

Independent Evaluation of the National Communications Support Programme

Final Evaluation Report

Requested by:
United Nations Development Programme

February 3rd, 2013

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Executive Summary

All Parties that are signatories to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are obligated, under Article 4.1 and 12, to provide information regarding the steps they are undertaking to implement the convention. Non-Annex I countries should submit their first National Communications within three years of the convention coming into force, based on the availability of funding. The funding delivered to Non-Annex I countries for National Communications is provided by the financial mechanism to the convention, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its Implementing Agencies, through its Enabling Activities (EA) programming.

The National Communications Support Programme (NCSP) was initiated in April 2005 to provide technical and policy support to more than 140 non-Annex I Parties in the preparation of their National Communications. The activities of the project aimed to improve the quality, comprehensiveness, and timeliness of national communications from non-Annex 1 Parties to the Convention in accordance with guidance provided by the Conference of Parties (see decision 17/CP.8). The NCSP is jointly implemented by UNDP and UNEP, and its current phase of implementation came to an end on December 2012.

The NCSP goal is *to provide an integrated package of support activities to promote the integration of climate change policy into national development policies*. In order to achieve this goal, the NCSP has three key objectives:

Objective 1. To facilitate implementation of enabling activities related to the preparation of National Communications;

Objective 2. To prepare and disseminate technical and policy-relevant materials, including methodologies and tools; and

Objective 3. To enhance knowledge management, best practices, communications and outreach.

In accordance with UNDP/GEF M&E policies and procedures for all regular and medium-sized projects supported by the GEF, the following report is the final evaluation of the NCSP. The key evaluation questions focused on four main criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and appropriateness, as defined by the OECD DAC and UNDP. The evaluation examines the progress of the NCSP toward its main objectives since 2005, identifies main achievements and gaps, and provides lessons learned and recommendations for practical remedial action.

In terms of **relevance**, the evaluation concludes that the NCSP is highly responsive to UNFCCC guidance and its priorities, and has implemented the underlying principles of Convention's Capacity Building Framework for non-Annex I countries. The NCSP closely supports and complements the efforts of the CGE and Secretariat and fulfills a specific role in essential technical backstopping and guidance around the NCs. Although not as overt as its direct role in operationalizing UNFCCC capacity building principles through assisting countries to meet reporting requirements under the Convention, the NCSP is also well-aligned with GEF, UNDP and UNEP priorities and policies. The implementation structure of operating through the IAs has served the NCSP strategy relatively well, though stronger regional expertise and specific tailored support appear to be areas for further improvement for the IAs as the NCSP adapts its technical backstopping role.

At the country level, the evaluation survey of mostly NC coordinators (36 NC coordinators, 8 UNFCCC focal points, 8 technical experts) reveals that the majority of opinions about the NCSP's relevance to NCs and support for NC country teams are favorable and strongly expressed. The three areas of 'strongest agreement' are that the NCSP technical guidance materials are used by NC teams (87.5% 28/32), the NCSP has improved access to NC technical and policy information on NCs (75%, 27/36), and NCSP tools/methods are used to integrate climate change into policies (71%, 27/38), respectively. Also, since country needs are extremely specific, the passive products and tools, such as the roster of experts, knowledge networks, and website, are .

To this end, however, to the extent possible, the NCSP should encourage streamlined reporting processes, coherence between reporting requirements, and lessening administrative burdens for partner countries. Also, NCSP has, to date, underutilized the relative support of regional, national and local institutions and technical expertise in order to bolster its local reach. Lastly, in order to ensure continued appropriateness at the country level, the NCSP should consider how to improve its delivery mechanisms to support the process of ensuring NCs develop beyond a reporting requirement and toward a technically sound framework document that is linked to national policies, informs policy-making, and helps enable mainstreaming climate change at the national level.

The NCSP has been highly **effective** in delivering products and services in a responsive manner that met the needs of countries that requested assistance for the preparation of National Communications. The technical backstopping has been the most valuable services provided to NAI countries, as it provides hands-on tailored technical support to countries requests. As countries continue to build capacity for national reporting, this type of technical backstopping will become increasingly more important to respond to specific needs that reflect changing national context and capacities. The NCSP has also prepared and disseminated a number of technical and policy related guidance documents that have been highly useful to countries. Given the time between the NCs, these materials will need to be updated for the next support programme.

Nevertheless, the overall the outreach and knowledge management undertaken by the NCSP has not been as effective as intended in terms of reach and the enhancement of knowledge management. The 'knowledge network' had low participation rates with few participating countries and experts. The website, provides a good source of information to countries; however, the layout may not be as user-friendly as possible. While the newsletter has been appreciated by a number of countries, it has really not been delivered with the contribution of countries, and the NCSP may want to explore other ways of providing the same information on a different platform. The workshops have been highly responsive to countries' needs and highly appreciated by participants.

The programme oversight has been effective, even with the dissolution of the Advisory Board. Nevertheless, the future support programme would need to ensure the reinstatement of the Advisory Board that would allow for informed and strategic guidance. Finally, the monitoring and reporting was not sufficient in order to measure and track the attainment of the programme objectives. In response to the MTE, the NCSP did undertake measures to improve this function. However, these proved challenging to implement so late in the programme.

The NCSP has been highly **efficient** in providing technical backstopping for member countries in light of human and financial resources available. The timeliness of the NCSP had not been as intended, however, since support began when several countries had already commenced the process of developing their NCs. However, given the increasing number and frequency of reporting requirements under the convention framework, along with an incremental increase in national capacities, it will be challenging to ensure that the NCSP is launched at the most opportune time(s) for countries to benefit. To date the NCSP has largely been able to be synergistic and complementary; however, the delivery of technical backstopping will need to be increasingly efficient and provided with more regional support.

The **sustainability** of results of NCSP activities and outputs hinge on the in-country relevance of NCs – and the process of developing the NCs - toward enabling effective policy planning and addressing development needs in light of climate change. The sustainability of the NCSP therefore depends on the ability of the programme to supply targeted guidance and technical support to partner countries at critical stages in the process of developing their NCs, and in ways that ensure the relevance of the NCs for not only UNFCCC reporting purposes but for providing a platform for cohesive policy-making, additional financing, and other follow-on activities.

This evaluation concludes that NCSP achievements have reached beyond the scope and scale of the program by providing technical solutions to overcome specific barriers to climate change planning and actions, and by building capacity for integrating climate change into national development policies at the individual level, and, in many cases, at the institutional and inter-ministerial levels.

However, the reach of NCSP's results is limited by a number of external factors typical of global support programs, such as managing the administrative burdens countries face in the process of developing their NCs (insufficient staff, high staff turn-over, government delays), as well as needing to quickly adapt to the dynamic context of reporting requirements for global climate funds. The NCSP also faces a number of internal barriers to upscale and replication, such as the relatively low levels of country awareness about what the program has to offer, and a lack of good models to engage regional partners and expertise.

In sum, with limited financial and human resources, the NCSP has been highly flexible and effective in implementing the programme to reach its objectives. The programme's technical backstopping, workshops, and guidance materials have been highly valued by partner countries in the development of their NCs. NCSP support has helped build individual capacity for NAI NC teams and their respective ministries, and in some cases has encouraged and informed inter-ministerial or inter-institutional collaboration. However, some challenges remain in delivering targeted technical services and products on the basis of a country-driven process and a demand-based programme, including matching the timing of products and services with particular needs, enabling accessibility and appropriateness of products and services through effective knowledge management, and mobilizing regional partners for ongoing and periodic technical support.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Thus in light of the conclusions of the evaluation, the following recommendations have been presented:

- The NCSP should consider how to improve its delivery mechanisms to support the process of ensuring NCs develop beyond a reporting requirement and toward a technically sound framework document that is linked to national policies, informs policy-making and helps enable mainstreaming climate change at the national level.
- To the extent possible, the NCSP should encourage streamlined reporting processes, coherence between reporting requirements, and lessen administrative burdens for partner countries.
- As the NAI countries take on their SNC and TNC, their capacity needs become more specific to their national context. As such, there is a growing need for an even more tailored approach in the third phase of the NCSP. The requested from countries are increasingly varied and technical, as such, to respond to these needs, a tailored approach may be more effective to respond to country needs. Furthermore, the technical guidance would need to be updated and revised to provide targeted guidance, such as downscaling of certain models to reflect national circumstances.
- Although integration of the NC at the national level remains an important step, the strength of the NCSP lies in building and supporting technical capacity for NCs. As such, given financial and human resources, the NCSP could focus on building individual technical capacities at the national and regional levels in order to increase a network of expertise that is more responsive to national context and capacities, and that can contribute to the credibility of the NC, all the while continuing its inclusion of a mainstreaming component within its activities.
- Outreach is a key component to the delivery of NCSP support, the workshops remain a key activity to engage experts and provide an opportunity to share and network. These workshops should indeed continue during the next phase of the NCSP.

- Having online outreach is imperative to provide low-cost tools to engage participant countries. The NCSP should review the available online tools and select those that have been effective in reaching a similar target audience and promoted engagement, such as webinars. Furthermore, the NCSP could make their website more user-friendly for countries, as well as review the potential use of social networking tools, such as LinkedIn or Twitter, to communicate updates, tips, articles, and best practices, on the website rather than a traditional newsletter.
- As the capacity level for countries to undertake their NCs get increasingly varied, the importance of engaging the regional level support that can provide such technical and policy assistance will be key in the following support programme. Regional cooperation and institutions should be included at the design stage of the next support programme to get a clear sense of the resources available to the NCSP and to countries.
- The design of the next support programme should outline goals and outcomes that are within the scope of the NCSP in regards to the budget and resources available. Although the goal may be to support the integration of climate change policy into national development policies. It would need to be more specific so that it can be within the reach and the scope of the programme (i.e. who's capacity, and what level). In order for the NCSP to get a clear sense of its contribution and the attainment of its goal, it is imperative that a baseline be established, that the log frame includes indicators for the outcomes, as well as the outputs, and that the monitoring be moved beyond the measurement of its outputs and done in a monitoring framework.
- It will increasingly become more difficult to determine when the NCSP should take on a new phase so it may benefit a larger number of countries at the most appropriate time. As the reporting requirements under the convention are become more numerous and more frequent, and while capacities are being built at different paces and levels, the consideration of a permanent support programme that can assist with reporting requirements could be reviewed.
- The efficiency of the NCSP has also been compromised by the lack of regional engagement and support. As such, the NCSP team has had to shift its focus to providing targeted tailored assistance. To improve the efficiency of the NCSP in providing high quality and timely assistance, there will need to be an increase in human resources, as well as regional support.
- In order to ensure capacity built is expanded beyond NC team individuals who attend trainings and workshops, the NCSP should invest effort toward:
 - Cultivating formal and information relationships with regional/local institutions, and facilitating the development of partnerships between countries and these regional centres;
 - Developing and facilitate workshops for a larger group of attendees per country/NC team but with more regional and/or topic focus (e.g. two countries that have very specific similar needs or solutions);
 - Identifying and testing higher quality and faster quality ways to exchange experiences, lessons learned and best practices (replacing the function of the defunct knowledge networks and lack of online), such as webinars featuring exchanges on country experiences and/or talks by the online roster of experts; and
 - Assisting countries in navigating the proliferation of guidance on new and existing topics – LULUCF, MRV, CDM, etc. REDD – and how to integrate these topics into the NCs to make them more relevant for policy processes and decision-making.

Acronyms

AAP	UNDP Africa Adaptation Programme
AC	Advisory Committee
BURs	Biennial Update Reports
CB	Capacity Building
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CGE	Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not Included in Annex I to the Convention
COP-MOP	Conference of the Parties – Meeting of the Parties
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
EA	Enabling Activities
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
INC	Initial National Communications
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
JI	Joint Implementation
LECRDS	Low-emission, Climate-resilient Development Strategies
LULUCF	Land-use, Land-use change and Forestry
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MTE	Mid-term Evaluation
NAI	Non-Annex I
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action
NAPA	National Adaptation Programmes of Action
NC	National Communications
NCSP	National Communications Support Programme
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OECD-DAC	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
PIRs	Project Implementation Reports
PRECIS	Providing Regional Climates for Impact Studies
Prodoc	Project Document
RBM	Results-based management
SBI	Subsidiary Body of Implementation
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
SNC	Second National Communication
TNA	Technology Needs Assessment
TNC	Third National Communication
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
US-EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
V&A	Vulnerability and Adaptation
VA	Vulnerability Assessment
WB	World Bank

1. Introduction

All Parties that are signatories to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are obligated, under Article 4.1 and 12, to provide information regarding the steps they are undertaking to implement the convention. Non-Annex I countries should submit their first National Communications within three years of the convention coming into force, based on the availability of funding.¹

The funding delivered to Non-Annex I countries for National Communications is provided by the financial mechanism to the convention, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its implementing Agencies, through its Enabling Activities (EA) programming. The GEF supports capacity building as a means to improve individual and institutional performance for progress towards global environmental gains, as well as to help countries meet their requirements under the environmental conventions.² During the first round of climate change enabling activities, countries experienced challenges in the implementation of their projects. In response to these challenges, the first NC support program was created in 1998, for a duration of two years. The GEF Review of Climate Change Enabling Activities concluded that the program was highly effective in providing support needed by countries to prepare their National Communications.³

The first guidelines for national communications were adopted at the COP2 in Geneva in 1996. The guidelines were revised in 2002 at COP 8 in New Delhi, which remained the key guidance for most of the current SNCs and TNCs, where appropriate. The COP 17 in 2012 adopted new reporting requirements, incorporates biennial update reports (BURs) guidelines from non-Annex I parties to the Convention (decision 2/CP.17, paragraphs 39-42 and annex III of decision 2/CP.17).⁴ Therefore the BURs will now be financed as part of the agreed upon ‘full cost’ of NC projects under the GEF umbrella. The SBI further “invited the GEF to report on providing funds for technical support for the preparation of BURs from non-Annex I Parties, similar to that provided by the National Communications Support Programme, in its report to COP 19 (paragraph 60).”⁵

According to the Durban Agreement, non-Annex I parties are to submit their first Biennial Update Reports (BURs) by December 2014. The first BUR will need to include a country’s GHG inventory for a calendar year no more than four years prior to the date of submission. Two years following first BUR submission, countries’ next NCs will be due, and after that, BUR and NC submissions will alternate every two years.⁶

2. The Project and its Development Context

In order to continue to support countries to submit their First, Second and/or Third National Communication (SNC and/or TNC) the GEF launched a US\$60 Million Global Umbrella Project, which was also supported by other donors, namely, the United Nations Development Programme, Switzerland, US-EPA, and DFID, that included the provision of a National Communications Support Programme (NCSP) for Non-Annex I countries.⁷

¹ UNFCCC website : http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/items/2716.php

² The GEF website : http://www.thegef.org/gef/capacity_development

³ NCSP Project Document

⁴ UNFCCC website: http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/items/2716.php

⁵ UNFCCC (2012) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties. p7.

⁶ NCSP (2012) Lessons Learned and Experiences from the Preparation of National Communications from Non-Annex I Parties to the UNFCCC. p3.

⁷ NCSP Project Document

The NCSP was initiated in April 2005 to provide technical and policy support to more than 140 non-Annex I Parties. The project was designed to significantly enhance the capacity of participating non-Annex 1 Parties to prepare their national communications for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The activities of the project aimed to improve the quality, comprehensiveness, and timeliness of national communications from non-Annex 1 Parties to the Convention in accordance with guidance provided by the Conference of Parties (see decision 17/CP.8). The NCSP is jointly implemented by UNDP and UNEP, which came to an end on December 2012.⁸

The NCSP goal is *to provide an integrated package of support activities to promote the integration of climate change policy into national development policies*.⁹ In order to achieve this goal, the NCSP has three key objectives:

- Objective 4.* To facilitate implementation of enabling activities related to the preparation of National Communications;
- Objective 5.* To prepare and disseminate technical and policy-relevant materials, including methodologies and tools; and
- Objective 6.* To enhance knowledge management, best practices, communications and outreach.

Three years after its inception, the NCSP underwent a mid-term evaluation (MTE) as per relevant GEF monitoring and evaluation policies for UNDP/GEF projects. Overall, the MTE concluded that the performance of the NCSP was satisfactory and that it provides high quality, efficient and effective support to Non-Annex I countries for the implementation of their enabling activities, as well as the submission of their National Communications. As the project is coming to a close in December 2012, and in accordance with UNDP/GEF M&E policies and procedures for all regular and medium-sized projects supported by the GEF, the NCSP now undergoes a final evaluation upon completion of implementation.

3. Approach for the Evaluation

In order to achieve the evaluation objectives stated in the Terms of Reference (see Annex 6), the evaluation team looked at the progress made towards achieving the NCSP's main objective since its inception in 2005, as well as the achievement towards the three main outcomes of the implementation of the NCSP. The evaluation identified main achievements and gaps, and provided lessons learned as well as practical remedial actions.

Based on the terms of reference, the evaluation team established key evaluation questions that focused on four main criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and appropriateness. The evaluation reflected on the aforementioned criteria based on the definitions provided by the OECD DAC and UNDP, for the relevance and effectiveness criteria, and UNDP, for the appropriateness criteria, which were then used to elaborate on the key evaluation questions, as presented in a detailed evaluation matrix (see Annex 1).

