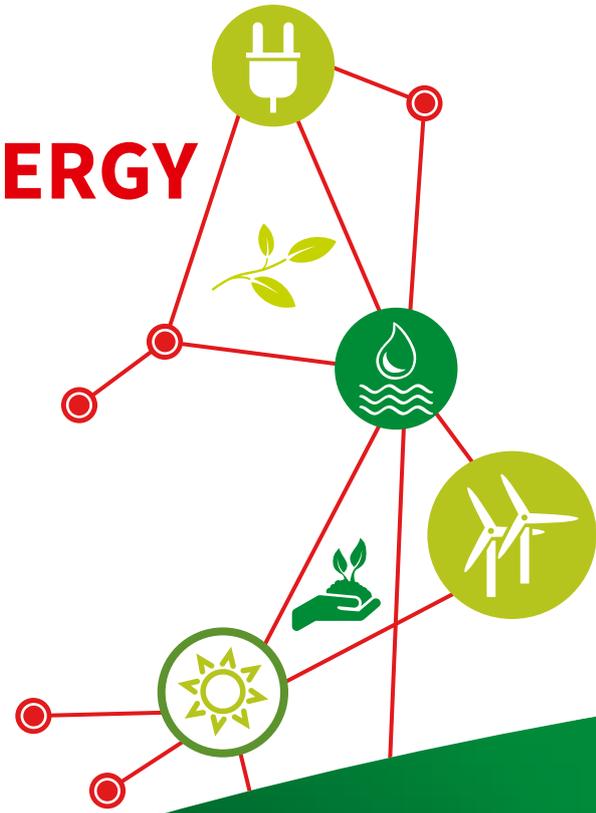


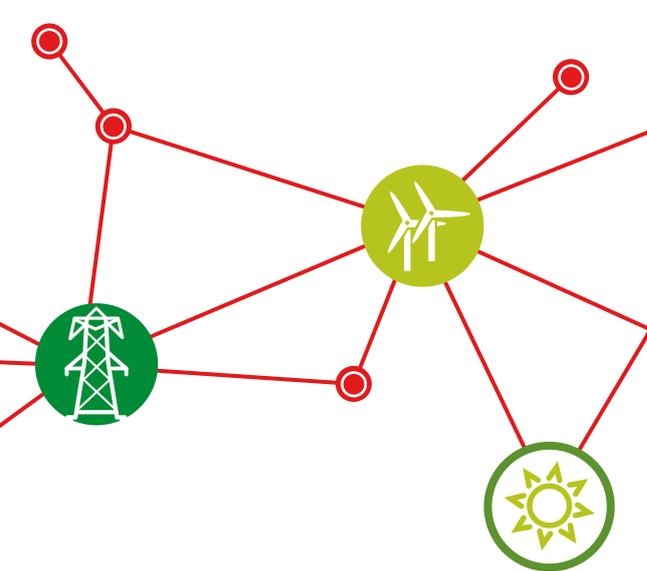
# ENGAGING WITH THE AFRICA RENEWABLE ENERGY INITIATIVE (AREI)



**ACSEA**



An Independent Civil Society  
AREI Monitoring Framework (ICSAMF)  
as part of the CSO Engagement around AREI



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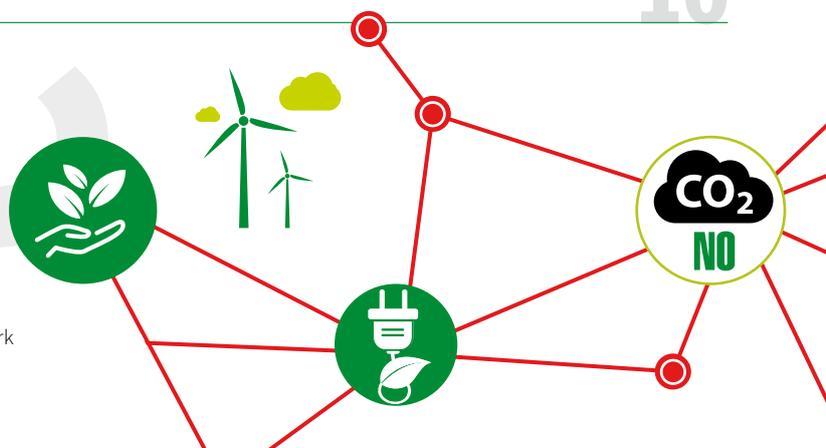
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# 1 CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT WITH AREI AND A CSO MONITORING FRAMEWORK

