

OUTCOMES OF THE ANNUAL REGIONAL WORKSHOP

Building Resilience through Participation; 26-27 March 2018, Bangkok



Organised by :

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CAN INCLUSIVE DECISION-MAKING INCREASE THE RESILIENCE OF VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES?



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Millions of people in Asia and the Pacific are living with substantial and increasing risks to their lives or livelihoods every day.

Unsustainable economic development and a changing climate are having increasingly negative impacts on the environment and the human rights of the people of this region.

At the same time, a democratic deficit, shrinking civil society space, discrimination and lack

of gender equality and respect for human rights, limit people's ability to demand accountability and to participate in decision-making for resilience-building and sustainable development.

The sad fact is: Development decisions are often made without involvement of the people most affected.

RESILIENCE AND INEQUALITY

Lack of resilience – in communities, societies or regions – disproportionately affects people living in poverty, and those who are marginalized and vulnerable. They tend to live in low-value, hazard prone areas like city slums, steep slopes, floodplains and river banks. They tend to derive their livelihoods directly from risk-exposed, climate-sensitive natural resources and agriculture. And – importantly – they tend to lack a voice/representation in the decision-making processes that affect their situation.

TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH PARTICIPATION

True resilience for everyone can only be achieved through participatory, inclusive processes. Decision-making which builds or influences the resilience of people, must involve the people affected. Ensuring that these decisions take into account the views of those who are affected by them increases public support, builds resilience, promotes sustainable development and helps to protect the enjoyment of human rights.

To be effective, public participation must be included in the development of policies, laws, regulations, projects and activities.

Furthermore, because the Asia-Pacific region's challenges are often transboundary in nature, they can only be fully addressed or solved through regional and transboundary cooperation.

A PIONEERING VOICE FROM THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

While the Asia-Pacific region is, by many accounts, the most risk-prone part of the world, the region is at the same time in the position to be a world-leader in resilience-building and to spearhead participatory approaches for sustainable development.

So it is encouraging that countries in the region are now implementing development plans to mitigate and adapt to climate change and reach the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfill the Agenda 2030. For an efficient process and better results, openness and public participation are crucial.

By showing and discussing examples of successful initiatives of openness and participation, we hope that countries and organizations can learn from each other and that the understanding of participation as a valuable and important part of any process is spread.



1. SUMMARY

Organised by the Embassy of Sweden, Bangkok in collaboration with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Annual Regional Workshop brought together more than 150 registered participants from many civil society organizations, governments and companies in Bangkok on the 26th and 27th of March 2018 under the theme, “Building Resilience through Participation”, a few days before the Fifth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD). The regional workshop highlighted the significance of participation when building resilience, explored successful participatory models and discussed new, innovative participatory approaches for building resilience. Together, these experts and stakeholders from the region and beyond shared perspectives and experiences from their diverse sectors.

The purpose of the Annual Regional Workshop was to provide an opportunity for participants to get to know each other’s work, as well as co-create and strategize for improved, inclusive ways of working to build resilience in the region. The aim was also to support the Asia-Pacific region and countries to implement Agenda 2030 and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, by linking to the theme of the APFSD and the Regional Roadmap towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific.

A lot of fresh ideas, messages, experiences and proposed ways of working toward inclusive resilience were voiced during the workshop.

The regional workshop was designed and facilitated in partnership with The DO School, a global community for people, organizational and social transformation. The key message of the workshop were put forward in the APFSD, bringing the workshop’s outcomes and participants’ voices into the UN Agenda 2030 process.

Participatory approaches were explored at four fundamental levels: Local, National, Regional and Regional-to-Global. Participants co-created ideas to enhance participation within those chosen levels on the first day of the workshop, under the guidance of facilitators from The DO School. These ideas were then further consolidated and taken forward on the second day of the workshop, resulting in each participant identifying new ideas, collaborators as well as actions to follow after the workshop.





