



**Submission by UNDP in response to the call for submissions to the upcoming session of the
Subsidiary Body for Implementation on the issue of National Adaptation Plans under the mandate
of Decision 3/CP.26, para 3(a)**

1. While much progress has been made since the NAP process was established in 2010, the most vulnerable communities need significant technical and financial support to accelerate their adaptation efforts, including through the NAP process, to reduce their exposure to climate risks and vulnerabilities and enhance overall adaptive capacity. It is critical to accelerate national adaptation plan implementation by scaling up of project pipelines, advance investment planning, mobilise finance and ensure expansion of adaptation action on the ground.

Part 1 – Introduction and context

2. At the time of writing, 53 countries have submitted their NAPs to the [UNFCCC](#).¹ This represents only 37% of the 142 developing country parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).² UNDP has provided technical support to 32 of the NAPs that have been submitted and is continuing to support other least developed and developing countries to increase the number of submissions.³

3. UNDP has an extensive history of providing technical and financial support to the NAP process. In 2010, Decision 1/CP.16 established the NAP process, while Decision 5/CP.17 invited “United Nations organizations, specialized agencies and other relevant organizations, as well as bilateral and multilateral agencies, to support the national adaptation plan process in least developed country Parties and, where possible, to consider establishing support programmes for the national adaptation plan process within their mandates, as appropriate, which could facilitate financial and technical support to least developed country Parties”.⁴ In response to this, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and several other partners developed the National Adaptation Plans Global Support Programme (NAP-GSP) in 2013, which was funded by the Global Environment Facility’s Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF). This marked the first major global programme of support to NAPs, and several of the initial NAPs [submitted](#) to the UNFCCC by LDCs were supported under this programme.

4. The Paris Agreement ensured NAPs would have a prominent role in the future, through the inclusion of adaptation planning in Article 7 of the agreement. This also enabled the Green Climate Fund to provide financial support to NAPs, through its Readiness and Preparatory Support window (hereafter referred to as the GCF NAP Readiness programme). With the launch of this funding window, UNDP worked with countries to leverage the results of the NAP-GSP and mobilise multi-

¹ As of January 15th, 2024

² Least Developed Countries Expert Group (2023), National Adaptation Plans 2023: Progress in the formulation and implementation of NAPs, p.12

³ Annex 1 provides an overview of UNDP’s support to NAPs.

⁴ FCCC/CP/2011/9/Add.1, Decision 5/CP.17, Paragraph 23



year NAP funding from the GCF and provide technical assistance. Several countries, including Liberia, Niger, Armenia, Uruguay and Bosnia-Herzegovina were the first movers in expanding their NAP activities. Eventually, UNDP scaled up its portfolio of support under the GCF NAP readiness programme, to provide support to 39 countries. This portfolio continues to expand based on country requests. For further information, please see Annex 1.

5. In 2015, in parallel to the support provided under NAP-GSP and GCF NAP Readiness, UNDP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) launched the Integrating Agriculture into NAPs Programme (NAP-Ag) to provide targeted support in the agriculture sector. This programme strengthened the capacity of sector ministries and departments of agriculture, fisheries and forests to leverage the NAP process to scale up their adaptation responses. Building on the results of this work, a follow-up programme was launched in 2021 called the Support Programme on Scaling up Climate Ambition on Land-use and Agriculture through NDCs and NAPs (SCALA), also implemented by UNDP and FAO, with support from Germany's International Climate Initiative (IKI). This programme complements other adaptation projects on the ground in nearly 100 countries where UNDP supports developing countries to implement their adaptation priorities in areas such as enhancing food security, increasing protection of ecosystems, and rolling out early warning systems.

Part 2 – The adaptation process

6. [The adaptation policy cycle provides an analytical frame for various steps in the adaptation process.](#)⁵

The present submission uses this framing to analyse and present UNDP's experience in assisting developing countries in their process to formulate and implement their NAPs. It includes country examples, challenges, lessons learned and recommendations.

a. Assessing impacts, vulnerability and risks

7. Up to date and accurate information about climate risks and underlying vulnerabilities is essential to the formulation of National Adaptation Plans and ensuring that their priority adaptation actions address the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable. Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (CRVAs) are an essential building block to enable decision-makers to determine who, what, and where is most vulnerable to climate change and target adaptation actions accordingly.

Progress made on Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments

UNDP has supported Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments in 35 countries that are national, regional, local and sectoral in scope.

8. The Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (CRVAs) countries have undertaken to inform their NAPs vary in scope and scale, depending on national circumstances and needs. Some countries, such as **Egypt**, are undertaking national level assessments that will establish climate risks and vulnerabilities at a much higher resolution than the assessments conducted under the National

⁵ UNFCCC n.d. Accessed 31st January, 2024



Communications. Other countries, including **Bhutan**, have undertaken sector wide CRVAs in the sectors that are thought to be especially vulnerable and are being prioritized under the NAP. In other instances, including **Cuba, Madagascar, Morocco** and **Azerbaijan**, CRVAs are focusing more on the local level, analysing areas of the country that are likely to be especially vulnerable.

9. Many countries are also using their CRVA processes to build capacity to repeat and enhance the assessments in the future. **Moldova**, for example, is developing sector-guidance on CRVAs and conducting on-the-job training, so that more sectors can replicate the exercise in the future, without having to rely on external support. **Cote d'Ivoire** started their CRVA process by developing a national guide for CRVA and training key personnel in ministries to understand how to conduct CRVAs – recognizing that it was essential to build capacity alongside conducting the assessment.

10. In these examples and in many other countries that have submitted their NAP, the CRVA exercise has been of critical importance to the process. Any adaptation planning exercise will face time, human and financial resource constraints, which means that not all adaptation priorities can be implemented. A thorough, detailed CRVA, whether at national, sector, or sub-national level is vitally important to determine the priority populations, places, and systems where adaptation investments are needed most. Moreover, the CRVA exercise can generate ideas for adaptation actions – especially when CRVAs engage communities, vulnerable groups, and a wide range of stakeholders. They also inform the climate rationale and additionality, information and analysis that is required in all adaptation projects.

