



Capacity building under the Paris Agreement

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Achieving a low-carbon climate-resilient world requires appropriate and adequate capacity for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and for adapting to climate impacts. As the enabler for implementation of climate change responses, capacity building takes on central importance. This is especially true for the least developed countries (LDCs) and the small island developing states (SIDS), which are hit first and hardest by climate change, but have the least capacity to adapt.

The Paris Agreement's capacity building provisions, including the decision to establish a Paris Committee on Capacity Building (PCCB) (Article 11); a Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT) (Article 13); and to promote education, training and public awareness (Article 12) can therefore be regarded as foundational for all other institutions, mechanisms and processes.

This paper seeks to provide some specific guidance with regard to PCCB and CBIT, while also providing a broader perspective on the key ingredients for sustainable capacity building. It draws on a historical perspective on capacity building efforts, and on the lessons learned from previous capacity building efforts by development agencies, and specifically under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Numerous bilateral and multilateral agencies are involved in capacity building both within and outside the UNFCCC. The following observations were derived from our analytical review of the history of capacity building:

- Inefficiency and ineffectiveness in capacity building initiatives continue to linger, mainly because of ad-hoc, short-lived, mainly project-based interventions.
- Effective capacity building is an endogenous process, which must grow from within the country. International actors can play a supporting and facilitative role, but not an ownership or managerial role.
- There is no research as yet on how much money is spent on capacity building in the development and environment context. As a crosscutting issue, capacity building is often a component of projects, making it difficult to quantify total funding specifically dedicated to capacity building. In any case, funding for capacity building remains low.
- There is sizable literature, mostly in the form of agency reports, on capacity building in many other areas of development and environmental governance. However, scientific assessments of capacity building in the climate change context are sparse.

Based on our analysis, we have the following recommendations for the way ahead from Paris:

- The key to successful implementation of climate change capacity building will eventually rely on a keen understanding of national capacity needs and challenges. **The PCCB should consider national arrangements to coordinate and facilitate capacity building at a national and sub-national level.** We believe that it is necessary to have an institution at the national level that is dedicated to the task of understanding national capacity building needs, and appropriately guiding national capacity building efforts. In fact, building institutional capacity to oversee a programme to develop climate-relevant capacity within the country is probably the most important – and perhaps the most difficult – activity of a capacity building programme. Long-term, sustainable systems at the national level are critical, and this will require moving away consultancy- and project-driven approaches.
- **The PCCB should also consider long-term, permanent arrangements for capacity building at the international (UNFCCC) level**, which are designed to:
 - change the paradigm of funding for capacity building to allow for more systematic, dedicated and programmatic funding that allows for country planning and ownership, longer-term sustainability,

- and capacity retention;
- enhance research and analysis on capacity building, including both an overall perspective (such as principles of capacity building), as well as national perspectives (working with local institutions).
- facilitate and provide guidance to the implementation of capacity building efforts.
- provide guidance to other actors outside the UNFCCC (such as bilateral donors and philanthropies) regarding key issues, gaps, and opportunities in capacity building for climate change.
- develop assessment procedures and metrics to evaluate progress on capacity building.
- We propose a **Capacity Building Mechanism** (CBM) under the UNFCCC, to provide systematic and ongoing attention to marshalling resources for capacity building, while highlighting lessons and effective practices from capacity building efforts across countries and regions, and using these insights to guide and facilitate implementation in a flexible manner to accommodate national circumstances.
- Taking a cue from the Technology Mechanism, **we propose that the CBM have two arms – an analytical/strategy arm and an implementation arm – overseen by a Board**. The analytical/strategy arm would engage in analyses to provide guidance to developing countries and to the implementation arm. The implementation arm would facilitate implementation of capacity building efforts, in a manner that is suited to the local needs and contexts of target countries. These arms must be guided by domain experts rather than negotiators (or country representatives). The overall CBM Board could have national representation, but with a majority from developing nations, since eventually the CBM has to be accountable to these ‘users’.
- The Board should also have **representation from the financial mechanism and the Technology Mechanism (and vice versa)**, to enhance coordination between these three “means of implementation”.
- We identify at least four kinds of activities that the CBM can promote at the national level: **human resource development; institutional capacity building; developing networks; and developing metrics for capacity building**.
- The implementation of capacity building efforts will require **knowledge support from international actors**. However, these international actors should not supplant developing country institutions, but rather support and strengthen them.
- Finally, **adequate and appropriately provided support for capacity building cannot be stressed enough**. Investments in capacity building can yield rich dividends by enhancing the effectiveness of climate action. Attention must be paid to ensure that developed country Parties follow through on the obligation to provide support under the Paris Agreement. An important task that the CBM can undertake is to track capacity building flows, and the channels and recipients of these flows.
- **Linkages with the financial mechanism are crucial to align capacity building and finance** in a way that allows for the prioritisation of the agenda as articulated by developing countries. At the same time, the UNFCCC should also provide guidance to other donors – such as bilaterals, multilaterals, and philanthropies – to complement rather than substitute or duplicate UNFCCC efforts in relation to key gaps and needs.

INTRODUCTION

We already live in a climate-changed world. The latest corroboration to this fact comes from one of the most authoritative scientific agencies of the world, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA). According to NOAA's monthly state of the climate report released on 20 September 2016, the month of August broke global temperature records on land and on the ocean's surface, with temperatures averaging 0.92°C above the 20th-century average. Five of the six populated continents experienced August temperatures within the top 10 warmest on record. Africa and Asia broke records on file since 1910 (NOAA 2016). Another story made headlines: *Arctic: Sea ice, record low is 'not rebounding'* (Hobson 2016), with the lowest area covered under ice sheet this summer. If the warming trend holds, 2016 is on track to be the warmest year on record.

