

Youth Engagement with EPA on the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Project



Meeting report written by Evelyn Addor (Admin/Communication, SYND)

Contact:
Chibeze Ezekiel
Exec. Coordinator, SYND
synd.ghana@gmail.com / info@syndghana.org
www.syndghana.org

Held on 29th September, 2020



Background:

The Government of Ghana, through the Environmental Protection Agency, under the auspices of the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) has successfully obtained a grant from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for a three-year project to build capacity to advance National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process in Ghana.

The project entitled “Enhancing multi-sector planning and capacity for effective adaptation in Ghana” is aim at strengthening the capacity of Ghana’s government at all levels to implement a NAP process including planning and budgeting for adaptation. In addition, it is to support multi-sectoral, medium-to long-term adaptation planning and budgeting in Ghana and promote the integration of climate change adaptation aspects into development planning processes and policies. Systems for developing and sharing climate risk and vulnerability information are to be reinforced and sustainable financing mechanisms for climate change adaptation initiatives developed. In addition, it seeks to develop a NAP process that will produce a costed adaptation plan for Ghana and provide the tools, mechanisms, system and information with which to replicate the NAP process at regular intervals and to mainstream adaptation planning into sector and district development plans.

Some key expected outcomes from the project are:

1. Central level systems and processes for the development of the NAP developed and mainstreamed at all level
2. District level systems and processes enhanced for the development of the NAP
3. Enabling environment to promote private sector investment in adaptation strengthened; and,
4. Learning about the NAP process disseminated.

As part of the process, five (5) technical groups have been formed with key roles and responsibilities, comprising Private Sector, CSO/NGOs, Youth Groups, representatives of relevant MDAs as well as Academia. In line with its values on youth participation in the NAP process as captured in the National Adaptation Plan Framework (2018), EPA has made provision for youth representatives in the working groups.

As a stakeholder in Ghana’s climate change strategic direction, the Strategic Youth Network for Development (SYND)¹ requested for a meeting with the Project Management Unit (PMU) to extend its contribution to achieving the outcomes and targets of Ghana’s NAP Readiness Project activities including the communication aspect of the project.

Event:

On Tuesday, 29th September 2020, SYND with some members of its Youth in Natural Resources and Environmental Governance (Youth-NREG)² Platform had a meeting with the PMU at EPA to

¹ SYND is a youth-oriented NGO that promotes youth inclusion in the governance of the Natural Resources and Environmental (NRE) sector. Our thematic areas of work are Climate Change, Biodiversity, Forestry and Energy Access.

² This platform provides space for knowledge learning and sharing among young people working on different environmental actions as well as create opportunity for joint advocacy in a concerted manner



Youth Engagement with EPA on the NAP



deliberate on effective youth participation in the ongoing National Adaptation Plan (NAP) development process in Ghana. In attendance were Mr. Ebenezer Appah-Sampong, Deputy Executive Director for Technical Services (EPA), Dr. Antwi-Boasiako Amoah, National Coordinator (NAP) project, Mrs. Sandra Kesse-Amoah, Gender Expert on the NAP Project and other supporting project staff.

Welcome Address by Mr. Ebenezer Appah-Sampong, Deputy Executive Director (EPA):

Mr. Appah-Sampong expressed his joy in seeing young people showing interest in Governance issues in the Natural Resources and Environmental sector. He said, "Environmental sustainability is a shared responsibility therefore, it's everyone's duty to protect, preserve and conserve the environment." He referred to the newly launched "State of the Environment" report stating that environmental degradation in Ghana cost about 11% of the Country's GDP. He bemoaned that "if we continue on the path of environmental degradation, our economic development cannot be sustained". He emphasized that it is important for EPA to collaborate with all state agencies, the private sector and civil society organizations like SYND to ensure that the message and education on climate change adaptation gets to all citizens. He finally added that adaptation is about planning for the future, which belongs to the youth; therefore, he is happy that such a meeting is to identify how young people can also contribute to the on-going National Adaptation planning process. He officially welcomed the team from SYND and used the opportunity to congratulate the Executive Coordinator of SYND, Chibeze Ezekiel on his appointment to the Panel of Environmental Experts on the Environment of Peace 2022 (EP 2022) project.

