

# Toolkit for Youth on Adaptation & Leadership



## MODULE 6

ENGAGING IN CLIMATE ADAPTATION  
POLICIES: LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND  
INTERNATIONAL



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ADAPTATION



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## Acronyms

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| <b>ASAP</b>   | The Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme      |
| <b>CBA</b>    | Community based adaptation                                |
| <b>CCA</b>    | Climate change adaptation                                 |
| <b>CIS</b>    | Climate Information Services                              |
| <b>COP</b>    | Conference of the Parties                                 |
| <b>COY</b>    | Conference of Youth                                       |
| <b>CRA</b>    | Community Risk Assessment                                 |
| <b>DRM</b>    | Disaster Risk Management                                  |
| <b>DRR</b>    | Disaster Risk Reduction                                   |
| <b>EAC</b>    | East Africa community                                     |
| <b>ECOWAS</b> | Economic Community of West African States                 |
| <b>GCF</b>    | Green Climate Fund  |
| <b>GHGs</b>   | Greenhouse gases  |
| <b>IPCC</b>   | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change                 |
| <b>JPA</b>    | Joint Principles for Adaptation                           |
| <b>LAP</b>    | Local Adaptation Plans                                    |
| <b>LDCF</b>   | Least Developed Countries Fund                            |
| <b>LLA</b>    | Locally Led Adaptation                                    |
| <b>MDGs</b>   | Millennium Development Goals                              |
| <b>NAP</b>    | National Adaptation Plan                                  |
| <b>NAPA</b>   | National Adaptation Programs of Action                    |
| <b>NDC</b>    | Nationally determined contribution                        |
| <b>NGOs</b>   | Non-Governmental Organizations                            |
| <b>PPCR</b>   | Pilot Program for Climate Resilience                      |
| <b>PSP</b>    | Participatory Scenario Planning                           |
| <b>SCCF</b>   | The Special Climate Change Fund                           |
| <b>SDG</b>    | Sustainable Development Goal                              |
| <b>SIDS</b>   | Small Islands Developing States                           |
| <b>SMART</b>  | Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound |
| <b>UNEP</b>   | United Nations Environment Programme                      |
| <b>UNFCCC</b> | United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change     |

# WELCOME TO THE TOOLKIT FOR YOUTH ON ADAPTATION & LEADERSHIP!

## Who is this toolkit for?

Climate change is reshaping the world young people have inherited and they will bear the costs in the coming decades. However, young people are often excluded from taking on leadership roles and engaging in decision-making activities related to climate change adaptation. This Toolkit for Youth on Adaptation & Leadership equips young people with the knowledge and skills to engage in climate adaptation policy, advocacy and action. This toolkit uses the terms “youth” and “young people” to refer to people between 15 and 35 years old.

## What you will learn

The toolkit covers essential materials and offers practical guidance for how you, as a young person, can take part in adaptation policy processes, lead advocacy campaigns, and approach adaptation with an entrepreneurial mindset. It provides tools for designing and implementing your own climate change adaptation actions so that you can be part of the solution to the climate crisis.



The “Toolkit for Youth on Adaptation & Leadership” is a project under the Global Center on Adaptation Youth Leadership Program, developed by the CARE Climate Justice Center with the financial support of Norad. It came together with input from young people who, like you, are concerned about the impacts of climate change and have faced challenges when advocating and taking adaptation action.

## How to use the toolkit

The toolkit includes eight modules:



### 1 Understanding climate change



### 2 The basics of vulnerability and climate change adaptation



### 3 Vulnerable groups and climate adaptation planning



### 4 Learning from youth-led climate adaptation solutions: African case studies



### 5 Developing soft skills for youth leadership in adaptation



### 6 Engaging in climate adaptation policies: local, national, and international



### 7 Designing and implementing your adaptation advocacy strategy



### 8 Designing your adaptation action

## Each module contains four sections:



**Warm Up** is the place to start. This provides an overview of the module's key concepts, based on the latest research and best practices. It highlights tools you can use to apply what you have learned, and develop your leadership skills.



**Heat Wave** will deepen your understanding. Find links to supporting scientific research, important publications, and tools for exploring and applying key concepts.



**Bright spark** is the place to get inspired. Read case studies, watch videos, and listen to podcasts about young climate leaders to get fired up for your own climate change actions!



**Cool Down** is your last stop. Here, you have space to test your knowledge (with a short quiz) and consider how you can apply what you have learned to your own climate action.

## MODULE 6

# ENGAGING IN CLIMATE ADAPTATION POLICIES: LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL



This module takes a closer look at climate adaptation policies at the local, regional, national and international levels. It highlights key adaptation plans and policies, including National Adaptation Plans and Nationally Determined Contributions. It includes guidance for how young people can get involved in shaping adaptation policy processes. It also examines key issues related to climate finance and the adaptation funding gap.

## What will I learn?

### By the end of the module, you will:

- Have a broad understanding of international climate governance and the main United Nations climate change policy processes.
- Know about the main climate adaptation policy frameworks at global, national and local levels.
- Understand the importance of youth engagement in climate adaptation policy processes and know more about how to engage in these processes.
- Understand global climate finance mechanisms and some of the challenges in accessing climate funds for adaptation.

