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## The Hanns Seidel Foundation's Regional Sustainability Network (RSN)

The Regional Sustainability Network (RSN) is an initiative developed in 2018 to provide a platform for region-wide dialogue for partners active in the climate field from different Hanns Seidel Foundation's project countries of the Sub-Saharan Africa division. Africa is the continent that is particularly affected and vulnerable to climate change, without having caused it in this form through its energy consumption and its relatively low emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>.

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Sub-Sahara Africa - Kenya - Regional Sustainability Network - RSN - civil society - common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities - Nationally Determined Contributions - NDCs

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The Regional Sustainability Network (RSN)<sup>1</sup> is an initiative developed in 2018 to provide a platform for region-wide dialogue for partners active in the climate field from different HSF project countries of the Sub-Saharan Africa Unit. Africa is the continent that is particularly affected and vulnerable to climate change, without having caused it in this form through its energy consumption and its relatively low emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>.

As early as 1992, the UNFCCC treaty stated: "... the global nature of climate change requires the widest possible cooperation of all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, consistent with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, as well as their social and economic situations."

The principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities" (CBDR-RC) is still the basis on which industrialised nations of the Global North can enter into a qualified and adequate dialogue with countries of the Global South and agree on and coordinate concrete measures within their respective capacities.

Sub-Saharan Africa, or Africa, has traditionally been a focus of Hanns Seidel Foundation's (HSF) International Cooperation with currently 11 project offices and project activities in 15 countries. The region, with its highly complex ecosystems and unique biodiversity, is experiencing the effects of current cli-



mate change in a dramatic way. Heat and drought, locust infestations and weather extremes have always been a natural reality in many African countries. For some years now, however, natural disasters have been multiplying and intensifying with devastating consequences that not only endanger the further development of the region, but also threaten the very existence of what has been achieved.

The Regional Sustainability Network (RSN) uses the access that the HSF project work has created in other sectors to make the complexity of climate change visible and to achieve a better position in terms of policy, engagement, capacity and dialogue to address climate change in Africa. Members of this network are organisations working in the fields of climate change, environmental sustainability and in the energy sector on the African continent. Members use RSN as a platform for extended dialogue, knowledge sharing, mutual learning and working together to develop solutions. Members have taken an active part in national discussions on climate action such as low-carbon growth, smart technologies, renewable energy, green agriculture and climate smart agriculture. In the UNFCCC process, the

Nine countries in sub-Saharan Africa are currently represented in the Regional Sustainability Network:	
Kenya	Sitz des Netzwerks (HSF) (North Rift Valley Economic Block, NOREB)
Ethiopia	(Environment and Climate research Centre, ECRC)
Democratic Republic of the Congo	(Centre d`appui au developement integral, CADIM)
Djibouti	(SOS Environment)
Ghana	(Centre for Ecological agriculture and livelihood, CEAL)
Namibia	(Desert Research Foundation)
South Africa	(Champions of the Environment Foundation)
Tanzania	(Climate Action Network Tanzania, CAN TZ)
Togo	(Urbis Foundation)



network has worked with members to organise regional pre-conferences of Parties and support members to participate in conferences such as the COP and UNEA.

In the future, one of the Network's tasks will be to help ensure that the ambitious targets of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are actually integrated into national climate plans and that their financing and implementation are guaranteed. The necessary capacity building of member organisations is an important component of further support by the HSS. The strength of the network lies in the fact that a large number of personal and institutional contacts can be incorporated, thus also enabling global learning. Last but not least, the network allows the special concerns of women, youth and vulnerable groups to be kept in focus when implementing the climate protection goals.

The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are of fundamental importance for the

participation of civil society in the national climate process. These contributions are binding, national climate target agreements that are published and enforceable and thus provide civil society with the necessary resilient argumentation basis for engagement at the national level.<sup>2</sup> Four of the countries represented in the RSN have submitted new, updated NDCs for 2021.

On the following pages, Sixbert Mwanga, Director of the Climate Action Network CAN Tanzania, gives an overview of the importance of civil society organisations for achieving the goals of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC-Paris Agreement) and the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs, using Tanzania as an example.

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### NOTES

- 1 Regional Sustainability Network: URL <http://rsnet.africa/#/home> URL <https://twitter.com/rsnetwork?lang=en>
- 2 NDC Registry, URL <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NDCCStaging/Pages/All.aspx> [22.10.2021]