The evaluation reviewed the overall **relevance** of the NCSP within the broader context of support provided at a global level, at the regional level, as well as its relevance at the national level for participating countries. At the global and regional, the evaluation assessed whether the NCSP was aligned with global priorities, as well as the priorities of the UNDP, UNEP, and the GEF, and whether after six years of operation it is still relevant. Within this criteria, the evaluation also assessed whether the design and concept of the NCSP is indeed relevant to the participating countries' target audience or beneficiaries. There is complementarity between the relevance and **appropriateness** criteria; for the purpose of this evaluation the appropriateness criteria looked

⁸ NCSP Mid-Term Evaluation

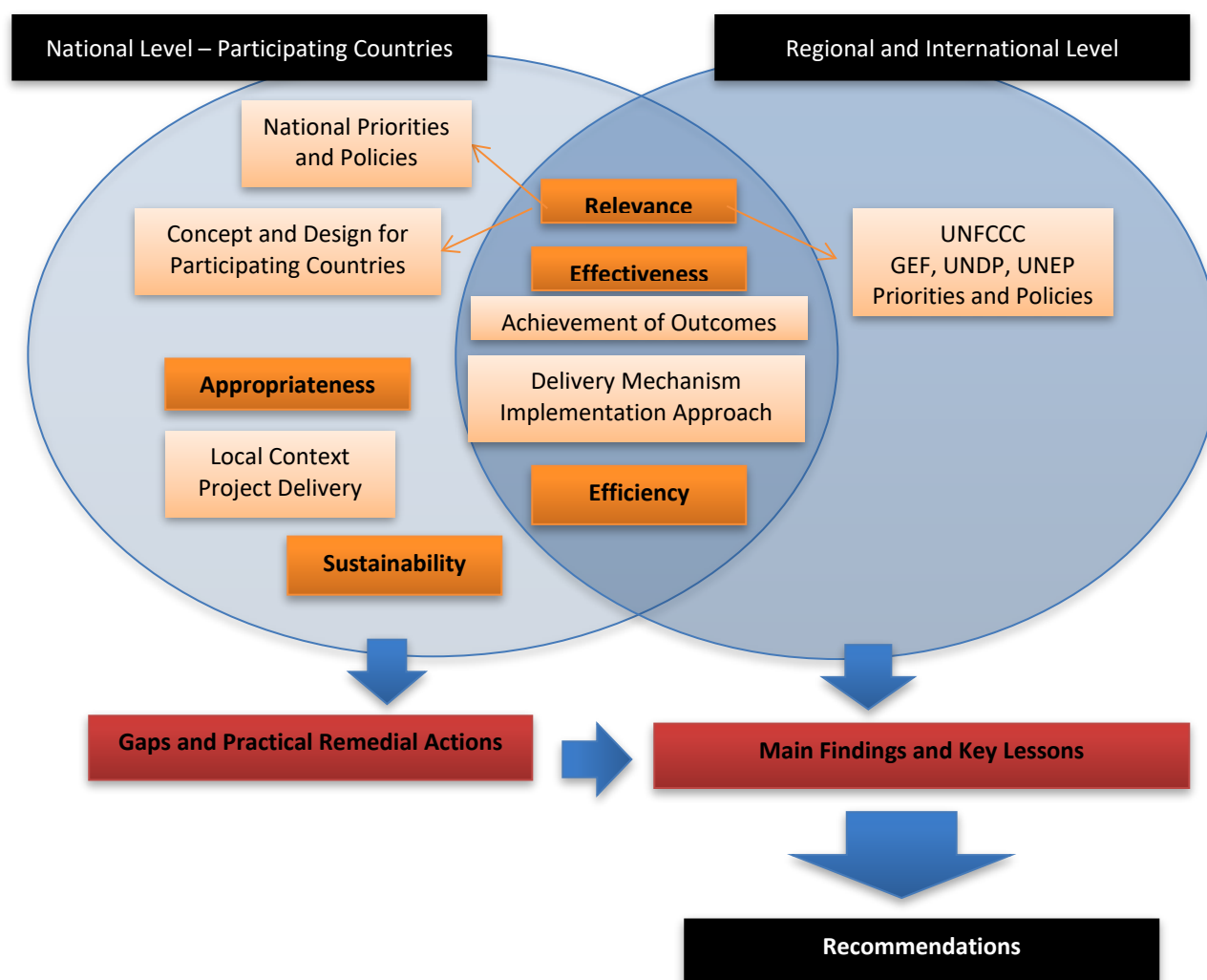
⁹ NCSP Project Document

at whether the operationalization of the NCSP has appropriately responded to the needs expressed by the participating countries. This criterion will mostly be assessed at the national level.

With regards to **effectiveness**, the evaluation assessed the achievements at the outcome level as well as the achievement of the main project goal. The progress was measured against the indicators developed after the NCSP mid-term evaluation of the project, in addition to other assessments served as reference. Within this criterion, the evaluation team did an examination of project delivery mechanisms vis-à-vis institutional and management arrangements that provided additional evidence on the extent to which the NCSP has been able to develop and execute processes and structures that are conducive to reaching objectives. Next is an analysis of whether the NSCP achieved **efficiency** in adding value or leveraging intended changes using a minimal amount of finances, time, and/or other resources. This assessment particularly looked at the efficiency of the NCSP in providing technical backstopping, along with other services.

Last is an assessment of whether the benefits gained by countries through the NCSP program are likely to have **sustainability** beyond the life of the program. This entailed an examination of the depth and scope of reach of the program in member country's capacity to address their own policy and technical issues around climate change and the development of their National Communications. The evaluation team drew on the evidence gathered to establish findings and provide key lessons learned. Furthermore, the evaluation allowed gaining insight on gaps in the project to provide remedial actions for future projects. The conceptual framework for this evaluation is illustrated in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Evaluation



The evaluation had three phases: (i) the inception phase, which aimed to plan and scope the evaluation, and develop the evaluation tools; (ii) the data collection phase, which used appropriate data collection methods and tools to collect pertinent information; and, (iii) the data analysis and reporting phase, which aimed to synthesise and analyse all collected data and present it in an evaluation report, with clear conclusions and recommendations.

Both primary and secondary data were collected as part of the evaluation process. Primary data was gathered through qualitative methods, including desk reviews (see Annex 2), and semi-structured interviews, as well as through a survey of country NC Project coordinators. The evaluation team undertook 17 interviews; see Annex 3 for a complete list of interviewees. Secondary data was obtained mainly from relevant partners and organizations that have participated in enabling activities surrounding the preparations of National Communications.

A survey (see Annex 5) was sent out to NC team members on November 19, 2012 to gain their insight on the services and products provided by the NCSP. In total there have been 50 respondents to the survey, of a total of 141 countries, giving a response rate of 35.5 per cent. Although there are six respondents that have not provided their country, Table 1 presents the regional distribution of the survey respondents compared with those of the overall project participants. The regional distribution is quite similar to those of the participating countries, with the exception of a high level of participation from Europe and CIS region, and a low participation of the Pacific region.

Table 1: Regional Distribution of Survey Respondents

REGION	# of countries	percentage	# of survey respondents	percentage of survey respondents
AFRICA	44	30%	11	25%
ARAB STATES	16	11%	4	9%
ASIA	21	15%	6	14%
CARIBBEAN	13	9%	5	11%
EUROPE AND CIS	15	10%	9	20%
LATIN AMERICA	21	15%	7	16%
PACIFIC	14	10%	2	5%

3.1. Limitations of the Evaluation

It must be noted that the evaluation data has some limitations. In regards to the survey, although there is a reasonable response rate it remains bias to the countries that have used the products and services of the NCSP. Therefore, it omits the insights from countries that may not have used the NCSP. In regards to the interviews, not all regions have been interviewed; those that are missing are from the Pacific and Latin America regions. Also, given the timing of the evaluation, which was undertaken during the 2012 COP in Doha, key interviews with the GEF and UNDP-GEF were not conducted due to challenging schedules.

4. Evaluation Findings

This section will review the findings of the evaluation by criteria, namely, relevance, appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Each section presents the key evaluation question along with a summary of key conclusions and recommendations.

4.1. Relevance

The following section will discuss the extent to which the NCSP is aligned with the needs of intended beneficiaries and also consistent with intended global, national and local policies and priorities, and seeks to answer the following questions:

- To what extent does the NCSP align with global priorities as identified in UNFCCC negotiations and convention priorities?
- To what extent does the NCSP align with GEF, UNDP, and UNEP priorities and policies?
- To what extent does the NCSP enable participating countries to align their activities to national priorities and climate relevant policies?

Conclusions

The NCSP is highly responsive to UNFCCC guidance and its priorities and has implemented the underlying principles of Convention's Capacity Building Framework for non-Annex I countries. The NCSP closely supports and complements the efforts of the CGE and Secretariat and fulfils a specific role in essential technical backstopping and guidance around the NCs.

Though not as overt as its direct role in operationalizing UNFCCC capacity building principles through assisting countries to meet reporting requirements under the Convention, the NCSP is also well aligned with GEF, UNDP and UNEP priorities and policies. The implementation structure of operating through the IAs has served the NCSP strategy relatively well, though stronger regional expertise and specific tailored support appear to be areas for further improvement for the IAs as the NCSP adapts its technical backstopping role.

Elaborate on third point. The ability of the NCSP to enable countries to align their activities to national priorities and climate relevant policies is dependent on how each country undertakes the NC process. The targeted technical support provided by the NCSP has been relevant to participating countries in providing the right tools and assistance to the NC country teams. The assistance provided by the NCSP has also been relevant in aligning national policies and priorities, however, as the NC become a more strategic tool, and as more reporting requirements like the NAMA's are undertaken the NCSP may need to provide more policy level assistance to ensure that the reporting requirement are indeed aligned with national priorities and policies.

COHERENCE WITH UNFCCC PRIORITIES

The UNFCCC Capacity Building Framework and the GEF Strategic Approach to Enhancing Capacity Building were important inputs toward the strategy and design of the NCSP.¹⁰ Specifically, the Marrakesh Accords and Marrakesh Declaration, pertaining to COP decisions 2/CP.7 (Capacity building in developing

¹⁰ UNDP 2004. NCSP Prodoc. p 12

countries), underlie the purposes behind NCSP capacity building strategy and delivery structure, from country voluntary monitoring and IA/fund reporting to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), to overall framework for capacity building in developing countries. As the framework states, “There is no ‘one size fits all’ formula for capacity-building. Capacity-building must be country-driven, addressing the specific needs and conditions of developing countries and reflecting their national sustainable development strategies, priorities and initiatives. It is primarily to be undertaken by and in developing countries in accordance with the provisions of the Convention.”¹¹ By these criteria, the NCSP’s goal and objectives (above) are highly relevant to Convention priorities and decisions.

Under Articles 4 and 12 of the UNFCCC, all signatory Parties are required to prepare a “National Communication.” Critical to the implementation of the NCSP is accessible and clear guidance to countries on reporting requirements under the UNFCCC. The guidelines for NAI countries were adopted at COP 2 in 1996. In 1999, the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) was formed to improve the process of NC preparation for Non-Annex I countries (NAI). Also, one of the responsibilities of the UNFCCC Secretariat is to assist non-annex I countries in preparing national communications, including the facilitation of CGE activities collaboration with various support programs, as well as dissemination and information exchange for capacity building. All NC activities are reported to the SBI. The UNFCCC guidelines were updated at COP8 in 2002, and most SNC and TNCs, where applicable, are based on this standard.¹²

As the UNFCCC guidance to parties on the preparation of NCs is revised and updated, with the guidance of the CGE and Secretariat, so too must the NCSP adjust its guidance and tools for countries to improve national ownership of the NCs and ensure they meet reporting requirements. Evidence from documentation review, interviews, and surveys indicate that the NCSP has kept pace with UNFCCC updates and changes, if not remaining ahead of the curve, on introducing and develop technical materials and tools relevant to key issues and themes that are reflected in the UNFCCC negotiations, and those expressed by countries, especially SIDs and LDCs, as key areas of interest or concern. Further, NCSP staff attend relevant SBI and COP meetings, conduct outreach to countries through the newsletter, and, until it was dissolved in 2009, convened around its Advisory Committee¹³ on monitoring progress, planning and strategy. One of the NCSP’s key relationships with the UNFCCC is through collaboration with the CGE on a number of workshops and trainings. While there appeared to be some overlap in purpose when the CGE’s mandate recently changed to a more active role in capacity building efforts, NCSP’s attendance at all programming meanings has helped support the CGE’s mandate and ensure its technical expertise reaches intended audiences.¹⁴

COHERENCE WITH GEF, UNDP AND UNEP PRIORITIES AND POLICIES

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC, provides financial support for the preparation of national communications and biennial update reports in accordance with guidance from the Conference of the Parties (COP) to non-Annex I Parties either through its agencies (UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank) or directly (since 2011). Some bilateral and multilateral organizations/agencies/programs also provide financial and technical support to many non-Annex I Parties. As mentioned above, the GEF’s Strategic Approach to Enhancing Capacity Building is a critical element to the design of the NCSP. In addition, the preparation of the NCs aligns with GEF’s Operational Program for the Climate Change Focal Area Strategy and the Strategic Programming for GEF-4 (2007) and GEF-5 mitigation strategy objective 6, relating to supporting EA and CB under the Convention. Finally, the SPA, LDCF, SCCF are designed to take into account the information provided by NCs and NAPAs financed by

¹¹ UNFCCC 2001. Marrakesh Accords and Marrakesh Declaration. http://unfccc.int/cop7/documents/accords_draft.pdf

¹² UNFCCC website: http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/items/2716.php

¹³ The Advisory Committee was comprised of representatives from GEF, UNFCCC, UNDP, UNEP, and the WB.

¹⁴ Interviews with countries and NCSP staff.

the GEF Trust Fund and LDCF, respectively.¹⁵ The activities of the NCSP are therefore directly relevant to the quality and sustainability of results of the GEF programs.

In terms of alignment with IA principles and priorities, since a large portion of the work of UNDP and UNEP falls under ‘capacity building,’ the NCSP is very closely aligned with this mandate. The development of NCs through the IAs has become more complex as financial resource options and other types of support (technical input, tools, models, methodologies) have multiplied. As of 2010, for example, countries can go through four possible options for access to resources for NCs: (i) working with a GEF Agency; (ii) being part of the UNEP umbrella project for NCs; (iii) by direct access from the GEF Secretariat; and (iv) through a national allocation as a full-sized project.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the GEF, “through its Agencies, continues to provide assistance to countries in formulating project proposals identified in their NCs in accordance with Article 12, paragraph 4, of the Convention and decision 5/CP.11, paragraph 2,” working with countries to identify and formulate project proposals.¹⁷ Regardless of the option each country chooses to access for NC resources, the NCSP’s mandate remains highly relevant to the facilitation of high quality, technically sound NCs that retain significance beyond UNFCCC reporting requirements in the form of policy planning and other mainstreaming activities.

COHERENCE WITH NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND PLANS

Since its initial phase, the NCSP has become more targeted in helping developing countries to overcome technical barriers toward the completion of their NCs. Since the time of the mid-term evaluation, the NCSP has provided technical review of at least 60 draft reports (out of a total possible 130 countries, depending on need) across various technical thematic areas.¹⁸ The July 2012 NC status survey indicates that matched with ‘Peer review among national NC team’ and review from ‘Staff from key sectoral ministries’, 35 out of 56 respondents, or 62.5%, used ‘NCSP review and inputs’ for the development of their NCS.¹⁹ In response to the open-ended question “In your experience, what has been the key support provided by the NCSP for your country?” 21 out of 57 (37%) possible respondents to this evaluation’s NC coordinator survey indicate that technical backstopping is the most significant.

The 2012 GEF report to the UNFCCC COP 18 also confirms that the NCSP has grown increasingly focused on targeted technical backstopping, including one-on-one support, with a package of activities such as:

- Guidance to national teams on specific areas of the NC work to fill gaps and improve the technical quality of the studies;
- Technical reviews of draft studies in the areas of GHG inventories, mitigation analysis and vulnerability and adaptation assessments;
- Feedback on draft NC reports, at the request of countries, to improve the reports before submission to the UNFCCC;
- On-line discussions with project coordinators on technical questions to provide recommendations on how to address specific constraints;
- Guidance and assistance in the preparation of terms of references for the technical studies; and
- Dissemination of relevant technical work and case studies to provide information and data to countries, as requested.²⁰

¹⁵ UNFCCC 2011. Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties. P24.

¹⁶ UNFCCC 2012. Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties. P19.

¹⁷ *Ibid* p35.

¹⁸ UNFCCC 2009. 2010. 2011. [Respectively] Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties. Matters relating to finance.

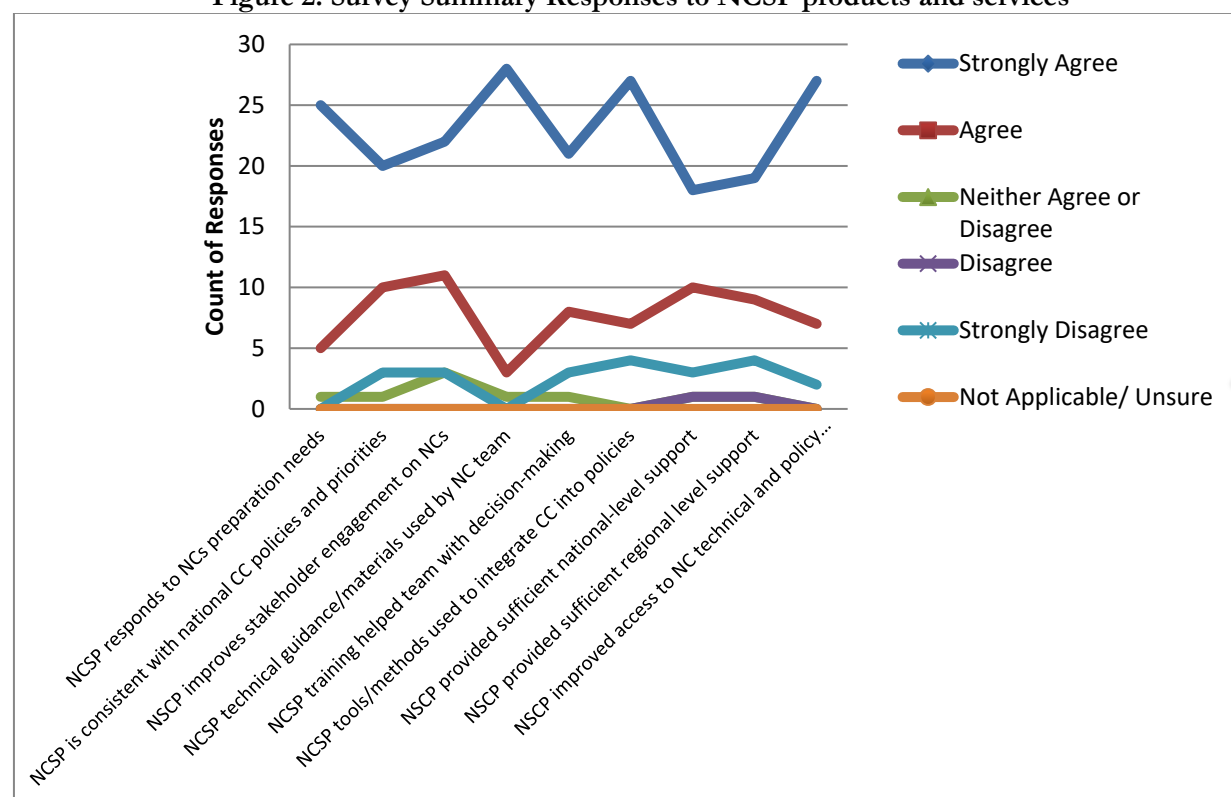
¹⁹ NCSP 2012. National Communication Experiences July 2012.

