

sNAPshot

Information Sharing for Adaptation Planning at Sub-national Levels: South Africa's Let's Respond Toolkit

Country Brief 3A

Introduction

South Africa's vulnerability to climate change arises from high levels of poverty, as well as its dependence on climate-sensitive sectors, including agriculture and water, for human livelihoods and economic development (Department of Environmental Affairs [DEA], 2016). Recognizing the important role played by provincial and local actors in addressing these issues, the country has demonstrated a strong commitment to vertical integration, the process of linking national and sub-national adaptation planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) (Dazé, Price-Kelly

and Rass, 2016, p. 4). Building on an earlier overview brief on vertical integration in National Adaptation Plan (NAP) processes, this sNAPshot focuses on information sharing, using South Africa's Let's Respond Toolkit as an example of how web-based platforms can be used for sharing information between different levels of government, as well as with non-governmental stakeholders.

South Africa's NAP Process

The NAP process in South Africa is led by the DEA, in collaboration with other key departments, notably: cooperative governance; human settlements; rural development and land reform; water and sanitation; agriculture, forestry and fisheries; health; mineral resources; energy; transportation; and public works. The *National Adaptation Strategy* (NAS) document (DEA, 2016) aims to serve as the NAP, establishing the country's adaptation objectives and providing a common reference point for adaptation efforts in the short to medium term, providing guidance across all levels of government and informing national, provincial and local planning. The government has placed considerable emphasis on integration across sectors, as well as polycentric approaches (Ramaru, 2017). A working draft of the NAS was completed in February 2017. This draft will be refined and further developed based on ongoing stakeholder consultations (DEA, 2016).



The Let's Respond Platform

The [Let's Respond Toolkit](#), while not specifically developed for the NAP process, represents an excellent resource for adaptation planning by local governments. Its purpose is to provide stakeholders with information, tools and guidelines to respond to climate change in local-level planning processes in South Africa (DEA & GIZ, n.d.). It aims to support the development of Climate Change Response Plans,

defined as plans “to effectively manage inevitable climate change impacts through interventions that build and sustain social, economic and environmental resilience and emergency response capacity” (DEA, 2011). The toolkit was developed through a project targeting local government, particularly municipalities, covering all provinces over the course of three phases. Figure 1 shows how it is organized.

Figure 1: The Let's Respond Toolkit homepage

LET'S RESPOND
A TOOLKIT TO INTEGRATING CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES INTO MUNICIPAL PLANNING

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Home

Welcome to the Local Government Climate Change Support Program

The purpose of this website is to provide stakeholders with information and tools to respond to climate change at a local level in South Africa. The website has been developed through the Local Government Climate Change Support Program (LGCCS), an initiative of the [Department of Environmental Affairs](#) and the [Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit \(GIZ\) GmbH](#).

A number of tools have been developed through the LGCCS to assist stakeholders to respond to climate change. The [Let's Respond Toolkit](#) provides stakeholders with an introduction and overview on how to integrate climate change into municipal planning processes. The [Vulnerability Assessment Toolkit](#) provides stakeholders with a step by step process for conducting a Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment. The [Climate Change Response Plan Templates](#) can be used as a starting point to develop a municipal climate change response plan. Finally, the [Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit](#) outlines a set of steps for engaging stakeholders in the climate change planning process.

This website also contains climate change related resources and information on each of the [participating municipalities](#). This includes a range of [climate change related maps](#), municipal census data relevant to climate change and project management information, such as [workshop details](#) and an [events calendar](#).

Program News

Draft Climate Change Plans Available for Comment

Northern Cape	Free State
Download Draft Climate Change Plans here <ul style="list-style-type: none">Frances Baard District Municipality – DC09John Taolo Gaetsewe District Municipality – DC45Namakwa District Municipality – DC06Pixley Ka Seme District Municipality – DC07ZF Mqacawu District Municipality/ Sivanda – DC08	Download Draft Climate Change Plans here <ul style="list-style-type: none">Fezile Dabi District Municipality – DC20Lejweleputswa District Municipality – DC18Thabo Mofutsanyana District Municipality – DC19Xhariep District Municipality – DC16

Source: DEA & GIZ (n.d.)

