



National Adaptation Plan Advocacy Capacity Building among Civil Society Organisations Pilot Project Report

14 August 2025

Introduction

This report constitutes the first written report on the National Adaptation Plan Advocacy Capacity Building among Civil Society Organisations Pilot Project being undertaken by the Adaptation Network (AN) with funding support from the NAP Global Network (NGN) via its host organisation, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). The AN is further supported in this project by its host organisation, the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), and the communication function of the AN provided by Mycelium Media Colab. This report covers the Project Inception phase of the project.

Deliverables

The following deliverables are associated with the Project Inception phase:

1. Submission of activities workplan schedule
2. Submission of self-assessment informing selection of organisations by at least three member organizations focusing on underrepresented groups
3. Provide regular updates on progress of the project to IISD

Both the activities workplan schedule and the self-assessment are appended to this report as Appendix A and B, respectively. In terms of regular updates, a fortnightly meeting is held between the AN Coordinator and Project Lead, Ms Penelope Price, and the IISD representative, Ms Angie Dazé, which serves as a regular update on project progress.

Project Progress

The Project Inception phase has been characterised by the following activities:

- Contracting





- There were some delays in the contracting period due to matters relating to intellectual property. These issues were resolved, and all parties involved now have open access to the project materials.
- Project design
 - Drawing on the concept note, the project design was further developed
- Selection of participating organisations
 - Selection criteria were established that targeted community-based organisations (CBOs) with a high level of marginalisation amongst their constituents. Criteria included their capacity to participate in and sustain the project; the nature of the community they represented; alignment of their aim with climate adaptation; their geographical location; the size bracket of their funding and staff complement, amongst others.
 - A call was widely advertised, inviting applications from AN members and non-members alike, meeting the selection criteria.
 - Applicants were rated according to the criteria, and telephonic interviews were conducted with shortlisted organisations.
 - Two organisations were selected from the Eastern Cape province and two organisations from the province of Limpopo. Both pairs were acquainted and selected due to their proximity, thus enabling ease of working together to enable the emergence of these two provincial hubs.
 - A reinterpretation of the project scope prompted the selection of a further two organisations that focus on advocacy of women and persons with disabilities, respectively. As there are not many of these specialist advocacy organisations present in South Africa, these organisations were identified and approached for participation.
- Onboarding of organisations
 - AN inception meeting was held with all participating organisations, where everyone was taken through the project design.
- Advocacy capacity assessment done with all participating organisations
 - The IISD supplied an advocacy assessment that all participating organisations conducted. As previously stated, the results are contained in Appendix B.
- Analysis of the capacity assessment and review of project activities
 - The results of the capacity assessment were analysed and the planned activities adjusted to meet the needs of the participating organisations based on the outcomes.
- A revised work schedule was developed and is included in Appendix A.



Project Plans

The next phase of the project will include capacity building through a mixture of peer-to-peer learning, expert input and mentored participant project work. This will take place in the online environment and will cover the topics of climate change and adaptation, the national and international climate policy space, as well as advocacy. This will be supported by technical experts drawn from the AN membership, and communications expertise provided by Mycelium Media Colab.

Reflections

As is typical of pilot projects, this project has already been rich in learnings and reflections, and it is worth giving some space in the reporting to adequately capture these. The primary learning point of this project to date has been around the selection of the participating organisations. A project design and selection process were undertaken based on the AN Project Lead's interpretation of the project concept as illustrated in Figure 1.