With this unfolding reality, the Paris Agreement is entering into force in Marrakech in early November 2016, a short eleven months after it was adopted at the 21st Conference of Parties (COP 21) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This is an unforeseen development. The Agreement was not expected to enter into force so soon. COP 22 in Marrakech will now be the first COP, serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement (CMA1). However, modalities have yet to be adopted for a number of elements under the Paris Agreement, including its capacity building elements: the formation of the Paris Committee on Capacity Building (PCCB) with a five-year work plan; and the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT).

The decisions to establish the PCCB under Article 11, the CBIT under Article 13, and in between as the base, Article 12 of the Paris Agreement stipulating for promoting education, training and public awareness, can be regarded as foundational for all other institutions, mechanisms and processes. For achieving a low carbon, climate-resilient world, capacity building for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to its increasing impacts in an open and transparent manner is of central importance, as the enabler for implementation of all other provisions and decisions. This is especially true for the least developed countries (LDCs) and the small island developing states (SIDS), which are hit first and hardest by climate change, but have the least capacity to adapt.

In recent decades, capacity building has become an integral part particularly of the environmental agreements and treaties. UNFCCC-led initiatives on capacity building began in earnest from COP 7 in 2001. Millions of dollars have been spent in developing countries by the bilateral and multilateral development agencies. This paper draws on a historical perspective on capacity building efforts for lessons learned, to provide a general perspective on the key ingredients for sustainable capacity building and also specific guidance for the PCCB and CBIT. It begins by tracing how the concept of capacity building has evolved in the domain of international development cooperation.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF CAPACITY BUILDING

Evolution of the concept

Capacity as a concept is regarded as having a weak intellectual pedigree in the larger world of development. It comes with no accepted or tested body of theory (World Bank 2005). Until the mid-1990s, the concept attracted almost no research support within the international development community (UNDP 1996), though the World Bank and UNDP pioneered a collaboration with the African Development Bank to establish the African Capacity Development Foundation with a starting fund of US\$ 30 million. Morgan

(2006) argues that most ideas about capacity have come out of a wide range of North American and European thinking of performance management, organisational development, political economy, institutional economics and sociology. Also its advent is regarded to be influenced by ideas of participation, public sector reform, civil society and empowerment (Eade 1997). Although universities have traditionally been the generator and repository of ideas and knowledge, in case of capacity building this was not the case. The development agencies of the Western world led the process of its evolution, and remain the storehouse of reports.

However, looking at the evolution of international development cooperation since the 1950s, capacity building can be said to have its precursor the concepts of 'institution building', 'institutional strengthening', 'human resource development', 'institutional economics', etc. (Kuhl 2009; Morgan 2006; Keijzer 2014). Based on the experience of the US-led Marshall Plan to rebuild war-ravaged Europe after the Second World War, the US and other European countries had the notion that development could be pursued in the newly decolonised developing countries through building and strengthening their national institutions. But social engineering is a much more complex phenomenon particularly in the pre-and initial stages of capitalist development than physics and mechanics, so thinking also started changing with new dynamics. The concept evolved as a response to dissatisfaction with traditional technical cooperation, in which development of local human capital was not the focus when endogenous growth theories came to be considered important (Thorbeeke 2000). The new discipline of 'institutional economics' tried to establish the idea of institution building with some theoretical underpinnings (Booth 2011; Hilderbrand, 2002). The argument was that differences in economic growth and development among developing countries can be explained by the differing quality of institutions responsible for economic management. But institutional change is not just a technical or mechanical process. It involves politics and this was not appreciated by aid agencies, as Shirley (2008) argues, and new institutional economics was not good news for development assistance.

So the early 1990s witnessed the advent of the new concept of 'capacity building' in the international development domain. The World Bank is regarded as the initiator of this concept, though later the development agencies started using the concept of 'capacity development.' Some commentators find no basic difference between these two terms (Vincent-Lancrin 2007), while others argue that there is: capacity building is regarded as having its start from a scratch, while capacity development is viewed as having a base from where to start the process (Kuhl 2009, Pearson 2011). Whatever the case, there is as yet no consensus on what capacity building/development actually means or entails. Most of the aid agencies have defined it in their own ways (Pearson 2011). But there appears to be a consensus that capacity building must include individuals, institutions and systems that collectively enable effective and sustainable development. However, based on an increasing number of sociological studies, Kuhl (2009) argues that development assistance can no longer be primarily explained by the needs of developing countries, rather by the search for acquiring legitimacy of continuing development assistance within the domestic constituencies of the industrial world. Whatever might be the case, capacity building/development appears to remain as a prominent organising theme of international development for the foreseeable future. Since the UNFCCC uses the term 'capacity building' that is what this paper will do.