KEY MESSAGES

One specific outcome of the workshop were a set of Key Messages, emerging from the discussions and participants' inputs. These Key Messages were intended to, and later were indeed, conveyed to the governments at the APFSD conference. The messages were compiled by the workshop organisers and divided into points about the context analysis and proposed actions:

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

- Resilience is key to sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific – a region exposed to a multitude of environmental, climate, social and economic risks. Currently, resilience is not keeping pace with the shocks, and the space for participation is shrinking. Meeting these challenges will require transformations of our societies, built on deep social engagement and broad-based support of all stakeholders. True resilience for everyone can only be achieved through participatory, inclusive processes.
- The risks to people in the region are not distributed or shared equally across groups in the societies. Women, people in poverty and those who are marginalized and vulnerable disproportionately affected by risks and the lack of resilience in communities, societies or regions. Other traditionally disadvantaged groups such as indigenous populations, minorities, the elderly and children, persons with disabilities and migrants are especially exposed.
- The same risk-exposed people also tend to lack voice and representation in the decision-making processes that affect their situation. Development decisions are often made without involvement of the people most affected.
- Communities are the “first responders” to risks and shocks. However, to reap the full benefits of participatory approaches and resilience-building, participation must be allowed in development processes on all levels; local, national, regional and global level. Inclusive international cooperation is crucial, since the Asia-Pacific's challenges are often transboundary or regional in nature.
- In many places, a democratic deficit, shrinking civil society space, discrimination and lack of gender equality and respect for human rights, limit people's ability to demand accountability and to participate in decision-making for resilience-building and sustainable development.
- While the Asia-Pacific region is, by many accounts, the most risk-prone part of the world, the region is at the same time in the position to be a world-leader in resilience-building and to spear-head participatory approaches for sustainable development and the fulfilment of the Agenda 2030.








POINTS FOR ACTION

- Governments, as the duty bearers, need to find ways to facilitate broad participation by the rights-holders of their societies to build resilience. And there are many good reasons and benefits to do so. Participation does not only help to fulfil human rights, such as freedom of expression and the right to information, there is also broad evidence that engagement of stakeholders in policy processes and discourses leads to better policies and outcomes.
- Policies, plans or budgets designed based on all stakeholders' risk analysis, perspectives and knowledge will lead to more relevant solutions and sustainable results. If decisions are made *with* people instead of *for* people, there will be better ownership, which strengthens sustainability.
- There is a need for more research and evidence building around the benefits of participation for sustainable development, especially quantifiable information. Evidence-based decision-making processes are vital.
- It is important to define what participation is, and what the dimensions of effective engagement are and how to conduct engagement processes for resilience-building, in as inclusive and transparent ways as possible. There will be no one way to do it – context and level specific solutions are necessary. Nonetheless, participation shall never be forced; it should be free and meaningful.
- Building resilience is a multi-stakeholder and multi-level endeavour. Diversity of stakeholders and perspectives is a power to be harnessed. Understanding each other's roles, responsibilities and capacities, addressing the structural imbalances (such as gender, power and knowledge) and jointly formulating the common goal of all stakeholders lays a foundation for partnerships for resilience. More space is generally needed for participation by civil society and vulnerable groups.
- Governments can identify and strengthen champions and change-makers as a starting point to facilitate participation processes for resilience-building. Developing networks of such champions, especially with participation of women and youth, would be critical to resilience building.
- Capacity building of all stakeholders, including governments, in conducting and participating in effective stakeholder engagement processes should be central to all resilience building initiatives.
- Rooting out corruption and building good, democratic governance is essential in facilitating meaningful participation.
- Performance incentives for collaboration and engagement should be built into policy and business processes. At the same time imposing punitive measures in cases where proper engagement has not happened could be considered.
- Developing innovative communication methods and tools to reach communities and stakeholders, who are normally 'left behind' is critical for ensuring meaningful participation. Free media is also vital for facilitating informed participatory development processes and promote collective learning on emerging risks.



EVENT ANALYTICS SUMMARY :

Over the two days of the workshop, the following metrics were tracked using the interactive tool, [sli.do](#) to help us understand how engaged and active participants were.