²⁰ UNFCCC 2012. Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties. Matters relating to finance. Eighteenth session. Doha, 26 November to 7 December 2012. p41.

The evaluation team surveyed NC coordinators²¹ to ask them about NCSP coherence with national priorities and plans as well as whether NCSP products and services address beneficiary needs and priorities. The majority of opinions about the NCSP's relevance to NCs and support for NC country teams are expressed favourably and strongly. The three areas of 'strongest agreement' are the NCSP technical guidance materials are used by NC teams (87.5% 28/32), the NCSP has improved access to NC technical and policy information on NCs (75%, 27/36), and NCSP tools/methods are used to integrate climate change into policies (71%, 27/38), respectively. This implies that NCSP is relevant to both technical matters and policy matters, and as discussed further in the sustainability section, this role becomes increasingly important as the NCs become less of "stock-taking" or descriptive national conditions and more a strategic document with direct policy impact for mainstreaming climate change national (and regional) level(s).

Survey responses also reveals high-level levels of satisfaction from countries on NCSP's overall responsiveness to needs in preparation of the NCs (please note that these are the reflections of the evaluation participants²²) (80.6%, 25/31 'strongly agree') and moderately high levels of satisfaction with NCSP's consistency with national policies (58.8% 20/34 'strongly agree' and 85.3%, 10/34 'agree') and contribution to improving stakeholder engagement (61.1%, 22/36 'strongly agree' and 30.05%, 11/36 'agree'). However, these latter two areas are where the 'agree' and 'strongly agree' cohorts are closer together in relative terms, suggesting that there are groups of countries who have gained from NCSP support but sense that they have not attained the full benefits of the program. This is supported by the response for sufficiency of national-level support, which came in at 56.3% (18/32) 'strongly agree' and 32.2% (10/32) 'agree', and similar results for regional-level support.

Figure 2: Survey Summary Responses to NCSP products and services



²¹ 38 NC coordinators, 8 UNFCCC focal points, 8 technical experts

²² Please see section 3.1 on limitations of the evaluation

- Facilitate institutionalization of climate change responses
- Generate CC knowledge and information on the basis of national priorities
- Provide a mechanism of policy dialogue for CC actions
- Implement public education and awareness activities at different levels in society
- Develop capacity building in many thematic areas of CC²³

4.2. Appropriateness

This section will examine the extent to which the NCSP is culturally acceptable and its activities or method of delivery of development initiatives are feasible, and will seek to answer the following question:

- Are NCSP activities and methods for delivery operationalized in a manner that meets identified needs?

Conclusion

The NCSP has implemented activities and methods in a manner that met country demand. Program technical products and those services that actively engage NC teams and team members are especially highly valued, and are directly targeted to expressed country needs and difficulties.

With a very limited staff, the program has been remarkably responsive and adaptable to changing circumstances and on-going challenges, including the administrative and management constraints faced by partner countries. Nevertheless, NCSP has, to date, underutilized the relative support of regional, national and local institutions and technical expertise.

Recommendations

- The NCSP should consider how to improve its delivery mechanisms to support the process of ensuring NCs develop beyond a reporting requirement and toward a technically sound framework document that is linked to national policies, informs policy-making, and helps enable mainstreaming climate change at the national level.
- To the extent possible, the NCSP should encourage streamlined reporting processes, coherence between reporting requirements, and lessening administrative burdens for partner countries.

REFLECTION OF LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The 2000 GEF Review of Climate Change Enabling Activities concluded that the first (2 year, 1998-2000) phase of NCSP contributed to closing the gap in technical assistance needed by countries in preparation for their INCs.²⁴ An independent assessment undertaken in parallel to the first review further recommended a “more tailored technical support from a wider group of experts,” especially for those sub-regions that faced difficulties in completing their NCs. The NCSP 2004 Prodoc responded to this recommendation by seeking to create a delivery system offering a “flexible package of options, but targeted to address specific needs and conditions of countries.”²⁵ The NC coordinator survey²⁶ conducted for this evaluation reveals that 19/57

²³ NCSP 2012. Lessons Learned and Experiences from the Preparation of National Communications from Non-Annex I Parties to the UNFCCC.

²⁴ GEF 2000. Review of Climate Change Enabling Activities. October 2000.

²⁵ UNDP 2004. NCSP Prodoc. p4.

(33.3%) of respondents ‘strongly agree’ and 31/57 (54.3%) ‘agree’ that “The support provided by the NSCP responded to your needs for the preparation of your NCs.” These results – 87.7% or 50/57 responses indicating NCSP met or exceeded demands for support – clearly show that NSCP is responding to needs overall, but there is room for specific improvement.²⁷

According to the NC Status survey in September 2012 (see Table 2 below), the ‘administrative’ and ‘specific GHG inventory’ (10, 71.4% each) categories were the most common ‘difficulties’ to the effective completion of NCs. Other difficulties related to ‘V&A assessment’ and specific ‘other information’ (8, 57.1% each); followed by ‘mitigation analysis’ (7, 50.0%); general ‘technical’ issues, specific matters in ‘national circumstances,’ and ‘other’ challenges (6 respondents, 42.9% each).

Table 2: Difficulties by Category (n=14)²⁸

Answer Options	Response Per cent	Response Count
Administrative	71.4%	10
GHG Inventory - specific	71.4%	10
Vulnerability and Adaptation assessment - specific	57.1%	8
Other information - specific	57.1%	8
Mitigation Analysis - specific	50.0%	7
Technical	42.9%	6
National Circumstances - specific	42.9%	6
Other	42.9%	6
Constraints and Gaps - specific	28.6%	4

The NC coordinator survey conducted for this evaluation (n = 52) reveals a clear link between the difficulties noted above and the utility of various NCSP products and services. For example, the ‘GHG inventory’ guidance matches the ‘workshops’ for the greatest response rate for “highly useful” (25 responses, 48%), followed closely by ‘mitigation analysis’ and ‘V&A’ with 23 responses each (44% each). Aside from ‘other’ and ‘administrative’ constraints, these three technical topic areas noted as primary ‘difficulties’, and interviews have confirmed the overwhelming level of utility expressed by participants of workshops and trainings. As a relatively new area for integration into the NCs, ‘V&A’ guidance has the largest combination of “highly useful” and “useful”, with 44/52 responses, or 84.6%. In only the case of the “roster of experts” and “knowledge networks” are any tools or guidance noted as “not useful”.²⁹

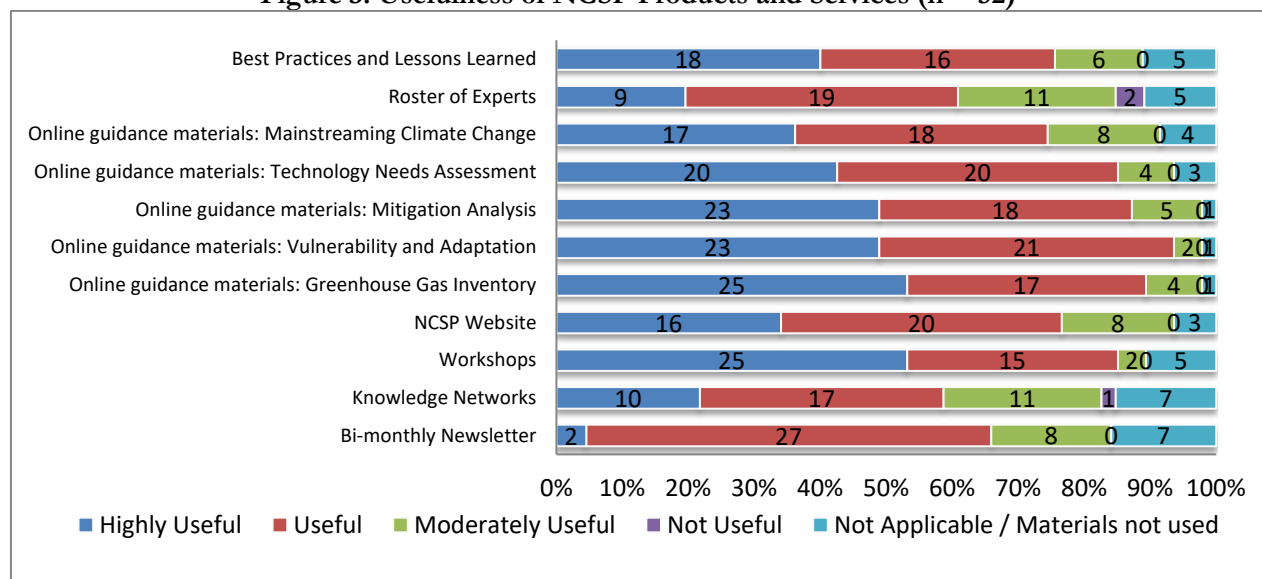
²⁶ 36 NC coordinators, 8 UNFCCC focal points, 8 technical experts

²⁷ Please see section 3.1 on limitations of the evaluation

²⁸ NC Status Survey, September 2012. Question 15. (14 respondents)

²⁹ Please see section 3.1 on limitations of the evaluation

Figure 3: Usefulness of NCSP Products and Services (n = 52)



These findings are very consistent with the relative strengths of the NCSP in providing targeted technical support in a timely manner. Since country needs are extremely specific, the passive products and tools, such as the roster of experts, knowledge networks, and website, are less favoured to the active, tailored delivery mechanisms such as technical tools on specific topics and engagement through workshops and trainings. With 27/52 (51.9%) responses for describing the bi-monthly newsletter as ‘useful’ but only 2 (4.5%) as ‘highly useful’, 8 for ‘moderately useful’, and 7 for ‘not applicable’ it is clear that based on the survey participants, this publication is widely read and circulated - giving it great visibility - but based on the survey data, it has not reached its full potential in terms of desired substance or content. There is a keen interest in best practices and lessons learned, however, with a combined 65.4% (34/52) of responses under ‘highly useful’ and ‘useful,’ suggesting that the newsletter could be improved as a vehicle for illustrating these stories and tips.

The utility of these materials and tools is also a reflection of where countries are in their NCs and the phase of their respective preparations. For the September NC Status Survey, in all instances where NCSP materials were used in the INC, the tool is also cited in the SNC at the same or greater frequency. As countries are in the early phases of adaptation-relevant data collection, circulation models and mitigation tools are far more frequently cited than the adaptation and vulnerability tools.³⁰

As described in the effectiveness section, the NCSP held over 23 workshops and trainings between, often in collaboration with the CGE and occasionally with other partners. While it is difficult to prove the use of workshops and/or training³¹ workshops matched GHG inventory in “highly useful” category in the NC coordinator survey conducted for this evaluation. Just over 74% of the participants (43/57) indicate that they ‘strongly agree’ (20) or ‘agree’ (23) that “The NCSP training provided assisted you and your team in generating relevant information for decision-making.”³² Interviewees further noted the significance of workshops and trainings knowledge exchange around their respective experiences, tips to mainstream NCs into national policies and planning, learning about specific modelling techniques like LEAP, and sharing lessons learned. Only in cases where the capacity of a country is high relative to its regional neighbours, and data quality and

³⁰ UNDP 2010. Reporting on Climate Change: A Preliminary Synthesis of Information contained in Initial and Second National Communications. p29.

³¹ The evaluation team is not aware of any exit surveys or follow-up designed to capture the learning outputs or outcomes of workshops.

³² Please see section 3.1 on limitations of the evaluation

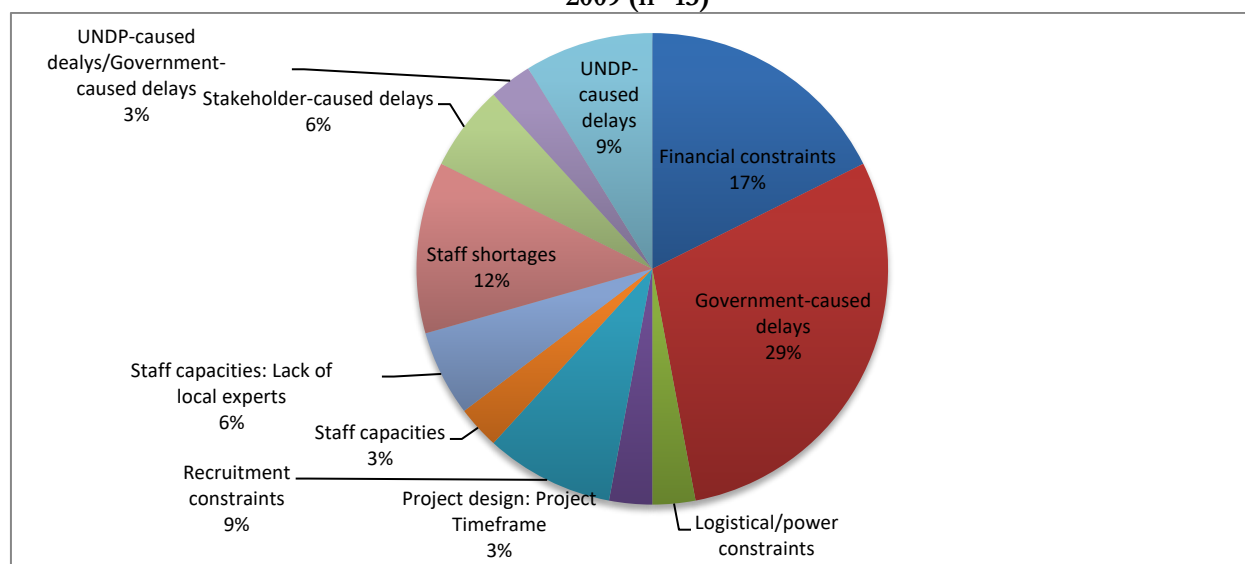
availability is also relatively high, did interviewees indicate less reliance specifically on the NCSP to supply expertise, tools, and/or training and workshops.

FEASIBILITY IN LIGHT OF OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

The 2009 MTE participant country survey concluded that UNDP and UNEP performed nearly equally effectively in supporting the implementation of the NCSP, but that one survey comment summarized the ‘majority of qualitative responses’: “UNDP provides advice and services when requested, though this is primarily administrative (budgeting, reporting, etc.) and not technical or strategic.”³³ While this may be interpreted as a negative remark, the statement is not inconsistent with NCSP’s first objective of “facilitating” the implementation of enabling activities, and as described above, administrative constraints are a primary source of challenges for completion of the NCs.

For example, figure 2 illustrates that four years into the programming of the NCSP, nearly half of all administrative constraints to the completion of NCs in 2009 in the Asia-Pacific region were due to financial (6 countries, 17% of respondents) and government-caused (10 countries, 29% of respondents) delays. This was followed by staff shortage (12%), and at 9% each (3 each) UNDP-caused delays and recruitment constraints.³⁴ The UNFCCC notes that common challenges to completion of high-quality NCs include a high demand for a small number of national experts, the multiple challenge of getting experts to sign short-term contracts, limited funding, and time-lag between NCs.³⁵ Although these challenges have an impact on the capacity of a country to submit their NC in a timely manner, these issues are beyond the scope of the NCSP and relate to broader administrative constraints. However, surveys and interviews conducted for this evaluation confirm that the NCSP has played a role in helping ameliorate these constraints, especially through the support of specific and timely expertise, supplementing or enhancing staff shortages and low staff capacities, and providing some relief to financial constraints.

Figure 4: Administrative Constraints to Completion of NCs by Category, Asia-Pacific Region, May 2009 (n=13)



³³ NCSP 2009. Mid-term Evaluation. September 20, 2012. p16.

³⁴ NCSP 2009. Questionnaires data RBAP. May 2009.

³⁵ UNFCCC 2010. Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention. Technical problems and constraints affecting non-Annex I Parties in the process of and preparation of their national communications and the assessment of their capacity-building needs, Bonn.

Nevertheless, with a permanent staff ration of 3 persons to 130 potential countries requiring support over the course of the current and forthcoming SNCs and TNCs, the NCSP may not be in a position to supply the desired level and types of tailored technical assistance without decentralizing some of their support to formal and/or informal regional and national institutional partners such as academia/research centres and the private sector. Interviews suggest that South-South exchange and regional-level support is currently underutilized and highly relevant to assisting NC teams in a hands-on manner for managing common pitfalls and facilitating specialized knowledge exchange. Furthermore, countries that have benefitted most are those that have created and maintained a team of experienced professionals who are well versed in the NC process.³⁶ The utilization of local and regional support is also consistent with the types of entities and agencies already involved in the development of the NCs, as explored further in the effectiveness and sustainability sections.

Box 1: Country Ownership of NCs in Namibia

In the interest of building institutional memory and a sense of country ownership of their NCs, Namibia's national Climate Change Committee determined that ministry staff would prepare the TNC in lieu of consultants. Nevertheless, they faced constraints in data processing and sharing. In order to help ensure that information gathered met quality standards for the NCs and other reporting processes, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism strengthened links with the National Statistical Commission (1). Namibia also took full advantage of the NCSP's workshops and technical review, especially for the GHG inventory, which, because of its institutional preparations, helped build the capacities of a large number of national stakeholders. As follow-up, the "Summary for Policy Makers" was even more relevant to follow-on activities and use of technical studies in the NC (1,2).