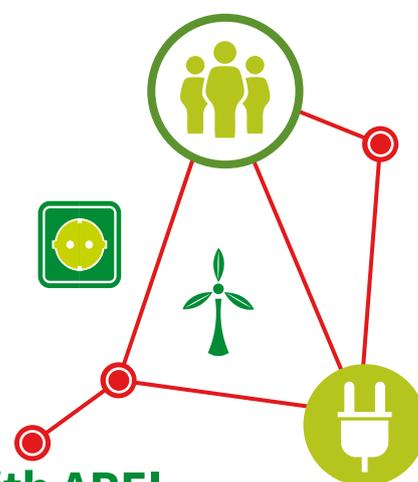
## 1.1 Introduction – The Africa Renewable Energy Initiative

The Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) aims towards the transformation of the African power sector by harnessing the continent's huge, but yet largely untapped, renewable energy (RE) potential. In order to achieve its two main goals of providing universal access to clean, appropriate and affordable energy and helping African countries to leapfrog towards RE systems, AREI works according to a number of guiding principles.

These guiding principles reflect the transformative people-centered approach of the initiative aiming at the whole African

continent with a particular focus on the needs of poor people. Key features of the initiative are country-ownership; following a transformative, programmatic approach; multi-stakeholder engagement as well as engagement of the private and public sector. Furthermore, AREI wants to promote all kinds of RE technologies, as long as they are socially and environmentally appropriate (i.e. coherent with sound safeguards) and support the full range of applications (grid-connected systems, mini-grids, but also small stand-alone systems). While there are numerous initiatives that aim towards

the advancement of electricity based on RE sources and/or energy access on the African continent, the special and distinguishing feature of AREI is that it is Africa-owned and Africa-led and is firmly anchored in the African political and decision-making processes.



## 1.2 Options for Civil Society Engagement with AREI

During the first phase of AREI, international and African CSOs have channelled most of their efforts into advocacy work at the governance level, aimed at establishing solid procedures for AREI. However, now that AREI is moving to the next phase of receiving funding and accrediting projects and policy initiatives under its name, CSOs need to adapt their strategy.

For AREI to achieve its visionary goals, it will be crucial to bring together a large number of CSOs engaging with AREI at the local, national, regional and international level. The importance of CSO engagement is stated in articles 4 and 5 of the “AREI Governance Instrument” and

articles 64 and 65 of the “AREI Rules of Procedure” and work Area 7 of the “Framework and Action plan”. The AREI bodies, in particular the Independent Delivery Unit (IDU), are aware that a strong CSO engagement would benefit the initiative, yet for many African governments it is still unusual to engage in dialogue with CSOs.

To date, many African CSOs have little knowledge of AREI and there is far too little CSO engagement from the different African countries. The most important task ahead is therefore to create an awareness of AREI both in civil society and national governments and to win their support for its vision.

### Different options for CSO engagement

Successful advocacy brings together different elements. It combines the capacity of very different organizations and aims to use their respective strengths to support a common goal. For AREI to live up to its promise of a transformational change, it needs organizations, which are able to connect different people and organizations as well as experts with a specific knowledge relevant for AREI and who are able to share them with others and develop new ideas. Furthermore, it needs communicators who can convince others and raise awareness about the ideas and vision behind AREI. In practice, CSOs can take on very diffe-

rent roles when engaging with international funding initiatives like AREI:

➔ **Facilitating dialogue and sharing information:** CSOs can organize workshops, bringing different actors together for sharing experiences and mutual capacity building. They can provide information from the international level to national and local actors. They can act as a facilitator between government agencies and local communities. Also, they often have a specific expertise which they can use to analyze the different questions around AREI.

➔ **Advocacy and lobbying:** CSOs can perform advocacy and lobbying work around AREI at different levels. At the international level, they can follow the development of energy policies and energy project accreditation or make interventions from a civil society perspective. At the national level, CSOs can advocate for solid and inclusive national planning, prioritizing small-scale and decentralized RE

projects, as well as progressive policies and incentives. Finally, CSOs can lobby donor countries to support AREI with new and additional funding.

➔ **Implementing projects:** CSOs can also become part of project implementation under AREI. They can cooperate with national governments or receive funding from international donors which is accounted for AREI funding.

➔ **Monitoring:** CSOs can serve as a watchdog of AREI implementation by providing independent monitoring of project progress and its impact on local communities.