	Active Users		Questions		Poll Votes
	152		37		896
Engagement score	192	Likes/Dislikes	136/0	Polls created	9
Engagement per user	1.3	Anonymous rate	89%	Votes per poll	100

The analytics summary shows that we had a high rate of engagement and participation from the participants. This summary also helps us understand that there were 152 active users out of more than 150 total registered participants. Although there was participation, a high percentage, upto 89% of participants preferred to stay anonymous while sharing their thoughts.

After two intensive workshop days, this wordcloud summarises how the participants felt :



2. WORKSHOP SESSION OUTCOMES

2.1 KEY OUTCOMES DAY 1

2.1-1 Setting the Scene: Roleplay on “Where is the Voice? Participation for effective natural resource management”

A highlight of this year’s workshop was a roleplay titled, “Where is the Voice? Participation for effective natural resource management” to set the scene for the two days. Rejani Kunjappan from RECOFTC chose a case study on a hypothetical Government plan to setup a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and moderated the roleplay with participants volunteering to play selected roles as part of a multi-stakeholder meeting organized at an imaginary District administration office.

The goal of the roleplay was to highlight the most common and conflicting issues among multiple stakeholders at various levels. Most socio-economic planning follows a top-down approach for the pace and momentum of development. The roleplay was an opportunity to reflect on these fundamental issues and induce dialogue to find inclusive solutions.

Roleplay Scenario

The following scenario was provided to the roleplay participants :

In August 2015, the provincial Government of AA came up with a plan to set up a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) on the wetland forest (about 600 ha) being used by local communities (>200 households) in Village B in the District AB. Although the government has not formally informed the local community, it is determined to go ahead in implementing the plan. The local community members however, are in panic after they heard about the plans from informal sources. They feel that since they have been protecting the forest for generations and the forest has cultural, environmental, social and economic significance to them, the industrial zone should not be there.



As a result, the community members discussed the issue amongst them and have chosen representatives to take up the issue, with the government. They have requested for a dialogue with the government. The government on the other hand is also trying to gather support for their plan. They invited the representatives from the private sector and urban youth to show the positive impacts and the value of the development.

A multi-stakeholder meeting has been organized at District AB administration office to discuss the issue. The participants of the meeting include:

- » the provincial government authority of AA
- » the local village head of Village B
- » the customary leader of the community in Village B
- » a representative of the local community in Village B who depends on the river for food and livelihood
- » a woman representative of Village B
- » member of the urban youth from the city of AA
- » a private sector representative who has investment in District AB

Roleplay participants selected one of the above roles and discussed the issue in realtime. The process of putting people in various roles had a reflective impact that was quite powerful. The roleplayers stated that it assisted them in better able to have empathy with and understanding the various stakeholders that they were meant to represent.

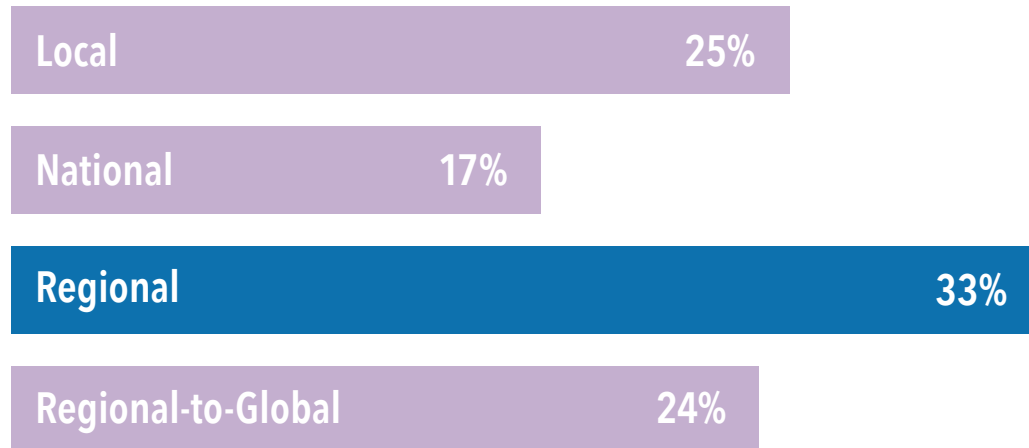
2.1-2 Breakout Sessions: Knowledge Sharing, Sensemaking & Building Inclusive Solutions

After the roleplay, participants were invited to breakout into smaller groups and seek inspiration from successful participatory models at various levels of governance: local, national, regional and the regional-to-global perspective.

