



Building capacity for LDCs to participate effectively in intergovernmental climate change processes

(Achievements 2014-2017)





UNDP BANGKOK

“The challenges for the LDC climate change negotiators are many. Having a very strong preparation ahead of the negotiation sessions as well as having a strong coordination among the members of the group is crucial for each LDC to participate efficiently.”

**- Mr. Tosi Mpanu Mpanu
(Former Chair of the LDC Group on Climate Change)**

Background



The negative effects of climate change are constraining the human and economic development of Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Decisions made at the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – such as those related to finance, adaptation, mitigation, technology, and capacity building – have major ramifications for LDCs. To ensure that the interests of LDCs are adequately and fairly reflected in the ongoing climate change negotiations, it is imperative that LDCs engage effectively in intergovernmental climate change negotiations, decision-making processes and eventual implementation of the decisions taken.



Currently, many international resolutions on climate change are adopted and implemented without adequate participation from LDCs. This is largely a result of existing disparities and gaps in the capacity of LDCs to engage in and influence the outcomes of intergovernmental climate change negotiations.

Some of the capacity constraints include:

- 1 Weak national coordination mechanisms to support effective participation in the intergovernmental negotiations;
- 2 Insufficient technical knowledge and language skills of climate change negotiators;
- 3 Limited knowledge of topics being negotiated in intergovernmental climate change negotiations; and
- 4 Uncoordinated and ad hoc transfer of knowledge, skills and lessons learned between members of the LDCs Group and within national delegations.

The LDC Negotiator Training Programme

'Building Capacity in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to Participate Effectively in Intergovernmental Processes' is a multi-stakeholder global programme implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Environment (UN Environment), funded through the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Programme execution is supported by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

The main objectives of the programme are:



Enhancing the role of LDCs in intergovernmental climate change negotiations



Strengthening national systems/institutions for coordinating climate change information in LDCs