Sources: (1) NCSP 2012. Lessons Learned and Experiences from the Preparation of National Communications from Non-Annex I Parties to the UNFCCC. P9,11,17,24. (2) Interview

4.3. Effectiveness

The effectiveness section will review the extent to which the NCSP has attained its objectives, by responding to these four key evaluation questions:

- Does the NCSP effectively facilitate technical support for the preparation of National Communications?
- To what extent has the NCSP been instrumental in preparing and disseminating technical and policy-relevant materials, including methodologies and tools?
- In what ways has the NSCP enhanced knowledge management, best practices, communications and outreach?
- To what extent have project delivery mechanisms and implementation approaches been conducive to reaching NCSP objectives?

Conclusions

The NCSP has been highly effective in delivering products and services in a responsive manner that met the needs of countries that requested assistance for the preparation of National Communications. The technical backstopping has been the most valuable services provided to NAI countries, as it provides hands-on tailored

³⁶ NCSP 2012. Lessons Learned and Experiences from the Preparation of National Communications from Non-Annex I Parties to the UNFCCC. p11.

technical support to countries requests. As countries continue to build capacity for national reporting, this type of technical backstopping will become increasingly more important to respond to specific needs that reflect national context and capacities. The NCSP has also prepared and disseminated a number of technical and policy related guidance documents, which have been highly useful to and appreciated by countries. Given the time between the NCs, these materials will need to be updated for the next support programme.

Overall the outreach and knowledge management undertaken by the NCSP has not been as effective as intended in terms of reach and the enhancement of knowledge management. The knowledge network had low participation rates with few participating countries and experts. The website, provides a good source of information to countries; however, the layout may not be as user-friendly as possible. While the newsletter has been appreciated by a number of countries, it has generally been delivered without the contribution of and countries; the NCSP may want to explore other ways of providing the same information on a different platform. The workshops have been highly responsive to countries' needs and highly appreciated by participants.

In light of the financial and human resources available, the NCSP has been highly effective in implementing the programme to reach its objectives. However, it did not do so as initially designed, with a decentralized top-down and bottom-up approach. There are still some challenges that remain in delivering targeted technical services and products on the basis of a country-driven process and a demand-based programme. There is high value in mobilizing regional institutions to support this process, which would benefit the countries on a technical and policy level; however, there are challenges in engaging these institutions in the process. The programme oversight has been effective, even with the dissolution of the Advisory Board. Nevertheless, the future support programme would need to ensure the reinstatement of the Advisory Board that would allow for informed and strategic guidance. Finally, the monitoring and reporting was not sufficient in order to measure and track the attainment of the programme objectives. In response to the MTE, the NCSP did undertake measures to improve this function. However, these proved challenging to implement so late in the programme.

Recommendations

- As the NAI countries take on their SNC and TNC, their capacity needs become more specific to their national context. As such, there is a growing need for an even more tailored approach in the third phase of the NCSP. The requested from countries are increasingly varied and technical, and as such, to respond to these needs, an even more tailored approach may be more appropriate and effective. Furthermore, technical guidance will need to be updated and revised to provide targeted guidance to reflect national circumstances, such as for downscaling of certain models.
- Although integration of the NCs into national level development policies remains important, the strength of the NCSP lies in building and supporting technical capacity for devising technically sound NCs. Given limited financial and human resources, the NCSP could focus on building individual technical capacities at the national and regional levels in order to increase a network of expertise that is more responsive to national context and capacities, and that can contribute to the credibility of the NC, all the while continuing its inclusion of a mainstreaming component within its activities.
- Outreach is a key component to the delivery of NCSP support, the workshops remain a key activity to engage experts and provide an opportunity to share and network. These workshops should indeed continue during the next phase of the NCSP, especially centered around specific regional and/or thematic areas of need expressed by partner countries.
- Having online outreach is imperative to provide low-cost tools to engage participant countries. The NCSP should review the available online tools and select those that have been effective in reaching a similar target audience and promoted engagement. Furthermore, the NCSP could make their website more user-friendly for countries, as well as review the potential use of social networking tools to communicate updates, tips, articles, and best practices, on their website rather than relying on a traditional newsletter.
- As the capacity level for countries undertaking their NCs become increasingly varied, the importance of

engaging regional level support that can provide such technical and policy assistance will be key in the following support programme. Regional cooperation and institutions should be included at the design stage of the next support programme to get a clear sense of the resources available to the NCSP and to countries.

- The design of the next support programme should outline goals and outcomes that are within the scope, budget, and resources available to the NCSP. Although the ultimate goal may be to support the integration of climate change policy into national development policies, the intermediary steps need to be more specific so that it can be attainable within the reach of the programme (i.e. who's capacity, what kind, and to what level). In order for the NCSP to get a clear sense of its contribution and the attainment of its goal, it is imperative that baseline conditions are established, that the log frame includes indicators for the outcomes as well as the outputs, and that the monitoring move beyond the measurement of its outputs and done through a consistent monitoring framework.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

As previously presented, the Project Document of the NCSP had one main goal, *to provide an integrated package of support activities to promote the integration of climate change policy into national development*, along with three objectives:

Objective 1. To facilitate implementation of enabling activities related to the preparation of National Communications;

Objective 2. To prepare and disseminate technical and policy-relevant materials, including methodologies and tools; and

Objective 3. To enhance knowledge management, best practices, communications and outreach.

In order to achieve these objectives, the NCSP is designed to provide technical backstopping support to NAI countries that request support, as well as provide guidance materials to help countries undertake the key components of their NCs. The technical support that was to be provided in this second phase of the NCSP deliberately built on the first NCSP project, which was found to be highly effective in supporting countries to submit a higher quality NC in a timely manner. However, one of the key recommendations was to provide more tailored support to countries' needs, in a flexible package of options. Also, given that the INC was viewed as a more technical document, usually concerning only a small group of key stakeholders within a country, the second phase of the NCSP was to help countries find ways to mainstream climate change into national policies using their NC.³⁷

In response to expressed needs,³⁸ the NCSP has produced a number of **guidance documents** to support countries in their NC process, which were all uploaded to the NCSP website for general access, and presented by topic.³⁹ Overall, these documents have been widely used by the countries that requested them. One of the key documents that has been quite valuable is on GHG inventory methodology, which helps fulfill this requirement of the UNFCCC under the NCs.⁴⁰ The guidance documents on V&A have also been useful, as over 90 per cent of the survey respondents felt the material was *highly useful* or *useful*, and, over 90 per cent of respondents *highly agree* or *agree* that the materials were used (see Figure 5). (please note that these are a reflection of the evaluation participants).⁴¹ The V&A materials are viewed as more reference material rather than providing clear 'how-to' guidance for countries to undertake their work. The challenge with V&A is that there are a number of approaches that can be used by countries, depending on national context (i.e. sectors,

³⁷ UNDP (2004) Project Document

³⁸ NCSP (2007) Interim Report of The National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), Prepared for NCSP's 5th Advisory Committee meeting, February 2007.

³⁹ NCSP Website

⁴⁰ Interviews

⁴¹ Please see section 3.1 on limitations of the evaluation

and available data). In response to this challenge, the NCSP, with the financial assistance of DFID and the collaboration of Oxford University, developed country-level climate profiles for 52 countries. The objective was to provide key observed and projected climate information to countries, and these profiles were made available through the NCSP website.⁴² Therefore, providing guidance has been very useful to countries; however countries now require more tailored guidance, that can, for example, help NC teams to undertake more detailed and more relevant V&A assessment by downscaling climate data from GCM, and improving their capacities to carry out mitigation and impact analysis that reflect more national circumstances using models, such as the LEAP.⁴³

There has also been a growing need for countries to use the NC as a basis for climate change policy-making at the national level, which has also been stated as the goal of the NCSP. In this regard, the NCSP has produced a document on *The National Communication as a Tool for Integrating Climate Change into National Development*, which was distributed during COP 17 in Durban. This document was published in April 2011, almost at the end of the latest phase of the programme, and while the document is well researched, there is currently no indication of its use or its contribution to supporting integration of climate change activities. Countries have also requested more exchanges on lessons learned, for which the NCSP has responded with a document on *Lessons Learned and Experiences from the Preparation of the National Communications from Non-Annex I Parties to the UNFCCC*. The NCSP also intended to produce a long-term strategy for EAs, but this has not been done.

The **technical backstopping** was delivered on a flexible basis via teleconference, email, and site visits to NAI countries.⁴⁴ The NCSP provided technical assistance to countries in response to specific technical questions, as well as reviews of draft versions of the NC. The reviews provide an opportunity for countries to make any necessary adjustments to their draft studies and correct inconsistencies in the reports before the national communication report is compiled and submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat. The support provided to the countries has been highly effective and appreciated by the countries that have received this type of support.⁴⁵ Over the course of the programme, the NCSP has responded to over one hundred requests.⁴⁶ The technical backstopping is viewed by the majority of survey respondents, as well as the interviewees, as the key type of support provided by the NCSP, as it is the most responsive to national context and capacities.

The one-on-one tailored support has contributed to facilitating the implementation of the activities related to the preparation of the NCs.⁴⁷ ⁴⁸One respondent stated: “*In fact, the NCSP family has played a significant role in enhancing the capability of the NC coordinators and other experts to perform their tasks efficiently in preparing quality NCs.*”⁴⁹ The improvement in the quality of the NC has been the key factor in NCSP’s contribution to the integration of climate change policy at the national level. Interviewees and survey respondents have stated that the better the quality of the document, the more credible it becomes. In turn, the document can be used by decision-makers, and referenced by academics. This has

Box 2: Using the NC as a Tool for Mainstreaming Climate Change in Jamaica

As a result of the assistance provided by the NCSP, the quality of the NC has improved to such a degree that the document is now viewed as quite a credible resource. The document has been used for the National Development Plan, by the Forestry Department, as well as a building block for the National Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change. The document has also been cited a number of times in academic literature. Finally, the document has been used to secure 9 million USD for an adaptation project supported by the GEF.

Source: Interview and NCSP Survey (2012)

⁴² UNFCCC (2010) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 122pp.

⁴³ Interviews

⁴⁴ NCSP (2005) Report on Activities (May 2005 to May 2006) and Draft Work Plan (2005 – 2010)

⁴⁵ NCSP (2012) Survey : National Communication Experience.

⁴⁶ UNFCCC (2010) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 122pp.

⁴⁷ NCSP (2009) MTE

⁴⁸ NCSP (2012) Survey : National Communication Experience.

⁴⁹ Survey respondent

been the case for countries like Jamaica (see box 2), St-Lucia, and Georgia, which have stated the value of having a high quality document. Furthermore, given that the process is lengthy, from four to six years for some NAI, the technical backstopping also ensures that the information in the NC is up to date.⁵⁰

As the capacity for national reporting is increasingly varied, many countries encounter difficulty finalizing their NCs because of a lack of funding or expertise.⁵¹ To address this challenge NCSP launched a Targeted Backstopping Initiative in May 2009, whereby specific countries were contacted to discuss specific needs. Personalized backstopping was provided in the form of additional funds, technical support, elaboration of TORs for technical studies, and/or assistance identifying experts to carry out necessary backstopping.⁵²

The NCSP also involved regional experts in an effort to train future trainers so capacity can be disseminated at the national level.⁵³ In response to an MTE recommendation, the NCSP also provided guidance to countries on how to increase the profile of NC reports in order to foster better understanding of the role the National Communication can play in linking climate change with national development priorities.⁵⁴ Although technical backstopping is a highly effective and appreciated support activity, there is a growing divergence of capacities and an increased need for technical backstopping to reflect the national context and capacities. The survey respondents have expressed the need for continued technical assistance, but also to increase the capacity of their national experts, so they may have in-house support that may respond and reflect their national context.

The NCSP had also set up a **roster of experts** that can support countries in the development of their NCs. Each expert listed in the directory was contacted by the NCSP, and had agreed to make themselves available to provide a range of technical support activities upon request and provided CV for countries to consider through the directory.⁵⁵ Although the NCSP had been successful in mobilizing a number of experts for the roster,⁵⁶ it has largely remained underutilized by countries.⁵⁷ Only 20 percent of the survey respondents found it highly useful, whilst, some interviewees have stated using the roster, the majority did not.⁵⁸

As more and more teams complete and improve the quality of their NCs, integrating their findings at the national level is the next logical step. Many interviewees and survey respondents felt they would need assistance in designing a more user-friendly document to provide to decision-makers. Although, it is stated as the main goal of the NCSP, attribution to the achievement of this goal is highly challenging as such activities are integrated within a broader systems of work. There has been question on whether or not this goal for the NCSP has been too ambitious given the size of the programme and the type of activities it supports. In addition there are a number of projects, supported by multilateral and bilateral organizations that solely focus on capacity building for the integration of climate change at the national level.

Overall, the NCSP has responded to the requests from country, and has provided valuable technical guidance to NAI. However, with increasing reporting requirements from the COP, there is a clear and distinctive role for the NCSP that responds to a very specific need for technical support and guidance from NAI. There is still low capacity for data management and data quality at the national level.⁵⁹ There is also a clear link

⁵⁰ Interview

⁵¹ UNDP (2010) NCSP PIR (2009 - 2010)

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ UNFCCC (2010) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 122pp.

⁵⁴ UNDP (2010) NCSP PIR (2009 - 2010)

⁵⁵ NCSP (2007) Interim Report of The National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), Prepared for NCSP's 5th Advisory Committee meeting, February 2007.

⁵⁶ NCSP (2009) MTE

⁵⁷ Interviews

⁵⁸ Please see section 3.1 on limitations of the evaluation.

⁵⁹ Interviews

between the improvement of the NC and its integration into national policies.⁶⁰ ⁶¹Countries have requested the assistance of the NCSP to review or reformulate the data so that it may be more user-friendly for decision-makers, like reducing the time scale of the data in the models. Although the NCSP could certainly contribute to promoting integration of activities at the national level through the improvement of the NCs, and providing some guidance on mainstreaming, it would require increased financial and human resources to provide 'an integrated package of support activities' as stated in the programme goal. Furthermore, as the NCSP is designed to be responsive to a process that is country driven, it can provide technical support and guidance to the integration process, for which the NCSP has provided some documentations; however, its effectiveness remains in providing support to countries to improve their NC and providing guidance on how to integrate the NC at the policy-level, which, in turn, has meant supporting national activities and policies.⁶²

OUTREACH AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

In order to reach out to its intended audience, the NCSP has undertaken a number of outreach activities, such as a bi-monthly newsletter, knowledge networks, workshops, and a website. There has been a varied response to these outreach activities.

The NCSP had planned to set up five thematic knowledge networks with national and regional experts.⁶³ The first **Knowledge Network (KN)** was on National GHG Inventory was formally launched in May 2006, which was housed at the GHG Management Institute, with access through the NCSP website. ⁶⁴ The objectives of the network are to assist non-Annex I Parties in the preparation of national GHG inventories for national communications and to build a larger, more capable community of inventory practitioners. The intention was to have a moderated forum with a technical specialist, which was contracted out by the NCSP. However, the even with a moderator there was no active engagement and the cost of having a dedicated staff could not be justified. The network has financial support from the Swiss government and was established following recommendations and requests from Parties. In April 2007, the network had nearly 650 members, from roughly one hundred different countries.

The second KN was on Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment, which was launched in January 2007.⁶⁵ It was designed to assist V&A experts and national programme coordinators working on SNCs, to facilitate knowledge sharing, data and information exchanges, and relate best practices with lessons learned. It also had a resource centre, which gave access to download literature and software package.⁶⁶ Unfortunately, the KN remained highly underutilized, with only two or three participants, and ultimately did not contribute as effectively to the exchange and enhancement of knowledge as intended.⁶⁷

At the time of the design of the programme, knowledge networks were viewed as a good low-cost outreach and engagement tool. In the context of this global programme, they have not been as effective as intended. Given the lack of success and engagement in the KN, the NCSP did not move forward with the three other planned KNs. Although the KN's have not been successful, there is still an increasing need to enhance online participation for the next support programme. It has been suggested that a webinar tool, which was not available when the NCSP had begun, may be more appropriate in the future.⁶⁸

⁶⁰ NCSP (2012) Survey : National Communication Experience

⁶¹ UNDP (2010) The National Communication as a Tool for Integrating Climate Change into Development Policy

⁶² UNDP (2010) The National Communication as a Tool for Integrating Climate Change into Development Policy.

⁶³ NCSP (2004) Project Document

⁶⁴ <http://www.ghgnetwork.org>

⁶⁵ <http://ncsp.va-network.org>

⁶⁶ NCSP (2007) Interim Report of The National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), Prepared for NCSP's 5th Advisory Committee meeting, February 2007.

⁶⁷ Interviews

⁶⁸ Interviews

One of the key activities the NCSP delivered has been its provision of numerous **workshops** (see Annex 4 for the list of workshops undertaken over the course of the programme). These workshops have invariably been in response to country needs and requests. The NCSP began with initiation workshops, which have proved to be highly important and effective in providing guidance to national programme coordinators on the policy context of the SNC process and the strategic opportunity to link the SNC process to national sustainable development planning under a changing climate.⁶⁹ The interim report stated the following:

The initiation workshops prove to be effective in providing essential guidance to national project coordinators on the planning, management and monitoring of the SNC process. Through a well-balance combination of planned briefing sessions by resources persons from LAs, NCSP and consultants (mainly from the region where the workshop is held), experience sharing by participants, interactive and hands-on sessions, and with simultaneous interpretation, participants left the workshops equipped with critical elements of a coherent strategy for implementing the SNC.⁷⁰

In response to the MTE the NCSP team updated the workshop materials to make them more engaging for participants.⁷¹ The workshops foster knowledge exchange of good practices, and regional collaborations, which have been highly beneficial for countries.⁷² Although not all NAI countries have participated in the workshops, those should not be indicators of their capacity or lack of reach of the NCSP, as issues such as topic and location of the workshop influenced the availability of countries who can participate.⁷³

The survey and interviews conducted during this evaluation have supported this view, with over 50% of the survey respondents stating that the workshops have been *highly useful*.⁷⁴ The technical workshops have related to increasing the technical capacity of NC teams, such as the five-day workshop on use of the Long-range Energy Alternative Planning (LEAP) model for mitigation studies in Cairo, Egypt, in 2006. As well as the workshops on V&A models, which have been requested by a number of countries. The workshops have also provided a key opportunity for the NCSP to assist countries in the integration of the NC as a tool for climate change policy in national plans, as the majority of the workshops included a component on how to use the NC to mainstream climate change in national policies.⁷⁵

The workshops remain a valuable part of the services provided by the NCSP, mainly because countries are keen to participate and exchange their own experiences. Although workshops may not be the most efficient way to provide technical assistance, as it requires more resources for fewer participants, it is certainly one of the most effective activities provided by the NCSP, and as such should continue in the next phase of the NCSP.