The goal was to co-create solutions that enhance participation within and across these four different levels. The four breakout sessions were supported by success story presentations from selected partner organisations and a facilitator from The DO School.



Our event analytics show that participants were most interested in joining the *Regional* breakout session:



When queried on reasons for their choice of breakout sessions, participants had a diverse spectrum of answers like :

"Unless problems and issues at the local level are addressed, interventions at national, regional, and global levels are hard to implement."

"Working with an organization at the regional level, I chose the "regional" group to understand more about how regional players can work together and creatively to build resilience. But watching this role play going on now, I am more interested in how regional can link to local / local level!"

"My role involves capacity building of national partners and actors including supporting countries in the Pacific. I am Interested to learn and contribute experiences from resilience work at national level."

"I'm interested in understanding lessons about how regional processes can help shape global policy."

BREAKOUT SESSION@LOCAL LEVEL

Facilitator: Rakesh Kasturi, The DO School

Lead Presenter: Dr. Neera Shrestha Pradhan from the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) shared experiences of piloting a Community Based Flood Early Warning System in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan and started a discussion on participation at the *Local* level.



Dr. Neera Shrestha Pradhan

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Though early warning systems have been developed at the global, regional, and national levels to provide flood information, there are gaps in getting this information to communities that are most vulnerable. To address this challenge ICIMOD together with government line agencies, partners, and local communities, piloted CBFWS (Community Based Flood Early Warning System) in India, Nepal, Pakistan and Afghanistan. This system is installed in the river tributaries that have high flood risks making downstream communities extremely vulnerable. The upstream community generates the flood information using a simple low-cost instrument and disseminates the real time early warning to the downstream local communities, providing them sufficient lead time for preparedness.



Rakesh Kasturi

PARTICIPATORY OUTCOMES:

This section summarises key findings from the participants' discussion after the presentation by Dr. Neera Shrestha Pradhan (ICIMOD) about piloting a Community Based Flood Early Warning System.

- The following questions emerged as the most significant to be answered during the breakout sessions:
 - » How might we empower communities to negotiate a better deal for themselves; get themselves a voice?
 - » How might we accelerate forest co-management for forestry and fisheries in Myanmar?
 - » How might we address silos at government functions to build resilient governance?
- At the local level, the roles of "government officials" was identified to be critical for encouraging participation at the local level. Participants shared multiple instances of these roles being more disruptive than supportive in local contexts.
- Regardless of which industry or sector was addressed, empowering women within communities (with financial literacy for example) led to a significant increase in impact and delivery.
- Whenever Local manufacturing was involved actively to make components or parts, the local economy benefited as a whole.
- Local communities tend to be happy with recognition as an incentive when it comes to acting as changemakers or changedrivers - sustaining engagement over longer periods of time turned out to be more the challenge.

BREAKOUT SESSION@NATIONAL LEVEL

Facilitator: Rashid Owoyele, The DO School

Lead Presenters: Rose Martin & Nicol Cave from the Secretariat of the Pacific Commission (SPC) shared experiences on how hybrid SPC-Government staff embedded in government ministries in Pacific Island Countries over the past decade are enabling national participation and building resilience and started a discussion on participation at the *National* level.



Rose Martin



Nicol Cave

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

The Pacific Community (SPC) shared the story of how hybrid SPC-Government staff embedded in government ministries in Pacific Island Countries over the past decade are enabling national participation and building resilience. The embedded human rights champions model allows SPC to avoid the often less effective “fly-in, fly-out” development modality applied by organisations working regionally, and enhances the translation of international human rights standards into the local context and Pacific way of life. The model builds resilience and helps ensure that people and countries’ are drivers of their own development.



Rashid Owoyele

PARTICIPATORY OUTCOMES:

This section summarises key findings from the participants’ discussion after the presentation by Rose Martin and Nicol Cave (SPC) about building resilience at the National Level.