Lessons from history

Development cooperation by the industrial countries in the form of technical assistance began in the 1950s. Since then, it came with many different names, forms and hues, but the question of its effectiveness had always been a central concern. As development engineering in varied environments across the world was often a process of 'learning by doing', themes and strategies for ensuring aid effectiveness constantly kept changing. Beginning with institution building and institutional strengthening during the 1960s-1980s, aid agencies have zeroed in on capacity building/development since the 1990s as the organising theme for development

cooperation, together with 'good governance' and 'country ownership' of exogenous assistance. Since 2003, there have been four high level deliberations on aid effectiveness: in Rome in 2003; in Paris in 2005; in Accra in 2008; and finally in Busan in 2011. Beginning particularly with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in 2005, 'systems' development was given focus in aid delivery. Meanwhile the shibboleth of development cooperation is shifting from 'aid effectiveness' to 'development effectiveness' (Mawdsley et al 2014). The landscape of development cooperation is also changing, with new donors from both the North and the South, along with new stakeholders including increased civil society participation.

In such evolving dynamics, the total number of aid projects and programmes has kept increasing, with hardly any capacity-neutral interventions. Morgan (2006) argues that many governments both from the donor and recipient sides and funding agencies prefer to keep capacity building as an umbrella concept with boundaries wide open, under which many different projects and programmes can be packaged and legitimised. In any case, bilateral and multilateral agencies led by the UNDP and the World Bank since the mid-1990s have initiated either stand-alone or mixed projects where capacity building figured somehow. The World Bank now has a dedicated Capacity Development Centre, and the UNDP likewise has a Capacity Development Group. The UN REDD programme is involved in many capacity building projects. The World Bank's Global Environment Facility (GEF), with its programme of Strategic Approach to Capacity Building, has initiated many such projects, which are crosscutting through its core areas of action, which include climate change. There are many flagship capacity building programmes, both of past and present, by regional and bilateral agencies, including: the EU's Advancing Capacity to support Climate Change Adaptation project; European Commission's Climate Change Capacity Development project; USAID's Capacity Building Program on the Economics of Climate Change Adaptation; the ; the Institutional Strengthening in Pacific Island Countries to Adapt to Climate Change project; and the Climate and Development Knowledge Network funded by the Netherlands and UK.

Despite these efforts, things on the ground have changed little (Keijzer 2013). So far very limited evidence is available on how the recipient countries themselves are managing capacity development strategies (Keijzer & Janus 2014). Capacity building efforts targeted at public sector strengthening also did not meet the expectations (World Bank 2005). While some analysts hold both the donors and recipients of aid responsible for such results (Wood *et al.* 2011; Keijzer & Janus 2014), others argue that donors are slow learners (Mawdsley *et al.* 2014) and lag behind the recipient countries in principles of aid effectiveness, such as mutual accountability and transparency (Gulrajani 2014). Obviously, inefficiency and ineffectiveness in capacity building initiatives continue to linger, mainly because of short-lived project-based interventions, lack of investments and under-involvement of recipients (UNFCCC 2016; Vandevveer & Dabelko, 2001).

Second, in technical assistance programmes of capacity building, private consulting firms usually from donor countries are commissioned to do the job. One or two consultants are 'parachuted in' to organise workshops and trainings, and the job is done with the submission of a project report. This was a mainly input-based, supply-driven, short-term and ad-hoc exercise. Here no capacity building 'systems' were left behind to carry the task forward (Huq 2016). Some argue that such donor-driven exercises by foreign experts even harm local capacity building, weakening local ownership and relieving local staff of taking responsibility for the project (Godfrey *et al.* 2002). While capacity building is a long term iterative process, aid agencies have built-in incentives for project completion reports and short-term output based results. Experience shows that countries where development cooperation played a stimulating and facilitative, but not decisive, role managed an endogenous process of increasing capacities (Kuhl 2009), because capacities cannot be implanted from beyond, but grow within, with a gestation time. The emphasis here again is on national ownership and local leadership of the process. The question remains as to how to grow local ownership and leadership in aided projects on capacity building.

Third, while there is no research yet on how much money is spent on capacity building for many different areas of development and environment, loose estimates suggest that one-third to one-fourth of annual official development assistance goes to capacity building, and the overwhelming share is spent by bilateral agencies (Victor 2013; Morgan 2006). Since capacity building, as a crosscutting issue, often remains a component of most projects, it is difficult to quantify total funding specifically dedicated to capacity building. In any case, funding for capacity building remains poor (Chen and He 2013; UNFCCC 2016; Nakhoda 2015). Wood *et al.* (2011) argue: “*The complex, long-term challenges of capacity development are the most important constraints for most countries, and these do not allow for ‘quick fixes’ or bureaucratically engineered solutions. However, partner countries can do more to identify priorities for strengthening capacities in targeted areas. Donors and agencies in turn can do more to support those priorities in coordinated ways, to strengthen country systems by using them and to reduce donor practices that undermine the development of sustainable capacity*”. Short-term technical assistance-based budgeting for capacity building is not a good avenue of funding for long-term sustainable capacity building ‘systems’.

Fourth, the private sector is largely absent in capacity building activities, except perhaps in the insurance sector, which is a direct profit-earning venture (Victor 2013). But the private sector is now the main stakeholder in mitigation, particularly in rapidly growing developing countries. This area will require speedy technology innovation, transfer, dissemination and application in specific socioeconomic and cultural contexts. It will require huge resources, both financial and technical, invested on a long term basis, which are often not made available through the traditional modes of technical cooperation by development partners.