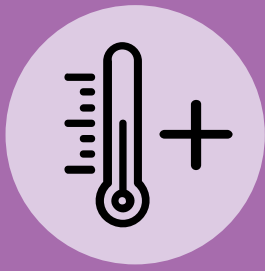
## Glossary

| Term   | Definition  | Source   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Adaptation finance gap</b>                                  | Adaptation finance gap refers to difference between the estimated costs of adaptation and the actual number of financial resources needed to support adaptation efforts. The estimated adaptation costs in developing countries are five to ten times greater than current public adaptation finance flows, and the adaptation finance gap is widening.   | <a href="#">UN</a>                                   |
| <b>Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP)</b> | ASAP was launched by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in 2012 to make climate and environmental finance work for smallholder farmers. A multi-year and multi-donor financing window, ASAP provides a new source of co-financing to scale up and integrate climate change adaptation across IFAD's new investments.  | <a href="#">IFAD</a>                                 |
| <b>Adaptation Fund</b>   | The Adaptation Fund is a global fund established to finance concrete adaptation projects and programmes in developing countries that are parties to the Kyoto Protocol and are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. It pioneered Direct Access, empowering countries to access funding and develop projects directly through accredited national implementing entities.  | <a href="#">The Adaptation Fund</a>                  |
| <b>Advocacy</b>  | Advocacy is the deliberate process of influencing those who make decisions about developing, changing and implementing policies.  | <a href="#">CARE international Advocacy Handbook</a> |
| <b>Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF)</b>                       | The Cancun Adaptation Framework is a set of guidelines and measures that were established during the UNCCC held in Cancun in 2010. The CAF aims to strengthen action on adaptation in developing countries through international cooperation. It will support better planning and implementation of adaptation measures through increased financial and technical support, and through strengthening and/or establishing regional centres and networks. The framework will also boost research, assessments and technology cooperation on adaptation, as well as strengthen education and public awareness. | <a href="#">UNFCCC</a>                               |
| <b>Climate Finance</b>   | Climate Finance refers to local, national or transnational financing—drawn from public, private and alternative sources of financing—that seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions that will address climate change.  | <a href="#">UNFCCC</a>                               |
| <b>Climate Funds Update</b>                                    | Climate Funds Update is an independent website that provides information and data on the growing number of multilateral climate finance initiatives designed to help developing countries address the challenges of climate change.   | <a href="#">Climate Fund Update</a>                  |

| Term  | Definition  | Source  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>COP (Conference of Parties)</b>                    | The COP is the supreme decision-making body of the Convention. All States that are Parties to the Convention are represented at the COP, at which they review the implementation of the Convention and any other legal instruments that the COP adopts and take decisions necessary to promote the effective implementation of the Convention, including institutional and administrative arrangements.   | <a href="#">UNFCCC</a>                          |
| <b>Green Climate Fund (GCF)</b>                       | GCF is a unique global platform to respond to climate change by investing in low-emission and climate-resilient development. GCF was established by 194 governments to limit or reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in developing countries, and to help vulnerable societies adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change. Given the urgency and seriousness of this challenge, GCF is mandated to make an ambitious contribution to the united global response to climate change.   | <a href="#">Greenclimatefund</a>                |
| <b>Kyoto Protocol</b>                                 | The Kyoto Protocol is an international treaty that was adopted on 11 December 1997. Owing to a complex ratification process, it entered into force on 16 February 2005. Currently, there are 192 Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. In short, the Kyoto Protocol operationalizes the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change by committing industrialized countries and economies in transition to limit and reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions in accordance with agreed individual targets.  | <a href="#">UNFCCC</a>                          |
| <b>Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)</b>          | The LDCF is enabling Least Developed Countries to prepare for a more resilient future. LDCF funding helps recipient countries address their short-, medium- and long-term resilience needs and reduce climate change vulnerability in priority sectors and ecosystems. LDCF backing helps countries implement National Adaptation Programs of Action (NAPAs) – country-driven strategies for addressing their most urgent adaptation needs. It also supports the implementation of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process, and the Least Developed Country work program under the UNFCCC                  | <a href="#">The Global Environment Facility</a> |
| <b>National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)</b>               | The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) is a process that was established under the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF). It enables Parties to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs) as a means of identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs. It is a continuous, progressive and iterative process that follows a country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and fully transparent approach.  | <a href="#">UNFCCC</a>                          |
| <b>National Adaptation Programs of Action (NAPAs)</b> | NAPAs provide a process for the least-developed countries (LDCs) to identify priority activities that respond to their urgent and immediate needs with regard to adaptation to climate change - those needs for which further delay could increase vulnerability or lead to increased costs at a later stage. The rationale for NAPAs rests on the limited ability of the LDCs to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. In the NAPA process, prominence is given to community-level input as an important source of information, recognizing that grassroots communities are the main stakeholders. | <a href="#">UNFCCC</a>                          |



| Term  | Definition  | Source  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>National Communication (NC)</b>                                    | National Communication is a report that each country that is a Party to the UNFCCC must submit. These reports highlight development priorities, objectives and national circumstances, including ongoing action and needs for meeting adaptation and mitigation goals and the objectives of the Convention. Parties are required to submit their first NC within three years of entering the Convention, and every four years thereafter.   | <a href="#">UNFCCC</a>                          |
| <b>Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)</b>                     | Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are climate action plans to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts. Each Party to the Paris Agreement is required to establish an NDC and update it every five years.  | <a href="#">UN</a>                              |
| <b>Paris Agreement</b>  | The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris, on 12 December 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. Its goal is to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. To achieve this long-term temperature goal, countries aim to reach global peaking of greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century.   | <a href="#">UNFCCC</a>                          |
| <b>Pilot Program for Climate Resilience</b>                           | Pilot Program for Climate Resilience is a program that supports developing countries and regions in building their adaptation and resilience to the impacts of climate change. First, the PPCR assists governments in integrating climate resilience into strategic development planning across sectors and stakeholder groups. Second, it provides concessional and grant funding to put the plans into action and pilot innovative public and private sector solutions.   | <a href="#">Climate Investment Fund</a>         |
| <b>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)</b>                           | SDGs are seventeen global goals, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The SDGs provide a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future and are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. | <a href="#">SDG</a>                             |
| <b>Special Climate Change Fund</b>                                    | The Special Climate Change Fund is a fund that is established under the Convention in 2001 to finance projects relating to: adaptation; technology transfer and capacity building; energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry and waste management; and economic diversification. It is managed by the GEF.   | <a href="#">The special Climate Change Fund</a> |
| <b>United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)</b> | The UNFCCC is an international treaty that entered into force on 21 March 1994. Today, it has near-universal membership. The 198 countries that have ratified the Convention are called Parties to the Convention. Preventing “dangerous” human interference with the climate system is the ultimate aim of the UNFCCC.   | <a href="#">UNFCCC</a>                          |



# Warm Up

## Climate change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a United Nations plan of action for People, Planet and Prosperity (famously known as the 3 Ps). The Agenda's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets demonstrate its scale and ambition. The SDGs are the global framework for sustainable development. The global goals set targets to guide countries in formulating and implementing national development plans.