### The role of monitoring within the broader civil society engagement

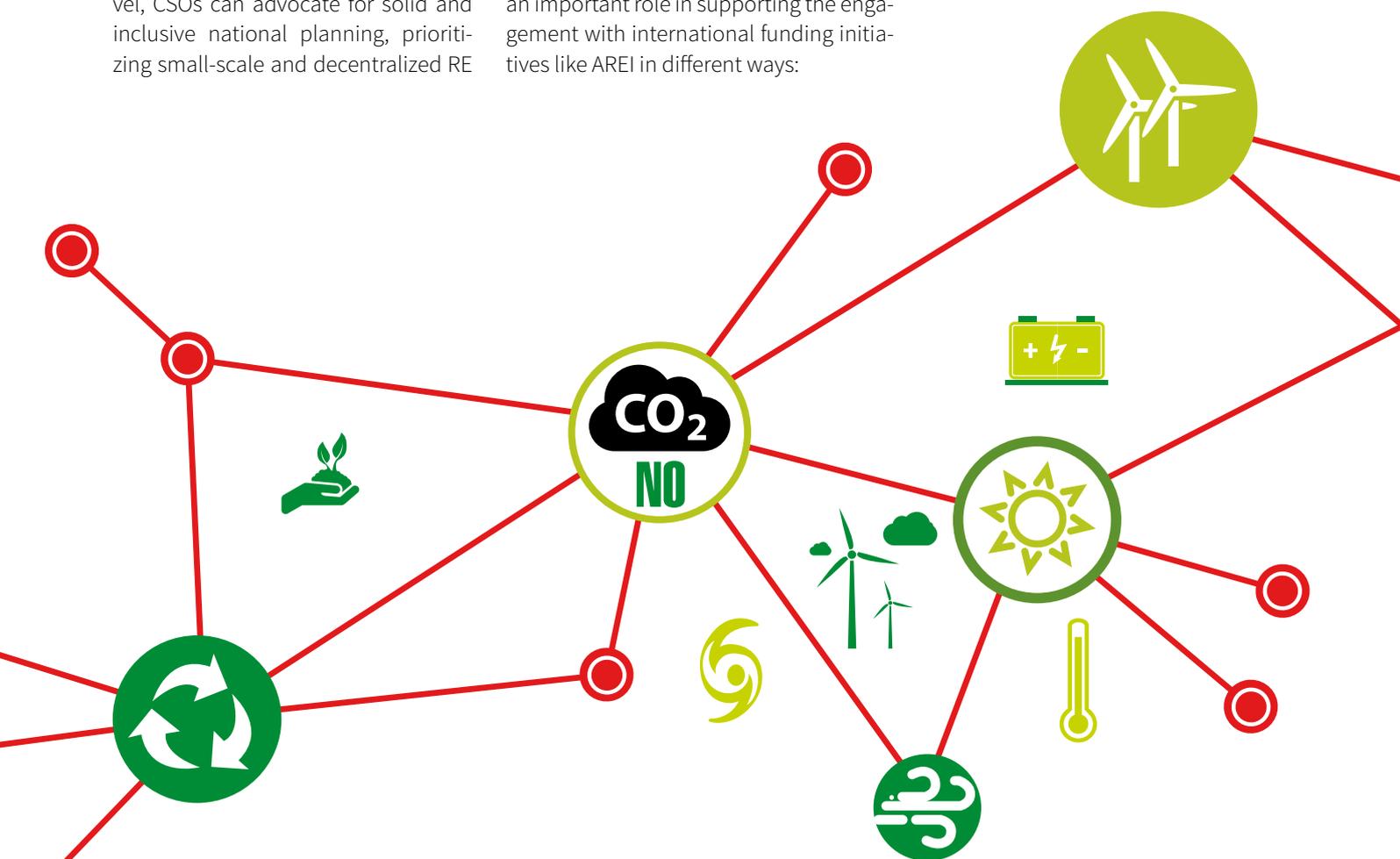
Monitoring is a specific task which needs to be contextualised within the different strategies CSOs can choose to follow. A systematic monitoring process can play an important role in supporting the engagement with international funding initiatives like AREI in different ways:

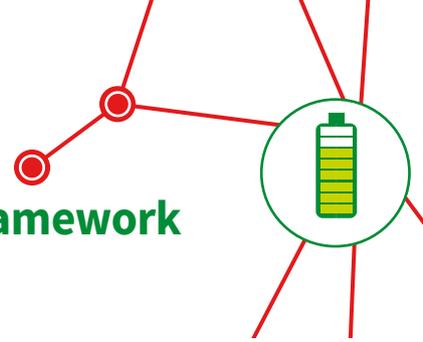
➔ A systematic monitoring approach builds up a track record of AREI and a detailed information pool on the implementation.