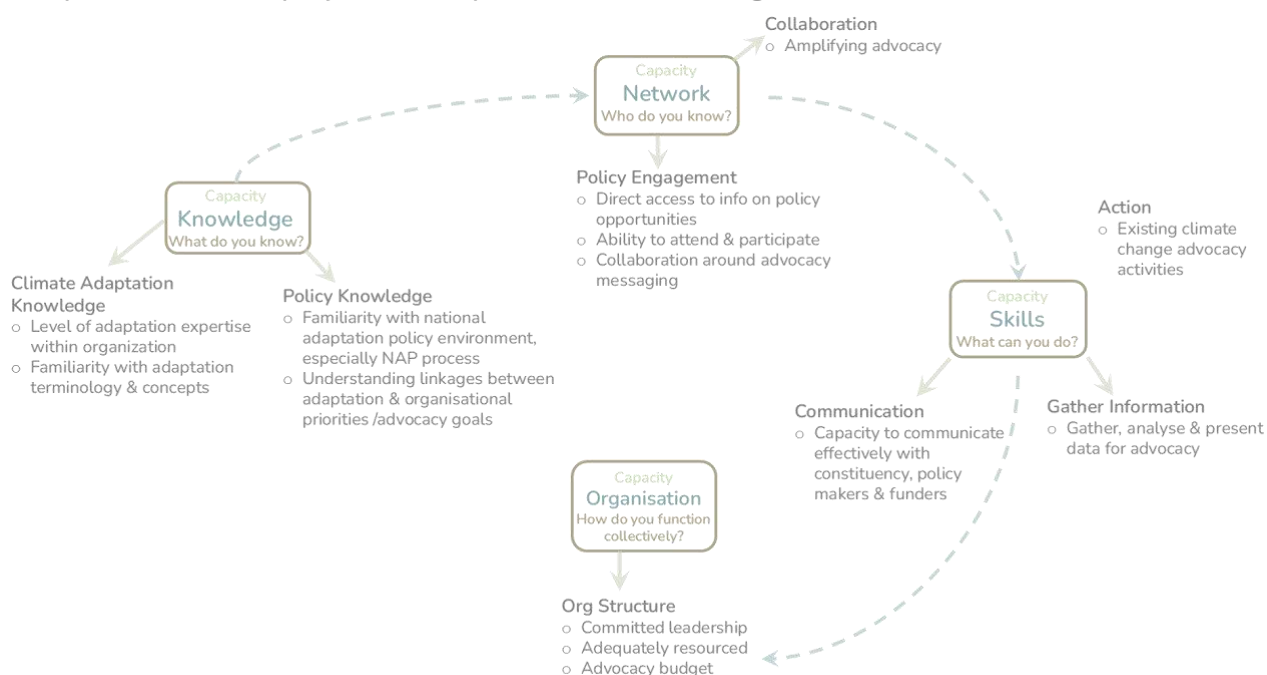


Figure 1: Initial interpretation of the capacity assessment project conceptualisation

This included the understanding that the project was targeting marginalised groups, in other words, the voices that were missing from national climate adaptation policy engagements. As the AN works with many CBOs, particularly in South Africa's poorest provinces, the Eastern



Cape and Limpopo, these groups were targeted for selection. Activities were planned to build a hub of policy engagement capacity in each province, providing a base through which this capacity in these under-resourced areas could grow. This participant design is reflected in Figure 2.

