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Myanmar is Better Equipped to Address Climate Change, Including in Cities

On 5th June 2017 at the World Environment Day celebrated in the Myanmar capital city Nay Pyi Taw, H.E. the President of the Union of the Republic of Myanmar, U Htin Kyaw, addressing a large audience of ministers, ambassadors and development partner representatives, stated that "climate change is a threat to development". Myanmar is indeed one of the most vulnerable in the world to the effects of climate change. However, the country is now better equipped to address its challenges as it has formulated the Myanmar National Climate Change Policy, and the Myanmar Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. The President thanked the Myanmar Climate Change Alliance (MCCA) for assistance and indicated that the policies "will be launched soon". The Strategy aims at turning Myanmar into a climate-resilient country by 2030.

Since 2013, with funding from the European Union UN-Habitat and UN Environment have partnered to implement the MCCA, the main climate change platform for Myanmar. MCCA aims at increasing awareness on climate change at the national level through the promotion and dissemination of science, advocacy, journalist training and media productions; strengthening the institutional, policy and technical capacities of the national and local governments to mainstream climate change in sectors; and promoting local adaptation through innovative vulnerability assessments and actual resilience-building actions.

MCCA has developed the National Myanmar Policy, Strategy and Action Plan through a thorough process



Town planners and authorities participate in an MCCA led participatory hazard mapping exercise to assess the effects of climate change in Pakokku Town, Myanmar. © Sukun/MCCA, 2016

of national and sub-national level consultations. These process has involved thousands of individuals, twenty line ministries, the three major cities (Yangon, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw), thirteen townships in six states and regions, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, universities, a youth forum, and UN agencies. The Strategy, drafted with the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), builds on six sectoral action plans, to ensure Myanmar will be able to respond to the expected changes in climate. These alterations have already hampered Myanmar's development ambitions, and will continue to do so according to climate change projections supported by MCCA and co-published with Columbia University and WWF. Ministries will start to fund the sectoral action plans in the fiscal year 2018-2019, effectively promoting mainstreaming of climate change into State planning.

MCCA has also finalized its vulnerability assessments for townships, which should be replicated at the national level. The assessments show evidence of people migrating abroad and towards main cities; these trends are fuelled by the effects of climate change. These impacts, both sudden disasters as well as long-term effects such as reductions in agriculture productivity, are pushing thousands to migrate. Mr. Pasquale Capizzi, Chief Technical Advisor of MCCA, stated that the fourth pillar of the Strategy, "Building Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Cities and Townships in Myanmar", takes these trends into consideration. It offers a roadmap to reduce increasing risks of disasters, anticipate increases in the costs and availability of services like energy and water, and promote low-carbon urbanization patterns.

Follow the progress of MCCA on www.myanmarcalliance.org or www.facebook.com/myanmarcalliance.

Cities in Mozambique and Comoros advance towards compliance with the Global Covenant of Mayors

Since its inception UN-Habitat has been actively supporting the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) for Climate and Energy, as well as one of its predecessor initiatives, the Compact of Mayors. UN-Habitat's Executive Director played a key role in launching the Compact of Mayors in 2014. Since the Compact was merged with the European Commission's Covenant of Mayors to form the GCoM, effective January 2017, UN-Habitat has served on the Founders' Council of the Global Covenant.

UN-Habitat has taken particular interest in helping cities in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that previously signed up to the Compact of Mayors to comply with their commitments. As of the end of 2016, of the more than 600 cities that had signed up to the Compact around 25 were from LDCs.

With the generous support of the Government of Sweden (Sida), UN-Habitat is currently helping two of those cities in sub-Saharan Africa – Moroni, Comoros (population 56,000), and Nacala, Mozambique (population 244,000) – to comply with those commitments. Commitments include inventorying greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, assessing vulnerabilities, developing a climate action plan, and reporting progress on CDP and/or carbon n , the Covenant's online reporting platforms.

Having committed to the Compact of Mayors, but lacking the funds and capacity to undertake all the activities required for compliance, in March 2017 the Mayors of both Moroni and Nacala wrote to UN-Habitat requesting support. UN-Habitat undertook scoping missions to both cities and commenced activities.