➔ It serves as a channel for the international work to feed information on the processes at AREI level to CSOs working at the national and local levels.

➔ The information collected by national and local CSOs on the implementation adds value to the work of international CSOs who can include this in the debate at AREI Board and IDU level.

➔ The information provided by monitoring broadens the knowledge of the government actors and IDU, who often lack the capacity to monitor all activities funded and who do not have access to the same types of sources, especially coming from local communities.





## 1.3 An Independent Civil Society AREI Monitoring Framework

The necessity for developing an Independent Civil Society AREI Monitoring Framework (ICSAMF) originated from an ongoing dialogue between African and international CSOs on AREI. Demands of African CSOs were gathered through multiple workshops and meetings<sup>1</sup> as well as a survey on African CSO perspectives on AREI. Two fundamental demands of African CSOs are to participate on multiple levels within the initiative and to contribute to the transparency of the initiative.

The overall objective of the ICSAMF is to hold AREI accountable so that the programs and projects that are implemented under AREI are truly people-centered, deliver sustainable development benefits, and are implemented according to a timeline that will enable the initiative to reach its long-term goal. A key task of the ICSAMF will be to contribute to the coordination and capacity building of CSOs, in particular in Africa. This will be done by spreading specific information about AREI to interested CSOs and organize mutual capacity building events on RE technologies, policies and country-specific circumstances. In addition, raising awareness with African governments and the general public will also be an important part of the work.

Regarding the concrete monitoring activities, the ICSAMF will monitor AREI activities in five areas. The overarching area of monitoring by civil society is the contribution of AREI towards sustainable development. In this area, the quality of the projects and policies financed and their contribution to sustainable development at local level will be monitored and assessed. In addition, the ICSAMF will monitor the following areas of AREI activities:

➔ **Governance:** This pillar concerns AREI's internal structures, processes and activities at the international level. It covers issues like how decisions are made in

AREI and by which structures, how and by whom eligibility is defined and how the future social and environmental safeguards relate to existing safeguards. The aim is to establish a clear definition of the working relationship between AREI and CSOs to ensure access to information exchange with AREI's governance structure (IDU, AREI Board etc.).

➔ **Progress:** This pillar monitors if AREI is on track to reach its capacity generation and policy targets. Based on the projects funded and progress reports by AREI, it should look at the planned versus implemented capacities, the share of small-scale and decentralized RE systems and the regional distribution. At the same time, it should also monitor the political frameworks for RE established in African countries and whether they set the right incentives for fostering transformational change towards RE.

➔ **Finance:** This pillar tracks the financial commitments and disbursements under AREI. It should cover the funding committed by donors, i.e. who committed how much funding and how donor countries account their financial contributions. In addition, it should monitor the disbursements to African countries as well as the channels used for AREI funding.

### Coordination, capacity-building, and awareness raising

➔ As illustrated in fig. 1, coordination and capacity building provide the ba-

sis for an effective civil society monitoring process and thus play a key role in the proposed monitoring framework. The ICSAMF should contribute to the coordination of work among CSOs regarding AREI in order to share and spread information, updates and briefings as well as to formulate demands or positions.

Associated with these tasks are mutual capacity-building regarding RE technologies, policies and country-specific circumstances (e.g. country targets, legislative and regulatory frameworks) among CSOs as well as awareness-raising about AREI among African state governments and the general public. The ICSAMF should strengthen the work of the African civil society coordination platform, which is the African Coalition for Sustainable Energy and Access (ACSEA) and serve as independent information hub regarding AREI.

### How should the an ICSAMF work?

Establishing the ICSAMF is divided into two phases. Until 2020, the focus would be on investing in developing the capacities of African civil society, setting up a website to spread information on AREI and its activities, and begin monitoring with a focus on internal processes, structures and donor commitments. Once more projects and programs are funded under AREI, the concrete and systematic monitoring of these at the local and national level should be established.



## 2 PROPOSAL FOR AN INDEPENDENT CIVIL SOCIETY AREI MONITORING FRAMEWORK (ICSAMF)

Based on previous discussions as well as lessons learned from the experiences explained in the subsequent chapter 3, the concept note proposes the following objectives, elements and set-up for the Independent Civil Society AREI Monitoring Framework (ICSAMF).

