



Civil society in Africa gets ready for the GCF

The project “Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) Readiness for the Green Climate Fund (GCF)” is implemented with a primary focus on Africa, with national-level activities in Ghana, Morocco, Malawi, Kenya and Senegal, regional exchange and global influencing. This report summarises key activities and achievements so far.

Key messages

- Activities undertaken in Ghana, Morocco, Malawi, Kenya, Senegal, Uganda and Côte d’Ivoire show that there is growing interest among civil society to engage in the GCF, but also that there is a massive task ahead to make the GCF, its purpose and modalities known;
- The interaction and experience sharing among civil society as well as with multiple GCF-related stakeholders, such as national institutions, implementing entities, is essential to more effectively navigate in the complex GCF environment and to build mutual capacity;
- Assessing the national state of play towards the GCF early-on helps to map key stakeholders, challenges and potential benefits of a successful national approach to the GCF;
- Civil society organisations can bring a variety of expertise to the table which is essential for a successful GCF implementation, from proposals design and practical project implementation, to monitoring expertise, communication and outreach capacities etc.;
- Investing into civil society readiness should be an essential component of broader readiness work targeting national stakeholders, including that funded by the GCF itself;
- Meeting expectations by other stakeholders to be well-informed and prepared increases the credibility and influence of civil society;
- Key challenges remaining include communication constraints both within civil society as well as with government stakeholders and implementing entities; limited human and financial resources, and GCF complexities.

Introduction

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) has the ambition to become the most important multilateral instrument in climate finance. Africa has become a focus region for the GCF early on. As it is unlikely that the intended paradigm shift towards low-carbon emissions and climate-resilient economies and societies (GCF founding mandate) can be achieved without broad civil society (CS) engagement, it is essential to scale-up existing civil society capacities to advocate for ambitious proposals, bring on-the-ground expertise to the table, help embed GCF-funded activities in a broader societal support for transformation and increase accountability of national authorities.

To support such efforts, a group of civil society organisations is currently implementing the project “Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) Readiness for the Green Climate Fund” with a primary focus on Africa, with financial support from the International Climate Initiative (IKI). This complements civil society engagement by many other organisations in relation to the GCF. The project aims to support broader African civil society engagement in the critical early implementation phase of the GCF, by developing readiness materials which facilitate CSOs engagement; supporting CSOs engagement in key African countries (with a focus on Ghana, Morocco, Malawi, Kenya and Senegal), and sharing of experiences at regional and global scales for expanded CSOs engagement in Africa and beyond. The national activities are guided by common approaches and tools, ranging from state of play assessments to national stakeholder engagement and sharing of lessons learned on regional and global levels. This report summarises key initial activities and experiences by early 2018.

Ghana

From mid-2017 onwards, **Kasa Initiative Ghana** and **CARE Ghana** organised **six workshops**. These included a 36 participants' national stakeholder workshop on 17 May 2017 in Accra which provided a space for sharing information among the different stakeholders to the national GCF process and discussing ways forward. Among others, the meeting included a panel discussion between the Ministry of Finance (National Designated Authority, NDA), Ecobank Ghana (NIE candidate), Social Investment Fund (formerly an NIE candidate) and the civil society representative on the Technical Advisory Committee to the NDA. On 26 September, a workshop was held in Tamale, northern Ghana, following concerns that the project should not only target CSOs resident in the capital. Other meetings have focused on enhancing information sharing and coordination among CSOs. All of the meetings took place under the auspices of the informal but highly active "Ghana SDG13 Platform" which is convened by Kasa Initiative and co-convened by CARE Ghana.

The most prominent result is the creation of a **69-member WhatsApp group dedicated to sharing SDG13-related issues, including GCF-related news**, and advocacy planning. During the 'Kasa Working Group on Climate Change' annual meeting, a GCF advocacy target was adopted for 2018, namely to lobby the NDA for inclusion of another civil society representative on the Technical Advisory Committee to the authority, in addition to the existing representative who is perceived as a gatekeeper, obstructing the flow of information between the NDA and civil society.