The NCSP **website**⁷⁶ served as a key platform for the NCSP to inform NAI countries on NCSP support activities, to disseminate information and resource material, and for NAI countries to exchange and share knowledge and experience for the preparation of SNCs.⁷⁷ The first website operated from December 2005–November 2009 and an updated version was launched in December of 2009. Since, the team has uploaded material on the news section of the webpage at least twice a month. Since December 2009, the website has received 28 603 visits, with an average bounce rate of 53.91 per cent, meaning that less than 50 per cent of

⁶⁹ NCSP (2007) Interim Report of The National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), Prepared for NCSP's 5th Advisory Committee meeting, February 2007.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ UNDP (2010) NCSP PIR (2009 - 2010)

⁷² NCSP (2007) Interim Report of The National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), Prepared for NCSP's 5th Advisory Committee meeting, February 2007.

⁷³ NCSP (2010) NCSP Indicators – Annex 1

⁷⁴ Please see section 3.1 on limitations of the evaluation

⁷⁵ UNFCCC (2009) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 136pp.

⁷⁶ <http://ncsp.undp.org>

⁷⁷ NCSP (2007) Interim Report of The National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), Prepared for NCSP's 5th Advisory Committee meeting, February 2007.

visitors went past the first page. Also, the average time spent on the website is 4 minutes and 11 seconds, which means either visitors know exactly where to find the information, or they were unable to find what they were looking for.⁷⁸ Also, only 33 per cent of survey respondents found the website *highly useful*, whilst another 35 per cent found it *useful*. The content of the website provides a number of useful tools; it could nevertheless be reviewed and revised to make it more user friendly. Also the NCSP could potentially utilize social networking sites to communicate updates, tips, articles and best practices, if they are deemed to be a valid way to reach the intended audience, rather than a traditional newsletter.

The NCSP team published a **newsletter** in English, Spanish and French every two months. Given that the NC is a country driven process, the newsletter was intended to be country driven as well, with countries providing information and papers. Unfortunately, countries did not contribute to the newsletter, consequently, the newsletter was then written by the NCSP team. When the first Programme Manager retired, the newsletter had stopped for the period of a year,⁷⁹ in response to the MTE and to continue its efforts to raise outreach and communication, it was re-launched.⁸⁰ However, in the last workshop in Istanbul the NCSP requested that participants provide papers for the workshop, this approach was rather successful as 25 out of 40 participants submitted a paper to the NCSP, which was initially considered as content for the newsletter, but then it was used for a new publication.⁸¹ According to the survey, the newsletter was not deemed the most useful tool provided by the NCSP, in comparison to others, with 51.9 per cent (27) of respondents felt the newsletter was *useful* but only 4.5 per cent (2) as *highly useful* (see Table 3). The newsletter was indeed a useful tool, however there is room for improvement in order to make a more participatory and effective communication tool.

The NCSP activities and outreach have also indirectly contributed to increasing stakeholder engagement through the NC process. Over the course of the SNC, more countries have established an NC unit, and it is within this context that the NCSP has provided support and guidance in ensuring that countries have increasingly diverse stakeholders in the NC process. Although the general increase in **stakeholder engagement** at the national level is not directly as a result of NCSP activities, the programme has indeed contributed in encouraging countries to engage a more diverse group of stakeholders. The survey has shown that over 60 per cent of respondents *highly agree* and *agree*, see Figure 5.⁸² However, there is still quite a bit of resistance to engaging stakeholders, as some NC teams like to contain the process within their units.⁸³

Overall the outreach and knowledge management undertaken by the NCSP has not been as effective as intended. The KN had low participation rates, with few participating countries and experts, which unfortunately means it cannot contribute to a solid exchange on key NC processes. The website, even after it has been revised, should still have more traffic, as it provides a good source of information to countries broadly speaking. However, given the average amount of time spent on the website, there is reason to suspect that it is not as user-friendly as it could be. The content of the website has merit, however, the layout could be improved to be more effective. While the newsletter has been appreciated by a number of countries, it has really not been delivered with the contribution of countries, and has not championed lessons learned, exchange stories, and best practices. This has been a shortcoming of this medium, given the nature of the NC process to be country driven. The NCSP could review whether there are other ways of providing similar information on a different platform, such as social networks. On the other hand, the workshops have been highly responsive and highly effective for participants and have consistently provided opportunities for countries to gather and exchange on their NC process. It is highly appreciated, and still requested by countries.

⁷⁸ Google Web Data (2012)

⁷⁹ Interviews

⁸⁰ UNDP (2010) NCSP PIR (2009 - 2010)

⁸¹ Interview

⁸² Please see section 3.1 on limitations of the evaluation

⁸³ Interviews

DELIVERY MECHANISM

The NCSP was designed to use a top-down, centralised approach, with direct response to support, a website, newsletter, tools and methods, and distillation of best practices. The bottom-up approaches for national components were technical feedback on NCs, site visits, roster of experts, and information exchange through knowledge networks. The primary stakeholders were the national climate change teams, while the secondary stakeholder were the broader range of institutions.⁸⁴ The design aimed to build on the first NCSP, which had a one-size fits all approach, and to give more tailored support services.

Given that the NC process is a country-driven process, the delivery mechanism is only as good as the demand. Overall the demand for the services was lower than was expected, however, over the course of the programme, and the NCSP staff felt that some countries need assistance in articulating their needs. As such, *the NCSP has been exemplary in its ongoing efforts to engage with relevant stakeholders, though: telephone consultations, questionnaire surveys, analysis of technical gaps, formal and informal consultations undertaken during the NCSP initiation and technical workshops.*⁸⁵

The NCSP had a small team at the New York head quarters office, as such it was to rely on **regional support** from the UNDP Regional Offices (RO) and other institutions for technical support. Requests for assistance would go directly to the NCSP, who would then assign the task to the requested agency. The role of the NCSP was to support the agencies in the implementation of the project, which was undertaken jointly by UNDP and UNEP, as such it should be noted that the delivery mechanism of the two agencies also differed.

The UNDP has a three-tier delivery system, where as headquarters provides the programme overview and design, technical assistance would then be provided at the regional level, and administrative assistance is provided in the Country Offices (CO). In terms of delivering a global programme, there could be a number of obstacles in using this delivery method. Not all CO have the same capacity, or availability to assist NC teams, and not all regional offices have the availability or the specific technical knowledge required to assist countries with specific requests relating to their NC. *High turnover rates at the UNDP COs has exasperated the short institutional memory at the national level.*⁸⁶ In theory, this delivery mechanism has merit; however, in practice, when delivering a global programme with a very tailored mandate, it is not as effective. This is especially the case for countries with low capacity, where the NCSP responded to these challenges by changing their delivery model when it launched the Targeted Backstopping Initiative, to directly engage certain countries. This delivery system for countries working with UNEP had a more tailored hands-on approach with the NC teams. UNEP has provided this type of assistance as there is only one staff dedicated to this programme, and he has been able to be more proactive with countries requiring more assistance.⁸⁷ UNEP is able to provide this type of assistance as it had only 40 countries, however, if UNEP had the same number of countries as UNDP, they would need to revise their delivery mechanism.⁸⁸ Also, in regards to accessing funds, countries found it easier to apply for funding through UNEP rather than UNDP, as UNEP only requires a project proposal and UNDP requires a PIF and a Project Document.⁸⁹

As the capacities of countries increase, and expressed needs become more specific to national context, a regional approach becomes progressively more important to promote south-south cooperation. As a result of the recommendations of the MTE, the NCSP had begun the process of developing MOUs with regional centres of excellence in the field of climate change.⁹⁰ The NCSP worked with the following institutions:

⁸⁴ NCSP (2004) Project Document

⁸⁵ NCSP (2009) Mid-term Evaluation.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Interview

⁸⁹ Interviews

⁹⁰ UNDP (2010) NCSP PIR (2009 - 2010)

- Bariloche Institute in Argentina: to conduct a mitigation analysis for the Latin America region and to carry out technical reviews of the GHG inventories and mitigation reports, as requested by countries (only 5 reviews were conducted)
- Stockholm Environment Institute in Boston, US: to carry out training on mitigation analysis for the African and Asian regions.
- Oxford University in the UK: to develop climate profiles as a basis for countries to use for their climate scenarios needed for the vulnerability and adaptation assessments. These climate profiles were done for 51 countries.
- Hadley Center in the UK: to conduct training activities on developing climate scenarios for African Countries.
- University of Waikato, CLIMsystems, in New Zealand: to conduct training on vulnerability and adaptation assessments for the Caribbean region.
- Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, UNDP Regional Centre, in Panama: to conduct training for the Latin American Region on the linkages between climate change adaptation and climate risks.

Although the NCSP has endeavoured to engage institutions at the regional level, it has not been as effective as intended, as it was not attached to any financial or human resources, and some regional centres may not always have the expertise required to respond to the needs of that region. Furthermore, the NCSP is built to be responsive to country requests and as such is it unable to ensure a level of volume requiring a certain expertise from any of the regional institutions or the UNDP RO. Consequently, the NCSP cannot allocate any funds to these institutions, not knowing the level of services they will provide. As a result, the availability and the interest of these institutions diminished.⁹¹ UNDP ROs have also failed to make a substantial contribution to implementation of the decentralized approach.⁹² Some RO have provided key support to certain countries, but overall the regional offices have provided limited assistance. Regional support remains a challenge for the next support programme. Some interviewees have stated the need to create centres of excellence to train the trainers.⁹³

In regards to **oversight**, the NCSP was to establish an Advisory Committee as a mechanism to ensure all countries receive NCSP services according to their needs, as well as a Project Implementation Committee, comprised of representatives from UNDP and UNEP, to review management and technical issues. Unlike phase one, the current phase of the NCSP has established links with the UNFCCC processes through representation of the NCSP on the CGE, as well as through representation of the UNFCCC and the CGE on the NCSP Advisory Board.⁹⁴ However, the Project Implementation Committee was never established and the Advisory Committee only met twice in the duration of the programme.⁹⁵ The failing of the Advisory Committee was due to the lack of funds, as well as to a high staff turnover; as the NCSP Project Manager retired, the contacts at the GEF and the UNFCCC changed as well. Subsequently, the Advisory Committee never resumed, and the exchanges among the institutions became more informal, with monthly exchanges via email or telephone.⁹⁶ However, interviews reveal that there is a clear need in the future for a more solid steering committee for advice, monitoring and support.⁹⁷

Since the renewed mandate of the CGE in 2009, the NSCP and the CGE have been quite synergetic in their undertakings. Under thematic and sub-regional training, the NCSP collaborated with the UNFCCC in the development of training and guidance materials for the following workshops organized under the Consultative Group of Experts on NCs (CGE): (i) Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventories for Latin America and

⁹¹ Interviews

⁹² NCSP (2009) Mid-term Evaluation.

⁹³ Interviews

⁹⁴ NCSP (2004) Project Document.

⁹⁵ UNFCCC (2005) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 60pp.

⁹⁶ Interviews

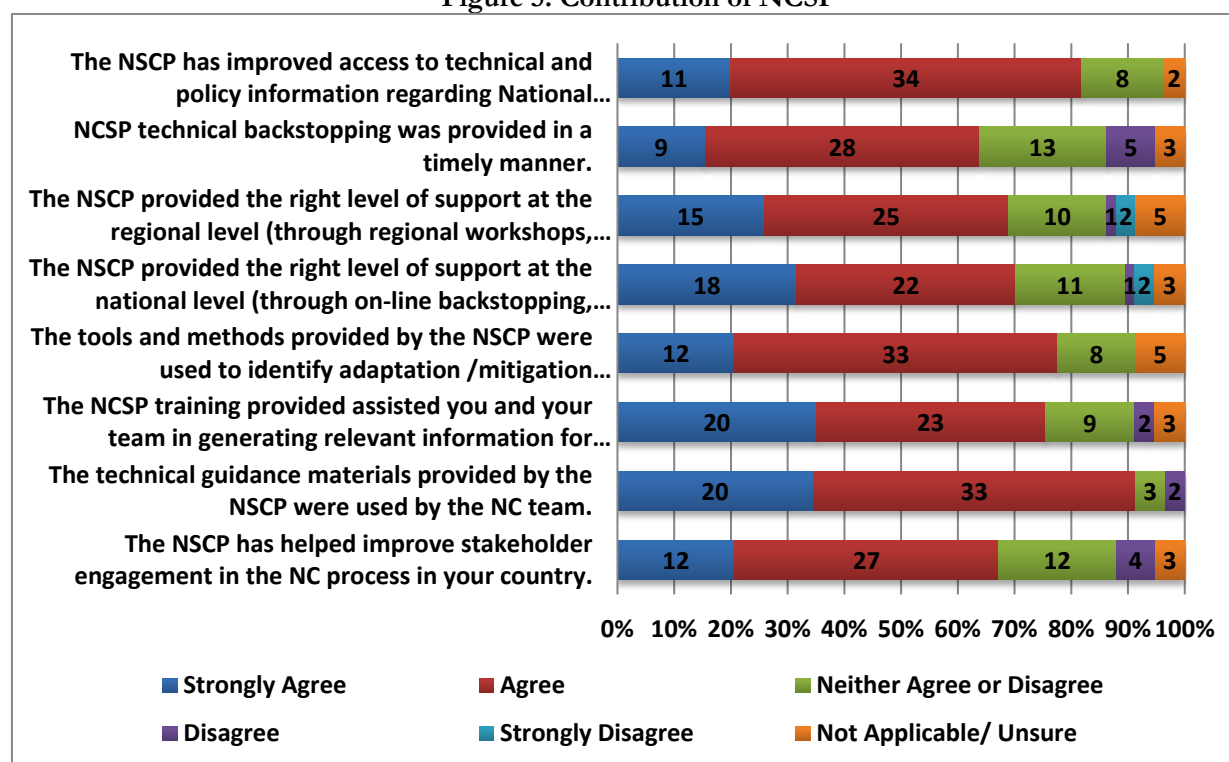
⁹⁷ Interviews

Caribbean (September 2011, Santiago, Chile); (ii) Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment for the African Region.⁹⁸ Interviewees have stated that given the CGE tends to target National Focal Points, and the NCSP works with the NC teams, they are more complementary than duplicate efforts. Furthermore, as the CGE and the NCSP provide joint workshops, this allows for them to increase the audience and diversity of stakeholders in their work.

Given the programme has been highly responsive to country needs and requests, the delivery mechanism shows a lot of promise; it has not however succeeded as it was originally designed. As such, this has posed certain challenges in regards to the decentralizing the services, and kept most of the work centralized at headquarters. In spite of these challenges, as of October 2012, the NCSP team has effectively assisted over 130 countries in their NC process, thereby achieving their initial expected output.

As the capacity level for countries to undertake their NCs becomes increasingly varied, engaging regional level support that can provide timely specialized technical and policy assistance will gain relative importance in the subsequent support programmes. Regional cooperation and institutions should be included at the design stage of the next support programme in order to get a clear sense of the resources available to the NCSP and to countries. Also, the NCSP should continue its work with the CGE as it has been well received by countries. Naturally, this is dependent on the renewal of the CGE mandate, which has been extended for one year.

Figure 5: Contribution of NCSP



Source: Evaluation Survey

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The project document presented a results-based log frame matrix for the NCSP, which outlined the programme goal, objectives, outputs and activities. In addition, the document outlined a table of deliverables

⁹⁸ UNFCCC (2012) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 124pp.

to be produced during the lifetime of the programme, which included six reports to the GEF Secretariat, two independent evaluations, and the monitoring of NCSP outputs.⁹⁹

The log frame established the main goal and the objectives stated above with outputs and activities. In essence, the log frame is indeed in line with results-based management principles. However, it had been challenging to review the progress of the NCSP, as there had not been establishment of baseline conditions. In response to this observation made in the MTE, the NCSP hired a consultant to undertake a comparative study of the INC and the SNC which produced the document *Reporting on Climate Change: A Preliminary Synthesis of Information contained in Initial and Second National Communications*. In terms of monitoring, the project document only lists output-based indicators, such as the number of newsletters and the number of workshops. They did not provide any indicators for the outcomes (objectives) or the goal, which resulted in a data gaps and un-measurable results. A more defined and detailed monitoring framework would need to be completed in coordination with UNEP for the next support programme.¹⁰⁰

The quality and the frequency of the reporting declined over the course of the programme. Two substantial reports were prepared for the 4th and 5th meetings of the Advisory Committee. Only one joint Annual Performance Report and Project Implementation Review Report have been prepared (by UNDP, for the period July, 2007 to June, 2008). A mid-term evaluation was presented in February 2009.¹⁰¹ Overall, the reports are on activities and outputs, rather than outcome results, which is a weakness in terms of demonstrating the progress towards the programme goal. Following the MTE, the NCSP established new outcomes and output indicators; however, there were challenges with regards to gaining some of the key data required for the indicators outlined.¹⁰² The NCSP did manage to survey participant countries twice a year to report to the GEF; in addition they undertook a number of post-workshop surveys.

The design of the next support programme should outline goals and outcomes that are within the scope of the NCSP, with regards to the budget and resources available. The current goal set out in this second phase of the NCSP is valid in theory, and supports the NC process as well as country needs. Nevertheless, it may need to be more targeted to the potential contribution of the NCSP as a global programme. The goal may be to support the integration of climate change policy into national development policies, but it would need to be more specific so that it can be within the reach and the scope of the programme (i.e. who's capacity, to what ends, and at what level).

