POLICY COMMENTARY / OCTOBER 2026

# Africa Does Not Need Another Climate Dashboard. It Needs Evidence That Projects Deliver.

*Why climate-monitoring systems must connect public spending, project evidence and community outcomes*

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A climate adaptation project can look successful on a dashboard while leaving an important question unanswered: did people become more resilient? A system may show a completed borehole, a disbursed budget and an impressive green status indicator. Yet if the borehole is not functioning during a drought, completion is not the same as impact. This is a hypothetical example, but it captures a real design challenge in public administration: recording activities is easier than verifying outcomes.

African governments are investing in climate plans, monitoring frameworks and digital public systems. The next challenge is to connect these layers. In my work developing monitoring and accountability applications, I have come to see that the most consequential design decision is not the chart type. It is what the system accepts as evidence—and who can challenge it.

## Commitments are becoming measurable

Kenya's Climate Change Act assigns responsibilities across levels of government and provides for climate planning, implementation, public participation and access to information. Kenya's Financing Locally-Led Climate Action programme, implemented through the National Treasury and county structures, further illustrates why ward-level decisions need credible links to budgets, implementation and community priorities.

The international reporting context is evolving as well. In 2025, parties to the Paris Agreement adopted 59 Belém Adaptation Indicators to help track progress toward the Global Goal on Adaptation. The indicators are voluntary and country-driven; they are not a universal scorecard that can replace national priorities. But they heighten the importance of coherent national data, clear definitions and a transparent trail from policy ambition to local results.

## A better system asks five questions

First, what was promised? Every intervention needs a defined location, responsible institution, baseline, timeline, financing source and intended result. A unique project identifier should follow it across planning, budgeting, procurement, monitoring and evaluation—not disappear when a spreadsheet changes hands.

Second, what was delivered? A project status should distinguish money released from money spent, works undertaken from works verified, and outputs from outcomes. Evidence can include inspection records, geotagged documentation, dated progress reports and community confirmation, with safeguards for personal information.

Third, who benefits—and who may be left out? A climate investment should not be assessed only by the number of assets installed. Evaluation should ask whether women, people with disabilities, pastoralists or other affected groups can access and use the service. The answer requires locally relevant indicators and participation, not simply another compulsory field.

Fourth, what happens when reality differs from the plan? Reliable systems need room for delays, failures, maintenance needs and disagreements. A red flag should initiate a documented response rather than encourage officials to conceal inconvenient information.

Finally, who can check the record? Communities, oversight bodies and implementing agencies need different levels of access, appropriate privacy controls and a clear process for correcting errors. A dashboard that cannot be questioned risks becoming a digital version of an unverified progress report.

## Build for institutions, not presentations

The World Bank's 2025 GovTech Maturity Index treats shared government systems, online services, digital citizen engagement and enabling institutions as interconnected dimensions of digital transformation. That is an instructive approach for climate technology. A standalone portal cannot compensate for unclear reporting responsibilities, missing records, weak connectivity or staff turnover.

Practical design should therefore prioritise common data definitions, interoperability, offline-capable field collection where necessary, audit logs, version-controlled indicators and training for frontline teams. Public reporting should explain uncertainty instead of hiding it behind attractive percentages. Evaluation questionnaires should also adapt to the actual project: the success criteria for drainage rehabilitation are not identical to those for climate-smart agriculture.

This does not require collecting every available data point. Governments should identify a small minimum dataset that all implementing organisations can maintain, then add sector-specific measures where they help answer a decision question. A practical pilot could follow one intervention from initial approval through procurement, field verification and community feedback, checking where records diverge. The exercise would reveal whether an extra data field improves oversight or merely adds another burden to county staff. System success should include data completeness, time to resolve discrepancies and the usability of information for those expected to act on it. Better governance often starts with fewer, better-defined questions.

## Measure what matters

A useful test is simple: could an independent reviewer trace a reported climate result back to the original project decision, expenditure record, verification evidence and people affected? If not, the system is producing visibility without sufficient accountability.

Africa does need digital climate infrastructure. But its value should be judged less by how many dashboards are launched and more by whether the evidence they preserve helps institutions learn, correct course and explain results to citizens. The future of climate accountability is not a prettier screen. It is a trustworthy chain of decisions and outcomes.

## References and further reading


1. Kenya Climate Change Act, 2016 (revised 2023)
2. Kenya National Treasury — Financing Locally-Led Climate Action
3. UNFCCC — Global Goal on Adaptation and Belém indicators
4. CGIAR — Context and voluntary nature of Belém Adaptation Indicators
5. World Bank — GovTech Maturity Index 2025


**AUTHOR NOTE** Draft policy commentary prepared with AI assistance for the author's independent review, fact-checking, substantial personal revision and outlet-specific disclosure. It reports no original field study or institutional finding. Views are personal, not official AGNES positions.