Facilitating knowledge management and sharing

239

trained
participants

137

face-to-face trainings
and seminars'
participants

99

e-learning course' s
participants

47

LDC's
represented

12

resource
persons

Training and e-learning

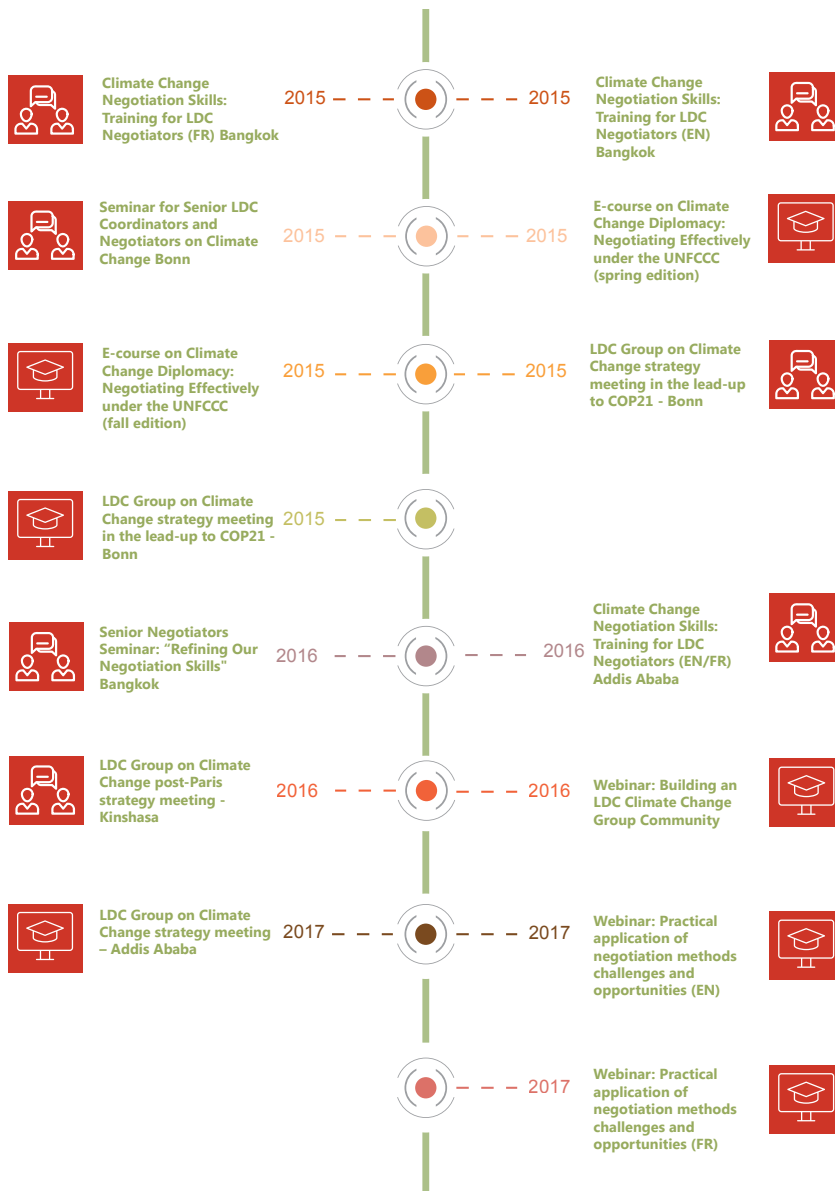


As one of the executing agencies, UNITAR has designed and delivered a training programme, combining face-to-face training events and tailored e-learning courses. To encourage effective learning and knowledge-exchange across as many LDCs as possible, these events were designed to accommodate various levels of expertise. The training sessions were also provided in both English and French.

Events for emerging negotiators focused on the structure and organisation of the UNFCCC, as well as basic negotiation skills. Events for senior negotiators provided updates on key negotiation streams and offered a forum for the development of a strategy.

UNITAR's well known climate change diplomacy course was tailored to the needs of LDCs and used to increase the number of beneficiaries targeted.

Timeline



Challenges and Solutions



“At this important juncture, as we transition together from agreement to implementation, LDCs need new types of collaboration and support. This will ensure our effective participation in the negotiations to advance and implement the Paris Agreement.”

**- Mr. Gebru Jember Endalew
(Chair of the LDC Group on Climate Change)**



Strengthening knowledge through...

LDC climate change negotiators are drawn from diverse backgrounds and have varying levels of experience. Therefore, their training requirements also differed. On this basis, training events for emerging negotiators were held separately from events for senior negotiators. In practice though, there was a consistent demand for refresher sessions about key negotiation concepts and portable skills (such as effective preparation for negotiations, chairing sessions and bilateral communication techniques) for both of these two groups.



...building portable skills

1 Expert multilateral diplomacy trainers provided ‘portable’ skills which are useful in all negotiating contexts. Topics included: Preparing for Multilateral Conferences and Negotiations; Negotiation Techniques; Negotiation Processes and Dynamics; Consulting and Lobbying; Communication and Intercultural Communication.

2 Before each learning or knowledge sharing event, the trainers conducted an assessment of the needs of participating negotiators and, where necessary, adapted their training sessions to the backgrounds and needs of the room.

3 The training curricula leveraged expertise, insights, and skills from other negotiation fora. For example, the seminar in Bonn involved experts from UNCTAD and WTO negotiation to share tips and experiences.

4 E-learning events were also used to contribute to a strong knowledge foundation for climate change negotiators.



Building coalitions on...

The LDC Group on Climate Change is diverse. Currently 48 countries are designated as 'Least Developed Countries' whose status is mainly determined by statistics: per capita income, human assets and economic vulnerability. Diversity in political structures, economic positions, culture and political environment is a key feature of the LDC Group on Climate Change countries, and delegates from these countries bring a wide range of views and interests. Pursuing national interests while achieving cohesive LDC coalition positions can be particularly challenging.



...group diversity

1 On occasions, the curricula integrated closed-door sessions, reserved only for LDC Group members creating space for reflection and strategizing. This was the case in October 2015, where the LDC Group was preparing for COP 21.

