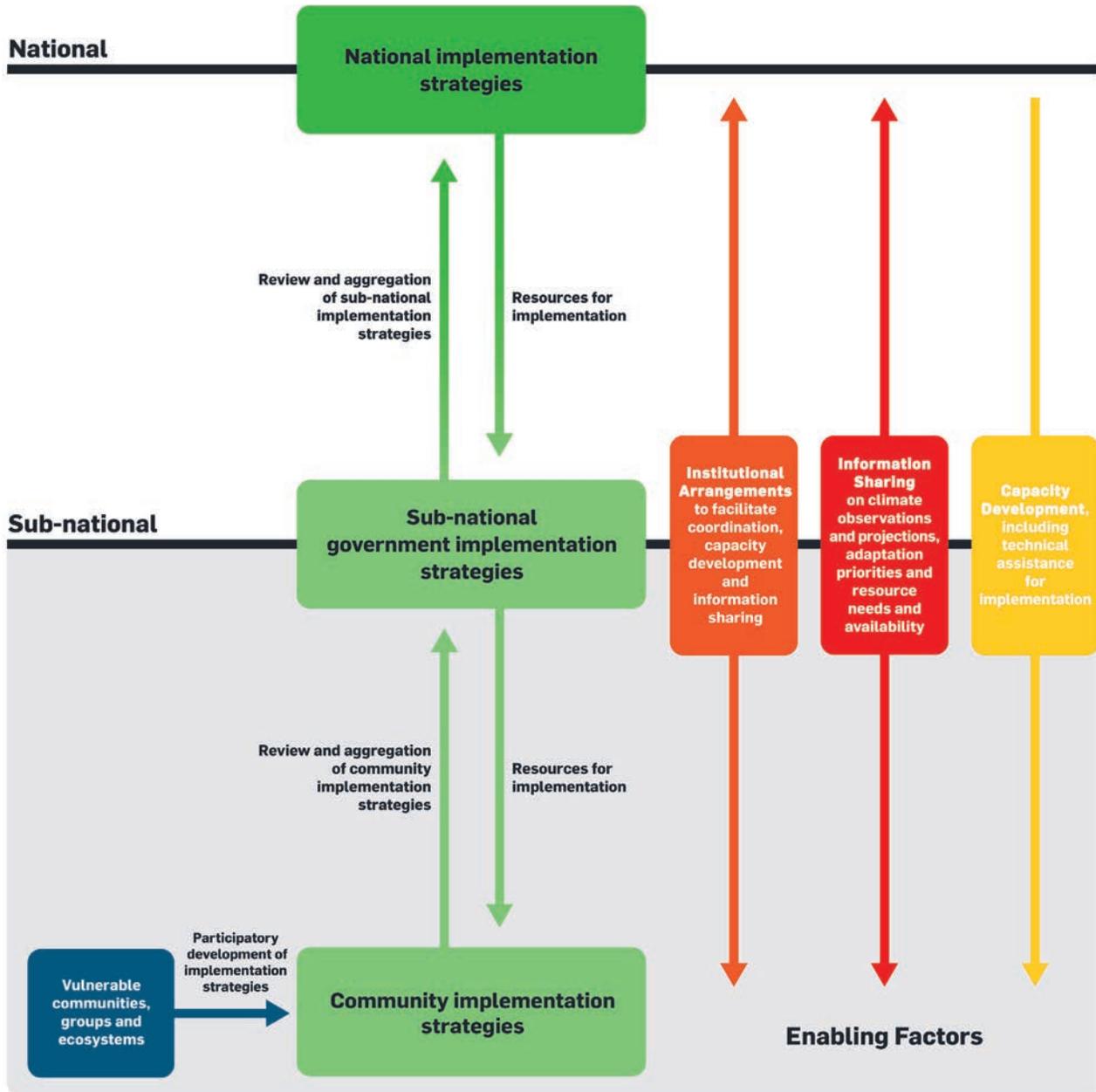
The implementation dimension is where adaptation options are prioritized and the plans are put into action. Implementation of adaptation actions will be undertaken by a wide range of actors at different levels, including government line ministries, sub-national authorities, civil society organizations, the private sector and communities. The context-specific nature of adaptation means that much implementation will occur at sub-national levels, with local organizations and communities putting the NAP into action, supported by sub-national authorities. Vertical integration in implementation focuses on ensuring that sub-national actors have the information, resources and capacity they need to implement adaptation, and that national and sub-national actors are coordinating their respective efforts.