Left: Alima Smart, Kasa Initiative's secretariat, welcomes participants at the GCF CSO meeting in Tamale; top-right: gender sensitive meeting environs at Tamale workshop; bottom-right: 2-pager GCF vocab with the most common acronyms has proven helpful in engaging civil society.



For now, the conclusion is that civil society has the structure (Ghana SDG13 CSO Platform) in place for the GCF discussion, has built relationships with relevant institutions, and communication is flowing openly among CSOs. Yet, the challenge is to access information but also delays in the accreditation of an NIE for Ghana, and the submission of project proposals only through Multilateral Implementing Entities (MIEs). The lack of new developments has caused a degree of fatigue among CSOs involved in the project. In general, CSO representatives demand for wider information sharing and coordination among civil society which has and is being addressed. There has also been interest in research action, such as monitoring visits to ensure that projects proposed to the GCF meet the required environmental and social safeguards.

Based on the previous experience, key next steps which the Ghana SDG13 CSO Platform will convene is finalising a work plan for 2018, considering a feasibility study into *Enhanced Direct Access* options for Ghana, advocating for an extra CSO representative on the Technical Advisory Committee to the

NDA, and preparations for a national stakeholder workshop, tentatively planned for October 2018, to promote and assess progress with regard to civil society readiness and broader Ghanaian capacity increase in relation to the GCF.

Kenya

The project's activities in Kenya are led by **CARE International in Kenya**. It all began with one-day **capacity building and knowledge/information sharing workshops** in three major urban centres in Kenya (Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa) between December 2017 and February 2018. These regional workshops have served and will continue to serve as springboard to build momentum toward a national workshop.

The first regional workshops already provide some interesting insights into challenges civil society faces in relation to the GCF. Generally, above 60% of CSOs have had previous access to information regarding the GCF; either from the GCF website or from informal/formal sessions (organised by the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and partners). However, less than 50% of the CSOs have submitted proposals for funding to the NIE due to limited access on comprehensive requirements needed for proposal development and submission, with overall lower numbers in Kisumu than in Nairobi. Less than 30% of CSOs in Nairobi and Kisumu are currently engaged with global and national GCF structures with regard to areas such as readiness capacity-building; submission of concept notes; request and access to information and resources previous and recent; updates and reports from GCF board meetings, etc. All participating CSOs expressed the need to forge common knowledge and information sharing platforms (either through email/chat group/Dropbox or organized formal capacity-building sessions) to strengthen this link at the regional level. Additionally, a need to explore national level networks with common aligned interests was expressed. All participating CSOs were willing to engage in project activities and requested regular briefs on the project progress; access to draft CSO's toolkit and national level GCF info packs current being developed by the project. The findings from the regional workshops in Kenya will inform upcoming activities, including the completion of a national state of play assessment and summary report, further engagement with the NDA and NIE for project sensitization and for planning the national stakeholder workshop scheduled in 2018. Moreover, determination of further national activities such as the development of national information packages in relation to the GCF will be undertaken.

Malawi

The **Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC)** and **CARE** lead the work in Malawi. The project activities in Malawi started with a **National Stakeholders Workshop** which took place from 13 to 14 July 2017. The workshop was conducted to share and discuss the findings of the assessment of the GCF state of play in Malawi, which was elaborated and disseminated by the project partners. The workshop increased stakeholders understanding of the goals and modalities of the GCF, while also actively participating in the GCF processes at national, regional and global levels. A communiqué from the workshop highlighting key recommendations and responsibilities for their implementation was produced. In an attempt to disseminate the key outcomes from the workshop, a full page article was published in the national weekend newspaper. Copies of the communiqué were prepared and shared among key stakeholders, including government officials. These recommendations include the need to create awareness on the GCF, its processes and the state of play in Malawi; the creation of a viable platform for experience and information sharing; capacity-building of government and non-state actor's institutions and relevant stakeholders on development of fundable GCF proposals; fostering private and public partnerships (PPP) to take advantage and opportunities under GCF; revamping the task force set-up in 2015 aimed at developing national proposals to the GCF and other global climate change funds, and establishing a GCF Technical Unit and a representative Advisory Committee within the Environmental Affairs Department to support the National Designated Authority in reviewing concept notes and proposals for endorsement by the GCF.