### 2.1 Overall objective

The Independent Civil Society AREI Monitoring Framework (ICSAMF) should have the overarching goal of supporting AREI so that programs and projects implemented under AREI:

- ➔ are truly people-centered,
- ➔ deliver sustainable development benefits,
- ➔ are implemented according to a time-

line that will enable the initiative to reach its long-term goal of 300 gigawatts (GW) of new and additional RE capacities by 2030.

### 2.2 How could the ICSAMF monitor AREI?

As described above, the ICSAMF would consist of five areas: Impact, Governance, Progress, Finance, Coordination, and Capacity Building. This section will propose examples of questions to guide the monitoring activities in the different pillars.

#### What should be monitored?

For example, AREI processes and structures or financial commitments, or if the projects are respecting AREI energy capacity and policy goals.

#### What are criteria against which we are monitoring?

For example, CSO participation, fulfillment of AREI guiding principles in the project selection, and implementation.

#### What is the basis for the monitoring activities?

For example, project lists and progress reports from AREI and from the donors, statutes of AREI bodies and intern regulation, agendas and reports of board meetings.

#### Who should be monitored? Who is best placed to monitor?

A core group of the ICSAMF, consisting of African CSOs in cooperation with international CSOs.

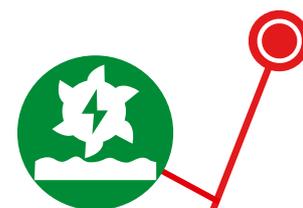
#### Who is the monitoring directed at (which political actor(s)/fora)?

Donor countries, AREI bodies, African governments and implementation organizations.

#### What are preconditions for the monitoring to work well?

Clear statements and reports, access to implementation information, cooperation between AREI bodies, African government and CSOs.

These questions could be adapted for each pillar to allow flexibility in the monitoring process while still ensuring comparability between the different pillars.



## 2.3 Set-up of an ICSAMF

The ICSAMF relies on commitment from African and international CSOs. Different CSOs and CSO-networks on the African continent and internationally have shown their commitment, support and engagement towards the initiative if it lives up to its own high standards and goals until 2030. The vision is therefore for international (non-African) CSOs to strengthen a network (ACSEA) that consists primarily of African CSOs responsible for the implementation of the ICSAMF that are supported by international CSOs. Furthermore, a certain degree of co-operation from AREI could support the ICSAMF, but independence should always be respected.

It is a common goal of AREI, but also of African CSOs, to broaden electricity access, rapidly advancing the African continent to a RE-based electricity system and thereby contributing to sustainable development (ACSEA, 2017). As AREI states, “active multi-stakeholder participation throughout all aspects and stages of AREI as prerequisites to successful implementation of AREI” (AREI, 2017). Therefore, the ICSAMF should be regarded not be as a “hurdle” for AREI program and project implementation, but as a useful, civil-society-driven tool to promote truly sustainable impacts of programs and projects building on the experience and knowledge of African and international CSOs.

### Getting the ICSAMF started

The vision is that the ICSAMF will gradually expand with AREI itself, meaning that in the first phase until 2020 the focus will be on (1) capacity building and awareness raising and (2) starting the monitoring of the structures, criteria as well as the first activities implemented under AREI.

#### 1. Website:

A website should be established as the primary information-hub. It can serve as an important tool for building awareness and a first step in building up an ICSAMF. On this website, information on the initiative can be collected and made accessible for CSOs. It should be complementary to the official AREI website and not duplicate it, but an important task is to look at the same issues from a different perspective.