Like the planning stage, vertical integration in implementation involves an iterative process that connects the national and sub-national levels, as shown in Figure 4. Implementation strategies are developed to support the plans at the different levels. At the community level, adaptation priorities are identified with participation of vulnerable communities and groups, integrating both indigenous and scientific climate information to ensure that the actions identified address current climate risks and are robust in relation to future scenarios. Community implementation strategies are reviewed and aggregated to feed into sub-national government implementation strategies. These are in turn rolled up into the national implementation strategy. As with planning, the sequencing of these processes will depend on the context. Resources for implementation, such as financial and human resources, are channelled from the national level to sub-national levels. These linkages are represented by the green arrows. This is the typical scenario—in some cases resources may be transferred directly from national or international sources to local organizations or communities and/or resources for adaptation may be generated locally.

As shown in Figure 3, institutional arrangements for implementation (represented by the orange arrow) ensure complementarity and coordination of actions at the different levels, and enable transfer of finance and other resources and services. They also facilitate capacity development, shown by the yellow arrow, enabling the actors at the different levels to fulfill their roles and responsibilities as defined in implementation strategies. Ongoing sharing of information between the different levels, represented by the red arrow, supports efficient and effective approaches to implementation. The ultimate outcome of this dimension is the coordinated and complementary implementation of adaptation actions by government institutions, civil society and private sector actors, communities and individuals, with relevant actions implemented at national and sub-national levels.



Figure 4: Vertical integration in implementation



The following sections provide guidance on addressing key issues and questions related to vertical integration in implementation.

Enabling Factors for Vertical Integration in Implementation

? Have mechanisms been established and resources allocated for ongoing coordination between national and sub-national actors?

While everyone generally agrees that coordination is important, it can be difficult to make it happen unless specific resources are allocated for this function. Resources include human resources, such as dedicated teams or specific individuals with the mandate to facilitate communication and collaboration between the central government and sub-national actors involved in implementing adaptation. While we discuss channelling financial resources for implementation to sub-national levels in more depth below, financial resources also allow for meetings between actors at different levels, as well as documentation, translation and communication of information in both directions. These linkages must be viewed as part of the core business of NAP implementation if vertical integration is to be effective.

↗ C3: Enhancing capacity for planning and implementing adaptation

“National adaptation platforms need to facilitate a two-way flow of ideas, information and strategies for resilience building and equitable sharing of costs and benefits. The inputs to and outputs from the platforms need to be meaningful and relevant.”

N'Djamena Declaration on Adaptation to Climate Change, Indigenous Pastoralism, Traditional Knowledge and Meteorology in Africa (2011), cited in Crawhall (2016)

? What information is needed by different actors to support efficient and effective implementation of adaptation?

Sharing of climate information must continue throughout the implementation stage, to ensure that sub-national actors have access to the most up-to-date information and data, and that local experiences and observations feed into climate analysis at the national level. Some adaptation actions rely on medium- and short-term information such as seasonal forecasts and early warnings for climate-related hazards such as floods, while other decisions require longer-term projections. Implementation strategies must therefore address the information needs of different actors on different timescales and at different scales. Other information needs during the implementation stage may include, for example, information on new technologies and/or opportunities related to finance (see below for more details).

↗ C3: Enhancing capacity for planning and implementing adaptation





How will capacity of sub-national actors for long-term planning and implementation of adaptation be enhanced?

During NAP implementation, there may be capacity constraints that represent barriers to action at sub-national levels. For effective prioritization of adaptation options, sub-national actors require a solid understanding of current climate risks and future projections, as well as the costs and benefits of different options for diverse stakeholders under a range of scenarios. There may also be technical gaps: for example, key line ministries such as environment, agriculture and water may not have representation at the lower levels of government, which can yield gaps in the practical skills and knowledge necessary for implementation of adaptation. Capacity development for sub-national actors must be incorporated in NAP implementation strategies. This could include, for example, training on climate issues, expert facilitation of prioritization processes to ensure they are inclusive and effective, and/or knowledge exchange and dialogue with sectoral teams responsible for adaptation. You will need to determine specific capacity-building strategies based on your context, the capacity gaps identified and the resources available.



C3: Enhancing capacity for planning and implementing adaptation

Developing Sub-national Adaptation Implementation Strategies



How will adaptation options be prioritized for implementation at sub-national levels?

Adaptation priorities may differ when viewed from the perspective of sub-national stakeholders rather than the national level. To guide implementation, adaptation options identified in the NAP must be prioritized in a way that captures local social, ecological and economic characteristics, using criteria that are agreed upon by all stakeholders. At sub-national levels, criteria may address issues such as impact on adaptive capacity and resilience of vulnerable groups or ecosystems, relevance for local development objectives and/or potential to benefit significant numbers of people, for example. Coordination of sub-national processes is required to ensure that resources for adaptation are targeted where they are needed most, while balancing efforts across regions and between levels and actors. Wherever possible, prioritized adaptation actions should build on and complement existing adaptation and development activities.



