



Joint Principles for Adaptation

A civil society initiative to promote effective and equitable adaptation to climate change

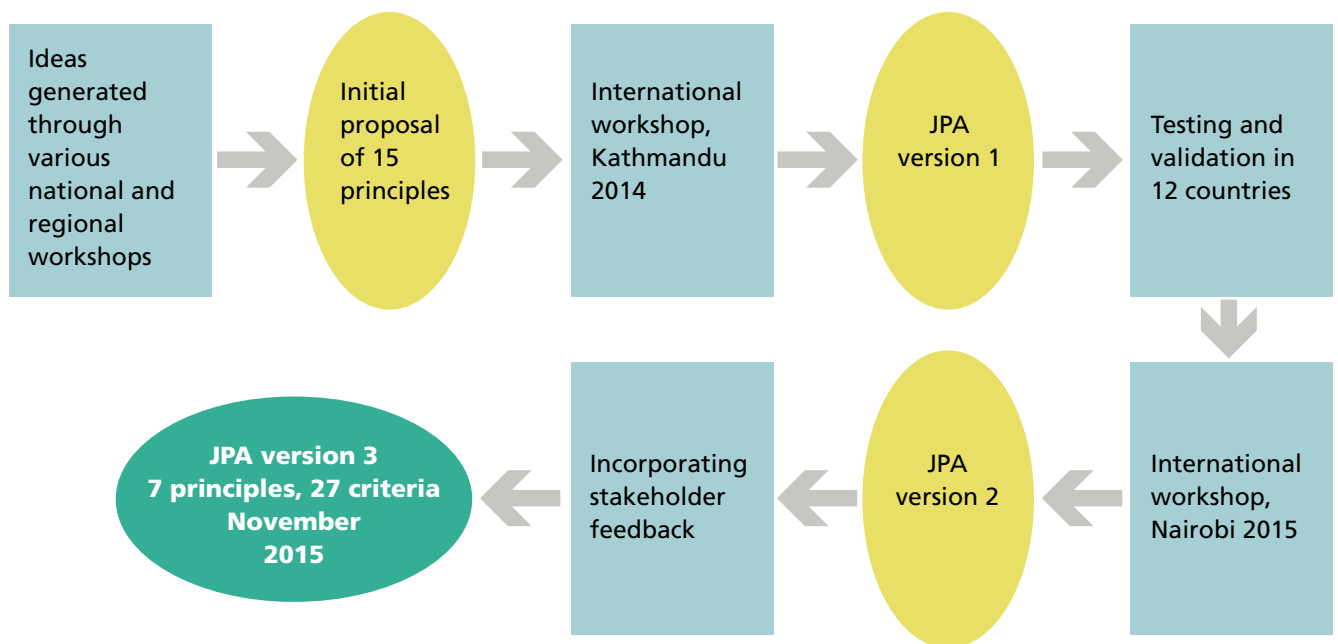


About the Joint Principles for Adaptation (JPA)

The Joint Principles for Adaptation are a statement by civil society organisations from across the world on what they consider to be a benchmark for good adaptation planning and implementation. They are a tool for ensuring that national policies and plans meet the needs and fulfil the rights of the most vulnerable people to adapt to climate change.

The JPA were developed over 2014 and 2015 by civil society networks working on climate change from Africa, Asia and Latin America, under a project known as Southern Voices on Adaptation (SVA). The JPA have evolved over time, having undergone several revisions after testing in twelve countries and feedback from different stakeholders. The present version 3 was finalised in November 2015.

How the JPA were developed



Using the JPA

The experience of the SV partners has over time not only improved the content of the JPA, but also the understanding of how the JPA can be put to good use in different contexts.

The Joint Principles have been used in broadly three ways:

to **influence policy processes**, by informing research and advocacy strategies; to **strengthen capacity**, by identifying issues for learning by civil society and other actors; and to **promote dialogue**, by providing an agenda for discussion with government and other stakeholders.

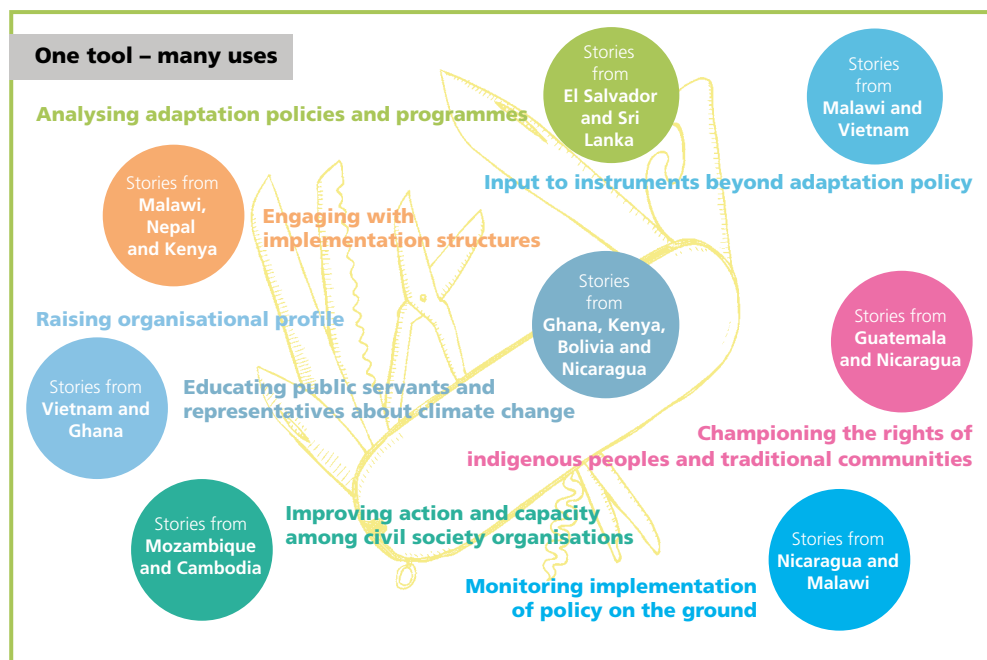
The Joint Principles are framed in a way that can be generally applicable across a wide range of country contexts. While they are useable in that form, in most cases they will need to be customised for a particular context. The first step in using the Joint Principles is to ensure that they are expressed in a way that is appropriate to the intended audience. A common next step is to use the JPA to analyse existing policies and plans, to identify gaps and areas where advocacy could be focused. As a companion to the JPA, Southern Voices have developed an assessment tool passed on the principles and criteria, available on our website southernvoices.net.