The SDGs are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Without urgent climate action (SDG 13), it will be impossible to reach the other SDGs by 2030.

All SDGs are deeply interconnected with SDG 13 on climate action. If climate change is not stopped, the entire Agenda is threatened. Figure 2 shows how climate change affects other SDGs.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**Figure 1:** The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Source: United Nations, no date.<sup>1</sup>



Without urgent action, climate impacts could push an additional 132 million people into poverty by 2030.<sup>2</sup>



Climate change poses severe and distinct threats to food security and could subject an additional 600 million people to malnutrition by 2080. By the 2080s, land unsuitable for agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa due to severe climate, soil or terrain constraints may increase by 30 million to 60 million hectares.<sup>4</sup>



Climate change affects the social and environmental determinants of health – clean air, safe drinking water, sufficient food and secure shelter. Between 2030 and 2050, climate change is expected to cause approximately 250,000 additional deaths per year from malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea and heat stress. The direct damage costs to health are estimated to be between USD 2 billion and 4 billion per year by 2030.<sup>6</sup>



Childhood exposure to climate shocks, such as droughts and floods, has an unequal impact on children's development, affecting their nutrition and access to education. This impedes their learning progress, with the poorest children most affected.<sup>7</sup>



Women face widespread discrimination in the distribution of assets, services and information – such as secure and adequate land, credit, education and training, employment opportunities, mobility, climate and market information services, inputs, and technologies.<sup>8</sup> They are less likely to be able to access information and support that could help them better manage the impacts of climate change.



More than 2 billion people live in countries experiencing high water stress. The situation will likely worsen as populations and the demand for water increase, and as the impacts of climate change intensify. With the existing climate change scenario, by 2030 water scarcity in some arid and semi-arid places will displace between 24 million and 700 million people.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, following climate-induced disasters, women and girls often lack access to safe and adequate facilities for menstrual hygiene management.<sup>11</sup>



The climate impacts associated with the other SDGs indicate why it is essential to take urgent and ambitious climate action. One of the targets for SDG 13 is to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries.

**Figure 2:** How the impacts of climate change affect other SDGs.

## International climate governance and adaptation policies

Tackling the climate crisis requires national and regional action and international cooperation. Policies are necessary to help reduce emissions sufficiently and ensure resilient societies. Due to the global nature of climate change, global cooperation and rules are required.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) plays a key role in developing global policy frameworks and objectives, which set the stage for national climate action and plans.

The UNFCCC is the key policy framework, with the Paris Agreement adopted in 2015 being the universal tool for its implementation. The processes supporting implementation of the Paris Agreement have become multi-layered over time. The Conference of Parties (COP) is the annual main event. Preparatory sessions for all governments and constituted bodies focus on specific themes (such as adaptation, finance, mitigation, capacity building, loss and damage). The Parties to the Convention have met annually from 1995 to assess progress in dealing with climate change.

The aim of the Convention is to stabilize greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations “at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human-induced) interference with the climate system.”<sup>12</sup> The Convention states that “such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened, and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.”<sup>13</sup>

### **The UN Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP)**

**The COP** takes place every year. It is the supreme decision-making body of the UNFCCC. All 198 Parties to the Convention are represented at the COP. Countries use the COP to review the implementation of the UNFCCC and other legal instruments the COP adopts, such as the Paris Agreement. The COP informs decisions governments make to promote implementation of the Convention, including institutional and administrative arrangements.

The timeline in Figure 3 highlights the evolution of the adaptation landscape under the UNFCCC. In the early stages of the UNFCCC, there were moderate considerations for adaptation. Parties were requested to submit assessments of climate change impacts to highlight the need for adaptation in their national communications.



Press conference at COP27, Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. Credit: UNFCCC.

The IPCC's Third Assessment Report in 2001 highlighted that mitigation alone would not be enough to respond to climate change, and that adaptation was essential. Parties started planning and implementing adaptation actions. The least-developed countries (LDCs) were supported to prepare and implement **National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs)** to help plan and implement immediate adaptation actions.

In 2010, Parties emphasized that adaptation must be addressed with the same priority as mitigation and developed several mechanisms for ensuring this. In 2013, work on enhancing knowledge and improving coordination for adaptation was launched, which fed into the Paris Agreement.

**Figure 3:** Evolution of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Source: UNFCCC (no date).<sup>14</sup>

## The evolution of the adaptation landscape under the UNFCCC



- 1 UNFCCC (1992)
- 2 COP 2 (1996): National Communications Observing impacts, assessing risks and vulnerabilities
- 3 COP 7 (2001): LDC support through NAPAs, LEG, LDCF, SCCF and AF Moving to planning and pilot implementation
- 4 COP 11 (2005): Nairobi Work Programme (NWP) Sharing knowledge and lessons learned
- 5 COP 13 (2007): Bali Action Plan Scaling up implementation
- 6 COP 16 (2010): Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF): Adaptation Committee, National Adaptation Plans, Working Programme on Loss and Damage Green Climate Fund Building coordinated and coherent action
- 7 COP 19 (2013): Enhancing knowledge products and improving universal agreement engagement
- 8 COP 21 (2015): Paving the road to a universal agreement

## The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement is the first climate deal that establishes common obligations for all countries (except for the provision of financial support, which is only an obligation for developed countries). It was adopted at COP21 in December 2015 and came into force in November 2016.

