

THE EXCHANGE SERIES

Effective Capacity Building for Accessing Climate Finance: Examples and Experiences

10th Exchange Email Discussion Report – Consolidated Replies | December 2015



[Dr. Peter King](#), Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance Senior Advisor, [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#), and Senior Policy Advisor, [Institute for Global Environmental Strategies \(IGES\)](#) Regional Centre, Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 4 Dec 2015)

[Dr. Piyachatr Pradubraj](#), Regional Technical Coordinator, [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#), Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 4 Dec 2015)



The 10th APAN Exchange was raised by Dr. Peter King and Dr. Piyachatr Pradubraj on 5 Nov 2015 to engage the APAN climate change adaptation community in Asia and the Pacific. The Exchange period lasted approximately two weeks (5 – 18 Nov 2015).

Dr. King is the Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance Senior Advisor for the [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#) project. Peter is also the Senior Policy Advisor at the [Institute for Global Environmental Strategies \(IGES\) Regional Centre based in Bangkok, Thailand](#).

Dr. Piyachatr Pradubraj is USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific's

Dear friends and colleagues,

This has been another insightful discussion on “*Effective Capacity Building for Accessing Climate Finance*”. Thank you for sharing your thoughtful responses. It has been especially good to hear from many of our [Government Training Support Program](#) alumni.

We started this *Exchange* with an understanding that adapting to climate change is immensely important for the survival of many countries in Asia-Pacific. But in order to adapt, countries need adequate financing, resources, and capacities.

Indeed, this key issue of financing will be at the front and center of the [COP21 negotiations](#) happening now in Paris.

Whether or not we see a fair and effective deal signed next week will depend on how climate finance is to be delivered to developing countries – in particular, the promised, but woefully insufficient, US\$100 billion a year by 2020.

We asked our questions with an understanding that there is money out there. Already, during this COP season, we are seeing sizable, new funding commitments in various forms made by [the GEF](#), big corporations, and developed and emerging economies.

In this Exchange, we wanted to find out what skills are needed – or are missing – for countries to acquire the necessary capacity to access financing. We also wanted to explore how best to develop country capacities to manage the project preparation process in order to ensure ownership and sustainability of adaptation activities.

Below are some key insights we picked up from your contributions.

We heard firsthand from government officials in Bangladesh (Dr. Md. Matiur Rahman and Md. Iskandar Hosan), India (Patrick Jasper), Papua New Guinea (Jacob Ekinye), Timor-Leste (Osorio Belo da Piedade), and Vietnam (Ky Quang Vinh). The importance of mainstreaming adaptation into development plans continues to resonate, because it inherently has financing implications, particularly with regards to accessing domestic funding sources. If there is no budget allocation, then even well-designed projects will not proceed.

Regional Technical Coordinator and she also leads the [Government Training Support Program](#) – a program that addresses the region’s capacity building needs for adaptation.

The lack of capacity to prepare project proposals that meet international donor standards was another critical issue raised – in fact, a fundamental skill we often see missing in many country officials. We cite Mr. Jasper’s accurate description that “proposal writing is an art itself”.

Others have raised that disbursement procedures from donors should be made clear, collaboration and communication between different government agencies should be strengthened, and local needs have to be better understood for effective adaptation to take place.

In terms of ensuring that capacity building is effective and long-lasting, both country official and development partner contributors (Dr. Vong Sok, Manu Maudgal, Daniel Gilfillan, and Shom Teoh), emphasized the need to select the right participant or “local champion”. However, it was noted by Mr. Maudgal that this is a “necessary but not a sufficient condition to enable institutional change.” Their discussions also touched upon the various approaches of training provision to obtain the best possible results under different situations.

Others also pointed out the inevitable movement of trained officers away from climate change roles as a persistent challenge to building institutional capacities; while, at the same time, Mr. Ekinye noted that incorporating climate change job descriptions into the organizational structure could support continuity should an officer depart. As climate change impinges on nearly all sectors, transfer between sectors is not necessarily an overall loss of capacity at the national level.

You can read Mr. Ekinye’s full response below, as well as all the other contributions to the *Exchange*, in this consolidated replies report.

Thank you all again for your insightful contributions. We also welcome new topics for future *Exchanges*. Please drop us an email at the-exchange@adapt-asia.org with your ideas. We look forward to another robust discussion.

Best regards,

Dr. Peter N. King
Senior Advisor

Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance
USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific

Piyachat Pradubraj, Ph.D.
Regional Technical Coordinator
USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific

Responses from the APAN Community

Contributors from the APAN Community to the 10th Exchange (5 – 19 Nov 2015).

1. [Ky Quang Vinh](#), Director, Climate Change Coordination Office of CanTho City,

Ky Quang Vinh, Director, Climate Change Coordination Office of CanTho City, Vietnam (Posted on 19 Nov 2015)

Dear Peter King,

I would have some ideas to discuss for these recent questions.