#### 2. First monitoring activities:

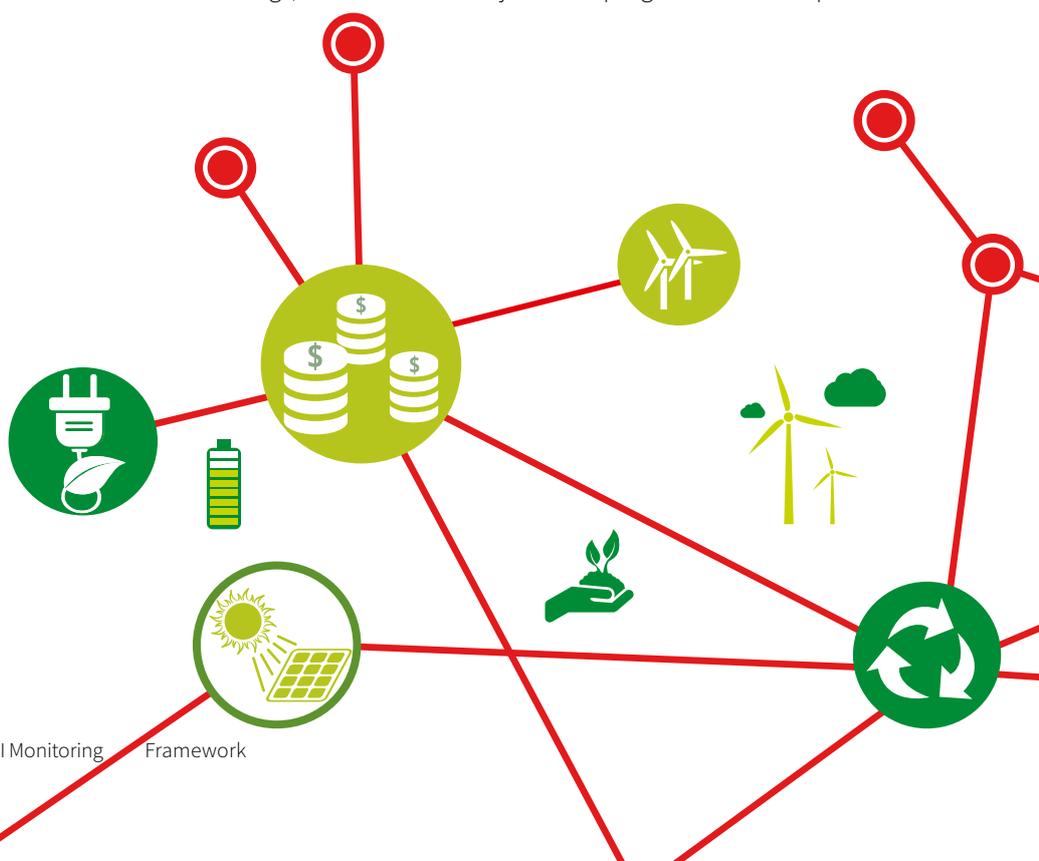
Tracking of the first AREI activities, such as those stated in the action plan, can be started on the basis of publicly available documents, progress reports as well as personal meetings and cooperative workshops. Furthermore, already proclaimed donor commitments can be tracked and comments on program and project proposals will be collected and published.

#### 3. Increasing CSO participation at AREI meetings:

The participation of CSOs in AREI-related official meetings (technical meetings, but also board meetings) would enhance

transparency within the initiative and would enable CSOs to formulate briefings about progress and developments within AREI for the general public. Depending on AREI’s willingness to co-operate, feedback could be given on project criteria, social and environmental safeguards as well as on proposals. In doing so, CSOs can offer in their perspective and advocate for the inclusion of sustainable development considerations, a fair distribution and the participation of marginalized groups in the process.

As a mid- to longer term perspective, e.g. the next two years, programs and projects are expected to be implemented under AREI. These first projects and their outcomes could be monitored and accompanied in selected countries, e.g. in countries where strong and interested CSOs exist. Monitoring could include on-site visits as well as working with affected local communities. However, monitoring AREI and related activities must also be conceived as a “learning by doing” exercise as it is not yet entirely clear how AREI will actually function regarding structures and processes and at which speed projects and programs will be implemented.



# 3 EXPERIENCES FROM CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT FOR MONITORING PURPOSES IN OTHER DOMAINS

This chapter will present the analysis of selected experiences of civil society engagement in other domains in order to learn about best practices (o.Ä.) for the envisaged ICSAMF.

## 3.1 The Adaptation Fund NGO Network

**Key features of the monitored funding scheme:** The Adaptation Fund (AF) is a climate finance mechanism that gives developing countries direct access to resources and aims to simplify and accelerate the procedures for climate finance.

**Objectives of the civil society monitoring mechanism:** The Adaptation Fund NGO Network aims to influence processes and promote engagement of the civil society in regard to the AF.

The network was established in 2010 and is a supporting facility forum for NGOs in developing countries. As such, it follows and observes the implementation of projects under the AF and strives to contribute to a successful implementation of these projects, in particular for the benefits of those most vulnerable to climate change.