The next support programme should also have a more systematic monitoring and reporting process to ensure that the programme is adaptive and attains its expected results. In order for the NCSP to get a clear sense of its contribution and the attainment of its goal, it is imperative that a baseline be established, that the log frame includes indicators for the outcomes, as well as the outputs, and that the monitoring be moved beyond the measurement of its outputs and done in a monitoring framework. The NCSP needs to outline a well-defined monitoring system, that will layout monitoring targets, timelines, data sources, risks and assumptions, at the design stage of the programme. Finally, the reporting should be clearly outlined at the design stage but also closely followed by the Advisory Board.

4.4. Efficiency

The efficiency section will review the extent to which NCSP resources were used and processes were designed for maximum value per unit of input. By responding to this key evaluation question:

⁹⁹ NCSP (2004) Project Document.

¹⁰⁰ Interviews

¹⁰¹ NCSP (2009) Mid-term Evaluation

¹⁰² Interviews

1. Has the NCSP been efficient in providing technical backstopping for member countries with the human and financial resources available?

Conclusions

The NCSP has been highly efficient in providing technical backstopping for member countries in light of human and financial resources available. The timeliness of the NCSP had not been as intended, however, since support began when several countries had already commenced the process of developing their NCs. However, given the increasing number and frequency of reporting requirements under the convention framework, along with an incremental increase in national capacities, it will be challenging to ensure that the NCSP is launched at the most opportune time(s) for countries to benefit. To date the NCSP has largely been able to be synergistic and complementary; however, the delivery of technical backstopping will need to be increasingly efficient and provided with more regional support.

Recommendations

- It will become increasingly more difficult to determine when the NCSP should take on a new phase so it may benefit a larger number of countries at the most appropriate time. As the reporting requirements under the convention become more numerous and more frequent, and while capacities are being built at different paces and levels, the consideration of a permanent support programme that can assist with reporting requirements should be considered.
- The efficiency of the NCSP has also been compromised by the lack of regional engagement and support. As such, the NCSP team has adapted in order to try to continue to provide targeted tailored assistance. To improve the efficiency of the NCSP in providing high quality and timely assistance, there will need to be an overall increase in human resources, as well as specific regional support.

For the second phase of the NCSP, the programme was delivered through a new modality as an umbrella approach that was compromised of three components: 1) self-assessments, 2) climate change EAs, 3) the NCSP. Rather than directly through the GEF as a means to decentralize the process and better respond to country needs, the umbrella approach is viewed as a successful means to provide the countries with the necessary funds. However, assistance from the GEF has changed delivery modality for the next phase, as it will continue to provide full-cost funding for NCs and BURs, but it has changed its options for countries to access resources for NCs to include: (i) working with a GEF Agency; (ii) being part of the UNEP umbrella project for NCs; (iii) by direct access from the GEF Secretariat; and (iv) through a national allocation as a full-sized project.¹⁰³ The umbrella project for UNDP has not been reinstated for the next NC process, as it has for UNEP.

The approved budget for the NCSP is \$4,470,777 USD, comprised of \$ 3,833,304 USD as a GEF contribution and \$637,473 USD of co-financing. The GEF contribution was released as a lump sum to the NCSP and internally managed over the course of the programme. The NCSP was to be executed by UNOPS, while the remaining of \$USD 216,000 NCSP funds from the GEF apportioned to UNEP was channelled through UNDP. The COP, the GEF Council authorized its Chief Executive Officer to approve financing for NCs under expedited procedures. The new GEF operational procedures for Expedited Financing of NC for NAI parties, were developed with a ceiling of \$405,000 USD per EA. An additional \$15,000 USD per country was provided for stocktaking and stakeholder consultations at the national level for NCs.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ UNFCCC (2012) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties.

¹⁰⁴ NCSP (2009) Mid-term Evaluation

Overall, the NCSP has been efficient in managing its **financial resources**, especially given that the programme had intended to be completed in 2010, but was able to continue providing support until December 2012. The cash co-financing was less than anticipated; though the NCSP has managed to get support from the Swiss Government in the translation of the UNDP Adaptation Policy Framework (APF) in French and , as well as Spanish, support from the US EPA for the participation of the NCSP training course on the LEAP model and ,covering the cost of upgrading the MAGICC-SCENGEN package.¹⁰⁵ The NCSP has also proven adaptable in its financial management, as it increased its support from 2008/2009 to 2009/2010 to respond to a growing need to build capacity at a regional (and/or) local level through training of trainers and partnerships with regional centres of excellence.¹⁰⁶

The **human resources** at the NCSP consisted of a small staff at the New York Headquarters who have provided unfailing support to the countries that have requested their service. Most of the interviewees and survey respondents have been highly satisfied with the team, and state that they have been highly efficient with the resources given. The NCSP has responded to country requests efficiently, as the majority of the survey respondents and interviewees felt that the NCSP provided timely assistance. Interviewees suggest there is room for improvement; but this will be highly dependent on the number of countries that will work with NCSP in the next NC cycle. If the numbers are the same as this cycle, and that the NCSP will be required to deliver more tailored assistance, there may be a need to increase human resources.

The purpose of umbrella project was to ensure the **timeliness** of delivery of services with the commencement of the countries' work - to be on the same project cycle. By the time phase two of the NCSP was operational some countries 87 non-Annex I Parties already in advanced stages of preparing their second national communications.¹⁰⁷ The timeliness of the NCSP has not been as efficient as intended given that some countries had already started their SNC when the programme commenced.

The question of timeliness in ensuring that the NCSP enter the project cycle at the same time as all NAI will most likely be particular to the forthcoming phase of the NCSP. As the capacity of countries become more diverse, the NC project cycle will be highly dependent on each country's capacity to respond to the reporting requirements, especially given that there are an increasing number of reports. If the NCSP is to remain on a project cycle, it will become increasingly more difficult to determine when the NCSP should take on a new phase so it may benefit a larger number of countries at the most appropriate time. As the reporting requirements under the convention become more numerous and more frequent, and while capacities are being built at different paces and levels, the consideration of a permanent support programme that can assist with reporting requirements could be reviewed.

As a global programme with limited resources, the NCSP had to ensure **complementarity and synergy** with existing work and partners. The mandate of the CGE had been renewed in 2010, and since the NCSP had worked well in ensuring that the work undertaken has been complementary to one another. Overall, the NCSP works with strategic partners in a synergistic manner.¹⁰⁸ The NCSP has built on training material and workshops that have been designed by the CGE. The NCSP has also used the UNDP Adaptation Framework as one of its online guidance tools.¹⁰⁹ However, as previously mentioned, the NCSP has not been effective in engaging regional level support, and this has impacted its level of efficiency in regards to the provision of technical capacity and policy guidance. In this respect, there is further room for improvement.

¹⁰⁵ NCSP (2005) Report on Activities (May 2005 to May 2006) and Draft Work Plan (2005 – 2010)

¹⁰⁶ UNDP (2010) NCSP PIR (2009 - 2010)

¹⁰⁷ UNFCCC (2005) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 60pp.

¹⁰⁸ NCSP (2009) Mid-term Evaluation

¹⁰⁹ NCSP (2007) Interim Report of The National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), Prepared for NCSP's 5th Advisory Committee meeting, February 2007.

The NCSP has been highly efficient in providing technical backstopping for member countries given human and financial resources available. The timing of the NCSP was not entirely well executed, as the support began when countries had commenced the process of devising their current NCs. Given the increasing number and frequency of reporting requirements, along with an increase in national capacities, it will be challenging to ensure that the NCSP is launched at the most opportune time for countries to benefit. Overall, the NCSP has been able to be synergistic and complementary, but the delivery of technical backstopping would likely be more efficient with more regional support.

5. Sustainability

This section discusses the extent to which NCSP has ensured the likelihood of continued benefits after the program ends, and seeks to answer the following question:

- To what extent have NCSP products and services resulted in upscale, replication, or other catalytic effects expanding the depth or breadth of member countries' technical capacities to address climate change?

Conclusion

The sustainability of results of NCSP activities and outputs hinge on the in-country relevance of NCs – and the process of developing the NCs - toward enabling effective policy planning and addressing development needs in light of climate change. The sustainability of the NCSP therefore depends on the ability of the programme to supply targeted guidance and technical support to partner countries at critical stages in the process of developing their NCs, and in ways that ensure the relevance of the NCs for not only UNFCCC reporting purposes but for providing a platform for cohesive policy-making, additional financing, and other follow-on activities.

This evaluation concludes that NCSP achievements have reached beyond the scope and scale of the program by providing technical solutions to overcome specific barriers to climate change planning and actions, and by building capacity for integrating climate change into national development policies at the individual level, and, in many cases, at the institutional and inter-ministerial levels.

However, the reach of NCSP's results is limited by a number of external factors typical of global support programs, such as managing the administrative burdens countries face in the process of developing their NCs (insufficient staff, high staff turn-over, government delays) and needing to quickly adapt to the dynamic context of reporting requirements for global climate funds. The NCSP also faces a number of internal barriers to upscale and replication, such as the relatively low levels of country awareness about what the program has to offer, and a lack of good models to engage regional partners and expertise.

Recommendation

In order to ensure capacity built is expanded beyond NC team individuals who attend trainings and workshops, the NCSP should invest effort toward:

- Cultivating formal and informal information-exchange relationships with regional/local institutions, and facilitating the development of partnerships between countries and these regional centres;
- Developing and facilitating workshops for a larger group of attendees per country/NC team but with a more specific regional and/or topic focus (e.g. two countries that have very specific similar needs or solutions);
- Identifying and testing higher quality and faster ways to exchange experiences, lessons learned, and best practices (replacing the function of the defunct knowledge networks and lack of online interface), such as

- webinars featuring exchanges on country experiences and/or talks by the online roster of experts; and
- Assisting countries in navigating the proliferation of guidance on new and existing topics – LULUCF, MRV, CDM, etc. REDD – and how to integrate these topics into the NCs to make them more relevant for policy processes and decision-making.

ADDRESSING TECHNICAL BARRIERS

The increased use of the NCSP technical solutions (as discussed in the appropriateness section) by partner countries since the first phase appears to have yielded improved relevance and quality of NCs. According to the 2010 APR/PIR, 26 countries submitted SNC with improved technical studies as compared to their INC.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, in many cases, the availability and quality of these technical studies has helped enable integration of climate change into sustainable development programs, lead to new environmental policy formation, formulate new task forces around technical and scientific issues, and facilitate inter-ministerial communication and/or dialogue between national climate change committee members.¹¹¹ Box 3 discusses how the NCSP enabled the Solomon Islands to overcome political barriers to mitigation actions with technical solutions.

Box 3 Mitigation Analysis in the Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands faces growing need to act on climate change as the consequences exacerbate existing environmental pressures. However, approximately 85% of the population has a subsistence livelihood, including from agriculture, fishing and forest products (1). In completing its GHG mitigation analysis, it became clear that the highest emissions reductions potential for the Solomon Islands includes the forestry sector, which is also a major source of income. Nevertheless, with the assistance of the NCSP to identify appropriate expertise to complete emissions studies, the NC team was able to propose ‘win-win’ mitigation measures, such as agro-forestry, which generates income while preserving land, soil and biodiversity, in order to temper political sensitivity (2). The Prodoc for the preparation of the SNC reports that the country “made good progress under its public service reform programme particularly in promoting the reforestation and agroforestry, the establishment of the land use commission and a new environmental act which makes it legally binding for all development projects to undertake environmental impact assessment.”(3)

Sources: (1) SPREP 2012. Country Profiles. Solomon Islands. <http://www.sprep.org/Solomon-Islands/pein-solomon-islands>; (2) NCSP 2012. National Communication Experiences July 2012. p20; (3) UNDP undated. ENABLING ACTIVITIES FOR THE PREPARATION OF SOLOMON ISLANDS’ SECOND NATIONAL COMMUNICATION TO THE UNFCCC. http://ncsp.undp.org/sites/default/files/Solomon_Islands_SNC_Prodoc.pdf

Evidence from interviews and surveys suggests that the tailored technical support of the NCSP has become more valued in its second phase as countries continue to access and make use of expertise, tools and materials; the NCSP is especially in countries where specific in-country capacity is limited. In response to the July 2012 NC Status survey, an overwhelming 96.5% (55/57) responses to the question of “What types of capacity were built under the NC process?” were ‘technical capacity (e.g. to prepare GHG Inventories, V&A Assessments, Mitigation Analysis etc.).¹¹² This evaluation’s survey asked NC coordinators “Which additional support services would your country need to facilitate the implementation of the enabling activities related to the National Communications?” Sixteen out of 38 responses (42%) pertained to general technical support, and an equal number pertained to specific technical topics or assistance (e.g. local and sub-sector emissions factors,

¹¹⁰ NCSP (2010.) Progress Implementation Report APR/PIR. Reporting period: 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008.

¹¹¹ NCSP (2012.) Country papers: Preparation of National Communications from Non-Annex I Parties to the UNFCCC. Lessons Learned and Experiences. p6, p18.; Interviews with participant countries.

¹¹² NCSP (2012.) NC Status Survey. July 2012.

forming climate and socio-economic scenarios, tech transfer, economic analysis such as CBA); where as another 11 responses (29%), each, related to tools/materials/guidance, and to training, respectively.

Even in countries with relatively high capacity, however, technical input is still sought out for considering the implications of and integration of new and emerging areas, such as LULUCF, MRV, CDM, and REDD. Interview and survey results of participant countries further indicate that targeted technical assistance needs to be equally balanced with coinciding assistance in identifying appropriate expertise and navigating new reporting guidance from the UNFCCC for NCs and BURs, policy-relevant assistance on making the NCs tie into the development of NAPAs, NAMAs, and for linking NCs to follow-on funding. Therefore, while technical solutions integrated into the NCs through the support of the NCSP are helping countries overcome barriers to climate planning and actions, the administrative burden of reporting requirements and the level and types of technical expertise needed have each only increased in volume and pace. Sustaining the results of NCSP technical solutions therefore depends on the continued delivery of a “flexible package” envisioned in the Prodoc in an increasingly dynamic local and global context.

BUILDING CAPACITY THROUGH PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

According to its Prodoc, the NCSP is designed to “emphasize capacity building, knowledge sharing and monitoring of program progress,” and its “ultimate goal is sustainability and maintenance of capacity - both institutional and individual levels - through more strategic and LT approach.”¹¹³ However, the NCSP entry point for capacity building is primarily the NC team, a small group of individuals drawn from relevant Ministries (usually environment, natural resource management and/or energy), and which includes the NC programme coordinator, whose time is stretched between other duties. Forty-nine out of 60 respondents (81.7%) to a recent survey of partner countries indicate the NC preparation team is drawn from the Ministry of the Environment; followed by the national climate change unit (24, 40%) and inter-ministerial committee (21, 35%), respectively.¹¹⁴ See table 3, which represents the target audiences for NCSP support toward capacity building.

Table 3: Responses to “What organizational entity/ies led the preparation of the National Communication?” (n = 60)¹¹⁵

Entity	Percentage	Count (out of 60)
Ministry of the Environment	81.7%	49
National Climate Change Unit/Office	40%	24
Inter-ministerial Committee	35%	21
Other	26.7%	16
Research Institutions	23.3%	14
Other Ministry	21.7%	13
Non-government Organization	18.3%	11
Consulting Firm	13.3%	8

Evidence points to NCSP activities providing capacity building beyond the individual level. First, even though Ministries are leading the NCs, in terms of the “agencies” involved in the preparation of the NCs, ministries (98.3%, 59/60) were followed by research organizations/ academia (90.0%, 54/60), NGOs (73.3%, 44/60), private sector (56.7%, 34/60) and CSOs (53.3%, 32/60). Therefore, the NC teams rely on a variety of specialized input and assistance, as well as coherence and coordination across various government and non-government entities. Second, in most cases (84.7%, 50/59 responses) climate change committees have been

¹¹³ NCSP (2004.) Prodoc. p4,5.

¹¹⁴ NCSP 2012. NC Status Survey. July 2012.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

formed specifically for the purposes of preparing NCs and other reporting requirements and therefore create a more stable structure in an otherwise potentially transient and periodic set of activities.¹¹⁶

Furthermore, although the NC units tend to be drawn from the environment ministry, the most common response for 'level' of capacity built is at the 'inter-ministerial' level (82.5%, 47/57), followed by 'local' capacities (68.4%, 39/57), 'ministerial' (63.2%, 36/57), and, finally, in the case that the experts helped other countries, at the 'national/international' level (38.6%, 22/57). In responses to "How has the process of developing a NC been relevant to support the following aspects of national efforts to address climate change?" the top three answers were related to institutional coordination and capacity building:

- Deepened relations between involved institutions (77%, 47/61)
- Enhanced capacity building (73.8%, 45/61)
- Established new links between institutions (70.5%, 43/61)¹¹⁷

As a recent comparison of the INCs and SNCs points out, support provided by the NCSP II started at a time when most countries were completing their INC, and at a time when countries were just beginning to prepare their SNC. With only a few exceptions that submitted their INCs before December 1998, most countries benefitted from NCSP I. For the 25 countries in the sample, the INCs were submitted over the course of a 13-year period, between 1997 and 2010, taking an average 4.3 years to complete. The SNCs, on the other hand, were submitted in a 3-year period between 2008 – 2010. Furthermore, although not statistically significant, on average, data suggests that countries provided approximately 55% more information (policy, legislative, and regulatory framework and the institutions responsible for their implementation) in their SNC than in their INC, and included more types of information and details previously undisclosed.¹¹⁸

Much of the "stock-taking" additional information (national circumstances, for example) provided in SNCs as compared to INCs does not require specific technical expertise, relies on some repetition of information, and does not necessarily indicate an understanding or plan for integrating NCs into policies and programs for mitigation and adaptation. Nevertheless, there is also a clear sense that countries appear to be more aware of additional tools and methodologies available for guidance and there is increased use of more advanced tools. For example, countries also generally provided more information on their GHG inventory but did not use the newer (2006) guidance provided by the IPCC and often sought out more country-specific methodologies such as CORINAIR, ENPEP and IMPACT methodologies that take a bottoms-up approach to calculating their GHG emissions. Also, a much greater number of countries used the more complex Tier 2 methodologies (2 INC, 13 SNC) as compared to Tier 1 (23 INC, 25 SNC) to calculate GHG emissions.¹¹⁹

As discussed in the effectiveness and appropriateness sections, technical documents, workshops and other tools have been very well received among partner countries and interviews have also confirmed that the quality of the NCs has improved as a result of NCSP support. Nevertheless, some of the longer-term capacity building components laid out in the Prodoc, such as the knowledge networks and partnerships with regional centers, have not manifested as envisioned. There is room for testing and developing more out-of-the-box strategies to answer additional technical support on specific topics – such as on V&A assessments, developing climate change scenarios, GHG inventory data management, and the development and implementation of education, training, and awareness strategies. However, just as technical expertise will need to be targeted, capacity-building efforts must remain needs based as well. In short, also relevant to the solutions to technical

¹¹⁶ NCSP 2012. NC Status Survey. July 2012.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ NCSP 2012. Reporting on Climate Change: A Preliminary Synthesis of Information contained in Initial and Second National Communications. P 9,12.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* p18, 19.

barriers is the surrounding context, including communication between political bodies, and other means of sustaining capacity.¹²⁰

Surveys and interviews confirm that although ministries lead the NC process, they rely heavily on and make use of inter-ministerial coordination, research/academic centres and other partnerships and expertise. As the NCs will need to become more geared toward facilitating the integration of climate change into national development priorities - a mainstreaming 'road map' for addressing climate change needs and actions - the NCSP will therefore need to carefully consider how to facilitate more in-depth and long-term South-South exchange learning, harness regional expertise and learning platforms, test further 'training of trainers' models, and help maintain or expand the level of expertise and technical support within governments for the development of the NCs. Administrative needs and reporting requirements for international funding are unlikely to reduce in the years ahead. Therefore NCSP support will need to navigate or help lessen these concurrent challenges alongside specific technical support.