Challenges and lessons learned relating to climate risk and vulnerability assessments

11. While countries have made strong progress on CRVAs as part of the NAP process, and the NAP process has been strengthened accordingly, several challenges remain.

12. First, data availability and data sharing – which is essential for a successful CRVA exercise – remains patchy. While some countries have enjoyed relatively open access to data to inform CRVAs, in others, data is either unavailable or data sharing between government departments and agencies is an ongoing challenge because the architecture of updating and sharing data across departments is not adequately developed. Moreover, CRVAs often utilise advanced meteorological data and other scientific information to generate downscaled climate projections. In some countries – especially LDCs – this data may not be available, and/or there are capacity gaps that act as a constraint to interpreting the data and developing projections. When this arises it acts as a barrier to developing CRVAs that can in turn hinder the NAP formulation, as countries are dependent on less precise climate models and analysis based on open-source data.

13. Secondly, human resource capacity continues to act as a barrier to undertaking detailed CRVAs. Many countries supported by international organizations have utilised international expertise to undertake their CRVAs. While this has ensured they benefit from the most advanced knowledge available, it also fails to address gaps in domestic capacity. Some have begun to address this by developing training manuals and courses to accompany their CRVAs, yet there is still some way to go to develop the domestic capacity required to implement such assessments. An important lesson



moving forward is to ensure that CRVAs and related exercises are accompanied by capacity development. This capacity development can draw on and customize the many training and guidance materials available online, including the [Supplementary Materials](#) to the NAP Technical Guidelines. Another approach that can be replicated is to work with local institutions, including universities, and complement their work with capacity building and/or review from international experts as **Benin** did in its assessment; or to team up local and international experts, as was the case in **Niger** and **Somalia**. It is also key to target specific institutions and professionals for trainings to ensure they yield the strongest learning results.

b. NAP formulation and planning for adaptation

Planning for Adaptation and NAP formulation

14. The Cancun Adaptation Framework was a landmark decision that ushered in NAPs and laid the foundations for addressing medium- to long-term adaptation needs and reducing the vulnerability of countries and communities to climate change. Subsequent decisions that directly called upon the multilateral and bilateral community to support NAPs enabled several financial and technical assistance initiatives to be developed. However, NAP submissions remained voluntary. Under the Paris Agreement, parties ‘should’ engage in adaptation planning, but are not required to submit a NAP.

15. While the number of NAP submissions remains relatively low, there has been an increase in the number of NAP submissions to the UNFCCC in recent years. 33 of the 53 NAPs published on the [UNFCCC NAP Central](#) were submitted since January 2021, which indicates that there is increasingly positive momentum. This increase in the rate of submissions is likely to be due to a combination of the following factors:

- At the country level, understanding of NAPs as important instruments to scale up adaptation responses is expanding beyond ministries of environment. As adaptation planning becomes increasingly urgent, more sector, planning and finance ministries are deepening their engagement, and are taking more steps domestically.
- Support from the Green Climate Fund through its NAP Readiness window became widely available in 2016 and access has increased over time. Many of the recently submitted NAPs were developed by countries with financial support from GCF NAP Readiness and technical support from international organizations.
- Working in close partnership with government departments and with dedicated technical support to NAPs provided by international agencies, including UNDP, has enabled more countries to formulate and submit their NAPs. UNDP has found the twinning of national and international expertise as vital to this process. As the number of countries that have completed the formulation of NAPs grows, there will be greater opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and cooperation.

- A greater depth of technical guidance has been developed and shared. This includes the [Supplementary Materials](#) to the NAP Technical Guidelines. In addition, with facilitation from the UNFCCC there is now a peer-review process that enables countries to get expert feedback on their draft NAP documents, prior to submission.
- Many organisations and entities, and in particular the LDC Expert Group (LEG), have run NAP writing workshops, and extensive training programmes for decision-makers and civil servants, meaning that in recent years, capacities have increased, which has facilitated the development, finalisation and submission of NAPs.
- By 2018-19 there was a baseline of NAP submissions already on the UNFCCC NAP Central website. This meant that other countries, who were formulating their NAPs at this time, had a basis of examples on which they could build their NAP documents. Moreover, in recent years there has been an increasing focus on NAP submissions under the climate negotiations.

16. An important part of the NAP process is the appraisal and prioritisation of adaptation options before they are included in a NAP. The [LEG NAP Technical Guidelines](#) suggested three main tools to appraise options: cost benefit analysis (CBA), cost effectiveness analysis (CEA) and multicriteria analysis (MCA). In the countries supported by UNDP, MCA was the most frequently used tool in the NAP formulation process, while CBA was more commonly used at the project level. While MCA can include econometric analysis, the method used by most countries has been purely qualitative and has consisted of ranking options based on stakeholders' stated preferences. This reflects the fact many countries lack the capacity to use more rigorous approaches for adaptation option appraisal, including modelling tools; the limited availability of data; and the limited relevance of the tools recommended for NAP formulation (both because of complexity and inaccuracy).

17. In **Niger**, for instance, while CBA was recommended as the most effective tool for appraising adaptation options, and an economist was recruited for this purpose, insufficient quantitative data led to the actual appraisal being done through an MCA collecting experts' and stakeholders' views.

Participation and including the most vulnerable

18. Many countries have taken a participatory approach to developing their NAPs, in accordance with the recommendations of the [Technical Guidelines](#) for the National Adaptation Plan Process. They have done so by holding extensive consultations at the national level, across multiple sectors and including the private sector, and at the sub-national level, in a way that aims to include women and vulnerable groups and, importantly, informs the design of NAP priorities that specifically aim to reduce the vulnerability of women and other vulnerable groups.