C1: Prioritizing climate change adaptation in national planning



Which sub-national actors are best placed to implement adaptation?

It is expected that government institutions will coordinate adaptation actions at sub-national levels. In some cases, they will also take responsibility for some aspects of implementation. In other cases, however, there may be other actors who are better placed to facilitate implementation of adaptation, particularly at the community level. Implementation strategies should therefore clarify roles and responsibilities of NGOs, CBOs, private sector institutions and other relevant actors operating at sub-national levels, based on their networks, capacities and the available resources. This includes clear definition of the scope of decision-making power of different actors in terms of budget, technical options and targeting of interventions, as well as expectations for deliverables and reporting.



C2: Developing a (long-term) national adaptation implementation strategy



What resources do sub-national actors require to implement adaptation?

A key element of developing implementation strategies is evaluating the resources required for priority adaptation options and determining how these can be accessed. This includes financial resources (addressed in the next section), but also other types of inputs such as human resources or materials in the case of infrastructure-related adaptation options. Sub-national actors may require support for costing adaptation priorities and developing resource mobilization strategies to ensure that resource needs have been clearly articulated and that implementation strategies are realistic.



C2: Developing a (long-term) national adaptation implementation strategy

Allocating Funds for Implementation of Adaptation Actions to Sub-national Actors



How can local development funding mechanisms be leveraged to facilitate implementation of adaptation?

In countries where responsibilities for development activities have been decentralized, there may already be mechanisms in place to channel resources to sub-national actors. Where this is the case, you should consider how these mechanisms can be leveraged to enable sub-national authorities and local organizations and communities to access funds for adaptation. This could involve adding a budget line to development budgets for adaptation activities, or a separate mechanism that uses the same procedures. The key is to ensure that mechanisms for funding adaptation action build on existing policies and systems, rather than creating parallel structures that will reduce efficiency and work against integration of adaptation in development plans and processes.



C2: Developing a (long-term) national adaptation implementation strategy



How will sub-national actors be enabled to access international adaptation finance?

It is expected that some adaptation actions will be funded through existing channels, for example through the inclusion of supplementary funds within government budgets for local development. However, it is likely that the additional costs associated with adaptation will require new sources of funding, including from international climate financing mechanisms. You will need to consider how adaptation finance and other funding for implementation of local adaptation actions will be allocated to sub-national actors, down to the lowest feasible administrative level. Mechanisms for channelling finance to sub-national levels must be transparent, with clear policies and procedures and strong linkages to the multistakeholder processes for prioritizing adaptation options and developing implementation strategies. Sub-national actors may require awareness raising on sources of finance (which may include funds allowing direct access for sub-national authorities and/or local organizations and communities) and the requirements to access them, as well as technical assistance for the development of funding proposals and/or facilitation of linkages with potential donors to address finance gaps.



C2: Developing a (long-term) national adaptation implementation strategy



Channelling Climate Finance to the Local Level: The Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility (LoCAL) in Cambodia

LoCAL was designed by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) to address the imbalance between responsibilities for building climate resilience, which rest largely with sub-national authorities, and access to finance for adaptation, which remains limited for these actors.⁵ LoCAL provides a country-based mechanism to increase awareness and response to climate change at the local level, to integrate climate change adaptation into local governments' planning and budgeting systems in a participatory and gender-sensitive manner, and to increase the amount of finance available to local governments for climate change adaptation. LoCAL combines performance-based climate resilience grants (PBCRGs), which ensure programming and verification of climate change expenditures at the local level, with technical and capacity-building support. It aims to demonstrate "the effectiveness and efficiency of local government investment in climate change adaptation and resilience" (UNCDF, 2014a). The facility channels international climate finance to local government through existing fiscal transfer systems, providing additional funds to cover the increased costs associated with adaptation investments, based on vulnerability and adaptation assessments and local adaptation plans that are linked with development plans. These budgetary allocations are combined with technical support and capacity development to enable local actors to use the funds effectively. Audits verify that the funds have been used appropriately and expected adaptation results achieved, and the results inform future allocations (UNCDF, 2014b).

