

Decentralising climate adaptation funds in Senegal

Decentralised climate funds lay the foundation for greater independence for local communities to prioritise investments that build resilience to climate change.

Senegal is a country severely affected by climate change and variability. An important step in funding the fight against climate change was taken in 2015 with the establishment of the National Climate Fund (NCF). This fund, administered by the *Centre de Suivi Ecologique* (CSE), is designed to take advantage of the opportunities for international partnerships and funding agreements created by the Green Climate Fund. The NCF will raise and manage US\$60 million per year to combat the negative effects of climate change and ensure sustainable development.

However, despite the significant progress that has been made in decentralisation, the management and disbursement of climate funds still rests with national-level bodies or non-governmental organisations (NGOs), leaving local government and communities with little control over financial decision-making and management. Their concerns and priorities often are not sufficiently accounted for when spending decisions are made.

Through the Decentralising Climate Funds (DCF) project, the four *Départements* of the Kaffrine Region – Kounghoul, Kaffrine, Malem Hodar and Birkelane – are trialling a new approach enabling them (i) to access climate funds to finance local adaptation and (ii) to build climate resilience into their planning and budgeting.

Decentralisation and gender in Senegal

Decentralisation in Senegal took a decisive step in 1996 with the transfer of nine areas of competence, including management and use of public lands, environment and natural resource management, health, planning, and territorial development, from the state to democratically elected local governments. In 2013 the government of Senegal adopted a national programme of reform with the aim of “building viable and competitive local territories capable of providing sustainable development” and promoting participatory democracy as well as good local governance.

In 2010, Senegal enacted its law on gender equity (Law No. 2010-11 of 28 May 2010), guaranteeing equal representation of women and men in all totally or partially elected institutions. This reform offers great prospects for the effective representation of women, who are especially vulnerable to climate change because of their limited access to natural resources, especially in rural areas.



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

- 84.2% of the population of the Kaffrine region is rural, and 63.8% of the region’s households live below the poverty line.
- 30%: the projected decline in agricultural production in the Kaffrine region due to climate change by 2025.
- 445 million CFA (£500,000): the amount of each of the three climate adaptation funds for Kaffrine’s *Départements* under the pilot project.

Integrating climate change into local planning

Following the ratification of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1994, and the Kyoto Protocol in 2001, Senegal has been working to integrate climate change into its economic and social development policies. At the national level this has meant the development of strategic documents (e.g. the National Adaptation Plan) and policies (e.g. the Forestry Policy 2005-2025) and the establishment of institutional frameworks such as the *Direction de l'Environnement et des Etablissements Classés* (DEEC), the *Comité National sur les Changements Climatiques* (COMNACC), and the *Comité régional sur les changements climatiques* (COMRECC).

There have also been advances in legislation to give more responsibility to local communities, particularly with the transfer of powers over environmental and natural resource planning and management.

Climate adaptation funds at local level

The DCF project provides local authorities and grassroots organisations in the four *Départements* of the Kaffrine region with funds to finance community-identified and -prioritised investments that can strengthen local people's resilience to climate change. A fundamental feature of the funding arrangements is the participation of women and young people in the planning and decision-making process.

The DCF project is governed by the national public accounts regime and a partnership agreement with the *Programme National de Développement Local* (PNDL) has been signed. This agreement will permit the pilot Climate Adaptation Funds (CAFs) to be managed as part of the PNDL's funding arrangements for local communities. Through the existing Local Development Fund, the PNDL has piloted a fast-track funding system for community projects via special government Treasury accounts. Climate adaptation funds will be transferred periodically using this channel.

This funding mechanism has the advantage of empowering locally elected officials, while also safeguarding the principles of transparency and good governance.

Next steps

After a call for project proposals at community level, *Département* level adaptation committees will organise a selection process. Next, the pilot funds will be officially launched. The DCF project will ensure that local authorities and grassroots community organisations receive support and training at all stages of the implementation of their projects to strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable people.



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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