1. From your experience, what do you think are the necessary skills and capacities government officials – both at the national and local levels – need to manage the project preparation process and, in turn, access climate

Vietnam (Posted on 19 Nov 2015)

2. [Patrick Jasper](#), Asst. General Manager - Climate Change Unit, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Kerala, India (Posted on 19 Nov 2015)
3. [Jacob Ekinye](#), Director Adaptation and Projects, Office of Climate Change and Development, Papua New Guinea (Posted on 18 Nov 2015)
4. [Dr. Md. Matiur Rahman](#), Chief Health Officer, Barisal City Corporation, Bangladesh (Posted on 17 Nov 2015)
5. [Osorio Belo da Piedade](#), Chief of Water Resource Management, Ministry of Public Works, Timor-Leste (Posted on 17 Nov 2015)
6. [Mikell O'Mealy](#), Senior Associate, Climate Change Adaptation, Abt Associates Inc., Bethesda MD, United States (Posted on 17 Nov 2015)
7. [Dr. Vong Sok](#), Governance and Institutional Development Advisor, [Mekong Partnership for the Environment, Pact](#), Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 16 Nov 2015)

finance, both internationally and domestically. In other words, what do you think is lacking? And why?

The biggest thing is to grasp clearly "what to do to adapt to climate change". Because climate change is a concept just has too abstract and easily confused with the impact of other phenomena. To grasp means:

- Be attractive and love to implement all the resilience activities which is the most important thing. Because there is no love, no determination cannot be made to achieve the highest results.
- Having local accuracy metrics diversity data types. Knowing the local knowledge and how local people to handle disasters. Knowing the needs of the local community and business.
- Depending on separate the administrative levels and the management areas of government officials, their job requires much difference. Ward level staff must grasp the exact situation of vulnerability and adaptation measures suitable natural-environmental, socio-economic level of the local. Staff higher administrative levels must know how to assess the investment needs and adaptation of selected subordinates necessary activities should comply with the mission and his power. Especially senior officers must also be fairly certain projections about future events and apply the remedies to be "no regrets".

2. Over the past years, there have been more and more activities led by the [Adaptation Fund](#), the [Green Climate Fund](#), and [GIZ](#) to build climate finance 'readiness'. What components of these activities would you think are the most effective and important? What modalities do you think work best?

In recent times through investment in environmental protection and climate change still lack centralized complete plan worldwide and therefore the efficient use of capital is not high, There is room let the operation "innocuous" is performed.

Because the phenomenon of climate change and the environment is a common survival problem of the whole world. So an Organization Global Climate Adaptation (UNCC) has properties "legally" and focus "budget" strong is very necessary to coordinate global resilience actions plan.

- Legal properties means that all nations in the world must recognize UNCC, and each country shall have the National Climate Adaptation Organization (NaCR) and the subordinate organizations to implement the UNCC resilience plans and under the assignee of UNCC. UNCC is an independent organization non-political and non-military. Its principle is practice & science for activities. UNCC will be established and operated under democratic methods and modern science.
- Focus "budget" means the contributions to the national response of the UN participation will be focused on the budget of the UNCC, which may include contributions from other non-state institutions . Source of this fund will be allocated to the countries recognize the legality of the UNCC, and to implement adaptation action plans in their countries under the global plan proposed by UNCC.

If UNCC is organized and operated as above. The issues to lower greenhouse

8. [Manu Maudgal](#),
Independent
Consultant (Posted on
16 Nov 2015)
9. [Md. Iskandar
Hosan](#), Assistant
Director
(Planning), Banglades
h Climate Change
Trust, Ministry of
Environment &
Forests, Bangladesh (P
osted on 13 Nov 2015)
10. [Daniel
Gilfillan](#), Development
Practitioner & PhD
Candidate, Fenner
School of
Environment and
Society, Australian
National University
(Posted on 12 Nov
2015)
11. [Shom
Teoh](#), Programme
Manager, Sustainable
Cities, Institute for
Global Environmental
Strategies (IGES)
Regional Centre,
Bangkok,
Thailand (Posted on 11
Nov 2015)

gas emissions and enhance the resilience of all countries in the world will be feasibly planned and implemented.

3. A lot of capacity building activities are centered on building personal capacity (i.e. capacities of individual government staff). In practical terms, how do we ensure that this leads to building institutional capacities, which is oftentimes the desired objective of many capacity building programs? How do we ensure impact?

We often understand very superficial phrase "capacity building". For example, we usually focus on improving individual capacity and results we have a big number of Professor and PhD with a very high rate by population, but we have very few of scientific works and even fewer successfully scientific works to be use in a practical and sustainable.