In Cambodia, the process of "decentralization and de-concentration" (D&D) formally began in 2002, and has advanced considerably since then. In 2008, the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development (NCDD) was established, with the mandate to coordinate this process (LoCAL-UNCDF, 2015). In its most recent plan, developed in 2015, the NCDD commits to decentralizing the delivery of core services to districts and municipalities, with a corresponding increase in resources and staff (NCDD, Kingdom of Cambodia, 2014). In this context, the pilot phase of LoCAL worked directly with sub-national governments in two provinces, Battambang and Takeo, to integrate climate change adaptation into decentralized development plans. The process involved vulnerability reduction assessments, adaptation strategy development workshops at district level and cross-province exchange visits. Funds were transferred to the districts on the basis of their adaptation plans, and they were empowered to select the projects that would be supported through performance-based grants. Technical backstopping and monitoring for the projects are provided by the relevant technical officers in the district government. While some challenges were encountered, the evaluation for the pilot phase found that this is a powerful tool for building capacity at the local level to integrate adaptation into planning, and the facility is currently being expanded to other climate-vulnerable provinces (LoCAL-UNCDF, 2015). Currently, NCDD has been nominated as the candidate for the National Implementing Entity (NIE) for Green Climate Fund direct access to secure funds to scale up the initiative (F. Karim, personal communication, September 29, 2016).

⁵ LoCAL, 2016. Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility. Presentation at Adaptation Futures, Rotterdam, May 11, 2016.

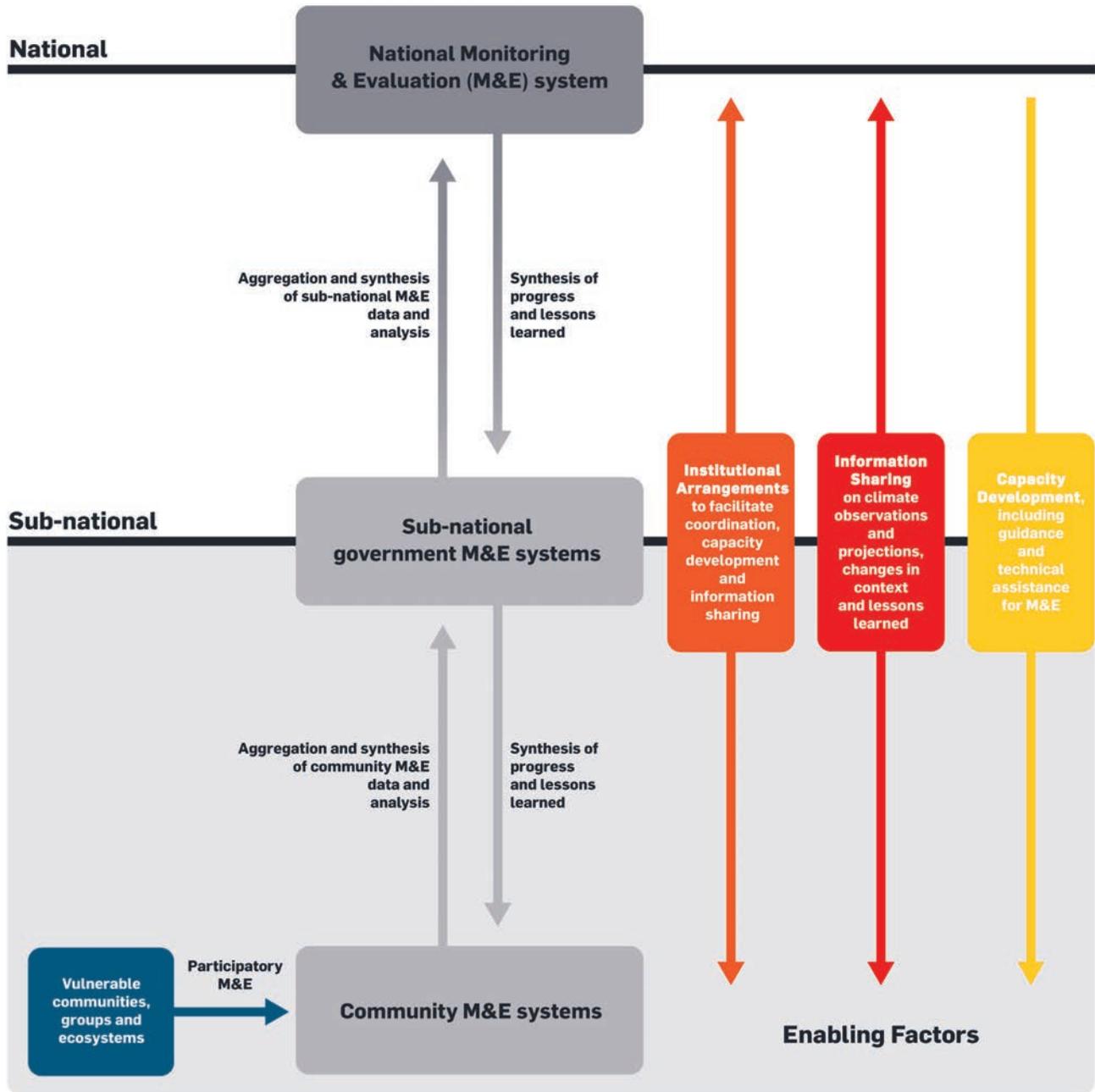
7 Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) of adaptation aims to assess progress in implementing adaptation, looking at both process and outcomes. Process refers to achievements in terms of implementing adaptation policies, plans or actions, while outcomes are the changes that result from these achievements, usually in relation to communities, ecosystems or vulnerable groups (Price-Kelly, et al., 2015). For more information, please see the [Guidebook for Developing National Adaptation Monitoring Systems](#). The guidance that follows is complementary to the guidebook, focusing on specific considerations for vertical integration in M&E. The purpose is to ensure that sub-national results and lessons learned are captured and integrated into ongoing decision making and future planning, and that national-level results and lessons learned are shared to inform planning and implementation at sub-national levels.