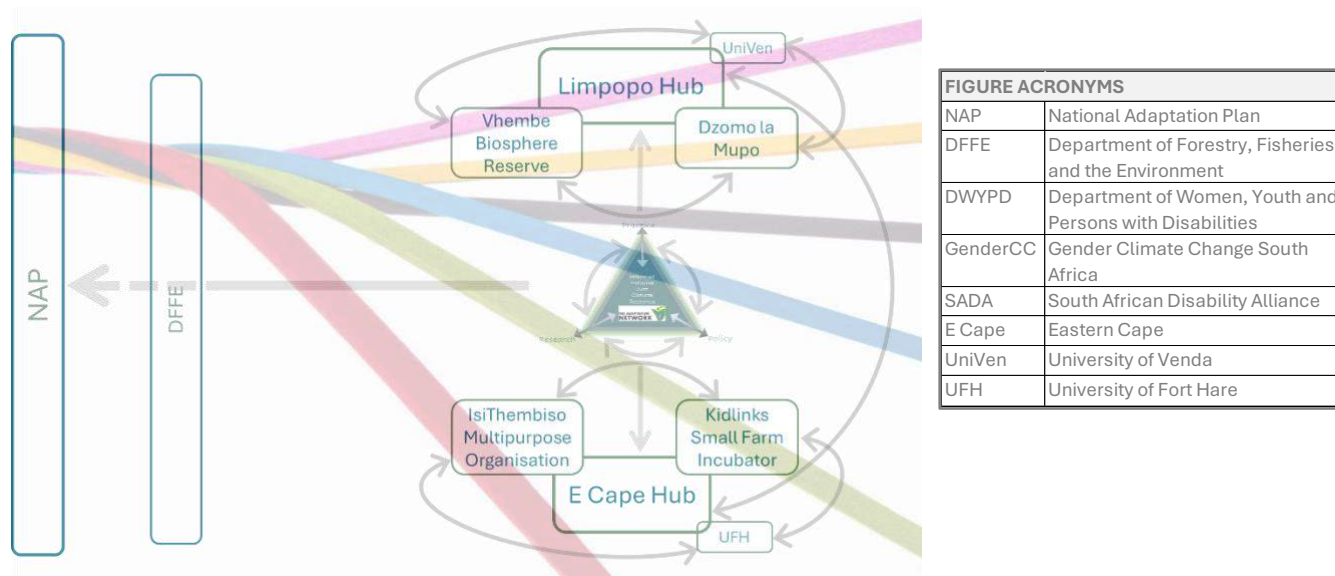


Figure 2: Initial project participant design

What this interpretation missed was the required focus on groups that advocate for the rights of marginalised groupings, rather than marginalised groups themselves. A project designed to select and build policy engagement capacity amongst CBOs with a high level of marginalisation amongst their constituents is quite different to one that selects and builds capacity amongst groups that advocate for the rights and representation of marginalised groupings, such as women, youth and persons with disabilities. This misinterpretation only surfaced once the activities had already been planned and the selection process had already been completed and thus introduced delays in the planned project timeline. The project team however took this in their stride and adjusted the project design to incorporate two more organisations who are advocacy organisations, one advocating for the rights of women and one for the rights of persons with disabilities. This revised participant design is illustrated in Figure 3. The planned activities were also altered to reflect the change and then reviewed once the capacity assessment was completed by all participating organisations.

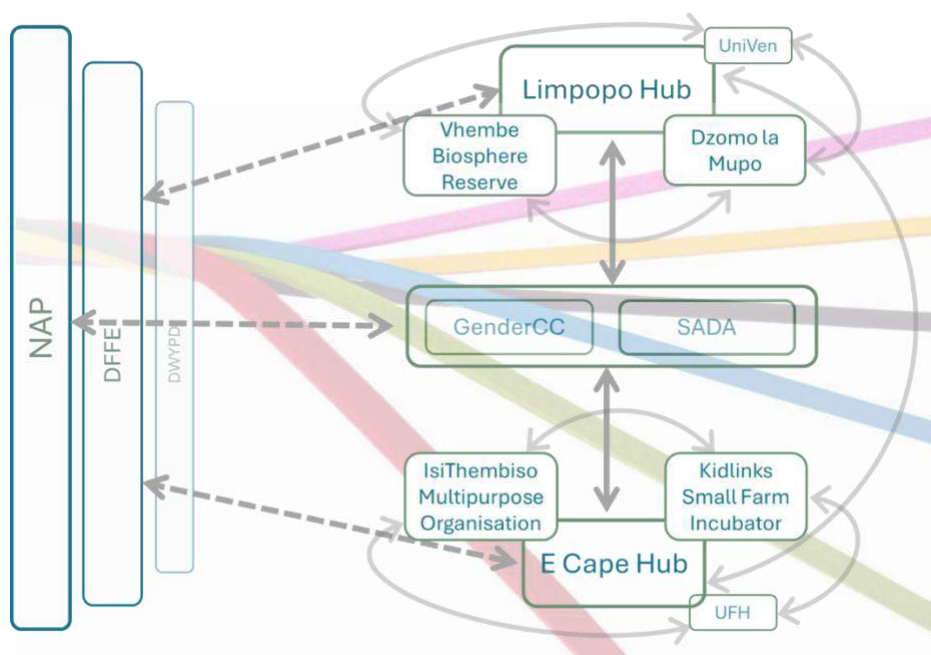


Figure 3: Adjusted project design incorporating advocacy organisations

Having moved forward a few steps since this revision, it is clear that having these focussed advocacy groups with a bit more capacity than the CBOs has strengthened the project design. They provide an ‘advocacy anchor’ to the CBOs and will thus be able to support the advocacy for marginalised groups within the CBOs at the national adaptation planning level. On the other hand, it is envisaged that building the community-based representation within the advocacy groups will strengthen their support and evidence base, making their advocacy efforts more effective and representative. The reviewed project activities have been designed to both build the capacity of the advocacy organisations, as well as build the capacity of the CBOs to support advocacy related to their marginalised constituents. The activities also aim to develop a network of engagement between policy makers, advocacy groups and CBOs around climate adaptation. Technical support from a range of AN members is also planned to further broaden and strengthen this ‘advocacy network’.

In response to the revision, and due to the resulting delays and ambitious scope of the combined initial and revised project scope, the project concept has been deepened and divided into three projects. Project 1 (this project), illustrated in Figure 4, has the following primary outcomes:

- Organisations advocating for the rights of marginalised groups are sufficiently capacitated to represent marginalised groups in national climate policy,



- A network is established to link advocacy organisations to community-based organisations that represent marginalised constituencies,
- A network is established between policy makers and advocacy groups.