Before 2015, there had been negotiations that focused on developing agreements for climate change, but these had different levels of success. The Kyoto Protocol, which was adopted in 1997 and sought to implement binding emission reductions, experienced several drawbacks, including a failure to implement the set target. In Copenhagen in December 2009, parties failed to come to a consensus on an agreement that would replace it.

The Paris Agreement's objective is to keep the increase in global temperatures well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels, while making efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 °C. The Agreement addresses adaptation to climate change, financial and other support for developing countries, technology transfer and capacity building, as well as loss and damage.

To drive up ambition, the Paris Agreement requires each country to submit an updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) every five years. An NDC is a climate action plan to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts. Starting in 2023, and then five years thereafter, governments will take stock of their actions to assess the collective progress towards achieving the goals of the Agreement. This regular "global stocktake" informs the next round of NDCs.

## Key Steps to Enhance Ambition



**Figure 4:** Key steps to enhance Ambition.

Source: Franzen et al., 2017.<sup>15</sup>

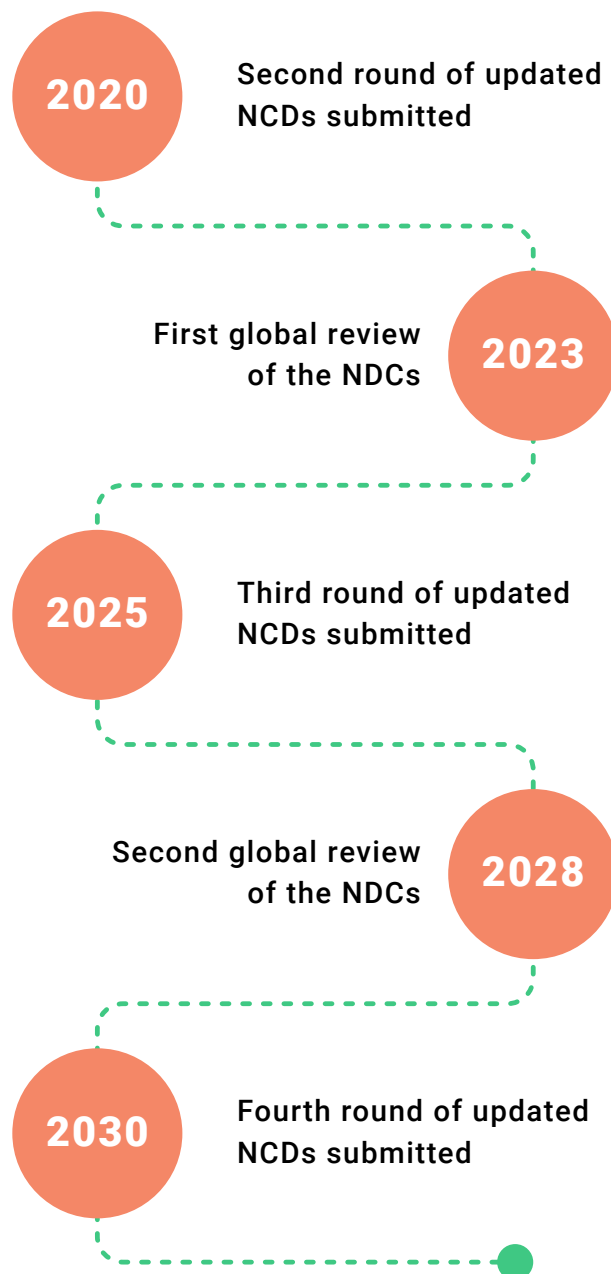
## National climate adaptation policies - what you need to know

As a young climate advocate, it's important to know about the different elements of national adaptation policies – so you understand the processes and ways you can engage. This will help you play your part in shaping local and national climate change adaptation plans and strategies.

### Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

As already discussed, an NDC is a country's climate action plan to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts. Governments submit their updated NDCs to the UNFCCC Secretariat every five years. The NDCs generally contain high-level information on expected climate impacts, mitigation and adaptation priorities, and reduction targets for each country.

It is important to know when these submissions will take place. They are an opportunity for you to input on NDCs about what you want to see in national and international policies (see Figure 5 for the NDC timeline). To learn more about your country's NDC submissions visit the United Nations' [NDC registry](#).



**Figure 5:** The NDC updating timeline.  
Source: UNICEF/UNDP, no date.<sup>16</sup>



## **National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs)**

A National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) is a process for identifying priority actions to respond to urgent adaptation needs – those for which further delay could increase vulnerability in a particular country. NAPAs are specifically for LDCs, to support them in addressing the challenge of climate change, given their high vulnerability. (You can access existing NAPAs via the UNFCCC's website).

## **National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)**

On top of the NAPAs, LDCs developed (or are developing) National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). These strategic documents complement the NAPAs. They identify a country's medium- and long-term adaptation priorities, and the strategies for addressing and tracking them.

The structure and form of NAPs vary by country and may include sectoral plans and sub-national plans for addressing adaptation needs. All NAPs include information on current and future climate change impacts and adaptation priorities.

## **National Communications**

To keep track of how countries are progressing with their climate actions, the UNFCCC requires a group of countries known as Non-Annex 1 countries (most of which are developing countries) to submit reports (known as National Communications) periodically.

These reports highlight development priorities, objectives and national circumstances, including ongoing action and needs for meeting adaptation and mitigation goals and the objectives of the Convention.

Countries are expected to submit these reports within three years of joining the Convention, and every four years thereafter. Most African countries have submitted at least one National Communication. (You can find all submitted National Communications at the UNFCCC's website).