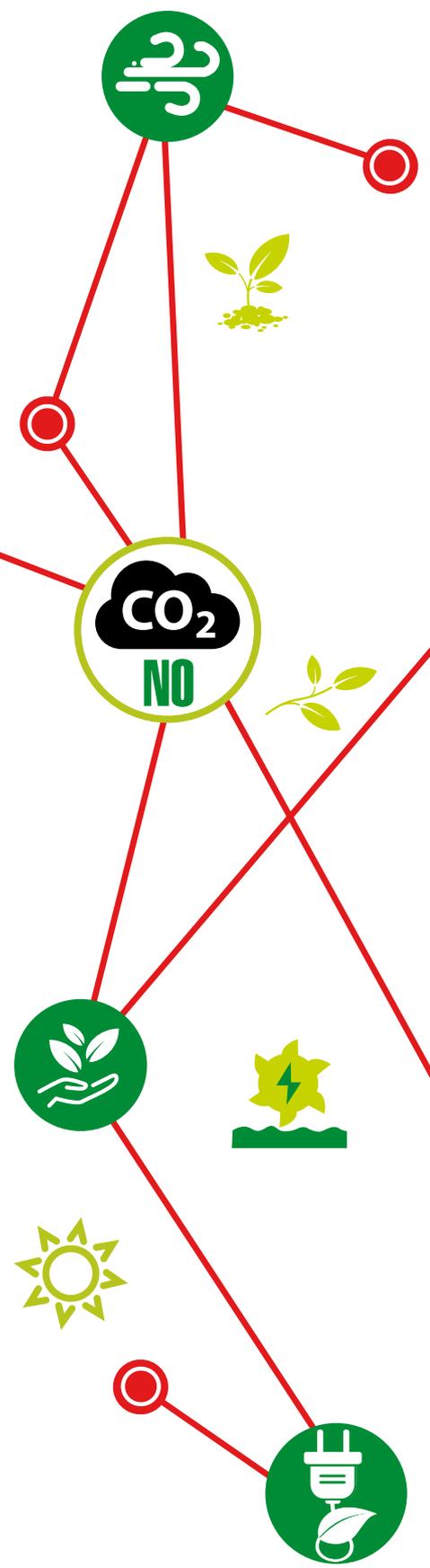
**Structure:**

**Actors involved:** Currently, the Adaptation Fund NGO Network has 10 supported partners in different parts of the world (e.g. Senegal, South Africa, Benin and Rwanda) and 230 organizations that associate themselves with the Network.

**Cooperation with the Mechanism:** Particularly in board meetings, a “civil society dialogue” format has been established where CSOs are in direct contact with board members and present their perspectives and demands for AF-related issues.

**Funding:** The work of the network is financed by the International Climate Initiative (ICI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB).

**Success factors and challenges:** The Adaptation Fund NGO Network is a successful example of how CSOs can influence decisions within a broader framework. Nowadays, the AF secretariat and board members approach the network in order to gain input and take the network’s demands into consideration in their decision-making. This continual exchange process would be very beneficial for AREI. Success factors for the Network are the long-lasting and permanent work around the AF at different levels. Vis-a-vis the AF Board and Secretariat, its independence, access to local information, which they did not possess, and the opportunity to be critical, but supportive of the AF’s overall objectives and design were key factors supporting a good working relationship.





**More information:**

[www.adaptation-fund.org/](http://www.adaptation-fund.org/)  
[www.af-network.org/](http://www.af-network.org/)

## 3.2 CSO networks for the Green Climate Fund

### Key features of the monitored funding scheme:

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is an operating entity for the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC and the largest multilateral climate fund. One of its financing modalities is the direct access modality that allows developing countries to directly access funding for their national institutions without passing through traditional financing channels like the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs). The fund disburses its financing through other institutions that have to go through an accreditation process, testing their ability to manage funds, implement projects and apply safeguards to implement concrete projects (GCFwatch, 2016).

From its beginning, the GCF guaranteed access to its board meetings, which take place minimum three times per year, for so-called “Accredited Observers”: Four observers are allowed to participate in board sessions (two from CSOs and two from the private sector with one each from developed and developing countries), which are identified through a self-selection process for a term of two years (GCF, 2017).

### Objectives of the civil society monitoring mechanism:

Next to the possibility for engagement granted to CSOs by the GCF itself, the GCFwatch website is established as a civil society platform. GCFwatch is a Southern CSO-led initiative established to help promote and accelerate Southern CSO readiness to engage the GCF.

### Structure:

➔ **Actors involved:** GCFwatch is a project of a broad coalition of NGOs from the different continents which have been accompanying the GCF during its Board Meetings for several years now. In addition to GCFwatch, there are existing CSO coordination struc-

tures to follow the fund, particularly at the international/board level, such as a gcf-cso mailing list. The regional nodes are supposed to organize the outreach to local groups on their continent and encourage them to submit content to the website.

