

Policy Brief 39

Localization of Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Efforts

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November 2022

Executive Summary

This policy paper provides a comprehensive overview of the local efforts by the various stakeholders in Egypt to tackle the issue climate change. It is a well-known fact that the Nile Delta is considered one of the three extremely vulnerable hotspots of climate change (UNDP, 2018). It is evident that the Egyptian government is keen on facing the threats of climate change reflected in the adaptation policies and frameworks which are presented in this paper.

Moreover, the paper suggests four policy alternatives that aim to meet the needs of the stakeholders while complying with Egypt's Vision 2030, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. These policy options are: Restructuring existing local initiatives, Establishing a unified national certification for the energy and agriculture sectors, Establishing a regional council for climate change communication, and Developing institutional capacity to lead local climate adaptation efforts. These alternatives are proposed based on research and discussions with concerned officials to reduce the operational gap between different stakeholders and ensure the inclusion, capacity building, communication and engagement of all the stakeholders. Each policy option was evaluated against six criteria. Accordingly, two of the alternatives were selected and recommended to be adopted by the government.

Egypt is currently leading Africa's climate action as it hosts COP27, which will be held in Sharm ElSheikh on November 6, 2022. On Egypt's COP27 agenda, the government will highlight creative green ideas to approach local and international support¹.

¹ <https://www.sgg.eg/Home/Index/>

Background and Problem Statement

The United Nations is leading an international practice on the localization of the SDGs. It defines localization as empowering local governments and communities to lead the change process to reach the national, regional, global goals (UNESCAP, 2021). According to the data from the Ministry of Local Development officials, there are four main programs related to the climate change and environmental issues:

- Decreasing carbon emissions, transforming cars into natural gas.
- Promoting clean energy use, controlling negative effects of rain falls, encroachment on agricultural land, and water pollution.
- Local administration of environmental considerations, integration into projects.
- Urban development programs.

From the gathered information, it was concluded that although considerable actions have been taken by the government, the civil society, the private sector and concerned individuals to overcome the tangible consequences of climate change, there is still a lack of a clear system that unifies these efforts. The absence of a framework is affecting the communication between the different entities, project implementation, proper budget allocation, reporting, data sharing, capacity building and raising of awareness.

Although the central government tries to facilitate a vision to be adopted, this vision is applicable for mega projects and interventions only. Therefore, each stakeholder works in their mandate and incorporates its efforts within internal plans and strategies as a part of the entities' orientation to address Egypt's climate vulnerabilities.

Furthermore, there is a sense of centralization in the implementation and exclusive exposure to originally scarce funds.

Another challenge is that there is an inflexibility of some current legislative frameworks related to engaging the civil society and private sector. Consequently, the limited civil society empowerment, leaves them focusing on raising awareness activities in selected areas.



Environmental awareness workshop for teachers of Future Language School by Lampa Environmental Initiative, 2022



Ecofriends Environmental Competition Program by Lampa and Karakeeb Makerspace, Taymour English School participation in 2019

Climate action, mitigation planning and building adaptive resilience, is a cross-cutting and cross-sectoral process that requires the engagement and participation of a broad range of stakeholders. Among key stakeholders are local government authorities. They act as the key players in the development of local climate policies. The Ministry of Environment (MoE) as the coordinating node, works closely with development partners to draft policies and prioritize areas for intervention.

Primary stakeholders are the front actors involved in the implementation of the proposed climate actions policies at the local level. Primary stakeholders include the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (MWRI), the Ministry of Local Development, the Ministry of Housing, and the Ministry of Agriculture. In addition, the Ministry of Finance plays a crucial role in providing budgetary resources and allocation. Further, the Ministry of International Cooperation plays an active role in reporting on Egypt's localization efforts with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development that submit reports on the progress of the SDGs, which will bring more opportunities of international capacities. The Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy, the Ministry of Transportation and the carbon-intensive/emitting industries are counted among the primary stakeholders. In addition, specialized research institutes and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) support the policy implementation process by providing technical guidance regarding areas of intervention and future expectations for an effective local climate action.

Secondary stakeholders may later participate in or indirectly support the policy implementation process that has been initiated. Secondary stakeholders can be the non-climate ministries, NGOs, CSOs, local community leaders, supporting businesses and universities. the Ministry of Social Solidarity should consider climate vulnerable communities (e.g., farmers losing crops due to heat waves, floods, droughts or local residents in vulnerable areas) and the Ministry of Health should consider climate-related emerging diseases and set their agenda accordingly. Other secondary stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of Information, Awqaf (Endowments), the Church and Universities play a supporting informative role in raising awareness toward the topic.