A further **engagement meeting** with the government on GCF related processes took place in December 2017 to validate and engage government on key recommendations from the workshop report. In attendance were government officials from the Department of Energy Affairs, Department of Environmental Affairs, Department of Disaster Management, and Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services from the country.

An **in-country study** on GCF related processes was conducted as part of the project aiming at enhancing CSOs understanding of the Fund modalities and proceedings. Amongst other findings, it found that inefficiency and bureaucracy within the GCF structures exacerbated by questionable transparency have led to long processing times for NIE accreditation and development of funding proposals, constituting a big challenge for Malawi. It also concluded that there is still limited awareness about the GCF and its requirements, partially because the information is usually disseminated in workshops and these workshops are mostly for selected people. As a result not most people would know about the GCF. There are high expectations that GCF readiness resources, requested by the NDA, help tackling this problem.

On the way ahead, civil society in Malawi plans to focus on three activities in the next months,



Participants at the engagement meeting in December 2017, in Malawi.

including further engagement with the government on GCF related matters, building on the recommendations developed in the national stakeholder workshop, knowledge exchange visits, and awareness creation on the existence of GCF and its related processes through social media, local newsletters, etc.

Morocco

In Morocco, the project activities are carried out by the **Association des Enseignants des Sciences de la Vie et de la Terre (AESVT)**, a network of environmental sciences teachers which became a civil society organisation with a functional network of Centres d'Éducation à l'Environnement (CEE) across Morocco. AESVT has contributed to enhance local civil society awareness about the GCF state of play in Morocco, especially on the existence of two of the GCF's direct access accredited entities in the country (the Agency for Agricultural Development and CDG Capital) and the approval of various projects for the country's populations by the Fund's Board either through a direct or an international access. AESVT successfully organized in March/April and in September 2017 **two National Stakeholders Workshops**, bringing together overall more than 50 participants. These included people from the region of Souss-Massa, where a GCF project will be implemented, as well as representatives from the Secretariat of State in Charge of Sustainable Development which is hosting the country's National Designated Authority (NDA) and the Agency for Agricultural Development (ADA), a National Implementing Entity accredited to the GCF.



Group session during Morocco's second workshop.

Following the workshops, AESVT co-organised together with Germanwatch an **official side event at the Climate Chance Summit** where policy recommendations from participants were shared with the global community, calling upon strategic

partners and key institutions to allocate adequate resources to empower civil society roles in influencing GCF projects outcomes and policies.

Besides these national workshops, AESVT ensured citizens have access to key information about GCF projects, for instance the Saïss Water Conservation project which will extend irrigation infrastructure to protect agricultural production from the impacts of climate change. Since their involvement in the project, the CSO has successfully established good relationships and collaboration with the Ministry of Energy, Mining and the Environment in charge of implementing Morocco’s climate action strategy, with the ADA and other national institutions. The association has achieved a transformative approach for citizens and their organisations to understand how they can engage and interact with key players around GCF activities. In that way, AESVT is contributing to increase the efficiency of the roles civil society can play in promoting the Fund’s objectives and getting ready to monitor progress around its projects once their implementation starts.

The association has also mobilised members and other actors in **commenting funding proposals** submitted by the ADA, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) to the GCF for funding consideration on behalf of the country authorities. This activity will be continued in 2018, alongside the organisation of new national workshops in other regions in Morocco, further interactions with GCF key players, national institutions and accredited entities, and field visits in communities where GCF projects will be implemented.

Senegal

ENDA Energie, a civil society organisation well established in the African region, is the leading national partner of the project in Senegal, while also playing a regional role across West and Central Africa sub-regions. The NGO has implemented various activities starting with the **realisation of a national assessment of the GCF state of play** in the country. This has enabled ENDA to get a clear picture about what is the current situation of the Fund in Senegal, who the key players are, which stakeholders are involved in the GCF proceedings and how they interact and engage with civil society. The assessment has been an opportunity to interview the National Designated Authority, meet with the national implementing entity to the GCF (Centre de Suivi Écologique, CSE), and interact with other international accredited entities such as the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the International Union for the Conservation of the Nature (IUCN). Many civil society actors active in the climate change process have participated to this exercise.

