



**The LAKI Consortium (LAKIC): Linking Knowledge and Action on
Adaptation to Climate Change in Agriculture, in South, Southeast Asia
and the HKH Region**

Background

Global Development Network (GDN)

GDN was created by World Bank in 1999, with the goal to boost the capacity of developing countries to produce - locally – the quality social science knowledge needed to inform local development debates and policies; strengthen the production and use of data for development; and contribute to linking – through globally connected local research - local and global debates on how to overcome development challenges. Today, as an independent international public organization based in New Delhi, India, GDN has accumulated two decades of experience mobilizing social scientists from developed and developing countries, in partnership with global research donors, to address development challenges through knowledge generation and research capacity building.

Embracing the growing overlap between climate change and development debates, in 2017 GDN entered the climate change space with a number of high-profile initiatives. GDN's efforts have focused on convening key global and regional institutions to (a) strengthen the value proposition of social sciences and development research done locally to climate change debates and action; and (b) to build momentum for investing in stronger capacities for research and data related to adaptation in developing countries, as a precondition to effective climate action.

The Lima Adaptation Knowledge Initiative (LAKI)

The [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\) \(2005\)](#) considers that scientific and transdisciplinary knowledge is needed to make better and more informed decisions on practical adaptation actions and measures to respond to climate change. In that sense, in December 2005, in Nairobi, Kenya, through decision [2/CP.11](#), the Nairobi Work Programme was created to [“facilitate and catalyze the development and dissemination of information and knowledge that would inform and support adaptation policies and practices”](#).

As part of the Programme, and aiming to prioritise and catalyse responses to strategic adaptation knowledge needs, the [Lima Adaptation Knowledge Initiative](#) (LAKI) was launched and endorsed by the COP 20 Presidency. This initiative was born and has been developed as a collaborative effort by UN Environment and UNFCCC secretariat. The [first phase](#) (three years) of the LAKI identified 85 priority knowledge gaps in 6 sub-regions (Andean, Western Asia, North Africa, Hindu Kush Himalaya, Indian Ocean island countries, and Southern Africa), covering 38 countries. Of the priority gaps identified, 24 were related to knowledge on agriculture, 28% of the total. These gaps include the lack of actionable knowledge on the vulnerability and sensitivity of agro-ecological zones, where appropriate climate risk management, and climate-smart agriculture is needed.

The Delhi Roundtable on “Closing Priority knowledge Gaps on Agriculture in the HKH, South and Southeast Asia regions: Next Steps” (21 March 2018)

The Global Development Network, as a partner of the Nairobi Work Program and in collaboration with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat and UN Environment, convened a [roundtable with 18 high-level participating organizations on 21st March 2018](#) to discuss an inclusive and effective mechanism aiming to close priority knowledge gaps in agriculture in South, South East Asia and Hindu-Kush Himalaya (HKH) region. As a first step to close knowledge gaps in these regions, the event took as reference the gaps already identified during the [first phase of the Lima Adaption Knowledge Initiative \(LAKI\)](#) in the HKH sub region, with a view to facilitate evidence-informed decision making and scaling-up of initiatives. Addressing knowledge gaps in the HKH region, should seriously consider and pay attention to analysing the upstream and downstream impacts of climate change, adaptation measures and projects which “may have high social and environmental costs upstream, but the substantial direct and indirect benefits are commonly mostly, or only, downstream” ([ICIMOD, 2011](#)). As the main outcome of the consultation, GDN proposes to coordinate the formation of an interdisciplinary consortium focused on translating adaptation research into actionable knowledge, and further into successful (and fundable) adaptation action. The Delhi roundtable concluded that forming a regional, interdisciplinary consortium of key actors with a strong representation of research institutions working on adaptation to climate change in the region, is a crucial first step to bridge the identified priority knowledge gaps and translate knowledge into successful adaptation action. This consortium should include the HKH, South and Southeast Asia aiming to strengthen the linkages between downstream and upstream, particularly focusing on generating transdisciplinary knowledge that bridges social and natural sciences

The remaining of the documents details the rationale for such a consortium and how it complements existing initiatives, its activities, some operational and financial considerations, and next steps.

Why do we need the LAKI Consortium (LAKIC)?

The first phase of the LAKI, and the consultation of March 2017 in Delhi, validated four important insights:

1. The majority of knowledge gaps identified at the HKH regional level are directly or indirectly related to agriculture, making it strategic to work on adaptation in the region.
2. Further research efforts will be needed to address all knowledge gaps identified by the LAKI in the HKH region. Most of the 16 gaps identified as priorities, however, can already be plugged with existing research. In this case, the relevant research needs to be made (more easily) accessible and put to use.
3. Limited coordination amongst institutions in the adaptation space in the region currently undermines systematic exchange of knowledge. Specifically, it undermines the capacity to inform agricultural research with insights, from a variety of angles, that would strengthen its relevance to action, it undermines the capacity of actors to link relevant knowledge to the

demand from development actors, and -finally- to strengthen the contribution of research to producing actionable knowledge that informs or shapes action on adaptation.