## Continental and regional climate adaptation strategies

**While African countries have their own adaptation plans and processes, there are also strategies for the continent, as well as certain regions.**

- The African Union has a continental climate change strategy, the Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2032).<sup>19</sup>
- The East Africa Community (EAC) has a climate change policy, a climate change strategy and a climate change master plan.<sup>20</sup>
- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) adopted its first Regional Climate Strategy in 2022 to inform long-term climate action.<sup>21</sup>
- The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has a Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, which outlines coordinated regional and national actions to respond to the impacts of climate change.<sup>22</sup>

## Local-level climate adaptation policies

Influencing policies, and planning to address climate change and prepare for its impacts, is relevant globally and nationally. Climate change adaptation is context specific, so local action matters.

Where provinces or districts take planning and investment decisions, even if they are just implementing national-level plans, some of these can be climate-smart, others less so. In Kenya, the Bungoma County climate change policy and environment policy, developed in 2020, is a good example of a local-level adaptation policy.<sup>23</sup>



Young Climate Activists at COP27. Credit: UNFCCC.

## How young people can engage in adaptation policy making

There are numerous ways you can engage in adaptation policy processes and make your voice heard.<sup>24</sup>

### 1 UNFCCC

- Collaborate with other youth organizations that participate in the UNFCCC to work together in the climate adaptation space. Look to connect with organizations that represent different groups, including young people, environmental organizations, indigenous peoples, women and people with different gender identities.
- Join YOUNGO, the official Children and Youth Constituency of the UNFCCC. You can contact YOUNGO focal points to organize and participate in meetings (including the COPs), talks and events.
- Join the Global Centre on Adaptation's Youth Adaptation Network, a platform to access adaptation knowledge and campaigning materials, with opportunities to implement adaptation action on the ground, and connect with leaders at the forefront of the global response to climate change.
- Write an email to your country's UNFCCC Head of Delegation asking to join COP as a youth representative. (A list of national focal points is available from the UNFCCC website).

## 2 The Paris Agreement

- Learn more about this monumental agreement from the resources provided in this toolkit and from the [UNFCCC](#). As a climate advocate who wants to engage in adaptation policy, it's important to be familiar with the Paris Agreement.

## 3 NDCs

- Participate in NDC processes if these are established in your country. If these processes are not in place, advocate for creating mechanisms to involve young people in the process of formulating, implementing and updating NDCs.
- Conduct youth consultations on NDCs to provide recommendations for improvements to decision makers and increase ambition.
- Monitor the results of the different parts of the NDC process. This will help you identify challenges in the process that you may help to improve.

## 4 NAPs

- Engage with decision makers to ensure young people are integrated as part of the NAP.
- Share simplified information on NAPs with other young people to promote engagement and increase the pool of young climate advocates who can monitor how NAPs are implemented.

## 5 Regional and local-level climate adaptation policies

- Urge your country to adopt a climate change strategy. If it already exists, find out how it is being implemented.
- Advocate for integrating young people into regional and local climate adaptation strategies.
- Train future generations (adolescents and children) on climate advocacy and climate adaptation issues so that knowledge is passed from generation to generation, and the movement continues to grow.
- Organize or join an awareness-raising campaign to encourage public understanding of climate change, its effects, and the actions young people can take to mitigate its anticipated impacts.
- Write a lobby letter and/or meet with the Minister of Climate Change (if your government has one) and/or your member of parliament who sits on the parliamentary committee on climate change.
- Start a petition for a climate change adaptation policy issue.

## 6 Stay informed and share what you know

- Monitor your country's climate reports. Your government may publish these online. Reading these reports will provide you with information to help develop climate action in your community and country.
- Read your country's adaptation communication. You can find all submitted National Communications at the [UNFCCC's website](#).
- Share information about climate change and adaptation actions on your social networks.
- Start a social media campaign using #Youth4Adaptation.

### Box 1: YOUNGO: bringing young peoples' voices to international climate negotiations

If you have ambitions of getting involved in the UNFCCC process, check out [YOUNGO](#), the official children and youth constituency of the UNFCCC. This global network of young activists (up to 35 years old) and youth NGOs helps shape intergovernmental climate change policies and empowers young people to formally bring their voices to UNFCCC processes.

YOUNGO has working groups that focus on different aspects of the UNFCCC negotiations and beyond. These work to ensure that the perspectives of young and future generations are considered in the international decision-making processes. YOUNGO members observe and report on climate negotiations and the implications of their outcomes.

Each year YOUNGO plans and hosts the [Conference of Youth \(COY\)](#), which takes place right before the COP, in the host country. The COY prepares young people to participate in COP.

YOUNGO membership is free. You can sign up using the [YOUNGO membership registration form](#).

### Box 2: Did you know? You can engage in the COP without travelling there

As a young climate advocate, you may not have the funds or ability to travel to the annual COPs. But this doesn't mean you can't participate. There are many ways you can influence the world's biggest climate change meeting. To take part you can:

- Share position papers in advance of the COP with policymakers and/or the media.
- Request a meeting with the country's delegation in advance of the COP to explain your organization's positions and demands.
- Provide concrete suggestions for the text in negotiation documents that governments are working on.
- Approach policymakers via social media.
- Engage in marches and demonstrations, which often take place in many countries during or around a COP.



Young Climate Activists participating in a climate march in Germany. Credit: CARE/Christoph Heinrich.



Civil society action at COP27. Credit: UNFCCC/Kiara Worth.



COP27 side event presentation: capacity-building for youth on leadership and adaptation. Credit: Global Center on Adaptation.