Later on, ENDA Energie has organised a **National Stakeholders Workshop** in Dakar in March 2017 which was attended by 33 participants representing the government of Senegal, civil society



organisations, the private sector and farmers’ organisations as well as women’s groups. The gathering was an opportunity to share the findings from the country state of play assessment. It also provided a platform to recognise Senegal’s efforts in building partnerships at the local and national levels, as well as with international donors, in order to develop climate change projects and programmes, particularly in the areas of water salinization, severe flooding and desertification as the principal climate change induced issues facing the country.

National workshop in March 2017 in Dakar, Senegal.

The example of Senegal is outstanding, given that the country has a direct access accredited entity (CSE) which demonstrates that national institutions can access the GCF resources. At the workshop, a road map was elaborated to activate CSOs engagement and interactions with GCF stakeholders in the country. That approach led to a **Stakeholders Consultation Meeting** in October 2017 where 12 representatives from national federations and civil society platforms met to review that roadmap, discuss achievements, reflect on the way forward and learn from each other. It was noted that several limits still keep CSOs away from playing relevant roles within the GCF, such as the lack of knowledge and information sharing among CSOs themselves and other authorities, the concentration of information at the level of NDA and accredited entities, inaccessibility to GCF funds, etc. It was proposed to seek more synergies and institutional leadership coordination and to enhance the capacities and roles of non-state actors within the Fund’s proceedings through setting up for example a functional platform which facilitates interaction among CSOs and with others.

In 2018, ENDA Energie will be hosting another national workshop, conduct a local assessment of the implementation of the first project activities in the country, and organise additional online webinars to share progress about the project activities and GCF policy development.

Regional exchange: Learning across borders

Civil society organisations in Africa are gearing up to ensure maximum benefit from the Green Climate Fund through the “CSOs readiness to the GCF” project that provides an opportunity for civil society stakeholders to collaboratively unpack the Fund and its operational modalities to a level that communities can leverage on the various climate finance benefits. Through bringing together experience and knowledge on regional levels beyond just single countries, the project aims to promote learning and networking across borders.

Following a launch event of the project in September 2016 in Nantes, France, during the Climate Chance Summit, a Pan-African Workshop on civil society readiness to the GCF was organised with support from PACJA and AESVT at the Centre Régional d'Education à l'Environnement (CEE) in Marrakech, Morocco, just before COP 22. The meeting gathered 25 civil society representatives and climate change practitioners from across Africa. They were joined by their peers from Germanwatch, CARE International, the Adaptation Fund NGO Network, the Réseau Climat & Développement, the Southern Voices project and CARE’s Adaptation Learning Programme for Africa, with the view to strengthen peer exchange and learning. Participants were provided with good overview, understanding and knowledge about the GCF, had a chance to assess and analyse factors limiting effective CSOs involvement in local GCF state of play and projects, discussed ways to develop common strategies among African civil society to better engage in the Fund’s activities in a constructive and critical manner, and elaborated ideas to strengthen participation in international GCF processes.

To further strengthen that engagement, ENDA Energie hosted a **Regional Stakeholders Workshop**



for West and Central African countries in May 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire. A number of 37 CSOs representatives attended the meeting which helped shared the project experiences, learning and results in these regions. The African Development Bank (AfDB) and the GCF Focal Point for Côte d’Ivoire supported the meeting by providing

Participants of the June 2017 regional workshop in Kampala, Uganda.

key inputs during the discussions. Participants learned for example about the existence of the **Africa Climate Change Fund (ACCF)**, an initiative from the AfDB, and had a chance to raise their concerns about the need for more capacity-building on the GCF through training, peer-learning, documentation and knowledge sharing, advocacy and attendance of GCF Board meetings. They called upon the AfDB to open the ACCF to CSOs as beneficiaries for diversity in the types of initiatives to be selected.