Finally, there is a sizable literature mostly in the form of agency reports on capacity building in many other areas, such as the global trade regime, the Montreal Protocol, the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Biosafety Protocol, the Regional Seas Programme, disaster risk reduction, etc., but there are no such scientific assessments yet of capacity building activities addressed to climate change. The latter involves both software and hardware, as new knowledge, skills and technologies able to create enabling environment for learning and research by individuals and institutions. Morgan (1998) cogently argues: “*capacity building is a risky, murky, messy business, with unpredictable and unquantifiable outcomes, uncertain methodologies, contested objectives, many unintended consequences, little credit to its champions and long time lags*”. All these lessons and observations point to the need for a renewed start led by the PCCB under the Paris Agreement.

CAPACITY BUILDING UNDER THE UNFCCC

History

Capacity building has been a part of negotiations under the UNFCCC since its inception in 1992. Article 6 of the Convention is dedicated to promoting education, public awareness, public access to climate change information, public participation in addressing climate change, and training of scientific, technical and managerial personnel. The Article was the main basis for subsequent decisions and activities on capacity building. Similarly, Article 10 of the Kyoto Protocol provides for strengthening of research capacity, education and training of personnel and institutional strengthening in developing countries. *Box 1* provides a snapshot of the development of capacity building as an agenda under the UNFCCC.

BOX 1: A brief trajectory of capacity building under the UNFCCC

COP 7: In 2001, the Marrakech Accords established a capacity building framework with guiding principles, and 15 priority areas. Six areas were highlighted specifically for LDCs: strengthening of national climate change focal points; strengthening of national research and training institutions; technical capacity for vulnerability and adaptation assessments; strengthening of meteorological and hydrological services; and enhancing public awareness including education and human capacity development.

COP 8: In 2002, the Five Year New Delhi Work Programme (NDWP) on UNFCCC Article 6 was adopted, with a decision to undertake a review of the 2001 work programme in 2007, and an intermediate review in 2004.

COP 13: In 2007, an amended NDWP was adopted, called for an extension of the 2001 work programme for another five years, through to 2012.

COP 17: In 2011, the Durban Forum on Capacity Building was created, as a multistakeholder forum that meets annually during negotiations to share ideas and best practices.

COP 18: In 2012, the Doha Work Programme on UNFCCC Article 6 was adopted, calling for annual in-session dialogues on Article 6 issues and a review of the 2001 work programme in 2020, with an intermediate review of progress in 2016.

COP 20: In 2014, in Lima, an annual Ministerial Dialogue on Article 6 was agreed. A Web Portal on capacity building activities was also launched by the UNFCCC Secretariat in 2014.

COP 21: In 2016, the Paris Committee on Capacity Building was created to address gaps and needs, and coherence and coordination of capacity building activities under the Convention. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation will organise annual in-session meetings of the PCCB and develop its terms of reference. The PCCB will oversee a work plan for the period 2016-2020. The Capacity Building Initiative on Transparency was also created at COP 21, to strengthen national institutions for meeting Article 13 provisions.

Review of capacity building activities under the UNFCCC

The capacity building activities under the UNFCCC are carried out under the capacity building framework adopted at COP 7 in 2001, as part of the Marrakech Accords. The guiding principles and approaches to this framework highlighted that capacity building should be country-driven and based on the priorities of developing countries; continuous, progressive and iterative; be undertaken in an effective, efficient, integrated and programmatic manner; take into account the special circumstances of LDCs and SIDS; promote 'learning by doing'; and rely on, and mobilise, existing national, sub-regional and regional institutions and the private sector, and build on existing processes and endogenous capacities (UNFCCC 2002).

A first comprehensive review of this framework was conducted at COP 10 in 2004; a second review took place in 2007; and a third was initiated in 2016. The first review found significant gaps, and identified the following key factors, among others, to be taken into account in further implementation:

- Prioritising institutional capacity building.
- Raising awareness at various levels on climate change issues and increasing the involvement of national governmental institutions in capacity building activities.
- Developing and, where appropriate, promoting exchange of best practices, experiences, and information on capacity building activities, including financial resources, case studies and tools for capacity building.
- Ensuring the long-term sustainability of capacity building activities is achieved through integration in planning processes.
- Making financial and technical resources available, through an operating entity of the financial mechanism and, as appropriate, through multilateral and bilateral agencies and the private sector.
- Further applying learning-by-doing approaches for capacity-building by supporting various types of capacity-building activities, projects and programmes at the national and local levels.
- Improving donor coordination.

The second review resulted in a call for ensuring consultations with stakeholders; enhancing the integration of climate change issues and capacity-building needs into national development strategies, plans and budgets; increasing country-driven coordination of capacity-building activities; and strengthening networking and information sharing among developing countries, especially through South-South and triangular cooperation.

A third review was initiated at the 42nd meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 42) in June 2015, but was not concluded. It was agreed to continue the review at SBI 45 in November 2016, with a view to recommending a draft decision for consideration and adoption at COP 22.

In addition to this formal process, there are about 13 thematic and financial entities involved in capacity building. The thematic entities include the Adaptation Committee; Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN); Consultative Group of Experts; Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage; Executive Board of the Clean Development Mechanism; LDC Expert Group; Standing Committee on Finance; and the Technology Executive Committee. The capacity building mandates of these entities can be found in Dagnet *et al.* (2015). The financial entities include the operating entities of the Convention's financial mechanism (GEF, LDC Fund, Special Climate Change Fund, Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund or GCF). The GCF has initiated capacity building activities under its readiness programme for accessing funds. The GEF carries out capacity building in two ways: as stand-alone capacity building activities (called enabling activities); and as part of climate change projects. It is also involved in a wide range of cross-cutting capacity building activities under its core areas for improving environmental governance.

