
REGIONAL CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE COOLING: A STRATEGIC GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



SIDE EVENT, MOP37, NAIROBI

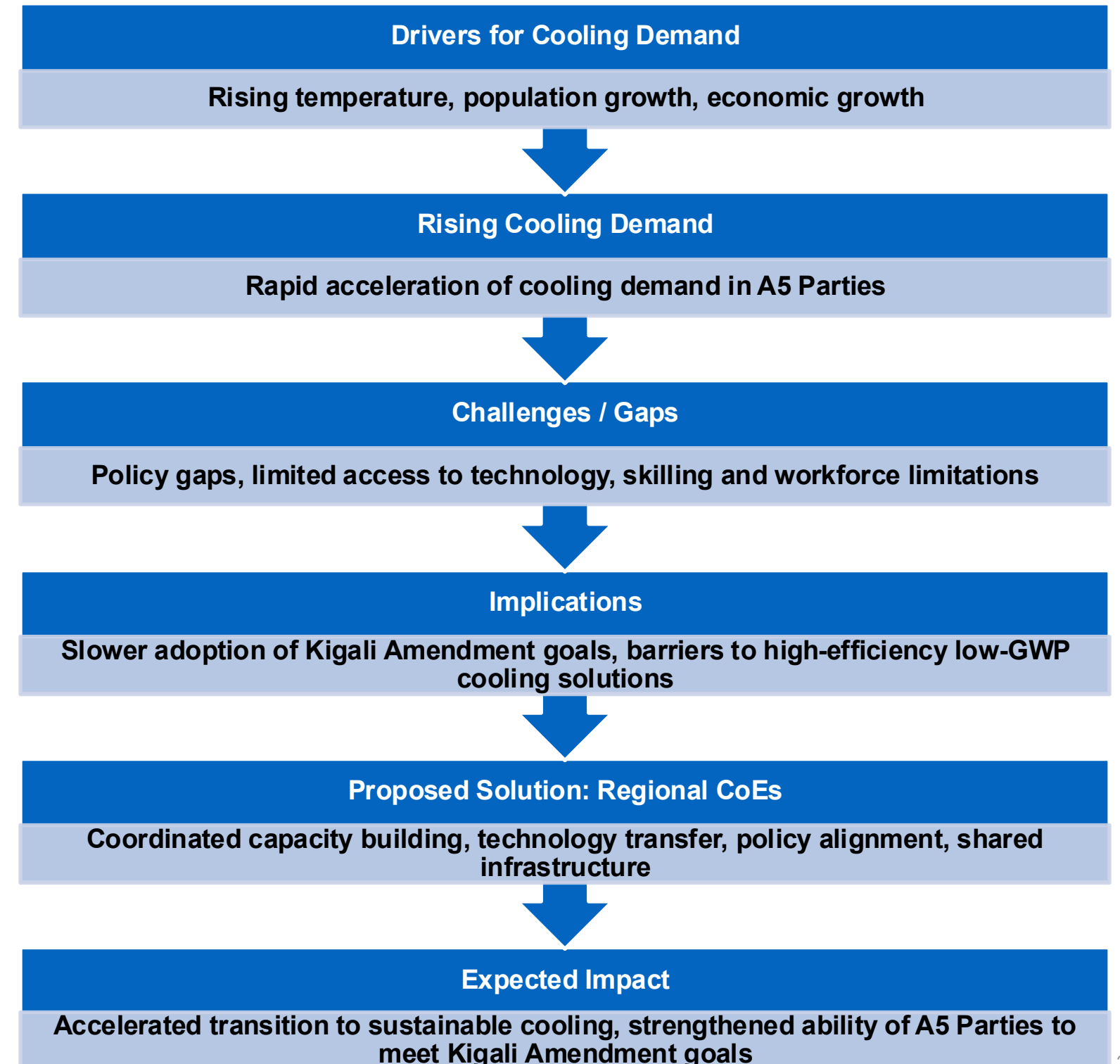
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What is a Regional Center of Excellence?

- A CoE serves as an institution that:
 - Leads and disseminates best practices
 - Builds capacity and fosters innovation
 - Promotes collaboration among governments, NGOs, industry, academia, and environmental and consumer organizations
- To earn the title of “excellence,” a CoE must demonstrate:
 - A clear vision
 - Consistent growth
 - Sustained commitment and dedication
- Regional CoEs, serving multiple countries rather than one, offer distinct benefits:
 - Enable strategic cooperation and policy harmonization
 - Achieve economies of scale and shared learning
 - Facilitate cross-country knowledge exchange
 - Enhance funding opportunities by attracting support from donors, multilateral organizations, and private partners—especially aiding smaller or less-resourced nations.

