



Event report, 9 November 2017

## **COP23 Side Event: Strengthening the Paris Agreement Transparency Framework through social accountability tools**

The Paris Agreement emphasises that "in order to build mutual trust and confidence and to promote effective implementation, an enhanced transparency framework for action and support [...] is hereby established" (Article 13.1).

With the Transparency Framework soon to be established, this event drew on the experience of the panelists to highlight opportunities to strengthen the transparency of action and support through active engagement of civil society. Lessons from good practices in international review mechanisms and recent successes were highlighted, using social accountability tools to strengthen and effectively engage stakeholders in climate actions, as well as showing existing corruption risks and governance challenges.

The event took place at the Bonn [Climate Planet](#) space, an initiative from the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and showcased how civil society's contribution to transparency can increase trust and help ensure climate finance truly counts.

*Below is a summary of the presentations and discussion:*

The debate was moderated by **Psamson Nzioki from Transparency International Kenya.**

**Mr Sebastien Duyck from the Center for International Environmental Law,** gave an update on the negotiations regarding the transparency framework.

- One of the main challenges of the Paris Agreement is its non-binding nature, due to a lack of compliance mechanism. In this regard, a strong transparency framework will be a key tool to drive countries to exceed their commitments and to build public interstate pressure, as it will show each Party's emission reductions and financial contribution.

- Negotiations have started shortly after the adoption of the Paris Agreement and are scheduled to be finalized within the next 12 months. So far however, no specific proposals have been tabled. As always with the United Nations, it is a very slow process. We hope that COP23 will move things forward but no precise outcome is foreseen.
- Most difficult issue to deal with will be the *Common but Differentiated Responsibly*.
- Future framework could provide a platform for inputs from the civil society and academia. There are three levels where it could happen: strengthening the role of stakeholders at the national level; consultation of stakeholders during the expert review; and consultation during international review.

**Mr Zakir Hossain Khan from Transparency International Bangladesh** gave his perspective, as a civil society representative from a developing country, on the Transparency Framework negotiations and their potential impacts on climate finance.

- The Transparency Framework is also an opportunity for transparency of climate finance. It's very broad. It could for example provide information on the country's total level of climate finance, separating support for adaptation and mitigation.
- Developed countries have more obligations ('shall') than developing countries ('should') in ensuring good governance.
- Both developed and the developing country Parties must be pro-active to frame robust and meaningful modalities of Transparency Framework focusing on "Whole-of-Governance" approach for the effective uses of climate finance.

**Mr Fazle Rabbi Sadek Ahmed from Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation Bangladesh** provided his perspective of an accredited entity working in a developing country context.

- It took our organisation about two years to become an accredited entity. It's a long process with stringent criteria in order to make sure that organisations are capable to handle the funds effectively without corruption. In the meantime, at the UNFCCC, industrial countries mostly try to spend their funds bilaterally.
- Everybody talks about the 100 billion but up to now, the Green Climate Fund only received 10 million over the past five years. If the international community wants to support the use of fund transparently and effectively, why not use the GCF?
- Although the Paris Agreement is not legally binding, countries should be transparent with their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and liable on their commitment.
- Emissions are still rising and funding flows are decreasing. Yet, there is still no definition of finance. We need to ensure that there will be one.
- Almost 30% of the funds are not new, this is double counting. Countries make commitment but they should be transparent on what it is, where it comes from and whether or not it is new. So far, this is not the case. There is also an accounting system in place but countries do not use it.

**Mr Mahesh Pandya from Paryavaran Mitra** provided examples of good practices on stakeholder engagement in India.

- We are using the right for information act in India to monitor transparency at the grassroots level. India's NDC mentions a contribution to development, which looks very good. But at the local level, people don't know about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is no participation. We are carrying our own consultations with the stakeholders and then sending the conclusions to our government.
- NDCs and state level strategies are different although very few people are aware of this. There is a double speech. We are monitoring both processes and using the legal tools to hold the government accountable.
- We also make sure that the funds allocated to various schemes and plans are being allocated appropriately, and do advocacy among politicians to raise questions in assembly during budget discussions.
- The role of the CSOs is not only to have more transparency but also to inform the government on how to use various funds to achieve the SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

**Shaziya Ali from Transparency International Maldives** provided examples of good practices on stakeholder engagement in the Maldives.

- The Transparency framework is fundamental for Maldives. As a vulnerable country it could receive a lot of money. This poses a high corruption risk, hence the need for transparency.
- CSOs also need to know the funds and what they can demand from them.
- Most of these funds are for adaptation activities. They should have a direct impact on people, who in turn need to have a say and be able to provide feedback to the donors and implementers. In this regard the interlinkage between SDGs and NDCs is very important.
- To this end, my organisation organises trainings and public forums and provides legal advice.

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**Resources:**

**Zakir Hossain Khan**, Transparency International, Bangladesh [A whole-of-governance standard for climate finance](#)

**Mahesh Pandya**, Paryavaran Mitra, India [Civil society's contribution to increase trust and ensure climate finance delivers](#)

**Shaziya Ali**, Transparency International, Maldives [CSO contribution to increase transparency of climate finance](#)