In 2016, the UNFCCC reported 681 capacity building activities undertaken in 2015, by 16 international institutions – an increase of over 80% from 2012 (UNFCCC 2016). Over the 2009-2015 period, support for mitigation-related capacity building was reported as increasing from US\$ 15.75 million to US\$ 321.16 million.

Despite these activities, developing countries report persisting gaps in their capacity needs in their National Communications and submissions to the UNFCCC (Dagnet *et al.* 2015; UNFCCC 2016). These are mainly:

- Lack of public awareness and support for climate action.
- Lack of training in vulnerability and adaptation assessments and methodologies.
- Inadequate international support for building and retaining individual and institutional capacity on a long term basis.
- Fragmentation of delivery channels, database, experts and research institutions.
- The need for establishing and strengthening permanent institutional arrangements and enabling environments.

These capacity constraints continue to linger due to a number of reasons, including inadequate resources; challenges of retaining staff and skills for institutions; lack of ownership and leadership; lack of institutional arrangements and enabling environments; lack of coordination, and fragmentation, between capacity building efforts at the sub-national, national and international levels; and an ad hoc, short-term, project-based approach to capacity building by aid agencies.

In the negotiating arena, capacity building has generally been a low key issue, without the acrimony that exists between Parties in other areas of the climate change negotiations. One area, however, has been controversial: the role of the UNFCCC in implementing capacity building measures. The Umbrella Group (mainly non-EU industrial countries), in particular, has argued that development agencies should take a lead role instead. Developing countries have pushed for a greater role for the UNFCCC as the central agency to ensure coherence and coordination. This controversy continued to the Paris conference, where support from the EU eventually led to some progress.

Paris Outcome on capacity building

Capacity building is dealt with under Article 11 of the Paris Agreement. The five paragraphs of this Article lay down the goals, guiding principles, and procedural obligations of all Parties to the Agreement with regard to capacity building. Developed country Parties should support capacity building in developing countries (Article 11.3), while developing countries should regularly communicate progress made on implementing capacity building plans, policies, actions or measures (Article 11.4). CMA 1 is asked to consider and adopt a decision on the initial institutional arrangements for capacity building.

Paris Committee on Capacity Building

The decision adopting the Paris Agreement (1/CP.17), in paragraph 71, establishes the PCCB to address capacity gaps and needs, both current and emerging, and enhance capacity building efforts. Paragraph 74 of the adopting decision launches a work plan on capacity building for the period 2016-2020, to consider nine elements (see Table 1). SBI 44, in May 2016, has already agreed on a 12-member PCCB, along with a draft terms of reference for the committee. A review of progress by the PCCB will take place at COP 25.

The PCCB is expected to ensure coordination and coherence in the capacity building work of disparate entities. Its effectiveness will be determined, to some extent, by the quality of its membership and their experience in capacity building – which is not always possible through a Party-nomination process.

Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency

Article 13 of the Agreement creates the CBIT. Paragraph 84 of decision 1/CP.21 stipulates that the CBIT will build the institutional and technical capacity of developing country Parties, in meeting the transparency requirements of Article 13, and also in the pre-2020 period. Article 13.15 stipulates that “*support shall also be provided for the building of transparency-related capacity of developing country parties on a continuous basis*”.

The GEF Council meeting in June 2016 approved the establishment and programmatic directions of the CBIT Trust Fund, which has been initially capitalised with US\$ 50 million (GEF 2016). GEF will prioritise projects submitted from those countries which are most in need of capacity building for transparency-related actions, in particular the LDCs and SIDS. Instead of a project-based approach, the funds will be best employed in building long-term sustainable mechanisms for transparency-related capacity building in countries, including through the promotion on national institutions (such as universities), in a manner that allows for national ownership of the capacity building efforts.

Finance for capacity building

The provision of finance for capacity building under Article 11.3 of the Paris Agreement is a recommendation (*should*), while the provision of support for the CBIT on a continuous basis under Article 13.14 and 13.15 is obligatory (*shall*). The latter does not specify any group of countries that “shall” be providing the support, however. These different formulations and omissions provide leeway for subjective interpretations by Parties in the negotiations. Also the support provision focuses more on transparency of action, than on support provided and received (Asselt, *et al.* 2016). It would appear overall that developed country Parties are more interested in capacity building for transparency, than plugging any overall capacity gaps.