1st Presentation on Why Adaptation is important by Dr. Antwi-Boasiako Amoah, National Coordinator (NAP Project).

In his presentation, Dr. Amoah informed participants that over 800 million people are currently vulnerable to climate change impact and if no action is taken, over 100 million people could be forced into poverty according to a research finding. Due to this, it has become important for people to adapt to climate change to reduce its impact on their livelihood and well-being, he iterated. He further noted that the National Adaptation Plan was established under the Cancun Adaptation Framework and was re-emphasized in the Paris Climate Agreement. The National Adaptation Plan seeks to identify long and medium-term adaptation needs and to develop strategies to address these needs in a continuous iterative process that follows a country-driven participatory and transparent approach he stressed.

According to him, the NAP has two main objectives that is, reducing the negative impact of climate change and integrating adaptation into new and existing government policies and programmes. He also took participants through the guiding principles of the NAP Framework. As part of the strategies to ensure the NAP process is inclusive, he informed participants that, NAP Champions would be selected to help reach out to the targeted audience with key messages.

He observed that the NAP process would apply nature-based solutions such as managing natural resources for adaptation, for example, restoring mangroves to protect against coastal flooding.



2nd Presentation on Ghana's National Adaptation Planning processes by Dr. Antwi-Boasiako Amoah, National Coordinator (NAP Project).

Dr. Amoah took participants through Ghana's Green Climate Fund NAP Readiness project. He stated that the main goal of Ghana's NAP project is to produce a costed adaptation plan for Ghana that provides the tools, mechanisms, systems and information with which to replicate the NAP process at regular intervals and to mainstream the adaptation strategy into Sector and District development plans. He stated that the project involves the participation and training of 20 district assemblies through a competitive bidding process. Out of the 20 assemblies, 10 of them will receive support to develop their respective adaptation plans. Furthermore, institutional heads at the district and regional levels shall receive capacity building training. He observed that, currently Ghana has no laws on climate change affecting its coherent implementation due to limited commitment. To this effect, a Bill on Climate Change will be developed as part of the project. He asserted that the private sector and civil society are being engaged to enhance multi-sector planning for effective adaptation measures in Ghana.

He expressed his commitment as the Project Coordinator in ensuring youth inclusion in the process and encouraged participants as future leaders to take action to stop the climate crisis by standing up and making their voices heard.

3rd Presentation on Gender Responsive NAP by Mrs. Sandra Kesse-Amoah (Gender Specialist)

Mrs. Kesse-Amoah defined gender as “economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female and the relationships that exist among women, men, girls and boys as well as the relations between women or between men (Corredor, 2019)”. She asserted that a gender-responsive approach to the NAP process addresses gender differences, promotes gender equality and actively challenges the biases, behaviours and practices that lead to marginalization and inequality.

She said, "gender-responsive approach to the NAP process recognizes that gender intersects with other socio-economic factors to influence vulnerability to climate change and adaptive capacity which therefore increases the likelihood that adaptation investment will yield equitable benefits for people of all genders and social groups, including those who are particularly vulnerable".

She observed that climate change impacts are not gender-neutral and therefore "responses to these impacts whether at the policy level or on the ground in vulnerable communities, must be gender-responsive". She gave examples of conventions that have enshrined gender equality as a universal human right such as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

She reiterated the importance of addressing gender inequalities in climate policy and action since gender equality is increasingly recognized as fundamental for effective adaptation. She indicated that gender inclusion is factored into all aspect and at all stages of the project from its inception, planning, implementation to the monitoring and evaluation stages.

4th Presentation on SYND's Contribution to the NAP Readiness Project by Chibeze Ezekiel (Exec. Coordinator, SYND).