Since then, both cities have developed GHG inventories with the assistance of Pegasys, a South Africa-based NGO contracted by UN-Habitat to support this activity. The GHG inventory process involved meeting with key stakeholders and collecting



Greenhouse gas emissions inventory workshop in Nacala, Mozambique, August 1, 2017. © Stephen Davis

data. Following the drafting of the preliminary inventory, Pegasys held a workshop in each city to collect feedback from stakeholders, validate the underlying assumptions of the inventory and gather additional data.

The inventory for Nacala shows emissions with a strong transport focus: from the estimated 200,816 tonnes of greenhouse gases emitted in 2016 (expressed in carbon dioxide equivalent, tCO₂e), 70% were from the transport sector, 28% were from waste and only 2% came from stationary sources. The 2016 emissions figures for Moroni are more evenly distributed between those three sectors: of the total annual emissions of 53,260 tonnes CO₂e, 32% were attributed to transport, 28% to waste and 40% to stationary sources.

As is typical for small cities in LDCs, Moroni and Nacala are insignificant emitters, both in absolute and relative terms. For example the per capita annual emissions for Moroni are 1.0 tCO₂e (2016), compared to Johannesburg's 5.4 tCO₂e (2013) and London's 5.2 tCO₂e (2012). In developing the inventories Pegasys faced several challenges, the primary one being access to data. To overcome this difficulty Pegasys identified specific sectoral actors and national entities whose data

could act as proxy. Furthermore, the Global Covenant of Mayors' Technical Support Team provided guidance on how Pegasys could disaggregate national data to meet Compact reporting requirements.

At present both cities have submitted their inventories to the CDP reporting platform. Nacala then quickly received a "badge" indicating that they had achieved a significant milestone on the way to full Covenant compliance. (Moroni's submittals are still under review.) Of the 60 cities in Africa that had committed to the Compact of Mayors, to date only five (including Nacala) have received their inventory badge.

UN-Habitat is continuing its support to both cities, to ensure that they meet all the requirements of the Compact and the Global Covenant. Currently UN-Habitat is applying its City Resilience Action Planning (City-RAP) tool to help Moroni meet its adaptation requirements. At the same time it is contracting a partner to support the remaining mitigation commitments in both cities, as well as the adaptation requirements in Nacala. Both cities seem on track towards full compliance.

2nd Asia-Pacific Expert Group Meeting on “Mainstreaming Climate Change Concerns into National Urban-related Policies”

On the 17th and 18th of July 2017, UN-Habitat and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) jointly held the second regional workshop on strengthening capacities of member States in the region to mainstream climate change concerns into national urban-related policies. Participants included delegates from six countries in the region: Bangladesh, Myanmar, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, and Viet Nam. International organisations such as the UN Development Programme, UN Environment, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation (GIZ), and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, as well as independent international experts, also participated.

The workshop’s aim was to provide a platform to share experiences and lessons learned from the participating countries on the development of urban-related policies, and review the extent to which they currently incorporate climate change considerations. The workshop also



Workshop participants at UNESCAP Bangkok, Thailand. © UN-Habitat

provided a platform to discuss the potential for further mainstreaming climate change into such policies. Participants discussed a draft regional guide to mainstreaming climate change into urban-related policies, which was shared with participants before the workshop began. The document was thoroughly reviewed during the workshop through panel discussions and group activities, and the final version of the guide will be much stronger thanks to such inputs. The regional guide is now being revised and a second version will be shared with participants.

Mr. Bernhard Barth, Human Settlements Officer at UN-Habitat Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific,

stated that “anchoring the policy and creating linkages in so many different ways is critical. We have come to some very interesting conclusions in terms of the legal, institutional and financial dimensions, as well as the policy and local action dimensions of such policies. Conclusions also address the strategic use of a whole range of possible entry points, e.g., moving from a climate event to a climate change policy, to financing opportunities”. He closed the workshop by expressing his sincere appreciation to all participants for their enriching inputs that will “further improve and inform the regional guide and which will also be useful for training [sessions that are planned in the near future]”.