- A strong need for real strategies to impact community engagement was felt in the breakout session at the National level. Currently, there media campaigns are prioritised ahead of community initiatives which end up discouraging participation.
- In order for true participation to happen, organizations must be able to think beyond didactic educational models in which communication happens uni-directionally. It must be understood that communicating at someone does not mean including them in a decision. When decisions are made prior to community involvement, this is also not true participation.
- Stakeholders at the National level express feelings of being left out with examples of decisions made without consulting the community, that went on to eventually impact the community negatively. Decision makers decide what to do then communities are expected to “participate”. Is that truly participatory?
- Civil Society Organisations are keen to use participatory methods at the National level to scale impact. But, communities are increasingly aware that solutions or policies arrive pre-baked prior to engaging the community in discussion. If CSOs want to use participatory methods, they need to do so much earlier than is currently accepted.

BREAKOUT SESSION@REGIONAL LEVEL

Facilitator: Katherin Kirschenmann, The DO School

Lead Presenters: Dhong Hai Nhu and her colleagues from Mekong River Commission (MRC) shared experiences of working with diversified partners on issues like water diplomacy using participatory approaches and started a discussion on participation at the *Regional* level.



Dhong Hai Nhu

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

The Mekong River Commission (MRC) is the only inter-governmental organisation that works directly with the governments of Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Viet Nam to jointly manage the shared water resources and the sustainable development of the Mekong River. The MRC is a platform for water diplomacy and regional cooperation in which member states share the benefits of common water resources despite different national interests. The presentation shared MRC's principles and experience in coordinating and working with diversified partners and counterparts at regional level with an emphasis on participation and collaborative model.



Katherin Kirschenmann

PARTICIPATORY OUTCOMES:

This section summarises key findings from the participants discussion after the presentation by Dhong Hai Nhu (MRC) about shared water resources and sustainable development of the Mekong river.

- At the Regional level, one of the key challenges was a need to harmonize multiple national plans that tend to make up policy.
- The complexity of involving all stakeholders through the different levels as well as receiving advice from international organizations is a far more complex problem than imagined. Aligning processes to work directly on coordinating at the national level is a time-intensive process which may sometimes take several years to proceed.
- Finding new ways of involving stakeholders at the different levels and making them care was also perceived to be a challenge at the Regional level.
- Poor communication across levels (from regional down to local and back) was a contributor to sustained challenges at the Regional level.
- A lack of sustainability of projects beyond funding periods was also identified as a challenge at the Regional level.
- A listing of opportunities / best practices that lead to success at the Regional level:
 - » When consulting with groups make sure to get full representation of issues of all diverse members
 - » Identify common needs (and really understand them)
 - » Invest in translations
 - » Don't over-promise anything to partners/stakeholders to not lose trust
 - » Improve communication and use of media
 - » More sharing on peer level

BREAKOUT SESSION@REGIONAL-TO-GLOBAL LEVEL

Facilitator: Rouven Steinfeld, The DO School

Lead Presenters: Wardarina from APWLD and Hitomi Rankine from ESCAP shared experiences of working successfully with participatory approaches and started a discussion on participation at the *Regional-to-Global* level.



Wardarina



Hitomi Rankine

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

APWLD and ESCAP shared the lessons learned from partnership building for the Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development and the preparatory Asia-Pacific People's Forum for Sustainable Development, with a focus on lessons learned from the selection process as critical for effective participation.



Rouven Steinfeld

PARTICIPATORY OUTCOMES:

This section summarises key findings from the participant's discussion after the presentation by Wardarina and Hitomi about partnership building for the Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development.

- The key issue at the Regional-to-Global level was identified to be paternalistic approaches. The challenge was to find new ways of generating interest in participatory processes with target groups who currently do not show interest while avoiding paternalistic approaches.
- Another issue at the Regional-to-Global level was a lack of accountability for Corporate and Governmental leaders to champion participatory approaches.
- Language usually tends to become a barrier while reaching out to communities across levels.
- Community initiatives need to start small and grow outwards. In order for participation to succeed, stringent, inclusive and transparent selection criteria need to be enforced for participants. Additionally, affirmative action should be applied to incentivise participation in certain communities.

