The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has caused a widespread demand and supply shock to the economic systems of countries around the world. In Africa, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on climate change are diverse and complex. It is affecting the livelihoods of millions of Africans, as it has significant impacts on agriculture and food systems, national health systems, businesses, education system, transport, trade, public and private finance. On top of these, climate-related fast and slow onset shocks such as drought, flood, erratic rainfall, pests and disease outbreak, hurricanes, inundation of costal infrastructure will most likely constrain efforts of early recovery from the COVID-19 situation. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, CIF has been working with the Bank and other MDBs to identify actions that can be taken in the short and medium term to help countries meet the major challenges at hand while simultaneously creating opportunities to build back better.

“COVID-19 should not be a reason to renge on global climate commitments, including allocating $100 billion per annum for developing countries by 2020. Instead, tackling the COVID-19 pandemic should present an opportunity to put forward audacious measures that will enable African countries to bounce back better.”

Kevin Kariuki
Vice President for Power, Energy, Climate and Green Growth at the African Development Bank

HOW CAN CLIMATE FINANCE SUPPORT COVID-19 RECOVERIES?

CIF and the Bank’s experiences in countries such as Zambia and Mozambique show that investments in climate resilient infrastructure provide employment and market access opportunities for remote populations negatively impacted by COVID-19. Climate-smart agriculture investments, including those that engage the private sector, can also stimulate rural economies while supporting adversely affected smallholder farmers. As seen in Mozambique and Niger, this can result in increased productivity, greater food security, and enhanced resilience to future shocks.

SUCCESS STORY

This Strengthening Climate Resilience in the Kafue Sub-basin project (SCRiKA)’s design features require a lot of field-level mobility during implementation, including interaction with rural communities and local government stakeholders. These were suspended in March 2020 due to “stay at home/travel restrictions” and social distancing guidelines. The project is since learning to adapt and continue delivery to the best of its ability.

“SCRiKA is improving vulnerable communities’ adaptive capacity to not only climate change but COVID-19 too. The on-going climate resilient support we are providing to communities will enable them to become resilient and easily diversify to alternative sources of income when their regular source of income is disturbed due to COVID. Further, the closure of borders will spur farmers’ productivity and increased income and, with the support already rendered to our communities, it’s easy for them to benefit from this opportunity.”

Indie Dinala
SCRiKA project manager with the Zambia Ministry of National Development Planning

Implementation of many projects has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, causing delays in expected closing dates. Since the onset of COVID-19, the Bank has been employing remote supervisions, which have mostly proven successful.

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