Chibeze began his presentation with a brief background of SYND and the Youth in Natural Resources and Environmental Governance (Youth-NREG) Platform. He noted that SYND aims



Youth Engagement with EPA on the NAP



to be a bridge between the Ghanaian government and youth on climate change and other environmental-related issues. He emphasized that the primary goal of the organization is to reduce fossil fuel-related emissions through youth inclusion in the governance of the natural resources and formulation, implementation and review of existing environmental sector policies, programs, and projects from local to national level.

He introduced some ongoing projects such as the Youth in Renewable Energy Movement campaign, Children for Climate (C4C) campaign and Mobilizing Youth for Climate Action (supported by the French Embassy).

He informed the EPA Team that, SYND, as part of its contribution to the NAP project, its Policy Team that will support the functions or work of the youth reps on the Cross-Sectoral Policy Groups (CSPGs). Additionally, it will help in developing educational materials to educate young people and the public; support the 20 districts to be identified to mainstream climate change into their new Medium Term Development Plans (MTDPs) as well as collaborate in running a strong social media campaign to enhance public awareness and amplify the project's deliverables.

He expressed his satisfaction with EPA for recognizing the vital role of young people and gender in the development of the NAP project. He also expressed his gratitude to EPA for recognizing SYND as a strategic partner on this project.

Key issues during the discussion session:

- The number of CSPGs was originally four (4) but now five (5) as there was a need to introduce an additional group. Since it had no budgetary implication, GCF had no issues.
- The Climate Change data hub is up to date. In addition, two districts will be offered help to develop district vulnerability portals, which will be linked to the national portal website. The two districts will serve as a pilot exercise to be replicated in other districts depending on the outcome.
- The 20 district assemblies to be chosen for the project would be based on merit. Interested assemblies are to apply when the call for proposals is announced or advertised. The proposals from the various districts will be evaluated by a team based on which the assemblies that meet the criteria will be chosen. This process is to help ensure from the assemblies to the project.
- The criteria for selecting the 20 districts may include vulnerability level of the area and the seriousness of the district towards climate-related activities developed.
- The media is a very important stakeholder because of their role in awareness creation.
- In selecting young champions for the project, consideration should be given to those who are actively involved in the fight against climate change and not just identifying celebrities who may be clueless on climate change issues.
- While supporting district assemblies to mainstream climate change into their MTDPs is laudable, SYND can also consider adopting schools in communities and engage them on climate change as one of the ways of promoting local action.
- Participating in the NAP process is not limited at the CSPG level as there is opportunity to engage at the local level through the 20 district assemblies to be identified.

Recommendations:

1. SYND should consider identifying partners to support the process of developing a Youth Strategy on NAP.
2. There is an opportunity to create a Youth in National Adaptation Plan (NAP) just as SYND has established the Youth in Renewable Energy Movement campaign.

Next steps:

- EPA to facilitate a meeting between SYND Media team and the project’s Communications Specialist to discuss further on the communication deliverables of the project.

Some key messages:

NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLAN (NAP) PROJECT

“The Youth is a strategic partner in Ghana’s National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Process because it entails planning for the future, which belongs to the youth.”

Mr. Ebenezer Appah-Sampong
Deputy Executive Director, EPA

NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLAN (NAP) PROJECT

“The youth is a strategic partner for implementing ideas that are critical to the course of this country because they are the future and not us.”

Dr. Antwi Boasiako
NAP Project Coordinator, EPA

NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLAN (NAP) PROJECT

“The NAP is supported to put up systems and structures that will help Ghana to incorporate Adaptation Planning into our development agenda. This is to alleviate poverty and care for the environment and climate.”

Dr. Antwi Boasiako
NAP Project Coordinator, EPA

NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLAN (NAP) PROJECT

“The building blocks of Adaptation are informed by two main components; Capacity building and Communications.”

Dr. Antwi Boasiako
NAP Project Coordinator, EPA

Media report:

<https://citinewsroom.com/2020/10/epa-synd-to-develop-roadmap-for-youth-participation-in-nap-process/>