Dear colleagues and friends,

A big thank you to all who have been following and contributing to this Exchange: “Building Capacities to Prepare Good Projects and Access Climate Finance.” We greatly appreciate the many thoughtful responses that were sent from members of this Community of Practice. We would like to briefly summarize our discussion by highlighting key insights that we picked up from your contributions.

We are glad to hear from colleagues in the Pacific, particularly B. Paul from the Republic of Kiribati’s Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development. He raised an important concern that many Pacific Island Countries share that we sometimes overlook – greater local participation is needed, but geographical distance remains a real challenge especially for communities living in remote islands in the Pacific.

The theme on localization resonated throughout the discussion, as it relates to adaptation project design. Ky Quang Vinh at Vietnam’s CanTho City’s Climate Change Coordination Office stressed that the participation of local communities are critical to prepare, implement and maintain an adaptation project. Meeting the needs of local communities, he added, will also contribute to sustainable capacity building at the local-level.

As many contributors had noted, adaptation solutions are inherently local. Patrick Jasper from India’s National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) reminded us that developing an adaptation project involves many stakeholders, such as different government agencies, civil society organizations, and local communities. This makes it even more challenging for officials to prepare viable projects and it also exacerbates the problem of the lack of capacity among government officials.

Kardono from Indonesia’s Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Climate Change Adaptation Directorate, added that many national and sub-national stakeholders also lack the capacity to understand climate change and identify adaptation from business-as-usual development. He said that it is not only the “how-to” develop a project part that is difficult for them, but there is a “lack of understanding [about] the substance of the project itself.”

You can read their full responses to the 13th APAN Exchange in this consolidated replies report.
Thank you again for your insightful contributions. We always welcome new topics for future Exchanges. Please drop us an email at the-exchange@adapt-asia.org with your ideas. We look forward to hearing your views again, and learning more, in our next Exchange.

Best regards,

Dr. Peter N. King
Senior Advisor
Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance
USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific

Dr. Keith Bettinger
Team Leader for Capacity Building
USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific
keithb@hawaii.edu

Responses from the APAN Community

Contributors from the APAN Community to the 13th Exchange (15 Nov – 2 Dec 2016).

1. B.Paul, Project Officer, Project Planning Unit, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development, Republic of Kiribati (Posted on 2 Dec 2016)

Greetings,

I came across the Exchange Series forwarded to me by an officer working in the project unit but on study leave. I am taking up her position in the MELAD on contract appointment.

I read over the responses and all also reflected the situation here in Kiribati. Participation is the main challenge for us during project document design and usually, mainly officials in Tarawa (Capital) are involved more often. Participation from Outer islands can be difficult given the islands are scattered. Surveys can be taken by officials to project sites at outer islands, but the reality of outer islands are not really captured given islanders are not often involved.

I am working in the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agricultural Development and I deal with design of project documents for projects seeking funds, assist in design of workplan and budget on a given duration and also monitoring of projects through report progress reviews and many more. I am captivated in the title 'Building Capacities to Prepare Good Projects and Access Climate Finance...' and also the responses, given that I know i need more inputs and capacity development in how to efficiently construct a good project proposal.

I am writing on behalf of the project unit of the ministry seeking opportunities for this important agenda that could enable us to develop and expand our capacity in project document design.

Look forward for your response.

B.Paul
Project Officer
Project Planning Unit

2. Patrick Jasper, Asst. General Manager, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), India (Posted on 5 July 2015)

3. Dr. Keith Bettinger, Team Leader for Capacity Building, USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific (Posted on 28 Nov 2016)

4. Kardono, Climate Change Adaptation Directorate, Ministry of Environment and...
5. **Ky Quang Vinh**, Director, Climate Change Coordination Office of CanTho City, Vietnam (Posted on 23 Nov 2016)

6. **Shom Teoh**, Program Manager, Sustainable Cities, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Regional Centre, Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 21 Nov 2016)

Dear Peter and Keith,

So nice to join you once again on the Exchange. I hope I am not too late. The theme of this Exchange reminds me of a similar one we had some time ago. I have made my answers brief. I hope it will suffice.

1. There is a widespread lack of capacity to actually design bankable projects. Is this consistent with your experience? And if so, how do we unpack this “lack of capacity” to identify specific areas where we can make a difference through training and mentoring? What skills and competencies are most needed?