Table 1: The nine elements of the PCCB work plan

	Proposals for the way forward
Assess how to increase synergies through cooperation and avoid duplication among existing bodies.	Coherence and coordination of the 13 entities working on capacity building under the UNFCCC (and the many more working outside the UNFCCC on climate-related capacity building) will be the PCCB's most challenging task. The current approach is scattered, inefficient and ineffective. The PCCB will have to consider long-term institutional options to improve coordination and coherence, and we suggest that a permanent "Capacity Building Mechanism" (CBM) appears to be the most efficient way forward.
Identify capacity gaps and needs and recommend ways to address them.	Despite numerous calls from previous reviews under the UNFCCC, plugging capacity gaps has proved challenging. A good understanding of national needs will be a prerequisite for identifying and addressing capacity gaps. The analytical/strategy arm of the proposed CBM could play the invaluable role of keeping abreast of constantly evolving national needs, while also identifying gaps and ways to address them.
Promote the development and dissemination of tools and methodologies for the implementation of capacity building.	A wide range of national stakeholders will have to be involved in the identification, development and dissemination of these tools and methodologies, including communities, governments, donors and universities. Moreover, a number of sectors will have to be covered. A national-level institution to coordinate this function must be a medium- to long-term goal, with the proposed CBM playing a facilitative role.
Foster global, regional, national and sub-national cooperation.	Country ownership, mutual accountability, and transparency will be critical in this regard. Cooperation could be strengthened in formal and informal education, knowledge support, e-learning, networking, etc. "Outside" actors (whether aid agencies, federal governments in the subnational context, or non-government organisations) should play a facilitative and information/ knowledge sharing role.
Identify and collect good practices, challenges, experiences and lessons learned from work on capacity building by bodies established under the Convention.	This must be part of an ongoing and sustained process of learning, to continue to strengthen capacity building efforts under the Convention. The proposed CBM's analytical/strategy arm can play a key role in this regard.
Explore how developing country Parties can take ownership of building and maintaining capacity over time and space.	This intractable issue can be facilitated through a more sustainable process to identify country needs; longer-term and more sustainable budget support instead of short-term technical assistance; national and local leadership; incentives for leaders/managers; a facilitative role for external partners; and mutual accountability and transparency. At the international level, funding modalities that allow for programmatic support, such as the GCF's Enhanced Access Modality, can play a key role. At the national level, national capacity building institutions can play a key role.
Identify opportunities to strengthen capacity at the national, regional and subnational level.	As climate change challenges are mostly local, national or region-specific, the identification of opportunities should be led by national and regional experts. The analytical arm of the proposed CBM and national capacity institutions can both play a role in promoting effective and efficient capacity development and utilisation.
Foster dialogue, coordination, collaboration and coherence among relevant processes and initiatives under the Convention.	Such dialogue coordination, collaboration and coherence will have to take place between institutions and process under the Convention, but also outside (with development agencies, for instance), and also at the national level. The CBM and national coordinating institutions could play a key role.
Provide guidance to the Secretariat on the maintenance and further development of the web-based capacity building portal.	A critical role for the portal should be to share peer-reviewed knowledge with national and subnational actors in developing countries without cost; and record traditional practices for dealing with climate variability and change.

WHAT KIND OF CAPACITIES ARE NEEDED TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE?

The complex and wide-ranging nature of the climate problem – and the solutions to help address this challenge – make the issue of capacity equally challenging. Submissions from Parties include an almost overwhelming array of needs (UNFCCC 2001).

Stepping back, we suggest that we can broadly classify capacity needs into three major categories:

- To better understand the nature of the climate problem as it pertains to any country – i.e., what might be the physical manifestations of a changed climate and its implications for various economic activities and livelihoods, such as impact on agriculture production, for ecological systems such as forests, mangroves, coral reefs, and fisheries, and for human and societal well-being through weather-related disasters, heat stress, etc.
- To be able to formulate and implement national actions to both help limit the scale of the problem through mitigation of greenhouse emissions, and to limit the human, ecological, economic, and other societal impacts through measures to mitigate risks and adapt to them.
- To analyse, build consensus on, and articulate the national interest in UNFCCC climate negotiations and obligations, as well as the broader array of international climate-related discussions and activities that now engage most countries (Sagar 2000).

While it goes without saying that local capacity is central, it may be in some cases that not all the relevant capacity may reside locally. For example, many LDCs may not be able to lead or manage a climate modelling effort aimed at understanding the manifestations of climate change within their countries. In this case, ensuring that international climate modelling capacity is adequately responding to the need to generate, for example, the downscaled scientific information that can be used as a starting point for climate risk assessment in these countries.

But even understanding what might be specific issues to examine (e.g. changes in rainfall patterns) will require an understanding of local issues and priorities. Since climate risks result from the interactions of climate change with local physical, biological/ecological and human/societal systems, the need for local knowledge becomes critical. Here local (natural and social scientific) capacity will play a major role. Similarly, monitoring and observation of climate impacts may require both international and local capacity. But as we move towards issues such as prioritising and implementing mitigation and adaptation options in the context of national development objectives, local capacity plays an increasingly central role, since an understanding of the local conditions takes on primacy.

In other words, with upstream, relatively ‘objective’ processes relating to understanding of climate phenomena (such as climate modelling and other scientific research), the relevant capacity and processes may be delocalised, although informed by local context and needs. As we move towards developing an understanding of the ensuing climate risks, local knowledge become more important since broadly the risk is the result of interactions between climate phenomena and local systems (be they physical, biological/ecological, or human). Here collaborations between industrialised country and developing country actors can be quite fruitful.

But as we move towards issues where subjective judgments become even more important – such as which development objectives to prioritise while choosing among mitigation options, for example, or what might be most suitable way to implement an option – appropriate and adequate local capacity is critical, with external actors preferably playing only a supporting role (such as providing information about good practices of policies and business models elsewhere).

Notably, while capacity resides in humans and organisations, given the breadth and the complexity of almost any aspect of climate change, networks and institutions that enable and guide the flow of knowledge play an important role in both harnessing such knowledge and gathering multiple perspectives become key. At the same time, learning becomes another key attribute.

To sum up, the key objectives of capacity building broadly are development of appropriate human and institutional capacity to engage in three activities: understanding the nature of the problem for the local context; understanding and navigating the ‘solution’ space, including international engagement; and implementing mitigation and adaptation solutions. A variety of actors, domestic and international, can contribute to this capacity development process through appropriate knowledge, skills, expertise and financial resources.

