



HMCCC Stories from the Ground: From Technical Design to Inclusive Ownership Strengthening the African Union's Climate Mobility Strategy

Unexpected Concerns

The process seemed smooth and clear. To develop a continental strategy of the African Union on Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change, an external consultant was hired. The team gathered information from the member states and invited a handful of members to a physical workshop to incorporate their comments on the situation analysis and a proposed structure for the strategy. Another workshop to validate the results was already planned. The aim of the consultation was to gather feedback from Member States (MSs), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and experts from the African Union Commission (AUC) on the development process of the strategy, and to take their input and guidance as owners of the continental strategy.

During the consultation workshop, something unexpected happened. While the exchange itself was productive, several participants raised concerns about the process. They didn't criticize the strategy thematically, but how it was developed: In their opinion, a continental strategy required the participation of as many African Union member states as possible. Only then it could represent the whole African continent and ensure a united approach on climate migration.

Ownership Takes Centre Stage

At the same time, the consultation achieved its purpose by generating important guidance from participants. Such as the need for in-depth discussions within Member States to consult technical experts from climate change, migration and environment sectors, or the need for further consultations with other stakeholders and civil society organisations.

For the project team, this feedback marked an important reflection point. While this was not a situation where the team had not anticipated different scenarios – indeed, the team had already engaged in extensive discussions, planning, and scenario-building around the strategy development process. It reinforced the importance of ensuring that the process is clearly perceived as inclusive and member-driven. The team had deliberately aimed for the strategy to be shaped and owned by MSs and RECs, rather than imposed through a purely technical process. Therefore, the aim of the consultation can be considered as having been met, as it provided concrete guidance to refine and strengthen the process. By this realization it became a turning point in the development of the strategy. Reflecting on the discussions, the team revised the consultation process and decided to open it up to broader and more continuous engagement.

Inclusion Strengthens Outcomes

This led to a series of regional online consultation meetings, where countries took part region by region – such as Southern Africa or Central Africa. In addition, further physical consultation opportunities were considered to complement the online engagement and ensure deeper exchange and consensus-building. The continental strategy now profits from the input of diverse voices across the African Union.

Looking back, the moment of disagreement turned into a valuable learning experience. What initially came as a surprise for the team strengthened the process by making it more inclusive, transparent, and representative. Reinforcing the ownership of the strategy by Member States and RECs.

This factsheet presents implementation experiences from the GIZ Global Programme Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change