4. Linkages between upstream and downstream will allow us to identify knowledge gaps in the rest of the region that are transboundary, including South and Southeast Asia. Cooperation between key organization involved in generation, exchange and use of knowledge is crucial to encourage knowledge initiatives that translate into action.

These insights point to the need for better access to knowledge, and better use of knowledge, as drivers of better coordination on adaptation – both within the research community and between research and policy actors. The creation of a consortium has as its core the goal to address this twin need, complementing existing initiatives.

The consortium should function based on the principle of “additionality”, i.e. it should not duplicate work but facilitate and catalyze existing work by increasing its visibility, increasing collaboration, and providing a shared interface to raise funds for putting research into use while studying how that is achieved.

From the discussions with potential consortium partners, before and during the consultation, the following key messages emerged around the scope for a consortium:

1. A consortium can further enable key institutions (international, national, local, public and private) to work with actors other than historical partners in the region, including through joint fundraising on an opportunity basis coordinated at the consortium level and open to members on a demand basis.
2. A consortium could also offer a one-stop entry point for a wide range of stakeholder on the demand side of knowledge to access (and share) information on adaptation, linking members to the demand for the knowledge they produce.
3. A consortium would enable better access to knowledge for non-research actors, enabling a systematic pooling existing information produced by members and matching it to knowledge gaps identified in the LAKI Phase 1.
4. A consortium would also allow its members to more easily collectively project the regional experience onto the global stage.
5. A consortium would enable a neutral effort to advocate for the importance of research-based adaptation knowledge, challenges linked to uptake and use, and strategies to overcome them.
6. A consortium could accelerate efforts to fund and support knowledge to action links, by catalyzing partnerships with commercial finance and climate finance organizations, as a neutral broker.
7. Such a consortium would also offer a first example of how the LAKI initiative could take shape at the regional level in a Phase 2 advocated by UNFCCC, Un Environment and the Green Climate Fund at the COP 23, addressing adaptation knowledge gaps and knowledge to action gaps, with potential to be replicated in other regions and/or expand to other themes.

What would the LAKI Consortium do?

The consortium aims to be a neutral space for mobilizing and allocating resources, linking supply and demand of knowledge on adaptation, and increasing cumulative learning on how knowledge links to action – in support of existing and future efforts by its members.

In particular, based on available funding and the demand from members, the proposed LAKIC consortium could provide – on a modular basis - a number of facilities with significant benefits for adaptation stakeholders in the region too:

- **a *knowledge and information facility* (through an on-line platform and off-line workshops), supporting members to make sure they share information which is high-quality, policy relevant, packaged to be communicated to decision makers, and clearly linked to specific knowledge gaps already identified and the SDG framework.**

The LAKIC Secretariat will play a role to map existing research and knowledge resources against the knowledge gaps identified by the LAKI phase 1.

Resources will be uploaded to the Adaptation Knowledge Portal and shared through a monthly newsletter developed by the LAKIC Secretariat. This material would serve as the baseline for a collective review of priorities and gaps.

The LAKIC Secretariat will organize events and consultations where member organizations will be able to share new knowledge, information and research on specific gaps.

- **a *networking facility* that provides a neutral space, and a single access-point, for knowledge brokering. The consortium would aim to establish itself as a reference hub for research and policy actors working on adaptation.**

The LAKIC Secretariat will map out the landscape of regional actors working on agriculture and adaptation in the region, and actively use a network database to facilitate connections – both on demand and on an opportunity basis-between among member organizations, and between them and key stakeholders, including policy actors and decision makers.

- **a *financing facility* that fundraises and manages funds specifically dedicated to closing knowledge gaps in adaptation through agricultural research and innovation. The consortium could serve as a vehicle for members to jointly fundraise with a single face, to access funds raised by the consortium as a whole, or to serve as a resource for implementation of activities funded outside the consortium;**

Through the LAKIC Secretariat, members organizations will be able to partner, collaborate and write joint proposals to receive specific grants/funding for projects related to closing the identified knowledge gaps and/or identify knowledge gaps in new regions/subregions.

The LAKIK will also act as a 'research-in-use' facility, that acts as a research and development hub for studying and testing the scaling up and scaling out of outcomes of adaptation work, To do so, it could be envisaged to create a fellowship for research particularly interested in question of knowledge uptake, knowledge co-creation, financing, scale-up of interventions, the political economy of adaptation action in the agriculture sector, etc.

The actual scope of activity of the LAKIC consortium will depend on funds available, and it should grow in a modular fashion based on the demand from its members and the interest of donors and partners in the climate and commercial finance space.

How will the LAKI Consortium work?

