Mainstreaming climate compatible development: Achieving deep political and societal change to deliver the ambition of the Paris climate agreement

Insights from CDKN

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About CDKN and the authors

CDKN works to enhance the quality of life for people affected by climate change. We aim to bridge climate change and development policy, enabling countries to implement development plans that integrate climate challenges and achieve a low-carbon and climate resilient future. We work in more than 70 countries and have deep engagements in 13 focal countries: Bangladesh, Caribbean (region), Colombia, El Salvador, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru, Rwanda and Uganda.

A team from CDKN, led by Simon Maxwell, Sam Bickersteth, Mairi Dupar, Ari Huhtala and Maria Jose Pacha, has assessed some 50+ working papers, research reports and case studies published over CDKN's six-year lifetime, which analyse the conditions required for climate compatible development policies to be robustly designed and implemented. The evidence base comprises CDKN-commissioned research by centres of excellence around the world, along with learning papers and case studies in which the in-house team and local partners turn the spotlight on CDKN's technical assistance programme. The synthesis of our findings on the drivers, challenges, essential conditions and success factors for climate compatible development is presented in the book *Mainstreaming climate compatible development*.

You may find the first edition of the book online at www.cdkn.org/mainstreaming (2015). The second edition is forthcoming in November 2016 and reflects progress in policy and practice since the Paris agreement. This poster builds on the findings of the first edition of the book and provides a preview of the second edition.

Introduction

Following the Paris climate summit, the onus is on countries to implement the national commitments submitted to the UNFCCC (the Nationally Determined Contributions or NDCs). Countries, especially those with high levels of development and high emissions, should do so with a view to ratcheting up levels of ambition in the near term. A review of NDCs is due in 2018 and the first formal stocktake in 2023.

It is widely recognised that the collective ambition of all national commitments made in Paris makes for a 3 degree world: far short of the headline ambition agreed by Parties in Paris: "Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels"

However, adding up all the NDCs shows that the world has so far formally committed to only a quarter or a third of the emission reductions needed by 2030 to achieve 2 degrees, let alone 1.5 (Maxwell, 2016; UNEP, 2015). Bridging the emissions gap and fulfilling the Paris promise will require unparalleled resolve and action: at global, national and subnational levels, it will be about 'getting the economics right' and 'getting the politics right'.

Getting the economics right involves mobilising financial resources to jump-start climate compatible development initiatives and sustain them. It also involves macroeconomic policies – ranging from the long-standing call for a global carbon price to the abolition of fossil fuel subsidies at national level – both of which would disincentivise polluting behaviours. Fiscal policies such as favourable tariffs for clean power producers play a role in transforming economic sectors and societal behaviours (Weischer, 2013). Our chapter 3 on 'Fiscal policies' and chapter 4 on 'Resourcing' in *Mainstreaming Climate Compatible Development* provide extensive further examples.

The economic policies and economic instruments deployed and the nature of domestic and international financial flows are pivotal (even intrinsic) to broader climate politics. The political case is made for climate compatible development when stakeholder groups consider it in their economic interest to take action. However, obstacles exist when stakeholders consider business as usual to be in their near-term economic interest.

Even when shifts to more climate compatible pathways demonstrate economic benefit in the short term (a necessary condition, see right), they may require reallocating economic resources from one form of production or consumption to another – and this requires political will and behaviour change. Alternatively, such shifts may impose short term costs that are paid back in the medium term. Leadership and successful stakeholder communications, engagement and mobilisation are needed to overcome political and behavioural inertia and create transformational change needed to achieve a 'close to 1.5C world'.

Such is the task for officials in developing country governments who are charged with fulfilling their countries' climate obligations. Their task involves:

- Making the case for precipitous action on climate adaptation and mitigation and creating national consensus on this.
- Designing policies and programmes for the reduction or avoidance of greenhouse gas emissions in a way that does not lead to maladaptation to climate change impacts and which protects and benefits the poorest.

