

Decentralising climate adaptation funds in Mali

A pilot project in the Mopti region paves the way for decentralised climate funds in Mali and gives decision-making power to local authorities and communities.

The aim of climate funding is to enable the countries most affected by climatic change and variability to adapt and become more resilient. Like most countries in the Sahel, Mali faces extreme climatic events in the form of droughts and floods. Adaptation must take place at the local level, but at present climate change funds are managed at the national level.

As part of the Decentralising Climate Funds (DCF) project, the three *Cercles* of Douentza, Koro and Mopti (*Cercles* are local administrative regions in Mali) are piloting an approach enabling them (i) to access climate funds to finance local adaptation and (ii) to integrate resilience to climate change into their planning and budgeting systems.

This initiative is permitting the *Agence Nationale d'Investissement des Collectivités Territoriales* (ANICT) to channel international and national climate funding to the local level. The lessons learned from this pilot experience could allow the government of Mali to replicate the approach across all local communities in Mali.

National framework on climate change

The government of Mali is in the process of establishing the institutional architecture to enable it to access international climate funds. The *Agence de l'Environnement et de Développement Durable* (AEDD), the designated national authority for the Green Climate Fund (GCF), has nominated ANICT to be the national implementing entity (NIE) for Mali and supported its candidacy for accreditation with the GCF Secretariat.

In 2011, with the aim of integrating these efforts into an overall vision for combating the effects of climate change, Mali adopted a National Policy on Climate Change (NPCC), with a National Strategy (NSCC) for implementing it, as well as a National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) that translates these strategic directions into concrete actions. Because of the size and scale of the resources required to implement these policies, Mali has been working with its development partners, in particular the UNDP, to establish a national Climate Fund.



Key terms

Climate funds: national and international sources of funding – both public and private – designed to combat climate change, including adaptation and mitigation measures. See for example the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Climate adaptation funds (CAF): term used by a number of pilot projects in East and West Africa to refer to decentralised funds for climate change adaptation.

Green Climate Fund (GCF): The Green Climate Fund of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) provides annual funding of US\$100 billion by 2020, to be allocated equitably between mitigation and adaptation efforts.

Resilience: capacity of local populations to react and adapt to climate change.

Essential statistics

- 98% of the population of Mopti are farmers or agro-pastoralists who rely on a combination of irrigated and rain-fed agriculture, cattle herding, fishing and agro-forestry.
- 445 million CFA (£500,000): the adaptation fund for each *Cercle* in the pilot project.
- 32.3% of the population of the Mopti region suffer from chronic malnutrition.

The legal basis for decentralised funds

Decentralised management of climate change funds by local authorities and communities requires reliable institutional and financial structures. The aim of the DCF project is to provide a "model" for flexible ways of channelling resources from the Green Climate Fund and other sources to support investment in adaptation measures prioritised by local people.

Although Mali does not have policies or laws specifically designed to enable the decentralised management of climate funds, provisions in current policy and legislation (in particular Law N°2012-007 of 7 February 2012 establishing the Local Governments Code) do not exclude the possibility of the national government authorising communities to establish decentralised climate funds under their own control. The management of these local funds would be subject to the principles governing public funding (requiring budgets to be planned, annual, unitary, balanced, etc.) and to government supervision (production of management accounts, conformity to standards in the award of public contracts, and transparency).

At the same time, the decentralised nature of these arrangements underlines the need to ensure the existence of a policy and legal framework that reinforces local governance and finance authorities and strengthens communities' capacities to play their part in the implementation of economic development, poverty reduction and climate change policies.

Ensuring resilience through local planning

If investments in adaptation are to ensure resilience to climate change, local knowledge and perspectives must be integrated into the formal planning process of local authorities. Local authorities must also have discretionary powers over their budgets, to ensure they have the freedom to support effective local strategies and to take timely decisions in the face of a rapidly changing and unpredictable local context.

To build resilience, it is essential that planning systems treat variability, unpredictability, and climatic instability as normal and usual conditions. This will demand substantial changes in the way local communities and national governments carry out planning, funding and evaluation of development and adaptation to climate change.

The pilot project is based on existing systems of local authority planning and budgeting and does not create new parallel processes. This is essential to ensure that change is systemic and transformative, so that planning for adaptation to climate change is integrated and therefore sustainable.

Next steps

The DCF project is supporting ANICT in the accreditation process with the GCF and will create linkages with local communities in the Douentza, Koro, and Mopti Cercles to develop their capacities to become future decentralised "executive agencies" of climate funding, able to support the adaptation activities prioritised by grassroots communities. The project approach targets institutional and financial weaknesses in the community level response to climate change.



The project

Decentralising Climate Funds (DFC) is a research-action and advocacy project supporting local people in Senegal and Mali to become more resilient to climate change through access to locally-controlled adaptation funds. The project is part of the BRACED programme funded by the UK government and carried out by the Near East Foundation (NEF) with Innovation, Environnement et Développement en Afrique (IED Afrique) and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

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Fact Sheet



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