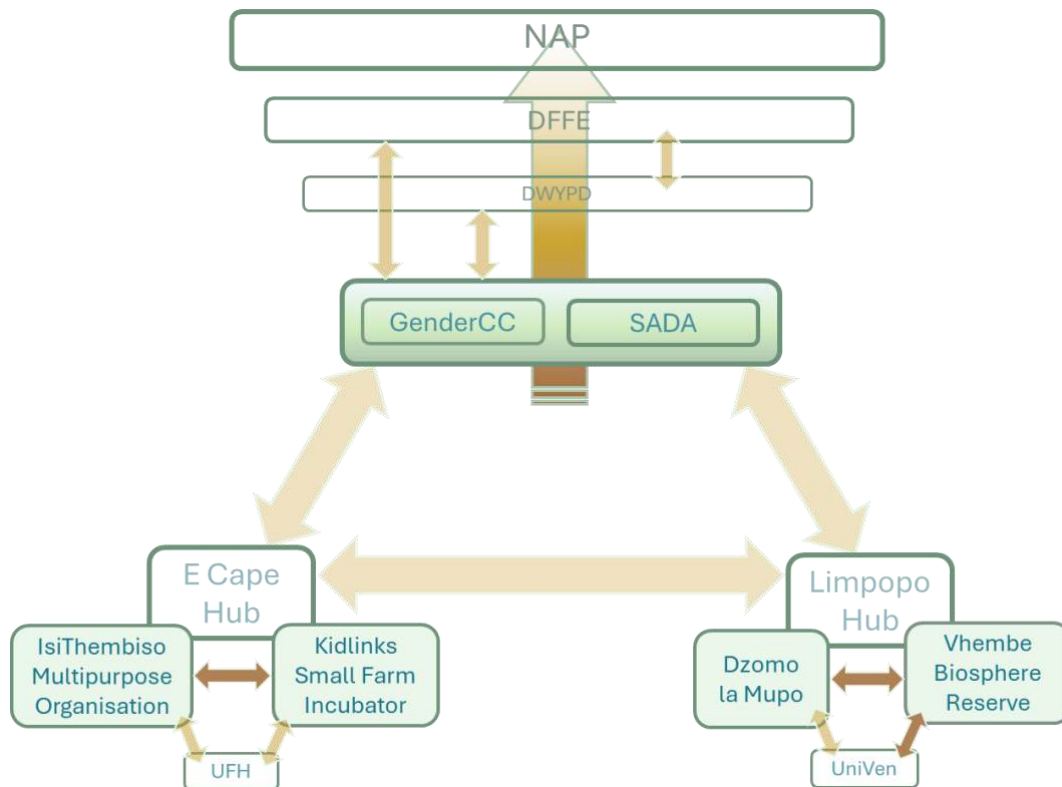


Figure 4: Project one design showing the emphasis on establishing relationships and building the capacity of the advocacy organisations to engage in NAP processes.

Project 2, illustrated in Figure 5, still requires funding to be sourced, but essentially deepens the work started in Project 1. It sees an expansion of the central band of advocacy groupings to include one focused on youth. The primary outcomes of this project include:

- CBOs are sufficiently capacitated to support advocacy groups in representing marginalised groups in national climate policy,
- The network between advocacy groups, CBO's and policy makers is strengthened.

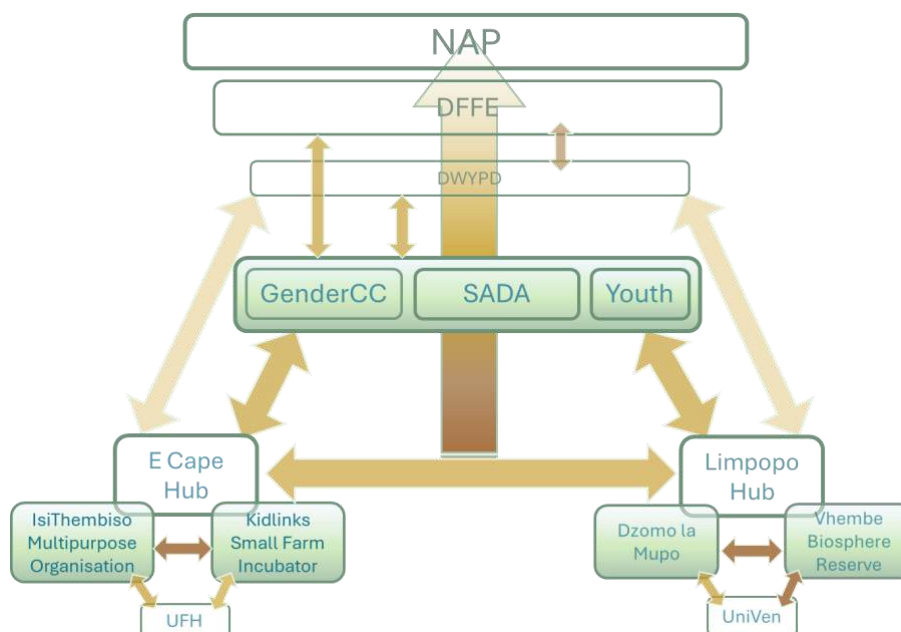


Figure 5: Project two shows the extension of the advocacy groups to include one that focusses on youth, as well as a deepening of the capacity to engage in NAP processes, taking this closer to the community-level.

