

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

USING THE NATIONAL POLICY ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN ZAMBIA FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

BACKGROUND

Climate change is globally recognized as an environmental issue that requires very strong collaborative efforts to mitigate as well as adapt to its impacts. Droughts, abnormalities in rainfall patterns leading to floods and extreme temperature variations are some of the impacts that have, and are being experienced at global, regional and national levels. These impacts affect critical aspects of the economy in terms of productivity, security, effectiveness and sustainability. This has led to the development of a number of treaties, agreements, policies and strategies at different levels to address climate change and its impacts in particular.

The project was designed to bridge the gap between traditional leaders and the government's national priorities towards climate resilience in Zambia. The goal was to develop capacity relevant to the local/traditional leaders and educators in communities and to promote the involvement of local authorities and traditional leaders in climate change education and public awareness through strengthening of climate change education, training and public awareness at all levels, including the role of indigenous knowledge.

DESCRIPTION

The project used the Asset-Based Community-Driven capacity building (ABCD) method in the capacity building of the local leaders (Chiefs and other traditional leaders). The Wildlife Education and Conservation Society of Zambia (WECSZ) served as an external catalyst and provided support in empowering local leaders to drive their own community development with respect to climate change. The project started with seminars to develop strategies for information dissemination to other community members. The process involved local/traditional leaders and educators identifying and mobilizing their social capital to use in disseminating the relevant information about climate change adaptation and mitigation, based on the National Policy on Climate Change. The aim of this method was to create a good chain for information flow between those community members who acquire the knowledge to other community members.

IMPACT

The community leaders and members that participated in the project now have a better understanding of the National Policy on Climate Change and have been exposed to a structured system of dissemination of climate information, which they can use to build climate change resilience in their communities. The training methods have been tested and the project can be repeated and replicated in other parts for maximum impact. Societal change takes time and the real impact of this project will become clearer in the future.

LESSONS LEARNED

Always keep the project objectives in mind while adopting a flexible approach as the situation on the ground can change.

Climate change awareness campaigns are important to:

- improve the understanding of climate change amongst citizens
- demonstrate that daily activities can collectively make a big difference and that each individual has a role to play in the fight against climate change

Replication of activities is crucial in order to maximize effectiveness government initiatives to improve crop production

Country: Zambia

Sector: Other (Education)

Key words: Local involvement, indigenous knowledge, traditional leaders

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