2.1-3 Shared Understanding@The Plenary

Participants assembled back at the Plenary to share their solutions and insights to close the day. Participants from each breakout session created specific ideas to enhance participation at the *Local, National, Regional and Regional-to-Global* levels.

Here are examples of specific ideas as participatory resilience solutions from the different breakout sessions:

Idea Title: Doorway to diversity

Idea User: Local Community Partners

Idea Description: Share and empower local communities with knowledge in the form of Storytelling, Writing and Technical support skills in order to equip them to connect better within themselves and with other levels.

Idea Title: Ambeesadors

Idea User: Policymakers

Idea Description: Create a community of ambeesadors to bridge silos in policymaking through information sharing and advocacy.

Idea Title: Inclusive Tables

Idea User: Governments/UN

Idea Description: Inclusive networking opportunity to increase participation of local, frontline stakeholders in meetings that take place in higher levels.

Idea Title: Craft for Change

Idea User: Mediapersons

Idea Description: Since media can be an agent of change, create a new way of reminding them about their core responsibilities - this can either be a short digital classroom or a reference card

Before closing the day, participants were asked what they were looking forward to on the second day of the workshop:

"Ideas from all discussion groups."

"The vegan lunch."

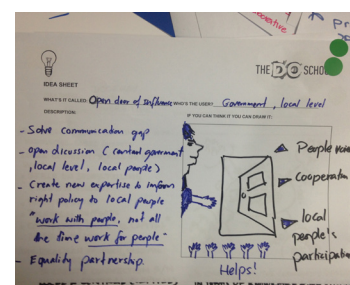
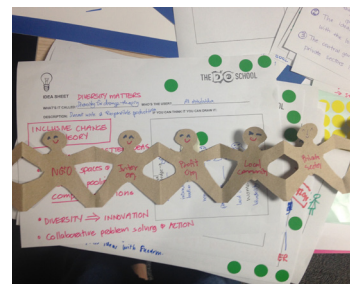
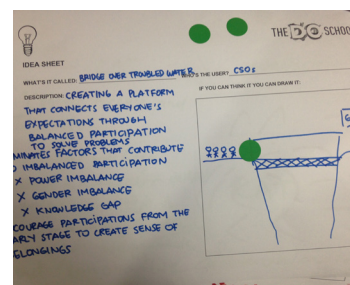
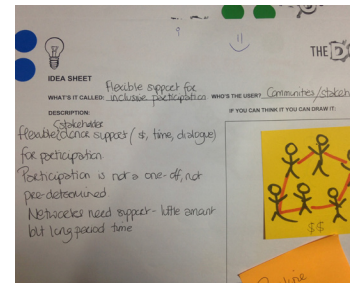
"Specific mechanisms for expanding and deepening civil society participation in regional decision-making."

"Exploring specific contexts and acknowledging complexity of issues and risks involved/ hearing more about failure."

"How do we translate the ideas from the workshop into action/reality?"

"Ideas to integrate local, national, regional and global level interventions."

"Potential collaborations."



2.2 Key Outcomes Day 2

2.2-1 Recap & Outlook

Day 2 of the Annual Regional Workshop started with a quick recap of the exciting moments and key insights from the various breakout sessions. Participants were encouraged to go into the Unconference session with either ideas they wanted to pursue or specific topics of interest.

2.2-2 Unconference

The Unconference session aimed to create a dynamic, free owing exchange of ideas in an intimate setting between hosts, who lead the session and guests. Guests had the opportunity to attend two rounds of 30mins each. The following sessions and corresponding insights from participants were noticed:

Session: Building resilience through inclusive and responsible rice value chains by Le Nguyet Minh from Oxfam GRAISEA

Key Messages:

- » Sustainable rice sector growth depends on equitable distribution of the increased wealth.
- » Small farm-size, scattered locations, varying timing of collection, and transportation challenges mean that exporters rarely buy directly from farmers
- » All key stakeholders need to convene to find solutions in a participatory manner

Key Insights:

"Key to bridging between stakeholders is the access to information, start dialogue and have a communications platform"

Session: Empowering women through climate change adoption by Community Representatives from RECOFTC Nepal and Myanmar

Key Messages:

- » Strength in networks comes from Community Forest User Groups in Myanmar
- » Government regulations impact community forestry efforts

Key Insights:

"Powerful sharing from Nepal on how climate change adaptation and women's empowerment can go hand in hand!"