   Yes there is a widespread lack of capacity to prepare viable adaptation projects simply because an adaptation project involves so many stakeholders and is very difficult to effectively develop. In addition it involves many wings of Government, civil society and the community. However this is a policy issue. With respect to specific skill sets, the ability to look at the bigger picture and view the problem through a climate lens rather than through the traditional perspectives is one that comes to my mind. Another skill is the ability to prepare proposals fitting into the rigorous criteria set by International Funding agencies which is another aspect that needs better focus.

2. In your experience, how can government agencies and officials play a more active role in ensuring good project design, without intervening too much and without obstructing the process? And how can we transfer these lessons through capacity building activities?

   In such cases where Officials are not involved in directly preparing adaptation or mitigation projects but overseeing the same, the official will need to know which parts of the proposal to actually scrutinize so that it is in consonance with the National Climate Plans and State Climate Plans in the minimum possible time and with maximum efficiency. Skills such as the ability to analyze a log frame and its outputs, scrutinize the objectives, examine the cost parameters and make sure that they are in consonance with national standards is essential.

3. Based on your experience, what sorts of information would be most useful in a guide like this? How can we ensure that the guide is responsive to the needs of agencies and organizations that are working on adaptation projects?

   a. Project Templates for the most common type of adaptation projects and mitigation projects based on an analysis of existing projects.
   b. Preparation of log frames based on the templates of the GCF and the AFB again based on existing project themes.
   c. Monitoring and evaluation guide
4. Given that COP22 is upon us, what are the most important developments in adaptation finance, and how can we map these developments to specific skills and capacities in our training materials?

COP22 is over and there is still a lack of clarity on the funding support available either through the AFB or the GCF. Funding is always going to be a problem, especially grant funding. Therefore it follows that there should be a larger emphasis on preparation of financially viable and technically feasible loan based projects having a mix of loan and grant or low cost loans. Developing of cash flow analysis, calculations of benefits and cost, rate of returns and the cost of funds and the concept of green bonds should also be given more emphasis as these are new and upcoming areas in climate finance.

Thanks again for the opportunity to contribute. The views expressed are personal.

Patrick Jasper
Asst. General Manager
National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), India

Dr. Keith Bettinger, Team Leader for Capacity Building, USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific (Posted on 28 Nov 2016)

Greetings again, friends and colleagues.

We are two week into our current APAN Exchange discussion, and I’d like to thank those of you that have contributed your insights and discussions. Below I’ve included a quick recap of the issues we are discussing along with some feedback to push the discussion forward. We are extending this Exchange until Friday, 2 December 2016 and we very much welcome additional input on each of these topics.

Our first question was there is a widespread lack of capacity to actually design bankable projects. Is this consistent with your experience, if so, how do we unpack this lack of capacity to identify specific areas where we can make a difference through training and mentoring? What skills and competencies are most needed?

One of the important themes emerging from the answers is a need to improve the understanding of local stakeholders about climate change and its impacts, as well as the connection between adaptation and development in general. Adaptation is different from development, because climate change impacts vary from place to place based on not only local geography, but also local social, economic, political, and cultural factors. Therefore a localized understanding of climate change is critical for securing “buy in” from local stakeholders, and also for the design of effective interventions. At the same time, adaptation is connected closely to development, because the impacts of climate change can reduce the effectiveness of development projects and undermine progress made towards economic and human development objectives. Shom also made the excellent point that “soft skills” are important in getting adaptation onto the local policy agenda. A major reason why “soft skills” like coalition and consensus building are important is because the
impacts of climate change are multi-sectoral, and so to effectively address them, there needs to be close coordination and cooperation between different agencies, as well as non-government stakeholders.

We’ve also seen technical issues described. One of these is that there is often a mismatch between local needs and the actual projects that are designed and implemented. A major reason for this is a lack of participation on the part of government officials and local communities. A second technical difficulty is that often projects only address one part of larger problems. This piecemeal approach could be due to a lack of coordination, but it could also be due to a lack of grant financing to develop more comprehensive approaches.

Over time we have continued to revise our capacity building tools based on input and experience. We have a strong focus on helping our participants to develop their own “localized” understanding of climate change processes and impacts, as well as the nexus of adaptation and development. Part of this involves helping participants know what sort of information is available, and how to access and use this information to understand what the local manifestations of climate change will be. However, an equally important part is to articulate a vision for the participants’ city or region. This goes beyond simply describing the essential functions and services the government is responsible for. Rather, we encourage thinking in terms of what the city should do for its residents (e.g. the city should provide opportunities for the social and economic development of its residents). When we put these two elements together, participants have been able to see how climate change adaptation contributes to the overall goals of the city. This leads to a more precise and nuanced description of the “problem” of climate change impacts, which in turn enables participants to come up with meaningful objectives for potential projects. We hope that this also empowers the local communities to more effectively communicate with central government officials to help ensure that project design actually matches the local needs.

