

# Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation into Development Planning<sup>1</sup>

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*Climate change poses a risk to the development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It affects livelihoods, health, and economic development.*

Since climate change has become more of a development issue, there is a need to mainstream climate change adaptation (CCA) into national planning as part of broader policies for development. Development planning should take into account anticipated impacts of climate change particularly on the livelihoods, resilience, and health of the population in poor countries.

**Mainstreaming climate change** is the iterative process of integrating considerations of climate change adaptation into policy making, budgeting, and implementation and monitoring processes at national, sectoral, and subnational levels as well as the different key sectors in the development field (UNDP-UNEP 2011).

Developed under the UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative, the framework of mainstreaming CCA into development planning is shown in Figure 1. It consists of three major components, namely:

1. **Finding the entry points and making the case.** This component sets the stage for mainstreaming. Preliminary assessment includes understanding the linkages between climate change and national development priorities. To define pro-poor adaptation outcomes targeted for mainstreaming CCA, governmental, institutional, and political contexts and needs must be understood. Possible entry points for mainstreaming at the national and sectoral planning levels include poverty reduction strategy; national development plans; sectoral strategies, plans, and policies; and preparation of sectoral budgets.
2. **Mainstreaming adaptation into policy processes.** It focuses on integrating CCA into the policy formulation process such as national development plans or sectoral initiatives based on country-specific evidence including impact, vulnerability and adaptation assessments,

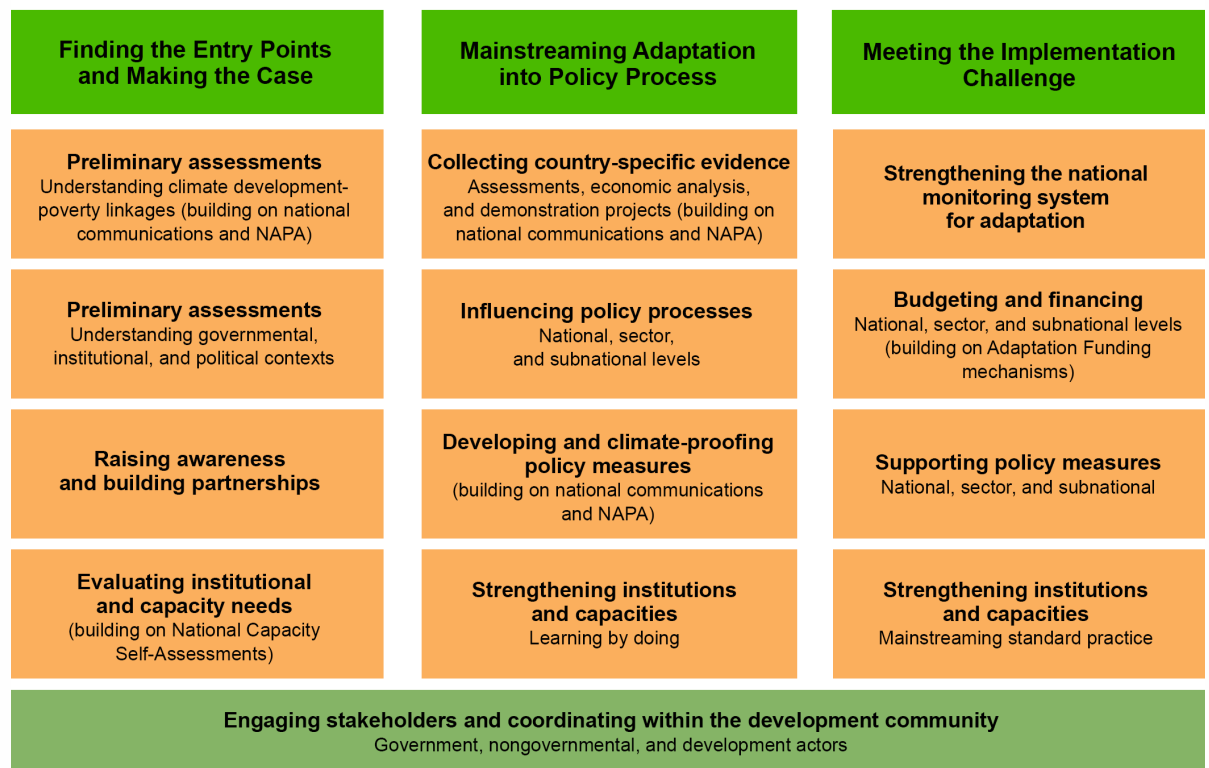


Figure 1. Framework of mainstreaming climate change adaptation into development

socioeconomic analysis, and demonstration projects.