19. In **Bangladesh**, national and international technical guidelines shaped a comprehensive approach to participatory stocktaking, development of science-based future scenarios, sectoral impact analyses, adaptation need assessments, cost benefit analysis and prioritisation. A consultative process involving public and private stakeholders in priority sectors identified, prioritised, and validated adaptation strategies and options, which were then translated into practical interventions. An economic assessment of adaptation options estimated costs and benefits to support prioritisation.



20. In **Bhutan**, the local level consultation process was extensive and aimed to ensure that the NAP's priorities were developed with the needs of women and the most vulnerable in mind. Considering the country's geography and difficulty accessing more remote areas, as well as challenges arising due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this consultation process took time, however, this investment meant that the NAP was developed to be inclusive and participatory, and its priority adaptation actions are far more likely to be in line with the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable.

21. **Montenegro** is currently in the advanced stage of formulating its NAP and has taken several steps to ensure that gender equality is comprehensively mainstreamed in the process. Risk and vulnerability assessments were conducted with a gender-lens, which, *inter alia*, provided decision-makers with gender-disaggregated data to inform the NAP's priority sectors and programmes. Meanwhile, the country is also developing a Gender Action Plan, that will be annexed to the NAP, which is designed to guide the NAP implementation to strive for gender equality in all adaptation action implemented under the NAP.

22. In **Uruguay**, a multi-disciplinary team of stakeholders from different government agencies designed and piloted a methodology to collect sex-disaggregated data as a means of establishing the gender dimensions of adaptation in agriculture. This approach was a precursor to developing gender-responsive adaptation plans and policies. Data was collected on issues including perception of climate change, participation in household decision-making, adoption of adaptation measures, participation in groups, and the intersecting issues of education level and youth out-migration. The findings of the data analysis indicate that gender relations, particularly in the context of household decision-making and participation in trainings and groups, can affect the adoption of adaptation actions.

Sectoral approaches

23. Some countries have adopted a sectoral approach for the formulation of NAPs, particularly for climate-vulnerable sectors such as agriculture. This allows institutional capacities and processes to be enhanced towards operationalising climate response strategies in priority sectors and can be useful in contexts where mandates and governance arrangements for the overall NAP process are still being established, which can take time.

24. Some countries have adopted a sectoral approach to the formulation of NAPs, particularly for climate-vulnerable sectors such as agriculture. In Uganda, where agriculture is a priority to achieve targets established in the Second National Development Plan, the government decided to develop the National Adaptation Plan for Agriculture (NAP-Ag) that will inform the overall NAP process. The NAP-Ag was launched in 2018 to guide mainstreaming climate change in agriculture sector policies, plans and budgets. The NAP-Ag was formulated through a multi-stakeholder participatory process which included building capacity, appraisal of adaptation options, implementation, and monitoring outcomes.



25. This participatory approach helped to build national ownership and political will that has continued from the formulation to implementation stage. To translate priorities outlined in the NAP-Ag (and NDC) into actionable and transformative solutions, climate options have subsequently been screened for transformative, systems-change potential and a systems-level assessment was conducted to strengthen the evidence base for climate-risk informed planning. This exercise generated local-level adaptation and mitigation solutions in mixed farming systems across the country's cattle corridor, which will be integrated into district development plans and contribute to NDC and NAP-Ag implementation. Experiences and lessons learned from developing the NAP-Ag have guided the overall NAP process and the adaptation strategies it highlights have informed the updated NDC.

Challenges and lessons learned related to NAP formulation

26. The GCF NAP readiness funding has been critical to support numerous NAPs that are under formulation or that have already been submitted to the UNFCCC, as the allocations are made towards comprehensive activities over a multi-year period and allow for depth in activities. There are no other comparable or dedicated funds that support NAP formulation or implementation. Several countries have accessed bilateral NAP funding at scale, but there are relatively few examples of this and such bilateral funding support is not available to all developing and least developed countries. This means funding outside the GCF Adaptation Planning Readiness window is scarce and unpredictable.

27. Another challenge relating to the formulation of NAPs is the time needed for consultations and prioritisation as well as technical inputs required. Most countries have demonstrated political support and committed resources to the NAP formulation process, however, even with international technical and financial support, many NAPs have taken 5 years or more to complete from inception to submission. There are numerous reasons for this, including the necessity of putting in place governance and management structures for the NAP, conducting climate risk and vulnerability assessments, the need for capacity building, and multiple competing priorities in focal-point ministries.

28. As highlighted above in relation to CRVAs, there are ongoing challenges related to data availability and sharing, and while countries have taken steps to overcome these, further work is needed to ensure that NAP formulation teams can access the data and information necessary to formulate NAPs. To side-step these obstacles, some countries – for example Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste and, have chosen to stock-take and consolidate recently available risk information rather than conduct fresh CRVAs prior to formulating their NAPs.

29. Another challenge is limited capacity in developing countries, and especially LDCs, to apply rigorous appraisal and prioritisation tools to adaptation options. There can be a disconnect between evidence gathered through CRVAs and other assessments and how information is presented in through the application of MCA. The NAP Technical Guidelines present prioritisation tools but these have limitations in terms of their valuation of ecosystems, gender inclusion and inclusion of the most vulnerable people. Moreover, tools like CEA, CBA and MCA are better suited to short-term, 'low regret' adaptation options, but are less well suited to potentially transformative options. Given the complexity of decision-making, economic tools such as CBA can be used in conjunction with other



tools that don't require specialized knowledge, and thus ensure greater levels of participation. In addition, there is potential to learn from how countries conduct their mid- and long-term development planning which often uses a variety of approaches.

30. In analysing the challenges countries have faced in formulating their NAPs, it is important that in the period between 2020 and 2023, while many countries were accelerating efforts to formulate their NAPs, the COVID-19 pandemic was a major constraint on all countries in their formulation process. The pandemic diverted human and financial resources away from strategic actions like developing NAPs toward immediate public health response measures.