Photo: At the Nairobi workshop the JPA were updated through discussions among participants from partner networks in 12 countries; ©CARE Denmark

National frameworks for climate change adaptation are more equitable and more effective when

PRINCIPLES	Criteria
A. The formulation, implementation and monitoring of adaptation policies and plans is participatory and inclusive	1. Multiple stakeholders (including, but not limited to civil society, sub-national governments, research institutes, academia, private sector, and indigenous peoples) participate in defining options and priorities as well as in implementation and monitoring
	2. The knowledge and experience of local communities and indigenous peoples is incorporated
	3. Plans and policies are publicised in ways that local people can understand and engage with
B. Funds for adaptation are utilised efficiently, and managed transparently and with integrity	1. The implementation and financing of plans is periodically monitored by a body on which civil society is represented
	2. Adaptation funding is made available through a transparent process of allocation
	3. There is full and free access to information on how adaptation funds are being spent (finances and processes)
	4. There is a mechanism in place to safeguard against initiatives that might have negative impacts
	5. A secure mechanism for expressing grievances and seeking redress is available
C. All government sectors and levels of administration have defined responsibilities and appropriate resources to fulfil them	1. National adaptation plans carry the authority to enable different government sectors to work in a coordinated way
	2. Existing initiatives and sector plans are enhanced to take climate change and disaster risk into account
	3. Funding for adaptation is explicitly provided for within the national budget and respective sectorial allocations
	4. Local level adaptation plans are guided by mechanisms to ensure coherence with national adaptation policies
D. Local adaptation plans are developed through approaches that build resilience of communities and ecosystems	1. Communities affected by climate change participate in defining adaptation options and priorities
	2. Local adaptation plans are formalised and integrated into the development priorities of local administrations.
	3. Significant resources are allocated towards implementation of local adaptation plans
	4. Financing arrangements make commitments for multi-year programmes of support to vulnerable communities
E. The resilience of groups who are most vulnerable to climate change is promoted	1. Plans and policies address the issues affecting different groups of women, men, boys and girls
	2. Groups of people who are vulnerable to social, cultural, economic and environmental conditions are identified, targeted
	3. Initiatives take into account the differentiated needs and capacities of women and men in different age groups
	4. Initiatives promote social equity and cohesion while protecting people's livelihoods
F. There is appropriate investment in the building of skills and capacities for adaptation, as well as in physical infrastructure	1. Adequate resources are made available to improve the effectiveness of institutions responsible for managing climate change adaptation
	2. Adequate resources are made available for raising public awareness and education about climate change
	3. Investment plans contain targets for developing human capacities, natural capital, and physical infrastructure
	4. The capacities of local people and their structures are developed in ways that contribute to the empowerment of individuals and communities
G. Plans and policies respond to evidence of the current and future manifestations and impacts of climate change	1. Adaptation plans consider how exposure to climate-related stresses and extremes is affecting existing vulnerabilities
	2. Vulnerability, exposure and adaptation scenarios are based on the best available science and evidence from the ground
	3. Interventions are modified as new information becomes available
	4. Climate information is made accessible to enable adaptive decision making by all stakeholders

For a demonstration of how the JPA has been used in different ways in different contexts, please see the Southern Voices publication “Putting Principles into Practice – Civil society experiences from across the world of using the JPA”¹, from which this illustration is taken:



The majority of SV partners have found that the Joint Principles for Adaptation have been a valuable resource for their work in promoting climate change adaptation that is effective, equitable and inclusive. Others are now encouraged to try this tool, customising it if necessary for their own circumstances.

Southern Voices

Since COP15 in Copenhagen the Southern Voices programme has been strengthening partner networks in the Global South to advocate for climate change policies benefiting poor and vulnerable people. The Southern Voices on Adaptation project (SV-Adapt) supports a coalition of 14 networks from Asia, Africa and Latin America focusing on pro-poor adaptation policies

The project is coordinated through three regional facilitators from southern partner NGOs, and the Secretariat in Copenhagen hosted by CARE Denmark. Decisions are taken by a Steering Committee composed of project stakeholders, and technical recommendations come from an Advisory Board made up of climate change adaptation experts.

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¹ Available from the Southern Voices website www.southernvoices.net

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