The third project, illustrated in Figure 6, further deepens the capacity to engage in national adaptation policy and aims for community-led stakeholder engagements to be held on their adaptation policy needs, with a strong reflection on the needs of women, youth and persons with disability within their constituencies. There may be sufficient capacity depth at this phase to bring other proximate CBOs in to bolster the hub.

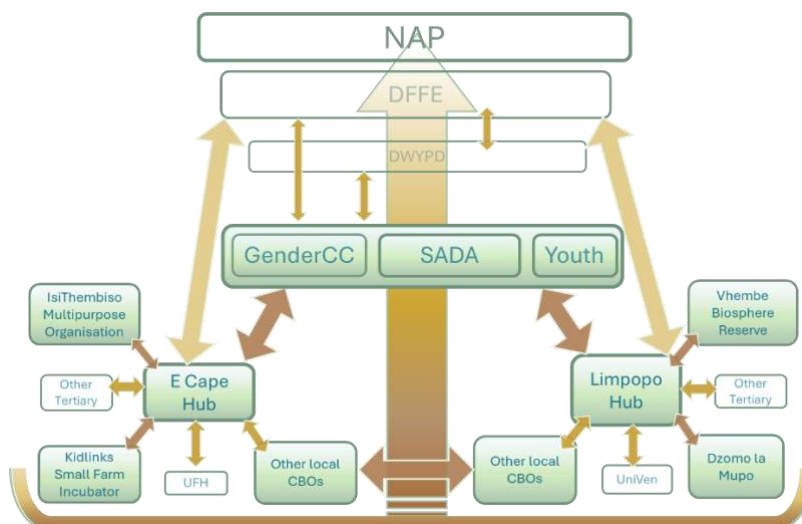


Figure 6: CBOs capacity to advocate for their adaptation needs is further strengthened in Project 3, enabling them to host policy makers in a community-led engagement around adaptation policy.

Conclusion

Despite the delays, the project is now going full steam ahead and no issues are expected in terms of anticipated project timeline.

Appendix A: Updated Work Schedule

Jun 2-7	Jun 9-13	Jun16-20	Jun 23-27	Jun 30-Jul 4	Jul 7-11	JUL 14-18	Jul 21-25	Jul 28-Aug 1
PROJECT SCOPING & SELECTION OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS							CAPACITY ASSESSMENT	
<i>A project scoping process leading to selection criteria being drafted to inform the selection of participating organisations.</i>							<i>Selected participating organisations completed an 'Advocacy Needs Capacity Assessment'</i>	

Aug 4-8	Aug 11-15
NEEDS RESPONSIVE ACTIVITY DESIGN	
<i>The planned programme is reassessed based on the outcomes of the Capacity Assessment. Revisions are included that meet the participating organisations' advocacy strengthening needs.</i>	

Aug 18-22	Aug 25-29	Sept 1-5	Sept 8-12	Sept 15-19	Sept 22-26	Oct 29- Oct 3	Oct 6-10	Oct 13-17
ONLINE PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING ENVIRONMENT								
<i>A series of online engagements drawing on AN members with expertise in respective areas, designed to cover the basics of climate change, adaptation, the policy environment and the intersection of climate impacts and marginalised groupings. This will also introduce the participating organisations to technical experts within the network that can assist them in their advocacy journey. The communication skills training will also start here, as well as the start of the advocacy strategy process.</i>								

Oct 20-24	Oct 27-31	Nov 3-7	Nov 10-14	Nov 17-21	Nov 24-28
THE GATHERING		FINALISING & EMBEDDING			
<i>An in-person gathering characterised by training, peer-to-peer learning and networking. Focus will be on advocacy strategies, communication skills, networking & planning for community events.</i>		<i>Finalising of advocacy strategies, planning and holding of community events to share project learnings</i>			

Dec 1-5	Dec 8-12
PROJECT WRAP UP	
<i>Project reporting and admin wrap up</i>	



Appendix B: Results of Capacity Assessment

The assessments was given four grades of responses to all questions, namely 'No', 'Yes, but needs improvement', 'Yes, is OK / mediocre', and 'Yes, is strong'. These allowed for a grading across all questions.