Thus strengthening capacity needs to be understood and implemented as a project with a specific product. In other words, capacity building is a national plan must aims to a specific response activities and long-term. By doing so, enhancing institutional capacity and evaluate the results of investment in capacity building would be feasible and easy to implement.

Sorry for late reply

Ky Quang Vinh
Director

Climate Change Coordination Office of CanTho City
Vietnam

<http://www.biendoikhihau.cantho.gov.vn/>

[Back to Top](#)

Patrick Jasper, Asst. General Manager - Climate Change Unit, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Kerala, India (Posted on 19 Nov 2015)

Dr. King, it is once again a privilege to be a part of the exchange and Dr. Piyachatr it is wonderful to finally see you in person. We corresponded extensively during the application process. I will do my best to shed some light on your questions.

1. From your experience, what do you think are the necessary skills and capacities government officials – both at the national and local levels – need to manage the project preparation process and, in turn, access climate finance, both internationally and domestically. In other words, what do you think is lacking? And why?

The need to apply a climate lens to investment projects has not yet sunk into the government sector. In most cases it is business as usual as you may call it and this may be due to the lack of adequate capacities. While most frontline staff are adept at preparing routine proposals to draw funds from Government Budget support, preparing proposals to international standards which most climate finance entities require will be a difficult proposition. Climate change is a fairly new subject and research on these subjects is an ongoing process. The lacunae which I feel is significant I have summarized below:

1. Lack of Access to latest research on the subject and the inability to link the research with current happenings.
2. The ability to look at development projects with a climate lens, modify projects on this basis and institutionalize these learnings.
3. Shortage of manpower at field level and hence lack of time to spend on preparing projects of international standards.
4. Lack of incentives to take the effort to prepare proposals of international Standards.
5. Governments the world over have highly technically qualified staff. However Technical qualifications do not guarantee a proposal which meets the rigors of international scrutiny. Proposal writing is an art in itself. Skills like preparation of the results Framework, Project management, Monitoring and evaluation skills, financial analysis etc. are required while preparing a comprehensive proposal. Gaps in these skills can only be assessed through a detailed Training Needs Analysis at an Institutional Level.

2. Over the past years, there have been more and more activities led by the [Adaptation Fund](#), the [Green Climate Fund](#), and [GIZ](#) to build climate finance 'readiness'. What components of these activities would you think are the most effective and important? What modalities do you think work best?

I do not know much about the initiatives of the AFB and the GCF but my organization has collaborated extensively with the GiZ especially in the realm of Capacity building. They have helped us in preparing specialized training modules on different training needs (in the field of Climate Change) of our Officers and we are in the process of imparting these training modules to our officers connected with the climate change initiatives. These areas involve basics of adaptation and mitigation as well as project preparation etc. While these types of training are highly localized and more economical in nature they do lack the kind of exposure and interaction a trainee obtains when a scholarship is provided.

3. A lot of capacity building activities are centered on building personal capacity (i.e. capacities of individual government staff). In practical terms, how do we ensure that this leads to building institutional capacities, which is oftentimes the desired objective of many capacity building programs? How do we ensure impact?

That's the million Dollar question isn't it? How do we ensure the trained few disseminate the training both at operational level and at Institutional level?

a. Selection of the beneficiary – This is by and large the most important part and by far the most difficult. I believe Ms. Shom Teoh touched upon this very briefly when she mentioned about training the trainer and I tend to agree with her to a certain extent. However it is also a fact that ultimate message is often diluted when it reaches the ultimate trainee through the trainer. Much also depends on the capacity of the trainer. So how do we balance this risk with the economics of training so many stakeholders? While I believe that the direct approach (training the ultimate field worker) is much more effective, it is the selection of the trainee that plays a crucial part. The selection process should not just involve scrutinizing the trainee's application but also scrutinizing the trainee's organization, the role played by the trainee in the

organization and the role played by the organization in the scheme of things. For example there was one training programme where the subject matter was field level implementation of adaptation projects where 60% of the attendees were from the research field which may not be very appropriate and throws doubt on the selection process. I guess this is similar to what Mr. Daniel Gilfillan has expressed.

b. Another suggestion I would make is proper follow up with the participant as to how much Impact this has resulted in at his/her workplace or in his/her organization in terms of institutional Capacity Building after the completion of the programme maybe for a year or so through individual dialogue or institutional dialogue. Of course I do not know how workable this could be.

c. Partnership with the institutions concerned? This probably follows my earlier observation about there being a Training Needs Assessment at an institutional level. Maybe a mechanism where TNA is done by the institution and selection of trainees could be done by Capacity Building agencies on the basis of these TNA? A similar mechanism we have followed in our organization in collaboration with the GiZ.

Thanks for the initiative.