Another important aspect that we have started including in our capacity building is the need for local level budgetary reviews so that local governments have an awareness of where they have already allocated resources for activities that are related to adaptation, and where the gaps are. We think of externally financed adaptation projects not as standalone interventions, but rather as part of a larger adaptation strategy, which includes a financing plan. I think the issues that were mentioned about adaptation projects often only addressing part of a larger problem, and about grant financing being insufficient, can be alleviated if externally-financed projects are couched within more comprehensive efforts that include locally-funded activities. Therefore understanding that grants are only part of the strategy, and that grants are more effective for certain interventions than others, and also that there are synergistic aspects to coordinating grant-funded activities with locally funded activities, is really important. We’ve started to include material on the climate public expenditure and institutional review (CPEIR) process.

Our second question was in your experience, how can government agencies and officials play a more active role in ensuring good project design, without intervening too much and without obstructing the process? And how can we transfer these lessons through capacity building activities?

Here the responses focused on the competencies and the incentives of the agencies involved in project design and liaising with financiers. The point was made that if the national implementing entity (NIE) has expertise in climate
change, then there is both the incentive and the technical expertise to ensure that the project is designed well. However, if the NIE is an agency that does not have expertise on climate change, sometimes the ability to ensure that the project actually effectively addresses climate change impacts is limited. Moreover, in these cases if the NIE doesn’t have the proper incentives to ensure good project design, a big variable in the success of the project is the willingness of some individual to become a champion for the project. While leadership and entrepreneurship have been shown to be very important for successful adaptation, if an understanding of the need for adaptation is not institutionalized, then results of adaptation efforts could be sub-optimal. So the challenge is: How do we link the competencies of the climate change experts to the needs of the implementing agency without intervening too much in the process?

The third question referred to a guidebook to climate change adaptation project preparation that USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific is currently developing. **We asked what sorts of information should be included in the guides.** One of the suggestions was technical content on how to develop the proposal, including understanding the problem, defining the project objective, and how to develop a strategy to achieve the objective. Each of these has been a major focus of the guide. As I noted in my original email, we reviewed dozens of approved adaptation projects to identify commonalities in how they are structured. Based on this, we have developed some guidelines and questions that help users understand how to analyze the problem and frame it in terms of an adaptation project. This includes identifying the development context and guidance on how to use problem/objective tree analysis to engage stakeholders in a process of mapping out the direct and indirect drivers and results of the chosen problem. We have found through practice that this enables participants to understand how climate change interacts with non-climate factors, which is a key step in developing good projects.

Another suggestion is that we include basic information on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Our focus to this point has been on helping users identify and use relevant information, including National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), vulnerability assessments, and other resources with locally-specific information on climate change physical processes and impacts. We provide guidance on what to look for when reviewing these documents, and how to use the information therein. As noted above, this helps describe the local context for adaptation, which is important in project development. It also helps to ensure that projects are connected to broader adaptation and development strategies.

Our fourth and final question asked **what are the most important developments in adaptation finance, and how can we map these developments to specific skills and capacities in our training materials?**

What we’ve learned is that there is a need to map all of the financiers as well as to link adaptation efforts to development budgets. But this is clearly an area where more thought and innovation is needed.

I thank those of you that have already taken the time to contribute to this Exchange, and I am looking forward to reading more discussion.

Many thanks again,

Dr. Keith Bettinger
Team Leader for Capacity Building
Kardono, Climate Change Adaptation Directorate, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia (Posted on 25 Nov 2016)

1. There is a widespread lack of capacity to actually design bankable projects. Is this consistent with your experience? And if so, how do we unpack this “lack of capacity” to identify specific areas where we can make a difference through training and mentoring? What skills and competencies are most needed?

There is lack of capacity in understanding climate change and its impacts among both national and sub-national stakeholders. Moreover, there is lack of capacity in identifying adaptation from business as usual development. Therefore, difficulties in designing a bankable climate change adaptation project not only arise from lack of how to develop a project, but also started from lack of understanding the substance of the project itself. Most of adaptation projects is still in the stage of vulnerability assessment to develop adaptation options. Less projects have come to stage of adaptation action at sites level.