Organisation: GenderCC SA - Women for Climate Justice	Name & Position: Ndivile Mokoena, Gender Equity & Social Inclusion Specialist	Response
Knowledge of climate change adaptation	Do members of your team have a solid understanding of the science of climate change and its impacts in your context?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Are you familiar with the concepts and approaches related to climate change adaptation?	Yes, but needs improvement
Familiarity with the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process	Do you understand the link between South Africa's Climate Change Act and the NAP?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Do you understand the objectives and approach to the NAP process in your country?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you know which institutions are leading/involved in the NAP process and where the process is at?	Yes, but needs improvement
Understanding of linkages between climate change adaptation and organisational priorities	Is climate change adaptation included in your organisational strategy?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Have you generated knowledge products or other outputs that articulate the links between adaptation and your organisational priorities?	Yes, is strong
Evidence generation	Do you have systems in place for collecting and analysing data to support your advocacy activities?	No
	How effective has your organisation been in conducting evidence-based advocacy?	Not done any evidence-based advocacy
Communications	Do you have a communications strategy to support your advocacy work?	No



	Do you have the communications tools and channels you need to get your messages to decision makers?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Have you generated knowledge products or other outputs that articulate the links between adaptation and your organisational priorities?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Are you able to articulate key messages for policy influencing?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
Policy analysis	Do you have policy analysis skills within your team?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Are you able to articulate key messages for policy influencing?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
Access to adaptation decision making spaces and mechanisms	Do you have any relationships with adaptation decision makers in government?	Yes, is strong
	Have you participated in past activities (consultations, workshops, etc.) as part of the NAP process or other climate change policy making?	No
Relevant coalitions and alliances	Do you participate in any coalitions that are engaged in climate change advocacy?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Do you have partnerships with climate change-focused organisations?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Do members of your constituency care about climate change adaptation?	Yes, is strong
Commitment of organisational leadership	Does your organisational leadership see climate change as a priority?	Yes, it is a priority
Relevant programs and opportunities	Do you have any existing climate change advocacy activities?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Do you have programs where climate change advocacy could be relevant?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
Policy agenda	Is influencing policies part of your organisation's objectives?	Yes, is strong
	Do you have an advocacy strategy or plan for the organisation?	No
Advocacy on adaptation to climate change as an	Has your organisation articulated objectives for influencing climate change policies and plans?	Yes, is OK / mediocre



organisational priority	Do you have a strategy for climate change adaptation advocacy?	No
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Organisation: South African Disability Alliance	Name & Position: Melanie Lubbe, Secretariat	Response
Knowledge of climate change adaptation	Do members of your team have a solid understanding of the science of climate change and its impacts in your context?	Yes is good enough / strong
	Are you familiar with the concepts and approaches related to climate change adaptation?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
Familiarity with the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process	Do you understand the link between South Africa's Climate Change Act and the NAP?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Do you understand the objectives and approach to the NAP process in your country?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Do you know which institutions are leading/involved in the NAP process and where the process is at?	Yes is good enough / strong
Understanding of linkages between climate change adaptation and organisational priorities	Is climate change adaptation included in your organisational strategy?	No
	Have you generated knowledge products or other outputs that articulate the links between adaptation and your organisational priorities?	No
Evidence generation	Do you have systems in place for collecting and analysing data to support your advocacy activities?	Yes, is mediocre
	How effective has your organisation been in conducting evidence-based advocacy?	Yes, is effective / strong
Communications	Do you have a communications strategy to support your advocacy work?	Yes, is strong
	Do you have the communications tools and channels you need to get your messages to decision makers?	Yes, is strong
Policy analysis	Do you have policy analysis skills within your team?	Yes, is strong
	Are you able to articulate key messages for policy influencing?	Yes, is strong
Access to adaptation decision making spaces and mechanisms	Do you have any relationships with adaptation decision makers in government?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Have you participated in past activities (consultations, workshops, etc.) as part of the NAP process or other climate change policy making?	Yes, some
	Do you participate in any coalitions that are engaged in climate change advocacy?	Yes, is OK / mediocre



Relevant coalitions and alliances	Do you have partnerships with climate change-focused organisations?	No
	Do members of your constituency care about climate change adaptation?	Yes, but needs improvement
Commitment of organisational leadership	Does your organisational leadership see climate change as a priority?	Yes, but needs improvement
Relevant programs and opportunities	Do you have any existing climate change advocacy activities?	No
	Do you have programs where climate change advocacy could be relevant?	No
Policy agenda	Is influencing policies part of your organisation's objectives?	Yes, is strong
	Do you have an advocacy strategy or plan for the organisation?	Yes, is strong
Advocacy on adaptation to climate change as an organisational priority	Has your organisation articulated objectives for influencing climate change policies and plans?	No
	Do you have a strategy for climate change adaptation advocacy?	No