Patrick Jasper

Asst. General Manager - Climate Change Unit

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

Kerala, India

[Back to Top](#)

Jacob Ekinye, Director Adaptation and Projects, Office of Climate Change and Development, Papua New Guinea *(Posted on 18 Nov 2015)*

Hi All,

This is a very exciting area of discussion and I am compelled to share my view and experiences from Papua New Guinea. I will try as best to answer the question raised.

1. From your experience, what do you think are the necessary skills and capacities government officials – both at the national and local levels – need to manage the project preparation process and, in turn, access climate finance, both internationally and domestically. In other words, what do you think is lacking? And why?

Firstly we need to mainstream climate change into development planning both at the national and local level. Unless and until climate change is reflected in the development plans and programs at all levels, financial resource flow will be hard to come from the Government Budgetary processes. They may use development partners intervention programs as a substitute for their own funding. The question of ownership and sustainability becomes important here.

It's not only a financial capacity constraint, administratively there must be collaboration and communication between different government agencies including NGOs, the private sector and even opinion from the civil society at large. As often echoed in forums, climate change cuts across all sectors and

has no boundary and it would be worth the effort to mainstream climate change at the ward council level, to the district level, to the provincial level then to the national level. Be it bottom up or top down planning, there must be a clear path for the resources to flow.

Develop the capacities of the officers of the climate change focal points and key agencies of government to manage and account for the climate finance. The problem for developing countries in general is accountability both to the people and to the financiers/donors.

Multilateral Implementing Entities and National Implementing entities should ensure the procedures for disbursement of funds is made known and clear to the partners and project proponents on the ground. Many times we do not get to spend the project funds and we are being accused of not having the capacity to spend - it's simply not being made aware of the procedures of disbursement.

2. Over the past years, there have been more and more activities led by the [Adaptation Fund](#), the [Green Climate Fund](#), and [GIZ](#) to build climate finance 'readiness'. What components of these activities would you think are the most effective and important? What modalities do you think work best?

I would say institutional strengthening/building capacities of the implementing agencies of any programs or projects is important and sufficient money should be given and only in very technical areas should consultants be engaged. Request for such services should come from the host government through its focal point.

3. A lot of capacity building activities are centered on building personal capacity (i.e. capacities of individual government staff). In practical terms, how do we ensure that this leads to building institutional capacities, which is oftentimes the desired objective of many capacity building programs? How do we ensure impact?

Building the capacity of the human resources is just as essential as setting up, for example, central climate change database/central repository and connecting to all partners. Having data is one thing and making use of it is another. Many times we get data at great expense only to collect dust in some corner of government offices after the assignment is over. Building climate change positions with job prescription into the organisational structure to ensure continuity should one officer depart. I am driving at strengthening the structure and the system and not individual officers.

I hope my views are relevant.

Thank you and kind regards,

Jacob Ekinye
Director Adaptation and Projects
Office of Climate Change and Development
Papua New Guinea

[Back to Top](#)

**Dr. Md. Matiur Rahman, Chief Health Officer, Barisal City Corporation,
Bangladesh** (Posted on 17 Nov 2015)

Dear Peter,

I believe the topic is critical but perfect. Climate change adaptation is a multi stakeholder's issue. People of LDCs are less aware of climate change adaptation. If we want to create a resilient city, we have to involve all stakeholders of the city for resilient campaign. To make a climate change adaptation project and its proper implementation skill personnel is needed. To build up human capacity, training is mandatory.

In Bangladesh perspective, we can spread climate change knowledge from officers to officer; officers to people by trained a high quality officer. To achieve better impact we should make climate change adaption as a social movement. So we need to train up two groups of people; one group for advocacy and other group for implementation of climate change adaptation programs. So there is no alternative of training. If we squish the training programs, we cannot reach to our goal timely.

To select trainee is not always easy. If you call governments of LDCs to nominate candidates for an overseas training, many times there is mismatched. On the other hand many countries like Bangladesh, government officials are transferable from one department to another department, one ministry to another ministry. Sometimes there have no relation of work from his past to present department or ministry.

I think if the trained officer has commitment, he/she can use his knowledge in his working field or day to day life. One ministry or one department cannot perform all activities of climate change adaption. In Bangladesh officers of Local Government Organizations are not generally transferable. So they can use their knowledge in their organization for long.

In Barisal city, Bangladesh we are working to make our city resilient. KfW is preparing climate change adaption project. I am using my knowledge that I earned from ADPC training to develop urban flood management project. Now we are working to develop community-based resilient program and development of waste management system. I believe, I can use my knowledge in Barisal City Corporation during my service period.