THE WAY FORWARD

The key to successful implementation of capacity building will eventually rely on a keen understanding of national capacity needs and challenges. What are the kinds of capacity needed in a particular country? How do we understand capacity needs by (a) types of capacity needed, (b) level (i.e., local, regional, or national), and (c) sector/area (e.g., energy, agriculture, water, disaster management, communication of information, public education and awareness)?

To understand these needs and guide national capacity building, we believe that it is necessary to have a national institution that is dedicated to the task. In fact, we would suggest that building institutional capacity to oversee a programme to develop climate-relevant capacity within the country is probably the most important – and perhaps the most difficult – activity of a capacity building programme. Such an institution should be able to develop a good understanding of national capacity needs, as well as oversee, coordinate, and facilitate the national capacity building process, define and shape the national capacity building agenda. Thus in a sense, it would be like a ‘system operator’ (Chaudhary, Sagar, & Mathur, 2012), and central to any effort towards “*capacity-building [being] country-driven, based on and responsive to national needs, and foster[ing] country ownership,*” as highlighted in the Paris Agreement (Article 11.2).

Tackling climate change issues requires long-term, sustainable systems at the national levels to carry out capacity building functions for decades and generations to come. This will require a significant shift away from consultancy and project-driven approach. The ultimate indicator of judging value for money for climate change capacity building should be whether in-country capacity systems and capacity suppliers have been developed in each target country, along with the appropriate arrangements for international flows of knowledge and other resources to support in-country actors to undertake the various functions required to participate fully in the climate arena. Such an approach allows capacity building exercises to be seen as ‘investments’ not as ‘expenditures’.

International arrangements

What kind of institutional form is ultimately needed at the international level, to appropriately support sustainable national-level capacity building? This will ultimately depend on the objectives of the international institution, which we would list as the following:

- Changing the paradigm of funding for capacity building to allow for more systematic, dedicated and

programmatic funding (maybe leveraging options such as the GCF's Enhanced Direct Access modality, which is expected to provide greater country ownership and programmatic support).

- Enhanced research and analysis on capacity building, which would include both a common perspective (e.g., principles of capacity building that might be useful for all countries; lessons from recent experiences in the climate area; how to enhance country ownership), as well as national perspectives (working with local institutions). The latter could also serve to provide feedback into international efforts.
- Facilitating and providing guidance to the implementation of capacity building efforts.
- Providing guidance to other actors outside the UNFCCC (such as bilateral donors and philanthropies) regarding key issues, gaps, and opportunities in capacity building for climate change.
- Developing assessment procedures and metrics to evaluate progress on capacity building.

This suggests that a systematic institutionalised approach to capacity building is required at the global (UNFCCC) level in the long term, consistent with Article 11.5 of the Paris Agreement, which states that “[C]apacity-building activities shall be enhanced through appropriate institutional arrangements to support the implementation of this Agreement...”.

We suggest the most suitable approach would be to create a Capacity Building Mechanism (CBM), to marshal resources for capacity building, guide and facilitate implementation in a flexible manner, and share lessons on capacity building efforts across countries and regions. This will ensure systematic and ongoing attention to the capacity building issue at the global level. The CBM can undertake the important task of tracking capacity building flows, and the channels and recipients of these flows.

What should such a CBM look like? Taking a cue from the Technology Mechanism, but learning some lessons from its experience, we suggest that the CBM have two arms – an analytical/strategy arm and an implementation arm – overseen by a Board.

The analytical/strategy arm would engage in analyses to provide guidance to developing countries on key issues relating to capacity building (including lessons from ongoing efforts), and also to the implementation arm on how to strengthen capacity building efforts under the UNFCCC and make them more effective. The implementation arm would facilitate implementation of capacity building efforts, in a manner that is suited to the local needs and contexts of target countries.

Learning from the Technology Mechanism, these arms must be guided by domain experts rather than negotiators (or country representatives) (de Coninck and Sagar 2015). The overall CBM Board could have national representation, but with a majority from developing nations, since eventually the CBM has to be accountable to these ‘users’. The Board could also have representation from the operating entities of the financial mechanism and the Technology Mechanism (and vice versa), to enhance coordination between these three ‘means of implementation’.

The implementation of capacity building efforts will require a range of knowledge support, including: scientific knowledge to better understand climate impacts; technical knowledge to appropriately meet UNFCCC reporting obligations (including “*timely and accurate communication of information*”) and to help design and implement mitigation and adaptation actions; effective business models to facilitate the deployment of technologies; policies to assist the mitigation and adaptation actions; and access to suitable finance. A number of international actors are key to such knowledge support. These include research enterprises that could provide suitable inputs to local climate impacts and other agencies that can support implementation efforts

(see Box 2 for an example). It should be noted that such international actors should not supplant developing country institutions, but rather support and strengthen them.

BOX 2: ICAO Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation Scheme

The CTCN, which is the operational arm of the Technology Mechanism, is an example of an institution intended to support implementation. The CTCN provides technology solutions, capacity building and advice on policy, legal and regulatory frameworks tailored to the needs of individual countries in order to help accelerate low carbon and climate resilient development. But the CTCN's current annual funding is less than US\$ 20 million to support all developing countries with the implementation of their climate actions. This funding does not come from the UNFCCC – the CTCN has to depend on donors for funding. Similar funding constraints for capacity building will have crippling effects on the ability of developing countries to implement their climate change contributions.