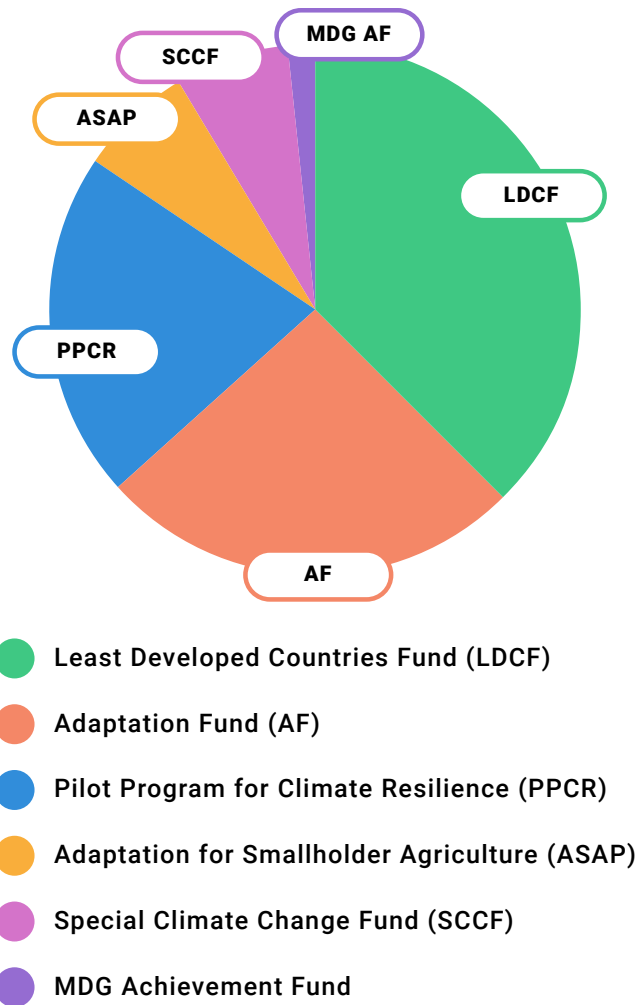
## The adaptation finance gap

All the plans and policies for addressing climate change and adapting to its impacts cost a substantial amount of money. For example, the money needed for global adaptation efforts could reach USD 140-300 billion per year in the 2030s, and up to USD 500 billion per year in the 2050s.<sup>25</sup>

While money is needed for adaptation, large investments are also needed for technology and infrastructure to reduce emissions. The money that goes toward climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts is called **climate finance**. This is drawn from public, private and alternative sources of financing.

The UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement call for developed countries to provide financial assistance to developing countries for climate action, adaptation and mitigation. International adaptation finance to developing countries continues to rise. It reached USD 28.6 billion in 2020, representing a 34% share of total climate finance to developing countries in 2020.<sup>26</sup> However, there is still a huge financing gap.

UNEP estimates that for developing countries, the money needed for adaptation could be five to 10 times greater than current international public adaptation finance flows. This discrepancy between the finances needed and those available to developing countries is known as the "**adaptation finance gap**."<sup>27</sup> This means that there needs to be a significant acceleration in how much money is made available for adaptation finance.



**Figure 6:** The different international climate finance mechanisms. Source: Climate Funds Update, 2019.<sup>29</sup>

### Adaptation funds

There are a handful of funds dedicated to supporting adaptation. You can learn more about the six main ones, and what each is worth, via the interactive [Climate Funds Update website](#).<sup>28</sup>

For an overview of the main adaptation funds and who is providing and receiving adaptation funds, read this report, [Climate Finance Thematic Briefing: Adaptation Finance](#).<sup>30</sup> You can access this brief and others on the [Climate Funds Update website](#).



## The Green Climate Fund

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was created in 2010 to promote a “paradigm shift towards low-emission and climate-resilient development pathways by providing support to developing countries to limit or reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and to adapt to the impacts of climate change.”<sup>31</sup>

The GCF is the world’s largest climate fund and a critical element of the Paris Agreement. It supports developing countries in realizing their NDC ambitions. Its mandate is to deliver a 50:50 balance between the money it allocates for mitigation and adaptation in developing countries. Given the urgency and seriousness of the climate crisis, the GCF is mandated to make an ambitious contribution to the united global response to climate change.

## Challenges in accessing climate funds

While various climate financing mechanisms exist, there are several challenges to accessing climate funds. A 2021 report from IIED highlights the following challenges:<sup>32</sup>

- 1 Climate finance is not balanced as agreed under the Paris Agreement, with adaptation** finance making up just 20% of overall climate finance flows. Only a fraction of climate finance goes to LDCs and small island developing states (SIDS). Of the funds that go to LDCs, more than half is in the form of loans. Less than 10% of global climate finance, meanwhile, is committed to local action.
- 2 Development finance itself is scarce, particularly in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.** Even without the pandemic, estimates suggest that USD 1 trillion is needed to meet the SDGs, which requires an increase of 750% above current levels. Currently, just over half of official development assistance (ODA) is aligned to the goals of the Paris Agreement.

## How young people can engage with climate finance

As already highlighted, there is a need for more finance for climate change adaptation. As a young person working to secure a better future through climate action, it's important to understand and engage with climate financing. There are various ways you can do this:

- Create a networking platform for youth engaged in climate action and help them organize community projects and participate in designing climate change adaptation projects at the national, sub-national and local levels.
- Track how climate change adaptation finance is spent in your country. This involves looking at how much is channeled to adaptation versus mitigation, who benefits, and whether projects are protecting the rights of local communities. [The Climate Funds Update website](#) is a useful tool for tracking climate finance, as is the [GCF](#). If climate finance is being channeled through a non-governmental organization, you may be able to see how the money is being used if the organization is willing to share its data or has it freely available. Once you know where adaptation projects are taking place, you may be able to organize field visits for monitoring and evaluation. You can then engage with communities to see if they are benefitting from projects and find out if their rights are being protected. (Note: to do this, you will first need to get approval from the organizations implementing the projects).
- You can be a key player in advocacy around key climate finance issues. For example, you may advocate to ensure that programs that seek funding from the GCF and other international climate finance mechanisms are designed to include the needs of vulnerable groups, such as women, girls and children.



# Heat Wave

## The Sustainable Development Goals

**WATCH** the video [Do you know all 17 SDGs? \(1:24\)](#) to learn about the global goals.

**WATCH** the video [SDG Climate Action 13 \(11:18\)](#) to learn more about SDG 13 on climate action. The video explains the goal's five targets and related indicators and the progress made so far.