2 Face-to-face training events also provided a much needed forum for networking among LDC negotiators. Informal interactive sessions as well as interactive team-building activities helped strengthen the cohesion of the LDC Group on Climate Change and foster the development of trust and knowledge sharing across regions, language groups and levels of

experience. Such was the session 'Moonlanding' – an interactive facilitated session on team-building adapted to the needs of the LDC Group. The role of a 'coordinator' was introduced to assist the group in reaching consensus. In effect, it aimed to illustrate the benefits and challenges of coordination.

3 The training and learning events were tailored to the fact that a significant number of LDC climate change negotiators come from French-speaking countries, while at the same time keeping opportunities for exchange between Anglophone and Francophone participants available. The training events in Addis Ababa in 2016, for example, included an overlapping session to bring together both groups. Events that were delivered mainly in English, also featured summaries and support in French.

An example: Support to LDC Group on Climate Change Strategy Meetings



In the making of the Paris Agreement (PA), the LDC negotiating group played a significant role in making sure that interests of the poorest and most vulnerable countries were heard. An important objective of the LDC Negotiator Training Programme is to support the operational strategy of the LDC Group on Climate Change. Strategy meetings are held periodically, to define future concrete actions, support, and implementation of the PA, and the roadmap for a united response to climate change.



The programme supported two crucial strategy meetings of the LDC Group on Climate Change in the lead-up to COP 21 in Paris in 2015 – one was held following the NAP Expo in Bonn, and one was held following the seminar for senior LDC coordinators and negotiators on climate change in Bonn.

Post COP 21, the programme continued to support key strategy meetings, two in 2016 and one in 2017. The LDC post-Paris strategy meeting was held in March 2016, and provided an opportunity to review and analyse the PA and COP 21 decisions. LDC delegates discussed immediate next steps and obligations arising from the PA and available support mechanisms, including organisational matters and future activities of the LDC Group. A subsequent strategy meeting in Kinshasa in June 2016 reviewed LDCs key requirements, and found several issues accommodated directly or indirectly in the PA for strategic engagement. The April 2017 LDC strategy meeting was held in Addis Ababa. LDC delegates reflected on progress since the PA, the COP 22 outcomes, and the current political landscape. The strategy meeting also provided a significant opportunity for the LDCs to consider the preparation of the Paris Rulebook, and prepare for the UNFCCC meetings in Bonn in May 2017, which in turn, are crucial to effective outcomes at COP 23.



Sustaining institutional memory...

Negotiators who have gained experience and training at intergovernmental negotiations are often promoted to more senior positions within government. A high staff turnover within LDCs government structures results in a lack of institutional memory for the LDC Group on Climate Change. As a result, senior or more experienced negotiators do not have the possibility to pass on their experience to junior negotiators.



Adapting to dynamic negotiations...

Over the years, multilateral climate change negotiations have become increasingly complex and dynamic. In order to be relevant to the negotiators, the training and e-learning activities had to clearly reflect on this dynamic and provide relevant references to current and ongoing negotiation topics.



...through knowledge retention

1 In order to build and sustain the capacity for LDCs to participate effectively in climate change negotiations, a number of training and seminar participants were involved as contributors and leaders of sessions and consequent events.

2 Future activities could explore opportunities to enable participants to apply newly acquired knowledge such as participating in COPs or preparing position papers.



...by sharing up-to-date information

1 The content of each event reflected on most pressing and relevant issues. For example, in the events pre-COP 21, the content focused on topics such as Managing Crises and How to Overcome Negotiation Deadlocks, while in the post-COP 21 sessions were held on Legal Implications of Ratification and The Paris Agreement – Existing Situation, Sticking Points, Options and Implications.

“Most of the issues that were presented were new to me, especially on negotiation skills; I always hear about these terms and even work with the team going for negotiation. Now I feel I can be part of the team.”

- Training Participant, Addis Ababa, 2016

Generating and Sustaining Climate Change Knowledge for LDCs

Publications Developed to Support LDC Negotiators

To ensure that vital knowledge on the climate change negotiations process is readily accessible to LDCs, a series of publications has been developed by IIED in collaboration with UN Environment and UNDP. These publications address key aspects of the negotiations process, and provide information to assist LDC negotiators in their understanding of the opportunities and challenges inherent in climate change diplomacy.