Figure 5 presents a potential model for vertical integration in M&E, which consists of linked M&E systems at national and sub-national levels. The overarching framework for M&E will most likely be developed at the national level, with appropriate institutional arrangements (orange arrow) to facilitate linkages with lower levels. Generally, this will include capacity development, such as guidance and technical assistance for establishment of M&E systems at the sub-national levels, as shown by the yellow arrow. The community-level system will ideally incorporate participatory M&E methods, including reflection on lessons learned. Locally generated information is fed to sub-national authorities, where it is aggregated and synthesized, together with sub-national monitoring data and lessons learned. As shown by the grey arrows, the national level M&E system captures an overview of the information generated at sub-national levels, along with information on national-level actions and learning. This is synthesized and communicated downwards to the sub-national levels to inform implementation and updates to plans. As in the previous dimensions, ongoing sharing of information on climate observations and projections, changes in the context and what works for adaptation at different levels is integral to the vertical integration process (shown by the red arrows). M&E informs both implementation of adaptation actions and reviews and updates to plans, in particular to enable increased integration of adaptation in development plans.



Figure 5: Vertical integration in M&E



The following sections present guidance on integrating sub-national actions and learning into national M&E systems.

Enabling Factors for Vertical Integration in M&E



Have institutional mechanisms been established for linking national and sub-national M&E systems?

Mechanisms for linking national and sub-national M&E systems must be established from the outset, with actors from the different levels involved in developing the system, including identification of indicators and agreement on methodologies for data collection and analysis. It will be important to clearly delineate roles and responsibilities for adaptation M&E, identifying specific functions for particular actors at the different levels of application. This includes responsibilities for sharing monitoring information with other levels; for example, local organizations could take responsibility for conducting household surveys and communicating the data to sub-national authorities. Ideally the system for monitoring adaptation will build on existing M&E systems, such as those used to track development progress or implementation of sustainable natural resource management strategies.



D1: Monitoring the NAP process



How will ongoing generation and exchange of information between national and sub-national actors be facilitated?

Adaptation is an ongoing process of learning, testing, adjustment and integration of new information and knowledge. This process occurs at multiple levels, from the community level up to national policy-makers. As different actors learn about what works and what does not, it is important to ensure that these experiences are shared. Mechanisms for this type of information exchange often exist at the national level, for example through multisectoral working groups. You should consider how existing mechanisms can be complemented to ensure that information and knowledge are shared not just at the national level, but also among sub-national stakeholders and between sub-national and national actors. This can be linked to the M&E system, but goes beyond the collection and analysis of data to facilitate interpretation, reflection and co-generation of knowledge among different actors. Through this process, actors at different levels will increase their ability to integrate the lessons into policy and practice going forward.



D1: Monitoring the NAP process



How will capacity of sub-national actors to monitor and evaluate adaptation be built?

In addition to considering how adaptation will be monitored across different levels of implementation, you will also need to consider how capacity will be built to ensure that M&E frameworks and methods are applied consistently and systematically by the relevant actors. Sub-national actors may require capacity development in, for example, data collection and management in order to effectively monitor actions at their level and feed the information into the national M&E system in a way that allows for aggregation at national level. This investment in capacity must be viewed as a core part of the M&E system, and resources allocated to ensure that it occurs. Taking a collaborative approach to M&E, with actors at different levels coming together in dialogue, can be a very effective way to build capacity and ensure sharing of information across levels.



C3: Enhancing capacity for planning and implementing adaptation

Capturing Sub-national Results and Lessons Learned



What information is required from sub-national levels to illustrate national progress on adaptation?