### ➔ Activities at and linkages between local, national and international level:

GCFwatch operates an interactive website with the primary goals to share information on GCF related processes independently from the GCF Secretariat, inform local civil society about national discussions, track the in-country progress of the GCF and serve as a one-stop shop for GCF CSO information (GCFwatch, 2017).

### ➔ Cooperation with the Mechanism:

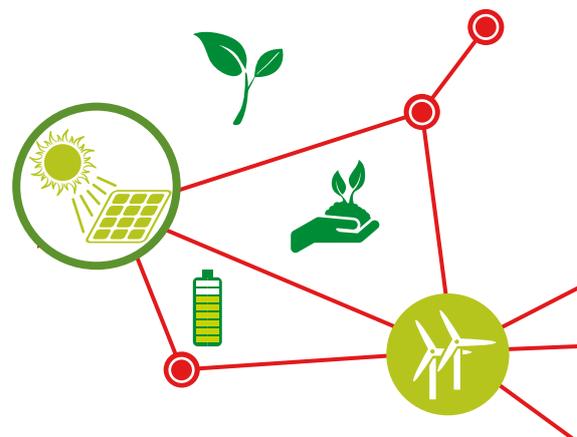
So far, there is no formal cooperation with the GCF.

### ➔ Funding:

Very little funding is available, except small amounts for specific aspect of GCFwatch made available from other projects of the member organizations.

### Success factors and challenges:

The main challenge was to get the website up and running with relevant content. This was mainly due to resource constraints and a lack of clear responsibilities or accountability. Additional challenges include identifying, reaching and supporting the local groups that are needed for on-the-ground insights on project implementation. Furthermore, another challenge is to avoid duplication with the detailed information provided by the GCF itself through its website.



### More information:

GCF Green Climate Fund (undated): Guidelines relating to the observer participation, accreditation of observer organizations and participation of active observers. Available at:

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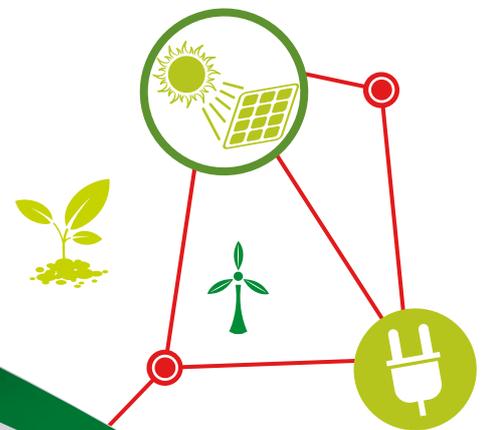
GCFwatch (2017): GCFwatch. Website: <http://gcfwatch.org/about/>



## 4 SOURCES

1 Workshop “Civil Society perspectives on the African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI)”, 02/10/2016, Berlin, organized by Germanwatch and Bread for the World; Workshop “Strengthening AREI for an African energy transformation that serves African needs”, 05/12/2017, Bonn, organized by Germanwatch and Bread for the World; Side event during SB46 “Making the African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) work for people and the planet”, 05/09/2017, Bonn, organized by Germanwatch, Association Actions Vitales Pour Le Développement Durable (AVD) and Réseau Action Climat - France (RAC-F).

- ➔ ACSEA African Coalition for Sustainable Energy and Access (2017): Africa Renewable Energy Initiative For Africa: African Civil Society Organizations Perspective. **Available at:** [https://info.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/sites/default/files/blog-downloads/acsea\\_arei\\_survey\\_web.pdf](https://info.brot-fuer-die-welt.de/sites/default/files/blog-downloads/acsea_arei_survey_web.pdf)
- ➔ AREI Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (2016a): AREI Action Plan. **Available at:** <http://www.arei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/AREI-Action-Plan-Nov-2016.pdf>
- ➔ AREI Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (2016b): Criteria to be considered for attribution and eligibility/prioritization of funding. **Available at:** [http://www.arei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/AREI-Criteria\\_EN\\_web.pdf](http://www.arei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/AREI-Criteria_EN_web.pdf)
- ➔ AREI Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (2017): AREI Progress report. **Available at:** [http://www.arei.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/AREI-Progress-report-Jan-2017\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.arei.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/AREI-Progress-report-Jan-2017_ENG.pdf)



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