31. Looking forward, building on the increase in number of NAP submissions and increased country capacity to formulate NAPs, UNDP foresees continued need for technical and financial support:

- Support to the 89 developing countries and LDCs that have not yet submitted their NAP to the UNFCCC is likely to be needed. While not all these countries will request technical support, many will, and funders and technical support partners need to be on standby.
- Technical support needs are largely unchanged from those UNDP and other international organizations have been providing, and are described in this submission, but over time, tools, guides, and methodologies will need to be revised and updated to reflect the greater level of experience that can be shared. This points to the need for a greater level of south-south cooperation to support countries that are only now beginning their NAP formulation process.
- A critical need moving forward will be technical and financial support to “second generation” NAPs. The earliest NAPs were finalised almost ten years ago and in some cases are scheduled for update or replacement. At present, there is no dedicated source of funding available for countries that intend to update or replace their ‘first generation’ NAPs – only additional GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support funds that are also designed to support the preparation of Long-term Strategies and revisions of the NDCs. This is important, because NAPs were designed to be an iterative process, which inevitably means they will be periodically revised or replaced. Given the need to a sustained, long-term approach to planning adaptation, and investing in action, it is critical that support is available to countries that want to revise or replace their current NAPs.
- After the formulation of NAPs at country level, regular review of the progress of NAPs implementation in each country is also needed to ensure not only calibration of progress but also to assess when NAPs need to be revised or subsequent NAPs formulated.
- The scope of NAPs and the nature of support required is also evolving. As more countries move from NAP formulation to implementation, countries’ support needs are also shifting from steps like CRVA and establishing governance structures to engaging further on investment planning and building a pipeline of adaptation priority projects and programmes. These issues are explored further in the next section.



32. NB. The points above are restricted to formulation while the next section deals with NAP implementation and project pipeline support.

c. Implementing National Adaptation Plans

33. This section explores implementing NAPs through an enhanced enabling environment for the implementation of adaptation action, including through enhancing political engagement, governance structures and institutional coordination, developing a pipeline of adaptation priority projects and finance and investment issues. It also provides an overview of UNDP's experience of NAP implementation as a bridge between planning and implementing adaptation action at scale. This submission does not discuss issues relating to implementing adaptation projects or programmes.

NDC – NAP Alignment and driving implementation through political engagement

34. Political engagement and support are critical to the NAP process. One way countries have demonstrated high-level political engagement is to work towards close alignment between their NAP and Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). This alignment is important because NDCs represent a high-level political commitment at the country level to take mitigation and adaptation action. The NAP represents an opportunity to operationalize the adaptation component of this commitment.

35. UNDP has supported over 125 countries (including 40 LDCs) through its [Climate Promise](#) initiative to enhance their NDCs. 94 per cent of these NDCs supported by UNDP increased the scope and sectors for adaptation and made key improvements in defining clear adaptation objectives and/or targets and in strengthening alignment of the NDCs with NAPs and other adaptation-planning processes and instruments. NAPs have been critical in increasing the ambition of adaptation components in NDCs, and they also have the potential to 'operationalize' NDC commitments. In the upcoming NDC revision process, UNDP is committed to continue to support countries on the NDC revision process and increasing adaptation ambition and alignment with the NAPs.

36. As of January 2024, 178 countries have submitted their 2nd or updated NDCs⁶, while only 53 have submitted NAPs. However, the processes for developing and delivering NDCs and NAPs are intertwined and complementary – even more so with high-level political support. For example, in countries like **South Sudan**, the NDC revision and National Adaptation Plan used complementary inputs, were undertaken in close coordination and were sequenced. UNDP supported the government on both processes in the same year.

37. Over 70% of all NDCs contain adaptation components, and more than 90 second generation or updated NDCs mention NAPs.⁷ To operationalise a scaled-up approach to implementing adaptation, the level of political priority accorded to adaptation in NDCs requires a NAP process as a necessary and comprehensive means to galvanise a whole of government and whole of society response to climate risk, and as an approach to mobilise the resources required at scale.

⁶ <https://ndcpartnership.org/knowledge-portal/ndc-content>

⁷ NDC Partnership - <https://ndcpartnership.org/node/21071>



38. There is an opportunity to promote NDC, NAP and other policy alignment whether countries are formulating or implementing their NAPs for the upcoming NDC revisions expected to be completed in 2025. These opportunities can include ensuring that the NAP is an instrument to operationalise the priorities and commitments of the NDC, aligning priority sectors and target locations, and to elaborate NDC commitments by identifying the most vulnerable groups, priority projects and to build a financing pipeline. Where countries are implementing their NAP, 2024 is a critical year, as in most countries work will begin on the next round of NDC revisions ahead of the completion of next cycle of updates in 2025. This provides an opportunity to implement a feedback loop – incorporating lessons from NAP implementation into the next iteration of the NDC.

Governance structures and institutional coordination

39. Governance structures and institutional coordination are important throughout the NAP process, from initiating a NAP, through the CRVA process and NAP formulation, through to implementation. Many countries are working to develop and enhance governance and coordination structures. In most countries, there has been an effort to engage in a whole-of-government approach to NAP coordination, engaging Ministries of Finance, Interior and Planning among others. In many countries there have also been efforts to engage the sub-national level in the NAP process, meaning that many countries have strengthened both horizontal and vertical coordination in their NAPs. By engaging a wide range of government ministries and departments in the formulation of the NAP, countries are laying the groundwork for a whole-of-government approach to the implementation of adaptation priorities by mainstreaming NAP priorities across government.