Highlights of selected publications:

Becoming a UNFCCC delegate: what you need to know: Attending UN climate negotiations for the first time is daunting, especially if it is a COP session. The UNFCCC process is notoriously complex. This toolkit helps LDC delegate navigate the sessions. It focuses on the process, rather than the content of negotiations, and offers some practical tips for getting through the days (and nights).

Climate negotiations terminology: the pocket guide: In multilateral agreements, the choice of words is always strategic and purposeful. Particularly in the context of the climate change negotiations, the amount of acronyms, buzzwords and legal terms can be complex, overwhelming and misleading. This pocket book aims to be a supporting tool for a better understanding and application of the language in the UNFCCC negotiations. Available in English and French.

A study of LDC capacity at the UNFCCC: The LDCs represent 48 of the 197 parties to the UNFCCC. Not only are they the world's poorest economies, they are extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Since 2001, they have acted together as the LDC Group in UNFCCC negotiations. This paper aims to analyse LDC feedback on how they prepare, analyse, report and disseminate information on the UNFCCC negotiations.

The Paris Agreement and the LDCs: At the end of 2015, the 196 parties to the United Nations

Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) gathered in Paris for COP21. On 12 December, they adopted the Paris Agreement (PA), contained in Decision 1/CP.21. This paper provides an analysis of the PA and the relevant sections of Decision 1/CP.21 that give effect to the agreement, based on the positions of the 48 LDCs.

Options for the Legal Form of the Paris

Outcome: There are various legal options for the form of the final outcome from the COP21 to be held in Paris that comes under the three broad options listed in the Durban Decision.

National Adaptation Plans; Understanding mandates and sharing experiences:

National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) allow developing countries to identify their adaptation needs; develop and implement strategies and programmes to address those needs; and enable actions to protect vulnerable communities. This paper considers the benefits and challenges of implementing a national mandate to provide the impetus to develop a NAP, assign responsibilities and encourage cross-sectoral participation, exploring the legal forms such a mandate could take and sharing experiences from LDCs undergoing the NAP process.

To download publications and resources to support LDC negotiators go to IIED Website resources page: <http://pubs.iied.org/>

LDC Group of Climate Change Website

A new website is being developed for the LDC Group on Climate Change, which will upgrade the current website. This initiative will facilitate improved knowledge sharing and communication between LDC negotiators and focal points, and provide a locus for knowledge, skills and lessons learned between all members of the LDC Group. This website will contain all updates, documents, resources and information to support the LDCs in climate change negotiations, through the LDC Group on Climate Change, in a way that is easily accessible, interactive and visual.

The website is being developed with the support of UNDP, UN Environment and IIED.





UNITAR

“This support comes at a critical time - LDCs must ensure that the future regime fully recognizes the challenges to development posed by climate change, to this end effective coordination and team-work are pivotal objectives in the run-up to Paris and beyond. The LDC Group needs to act more strategically and as a unit.”

- **Mr. Giza Gaspar Martins**
Former Chair, LDC Group about the seminar in Bonn in October, 2015

In Their Words



“Procedures on negotiations are now at my fingertips. I am confident to participate at the negotiations especially the COP 22.”

**- Training Participant
Addis Ababa, 2016**

“On ne peut pas tout comprendre sans pratique.”

**- Training Participant
Bangkok, 2015**

“J’étais vraiment débutants mais j’ai commencé à être percutant.”

**- Training Participant
Addis Ababa, 2016**

“Earlier, I used to get very emotional during the negotiation process, now I am more relaxed. I learnt to develop a relationship at the end of the day.”

**- Training Participant
Bangkok, 2015**



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“[The training] made me more confident. I can now better understand the position of our partners. Earlier, I used to get very emotional during the negotiation process, now I am more relaxed. I learnt to develop a relationship at the end of the day. “

- Training Participant, Bangkok, 2015

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