



## Session 8 26 February 2021

- 15:00 - 16:45 Lilongwe
- 16:00 - 17:45 Addis Ababa
- 14:00 - 15:45 Paris
- 08:00 - 09:45 New York

## SESSION 8

### BUILDING CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ACCELERATING THE ENERGY TRANSITION IN AFRICAN LDCs

The climate emergency that the world is currently witnessing is hitting hardest the LDCs. The LDCs have been recognized as a group that is especially vulnerable to the negative impacts of the climate crisis, while they have least contributed to its creation. This is reflected in the Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework and 2030 Agenda. Yet, this recognition is not matched with an adequate level of financial assistance, technology transfer and capacity-building support to strengthen resilience and sustainability.

African LDCs frequently experience natural disasters, including cyclones, hurricanes, landslides, flooding, earthquakes and drought. These have devastating effects on lives and livelihoods and often exacerbate previously existing patterns of discrimination that render females more vulnerable. Natural disasters often contribute to increased public debt due to emergency response and lost revenue, and also divert funding from investments towards the SDGs and IPoA goals and targets. Among other factors, the added burden of low GNI per capita constrains their ability to respond and build resilience.

The 2019 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction found that people in LDCs are, on average, six times more likely to be injured, lose their home, be displaced or evacuated, or require emergency assistance, than those in high-income countries. The damage and losses from climate-related disasters have increased in severity over time, including in African LDCs. For example, in 2019, Idai was one of the strongest known cyclones to make landfall on the east coast of Africa, which had a devastating impact on Mozambique as well as Malawi. Cyclone Kenneth hit Mozambique 6 weeks later, amplifying the devastation. Most African LDCs are also affected by recurring droughts, affecting electricity generation from hydropower.

A long-term focus on building resilience is crucial to enable LDCs to reach the SDGs. It is critical that disaster risk reduction strategies are fully in-line with the Sendai Framework in order to make the transition from reactive crises management approaches to proactive approaches that reduce risk, build resilience and prevent crises. To-date, only 5 LDCs have self-reported that their disaster risk reduction strategies are at least 70 per cent in-line with the Sendai Framework. Efforts in this respect range from early warning systems based on comprehensive and timely data, enhanced capacity for planning through adequate institutions and skills to climate-resilient infrastructure. Insurance schemes ranging from country level, like the Africa Risk Capacity, to SMEs and households, like weather insurance for farmers, have also been established over the past years.



At the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit in September 2019, LDCs emerged at the forefront of the strong push for greater ambition in global climate action. The Summit delivered announcements that recognize that while LDCs are particularly impacted by climate change they are ready to commit to more ambitious climate action. At the Summit, the LDCs committed to net zero GHG emissions by 2050 in the context of resources being available to do so, as well as to deliver climate-resilient development pathways and secure full access to sufficient and affordable renewable energy for all by 2030. The two LDC specific announcements made at the Summit – LDC-Vision 2050 and LDC Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR), and the Coalition for Sustainable Energy Access. The LIFE-AR brings together government, private sector, civil society, academia and communities focusing on integrated adaptation, mitigation and resilience planning at national and local levels.

Sustainable energy has the potential to contribute to the reduction in greenhouse gas emission and fill the huge gaps in access to energy in LDCs. Access to electricity in African LDCs including Haiti increased from 22% in 2011 to 36% in 2018. In absolute terms, more than 436 million people did not have access to electricity in 2018 demonstrating the urgent need to accelerate energy transition.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of reliable, affordable and sustainable energy systems – from powering healthcare services to enabling communication and information technologies social distancing and community resilience. With the cost of renewables falling, there is immense opportunity for LDCs to leapfrog straight into renewable technologies. Investments in energy have a significant GDP multiplier – it is estimated that for every US dollar invested in the transition towards renewable energy, an additional USD 0.93 of GDP growth above business as usual is expected to occur.

Despite the immense potential of the energy sector in LDCs, these countries rarely benefit from larger financing schemes to the same extent as more prosperous, developing countries. For instance, public financial flows to developing countries in support of clean and renewable energy, reached a total of US\$ 21.4 billion in 2017, of which only 12 per cent reached the least developed countries in 2017.

It is also an opportunity for governments to establish or make upward adjustments on their renewable energy targets to take account of additional procurement of new renewable energy generation capacity. While there has been some increase, the climate financing received by LDCs is far short of estimated requirements. The total amount of climate change finance needed to fund both mitigation and adaptation measures post-2020 in the LDCs has been estimated at \$93 billion per year, based on the intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) submitted by 44 LDCs in the lead-up to the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 21). Dedicated funds for addressing the climate crisis by LDCs, for example the LDC Fund established by the UNFCCC, have limited resources and LDCs face capacity constraints in accessing other funds like the Adaptation Fund and Green Climate Fund. In addition, the National Adaptation Plans are critical tools to support the LDCs in building resilience to the accelerating adverse impacts of climate change. To date, the scale and pace of funding and support for LDC has fallen short of the required amounts. Nor are tools available – such as adaptation indicators – to measure progress in adaptation and building resilience.

As the gap in finance needed to provide energy in LDCs is vast, development partners, IFIs and the private sector should increase funding allocated to sustainable energy in LDCs. Greater international cooperation directed towards creating enabling environments, capacity building and technical assistance in the preparation of bankable projects are also needed to accelerate the energy transition in LDCs.



## Guiding questions:

- How can the resilience of LDCs to climate change and natural disasters be enhanced?
- What role can insurance and social protection systems play in disaster management?
- What type of support is needed for LDCs to build resilience (adaptation) and to strengthen emission reduction (mitigation)? How can new technologies support these efforts?
- Additional power generation capacity is needed to increase access to energy in African LDCs. How can it be ensured this additional capacity will mainly utilize renewable energy?
- What are the key technical, financial and social challenges to develop sustainable energy systems in currently underserved areas within African LDCs?