Organisation: IsiThembiso Multipurpose Organisation	Name & Position: Xolelwa Koncoshe, Programs Facilitator	Response
Knowledge of climate change adaptation	Do members of your team have a solid understanding of the science of climate change and its impacts in your context?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Are you familiar with the concepts and approaches related to climate change adaptation?	Yes, but needs improvement
Familiarity with the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process	Do you understand the link between South Africa's Climate Change Act and the NAP?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you understand the objectives and approach to the NAP process in your country?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you know which institutions are leading/involved in the NAP process and where the process is at?	Yes, but needs improvement
Understanding of linkages between climate change adaptation and organisational priorities	Is climate change adaptation included in your organisational strategy?	Yes, is good enough / strong
	Have you generated knowledge products or other outputs that articulate the links between adaptation and your organisational priorities?	No
Evidence generation	Do you have systems in place for collecting and analysing data to support your advocacy activities?	No



	How effective has your organisation been in conducting evidence-based advocacy?	Not done any evidence-based advocacy
Communications	Do you have a communications strategy to support your advocacy work?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you have the communications tools and channels you need to get your messages to decision makers?	Yes, but needs improvement
Policy analysis	Do you have policy analysis skills within your team?	No
	Are you able to articulate key messages for policy influencing?	Yes, but needs improvement
Access to adaptation decision making spaces and mechanisms	Do you have any relationships with adaptation decision makers in government?	No
	Have you participated in past activities (consultations, workshops, etc.) as part of the NAP process or other climate change policy making?	Yes, some
Relevant coalitions and alliances	Do you participate in any coalitions that are engaged in climate change advocacy?	Yes, but not enough
	Do you have partnerships with climate change-focused organisations?	Yes, is sufficient
	Do members of your constituency care about climate change adaptation?	No
Commitment of organisational leadership	Does your organisational leadership see climate change as a priority?	Yes, it is a priority
Relevant programs and opportunities	Do you have any existing climate change advocacy activities?	Yes, is strong
	Do you have programs where climate change advocacy could be relevant?	Yes, but needs improvement
Policy agenda	Is influencing policies part of your organisation's objectives?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you have an advocacy strategy or plan for the organisation?	Yes, but needs improvement
Advocacy on adaptation to climate change as an organisational priority	Has your organisation articulated objectives for influencing climate change policies and plans?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you have a strategy for climate change adaptation advocacy?	Yes, but needs improvement

Organisation: IsiThembiso Multipurpose Organisation	Name & Position: Xolelwa Koncoshe, Programs Facilitator	Response
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Knowledge of climate change adaptation	Do members of your team have a solid understanding of the science of climate change and its impacts in your context?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Are you familiar with the concepts and approaches related to climate change adaptation?	Yes, but needs improvement
Familiarity with the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process	Do you understand the link between South Africa's Climate Change Act and the NAP?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you understand the objectives and approach to the NAP process in your country?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you know which institutions are leading/involved in the NAP process and where the process is at?	Yes, but needs improvement
Understanding of linkages between climate change adaptation and organisational priorities	Is climate change adaptation included in your organisational strategy?	Yes is good enough / strong
	Have you generated knowledge products or other outputs that articulate the links between adaptation and your organisational priorities?	No
Evidence generation	Do you have systems in place for collecting and analysing data to support your advocacy activities?	No
	How effective has your organisation been in conducting evidence-based advocacy?	Not done any evidence-based advocacy
Communications	Do you have a communications strategy to support your advocacy work?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you have the communications tools and channels you need to get your messages to decision makers?	Yes, but needs improvement
Policy analysis	Do you have policy analysis skills within your team?	No
	Are you able to articulate key messages for policy influencing?	Yes, but needs improvement
Access to adaptation decision making spaces and mechanisms	Do you have any relationships with adaptation decision makers in government?	No
	Have you participated in past activities (consultations, workshops, etc.) as part of the NAP process or other climate change policy making?	Yes, some
Relevant coalitions and alliances	Do you participate in any coalitions that are engaged in climate change advocacy?	Yes, but not enough
	Do you have partnerships with climate change-focused organisations?	Yes, is sufficient
	Do members of your constituency care about climate change adaptation?	No
Commitment of organisational leadership	Does your organisational leadership see climate change as a priority?	Yes, it is a priority