I think present training system is perfect and feasible. If we can choose relevant and permanent officers of concern department for training we will get better outcome. After completing training, it is very difficult to arrange a workshop with attending of high officials from respective countries of different departments. It is easy to arrange experience sharing meeting with officials of same organization. It does not need resource from outside. In Bangladesh this is in practice. We have to submit report training report to the government. When we like to hold a workshop, claiming participants from many organizations, NGOs, it needs foreign support or Central Government approval in case of LDCs. This is very difficult manage. So, the present training system is more perfect, more convenient.

Regards,

Dr. Md. Matiur Rahman
Chief Health Officer
Barisal City Corporation

Barisal, Bangladesh

[Back to Top](#)

Osorio Belo da Piedade, Chief of Water Resource Management, Ministry of Public Works, Timor-Leste *(Posted on 17 Nov 2015)*

Dear Piyachatr,

I would like to say that, we need to look deeper into that weather change is a global issue that we need to rise up to work together to make sudden changes in adaptation and mitigation, who plays an important role in this regard, I think of the various programs that have been taking place and organized by USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific, has given a lot of training and workshops to us to be pioneers in terms of enhancing adaptation and mitigation, but did not rule to the pioneers to continue training in order to become a teacher for trainees, and so please give opportunity to those who already are in phase with high experience in order to remain a teacher for the generation that participated in the National level training, that's what I think is important way. Thank you.

Best regards for all of you,

Osorio Belo da Piedade
Chief of Water Resource Management
Ministry of Public Works
Timor-Leste

[Back to Top](#)

Mikell O'Mealy, Senior Associate, Climate Change Adaptation, Abt Associates Inc., Bethesda MD, United States *(Posted on 17 Nov 2015)*

Dear Colleagues,

Thanks very much for sharing these invaluable perspectives on accessing and mobilizing climate finance. We're hosting a webinar on this topic next week with the senior advisor to the Green Climate Fund and leaders from GIZ, USAID and the U.S. State Department. Please feel free to [register here](#) to contribute your thoughts there as well. A recording of the webinar and copy of the presenters' slides will be sent to everyone who registers, even if you're not able to join us during the event itself.

Thank you again and best wishes for all of you critical work.

Warmest regards,

Mikell O'Mealy
Senior Associate, Climate Change Adaptation
Abt Associates Inc.
Bethesda MD, United States

[Back to Top](#)

Dr. Vong Sok, Governance and Institutional Development Advisor, [Mekong Partnership for the Environment, Pact](#), Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 16 Nov 2015)

Dear Peter and Piyachatr,

Interesting discussion. Because it is a full narrative, sometimes it's hard to understand as a kind of concept/philosophy about the training. To me, there are three areas to consider: a) what is the training about (even though it's climate change adaptation, it is still very broad), b) what are the outcome/impact levels they are looking for (goal/objectives)?, and c) context/country/agency (including the current situation- reasons, support system, etc.). The three areas very much influence training design and planning, and its impacts. If I have a chance I would say all three approaches mentioned are useful depending on the three factors above, whereas bundle B is more useful for some countries at high risk and poor capacity to address those risks, e.g. Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar.

In my situation with Mekong Partnership for the Environment, we bring together governments, civil society and business to improve Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and public consultation policies and practices. We apply many of these same considerations. Below is a matrix I've put together to help think through those questions.

Dr. Vong Sok

Governance and Institutional Development Advisor

Mekong Partnership for the Environment, Pact

www.pactworld.org/local-updates/mekong-partnership-environment

Bangkok, Thailand

Training Approach	Focus Area	Goals/Objectives	Context/Country/Agency
'Train the trainer'	-Community adaptation program, -Key government sectors (Water, Agriculture, Coastal Planning/Development, -CSO networks active in climate change -Risk and Vulnerability Assessment of CC	To build a strong resource pools [practitioners-educators] for community, key sectors related, and CSOs in climate change adaption.	-Local and/or sector where it is high vulnerable to climate change. -Add-on efforts to existing initiatives e.g. sector development, local development (initiatives/activities exist actively in place).
Bundle training with 'doing'	-Researchers/academic group working in climate change -Local community – farmers (lead farmer) -Business association networks. -Local planners/local authority/local sector agencies (office/department) -crop adaptation, living with flood, coastal development, rainwater collection, watershed/wetland planning/management	To provide know-how for coping with climate change through addressing and incorporating its into their core activities.	-High vulnerable sites to climate change, -Basis knowledge, skill & interest required, especially lead farmers and business networks. -Where it's needed for site demonstration, probably in an area of uncertainty and risk associated with climate change, and its impacts.
'Two-track training'	-Synergize efforts to address climate change issues from policies and practices -Promotion or strengthen particular programs of climate change to impact a sector and/or geographic level (country, province) -Climate Financing/Green funds/climate risk assurance	To assist a systematic understanding and change of a sectoral agency, or a particular geographic site (e.g. province) in relation to policies and practices [governmental officials as targeted focus.	Some trainings should be done separately for higher level official (decision-maker, and politician...) and officials for implementation [practitioners].