Community engagement of beach sellers in Al-Sraya beach cleanup organized by the Lampa Environmental Initiative, sponsored by DHL, 2019

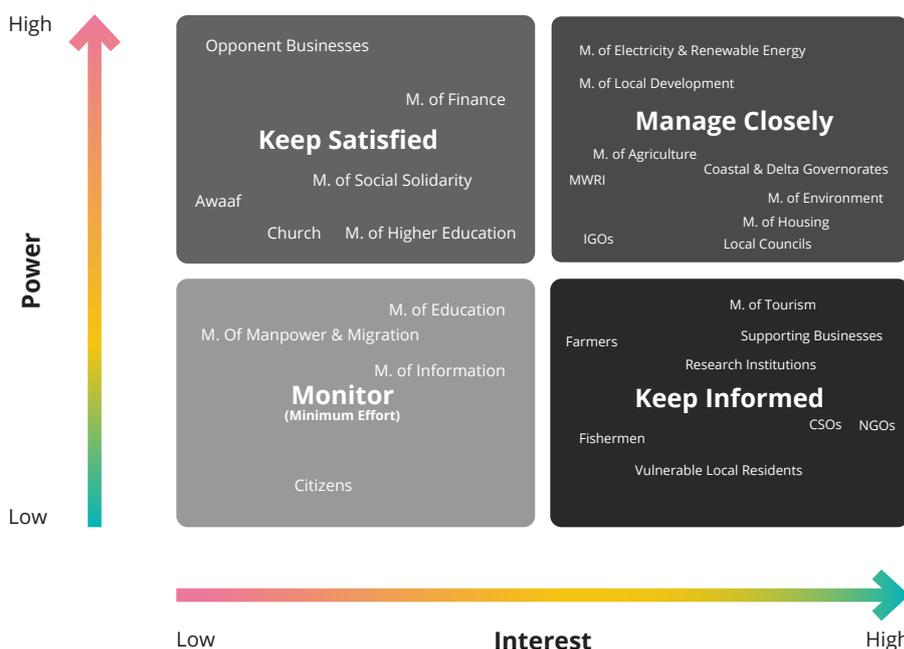


Figure 1: Power - Interest Stakeholder Analysis

Policy Recommendation

This paper recommends focusing on restructuring existing local initiatives to increase the engagement of the citizens and grassroots stakeholders in the decision making and project implementation process. The local initiative could be the one launched by the Ministry of Local Development under the name “Your Voice is Heard” that aims to offer an active communication channel between the citizen and the governorates for an efficient and rapid response to problems (Ministry of Local Development, 2017). According to officials, the initiative is recognized; however, it still could be improved.

The main purpose of this alternative is to add to what is already existing to increase citizens’ engagement, public awareness, communication, transparency to gain the public’s trust and to increase cooperation among different stakeholders. To effectively do so, the paper recommends that the Ministry should identify the exact mission and vision of the initiative and make sure that they are clear for everyone to understand, conduct a proper stakeholder analysis -an analysis was previously developed in the paper-, learn about the recent trends, keep an active virtual presence, create a solid monitoring and evaluating system, invest in campaigns and publish frequent reports.

This policy alternative is recommended based on the high scores that it recorded considering different criteria, such as technical feasibility, efficiency, and equity criteria. However, we also recommend that a regional climate change communication council should be established in parallel to build a successful localization strategy in Egypt as it guarantees equity and it addresses the gap reported during the discussions with the officials and key stakeholders.

This council will be dedicated to bring all ministries together, making them communicate with each other to integrate their activities as communication lies at the core of policy interdependence and integration.

The council offices must also include local government officials from governorates, delegated local officials from ministries, private sector companies’ representatives, active NGOs and initiatives, universities, parliament members, and community leaders to ensure and create the needed dynamics for effectiveness and progress.

The main mandate of the council is recommended to be promoting engagement among all the line stakeholders without centralization through creating an enabling environment to have all concerned actors’ collaboration. This council should be a complementary policy tool to the NCCC which is entitled to draw official climate change policies.

«All the academic references used in this brief are mentioned in the policy paper.»

This brief is published by: The Public Policy Hub - GAPP School (AUC)

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