Information Sharing on the Platform

The Let's Respond site is a strong example of a web-based information-sharing platform to support risk and vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning. The platform provides users with access to:

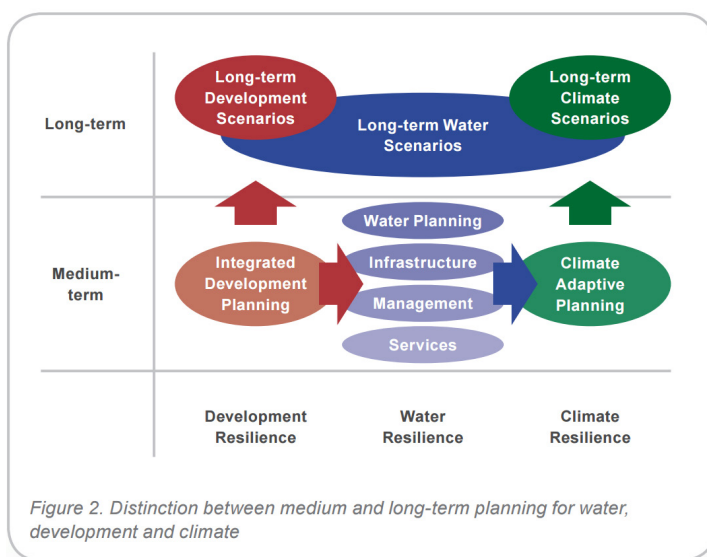
- **Practical tools:** Tools for key elements of the adaptation planning process, including vulnerability assessment and stakeholder engagement.
- **Technical information:** Technical information on climate change, including vulnerability assessments and long-term adaptation scenarios for key sectors (see Figure 2 for an example).
- **Planning supports:** Training materials and templates to support municipalities in undertaking vulnerability assessments and developing Climate Change Response Plans.

In addition, it provides key information to support stakeholder engagement in adaptation planning, including draft municipal climate change plans that are open for public comment and information



on past and upcoming stakeholder workshops held throughout the planning process. While there may be barriers for some individuals or groups in accessing this information due to a lack of literacy and/or Internet access, it is a good starting point for informing stakeholders about what is occurring and opportunities to provide inputs. By making information and documents available across provinces and municipalities, the platform offers users in different jurisdictions the opportunity to learn from the experiences of others.

Figure 2. Extracts from the Long-Term Adaptation Scenario for the Water Sector Factsheet



BOX 4: PRIORITY FUNCTIONS THAT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL TO THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER AFFAIRS

1. Policy review for enabling flexible frameworks.
2. Flexible and robust infrastructure planning.
3. Maintaining and rebuilding ecological infrastructure in vulnerable systems (see Box 5).
4. Institutional oversight to ensure that water-related institutions build adaptive management capacity.
5. Effective information management and maintenance of monitoring and evaluation systems.
6. Sustainable and locally accessible financial management.

Source: DEA, Department of Water Affairs, GIZ & South African National Biodiversity Institute (n.d.)

Future Plans for Information Sharing

Going forward, South Africa continues to place a strong emphasis on information and knowledge sharing for adaptation, including at sub-national levels. The draft NAS document highlights the key role played by provincial and local governments in communicating climate change using clear and accessible language. Plans to facilitate information sharing at the provincial level include the establishment of provincial forums on climate change and the development of topic-specific campaigns targeting different stakeholder groups. At the local level, climate change champions will be appointed and localized campaigns will be launched, linking adaptation messaging with communications on integrated development plans. Particular emphasis is placed on communicating with communities, recognizing the need to tailor information to context and use appropriate communication channels and existing platforms. In addition, establishing two-way channels ensures local knowledge is captured and that communities can access the information they need on an ongoing basis (DEA, 2016).

References

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About the NAP Global Network and sNAPshots series

The NAP Global Network is a group of individuals and institutions who are coming together to enhance bilateral support for the NAP process in developing countries. Based on experiences and lessons shared through the activities of the NAP Global Network, sNAPshots highlight examples of how countries are currently approaching different aspects of the NAP process. If interested in participating the NAP Global Network, please [sign up online](#).

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