[Back to Top](#)

Manu Maudgal, Independent Consultant (Posted on 16 Nov 2015)

1. From your experience, what do you think are the necessary skills and capacities government officials – both at the national and local levels – need to manage the project preparation process and, in turn, access climate finance, both internationally and domestically. In other words, what do you think is lacking? And why?

Govt officials are extremely knowledgeable and talented but often long term strategic thinking is ham-strung by the immediate fire-fighting. Thus Govt officials actually need immediate implementation ready solutions- as of yesterday.

From climate finance access perspective, the key areas of work needed are— stimulating ideas for proposal preparation and their prioritisation and Idea development into full proposals.

Once proposals are made then in my view Govt processes can easily take over.

2. Over the past years, there have been more and more activities led by the [Adaptation Fund](#), the [Green Climate Fund](#), and [GIZ](#) to build climate

finance 'readiness'. What components of these activities would you think are the most effective and important? What modalities do you think work best?

From climate finance readiness perspective, the key areas of work needed are— developing products for the target market where often collateral is not available example crop insurance.

In my view one needs to work with EXISTING financial institutions catering to target audience for finance uptake and co-develop products taking into account their feedback at each and every stage.

In this regard, GIZ work is note –worthy example on crop insurance in India.

3. A lot of capacity building activities are centered on building personal capacity (i.e. capacities of individual government staff). In practical terms, how do we ensure that this leads to building institutional capacities, which is oftentimes the desired objective of many capacity building programs? How do we ensure impact?

Building capacity of the local champion is often necessary but not a sufficient condition to enable institutional change. Reason being the local champion chosen is often not the right person from project objectives especially in-case of study tours abroad and the like. However, this is a necessary evil else the proposal itself may not get accepted in the first place.

Institutional change is slow but decisive. In my view building institutional capacity is not a 1-3 year affair but needs a long term approach at least 5-7 years. In this regard the work of GIZ is note-worthy where the focus is on both the process and the results.

If results come and the process is institutionalised then impact is visible on a long term basis.

Manu Maudgal
Independent Consultant

[Back to Top](#)

Md. Iskandar Hosan, Assistant Director (Planning), Bangladesh Climate Change Trust, Ministry of Environment & Forests, Bangladesh (Posted on 13 Nov 2015)

Dear Piyachatr,

Thank you for raising interesting & most demanding topic. We know that there are many windows of accessing climate finance for adaptation & mitigation. But the way/procedure is really complex. Though I think it should be for the transparency and effective uses of fund. We, the people are assigned for climate change related activities, should be trained. I think there is no alternative ways except training. Here, I do agree to the opinion of Ms. Shom Teoh that train of trainers. After completing training for the trainers, a workshop be arranged having trained trainer, one high official & one working official from respective countries. So that, the trained trainers can arrange same training in host country with the approval of high official and having official support from the working official. By this way the persons working on climate change adaptation & mitigation from government organizations &

NGOs and looking for international climate finance.

I think capacity building for the permanent official is mandatory. It is because that there are two types of official in my country. One type is transferable and another is non-transferable. In some cases, I see that an official is nominated for training when is working in respective field (Bangladesh Climate Change Trust). But he is transferred to another department (Ministry of Liberation War Affairs) just few days after completing the training course. The knowledge he acquired from the training has not been embodied for the organization he worked for.

Thank you all for sharing valuable views on effective capacity building for accessing climate finance.

Regards,

Md. Iskandar Hosan

Assistant Director (Planning)

Bangladesh Climate Change Trust

Ministry of Environment & Forests

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

www.bcct.gov.bd; www.moef.gov.bd

[Back to Top](#)

Daniel Gilfillan, Development Practitioner & PhD Candidate, Fenner School of Environment and Society, Australian National University (Posted on 12 Nov 2015)

Dear Fellow Adaptation and Development Experts,

The questions that Dr. Piyachatr Pradubraj has posed resonate with my experience both in international development generally, and as a researcher focussing on adaptation in South East Asia.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a development goal and an adaptation goal, and for the purposes of this response I do not make a distinction. In my experience there is a tendency for capacity building efforts to focus on the content of the end goal of a project, rather than on foundational skills. By this I mean that (working with an individual) the skills training focusses on what to do about a particular problem rather than the process of thinking about the problem. If a national or local level government official already has the capacity to think about adaptation project preparation from the perspectives of a number of constituencies, as well as in terms of different sectors, then my experience suggests that project and process ownership is the next big hurdle.