Vulnerability and adaptation assessments help identify the population groups, regions, and sectors that are most vulnerable due to present climate risks, state of development, poverty, and/or natural resources. Such assessments could also estimate or gauge future impacts and vulnerabilities. They may also serve as basis for identifying possible adaptation measures.

3. **Meeting the implementation challenge.** This component ensures that mainstreaming CCA is institutionalized. Necessary to meet the implementation challenge is to strengthen the national monitoring system for adaptation. Budget and financing should likewise be provided to effectively implement and monitor the institutionalization of the mainstreaming process. Moreover, effective climate-related policies must be developed. For mainstreaming CCA to be a standard practice in the

country, strengthening institutions and capacities should thus be prioritized.

Since mainstreaming CCA is an iterative process, each component capitalizes on previous work or activities and depends on the country's circumstances, priorities, and needs. The whole process—from inception through policy formulation, implementation, and monitoring—requires the participation and cooperation of different stakeholders including government policy makers, implementing agencies, development partners, the private sector, and communities.

Revising regulations and standards such as employing building codes to reflect climate risks in terms of infrastructure and building on early warning systems to include medium- and long-term climate impacts in the area of disaster risk reduction are examples of mainstreamed adaptation measures.

Meanwhile, Figure 2 illustrates another approach towards mainstreaming

CCA into any development planning and policy. This “learning-by-doing” approach involves four simple steps: (1) awareness raising, (2) targeted information, (3) piloted activities, and (4) mainstreaming. Capacity building initiatives are needed at the policy level across all sectors to ensure that the first three steps can be integrated effectively into the policy-making process.

There are, however, barriers to mainstreaming CCA. They are as follows:

- Limited understanding of the nature and extent of risks and vulnerabilities
- Lack of knowledge of adaptation (and effective implementation)
- Lack of supportive policies, standards, regulations, and design guidance
- Existing legal or regulatory restrictions
- Lack of availability or restricted access to finance
- Differences in willingness to accept uncertainties

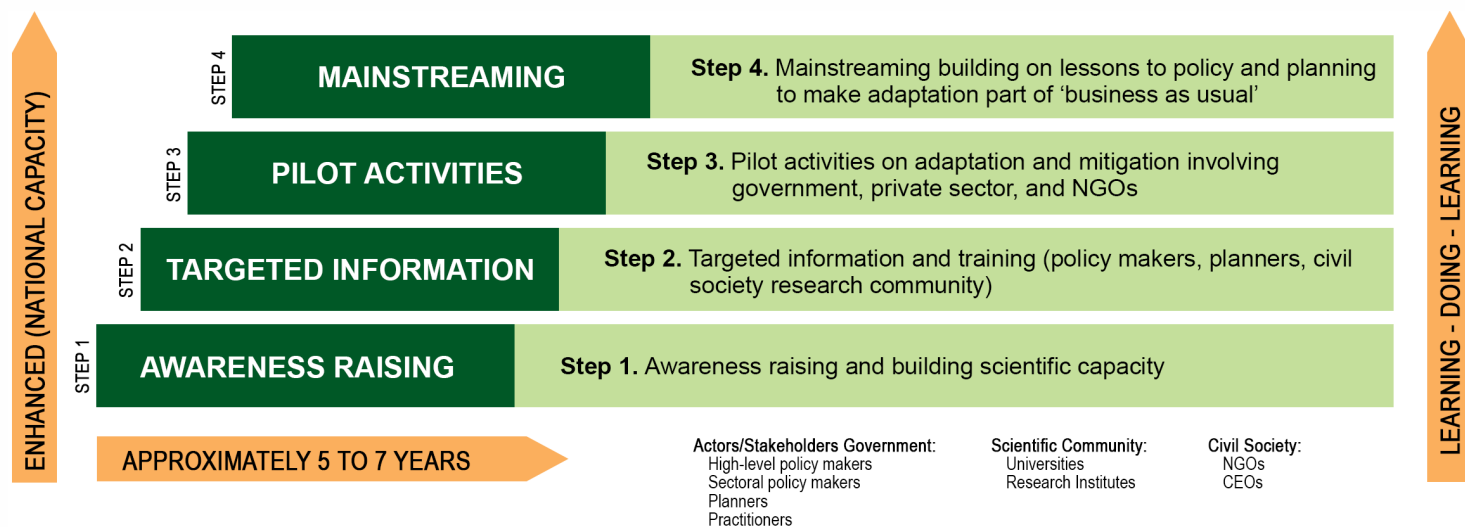


Figure 2. A simple step for mainstreaming<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Huq S. and J. Ayers. 2008. Taking Steps: Mainstreaming National Adaptation. IIED Briefing. International Institute for Environment and Development. <http://pubs.iied.org/17040IIED.html>

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