



CDKN Mid Term Review Summary

1. Background

The Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) was established by DFID in 2010 to enhance developing countries' access to high quality, policy-relevant information and tailored advice on climate compatible development (CCD). CDKN achieves this through the provision of knowledge management, research, technical assistance and advice, negotiations and partnership support. It is a globally unique, innovative, and demand-driven programme. The CDKN model is largely market-based, requiring outsourced and competitive procurement for 75% of outputs. A critical part of CDKN's role has been to help build technical capacity in developing country supplier markets. CDKN now supports interventions in 46 countries, and has been successful in leveraging additional funding at the national, regional and global levels.

CDKN is funded by the UK (DFID) and the Netherlands (DGIS) and managed through a Management Oversight Committee (MOC) with representation from DFID, DGIS and DECC. It is implemented by PwC as lead contractor for an alliance of six private sector, civil society and non-governmental organisations in the global north and south. The current CDKN contract covers a 5-year period of 2010-11 to 2014-15. The initial total value to DFID of the contract was £45.8m. This has since been increased through subsequent contract amendments to accommodate additional co-funding of £15m from DGIS, and a further £10m for management of the Climate Window of the Advocacy Fund.

The demand for CDKN's services has been significant and in 2012-2013 the programme reached a peak in its funding cycle. It became clear that unless additional funding is made available, the programme will have to start scaling down. The value for money of such scale down was questioned and so was the need for bigger and longer CDKN.

To address such questions, DFID and DGIS commissioned an independent Mid Term Review (MTR) slightly earlier than the usual time they conduct these reviews in their other programmes. The MTR took place November 2012-February 2013 and the final report is now available.

The MTR was competitively procured and awarded to an established provider with leading expertise - ITAD. The team were asked to review:

- The strategic niche, role and need for CDKN;
- The progress to date against the original design, milestones and indicators; and
- The value for money of the CDKN operational model.

The MTR conducted a comprehensive review, relying on: extensive document review; more than 100 stakeholders interviews; five country visits and case-studies; a review of each of the CDKN five outputs; and a visit to the last COP in Doha (COP18).

2. Key findings

The MTR concluded that CDKN has successfully established and is filling an important niche. It confirmed the strength and logic of the overall model and approach and confirmed the on-going need and demand for the programme. The MTR confirmed that while some of the original assumptions behind CDKN (as imminent global deal) have not materialised, CDKN has adapted quickly to the current context and continues to deliver results and value.

The strong demand for CDKN's services despite the emergence of new relevant funds and institutions was also confirmed by the MTR. It analysed the role and positioning of GGGI, for example, and concluded that the two use different operational models. The MTR notes that 'the need for both organisations vastly outweighs their combined capacity'. The MTR also reviewed examples where CDKN and GGGI collaborate and found that they have done so well, in a compatible and efficient manner that can be replicated.

The report also records CDKN's proactive engagement and collaboration with existing bilateral country programmes supported by DFID, DGIS, DECC, the FCO, INGOs, and multilateral organisations such as the World Bank, the Green Climate Fund, UNEP and other partners. CDKN builds value from these projects linking them to existing knowledge networks such as the LEDS Global Partnership, the Climate Knowledge Brokers network and the Community Based Adaptation network. CDKN is also an active member of the Green Growth Best Practice Initiative and Green Growth Knowledge Network. Evidence suggests that CDKN's role has been transformational already in ensuring greater southern representation and voices in these fora and linking national and regional experiences with the global debates.

The report also notes that CDKN is delivering results and has made good progress against the original expectations, milestones and indicators under each of its outputs (with some minor exceptions). Overall, the MTR finds progress against all outputs and purpose to be as good as reasonable to expect at the mid-point of the programme. The MTR endorses CDKN's own data and analysis that CCD programmatic and / or policy change in 28 countries has been significantly supported by CDKN.

The MTR provides a number of case studies that illustrate CDKN's transformative results and ability to deliver policy and programmatic change. It provides such cases (e.g. Colombia) where this has happened through systemic, multi-dimensional programmatic engagement and where the focus has been on a specific national process (e.g. Kenya). The MTR also reviews examples of CDKN's sub-national, regional and global work and confirms the importance of these multi-layered engagements.

The MTR notes and endorses the CDKN evolution from a purely demand-led approach in multiple countries to a more strategic, catalytic approach in fewer, deep engagements countries that is combined with support for regional initiatives and global knowledge management and learning products.

The MTR also compared the CDKN cost model and particularly administration costs with similar programmes. It found that CDKN is comparatively more cost effective, at times with up to 5% lower administrative costs. The MTR also records the multiple ways in which CDKN ensures value for money, including heavy reliance on competitive awards, internal reviews and cost comparisons and regular systemic restructuring to match the programme's evolving needs.

3. Recommendations

The MTR considered the pending questions about CDKN's future and additional funding and recommended that additional funding should be provided to CDKN in its current form until a sustainable solution is found for the long term. The MTR clearly recorded the trade offs and risks of a rapid scale down of the programme and the ways these undermines its value for money.

The MTR, while endorsing the overall performance of CDKN, noted a number of areas where performance could be improved at both strategic and operational levels and has made a number of recommendations. These recommendations are of diverse nature (some output specific, others about operational issues) and have been discussed with the CDKN management. CDKN management has already taken actions in some areas and there are plans in place to address others over the coming year. Overall, none of the recommendations related to a structural or systemic issue and they are broadly uncontroversial.

All recommendations that can be reasonably addressed without the additional funding recommended by the MTR are part of the CDKN Year 4 Business Plan.

4. CDKN annual review

Following the MTR DFID have conducted their own annual review of CDKN, drawing on the findings and recommendations of the MTR. The annual review gave CDKN an overall output score of A. With 2 outputs scored as 'A+' (outputs moderately exceeded expectation) and 3 of CDKN's outputs scored as 'A' (outputs met expectation). DFID concluded:

"The overall finding of the MTR was that CDKN output was progressing in line with the output indicators defined in the logframe across all five output areas. Evidence of outputs was witnessed through the country visits as well as interviews with CDKN output team members and is considered well within the range expected at this point in the programme. The review also noted evidence of strong results and delivery in the field of CCD, and clear signs that the programme has evolved in response to changes in context, and has responded to lessons and stakeholder feedback to endeavour to become a more relevant, effective and efficient CCD institution. The AR in addition noted that CDKN had made commendable efforts to ensure that where appropriate, gender was properly considered across the breadth of the programme. However, more needs to be done in this area."

This document is an output from a project funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Netherlands Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) for the benefit of developing countries. However, the views expressed and information contained in it are not necessarily those of or endorsed by DFID or DGIS, who can accept no responsibility for such views or information or for any reliance placed on them.

This publication has been prepared for general guidance on matters of interest only, and does not constitute professional advice. You should not act upon the information contained in this publication without obtaining specific professional advice. No representation or warranty (express or implied) is given as to the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in this publication, and, to the extent permitted by law, the entities managing the delivery of the Climate and Development Knowledge Network do not accept or assume any liability, responsibility or duty of care for any consequences of you or anyone else acting, or refraining to act, in reliance on the information contained in this publication or for any decision based on it.