The capacity building should address some areas:
- Improve capacity in understanding climate change and its impact and connected to local specific issues
- Improve capacity in understanding the problems and its causes, and how to connect it with climate change impacts. From my experience, when people are asked to developed a climate change project, they focused only on how climate change causes the problems instead of how climate change worsens the problems. This material should also provide the skill to identify stakeholders to be involved when the adaptation strategies are developed.
- Improve capacity in understanding international finance access mechanism.

2. In your experience, how can government agencies and officials play a more active role in ensuring good project design, without intervening too much and without obstructing the process? And how can we transfer these lessons through capacity building activities?

Yes, government officials play important roles in ensuring the project design quality, if they understand the substance of the project. In case of the national designated agency is in particular technical ministry who deal with climate change issues, I am optimistic that they assess the project design appropriately. However, in case of the national designated agency is hold by non-technical ministry (for example ministry of finance), there are more possibility that there is not enough attention on the quality of the project design (from the substances side). In other words, project endorsement authority must involve other competent institutions before endorse a project. Of course this involvement should be limited to some extent not to intervening too much in the processes. Capacity building is much more needed by institutions who has endorsement authorities and institutions/ministries dealing with climate change adaptation.

3. Based on your experience, what sorts of information would be most useful in a guide like this? How can we ensure that the guide is responsive
to the needs of agencies and organizations that are working on adaptation projects?

Useful information in guidebook for designing adaptation projects:
- Basic information: climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Technical content: how to develop proposal (understanding the problem, define project objective, strategy to achieve the objective, etc.)
- Managerial content: how to manage the project (finance, human resources, etc.)
- Access to financiers: identification of financiers, how to access, requirements for access, etc.
- Examples of project proposals

4. With this in mind, and given that COP22 is upon us, what are the most important developments in adaptation finance, and how can we map these developments to specific skills and capacities in our training materials?

Adaptation is closely related to development. There is a need to develop M & E tools in financial/budget for adaptation that attached to the development budget. Such tool like budget tagging is useful to use. However, it also depends on how far the sectors knowledge on adaptation. The goal of mainstreaming climate change adaptation into national development plan therefore can be measured by this tool.

In the context of global finance, mapping the financiers is a must. More important thing is how to encourage potential institutions to become national implementation entities to be able to have direct access to the financiers. Sharing experiences from NIE who successfully got accreditation and accessed the fund is valuable. From government side, technical capacity is needed to direct the project proposals to be in line with government development plan.

Kardono
Seksi Analisis Ekologis Subdit Identifikasi dan Analisis Kerentanan
Direktorat Adaptasi PI (Climate Change Adaptation Directorate)
Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan (Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Indonesia)

Ky Quang Vinh, Director, Climate Change Coordination Office of CanTho City, Vietnam (Posted on 23 Nov 2016)

Dear Dr. Peter N. King,

I suggest some ideas to your questions in this 13th APAN Exchange Series.

1. There is a widespread lack of capacity to actually design bankable projects. Is this consistent with your experience? And if so, how do we unpack this “lack of capacity” to identify specific areas where we can make a difference through training and mentoring? What skills and competencies are most needed?

It is true that there is a gap between the actual needs of the local project implementation and project content is deployed.

The main manifestations:
- The project does not meet local needs: For example, project management board only for conditional displaying his knack;
- The project can only meet a fraction of the local problems: For example, the projects only for flooded risk reduction, while flooding, drought and saltwater intrusion is locally frequently happen;
- Project study only focus on raise awareness, but little or no intervention constructions are concerned.

The causes may include the following:
- The lack of participation of government officials and local communities at the original point;
- The project managers lack of understanding of the disaster situation, organizational apparatus, the capacity of local;
- The grants is not enough for full realization of the local need.

2. In your experience, how can government agencies and officials play a more active role in ensuring good project design, without intervening too much and without obstructing the process? And how can we transfer these lessons through capacity building activities?

This is a long process, and it needs the enthusiasm of the project leader boards. Because the problem is local, so local people must have been contribution to solve their problems. The project only contributes support and financial capacity. Inseparable from the participation of local people from preparation to implementation and operation stages to maintain the project. The activities to meet the needs of the local reality will work for sustainable capacity building and quickly.

Note: the local people education level is not high; it is difficult to absorb your abstract guidelines.

3. Based on your experience, what sorts of information would be most useful in a guide like this? How can we ensure that the guide is responsive to the needs of agencies and organizations that are working on adaptation projects?

Should find out: the natural disasters likely to happen locally, forecasting the level of danger in the future; cognition and local resources; wishes of local disaster response goals. On that basis, the local awareness-raising, and project development and jointly assigned the responsibility of each person involved in the project.