In June 2017, PACJA and CARE organised a second **Regional Workshop in Kampala, Uganda**, focused on Eastern and Southern Africa, in the context of the Community-based Adaptation Conference (CBA10). The almost 40 participants included CSOs from more than 10 countries, and also provided a forum for Uganda civil society actors to learn from each other and to engage with Ugandan government officials. The forum interrogated the various processes within the GCF, identified challenges to engage in the GCF process and released a statement with various recommendations to the various challenges identified. To fertilize cross-learning in the project, ENDA presented on key outcomes of the West and Central African regional workshop. These activities have resulted into creation of awareness and enhancing of civil society technical capacity on the GCF. Further, mobilisation of African civil society on the GCF has spearheaded the formation of a GCF Africa Contact group. Key findings were published in a communiqué which was disseminated widely.

The project partners conducted several **regional webinars** in 2017 and early 2018 led by PACJA, ENDA, CARE and Germanwatch both in English and French, with overall more than 150 participants from across Africa. These addressed a range of issues with particular emphasis on experience on national-level engagement and ownership of the GCF modalities. Representatives from agencies such as Kenya’s NIE (NEMA), CSE in Senegal, African Development Bank (AfDB), the Observatory of Sahara and Sahel (OSS), government officials, and other experts contributed to those exchanges.



Working atmosphere at the regional workshop in Abidjan.

In 2018, the project provides an opportunity to enhance engagement on the GCF through the regional GCF contact group. It is planned to further advance regional exchange at various opportunities, building on further readiness activities in various countries, and leading to a Pan-African Conference later in the year, potentially in October.

Global level

Since its start, the project has also enabled meaningful engagement of African civil society in the GCF policy proceedings, especially during Board meetings. Under an elaborated Fellowship Programme coordinated by **Germanwatch**, two representatives from the project consortium of partners (**ENDA Energie and PACJA**) attend these meetings where they can interact with Board members, GCF secretariat staff and civil society representatives from other countries on various issues. **CISONECC’s Coordinator** from Malawi is additionally participating to these meetings from February 2018 as one of the Southern civil society active observers to the GCF following his election. They contribute to civil society’s roles during meetings, participate to relevant policy discussions and advocacy activities in between sessions, and have the opportunity to bring their experiences on the discussions table. In total, six GCF Board meetings have been attended by the project team so far, including four by the fellows who have a chance to increase their understanding and knowledge about the Fund and participate to enhancing GCF’s goal of achieving a low-carbon development pathway. A number of international side events were organised by project partners worldwide, such as during UNFCCC’s

Conference of the Parties (COP 22 and COP 23), intersessional meetings (SBs), at 2017 Climate Chance Summit in Agadir, Morocco, among others. Each time, partners presented the project results, lessons learnt, opportunities and ways forward.

Outlook for 2018

In 2018, plans are made to continue hosting side events in the margins of international events like at COP 24 in Poland and during its intersessional meetings (SBs) or in the margins of GCF Board meetings, for instance. Another key milestone this year is the organisation of a Pan-African Conference which will focus on sharing the project results and achievements so far, then reflecting with participants about the way ahead. Work on the national level will proceed with various activities, including assessing progress in civil society capacity, and charting ways forward for the engagement with various institutions relevant to GCF matters.

Contact information

Project coordination: Germanwatch: Jean Paul Brice Affana, affana@germanwatch.org;
CARE: Sven Harmeling, sharmeling@careclimatechange.org

Ghana: Chibeze Ezekiel (Kasa Initiative), chibeze@gmail.com;
Peter Bruun Clausen (CARE), pclausen@care.dk

Kenya: Julius Karanja Mbatia (PACJA), karanja@pacja.org;
Crispus Mugambi (CARE), crispus.mugambi@care.or.ke

Malawi: Julius Ng'oma (CISONECC), julius@cisoneccmw.org;
Geoffrey Kumwenda (CARE), Geoffrey.Kumwenda@care.org

Morocco: Said Chakri (AESVT), said.chakri1@gmail.com

Senegal: Emmanuel Seck (ENDA Energie), emmanuel.seck@endaenergie.org

The project is also supported by the **Institute for Climate and Sustainable Cities** (iCSC) on communications/outreach aspects: Kairos T. Dela Cruz, kairos@icsc.ngo

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