¹²⁰ NCSP 2012. Country papers: Preparation of National Communications from Non-Annex I Parties to the UNFCCC. Lessons Learned and Experiences. p6.

6. Conclusion

The NCSP has proven itself to be a highly responsive to the needs of NAI countries in a context of a country driven process. Overall the NCSP has been **highly relevant** to the UNFCCC guidance and priorities, along with the GEF, UNDP and UNEP. The implementation structure of operating through the IAs has served the NCSP strategy relatively well, though stronger regional expertise and specific tailored support that met country demand. Program technical products and those services that actively engage NC teams and team members are especially highly valued, and are directly targeted to expressed country needs and difficulties. And thus, with a very limited staff, the program has been remarkably responsive, adaptable and by extension **appropriate**, to changing circumstances and on-going challenges, including the administrative and management constraints faced by partner countries.

Overall, the NCSP has been **effective** in providing technical support for the preparation of National Communications to the countries that have requested their assistance. The technical backstopping and workshops have been the most valuable services provided to NAI countries, as it provided hands-on tailored technical support to countries requests. The technical and policy related guidance documents have been widely used and appreciated by countries. The outreach and knowledge management undertaken by the NCSP, through KN, the newsletter, and the website, has not been as effective as intended in terms of reach and the enhancement of knowledge management.

The NCSP has been effective in delivering the products and services in a responsive manner that met the needs of countries. To this end the NCSP has been **highly effective** in implementing the programme to reach its objectives. However, there are still some challenges that remain in delivering such targeted technical services and products on the basis of a country-driven process and a demand-based programme. There is high value in mobilizing regional institutions to support this process that would benefit the countries on a technical and policy level.

The programme oversight has been **effective**, even with failure of the Advisory Board; however, the future support programme would need to ensure the reinstatement of the Advisory Board that would allow for better guidance. Finally, the monitoring and reporting was **not effective** in measuring and monitoring the attainment of the programme objectives, and would need to be addressed at the design stage of the next NCSP.

The NCSP has been **highly efficient** in providing technical backstopping for member countries given the human and financial resources available. The timeliness of the NCSP had not been as intended, however, given the increasing number and frequency of reporting requirements, along with an increase in national capacities, it will be challenging to ensure that the NCSP is launch at the most opportune time for countries to benefit.

The **sustainability** of the NCSP depends on the ability of the programme to supply targeted guidance and technical support to partner countries at critical stages in the process of developing their NCs, and in ways that ensure the relevance of the NCs for not only UNFCCC reporting purposes but for providing a platform for cohesive policy-making, additional financing, and other follow-on activities.

This evaluation concludes that NCSP achievements have reached beyond the scope and scale of the program by providing technical solutions to overcome specific barriers to climate change planning and actions, and by building capacity for integrating climate change into national development policies at the individual level, and, in many cases, at the institutional and inter-ministerial levels.

7. Recommendations

Following recommendations below are based on the assessment undertaken in the evaluation, and serve the purpose of providing input in the next support programme, as per requested in the ToRs.

- The NCSP should consider how to improve its delivery mechanisms to support the process of ensuring NCs develop beyond a reporting requirement and toward a technically sound framework document that is linked to national policies, informs policy-making and helps enable mainstreaming climate change at the national level.
- To the extent possible, the NCSP should encourage streamlined reporting processes, coherence between reporting requirements, and lessen administrative burdens for partner countries.
- As the NAI countries take on their SNC and TNC, their capacity needs become more specific to their national context. As such, there is a growing need for an even more tailored approach in the third phase of the NCSP. The requested from countries are increasingly varied and technical, as such, to respond to these needs, a tailored approach may be more effective to respond to country needs. Furthermore, the technical guidance would need to be updated and revised to provide targeted guidance, such as downscaling of certain models to reflect national circumstances.
- Although integration of the NC at the national level remains an important step, the strength of the NCSP lies in building and supporting technical capacity for NCs. As such, given financial and human resources, the NCSP could focus on building individual technical capacities at the national and regional levels in order to increase a network of expertise that is more responsive to national context and capacities, and that can contribute to the credibility of the NC, all the while continuing its inclusion of a mainstreaming component within its activities.
- Outreach is a key component to the delivery of NCSP support, the workshops remain a key activity to engage experts and provide an opportunity to share and network. These workshops should indeed continue during the next phase of the NCSP.
- Having online outreach is imperative to provide low-cost tools to engage participant countries. The NCSP should review the available online tools and select those that have been effective in reaching a similar target audience and promoted engagement, such as webinars. Furthermore, the NCSP could make their website more user-friendly for countries, as well as review the potential use of social networking tools, for example LinkedIn or Twitter, if deemed appropriate, to communicate updates, tips, articles, and best practices, on the website rather than a traditional newsletter.
- As the capacity level for countries to undertake their NCs get increasingly varied, the importance of engaging the regional level support that can provide such technical and policy assistance will be key in the following support programme. Regional cooperation and institutions should be included at the design stage of the next support programme to get a clear sense of the resources available to the NCSP and to countries.
- The design of the next support programme should outline goals and outcomes that are within the scope of the NCSP in regards to the budget and resources available. Although the goal may be to support the integration of climate change policy into national development policies. It would need to be more specific so that it can be within the reach and the scope of the programme (i.e. who's capacity, and what level). In order for the NCSP to get a clear sense of its contribution and the attainment of its goal, it is imperative that a baseline be established, that the log frame includes indicators for the outcomes, as well as the outputs, and that the monitoring be moved beyond the measurement of its outputs and done in a monitoring framework.

- It will increasingly become more difficult to determine when the NCSP should take on a new phase so it may benefit a larger number of countries at the most appropriate time. As the reporting requirements under the convention are become more numerous and more frequent, and while capacities are being built at different paces and levels, the consideration of a permanent support programme that can assist with reporting requirements could be reviewed.
- The efficiency of the NCSP has also been compromised by the lack of regional engagement and support. As such, the NCSP team has had to shift its focus to providing targeted tailored assistance. To improve the efficiency of the NCSP in providing high quality and timely assistance, there will need to be an increase in human resources, as well as regional support.
- In order to ensure capacity built is expanded beyond NC team individuals who attend trainings and workshops, the NCSP should invest effort toward:
 - Cultivating formal and information relationships with regional/local institutions, and facilitating the development of partnerships between countries and these regional centres;
 - Developing and facilitate workshops for a larger group of attendees per country/NC team but with more regional and/or topic focus (e.g. two countries that have very specific similar needs or solutions);
 - Identifying and testing higher quality and faster quality ways to exchange experiences, lessons learned and best practices (replacing the function of the defunct knowledge networks and lack of online), such as webinars featuring exchanges on country experiences and/or talks by the online roster of experts; and
 - Assisting countries in navigating the proliferation of guidance on new and existing topics – LULUCF, MRV, CDM, etc. REDD – and how to integrate these topics into the NCs to make them more relevant for policy processes and decision-making.

8. Lessons Learned and Good Practices

The following lessons and good practices stem from the evaluation conducted.

- The NCSP's strengths lie in providing an adaptable delivery mechanism of targeted advice and technical input, and it should continue to focus on supporting countries to develop high-quality NCs for the purposes of follow-on policy processes, decision-making, and funding.
- There is an inherent tension to the implementation of a program or project 'strategy' in the context of a 'country-driven' support model. The IAs must strike a balance between being proactive and responsive, with a delivery approach that answers requests in relation to technical needs without exceeding their mandate.
- There has been a low level of participation in knowledge networks and contribution to the newsletter by participant country. Interactive services and fora are most useful to and appreciated by partner countries for learning and information exchange. Linking NCSP activities to promote country engagement has proven successful; such as having workshop participants contribute to the newsletter.
- Using the relationship with the CGE as a starting point, the NCSP can continue to seek out specific synergies among other programmes and projects supporting EAs, as well as non-GEF capacity building measures. These relationships can lead to an expansion of platforms to launch materials, reduce administrative or knowledge management burdens, and expand the visibility of the programme.
- The Umbrella approach to providing countries with assistance for their NCs has been a good modality for delivering financial and technical assistance in a timely manner.
- The objective and the scope of the project design has been too ambitious with regards to the potential of the NC process, as well as with the resources made available to the NCSP.
- Regional participation has been challenging given the nature of the NC process, which is demand driven, and therefore the NCSP is not able to provide a defined workload and in turn provide funds for these institutions to allocate resources.
- The workshops remain a valuable part of the services provided by the NCSP, mainly because countries are keen to participate and exchange their own experiences. Although workshops may not be the most efficient way to provide technical assistance, as it requires more resources for fewer participants, it is certainly one of the most effective activities provided by the NCSP.

Annex 1: Review Matrix

Evaluation Question	Judgment Criteria	Proposed Indicators	Means of Verification	Source of Verification
A. Relevance	NCSP is aligned with the needs of intended beneficiaries NCSP is consistent with intended global, national and local policies and priorities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Supplementary information provided in NC coordinator Survey] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Supplementary information from Country NC coordinators]
1. To what extent does the NCSP align with global priorities as identified in UNFCCC negotiations and convention priorities?	UNFCCC negotiations and convention priorities are evident in NCSP activities and delivery mechanisms	a) Activities and delivery mechanisms reflect current themes and issues covered in UNFCCC negotiations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodocs PIRs MTE UNFCCC Documents
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-Structured Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNFCCC Secretariat NCSP Advisory Committee Consultative Group of Experts
		b) Activities and delivery mechanisms reflect Convention priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodoc PIRs MTR UNFCCC Documents
2. To what extent does the NCSP align with GEF, UNDP, and UNEP priorities and policies?	GEF, UNDP and UNEP priorities are evident in NCSP activities and delivery mechanisms	a) Activities and delivery mechanisms reflect current GEF, UNDP and UNEP priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodoc PIRs MTE UNEP Documents GEF Documents UNDP Documents
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-Structured Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GEF Secretariat UNDP and UNEP staff (HQ) Consultative Group of

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experts NCSP Advisory Committee NCSP Staff
		b) Activities and delivery mechanisms align with GEF, UNDP and UNEP policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodoc PIRs MTR UNEP Documents GEF Documents UNDP Documents
3. To what extent does the NCSP enable participating countries to align their activities to national priorities and climate relevant policies?	NCSP design and concept is coherent with national priorities and plans	a) Number and extent of member country representation in NCSP decision-making bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodoc PIRs MTR
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-Structured Interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultative Group of Experts NCSP Advisory Committee GEF Secretariat UNDP & UNEP Staff (HQ) National NC coordinators
		b) Coherence between NCSP-supported countries' actions and their national CC policies, strategies, priorities (for e.g. informing ongoing policy processes, mobilizing additional resources, and ensuring coherency across community, sub-national and national scales in adaptation policy implementation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-Structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCSP staff UNDP & UNEP Staff (Regional) Bilateral Donors Experts National NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodoc PIRs MTE NC Reports
		c) Evidence that NCs inform national development policies, priorities to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCSP staff Bilateral Donors

		address CC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts • UNDP & UNEP Staff (Regional & HQ) • National NC coordinators • NC Reports
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prodoc • PIRs • MTE • Questionnaires • Requests from countries/bi-annual questionnaires submitted by countries
	NCSP products and services address beneficiary needs and priorities	d) Change(s) in stakeholder engagement process on climate change policy and technical issues at country/local levels as a result of NCSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-Structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSP staff • Bilateral Donors • Experts • UNDP & UNEP Staff (Regional) • GEF Secretariat • UNFCCC Secretariat • NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs • MTE • Workshop Reports • Questionnaires • Requests from countries
		e) Degree of beneficiary involvement in NC-relevant activities or generation of deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-Structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSP staff • Bilateral Donors • Experts • UNDP & UNEP Staff (Regional) • GEF Secretariat

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodoc PIRs MTE NCSP newsletter Workshop Reports NCSP reviews of draft reports Website (Knowledge Networks)
B. Appropriateness	<p>NCSP is culturally acceptable</p> <p>NCSP activities or method of delivery of development initiatives are feasible</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Largely informed by NC coordinator Survey] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [NC coordinators]
4. Are NCSP activities and methods for delivery operationalized in a manner that meets identified needs?	Activities and delivery mechanisms sufficiently reflect local circumstances and contexts	a) Extent of use of TA products and services by participating country teams and/or experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-Structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCSP staff Bilateral Donors Experts UNDP & UNEP Staff (Regional) National NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PIRs MTE Website review Workshop reports NCSP reviews of draft reports
		b) Evidence of use of training in local decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey Semi-Structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC coordinators NCSP staff Bilateral Donors

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts • UNDP & UNEP Staff (Regional) • NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTE • PIRs
		c) Evidence of alignment with social norms, cultural safeguards, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts • NCSP Staff • UNEP, UNDP Staff (HQ & Regional) • GEF Secretariat • NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs • MTE • Questionnaires • Requests from countries
	Activities and methods for delivery are feasible in light of operational support	d) Level and type of support for regional and national institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTE • PIRs
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts • NCSP Staff • UNEP, UNDP Staff (HQ & Regional) • Bilateral donors • NC coordinators
		e) Gaps in services needed or themes covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC coordinator survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSP Staff • Consultative Group of Experts • NCSP Advisory Committee • UNDP & UNEP Staff

				(regional, HQ) • Bilateral donors • NC coordinators
			• Desk review	• MTE • PIRs
C. Effectiveness	NCSP has met or exceeded its objectives		• [Supplementary information provided in NC coordinator Survey]	• [Supplementary information from NC coordinators]
5. Does the NCSP effectively facilitate technical implementation of enabling activities related to the preparation of National Communications? [e.g. to what extent has the NCSP met <i>Objective 1. To facilitate implementation of enabling activities related to the preparation of National Communications</i>]	NCSP facilitates effective technical support for the preparation of NCs.	a) Evidence of supported countries reporting use of materials or support from NCSP (mitigation/GHG inventory, adaptation/vulnerability assessment(s), sectoral/other, etc)described b) Proportion of supported countries with NC project proposal approved by IAs	• Desk review • Desk review	• Prodoc • PIRs • MTE • Annual Work plans • Draft Workshop report • Prodoc • PIRs • MTE • GEF Website
6. To what extent has the NCSP been instrumental in preparing and disseminating technical and policy-relevant materials, including methodologies and tools? [e.g. to what extent has the NCSP met <i>Objective 2. To prepare and disseminate technical and policy-</i>	Products and services reach intended audiences	a) Products such as guidance on V&A Assessments, GHG Inventory, mitigation assessment, technical needs assessment, and other materials are accessible and/or useable by countries	• Desk review • Survey	• Prodoc • PIRs • MTE • NCSP Website • NCSP produced Guidance material • Workshop reports • NC coordinators

relevant materials, including methodologies and tools]			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-Structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experts NCSP Staff UNEP, UNDP Staff (HQ & Regional) Bilateral donors NC coordinators
	Products and services and are useful for policy and technical needs	b) Countries use NCSP tools, methods, other support for improving/informing policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodoc PIRs MTE Workshop reports NCSP Newsletters¹²¹ NCSP Lessons learned papers
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-Structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experts NCSP Staff Bilateral Donors UNEP, UNDP Staff (Regional)
		c) Countries use tools, methods, approaches to formulate technical solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodoc PIRs MTR Bi-annual questionnaires NC Reports drafts or final reports
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-Structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experts NCSP staff Bilateral donors UNEP, UNDP Staff

¹²¹ Available at: <http://ncsp.undp.org/newsletter>

				(Regional)	
7. In what ways has the NSCP enhanced knowledge management, best practices, communications and outreach? [e.g. to what extent has the NCSP met <i>Objective 3. To enhance knowledge management, best practices, communications and outreach</i>]	Outreach and KM strategies have heightened understanding of technical and policy issues on climate change	a) Evidence that documented best practices are utilized	• Desk review	• Prodoc • PIRs • MTE • NCSP Website • NCSP Newsletter • NCSP NC Reports	
			• Survey	• NC coordinators	
			• Semi-Structured interviews	• Experts • NCSP staff • Bilateral donors • UNEP, UNDP Staff (HQ & Regional) • UNFCCC Secretariat • GEF Secretariat • NC coordinators	
			b) Evidence of targeted stakeholder engagement with knowledge networks, list serves, newsletter, and other outreach	• Desk review	• Prodoc • PIRs • MTE • Questionnaires
				• Survey	• NC coordinators
				• Semi-Structured interviews	• NCSP staff • Bilateral donors • UNEP, UNDP Staff (HQ & Regional)
8. To what extent have project delivery mechanisms and implementation approaches achieved intended results?	[Comprehensive answer to be provided on the basis of answers primarily to Questions 6,7,8/e.g. NSP objectives 1,2,3.]				