CDKN Colombia uses powerful public communications to make the case for climate action including by the multinational hotel industry

Making the case for climate compatible development

Compelling narrative must show the 'cost of inaction'. A compelling narrative is needed, around the costs of failing to adapt to and mitigate against climate change. In Nepal, calculating the cost of climate change impacts over the next few decades has provided a focus – previously lacking – for the different ministries of national government to engage in the climate debate, assess implications for their sectors, and develop more climate-resilient interventions (Government of Nepal, 2014). In Uganda, an economic analysis showed that the cost of inaction on climate adaptation would cost 20 times more than taking adaptation measures today (Baastel, 2015).

A 'development first' approach should underpin action. In developing countries, identifying and articulating the present-day development benefits including such diverse benefits as public health, energy security, employment, road safety, etc.) of climate mitigation and adaptation approaches has the greatest chance of achieving broad buy-in for implementation: arguably it is the only starting point (see LEDS GP, 2016).

CDKN project, Ahmedabad, India, courtesy Indian Institute of Public Health

Leaders must build a national consensus: Building a broad-based alliance includes dealing with the real and perceived losses from climate compatible development – this will be especially the case under a scenario by which countries endeavour to limit average global warming well below 2 degrees. Without question, the impacts of climate change are already creating losers in society. However, climate compatible development policies will also be perceived as creating some losers, especially in the short term and national strategies will be required to manage these dislocations.

Climate knowledge brokers have a more important role than ever. In order to implement the NDCs, intermediary organisations, who tailor knowledge to make it more accessible and usable for others, can play a critical role in deepening actors' understanding of climate impacts and solutions, so empowering them to act. Such 'knowledge brokers' can create bridges between the languages of science and climate-impacted communities and policy-makers.

Designing policies and programmes which mitigate climate change while avoiding 'maladaptation' and benefiting the poorest

Ensuring that low income and socially marginalised people are not the casualties of precipitous climate action but rather, recognising that mitigating and adapting to climate change is necessary, and can be designed in order to tackle poverty in the long term. Climate action can and must be designed in order to achieve the first of the Sustainable Development Goals: eradicate extreme poverty, and 'leave no one behind'. As emphasised in the IPCC's *Fifth Assessment Report*, without careful management, measures to reduce, capture and sequester carbon risk removing the means of livelihood from certain groups, or create new vulnerabilities to climate change impacts (IPCC, 2014; Carabine et al., 2014).

The 'right' stakeholders must be at the table: those affected by climate change and affected by climate-related policies. Social and environmental safeguards on climate-related interventions are necessary but not sufficient. Granting agency to socially disadvantaged groups is integral to effective and sustainable action. For example, CDKN research demonstrates convincingly that climate compatible development programmes are more effective and more sustainable over time when women are equal partners with men in decision-making roles, as well as in implementation roles.

When stakeholders define the problem together, they have the basis for tackling the problem together: There is tremendous value in stakeholder engagement processes (which we have charted from the subnational level in CDKN programmes, up to national level process, such as the MAPS programme: Mitigation Action Plans and Scenarios) which cultivate the common understanding and agreement of situation before representatives of key stakeholder groups as a foundation for action. Such groups then collaborate to chart a way forward: legitimacy of the process is important.

Navigating the nexus: Managing the potential down-sides of climate action means navigating the complexities of land and water use especially in those places where natural resources are already scarce thanks to population and other pressures and climate change exacerbates the pressures on the 'water-energy-food nexus'. For example, demographic shifts, growing resource demands and forest ecosystem degradation, coupled with climate change, have widespread implications for water, energy, food security in Amazonia and beyond. Large-scale deforestation is predicted to reduce rainfall by up to 21%, which could have significant implications for agriculture and energy generation requiring 'transversal, multisectoral' approaches' (Sabogal, Bellfield and Bauch, 2016).

Eradicating existing laws and policies that undermine climate compatible compatible development is as important as taking pro-climate action alone. What's more, enforcing existing environmental laws can enable large strides toward a more climate compatible future (see for example Lofts and Kenny, 2012).

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