The consortium will leverage the expertise of consortium members as a whole, through the creation of a top-quality Scientific Committee of representatives from member and non-member organizations with the role to ensure high-quality inputs to:

- Validate the relevance to knowledge gaps of existing research.
- Support proposal development for scale up and out initiatives with innovative links to local commercial and climate finance actors, by linking the consortium members with financial actors who could offer mentorship and expertise, to strengthen tests for financial sustainability of adaptation projects in agriculture.
- Identify 'best bets' projects that focus on scaling up and out the *outcomes* of adaptation work that revolves around agricultural innovation and local commercial finance.
- Integrate political economy, behavioural and equity questions, in support of adaptation that is sustainable, mainstreamed and transformative.
- Provide interdisciplinary mentorship and peer review opportunities during project implementation
- Provide advisory to develop a robust monitoring and evaluation framework that would guide implementation and allow to study the determinants of mainstreaming and sustaining adaptation, and the conditions for transformative adaptation.
- identify and map multidisciplinary research results/knowledge products already available with the members that bridge the identified knowledge gap(s) and work towards 'repackaging' for easy access by the relevant stakeholders.

Concretely, the consortium would:

- identify and map key institutions working on social science and climate/agricultural science in the region;

- identify and map multidisciplinary research results/knowledge products already available with the members that bridge the identified knowledge gap(s) and work towards 'repackaging' for easy access by the relevant stakeholders;
 - develop a new multidisciplinary research and knowledge agenda that can support closing the knowledge gaps;
 - manage research grants, on a competitive basis, pooling together intellectual resources for cross-mentoring and joint implementation of the research. An emphasis will be put on building capacities of young researchers or smaller research institutions in the region; The research grants will aim to address the knowledge gaps and will emanate from a specific demand.
 - Develop a line of work on how to link adaptation action and financing, especially when activities need to be scaled up
- Systematize and facilitate knowledge sharing and exchange acting as a neutral space for knowledge brokering for governments, policy makers, academics, research institutions, negotiators and private sector. This specifically can be done through a yearly conference, bringing together the members of the consortium.
- Provide scalability grants that will support specific solutions that foster agriculture innovation

How will the LAKI Consortium be organized?

The LAKIC will be structured around the work of a **Secretariat**. The Secretariat will be coordinated by a Consortium Manager, hosted by GDN, for the first 6 months, with a key responsibility for steering fundraising, and as the consortium develops, profiles for the management of the different facilities, some of which might be hosted by member organisations:

The work of the Secretariat is overseen and directed by a **Steering Committee** comprised of one representative from the UNFCCC, UN Environment, ICIMOD and Global Development Network. The Steering Committee will serve to coordinate activities across the consortium, prioritize work activities, establish guidelines for participation, participate in the selection of the Secretariat and consultants, and make critical recommendations to guide the projects.

A **Scientific Advisory Board** will ensure the scientific quality and relevance of all fundraising proposals put forward by the consortium, but also the research and knowledge funded through the consortium. The Board includes at least one representative per organization joining the consortium, who joins the board in an individual capacity. The Board members can also be mobilized to act as advisor to specific projects, The Board defines the quality standards the consortium adheres to, including in terms of policy-relevance, and is transdisciplinary.

- Research institutions, governments, decision makers, private companies, financial institutions, international, national and local institutions and NGOs can apply to be one of the **consortium members**. Eligibility will be based on a review of the applying organizations' track record in agricultural and adaptation research in the region, and applications will be vetted by at least 3 Scientific Advisory Board members and validated by the Steering Committee. Once confirmed, consortium members will be able to access research grants on a competitive basis as part of the

Consortium's own programs (whenever funding is available), will be part of the events and meetings organized under the consortium activities, share knowledge and experiences, be part of joint projects and policy outreach efforts on a demand basis, build their capacity to develop high-quality research and to better communicate and package knowledge and information, among other benefits.

For the initial 3 years of the consortium, GDN will play a capacity building role by steering the development of the initiative, as well as staff and host the Secretariat with the funds raised by the consortium.

Why GDN?

Through its global research projects, GDN has built, maintained and used over its two decades of experience several research-related assets that are relevant for this project:

- A capacity to mobilize the best researchers globally, in various capacities: as researchers directly involved in the research work or managing it or part of it as scientific advisors; as mentors; as participants in peer reviews; as speakers in various events;
- A capacity to manage complex programs, by providing assistance to planning research, organizing training sessions, monitoring quality, monitoring delivery and respect of timing and substantial commitments, both in face-to-face settings and in remote work modality and organizing peer reviews as well as policy seminars and workshops;
- A capacity to maintain financial oversight on research expenses and to report in full and transparent ways;
- A capacity to connect researchers between themselves, and with other stakeholders, notably policy-makers.

What are the concrete next steps?

- Global Development Network will discuss with UNFCCC and UN Environment the possibility to support the development process of the LAKIC by hiring a consultant for **6 months**, hosted by GDN, who will work with in the steering committee creating the consortium.
- During the development of the LAKIC, the consultant, together with UNFCCC and UN Environment, will list the requisites to be a member of the consortium, as well as the type of information and documents needed for this purpose.
- The LAKIC Secretariat which will request interested organizations to submit an expression of interest to be a member of the consortium.
- Interested and member organizations will present the LAKIC at COP24 in Katowice, Poland (3-14 December 2018), as a scaling up effort to support the implementation phase of the LAKI.