Given that much of the implementation of adaptation actions will occur at sub-national levels, it is critical that these efforts are captured and incorporated in the national-level M&E system. As part of the design of the M&E system, you will need to consider what information is needed from sub-national levels (and in what format) in order to illustrate progress on NAP implementation. This will likely involve a mix of quantitative and qualitative information that demonstrates advancement in terms of both process and outcomes. The types of information required could include progress in developing community or sub-national government adaptation plans and/or integrating adaptation in local development plans, resources committed to adaptation efforts at the local level, evidence of increased capacity of sub-national actors to plan and implement adaptation and/or numbers of people reached by adaptation activities, for example.



D1: Monitoring the NAP process



How will information on sub-national adaptation processes and outcomes be collected, aggregated and synthesized?

Once you have decided what information is needed from sub-national levels, you will need to determine how it will be collected, aggregated and synthesized at the national level. This generally involves the identification of indicators to be monitored by sub-national actors, often linked to a broader set of questions designed to evaluate impact and capture learning from implementation. Sub-national metrics for adaptation must be designed taking into account the process of aggregation and synthesis. The simplest approach to aggregation is to use standardized indicators at different levels. However, this may obscure some of the context-specificity of local processes and outcomes. To address this, you may consider identifying key themes at the national level, and allowing sub-national actors to identify specific indicators within these themes. A less data-oriented approach and more learning-focused approach could involve synthesis of information from different levels, identifying common themes and lessons (Leiter, 2015). The right approach in your country will depend on the structure of your NAP and the information and knowledge you wish to obtain. Your M&E system will need to clearly define the indicators and questions to be answered at different levels, as well as how data will be collected, analyzed and transmitted to the national level for aggregation and synthesis.



D1: Monitoring the NAP process

“The NAP process emphasizes the need to integrate climate change adaptation into all relevant sectors and levels of government (i.e., both horizontally and vertically). Therefore, while an M&E system that includes monitoring a NAP process may apply at the national level and be coordinated by a national entity, it will likely need to aggregate information from different sectors and/or scales.”

Price-Kelly et al., *Guidebook for Developing National Adaptation Monitoring Systems* (2015, p. 29)



How will sub-national experiences and learning be captured in updates to the NAP and related processes?

As the NAP is an iterative process, it is assumed that there will be reviews and updates over time. Ideally, these updates will be aligned with revisions and updates to key development plans and strategies and/or sectoral strategies for climate-sensitive sectors, to facilitate increasing integration of adaptation. From a vertical integration perspective, these updates must be informed by sub-national experiences and perspectives, recognizing that much of the implementation of adaptation actions will occur at these levels. This will likely involve synthesis of learning generated through the knowledge sharing mechanisms and engagement of sub-national actors in the update process. This iterative process also provides opportunities for enhancing the integration of adaptation into sub-national development planning.



D3: Iteratively updating the national adaptation plans

Ensuring Results and Lessons Learned Inform Sub-National Action



How will progress and lessons learned be used to inform ongoing adaptation processes?

The information generated by M&E systems is useful not only to demonstrate progress, but also to inform ongoing processes of planning, integrating and implementing adaptation. The dissemination of synthesized results and lessons learned to sub-national actors is important to ensure that they have the best information available on effective adaptation approaches, as well as things that haven't achieved the desired results and why. This could include, for example, information on specific technologies or practices and how they have performed in different contexts and against different weather conditions, or on processes that have been effective in building adaptive capacity of local stakeholders. With this information, sub-national actors can adjust their implementation strategies accordingly and incorporate the learning into future planning.



D3: Iteratively updating the national adaptation plans





Morocco: Regional Adaptation M&E Systems

Morocco has taken a practical and iterative approach to developing regional adaptation M&E systems, beginning in three of the country's 12 regions: Souss Massa Drâa, Marrakech Tensift Al Haouz and Tadla-Azilal. The participatory process involved several workshops where key stakeholders agreed a common vision for adaptation in the region and developed climate change impact and vulnerability chains for key sectors such as water, biodiversity and forests, agriculture and tourism. Based on this, indicators were selected through multistakeholder dialogues, including indicators to monitor both adaptation processes and outcomes.

Morocco's regional environment and sustainable development monitoring systems (SIREDDs) are integrated information systems incorporating a number of modules addressing different issues. They are managed by the Regional Observatories on Environment and Sustainable Development that have been established in each region. The adaptation indicators have been integrated as a specific module (which also includes climate change mitigation, extreme events and damage and loss indicators). This module incorporates a database that captures a mix of standard indicators that will be aggregated at the national level and region-specific indicators which are tailored to the particular context of the region in question. The climate change module of the SIREDDs monitors changes in vulnerability in key sectors, as well as progress on implementing adaptation measures and the resultant impacts. In addition, it provides tools for decision makers, including a decision dashboard and spatial-temporal monitoring of key climate indicators (S. Maamouri, personal communication, September 21, 2016). Lessons learned on implementing adaptation are also analyzed (Hammill & Dekens, 2014). Some challenges have been encountered in rolling out these systems, notably the recent changes to the regional governance structure which have changed the territories covered by some regions and necessitated a redistribution of roles and responsibilities in relation to the SIREDDs. Despite this, establishment of the systems is progressing and expansion to the remaining regions is expected in the next couple of years.

