



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

Mainstreaming Kenya's National Climate Change Action Plan into the Devolved Government Structures

Introduction: The Kenyan Constitution, promulgated in August 2010, provides for a devolved government structure to come into effect after the March 2013 general elections. Some of the functions previously under the jurisdiction of the by the central, national government have been devolved to the 47 county governments.

According to the Fourth Schedule of the Constitution 2010 and the County Government Act of 2012, the following sectors and functions have been devolved to the county governments: agriculture (crop and animal husbandry, livestock sale yards, county abattoirs, plant and animal disease control, and fisheries); county health services such as promotion of primary health care, refuse removal, refuse dumps and solid waste disposal; control of air pollution, noise pollution, other public nuisances and outdoor advertising; cultural activities, public entertainment and public amenities including sports and cultural activities and facilities, county parks, beaches and recreation facilities; county transport, including county roads, street lighting, traffic and parking, public road transport, and ferries and harbours (excluding the regulation of international and national shipping and matters related thereto); and trade development and regulation including markets, trade licences (excluding regulation of professions), fair trading practices, local tourism, and cooperative societies. Other county responsibilities include county planning and development, including statistics, land survey and mapping, boundaries and fencing, housing, and electricity and gas reticulation and energy regulation; pre-primary education, village polytechnics, homecraft centres and childcare facilities; county public works and services including storm water management systems, and water and sanitation services; fire fighting services and disaster management. County governments will implement specific national government policies on natural resources and environmental conservation, including soil and water conservation and forestry. In addition, county government will be responsible for ensuring and coordinating the participation of communities in governance at the local level.

Risks and Impacts: Climate change could impact on the functions and sectors devolved to the county governments (for example by increasing need for response to drought); and the devolved functions and sectors could also impact on climate change (for example by emitting greenhouse gases). Illustrative examples are provided for the agricultural and health sectors, recognizing that a detailed analysis is needed to guide planning for all sectors at the county level.

County governments will need to different responses to climate change depending on the specific impacts in their region. In the agricultural sector, some crops are expected to experience more favourable growing conditions as a result of climate change, whereas others will find future climatic conditions intolerable. Equally, some regions (namely the mixed rain-fed temperate and tropical highlands) are projected to experience an increase in crop yields, whereas others (mainly the ASALs) are projected to witness a significant decline in crop yields and livestock numbers as water resources become increasingly scarce. These patterns are largely driven by regional variability in future precipitation and geographic exposure to extreme events, particularly drought frequency. In addition, different low carbon actions will be needed, depending on the crops raised and livestock reared in the county.

Climate change impacts on the health sector include spread of vector-borne diseases (such as malaria, dengue, schistosomiasis and tick-borne diseases) and food-borne diseases (such as diarrheal diseases). Climate change is also expected to increase exposure to Rift Valley fever, malnutrition and water-borne diseases. The geographic distribution of future risks of malaria is expected to shift. The formerly risk-free Kenyan highlands will



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come under increased threat of malaria due to rising temperatures and precipitation, whereas the risk is likely to be reduced at lower altitudes where the disease is endemic and the strategies for its management are increasingly well known by the local communities. Devolved functions that could impact on counties' management and control of these diseases are promotion of primary health care; refuse removal; refuse dumps and solid waste disposal; county public works and services including storm water management systems in built-up areas, and water and sanitation services; fire fighting; disaster management; and county development planning.

Recommended Actions: The climate change agenda is a challenging one for new county governments that will face many priorities. While the national government has a crucial role to play in setting Kenya on a low carbon climate resilient pathway, many adaptation and mitigation interventions will need to be taken at the local level. Dealing with climate change – that is, making the right policies and choices – will require people with skills and knowledge, and available and accessible information. Without support and advice, the capacity of many county governments to move toward a low carbon climate resilient future will be limited. The National Climate Change Action Plan recommended the following actions to build the capacity of the county governments:

- *Develop adaptation plans at the county level* - These plans will provide information on the impacts of climate change in the county, existing adaptation activities to address them, proposed adaptation activities specific to the county, the location in the specific county, how they will be implemented, by whom, financing, and monitoring and evaluation. The Ministry for Development of Northern Kenya Development and other Arid Lands (MDNKOAL) is piloting adaptation planning in Isiolo county. Civil society organisations such as CARE and the Sustainable Community Environment Programme are also piloting local climate adaptation planning in Garissa and Nakuru counties respectively.
- *Mainstream adaptation and mitigation considerations in the County Development Plans* - The preparation of County Development Plans should include a climate change review to identify where the actions recommended in the NCCAP can be mainstreamed in county planning, and where county actions could be adjusted to encourage mitigation or increase climate resilience.
- *Provide support and guidance* – The national government should provide knowledge and guidance to the new county governments on integrating low carbon climate resilience considerations into county planning and programs. Guidance should include appropriate information from the Kenya Meteorological Department on baseline and projected climate for each county. A new Climate Change Resource Centre under the Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources, expected to be constructed and operational in 2013, will provide information and knowledge on technology innovation, finance, capacity building and local ownership. The new Resource Centre should be accessible to county officials.
- *Identify climate change officers at the county level* - County governments could identify relevant officials to lead on climate change actions, including integrating climate change considerations in county plans, developing and implementing County Adaptation Plans, and providing training to county officials to ensure effective delivery of plans.



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- *Share data and information* - County governments should play a pivotal role in sharing data, information and lessons learned both horizontally (county to county, and community to community) and vertically (community to national government). This requires forums for information exchange and information platforms, and the adoption of a participatory approach to adaptation planning. County climate change officials should form partnerships with stakeholders at community, county and national level. One such partnership could be with the T21 team who are currently exploring the development of county level outputs, and with the Climate Change Secretariat who could advise on the NCCAP and climate change information sources.

Conclusion: The climate change agenda is a challenging for county governments; and moving toward a low carbon climate resilient pathway will require people with the right skills and knowledge. The central government, through relevant ministries, will need to help address skills gaps and provide support. The new Climate Change Resource Centre under the MEMR, expected to be operational in 2013, should ensure that information is accessible to county officials, and meets their needs. County development plans offer an opportunity to mainstream climate change adaptation and mitigation; and county adaptation plans could follow on the development of the National Adaptation Plan. Development of climate change expertise at the county level is needed, and counties could designate climate change officers.