9. To what extent have project delivery mechanisms and implementation approaches been conducive to reaching NCSP objectives?	Sufficient execution arrangements	a) Quality of design and structure of delivery mechanisms and implementation approaches by the NCSP for member countries	• Semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative Group of Experts • NCSP Advisory Committee • NCSP Staff • Bilateral donors • GEF Secretariat
			• Desk review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs • Prodoc • MTE • Annual Work plans
	Appropriate and adequate institutional arrangements	b) Quality of decision-making processes and oversight within NCSP internal management and oversight	• Semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative Group of Experts • NCSP Advisory Committee • NCSP Staff • Bilateral donors • GEF Secretariat
			• Desk review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs • MTR
		c) Quality of decision-making processes and oversight between NCSP UNDP, UNEP and GEF	• Semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSP Staff • UNEP Staff • Bilateral donors • GEF Secretariat
			• Desk review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs • MTR
		d) Functionality of M&E system with indicators, time tables, and targets for NCSP contribution(s) to NCs	• Semi-structured interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSP Staff • UNEP, UNDP Staff (HQ & Regional) • GEF Secretariat • Consultative Group of Experts • NCSP Advisory Committee

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prodoc • PIRs • MTR
	Functional coordination arrangements among various components	e) Quality of coordination mechanisms used by partners to share information between NCSP UNDP, UNEP and GEF.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSP Staff • UNEP, UNDP Staff (HQ & Regional) • GEF Secretariat • Experts • Bilateral Organizations
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs • MTE • NCSP website
D. Efficiency	Resources were used and processes were designed for maximum value per unit of input		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Supplementary information provided in NC coordinator Survey] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Supplementary information from NC coordinators]
10. Has the NCSP been efficient in providing technical backstopping for member countries with the human and financial resources available?	Optimal procedural arrangements to minimize duplicate efforts and delays	a) Quality of management and communication arrangements for timely delivery of products and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCSP Staff • UNEP, UNDP Staff (HQ & Regional) • GEF Secretariat • Consultative Group of Experts • NCSP Advisory Committee • National NC coordinators
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MTE • PIRs • NCSP review of reports • Annual Work Plans • Questionnaires • Workshop Reports

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requests from countries
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC Project Coordinators
			b) Evidence of systematic capitalization on existing knowledge bases, tools and systems complementary to the NCSP objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCSP Staff UNEP, UNDP Staff (HQ & Regional) NC coordinators
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodoc MTE PIRs NCSP review of reports NCSP website
	Sufficient and targeted resources devoted to reaching specific program objectives	c) Expenditures per NCSP objective against expressed needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NCSP Staff UNEP, UNDP Staff (HQ & Regional) NC coordinators Experts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desk Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prodoc MTE PIRs NCSP review of reports NC reports
E. Sustainability	Achieved benefits are likely to continue after the program ends.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Supplementary information provided in NC coordinator Survey] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [Supplementary information from NC coordinators]
11. To what extent have NCSP products and services resulted in upscale, replication, or other catalytic effects expanding the depth or breadth of member countries' technical capacities to address climate	Achievements met reach beyond the scope and/or scale of the program	a) Evidence of NCSP technical solutions enabling countries to overcome barriers to climate change planning and/or actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NC coordinators UNDP/UNEP Staff GEF Secretariat Consultative Group of Experts NCSP Advisory Committee NCSP Staff

change?				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilateral donors • GEF Secretariat
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs • MTE • NCSP newsletter • Workshop report • NC reports • NCSP review of reports
		b) Evidence of NCSP products or services resulting in capacity built to integrate climate change policy into national development policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-structured interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC coordinators • UNDP/UNEP Staff • GEF Secretariat • Consultative Group of Experts • NCSP Advisory Committee • NCSP Staff • Bilateral donors • GEF Secretariat
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRs • MTE • NCSP newsletter • Workshop report • NC reports

Annex 2: Bibliography and List of Documents

NCSP PROGRAMME DOCUMENTS:

NCSP Project Document
NCSP Annual Work Plans
NCSP Workshop Reports
NCSP Questionnaires
NCSP Newsletters
NCSP Progress Reports
NCSP Mid-term Evaluation
NCSP Training Needs Assessment
NCSP Website
NCSP Survey of National Communication Experiences, July 2012

OTHER DOCUMENTS:

GEF (2003) Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building
GEF (2006) The GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Policy
GSP, 2008: Monitoring Capacity Development in GEF operations: A framework to monitor capacity development initiatives. Global Support Programme for Capacity Development for Environmental Management.
GEF (2008) Second Progress Report on the Implementation of the GEF Strategic Approach to Capacity Development.
NCSP (2012) Lessons Learned and Experiences from the Preparation of National Communications from Non-Annex I Parties to the UNFCCC.
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NCSP (2007) Technical Report on the Implementation of the National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), 11 April 2005 – 10 April 2007.
NCSP Guidance and Tools on Climate Change
UNDP (2011) National Communication as a Tool for Integrating Climate Change into National Development
UNDP-UNEP: UNDP-UNEP Partnership on Climate Change, 7pp.
UNEP (2006) Cooperation between the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme. Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme.
UNFCCC (2002) COP 7 Decision on Capacity Building, 69pp.
UNFCCC (2005) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 60pp.
UNFCCC (2006) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 71pp.
UNFCCC (2007) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 74pp.
UNFCCC (2008) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 69pp.
UNFCCC (2009) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 136pp.

- UNFCCC (2010) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 122pp.
- UNFCCC (2011) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 113pp.
- UNFCCC (2012) Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties, 124pp.
- UNFCCC (2008) Activities to Implement the Framework for Capacity-building in Developing Countries under Decision 2/CP.7, 61pp.
- UNFCCC (2005) Sixth compilation and synthesis of initial national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, 21pp.
- UNFCCC (2008) Activities to Implement the Framework for Capacity-building in Developing Countries under Decision 2/CP.7, 61pp.
- UNFCCC (2010) Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.
- UNFCCC (2011) Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.
- UNFCCC (2012) Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.

Annex 3: List of Interviewees

Organization	Name	Title
NCSP / UNDP		
UNDP/NCSP	Yamil Bonduki	Programme Manager
UNDP/NCSP	Gabriela Walker	Technical Specialist
UNDP/NCSP	Susanne Olbrisch	Climate Policy Specialist
UNDP/NCSP	Martha Perdomo	Former Global Manager
UNDP/NCSP	Xianfu Lu	Former Technical Specialist
UNDP/NCSP	Maude Veyret-Picot	JPO
NCSP / UNEP		
UNEP-GEF	George Manful	Senior Task Manager
Multilateral Organizations		
UNDP Regional Europe and CIS	Martin Krause ^[1] _{SEP}	<u>Environment and energy^[1]_{SEP} Practice Leader^[1]_{SEP}</u>
World Bank GEF	Richard Hosier	Sr. Environmental Specialist
UNFCCC Secretariat	William Angyemang-Bonsu	Programme Officer Support to National Communications
UNFCCC Secretariat	Uazamo Kaura ^[1] _{SEP}	Programme Officer ^[1] _{SEP} Support to National Communications
Participant Countries		
AFRICA		NC Project Coordinators
Sao Tome	Santana Adérito Fernandes	
ARAB STATES		
Egypt	Dr. El-Sayed Sabry Mansour	
ASIA		
Thailand	Wangwacharakul Vute	
Nepal	Bed Prakash Lekhak	
CARIBBEAN		

Jamaica	Mahlung Clifford Anthony	
St-Lucia	Jean Alma	
EUROPE AND CIS		
Georgia	Shvangiradze Marina	
UNFCCC Consultative Group of Experts		
Africa	Patience DAMPTEY (Ghana)	

Annex 4: List of Workshops

Month Year	NCSP Workshop Title, Location
October 2005	Support of the Preparation of the SNC for Non Annex I countries of the CIS Region, Georgia
April 2006	Mitigation Training Workshop Long-Range Energy Alternative Planning (LEAP), Egypt
August 2006	CGE Hands on Training Workshop on V&A Assessments for the Latin American and Caribbean Region, Paraguay
September 2006	Support of the Preparation of the Second National Communication for Non-Annex I countries in the African Region, South Africa
October 2006	Vulnerability & Adaptation to climate change for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Uzbekistan
July 2007	Hadley Centre - NCSP Joint Workshop on the Use of PRECIS and MAGICC/SCENGEN for Regional Climate Scenario Development, UK
July 2007	LEAP Training Workshop, Thailand
August 2007	NCSP Workshop of Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessments and Climate Risk Management for Latin American Countries, Uruguay
April 2008	National Communications and Vulnerability & Adaptation to climate change for the Caribbean, Barbados
June 2008	NCSP Workshop on SNC Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessments for African Countries, Senegal
September 2008	National Communications and Vulnerability & Adaptation to climate change for Asia, Thailand
September 2008	Vulnerability and Adaptation Training for the Latin America and the Caribbean Countries, Trinidad and Tobago
February 2009	National Communications and Vulnerability & Adaptation to Climate Change for Arab States, Jordan
July 2009	NCSP Workshop on Vulnerability & Adaptation for Asia, Malaysia
August 2009	Follow-Up Workshop on Second National Communications for Pacific Island Countries, Fiji
May 2010	NCSP Training Workshop on PRECIS, Niger

September 2010	LEAP Training Workshop for African Countries, Benin
September 2010	NSCP/CGE Initial National Communication Workshop, Philippines
May 2011	Workshop on V&A Assessment for the Asia Pacific Region, Thailand
September 2011	CGE –NCSP Regional training on GHG inventories for Latin America and the Caribbean, Chile
November 2011	Hands-on Training Workshop on Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment for the African region, Kenya
February 2012	CGE-NCSP Hands-on Training Workshop on Mitigation Assessment for the Asian Region, Thailand
October 2012	NCSP Final Workshop on Lessons Learned from National Communications, Turkey

Annex 5: Survey

Please select your language:

- ☐ French
☐ English
☐ Spanish

Country: _____

Title or Role:

- ☐ NC Project Coordinator
☐ National UNFCCC Focal Point
☐ Technical Expert
☐ Other: _____

Please indicate the NCs your country has submitted so far: ☐First ☐Second ☐Third

The NSCP has provided a number of support services for the implementation of enabling activities related to the preparation of the National Communications for Parties. In your experience, to what extent have the following services and provisions been useful?

	Highly Useful	Useful	Moderately Useful	Not Useful	Not Applicable/ Materials not used
Bi-monthly Newsletter					
Knowledge Networks					
Workshops					
NCSP Website					
Online guidance materials:					
Greenhouse Gas Inventory					
Vulnerability and Adaptation					
Mitigation Analysis					
Technology Needs Assessment					
Mainstreaming Climate Change					
Roster of Experts					
Best Practices and Lessons Learned					

In your experience, what has been the key support provided by the NCSP for your country?

Please state your level of (dis)agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable/ Unsure
The support provided by the NSCP responded to your needs for the preparation of your NCs.						
The support provided by the NSCP is consistent with your national climate change policies and priorities.						
The NSCP has helped improve stakeholder engagement in the NC process in your country.						
The technical guidance materials provided by the NSCP were used by the NC team.						
The NSCP training provided assisted you and your team in generating relevant information for decision-making.						
The NSCP tools and methods were used to identify adaptation /mitigation measures or other climate change strategies to integrate into national policies.						
The NSCP provided the right level of support at the national level for the preparation of your NC.						
The NSCP provided the right level of support at the regional level to address cross-boarder issues related to NCs.						
NSCP technical backstopping was provided in a timely manner.						
The NSCP has improved access to technical and policy information						

regarding National Communications.						
------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--

Which additional support services would your country need to facilitate the implementation of the enabling activities related to the National Communications?

--

Please use the space below for any additional comments, and/or information on any of your “Not Applicable” answers above.

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Thank you for your participation.

Annex 6: Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for Final Project Evaluation

NCSP NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT PROGRAMME (NCSP) 2005-2011

GEF Background on capacity building activities

The Global Environment Facility supports capacity building within its programs and projects. Capacity development is essential to improve individual, institutional performance and also to promote progress toward global environmental gains and especially in the area of climate change.

The NCSP has been in operation since 2005, and implemented as two separate projects by UNDP and UNEP, both of which are coming to an end on 30 December 2012.

UNDP/GEF Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) policy

In accordance with UNDP/GEF M&E policies and procedures, all regular and medium-sized projects supported by the GEF should undergo a final evaluation upon completion of implementation.

A final evaluation is intended to **assess the relevance, performance and success of projects**. It looks at early signs of **potential impact and sustainability of results**, including the contribution to **capacity development** and the **achievement of global environmental goals**. It will also identify/document lessons learned and make recommendations that might improve the design and implementation of future UNDP/GEF projects.

Project Background

The National Communications Support Programme (NCSP) was initiated in April 2005 to provide technical and policy support to more than 140 non-Annex I Parties in preparation of their first, second (or third) national communications. The NCSP is jointly implemented by UNDP and UNEP. (UNDP supporting 101 countries and UNEP 40.)

The NCSP is part of a US\$60 Million Global project and is **funded by GEF and Donors**: Switzerland, US-EPA, DFID, Australia and The Energy and Environment Group (UNDP)

The project was designed to significantly enhance the capacity of participating non-Annex 1 Parties to prepare their national communications to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The activities of the project aimed to improve the quality, comprehensiveness, and timeliness of national communications from non-Annex 1 Parties to the Convention in accordance with guidance provided by the Conference of Parties (see decision 17/CP.8).

The project seeks to accomplish this goal through the operation of a series of activities designed to provide assistance to countries preparing national communications and through the organization of a number of thematic and regional exchange workshops

NCSP Project objectives

Objective 1. To facilitate implementation of enabling activities related to the preparation of National Communications;

Objective 2. To prepare and disseminate technical and policy-relevant materials, including methodologies and tools; and

Objective 3. To enhance knowledge management, best practices, communications and outreach.

Focus and Objectives of the Evaluation

The overall purpose of the Evaluation is to review the performance of the NCSP and to assess the processes and achievements made by the project and will also draw lessons that will inform the development future programmes.

More specifically the evaluation of the NCSP will have the following objectives:

1. To evaluate the appropriateness, relevance, and effectiveness and of the project in providing technical assistance to countries for the preparation of their National Communications.
2. To assess project concept and design and their relevance to the needs of participating countries in meeting their reporting obligations to the UNFCCC
3. To evaluate project **achievements** at the **outcome level**
Progress should be measured against the indicators developed after the NCSP mid-term evaluation of the project and other assessments that should serve as reference.
4. To provide a basis for decision making on necessary amendments and improvements for future programmes
5. To evaluate the project delivery mechanism or **implementation approach**, in particular focusing on:
 - Execution arrangements;
 - Institutional arrangements;
 - Coordination arrangements among the various components;
 - Efficiency of the technical backstopping to countries

6. To document, provide feedback on, and disseminate the lessons learned by presenting and analyzing main **findings and key lessons**, including examples of **best practices** for future GEF capacity building/support projects. Key lessons should adequately be supported by evidence.
7. **Identify gaps and practical remedial actions** directed in a more generic sense to the national governments and entities responsible for the sustainability of the changes achieved by the project.
8. Respond to comments received from interested parties and integrate them into the final report as necessary (comments will be delivered and included in the report). Include, in an annex, an explanation of any differences or disagreements between the findings of the evaluation.

The **main stakeholders of this evaluation** include: the executing and implementing agencies; the national teams and local country offices. Representatives of all or part of these parties would have to be consulted in the course of this evaluation.

Evaluation Methodology

- Review of key project documents such Project document, PIRs,
- Review of the midterm evaluation
- Review of relevant documentation such as, annual work plans, questionnaires, workshop reports, materials developed by the support programme, responses to country requests, country data, progress reports, and the programme, newsletters, training needs assessment identified by the NCSP team and the material content of the NCSP web site.
- Telephone discussions with the Implementing Agencies, country offices, UNFCCC, and the GEF Secretariat.
- Feedback from countries through written surveys.
- Telephone interviews, as appropriate, combined with emails to a selected number of countries, ensuring geographical representation, number and maturity of enabling activities.

Report Outline

The evaluators will prepare one final evaluation report in English, the format of which is described ..??.

In addition, the evaluators will prepare an executive summary of findings, in English and formatted so as to be easily presented as overhead to meetings.

The evaluation report should be structured along the following lines:

<u>Consolidated overall report</u>

- | |
|---------------------|
| 1. Table of content |
|---------------------|

2. Executive summary
3. Acronyms
4. Introduction
5. The project(s) and its development context
6. Approach for the evaluation
7. Findings in the areas of focus for the evaluation
8. Conclusions
9. Recommendations
10. Lessons learned and good practices
11. Annexes

The report will include figures, graphs and table to summarize results and highlight key findings.

Timing

The proposed schedule would be carried out within the following timeframe:

- On-line discussions with key players (UNDP and UNEP) (September 2012)
- Compilation and analysis of relevant documents (September/October 2012)
- Design, implementation and review of surveys, including selection of countries and strategies for interviews (September 2012)
- First draft report and review by agencies involved (15 October 2012)
- Second draft report and review by agencies involved (22 October 2012)
- Final report (if new comments are provided, 29 October)

Qualifications of the consultant

- 10-15 years of professional experience in climate change, capacity development or environment, economics and/or development related field is required.
- Demonstrated project/programme evaluation skills and experience.
- Demonstrated ability to undertake analytical work, capacity drawing on case studies as well as analyze data, country trends and lessons learned.
- Familiar with GEF project evaluation procedures, especially in the context of UN and GEF projects.