Best,

Ky Quang Vinh
Director
Climate Change Coordination Office of CanTho City
Vietnam
http://www.biendoikhau.cantho.gov.vn/
Thank you for raising this interesting topic, which is also broadly applicable to other development areas besides adaptation finance.

I have been running a 'frontrunner' green cities network and helping ASEAN national and local governments to design local/national urban sustainability projects for 6 years.

First, I have a question - can you please define 'bankable'? Do you mean it broadly (funders/financiers are willing to put in the money) or specifically (has high potential of generating direct financial returns)?

Below are some thoughts, including on what differentiates those who succeeded in getting international funding/assistance, compared to those who didn’t.

1. There is a widespread lack of capacity to actually design bankable projects. Is this consistent with your experience? And if so, how do we unpack this “lack of capacity” to identify specific areas where we can make a difference through training and mentoring? What skills and competencies are most needed?

In order to design and write quality/bankable projects, the project manager needs to be a (i) technical expert; (ii) highly proficient in English and also have (iii) formal 'authority' and mandate as well as (iv) 'soft' skills (i.e. socio-political acumen to coordinate and secure collaboration from multiple parties). These 4 elements are rarely present in one individual, so a team effort is often the minimum requirement to be successful.

Most training opportunities offered by international development partners often pay attention to (i) 'technical' and (iii) 'authority', but neglect (ii) 'English proficiency' and (iv) 'soft skills'.

I haven’t reached a conclusion on how best to address these two challenges, but here are some real examples of how the ‘frontrunner’ city governments are trying to address this:

- Provide regular business English tutoring and leadership/management classes for staff involved and tasked with fund raising
- Involve university/school teachers (usually they have better English compared to the average government official) formally or informally in international projects (could be volunteer or paid)
- Set 'improvement in English proficiency' and 'performance in fundraising' as an extra Key Performance Indicator for staff (I'm not sure how exactly this can be done within a government administration and the legality of it – hopefully government members of this Exchange platform may share?). In many governments, the TOR for staff responsibility lacks clarity and this means that only highly-motivated individuals will go beyond their basic responsibilities.

On (iv) 'soft skills', the issue of multi-stakeholder coordination is often a very tough hurdle to overcome by local project team. Government project teams need help/stimulus to overcome internal 'silos' as well as to connect with non-government stakeholders. The long term presence of visitors/guests (trainers and development partners) can be extremely helpful, morale-boosting and even 'game-changing'. Such arrangements are rare.

It would be great if 'one-off' overseas training be equally balanced by a
dispatch of external experts to mentor/facilitate the project design process in the recipient country/city.

2. In your experience, how can government agencies and officials play a more active role in ensuring good project design, without intervening too much and without obstructing the process? And how can we transfer these lessons through capacity building activities?

The fundamental issue of whether the work of government agencies/officials in designing international projects is formally incentivized (e.g. be part of the official KPI as well as also be formally institutionalized as a dedicated position, as opposed to be 'assigned' on an ad-hoc basis) needs to be considered. Otherwise, it will not be prioritized and be entirely dependent on personal initiative. (This is of course, an over-simplification of a deeply complex matter!)

3. Based on your experience, what sorts of information would be most useful in a guide like this? How can we ensure that the guide is responsive to the needs of agencies and organizations that are working on adaptation projects?

It would be great to have guides in local languages (for wider circulation), and also to have a strategic and incentivized approach.

**Normal:** Publish a guide, make it available online and promote it to stakeholders  
**Better:** Publish a guide, organize 'one-off' training on using the guide.  
**Even better:** Publish a guide, organize training on using the guide and offer 'guaranteed' project design funding or further assistance for those who responded well to the training.

**Shom Teoh (Ms.)**  
Programme Manager, Sustainable Cities  
Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Regional Centre  
Bangkok, Thailand  

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**E-DISCUSSION LAUNCH EMAIL** (posted 15 Nov 2016)

Dr. Peter King, Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance Senior Advisor, **USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific**, and Senior Policy Advisor, **Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)** Regional Centre, Bangkok, Thailand *(Posted on 15 Nov 2016)*

Dr. Keith Bettinger, Team Leader for Capacity Building, **USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific** *(Posted on 28 Nov 2016)*

Dear colleagues,

The annual COP season is upon us once again. While the [UN climate talks](http://www.unclimate.org) are ongoing in Marrakech, we at **USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific** in Bangkok are continuing to develop and improve our activities to help governments build the skills needed to access financing for climate change adaptation.
Leading this effort is Keith Bettinger, the project’s new Team Leader for Capacity Building. Keith has been instrumental in designing and implementing some of our flagship capacity building programs, focusing on building up the region’s capacities to manage the project preparation process.