**EXPLORE** the online tool [SDG Tracker](#) to keep track of global progress on the SDGs.

## UNFCCC, COP and the Paris Agreement

**READ** this guide for first timers at the [COP, COP for Newbies](#), from YOUNGO.

**EXPLORE** this [interactive timeline](#) of the UNFCCC negotiations, which shows key milestones in the evolution of international climate policy.

**READ** UNICEF's booklet [Paris Agreement for Young People](#) to learn more about the Paris Agreement.

**WATCH** the video [What is the Paris Agreement and how does it work? \(1:39\)](#) by UN Climate Change to learn more about the Paris Agreement.

**LISTEN** to this [recording](#) (4:22) about the history of adaptation in international negotiations from the establishment of the UNFCCC to 2015 in Paris.

## National climate change policies

**EXPLORE** all the NDCs available at the [NDC Registry](#). Some countries have regional or local strategies for climate change that you can find either online or by meeting regional and local authorities.

**EXPLORE** the available [National Adaptation Plans](#) and [National Adaptation Programmes of Action](#).

**EXPLORE** the [Grantham Institute's Climate Change Laws of the World](#) database to learn about climate change policies and laws of countries across the world. Can you find the policies and regulations for your own country?

**WATCH** this [video on Liberia's National Adaptation Plan](#) (15:04) to learn more about how one African country is planning for a future with climate change.

**LEARN** about gender integration in NDCs with a deep dive via [CARE's online course on NDCs](#) and the [Gender in NDCs online course](#).

**WATCH** this video, [CARE Partners for Resilience compilation video](#) (2:46) to learn more about CARE's national-level advocacy work.

**WATCH** this video, [PS. In Theory: Nationally Determined Contributions](#) (2:44) to learn more about NDCs.

## International climate finance and the Green Climate Fund

**EXPLORE** the [Climate Funds Update](#) website to learn about the growing number of multilateral climate finance initiatives designed to help developing countries address the challenges of climate change.

**READ** UNEP's 2022 Adaptation Gap Report, [Too Little, Too Slow: Climate adaptation failure puts world at risk](#) to further understand the gaps between adaptation finance needs and commitments.

**LEARN** about the GCF by taking this [Introduction to the Green Climate Fund](#) online course, where you will get a better understanding of what the GCF is, what it has been set up for, and why it is unique.

**READ** the [Green Climate Fund Proposal Toolkit 2017](#), produced by Acclimatise and the Climate and Development Knowledge Network, to learn how to develop a project proposal for the GCF.

**LEARN** about key considerations when developing and implementing GCF projects, and the role of civil society organizations in accessing the GCF by taking this short online course, [Developing and Implementing GCF Funding Proposals](#).

**READ** this [funding proposal template](#) for the Adaptation Fund.

**READ** Sick of waiting: Poor countries prepare to fight climate change alone, an article by Climate Home News, to understand how some developing countries are taking matters into their own hands.

**LEARN** how to prepare proposals that are aligned with the GCF's requirements with a short online course: Developing and Implementing GCF Funding Proposals. You will gain a better understanding of how to develop GCF proposals, taking GCF investment criteria into account along with key considerations for developing and implementing GCF projects. The course also covers how to integrate gender into GCF project proposals and the role of civil society organizations in accessing the GCF and project design.

**WATCH** this short video (4:20) to learn about the mandate, role and structure of the GCF.

## Issues with climate finance for adaptation

**READ** the report Climate Adaptation Finance: Fact or Fiction? to find out how adaptation finance flows are overestimated, as large amounts of climate finance have been allocated to projects that have nothing to do with adaptation, such as the "Nhat Tan Friendship Bridge" in Vietnam. In fact, this project corresponds to a financial commitment to fund the construction of a bridge to meet Hanoi's traffic demands and link the city center with Noi Bai Airport.

**READ** Delivering Real Change, a working paper from IIED that highlights how adaptation finance is not reaching the local level. According to researchers, and despite compelling evidence that in many cases more effective, efficient, and sustainable climate change action can be achieved at the local level, less than 10% of climate finance committed from international climate funds by 2016 was prioritized for local-level activities.

**READ** how adaptation finance is not integrating gender by looking at Chapter 7 'Mainstreaming gender equality' in Climate Adaptation Finance: Fact or Fiction. About 47% of adaptation projects do not mainstream gender equality, and either have a gender marker of zero or are not marked at all.

**READ** the United Nation's report Accessing Climate Finance: Challenges and opportunities for Small Island Developing States for more information on barriers to accessing climate finance, and in particular getting international climate finance to the local level.



# Bright Spark

## Case studies

### **Building resilience and promoting inclusive governance**

Learn about the Strengthening Resilience and Promoting Inclusive Governance Program (STRENPO) program, which aims to build resilience among women and young people in vulnerable, natural resource-dependent communities, including refugee settlements, to shocks and stresses from natural resource degradation, climate change, and conflict and displacement.

### **Strengthening capacity for local adaptation planning**

As part of the Africa Climate Change Resilience Alliance (ACCRA), CARE in Mozambique was involved in developing an approach for participatory Local Adaptation Plans (LAPs) as a national climate-resilience planning model. This approach was also adopted by the government. With further government funding, the initiative was scaled up to include 60 communities.



## Tools to inspire action

**EXPLORE** the [Climates](#) international laboratory of ideas and actions for inspiration. Climates brings together volunteers, students and young professionals around climate issues. It is a collective of serious and creative young people, sharing a vision for a transition to a low carbon society by informing, empowering and engaging young people in collaborative research, international advocacy and popular mobilization.