The Need for Regional CoEs in A5 Parties

- The Global Cooling Emissions Model (Gluckman Consulting) projects that cooling demand in A5 Parties will rise by over 240% (23.1 TW) by 2050, driven by rising temperatures and economic growth.
- With targeted cooling policies and efficient technologies, A5 countries could achieve by 2050:
 - 27% reduction in indirect emissions (≈ 392 MTCO₂e)
 - 84% reduction in direct emissions (≈ 503 MTCO₂e) — relative to business-as-usual projections.
- Regulatory gaps are limiting this potential:
 - Many countries—especially in Africa and Asia—lack Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) for cooling appliances.
 - This leaves them exposed to imports of inefficient, high-GWP equipment.



Examples

- **Africa Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Cooling and Cold-chain** shows the benefits of a hub-and-spoke model, where a central hub coordinates efforts while regional spokes adapt solutions to local situations
- **ASEAN Centre for Energy** illustrates how a multi-stakeholder governance model—with a governing council that includes representatives from member states—supports inclusive decision-making and ensures that initiatives align with regional priorities
- **CoEs for renewable energy and energy efficiency in East Africa, Southern Africa, and the ECOWAS regions** demonstrate how cooperative regional processes can speed up policy adoption and harmonization
- **Regional Centre for Lighting, Sri Lanka** shows how independent testing to block substandard imports

Key Transferable Learnings for Future Regional CoEs

- Governance that includes like-minded representation from member states and regional actors ensures that decisions are participatory, context-sensitive, and focused on shared priorities.
- Strong partnerships across public, private, academic, and civil society sectors improve knowledge exchange, build capacity, and coordinate regional action.
- Securing diverse and sustained funding through a mix of donor contributions, in-kind support, and dedicated financing mechanisms strengthens operational stability and long-term impact.
- Embedding rigorous monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems allows for continuous improvement, accountability, and evidence-based scaling and replication of effective practices.
- Engaging local institutions and governments from the beginning fosters ownership, ensures relevance to local contexts, and creates a better environment for implementation.

A Summary of the Guiding Framework for Setting-up Regional CoEs

These considerations must be addressed in parallel from the outset, as their deep interconnections require an integrated approach:

Foundation and Planning	Governance	Funding	Organizational Structure and Staffing	Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government leadership is essential, with designated nodal entities covering both ozone and energy efficiency officers.• Country-level assessments must be conducted to map needs, policies, market trends, and stakeholders.• A Common Minimum Program should be developed to align regional priorities and reflect shared realities.• Existing networks of cooperation should be leveraged to enhance efficiency and continuity.• The regional CoE's development should be phased to balance immediate needs with long-term sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Governance should build on proven cooperation models, leveraging established relationships for continuity.• A Governing Council with fair representation from member states, international partners, and academic institutions should ensure transparency, accountability, and alignment with regional priorities.• The governance framework should align with the chosen CoE configuration, whether a single center, hub-and-spoke, country-level centers, or a hybrid model.• Governance should be collaborative, consensus-based, flexible, and adaptable to emerging challenges and opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diversify funding from MLF, non-MLF sources, and in-kind contributions; decide multilaterally on a dedicated MLF window.• Ensure host country commitment with seed funding, land, and setup support.• Build revenue streams (consulting, testing, training, etc.) with time-bound MLF operational support.• Use membership or voluntary contributions to share costs and foster ownership.• Manage financial risks with controls, audits, reserves, and independent decisions.• Protect independence by refusing funding that compromises neutrality and disclosing all sources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear roles for senior management and operational teams are essential for effective coordination and execution of initiatives.• Recruiting, developing, and retaining skilled, motivated staff is critical to maintaining credibility and reputation as a CoE.• Local partners and staff should lead on-the-ground operations to build community trust and ensure relevance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Activities should align closely with the CoE's vision, mission, and strategic objectives.• Potential focus areas include energy efficiency aligned with HFC phasedown, capacity building, regional alignment, and bridging technology gaps.• Identify and implement high-impact, low-effort actions first, then progressively expand to more complex initiatives as resources increase.

Panel Discussion



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