



Webinar report: Is academia ready to support youth in contributing to enhanced transparency under the Paris Agreement?

28 September 2021

A solutions-oriented dialogue on academia's role in helping countries meet their Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) requirements



Despite overall progress in mobilizing global support for capacity building, developing countries continue to face skills gaps when implementing their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and fulfilling their reporting requirements under the Paris Agreement. Provided with adequate support, universities and scientific institutions could play a key role in narrowing these gaps. Furthermore, they could help strengthen and retain domestic capacities in developing country Parties and help them comply with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) processes. They could also train the next generation of climate practitioners.

KEY MESSAGES

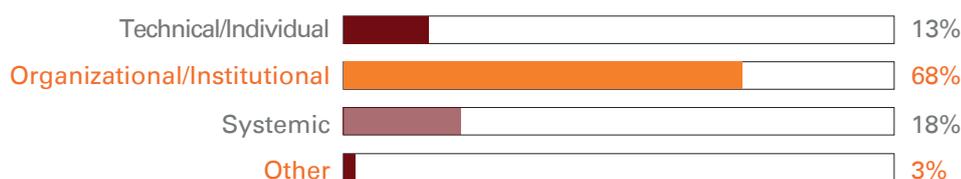
- ▶ With adequate financial and political support, universities could become central hubs for building, utilizing and retaining climate-related capacity at the national level. They play a key role in training the next generation of climate researchers, practitioners and leaders.
- ▶ Universities could be the crucial link between actions on the ground, policy processes and implementing entities.
- ▶ Universities and research institutions are at different starting points when it comes to climate-related capacity. Some are actively involved in climate dialogues and policy processes, while others may experience capacity needs and gaps with regards to technical skills, human resources and technological infrastructure.
- ▶ Tailored capacity-building efforts should capitalize on existing strengths in universities, research institutions, and academic networks. They should foster contextually-appropriate solutions for addressing existing gaps and needs.
- ▶ Capacity building activities should empower cohorts rather than isolated individuals. They should aim at fostering collaboration among disciplines and institutions.
- ▶ Academic experts should be proactive in their efforts to engage in climate related processes; and find innovative ways to communicate their work to various actors.
- ▶ It is important to link climate-related research, policy making and action more closely. Youth play a key role in strengthening these links; and making climate issues a priority on the political agenda.
- ▶ A recent United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) survey showed that climate-related education at the university level focuses on 75 percent knowledge, 0 percent technical skills, and 25 percent social and emotional skills.
- ▶ Knowledge is not enough to make change. It has to be tied to action and accompanied with the necessary practical skills.
- ▶ Climate curricula should give students the knowledge and practical skills they need to push the climate agenda forward. Curricula should be contextually appropriate, compatible with existing and emerging technologies, and practice-oriented.

WEBINAR OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Spark a solution-oriented dialogue among various stakeholders to foster the participation of academic institutions in Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF)-related activities: from training and skill development to data provision and policy engagement.
- ▶ Examine key capacity building needs of academic institutions in order for them to take an active role in climate-related processes and actions at the national level.
- ▶ Showcase examples of good practices in enhancing awareness, education, and skill development to allow youth to take up an active role.

FIGURE 1 POLL: CAPACITY BUILDING GAPS

In the context of your work, which type of capacity building gap is more pressing to enable the engagement of academia in UNFCCC related work?



SUMMARY

The FAO transparency team hosted this solution-focused roundtable. Speakers also presented good practices from their capacity building efforts. The event was part of the #All4ClimateItaly campaign leading up to the pre-United Nations Climate Change Conference (Pre-COP 26) meetings.

FAO Chief Scientist Dr Ismahane Elouafi opened the event. Speakers included representatives from:

- ▶ **Youth groups** represented by the Children and Youth constituency to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (YOUNGO)
- ▶ **Youth-centered initiatives for skill development** related to the goals of the Paris Agreement represented by ImpulSouth
- ▶ **University and academic networks** in developing and developed countries represented by the University of Wageningen
- ▶ **Support providers for academic capacity-building efforts** represented by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

The discussions focused on ways to enhance the ETF-related capacities of:

- ▶ university educators, graduates, and students; and
- ▶ academic institutions – including strengthening their engagement in national and international climate agendas and with policy makers.

An example from Zimbabwe, under the FAO “Global capacity-building towards enhanced transparency in the AFOLU sector (CBIT-AFOLU)” project, showed how a country-driven process can develop climate related capacity in academia in a sustainable way. A representative of the UK COP26 Presidency underscored that the whole of society must be involved in the transition towards the ETF.

“ Climate change knowledge must be tied to action. Academia must ensure young graduates have fit-for-purpose skills and inform them about avenues for action.”

Elouafi, FAO Chief Scientist

EVENT OUTLINE

Moderated by Alina Gerke

TIME ON RECORDING	TITLE	SPEAKER
0:00	Opening and ice breaker	Alina Gerke <i>Climate Change Specialist, FAO</i>
2:45	Welcoming remarks	Ismahane Elouafi <i>Chief Scientist, FAO</i>
12:50	Scene-setting presentation: capacity gaps faced by academia in contributing to the ETF	Mirella Salvatore <i>Coordinator of the CBIT-AFOLU project, FAO</i>
24:10	Roundtable: a multi-stakeholder solution-oriented discussion on greater participation of academia and youth in processes and actions linked to the Paris Agreement and its ETF	Moderator: Andrea Carrión <i>Professor, Impulsouth initiative</i>
		Mizan R. Khan <i>Deputy director, ICCCAD Programme Director, LDCs Universities Consortium on Climate Change (LUCCC), Bangladesh</i>
		Elizabeth Gulugulu <i>Member of UNFCCC YOUNGO, Agriculture and NDC working groups</i>
		Aarti Gupta <i>Professor of Global Environmental Governance Leader of the TRANSGOV project, Wageningen University, the Netherlands</i>
		Bruce Currie-Alder <i>Programme manager, Canada International Development Research Centre (IDRC)</i>
1:01:35	Q&A	
1:11:25	Country experience: Zimbabwe	Walter Svinurai <i>Animal Scientist and GHG Inventory Compiler Senior lecturer at the Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences & Technology (MUASt), Zimbabwe</i>
1:16:00	Key takeaways	All speakers
1:20:10	Closing	Karl McAlinden <i>Head of Capacity Building Negotiations and Programmes, UK COP26 Presidency Team</i>

Meeting recording: <https://bit.ly/academiaand youth>

Presentations and more information: <https://www.fao.org/climate-change/our-work/what-we-do/transparency/webinars/academia-and-youth/en/>



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