



What do we want to achieve in Climate Change Policy Making?



The work done by Transparency Maldives to influence climate change policy.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) established in 2013, is extremely important for the Maldives as it would facilitate, co-finance and enable investments in renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste management, water and sewerage, biodiversity and nature protection. Transparency Maldives actively participated in the consultation process of the setting up of the GCF and provided recommendations to include integrity mechanisms and corruption safeguards into the structure of the fund. Consultations took place with the technical team who designed the legislative framework to ensure the recommendations given by Transparency Maldives were considered in the final regulation of the fund. In addition Transparency Maldives published a policy brief on the importance on including transparency provisions and integrity assurances in the fund. The then-minister for Environment and Energy welcomed Transparency Maldives' comments to the proposed Maldives Green Fund.

Conclusion

At present there are many challenges for effective civil society engagement in influencing climate policy. However, Transparency Maldives hopes to play an active role in building a coalition of NGO's across the Maldives who would work together to influence climate policy at both national and global level. This would help to ensure more transparency and accountability in managing climate funds coming into the country. By building the capacity of civil society organizations in the area of influencing climate change policy we hope to better reflect local needs in developing policies so that communities have a better say in how climate funds are being utilized.

CLIMATE FINANCE INTEGRITY PROJECT

What is the Climate Finance Integrity Project?

The Climate Finance Integrity Project (CFIP) in the Maldives is part of Transparency International's CFIP program launched in 2011 to promote transparency and accountability in the increasing volume of funds being allocated to countries where programs for climate change adaptation and mitigation are taking place.

The CFIP program is funded by the German Ministry of Environment and administered by Transparency International, in six different countries – The Maldives, Mexico, Kenya, Bangladesh, Papua New Guinea and Peru. The national chapters of Transparency International in these countries are working to assess the risks and find solutions to ensure that these funds are not lost due to corruptive practices in the respective countries, ensuring more effective climate finance, which meets adaptation and mitigation objectives.

CLIMATE FINANCE E-LEARNING TOOL COURSE

What is the Climate Finance E-Learning Tool Course?

The Climate Finance E-Learning Tool Course (ELTC) is an online resource being produced by Transparency International in order to raise awareness on Climate Finance Governance, and as a self-learning tool for stakeholders and those interested in issues around Climate Finance Governance. It consists of three main courses :

Introduction to climate finance governance: this introductory lesson focuses on climate finance. What is climate finance? Why do we need it? Where does it come from? Who distributes it? How is it used?

Climate finance – corruption and solutions: this lesson focuses on corruption and solutions. What is corruption? How might it look in a climate finance context? What can be done to tackle it?

Building integrity in REDD+: this lesson focuses on specific corruption challenges and solutions for REDD+. What aspects of REDD+ make it vulnerable to corruption? What are the specific risks? What is already happening to address such risks and what more can be done? What role can you play to ensure REDD+ corruption risks are tackled?

Anyone who is interested in taking the course may do so by following the instructions on the right hand side of the link below:

<https://courses.transparency.org/login/index.php>

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The Role of Civil Society in Influencing Climate Policy



Introduction

Under the climate finance governance integrity program, Transparency Maldives published its assessment of Climate Finance Governance in the Maldives in 2013. The purpose of the assessment was to study the governance of climate finance in the country, focusing on levels of transparency and accountability in existing institutions involved in climate finance governance. One of the key findings of the assessment was that there was limited participation of civil society in climate finance governance especially in the area of climate change policy making. Taking this into account the assessment lays out recommendations for donors and implementing agencies to engage civil society in the development of strategic plans, project formulation and review stages of climate change projects.

In order to mobilize civil society in the area of climate change policy-making, Transparency Maldives held a two-day consultation for civil society organizations (CSOs) working in the area of climate change adaptation and mitigation. This consultation validated the findings of the assessment and indicated the limited space for CSOs in climate finance governance and influencing climate change policies. It is hoped that such consultations would serve as the foundation for strengthening the role of civil society in Climate Finance Governance and enable them to play a proactive role in the area of influencing climate change policies.

What is Civil Society?

In the context of our assessment civil society is defined as non-governmental organizations, community based organizations, youth groups, women development committees and all other individuals who are individually and collectively working to protect their communities from the negative consequences of climate change. The reason for this classification is that in the Maldives, diverse groups carry out climate change activities even though they are not classified as environmental or climate change focused organizations.



Participants at the consultations present their action plan on ways to influence climate change policy at a national level.



Why should Civil Society Get Involved?

As representatives working on behalf of their communities it is crucial to be informed of the policies being formulated in the area of climate change in the Maldives. As climate change affects vulnerable communities the most, it is important to get their voices heard at national and global policy making forums. It is important to advocate and lobby to bring about policies that would ensure communities who are facing the adverse effects of climate change are protected from its consequences. It is also important to ensure that the climate change programs being implemented in the country are the most needed in the area of climate change mitigation and adaptation. Finally, it is vital to ensure that climate funds coming into the country is governed through a transparent framework with clear lines of accountability laid out.

What are the benefits of getting involved?

- Civil society would be able to directly influence climate change policies and be better able to pressure authorities to utilize climate funding in ways that would benefit their communities the most.
- Civil society would be in a better place to actively work for climate resilience and have greater ownership in climate change projects being carried out in their communities.
- By proactively engaging in climate policy making, civil society would be in a better position to make the government accountable in the way climate funds are being utilized.
- Civil society would be in a better place to identify acts of corruption or misuse of climate funds if they keep track of climate funding coming into the country.

What to consider when you want to influence climate change policy?

- On what scale do you want to influence climate change policy (national or global).
- How would it benefit your country or community?
- What changes do you want to bring to climate change policies?
- How do you achieve in bringing these changes in policy making?

Policy Influencing

Monitor how projects are being implemented

How?

- Visit donor websites, implementing and monitoring agencies websites to review their annual reports and their own success indicators against what's on the ground.
- Provide feedback
- Extract key information from reports and increase public awareness through media reports and other channels.

Actively getting involved in policy formulation

How?

- Commenting on policy drafts
- Attend community consultations Arrange meetings to give your view to local councils

Be updated on climate policies that are being drafted

How?

- Use RTI (Right to Information) applications to gather information
- Gather information by directly contacting the relevant institutions

Ways in which influencing policy can be achieved

- Find out where the national interest lies in the area of climate change (existing data, speaking with communities)
- Network with other NGOs in climate and environmental area (a collective movement has better chance of succeeding in policy influencing)
- To be consistent and concrete in lobbying for change (At policy formulation stage through social media, focal group discussions with stakeholders and other mediums)
- Find out innovative ways to mobilize public in climate policy influencing (awareness campaigns on the effects of climate change, appeal to public sentiment on the negative effects of climate change)
- Be aware of global trends and developments in climate change policies such as COP, annual conferences on climate change.
- Lobby for more transparency and integrity in global funding mechanisms eg; Green Climate Fund.