40. **Argentina** provides an example of this. Reflecting its decentralized governance structure, the country developed guidelines and lessons learned on how to address adaptation at the local level, which was aimed at planners and decision-makers at the sub-national level to support them to develop sub-national adaptation plans. Cambodia and Mozambique have both utilised their NAP to deepen vertical and horizontal coordination; **Cambodia** has assigned the National Committee for Sub-national Democratic Development Secretariat (NCDD-S) on the Climate Finance Sub-group in its NAP, while **Mozambique** has developed an implementation arrangement structure that includes provincial, district and municipal governments, as well as non-state actors – many of which operate at the sub-national level, including the private sector, civil society, community-based organizations, the media, and academic institutions. **Uzbekistan** has also worked to enhance horizontal and vertical coordination. The country has formed an inter-agency working group, which comprises 10 ministries and institutions, as well as representatives of communities from the three provinces targeted by the NAP.



41. In **Viet Nam**, the inter and intra-institutional coordination and decision-making mechanisms for NAP were established and defined by government decisions that institutionalize the NAP governance mechanisms. While the Ministry of Environment is the institution primarily responsible for overseeing and coordinating various stakeholders to monitor and implement the NAP, the Ministry of Planning (MPI) is mainly responsible for consolidating investment projects from the NAP into the medium-term public investment plan. UNDP has been supporting Viet Nam to strengthen this coordination arrangement.

Developing a pipeline of adaptation priority projects

42. While some NAPs categorize priority projects or categorize them into programmes, even the most detailed NAPs do not comprehensively identify priority projects to a stage where they are ready to access international public or private climate finance. Rather, NAPs tend to arrive at a longlist of partially appraised priority projects. Typically, these cover a variety of different scales and sectors, and include both major investments in physical infrastructure, livelihoods and ecosystem restoration and smaller more strategic investments such as capacity building, continued enhancement to governance or management structures and private sector engagement.

43. This is an important first step in terms of transitioning from NAP formulation to implementation, but greater elaboration of these initial concepts, is a necessary follow-up. Because the priorities highlighted in the NAP are very rarely ‘identified’ beyond a narrative project or programme description, the NAP priority projects are not ready to be financed or implemented when a NAP is finalised. To identify projects ahead of implementation, significant further work is needed, including further prioritisation, discussions with potential investors and financiers, detailed project design and costing, cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analysis, environmental and social risk and safeguarding analysis, studies and analysis to determine the gender equality and social inclusion aspects of the potential project, risk assessments, and business modelling, cashflow, and other analysis (especially if a project is being identified for private investment). These activities are time consuming, resource intensive, and in some cases require highly skilled expertise and specialist inputs.

44. To illustrate the types of activities that can serve as inputs, in **Ethiopia** a participatory technical review of NDC, NAP and other climate-related plans was conducted to identify actionable entry points for transformative climate solutions in agriculture and land use. Based on the priorities identified, a systems-level assessment has commenced in 2023 to gain a deeper understanding of climate risks and adaptation/mitigation opportunities in three micro-watersheds – representative of the three major agroecological zones – in the country. The assessment is designed to identify local and context-specific interventions with the potential to spur transformational change in each micro-watershed, using a gender-responsive and community-based watershed management approach. As part of the assessment, a gender-responsive and climate-resilient value chain analysis was conducted to identify the risks, barriers, and opportunities for private sector engagement in climate solutions in the land use and agriculture sectors in two micro-watersheds. The outcomes of the analysis will serve as inputs to the development private sector business cases, feasibility assessments and project concept notes



to unlock private sector investment in climate-resilient, community-based watershed management solutions.

Finance

45. It is widely accepted that more finance is needed to implement adaptation priorities. According to the 2023 UNEP [Adaptation Gap](#) Report, adaptation finance requirements are 10-18 times greater than current international public adaptation finance flows⁸, and that adaptation costs in all developing and least developed countries could reach 1 per cent of the combined GDP of all developing countries.⁹

46. Numerous countries have been taking important steps towards mobilising the additional finance necessary to meet adaptation needs. Among UNDP's current portfolio of GCF-funded adaptation planning support, 28 countries have developed or are developing NAP financing strategies. This is being done in complementarity with the SDG Finance practice of looking into tools such as investor mapping to mobilise and expand the pool of financing partners. UNDP is also working with its Sustainable Finance Hub to raise awareness amongst finance ministries on NAPs, NDCs and public and private finance, and has collaborated with UNEP and the Secretariat of the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action and the Co-Chairs of the Adaptation Working Group to hold a series of [webinars](#) on enhancing access to adaptation finance.

47. Moreover, numerous countries are currently developing concept notes for funding to speed up funding to implement NAP priorities. This demonstrates a recognition among countries that finance is needed and a commitment to invest in mobilising it. However, the development of these concept notes – while a necessary first step– remains insufficient to guarantee funding, as most funders require detailed studies and assessments to be completed *before* concept notes and proposals can be considered for funding.

48. There are several interrelated issues that act as barriers to increased financing for developing and least developed countries to implement their NAPs:

- At present, there is no easily accessible source of funding support to countries to undertake the various activities involved 'project identification' (described above). Good practices have been emerging in this area through the support provided by the UN Secretary General's Adaptation Pipeline Accelerator, which has enabled countries such as **Bangladesh** to advance NAP priority projects towards funding, but there is need for significantly expanded financial and technical support to identify NAP priorities and build a pipeline of adaptation priority projects.