Relevant programs and opportunities	Do you have any existing climate change advocacy activities?	Yes, is strong
	Do you have programs where climate change advocacy could be relevant?	Yes, but needs improvement
Policy agenda	Is influencing policies part of your organisation's objectives?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you have an advocacy strategy or plan for the organisation?	Yes, but needs improvement
Advocacy on adaptation to climate change as an organisational priority	Has your organisation articulated objectives for influencing climate change policies and plans?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you have a strategy for climate change adaptation advocacy?	Yes, but needs improvement

Organisation: Kidlinks Smallholder Incubator Farms	Name & Position: Elizabeth Lightfoot, CEO	Response
Knowledge of climate change adaptation	Do members of your team have a solid understanding of the science of climate change and its impacts in your context?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Are you familiar with the concepts and approaches related to climate change adaptation?	Yes, but needs improvement
Familiarity with the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process	Do you understand the link between South Africa's Climate Change Act and the NAP?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you understand the objectives and approach to the NAP process in your country?	No
	Do you know which institutions are leading/involved in the NAP process and where the process is at?	No
Understanding of linkages between climate change adaptation and organisational priorities	Is climate change adaptation included in your organisational strategy?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Have you generated knowledge products or other outputs that articulate the links between adaptation and your organisational priorities?	Yes, but needs improvement
Evidence generation	Do you have systems in place for collecting and analysing data to support your advocacy activities?	Yes, but needs improvement
	How effective has your organisation been in conducting evidence-based advocacy?	Not done any evidence-based advocacy
Communications	Do you have a communications strategy to support your advocacy work?	No
	Do you have the communications tools and channels you need to get your messages to decision makers?	No
Policy analysis	Do you have policy analysis skills within your team?	Yes, but needs improvement



	Are you able to articulate key messages for policy influencing?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
Access to adaptation decision making spaces and mechanisms	Do you have any relationships with adaptation decision makers in government?	No
	Have you participated in past activities (consultations, workshops, etc.) as part of the NAP process or other climate change policy making?	Yes, but very little
Relevant coalitions and alliances	Do you participate in any coalitions that are engaged in climate change advocacy?	No
	Do you have partnerships with climate change-focused organisations?	No
	Do members of your constituency care about climate change adaptation?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
Commitment of organisational leadership	Does your organisational leadership see climate change as a priority?	Yes, it is a priority
Relevant programs and opportunities	Do you have any existing climate change advocacy activities?	Yes, but needs improvement
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	Do you have an advocacy strategy or plan for the organisation?	No
Advocacy on adaptation to climate change as an organisational priority	Has your organisation articulated objectives for influencing climate change policies and plans?	No
	Do you have a strategy for climate change adaptation advocacy?	No

Organisation: Vhembe Biosphere Reserve	Name & Position: Tonderai Makoni, Director	Response
Knowledge of climate change adaptation	Do members of your team have a solid understanding of the science of climate change and its impacts in your context?	Yes is good enough / strong
	Are you familiar with the concepts and approaches related to climate change adaptation?	Yes, but needs improvement
Familiarity with the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process	Do you understand the link between South Africa's Climate Change Act and the NAP?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
	Do you understand the objectives and approach to the NAP process in your country?	Yes, but needs improvement
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Relevant coalitions and alliances	Do you participate in any coalitions that are engaged in climate change advocacy?	No
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	Do members of your constituency care about climate change adaptation?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
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Relevant programs and opportunities	Do you have any existing climate change advocacy activities?	Yes, but needs improvement
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Policy agenda	Is influencing policies part of your organisation's objectives?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you have an advocacy strategy or plan for the organisation?	No
	Has your organisation articulated objectives for influencing climate change policies and plans?	No



Advocacy on adaptation to climate change as an organisational priority	Do you have a strategy for climate change adaptation advocacy?	No
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Organisation: Dzomo la Mupo	Name & Position: Mphatheleni Makaulule, Executive Director	Response
Knowledge of climate change adaptation	Do members of your team have a solid understanding of the science of climate change and its impacts in your context?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Are you familiar with the concepts and approaches related to climate change adaptation?	Yes, but needs improvement
Familiarity with the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process	Do you understand the link between South Africa's Climate Change Act and the NAP?	Yes, but needs improvement
	Do you understand the objectives and approach to the NAP process in your country?	Yes, but needs improvement
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Access to adaptation decision making spaces and mechanisms	Do you have any relationships with adaptation decision makers in government?	No
	Have you participated in past activities (consultations, workshops, etc.) as part of the NAP process or other climate change policy making?	Yes, but very little



Relevant coalitions and alliances	Do you participate in any coalitions that are engaged in climate change advocacy?	Yes, is OK / mediocre
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