**LEARN** about practical tips for engagement with UNICEF's [Prepare to act. Practical tips for climate advocacy and action.](#)

**EXPLORE** UNICEF's [Toolkit for Young Climate Activists in the Middle East and North Africa Region/Arab States Region.](#)

## Get involved in UNFCCC processes

**JOIN** YOUNGO by completing and submitting the [YOUNGO membership registration form.](#) You can find the details for YOUNGO focal points at the [UNFCCC website.](#)

**LEARN** more about how to participate in UNFCCC processes by reading the report, [Youth Participation in the UNFCCC Negotiation Process: The United Nations, Young People and Climate Change.](#) The report looks at how youth participation has taken place at UNFCCC, starting with COP5, and highlights increased efforts by young people to advocate for effective climate change solutions.

## Videos

**WATCH** ["Please Open Your Hearts"](#) (6:14) and get inspired by Kenyan climate activist Elizabeth Wathuti speaking at the Opening Ceremony of the World Leaders Summit at COP26.

**WATCH** Vanessa Nakate's address ["Humanity will not be saved by promises"](#) (7:14) at COP26, where she urges world leaders to act on climate change for future generations.

**WATCH** a Nation TV Kenya interview [Turning Down the Heat: Road to Glasgow](#) (1:18:55), where you will learn more about what was needed at COP26 in Glasgow.

**WATCH** the video [Fighting Climate Change.](#) Featuring CARE-Climate-Heroine Minet from the [Philippines](#) (10:15), developed as part of the CARE Climate Heroines campaign, showcases the work of local and global women who have taken strong action on the climate crisis.

## Interviews

**LISTEN** to [this interview](#) (on YouTube) with Julius Ng'oma from the Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC) to learn about experience from Malawi on influencing the National Adaptation process.



# Cool Down

## Test your understanding *answers on page 35/36*

- 1 The COP is the supreme decision-making body of the UNFCCC. What does COP stand for? Select the correct answer.**
  - (a) Conference of the Parties
  - (b) Council of Pioneers
  - (c) Club of Paris
  - (d) Caretakers of the Planet
- 2 Countries that are signatories to the Paris Agreement must submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). An NDC is a country's climate action plan to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts. How often must countries update and submit their NDCs? Select the correct answer.**
  - (a) Every year
  - (b) Every three years
  - (c) Every five years
  - (d) Every 10 years
- 3 True or false? The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process seeks to identify and address medium- and long-term adaptation needs.**
  - (a) True
  - (b) False
- 4 Which of the following is a way you can influence regional and local climate adaptation policies? Select the correct answer.**
  - (a) Urge your country to adopt a climate change strategy
  - (b) Advocate for integrating young people into regional and local-level climate adaptation strategies
  - (c) Write a lobby letter and/or meet with the Minister of Climate Change (if your government has one) and/or your member of parliament who sits on the parliamentary committee on climate change



**5 The amount of money needed to fund adaptation efforts in developing countries is estimated to be how many times greater than what is currently available from public adaptation finance flows? Select the correct answer.**

- (a) 2-3 times
- (b) 5-10 times
- (c) 12-15 times
- (d) 20 times

**BONUS QUIZ:** To further test your knowledge of climate change, do [this online quiz](#) developed by UNDP. It covers three topics:

- [The problem of climate change](#)
- [The impacts of climate change](#)
- [Mitigating the impacts of climate change](#)

## Reflect and prepare for your climate adaptation action

Climate action starts at home. Now that you have learned about the ways young people can engage in adaptation policy processes, think about how you could influence local climate adaptation policy in your area.

- Which policy process would you like to engage in?
- Why is this process important? And what impact could you have by engaging?
- What can you learn about this process and the key actors involved before you take the steps to get involved?
- What steps will you take to get involved in this process? Who do you need to contact?
- What activities do you plan to be involved in for this process?
- What resources do you need to be involved?
- What outcomes do you expect? How will your engagement benefit you, other young people, your community or country?
- How will you share what you have learned with other young people?

## Answers

**1. Correct answer:** (a) Conference of the Parties.

**EXPLANATION:** The COP (Conference of the Parties) occurs every year under the UNFCCC. The COP is the supreme decision-making body of the UNFCCC. All 198 Parties (197 countries and the European Union) to the Convention are represented at the COP. Countries use the COP to review the implementation of the UNFCCC and any other legal instruments the COP adopts, such as the Paris Agreement, and take decisions necessary to promote the effective implementation of the Convention, including institutional and administrative arrangements.

**2. Correct answer:** (c) Every five years.

**EXPLANATION:** Governments submit their updated NDCs to the UNFCCC Secretariat every five years. The NDCs generally contain high-level information on expected climate impacts, mitigation and adaptation priorities, and emissions reduction targets for each country.

**3. Correct answer:** (a) True.

**EXPLANATION:** On top of the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), LDCs developed (or are developing) National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). These strategic documents complement the NAPAs. They identify a country's medium- and long-term adaptation priorities and the strategies for addressing and tracking them.

**4. Correct answer:** (d) All of the above

**EXPLANATION:** As a young climate advocate, there are numerous ways to engage in adaptation policy making processes and make your voice heard. At the regional and local levels, you can:

- Urge your country to adopt a climate change strategy. If it already exists, find out how it is being implemented.
- Advocate for integrating young people into regional and local-level climate adaptation strategies. Train future generations (adolescents and children) on climate advocacy and climate adaptation issues so that knowledge is passed from generation to generation, and the movement continues to grow.
- Organize or join an awareness-raising campaign to encourage public understanding of climate change, its effects, and the actions young people can take to mitigate its anticipated impacts.
- Write a lobby letter and/or meet with the Minister of Climate Change (if your government has one) and/or your member of parliament who sits on the parliamentary committee on climate change.
- Start a petition for a climate change adaptation policy issue.

**5. Correct answer:** (b) 5-10 times.

**EXPLANATION:** UNEP estimates that for developing countries, the money needed for adaptation could be five to 10 times greater than current international public adaptation finance flows. This discrepancy between the finances needed and those available to developing countries is known as the "adaptation finance gap."

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