⁸ United Nations Environment Programme (2023) Adaptation Gap Report 2023, p.XII

⁹ P.XIV



- Even where projects are identified, there are ongoing problems with the flow of funding. An analysis by the OECD found that only 9 per cent of climate finance flows to Least Developed Countries, where climate risks are often the most acute and people are more likely to be vulnerable.¹⁰
- Developing projects for funding from the UNFCCC funding mechanisms is time consuming and resource intensive. Countries often need technical and financial support to develop projects for funding through these mechanisms. Moreover, not all countries have nationally accredited or direct access entities to these funds, making them reliant on an accredited international partner. . Where countries do have accredited entities, capacity of these entities is mixed. In some cases, nationally accredited/direct access entities are either development or private sector banks, whose engagement with the vertical funds tends to lean more toward mitigation projects that can more easily crowd in other sources of investment and generate revenue streams rather than towards adaptation (and while this is often also necessary, it doesn't move a country's NAP priorities forward).
- In other countries there is a nationally accredited/direct access entity, but this entity has not been able to successfully develop a project for funding – usually due to resource constraints and the cost of developing projects for vertical funds. Even in cases where capacity constraints are not a significant issue, developing a project successfully for funding from the vertical funds and/or packaging project ideas for loan or other types of finance, continues to be a resource intensive process, which acts as a barrier to developing and least developed countries as work to develop projects.

Challenges and lessons learned related to implementation

- The first generation of NAPs submitted to the UNFCCC are approaching 10 years old. Some countries, such as **Kenya**, have made significant progress in implementing their NAPs. It is important to harness and share knowledge from these early NAPs to extract lessons learned and guidance to countries that have finalised their NAPs more recently or are still formulating them.
- In some cases, the NAP doesn't include a list of projects but only a list of prioritised options of different scales, and an additional step to ensure that these options have the potential impact expected for a country to reach its adaptation targets and that these are translated into projects/initiatives would be required. The UNDP-FAO Climate Action Review (CAR) tool, to be published early 2024, is one such tool. It has helped countries unpack the priority actions listed in their NDCs and/or NAP on agriculture and land use in a participatory manner, by understanding their transformative potential.

¹⁰ OECD (2023), Climate Finance Provided and Mobilised by Developed Countries in 2013-2021: Aggregate Trends and Opportunities for Scaling Up Adaptation and Mobilised Private Finance, Climate Finance and the USD 100 Billion Goal, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/e20d2bc7-en>.

- Finance continues to be a major barrier to implementation. The APA Initiative has demonstrated that countries have the political will to identify their adaptation priorities and attempt to finance them, there are still considerable gaps between submitted NAPs and the capacity and resources needed to implement them, and that continued financial and technical support is required to drive the implementation of NAPs.
- The forthcoming NDC revision cycle, which will be taking place through 2024 and 2025, is an important inflection point that enables countries to create a feedback loop from the NAP formulation and implementation process to the next iteration of the NDCs.

d. Sharing information, knowledge and guidance

49. Effectively designed monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems can help to ensure that adaptation actions implemented now or in the future can be better designed and more effectively targeted to ensure that they benefit the poorest and most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Impacts can also be calibrated. Countries have used a range of approaches to MEL systems that have been tailored to their national circumstances. However, some clear principles are emerging:

50. First, MEL systems should track adaptation activities implementation and their effectiveness. This means that MEL systems should be developed as part of the NAP formulation process and should be ready to use when a country has completed its NAP and is ready to implement its adaptation priorities. The inclusion of activity tracking and evaluation of NAP effectiveness are both important; tracking implementation tells a country how many of its national adaptation priorities have been translated into projects/initiatives, funded and implemented, while evaluating effectiveness is also important as this gets to the heart of why a country would undertake MEL – ensuring that adaptation actions are providing adaptation (and ideally other) benefits to communities, especially the poorest and most vulnerable.

51. Countries such as **Papua New Guinea** and **Albania** provide examples of good practice in this area. Papua New Guinea has developed quantified targets as part of its NDC, which in turn is then elaborated through its NAP. These targets and indicators can measure progress towards the overall NDC and NAP objectives through its MEL system. Albania has recently produced an evaluation report that tracks the NAP's progress after four years of implementation. Albania's evaluation provides an objective reflection on where the country has made progress implementing its adaptation priorities, and where further investment is needed.

52. Second, MEL systems are most likely to be effective when they are comprehensive, vertically and horizontally integrated. Comprehensive means they cover all sectors in which adaptation actions are being implemented. Vertically and horizontally integrated means that the MEL system is being rolled out at all levels of government – both national and sub-national, and across different sector/line ministries that may not be directly responsible for the National Adaptation Plan, but are implementing, supporting or overseeing adaptation actions. **Vietnam** has established a participatory and results-oriented M&E framework and implementation guidelines, and has also transformed it into



an online M&E [platform](#) that provinces and sectoral ministries can register to access for virtual monitoring and reporting.

53. Third, it is easy to overlook the learning component of MEL. However, it is important to build a governance structure and capacity to be able to implement the MEL system. Good practices in this regard include formulating and building the capacity of a task team to oversee the MEL system in a country, designing other procedures and codifying them in the NAP, putting systems in place that support and encourage continuous or lifelong learning (including through partnerships with academic and training institutions) and having a public data and information platform that can be a repository for monitoring and evaluation reports and can improve transparency.

Knowledge, data and information platforms

54. Improving knowledge systems and management and access to data and information is an important enabler of the NAP process, while also being an important tool to support capacity building, transparency, public engagement and MEL. UNDP has supported at least 20 countries to develop a web-based data, knowledge and information platform.

55. While all knowledge, data and information platforms have broadly the same objective – that is, to share information, strengthen public engagement in the NAP process, enhance transparency and contribute to the NAP’s MEL system – there are subtle but important differences in the types of platforms that countries have developed.

56. The first type focuses more on public awareness. Whilst this type of platform contains scientific data and information relevant for MEL, the focus is on public engagement and an interested but non-specialized audience. Such platforms typically contain more pictures, graphics, and short news articles about climate change adaptation-related activities. They also contain links to social media to encourage engagement and focus on a younger, web-savvy demographic. [Ecuador is an example](#) of this approach.

57. The second type is a science, data, and research-oriented platform. While this type of platform is also public, its intended audience is more academic, scientific, and research-oriented, and consequently the site is less focused on general public engagement through imagery and social media links. [Bhutan and Serbia](#) provide examples of this.