The first of these is not a quick fix. If training is provided to prepare funding proposals for dike building, but the people taking part in the training do not yet have the capacity to transfer that training to a different context then the training can easily end up as a single use event. To get around this issue requires (in my experience) identifying a local 'champion' (or champions) who has (have) the innate capacity or talent to transfer skills from one setting to another. Significant time should be spent working with this individual or group both on the particular problem, but also on how they can work with

and build the skills of their colleagues over time. In essence this amounts to a transfer of responsibility to a local party for project preparation, and is the first step in raising capacity more broadly. Another important consideration is training content, where a single skill is applied in three or four different ways or settings to model the transfer between circumstances.

This sounds similar to a 'train the trainers' approach, however the identification of the champion(s) is key to the success, and the challenges of this should not be underestimated. There are a number of characteristics that are important in the champion apart from the innate skills mentioned above. The champion also needs to be committed to the geographic area and process. They must also be respected by their colleagues and the general public. They must be prepared to take on responsibility, and finally they must have the desire and ambition to improve both the situation where they work and themselves.

The second issue then is ownership of the process. There are a number of elements of ownership including understanding of the adaptation issues now and how these are likely to change over time, and also viewing the adaptation project as a priority when compared with other development priorities such as infrastructure or business development. While it may be obvious that the climate is changing, the future is uncertain, and in the face of uncertainty it is often easier to put blinkers on and 'do what we've always done'. Why prioritise adaptation when no-one can tell me how much more powerful the typhoons in 2030 will be? My experience suggests that time is a key input - training events and seminars are less likely to result in prioritisation of adaptation if the attendees are not exposed to ideas related to climate change and adaptation on a daily and weekly basis. This is a point where the champion(s) mentioned earlier are important. It is these people who can keep adaptation on the agenda and make it a part of the 'normal' work life. And this can help with mainstreaming of adaptation into different sectors, because it takes policy off the paper and brings it alive in the office.

While I haven't explicitly discussed institutionalisation in this response, the suggestions that I've included above should go a long way towards institutionalising adaptation concerns above and beyond including it in workplans.

Regards,

Daniel Gilfillan
Development Practitioner & PhD Candidate
Fenner School of Environment and Society
Australian National University

[Back to Top](#)

Shom Teoh, Programme Manager, Sustainable Cities, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Regional Centre, Bangkok, Thailand *(Posted on 11 Nov 2015)*

Dear Peter and Piyachatr,

Thank you again for raising another interesting topic. I'd love to hear from government officials who have been trained (or had been involved in training) in financing for climate change on questions (1) and (2).

On question (3), I'd like to share some ideas for 'ensuring' impact of capacity building activities as someone who has been responsible for designing learning activities for governments (both national and sub-national).

Firstly, I see 'capacity building' as a philosophical issue. Capacity building is a form of education, which in turn is a form investment (where past performance is an indicator, but not a guarantee of future performance). We can only try our best to select the most promising persons to be educated, but I believe no one person can absolutely judge whether that person X has generated larger 'returns' on investment or not. That would require godly omniscience.

Just to give a realistic example: a high performance government officer was nominated to undergo a 3-month, highly privileged scholarship to be trained on a particular topic. However, after the training, she/he opts to change career track from government to pursue 'other opportunities' (for example better pay and a more exciting job in the private sector). The 'trackability' of the 'impacts' would become uncertain. Some may consider the investment into training this person wasted since he/she did not remain in government to implement climate change related projects. We could track what he/she did in the private sector, but this is probably unrealistic (do you know any government training programme capable of such far-range 'tracking'?).

This scenario has occurred numerous times in my experience. Of course, I feel disappointed. But then again, I also believe excellent people will likely be excellent and do good things and whether they are government, NGO, academia, etc.

Still, on some sleepless nights I have pondered on how 'capacity building' could be done to maximise the potential positive impacts:

a) 'Train the trainer' - A typical training event concentrates the education on a limited number of persons (especially overseas training, which is expensive). Perhaps, in addition to post-training follow-up questionnaire/reports on an individual basis, we could require the trained officer to conduct a number of in-house workshops for other colleagues back in their offices so that knowledge can be spread to more officers.

I've not reached a conclusion on this, but in certain cases (the type of training, and when the consultants are not too pricey and busy), I think that it could be cheaper and more value for money to dispatch trainers/experts to conduct training in the target cities/countries, rather than selecting a few 'champions' from various cities/countries to be trained in one location. (Because you only pay for the travelling costs of the trainer/experts to visit the countries). I think a balance of both centralised and de-centralised training may work better. What do you think?

b) Bundle training with 'doing' - If the training is very technical, the trained officer could be supported with a small post-training action fund to apply their knowledge to practice. Meaning, someone who is trained on climate finance proposal writing/project preparation should be given some small post-training supporting resources/funds to develop a few proposals and get them successfully funded.

c) 'Two-track training' - To make things happen in governments, usually the decision-making and working-level officers need to act in tandem. The high-

level person may wish to implement some actions after training, but may be too busy to follow up or have no capable support staff. The working-level officer's initiative to act after training is often hampered by a lack of high-level support/endorsement. Many training programmes often follow the formulaic approach of one sponsored participant per country/city/entity. Perhaps it makes sense to sponsor at least two persons per training: one high-level, one working representative?