Adaptation Fund Project Kicks Off in Lao PDR

In June 2017, UN-Habitat began implementing the Enhancing the Climate and Disaster Resilience of the Most Vulnerable Rural and Emerging Urban Human Settlements in Lao PDR project, executed by the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, and funded by the Adaptation Fund.

The project is being implemented in three of Laos’ least developed provinces: Attapeu, Sekong and Saravan. In addition to widespread poverty they also face multiple climate change related hazards including flooding, storms and droughts. This combination of high poverty, a lack of basic services and infrastructure, and intense, worsening climate-related hazards, means that people in the project’s target area are highly vulnerable to climate change.



Participants at the Provincial Inception Workshop under the Laos Adaptation Fund Project in Attapeu, Laos. © UN-Habitat/Laos

Following on from a national-level inception workshop (which took place in February before the project formally began implementation), a provincial-level inception workshop took place on the 2nd and 3rd of August in Attapeu. This event focused

on kick-starting the first of the project’s four components: assessing climate change vulnerabilities and formulating action plans.

The workshop was opened by H.E. Nay Viyaketh, the Governor of Attapeu

Adaptation Fund Project Kicks Off in Lao PDR (continued)

Province, and H.E. Mme Vilaykham Phosalath, Vice-Minister of Public Works and Transport (MPWT). In his opening remarks, H.E. Viyaketh welcomed the project to Attapeu Province, while H.E. Mme Vilaykham highlighted that "the project needs to be robust and successful in order to set the base for further development in this region". He further encouraged full engagement of provincial and district level officials in the project by saying that the "project implementation structure is in line with the Government's "3-build" policy, whereby we focus on strengthening our village, district and provincial levels".

The workshop was also attended by provincial vice governors, district governors from the eight target districts, and key representatives from MPWT, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and their local departments. Phomma Veoravan, Director General of the Water Supply Department, MPWT, expressed a wish to see the vulnerability assessment exercise "institutionalized in the future, so that we can conduct it in other provinces as well". He added that "this project is extremely important for the Ministry as it will be a model for our future climate change interventions linked to the water supply sector".

The project is the first that UN-Habitat has implemented with funding from the Adaptation Fund. The total project funding is \$4.5 million, of which \$2.8 million will be invested in small-scale infrastructure in the target provinces. The exact locations and nature of this investment will be determined through a vulnerability assessment and action planning process. Another major component of the project is building capacity. Under this component the project will work at national, provincial, district and community levels to build sufficient capacity to replicate and upscale the project's approach.

UPCOMING EVENTS

UNFCCC COP-23. Bonn, Germany (6-17 November 2017)

During this year's UN Climate Change Conference, UN-Habitat will be leading or participating in a number

of city focused events. Highlights include: 8 Nov -- the Nairobi Work Programme Focal Point Forum on "human settlements and adaptation"; 11 Nov Urban Planning Track at the Human Settlements Day with five

distinct events, including launch of a new cooperative initiative: "Planners for Climate Action"; 12 Nov -- Local & Regional Leaders' Summit; 13 Nov -- SDG 11 ('cities') and climate action.

ABOUT US

Headquartered at UN-Habitat in Nairobi, the Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI) involves the participation of more than 40 cities worldwide. It targets medium-sized cities in developing and least-developed countries, and emphasizes good governance and practical initiatives for the municipalities and their citizens.

The CCCI team has adapted participatory processes developed

previously by UN-Habitat so as to specifically address climate change issues within the city. A complementary set of tools is being further developed to support cities in assessing vulnerabilities, analyzing baseline emissions, and prioritizing mitigation and adaptation actions. Since 2008, CCCI has been generously supported by the Governments of Norway, Germany and Sweden, the United Nations Development Account, the Cities Alliance, and

other sources of global, regional, national and local funding.

Bulletins of the Cities and Climate Change Initiative are periodically published electronically. For more information, or to be added to our mailing list, contact ccci@unhabitat.org or visit www.unhabitat.org/ccci.

CCCI Cities and Countries