58. Finally, the third type focuses on integration. While climate change adaptation is increasingly seen as a cross-cutting problem that requires engagement from a wide range of sectors and levels of government, a problem many countries face is that institutional silos persist – that climate change is seen primarily as an environmental problem. As part of the approach to overcome this, integration type platforms, such as the example from [Vietnam that](#) focuses on linking decisions makers from across government and linking data from different sectors to data gathered under the NAP support project, with a view to strengthening decision-making, MEL systems and mainstreaming adaptation action across government.



Challenges and lessons learned relating to knowledge, data, information and MEL systems

59. A key takeaway from UNDP's experience from supporting countries to enhance their knowledge, data and information environment is that there is no one-size-fits all approach to developing a data and information platform. In several cases, these platforms have faced sustainability challenges after international financial and technical support ends. This reflects the technical complexity of maintaining and updating the sites and the running costs associated with them. It is important, therefore, to build comprehensive sustainability mechanisms, including building technical capacity and support, and continued financing, into the design of knowledge, data and information systems from the outset.

60. There are various challenges relating to data access, availability and sharing that are impacting countries' ability to design and implement MEL systems that support NAP. In many countries, especially LDCs, there is a lack of data because the structures and resources to gather data are not available. In other cases, data may be gathered but it is not shared, or not freely available because the necessary protocols or data sharing structures aren't in place.

61. Countries that are in the more advanced stage of implementing their NAPs are often at the stage of undertaking evaluations. However, impact evaluations require technical skills, time and investment and, given the lack of NAP implementation support many countries face, the resources to undertake such evaluations are often unavailable. Moreover, there are comparatively few examples of impact evaluation at the national plan level – countries have far more experience of working with the impact evaluation approach at the project or programme level.

62. Finally, there is limited application of community-based MEL in the NAP Process. This is partly due to resource constraints – community-based MEL is resource and time-intensive. The relationship between Community based MEL mechanisms and national monitoring and evaluation systems are often not well defined.

Part 3 – Partnerships for adaptation

63. Implementing NAPs is a challenge that no actor or stakeholder in a country can undertake alone. This means that partnerships to support the formulation and implementation of NAPs are essential.

64. As highlighted earlier in this submission, implementation of adaptation priorities is more likely to be effective when it is vertically and horizontally mainstreamed across government – working with different sector/line ministries and sub-national government to ensure coordination. However, partnerships and multi-stakeholder collaboration outside of government are also vital.



65. In response to the IPCC 6th Assessment Report and 2021 Adaptation Gap Report findings on widening adaptation finance gaps and the need for scaled-up adaptation, UNDP has strengthened its partnerships with the UNFCCC Secretariat and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG). UNDP has worked in partnership with both the UNFCCC and the LEG to provide hands-on training and knowledge sharing on the process required to [prepare and submit proposals](#) to the UNFCCC multilateral climate finance mechanisms and first-level review and advice on adaptation project ideas that enables NAP formulation and implementation support. UNDP is also a member of the NAP Technical Working group and the [UN4NAPs](#) initiative and provides support to developing countries at the sidelines of CoPs and inter-sessional climate conferences by responding to technical requests identified by countries in the process of formulating and implementing their NAPs, including peer-reviewing countries' draft NAP documents.

66. Numerous countries, including **Bhutan** and **Azerbaijan**, have partnered with local universities and training institutions to capture knowledge and learning, and incorporate adaptation into their academic and/or training curriculum. Universities and training institutions are essential because they help to document and institutionalise the knowledge gained through the NAP process and train the next generation of both civil servants and technical specialists on adaptation-related topics. At the global level, UNDP has joined the [Adaptation Research Alliance](#), a global coalition of academic institutions, international organisations and civil society committed to strengthening adaptation research for impact, and is currently working to co-create a global programme that will support enhancing the engagement of academic institutions in the adaptation policy process in least developed countries.

67. The private sector is another critical stakeholder, and numerous countries are working to strengthen private sector engagement in the NAP process. Many countries understand the need to closely work with the private sector as part of the NAP process, and that doing so brings numerous benefits, including the potential to mobilize finance and other resources for implementation, coordination, enhancing the awareness of private sector actors, including small and medium-sized enterprises around the need for climate change adaptation, and to streamline future investment. As part of its NAP, the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** developed a strategy to mobilize the private sector on climate change adaptation and jointly identified options for the private sector to invest in adaptation-related services and technologies. **Vietnam** has established a Technical Working Group on the private sector and climate finance and developed a report identifying bottlenecks to private sector investment in adaptation projects through an in-depth assessment of key sectors, agriculture and transport. It also produced a policy brief to improve the engagement of financial institutions to support private investment in climate change adaptation.

68. The UNDP/FAO SCALA programme supports both LDCs and developing countries to identify entry points for private sector engagement. It promotes consensus building and partnership with the private sector to leverage investments in climate action and provides technical assistance to design de-risking strategies and bankable project concept notes. In **Costa Rica**, through ongoing collaboration between private sector actors, regional livestock commissions and the Ministry of Agriculture, the certification of a Technical Standard for Beef Production without Forest Cover Loss is being piloted with support



from SCALA. The results of the first application of the technical standard have been finalized and tools and training materials were developed for wider application by livestock producers. In **Ethiopia**, SCALA conducted field level scoping, consultations and training for national government staff on applying the UNDP-FAO value chain analysis toolkit. The analysis included an assessment of opportunities for increased private sector engagement and financing within targeted value chains and the identification of barriers and risks deterring resilient investments which will provide input for the development of project concept notes. In **Sao Tome and Principe**, a market study on the commercial viability of bio-inputs to produce organic vegetables and commodities for export was published. Linkages are being explored with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the GEF focusing on the intersection of bio-inputs and waste management, in order to support the country's ambition to become a fully biological nation while promoting agribusiness diversification and youth inclusion.