I'd love to hear your opinions on the above! Are they too idealistic or practical?

Many thanks and regards,

Shom Teoh (Ms.)

Programme Manager, Sustainable Cities

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

[Back to Top](#)

E-DISCUSSION LAUNCH EMAIL (posted on 5 Nov 2015)

Dr. Peter King, Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance Senior Advisor, [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#), and Senior Policy Advisor, [Institute for Global Environmental Strategies \(IGES\)](#) Regional Centre, Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 5 Nov 2015)

Dr. Piyachatr Pradubraj, Regional Technical Coordinator, [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#), Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 5 Nov 2015)

Dear friends,

How time flies. This email marks the 10th Exchange, which means this is also the 10th time I am seeking your inputs on key adaptation topics. Thank you very much for contributing so actively in these past discussions. I am encouraged to see how this community has grown over the years. I am also grateful for all the ideas and insights shared, discussed, and learned.

In this 10th Exchange, I hope to do things a little different. I would like to expand our regular discussion by getting more adaptation experts involved in taking the conversation forward.

So please allow me to introduce Dr. Piyachatr Pradubraj, whom I work with at [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#). She is the project's Regional Technical Coordinator and she also leads our [Government Training Support Program \(GTSP\)](#) – a program that addresses the region's capacity building needs for adaptation.

We developed this program recognizing that project preparation is generally not done by government officials, but rather done by consultants, NGOs, or academics. If we want to see ownership and sustainability of adaptation activities, we need to make sure that countries themselves develop the necessary capacities to manage the project preparation process.

Indeed, this is a task not easy to accomplish. I am looking to both you and Dr. Piyachatr for some answers to help shed light on this key issue of effective capacity building, which I believe many of us are still figuring out the best and

most efficient ways to deliver real impact on the ground. Khun Piyachatr, please.

Dr. Peter N. King
Senior Advisor, Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance
USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific

Thank you very much for the kind introduction, Peter.

Dear colleagues,

It is a privilege to be able to use this Exchange platform to reach out to you, both government officials and development partners involved in climate change adaptation projects and activities.

As Peter has mentioned, I work at [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#), mainly supporting the capacity building component of the project, particularly the [Government Training Support Program \(GTSP\)](#). I know all of our GTSP participants are included in this Exchange community and I have seen that a few of you are very active in previous discussions. Thank you for those valuable insights. Now I hope you – and others who have attended climate change adaptation-related capacity building events, or have designed one – are able to share your thoughts on some of my questions below.

Peter talks about the issue of effective capacity building that we need to figure out. I think before we go further we would need to break this down to two separate thoughts: To successfully achieve capacity building objectives, are we referring to the effective methods or modalities for capacity building? Or are we focusing on the actual capacities needed to access climate finance? With this in mind, please consider the following questions:

1. From your experience, what do you think are the necessary skills and capacities government officials – both at the national and local levels – need to manage the project preparation process and, in turn, access climate finance, both internationally and domestically. In other words, what do you think is lacking? And why?

2. Over the past years, there have been more and more activities led by the [Adaptation Fund](#), the [Green Climate Fund](#), and [GIZ](#) to build climate finance ‘readiness’. What components of these activities would you think are the most effective and important? What modalities do you think work best?

3. A lot of capacity building activities are centered on building personal capacity (i.e. capacities of individual government staff). In practical terms, how do we ensure that this leads to building institutional capacities, which is oftentimes the desired objective of many capacity building programs? How do we ensure impact?

I am very much looking forward to hearing your views. Thank you once again for the opportunity.

Best regards,

Piyachatr Pradubraj, Ph.D.
Regional Technical Coordinator
USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific

Admin matters: For each *Exchange*, community members have about 1-2 weeks to share any thoughts, ideas, and experiences via the-exchange@adapt-asia.org with the group. At the end of the *Exchange* period, a consolidated summary of the discussion will be shared.

The Exchange Series on Climate Change Adaptation is facilitated by the APAN Knowledge Management Team and supported by the [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific project](#). The team moderates the exchanges and ensures that members receive a maximum of one email a day. Messages posted reflect the personal views of the contributors and not the positions of their organizations.

If you would like to opt-out of the *Exchange* at any time, please contact Augustine Kwan at the IGES Regional Centre at kwan@iges.or.jp

The Exchange Series on Climate Change Adaptation is made possible with the generous support of the USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific project. To learn more about APAN and our partners, visit: <http://www.asiapacificadapt.net/>



Mobilising Knowledge and Building Capacities for Climate Resilience