At the same time, Morocco is moving forward in developing regional climate change plans in two of the three regions covered by the adaptation M&E systems, as part of its NAP process. The development of these plans has been informed by data from the SIREDD, which has provided a good basis for understanding hydro-meteorological hazards and climate vulnerabilities in the regions. When the plans are finalized, the climate change module of the SIREDD will be reviewed and the indicators will be adjusted or revised to ensure they are aligned with the objectives in the plans. Other next steps include the strengthening of linkages with the commune level (the lowest administrative structure in Morocco) and a system for compiling and communicating the information at the national level, including to report on adaptation progress against the NDC and in the annual State of the Environment reports (Y. Jaouhari, personal communication, August 11, 2016).

8 Summary of Key Points

It may be useful to revisit different questions and considerations presented in this guidance in more detail at different stages in the NAP process: Annex A provides an overview that you can use to quickly navigate to different parts of this document. This section provides a summary of key points to keep in mind throughout the process, which emerge from the guidance presented in the previous sections. Note that these may not be appropriate or feasible in all contexts, so they should be treated as suggestions to progress toward good practice in vertical integration.

Institutional arrangements

- Where they are already in place, existing decentralization processes can provide entry points that facilitate effective vertical integration in the NAP process.
- Establishing or building on mechanisms for dialogue, coordination and information sharing between actors at national and sub-national levels throughout the NAP process helps to ensure continuous and broad-based engagement in the NAP process.
- Identifying which functions are best undertaken by actors at different levels, including non-governmental actors such as civil society organizations and the private sector, can help to delineate roles and responsibilities in adaptation planning, implementation and M&E.
- Ensuring flexibility of institutional arrangements for the NAP process may help to respond to changes in the policy and governance context.

Information sharing

- Consideration of the information needs of different actors throughout the process of planning, implementation and M&E helps facilitate informed decision making at all levels.
- Establishing mechanisms for ongoing information sharing between actors at national and sub-national levels can enable learning and coordination.
- Provision of climate information at the appropriate scale and timeframe and in accessible formats will facilitate its application by sub-national actors.
- Facilitating dialogue between actors at different levels can help to merge scientific and indigenous climate information, to share experiences with adaptation and to ensure that adaptation actions are mutually supportive.

Capacity development

- For an inclusive and participatory process, consider what capacities are needed in the NAP team to facilitate vertical integration, including skills related to stakeholder engagement and provision of technical assistance.
- To realize their roles and responsibilities in relation to adaptation, sub-national actors— including local organizations—may require capacity development, including technical knowledge on adaptation as well as process-oriented skills such as inclusive facilitation and M&E.
- The integration of capacity development strategies for relevant actors within the NAP—including in implementation and resource mobilization strategies and M&E systems—can help to ensure that resources are allocated and progress is tracked.

Planning

- Consideration of how sub-national perspectives can best be integrated during the initiation of the NAP process enables appropriate design and sequencing of planning activities and outputs.
- A commitment to take sub-national diversity in development needs and climate vulnerabilities into account in the NAP process can facilitate adaptation planning processes that are participatory, gender-sensitive and inclusive of vulnerable groups.
- Where feasible and appropriate, integration of adaptation into sub-national development planning can increase sustainability and effectiveness of adaptation planning processes.

Implementation

- Consideration of how adaptation options can best be prioritized for implementation at sub-national levels—in terms of the process, which stakeholders should be involved and how criteria for prioritization will be agreed—can help to ensure that the NAP process responds to needs.
- Sub-national actors may require support in costing of adaptation priorities and elaboration of resource mobilization approaches in order to develop implementation strategies.
- There may be opportunities to leverage existing mechanisms for local development funding to facilitate implementation of adaptation.
- Establishing transparent mechanisms can help to create an enabling environment for sub-national actors to access adaptation finance.

M&E

- A comprehensive national M&E system incorporates data and information from sub-national levels, with due consideration to how it will be collected, aggregated and synthesized.
- Linking M&E systems with updates to the NAP process helps to ensure that sub-national experiences and learning are captured.
- Sharing of synthesized results and strategic lessons from the M&E system with sub-national actors can support learning and integration in ongoing adaptation planning and implementation.