Part 4 – Moving forward: Conclusions and recommendations

69. Progress toward the objectives of the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans has been mixed. Significant progress in some areas such as strengthened governance structures, new and enhanced climate risk and vulnerability assessments, strengthened capacity and an increase in NAP submissions in the last three years are important and very positive steps towards the achievement of the NAP process objectives. On the other hand, important challenges still exist, including access to finance for next generation NAPs and implementation of adaptation priorities, enhancing data and information for, *inter alia*, NAP MEL systems and the need to retain and continue to strengthen institutional capacity.

70. With this in mind, the present submission identifies the following recommendations.

- Continued efforts are needed in many countries to enhance access to high quality data, and to encourage more comprehensive data sharing. There is a need to continue political engagement and international support in this area.
- Further efforts are needed to build the capacity levels to undertake risk and vulnerability assessments, which will make countries less dependent on international expertise, while building domestic capacities. Given the extensive range of guidance materials online, further tools and guidance are not likely to be necessary at this time (although they will be needed in the future). Instead, there is a need for peer-to-peer support, country exchange and mentoring of teams that will undertake such assessments in the future.
- Progress on NAP formulation is mixed – while there are a relatively low number of submissions to the UNFCCC, at the same time there have been important preparatory actions taken in many countries. Moreover, the recent increase in the number of submissions suggests that there is momentum moving forward. Continued support from the on the UNFCCC financial mechanisms, UNFCCC entities – the LEG and Adaptation Committee is vital to ensure that all developing and least developed countries have the opportunity to formulate and submit their NAP.



- Funding support from the GCF – and earlier the GEF – has been critical to NAP formulation and submissions. However, there is concern that such funding will not be available to support second generation NAPs, or to build a pipeline of adaptation priority projects. There is a need to ensure that funding options are available to countries formulating their first NAP, countries that are seeking to accelerate the implementation of their NAP, and countries that are seeking to formulate a ‘second generation’ NAP.
- Political support to the entire NAP process – and especially implementation – is vital. This support can manifest itself through alignment between the NDCs and NAPs, and next generation NDCs that reflect the lessons learned from the NAP formulation and implementation process. There is a need to continue knowledge, awareness and advocacy efforts at the political level to ensure continued engagement and commitment.
- Financing NAP implementation is a critical challenge and requires greater support to countries to elaborate their project pipelines, match public and private financiers to projects, and develop more financial instruments, financing strategies, and investments is essential and a major component of accelerating National Adaptation Plans implementation.
- MEL systems are critical to determine the progress towards achieving the objectives of the NAP. Limited evidence suggests that countries are making progress, but further support is needed in this area. The need for continued support to the development and roll-out of MEL systems also highlights the need for continued financial support.



Annex 1 – Summary of support provided by UNDP to National Adaptation Plans

UNDP's support to the NAP process in numbers:

- More than half of all NAPs submitted to the UNFCCC have been supported by UNDP (32¹¹ out of 53 as of January 2024).
- UNDP has supported 39 countries¹² (including 12 LDCs) to access GCF NAP Readiness funds.
- UNDP's support to NAP formulation:
 - o 35 countries supported in conducting Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessments (CRVA).
 - o 61 countries supported to strengthen their adaptation governance and coordination arrangements.
 - o 36 countries supported to develop NAP Stocktaking reports.
- UNDP's support to NAP implementation:
 - o UNDP has been supporting almost 100 countries including 42 LDCs to access multilateral funds to implement adaptation projects on the ground, with projects recently approved in Bhutan (GEF) and Haiti (GCF) which contribute to implementing priorities identified in the NAPs.
 - o Through UNDP supported NAP projects, over 50 countries have strengthened their capacities for adaptation planning, enhanced climate information, data, knowledge and monitoring, evaluation and learning systems which are critical for the design and implementation of adaptation interventions as well as in monitoring progress.
 - o 28 countries supported to develop adaptation finance strategies.
 - o Building on the NAP-Ag programme, UNDP and FAO are supporting 12 countries (including 5 LDCs) in transformative climate action in the land use and agriculture sectors through the **SCALA** initiative.
 - o UNDP's adaptation experts have been supporting countries in developing project pipelines through the LEG NAP writing workshops and also supporting Direct Access Entities (DAEs) in developing and implementing adaptation projects.

¹¹ Of the 32 NAPs supported by UNDP, 15 have been supported with funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Adaptation Planning Readiness Window. The remaining 17 have been supported through other funding sources, including the GEF funded NAP-Global Support Programme.

¹² The status of UNDP implemented GCF NAP Readiness funded projects:

Completed: LDCs: Bangladesh, Benin, Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Liberia, Madagascar, Niger, non-LDC: Argentina, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cote d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Papua New Guinea, Serbia, Vietnam, Uruguay

Under Implementation: LDCs: Bhutan, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Somalia, Tanzania, non-LDC: Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Cuba, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Moldova, Montenegro, Morocco, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan



- As part of its support to the UN Secretary General’s **Adaptation Pipeline Accelerator (APA)** initiative, UNDP has been supporting 17 countries (including 6 LDCs) in identifying adaptation priorities; translating adaptation priorities identified in NAPs and/or adaptation components in NDCs into investment plans; and developing pipeline of projects.
- **NAP-NDC alignment:** UNDP has supported 120 countries (including 40 LDCs) through its “Climate Promise” initiative to enhance their NDCs. 94 percent of these NDCs increased the scope and sectors for adaptation and made key improvements in defining clear adaptation objectives and/or targets and in strengthening alignment of the NDCs with NAPs and other adaptation-planning processes and instruments. NAPs have been critical in increasing the ambition of adaptation components in NDCs, and they also have the potential to ‘operationalize’ NDC commitments. In the upcoming NDC revision process, UNDP is committed to continue increasing adaptation ambition and alignment with the NAPs.