What sort of activities should the CBM promote at the national level? We identify at least four kinds: human resource development; institutional capacity building; developing networks; and developing metrics for capacity building.

Human resource training

Capacity building efforts fundamentally have to involve imparting specific skills to individuals – from more straightforward skills such as energy auditing, or installing solar photovoltaic installations, to more complex skills such as project design and implementation, or strategic decision-making. Most of these can be developed through training programmes, although the more complex the skill, the more the importance of learning-by-doing, which means working alongside experts over longer periods. To support adaptation, a dedicated focus on capacity building at local levels, for communities and local government officials, will be necessary. Training of trainers will be important for sustainable capacity building. National governments have a key role to play by ensuring there is an adequate supply of well-educated personnel as the foundation upon which capacity is built. Universities, by virtue of both engaging in research as well as being central players in the world of research as well as education, training, and awareness should play a key role in human resource training (see Box 3).

BOX 3: Key role of universities

Investing in universities is key to sustainable capability building systems under Articles 11 and 12 of the Paris Agreement (Hoffmeister *et al.* 2016). Historically, universities have proved to be powerful arbiters of knowledge in societies and their impact reaches well beyond their own boundaries (Winthrop and McGivney, 2016). Therefore universities have a ripple effect across all sections of society, going all the way from schoolchildren (through an influence on curriculum) to thought leaders and policy makers.

Universities can be central hubs in capacity building activities, the source of trained personnel and generators and disseminators of climate-relevant knowledge, especially since even the poorest countries have universities. Some universities in developing countries, for example, are already taking the lead in developing Master programmes for students and professionals. Strengthening existing programmes and helping develop new ones with the appropriate curriculum and research would go a long way in building human resources to help tackle climate change. However, universities, especially in the LDCs, lack resources, such as budgets for developing infrastructure, lack of technical aids and internet facilities for learning, access to global knowledge and databases, poor library collections, poor or no research funds, etc. Overcoming these barriers requires funding and appropriate programme development to impart specific skills relevant to addressing climate change.

Institutional capacity building

Strengthening or building institutions that are able to fulfill the functions required to support effective climate action is equally key, since ultimately such entities are the ones that will organise human and other resources to complete specific tasks. Institutional capabilities may also involve something as simple as an energy audit, or something as complex as coordinating technology development and deployment activities across a number

of sectors. The Climate Innovation Centers are an example of an institutional form intended to take a holistic perspective to provide a range of support services to accelerate climate innovation (*see Box 4*).

BOX 4: Climate Innovation Centers

The World Bank is establishing a global network of Climate Innovation Centers (CICs) in seven countries (Kenya, South Africa, Ethiopia, the Caribbean, Morocco, Ghana, and Vietnam) around the world. Based on a concept developed by Sagar, Bremner & Grubb (2009), the CICs aim to provide end-to-end support for developing/adapting climate technologies and deploying them at scale, taking into account the particular requirements for a given technology and the deployment context. The CICs provide a suite of services to small and medium enterprises and climate innovators, including business advisory services, training to build local capacity, and policy support to promote more effective policies and sector regulations.

Developing networks

Greater interaction between actors, especially within the South, at all scales (local, national and regional) will be of particular use to promote knowledge and experience sharing, and for synergies between entities and across application domains (Chandler & Kennedy 2015).

Developing metrics for capacity building

The development of metrics for capacity building will help both the global stocktake (under Article 14 of the Paris Agreement), and regular assessments of progress in capacity building. It also will serve as an analytical base for understanding patterns and determinants of successful capacity building.

Adequate and appropriate financial support

Finally, the need for adequate and appropriately provided support for capacity building cannot be stressed enough. Investments in capacity building can yield rich dividends by enhancing the effectiveness of climate action, which has global benefit, both for mitigation and adaptation actions (Khan 2014). But this cannot be left to the goodwill of donor agencies or other institutions with a limited view or understanding of the overall capacity building needs of developing countries.

The Paris Agreement by no means guarantees adequate resources for capacity building. The use of the term “*should*” instead of “*shall*” in the context of developed countries enhancing support for capacity building indicates a lower form of obligation. Thus attention must be paid to ensure that developed country Parties do follow through on this obligation.

Linkages between the capacity building institutional arrangements (such as the proposed CBM) and the operating entities of the financial mechanism are crucial to move away from bilateral support and technical assistance, and align capacity building and finance in a way that allows for the prioritisation of the agenda as articulated by developing countries. At the same time, the UNFCCC should also provide guidance to other donors – bilateral and multilateral agencies, as well as philanthropies – to complement rather than substitute or duplicate UNFCCC efforts in relation to key gaps and needs. In particular, actors such as philanthropic institutions may be able to make a critical contribution (*see Box 5*).

BOX 4: The important role of philanthropic institutions

Philanthropic actors have much more agility, flexibility and freedom with which to operate. They can take a long-term perspective since they do not have to deliver immediate returns synchronised with government policy or political cycles or shareholder expectations (and can even take a broader perspective on what constitutes a 'return'). They can also take greater risks and experiment with newer and more innovative approaches to addressing development challenges. They are able to take a "system perspective" that recognises that the success of a project or a funded entity very much depends on the broader context of operation/implementation. Therefore, they may be engaged in ecosystem development, market creation, and refinement of policies in order to help achieve effective outcomes (United Nations 2013).

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