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Annex A:

Overview of Key Issues, Questions for Consideration and Relevant Steps in the NAP Technical Guidelines

Key issues	 Questions for consideration	 Relevant steps in NAP technical guidelines
Planning		
Institutional arrangements	What mechanisms already exist to facilitate linkages between national and sub-national planning processes? How can these be leveraged for the NAP process?	A1: Initiating and launching of the NAP process
Information sharing	What information needs to be generated and shared between national and sub-national actors to facilitate adaptation planning at different levels?	B2: Assessing climate vulnerabilities and identifying adaptation options at sector, sub-national, national and other appropriate levels
Capacity development	What are the capacity needs and gaps for engaging sub-national stakeholders in adaptation planning processes?	A3: Addressing capacity gaps and weaknesses in undertaking the NAP process
Recognizing sub-national diversity in development needs and climate vulnerabilities	What analysis has been done to generate understanding of sub-national diversity in development needs and climate vulnerabilities?	A2: Stocktaking (identifying available information on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation) and assessing gaps and needs of the enabling environment for the NAP process
	What additional sub-national analysis is needed?	B2: Assessing climate vulnerabilities and identifying adaptation options at sector, sub-national, national and other appropriate levels
	How will sub-national diversity be accounted for in identification of adaptation options?	B2: Assessing climate vulnerabilities and identifying adaptation options at sector, sub-national, national and other appropriate levels
Ensuring that sub-national perspectives are reflected in national adaptation plans	How will existing sub-national adaptation planning processes (if any) be incorporated in the NAP process?	B4: Compiling and communicating national adaptation plans
	How will adaptation options be identified and assessed at sub-national levels?	B3: Reviewing and appraising adaptation options
	How will inputs from sub-national stakeholders be integrated into national adaptation plans?	B4: Compiling and communicating national adaptation plans
Ensuring that national adaptation plans are reflected in sub-national planning	How will information related to the NAP be communicated to sub-national actors to inform planning?	B4: Compiling and communicating national adaptation plans
	What sub-national planning processes represent the best entry points for integrating adaptation?	B5: Integrating climate change adaptation into national and sub-national development and sectoral planning
	How will guidance and support be provided to sub-national actors for integrating adaptation into development planning?	B5: Integrating climate change adaptation into national and sub-national development and sectoral planning

Key issues	 Questions for consideration	 Relevant steps in NAP technical guidelines
Implementation		
Institutional arrangements	Have mechanisms been established and resources allocated for ongoing coordination between national and sub-national actors?	C3: Enhancing capacity for planning and implementing adaptation
Information sharing	What information is needed by different actors to support efficient and effective implementation of adaptation?	C3: Enhancing capacity for planning and implementing adaptation
Capacity development	How will capacity of sub-national actors for long-term planning and implementation of adaptation be enhanced?	C3: Enhancing capacity for planning and implementing adaptation
Developing sub-national adaptation implementation strategies	How will adaptation options be prioritized for implementation at sub-national levels?	C1: Prioritizing climate change adaptation in national planning
	Which sub-national actors are best placed to implement adaptation?	C2: Developing a (long-term) national adaptation implementation strategy
	What resources do sub-national actors require to implement adaptation?	C2: Developing a (long-term) national adaptation implementation strategy
Allocating funds for implementation of adaptation actions to sub-national actors	How can local development funding mechanisms be leveraged to facilitate implementation of adaptation?	C2: Developing a (long-term) national adaptation implementation strategy
	How will sub-national actors be enabled to access international adaptation finance?	C2: Developing a (long-term) national adaptation implementation strategy
Monitoring & evaluation		
Institutional arrangements	Have institutional mechanisms been established for linking national and sub-national M&E systems?	D1: Monitoring the NAP process
Information sharing	How will ongoing generation and exchange of information between national and sub-national actors be facilitated?	C3: Enhancing capacity for planning and implementing adaptation
Capacity development	How will capacity of sub-national actors to monitor and evaluate adaptation be built?	C3: Enhancing capacity for planning and implementing adaptation
Capturing sub-national results and lessons learned	What information is required from sub-national levels to illustrate national progress on adaptation?	D1: Monitoring the NAP process
	How will information on sub-national adaptation processes and outcomes be collected, aggregated and synthesized?	D1: Monitoring the NAP process
	How will sub-national experiences and learning be captured in updates to the NAP and related processes?	D3: Iteratively updating the national adaptation plans
Ensuring results and lessons learned inform sub-national action	How will progress and lessons learned be used to inform ongoing adaptation processes?	D3: Iteratively updating the national adaptation plans



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