In this 13th APAN Exchange Series and in efforts to expand our discussion, I turn to Keith to share his experience working on these programs and to take this conversation forward. Importantly, I look to you, our growing community of practice, for your insights and to learn from you once again. Keith, over to you.

Thank you very much.

Dr. Peter N. King
Senior Advisor – Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance
USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific

Thank you, Peter.

Greetings and Aloha friends and colleagues – I’d like to pick your brains! It is my pleasure to contribute for the first time to the APAN Exchange Series, which over the past few years has provided an extremely useful platform for the exchange of ideas on climate and development topics. As Peter has mentioned, my name is Keith Bettinger and I am the Team Leader for Capacity Building for the USAID Adapt-Asia Pacific project.

Over the past few years I have worked to develop two courses for the project: Our Urban Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Course, and our Project Preparation and Finance course. Both of these courses have been implemented several times, and we have a number of deliveries planned for the future. These courses have enjoyed success not only because they build on the experiences and lessons learned from the past five years of the USAID Adapt-Asia Pacific project, but also because, in developing and refining these courses, we have listened to our colleagues that are working in the field to develop adaptation strategies which inform the design of bankable adaptation projects.

With this in mind, and in the spirit of constantly improving our services and responding to demonstrated needs, I come to you in this Exchange with a number of questions that will draw on your experience to inform the future direction of USAID Adapt-Asia Pacific’s capacity building efforts. All of us here at USAID Adapt-Asia Pacific would be greatly appreciative if you would address as many of these questions as you can.

1. One of the most common issues I’ve encountered in conversations with people working to develop bankable adaptation projects is that there is a widespread lack of capacity to actually design bankable projects. Is this consistent with your experience? And if so, how do we unpack this “lack of capacity” to identify specific areas where we can make a difference through training and mentoring? What skills and competencies are most needed?

2. In designing our project preparation and finance course, we approached the task from the perspective that government officials, in most cases, will not be doing the actual design work for adaptation projects for the Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund, and other financiers. Rather, they will be supervising this process. To us this means that these officials can play a strong
role in ensuring quality in the design process. However, in many cases we have found that government officials and agencies play a “rubber stamping” role, simply approving the project design, which can lead to sub-optimal outcomes. In your experience, how can government agencies and officials play a more active role in ensuring good project design, without intervening too much and without obstructing the process? And how can we transfer these lessons through capacity building activities?

3. We are currently developing a guidebook for designing adaptation projects that takes a very practical approach to managing the process of project preparation. This tool will be based on the USAID Adapt-Asia Pacific experience as well as a comprehensive review of dozens of adaptation projects that have already been funded and/or implemented. The guidebook takes a step-by-step approach to help navigate the process of developing bankable projects, and also provides diagnostic questions to help users assess the quality and completeness of their project proposal documents. Based on your experience, what sorts of information would be most useful in a guide like this? How can we ensure that the guide is responsive to the needs of agencies and organizations that are working on adaptation projects?

4. We recognize that the world of climate change adaptation finance is rapidly evolving, and in developing and updating our capacity building materials we endeavor to be as current as possible and to respond to emerging trends and opportunities. With this in mind, and given that COP22 is upon us, what are the most important developments in adaptation finance, and how can we map these developments to specific skills and capacities in our training materials?

Although I have a million other questions I’d like to ask you, I’ll stop with four. I greatly look forward to seeing your responses and engaging in a discussion on these topics. As professionals tackling the greatest challenge of our times, we’re all in this together, and one of the greatest assets we have is our accumulated experience and expertise.

Many thanks,

Dr. Keith Bettinger
Team Leader for Capacity Building
USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific

Admin matters: For each Exchange, you have about two weeks to share any thoughts, ideas and experiences via the-exchange@adapt-asia.org with the group. At the end of the Exchange period, a consolidated summary of the discussion will be shared.

The APAN Exchange Series is facilitated by the APAN Knowledge Management Team and supported by the USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific project. The team moderates the exchanges and ensures that members receive a maximum of one email a day. Messages posted reflect the personal views of the contributors and not the positions of their organizations.

If you would like to opt-out of the Exchange at any time, please contact Augustine Kwan, Programme Manager at the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies at kwan@iges.or.jp.

The APAN Exchange Series is made possible with the generous support of
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