"It is possible to have a community forest which is well managed in the country where legality is still a issue."



Session: The role of media in strengthening environmental and climate change resilience by Kok Eng Amy Sim from InterNews / Earth Journalism Network

Key Messages:

- » Information is key to shifting the power structure around climate change information.
- » Journalists in the Asia-Pacific region face censorship by authoritarian governments, and political and physical threats from political powers and illegal trade

Key Insights:

"We need better capacity to transmit our messages in collaboration with journos"



Session: Human Centered Design approach to create a sustainable community development by Radwa Rostom from Hand Over

Key Messages:

- » Local, sustainable materials reduce costs as well as carbon footprints
- » Sustaining community efforts in the long term is an ongoing challenge

Key Insights:

"Human Centered Designs solutions can help build community capacity and ownership."



Session: Maeve Nightingale from IUCN Mangroves For the Future on "Unpacking and measuring resilience in the context of social parameters?"

Key Messages:

- » All 17 Sustainable Development Goals are inter-connected with building resilience of ecosystems
- » Unpacking 'resilience' - how do we 'measure' in particular resilience of social parameters (people participation/ people empowerment)?

Key Insights:

"Unpacking resilience is more about institutional strengthening and conflict transformation!"



Session: "The importance of participatory education, learning and research for resilience and human rights based development " by Helena Olsson from Raoul Wallenberg Institute.

Key Messages:

- » Introducing what human rights law says about participation and the role of education and research in shaping a society built on human rights principles, which is assumed to imply enhanced resilience.
- » The session included examples of how RWI supports inclusive, participatory education and research in Asia.

Key Insights: "Human rights research and education should be conducted in a way that the process also supports and lives human rights principles."

Session: Supporting countries in improving their financial resilience to climate change by Kevork Baboyan from UNDP Climate Change Finance

Key Messages:

How do we engage society in the critical conversations around climate finance and nudge them to action?

Key Insights:

"Include all partners in creating governance structures to protect local ecosystems."

Session: "Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) in promoting participatory/ consultative planning and decision making?" by Anna Francis Olsson from NIRAS and partners

Key Messages:

- » Three perspectives on the relevance of SEA in promoting participatory/consultative planning and decision making.
- » Perspectives from Laos and Cambodia on new regulations on SEA.
- » Perspectives from 10 yrs of SEA practice in Vietnam - still room to use the tool for improved public consultation?

Key Insights:

"Strategic Environmental Assessment can promote stakeholders' participation in the planning and decision making process."



2.2.3. Solution Lab

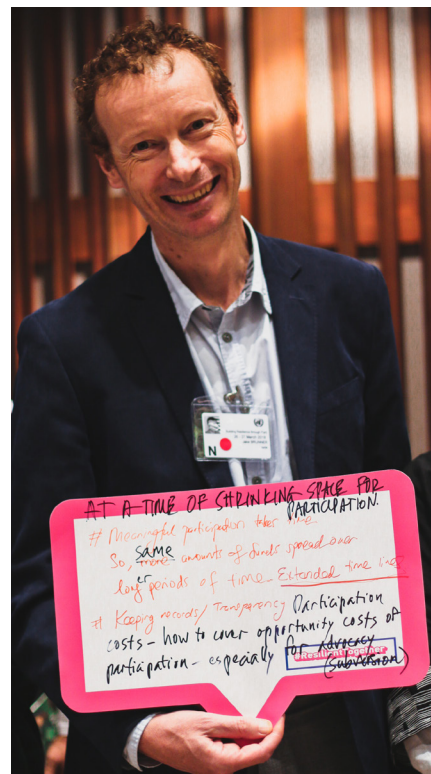
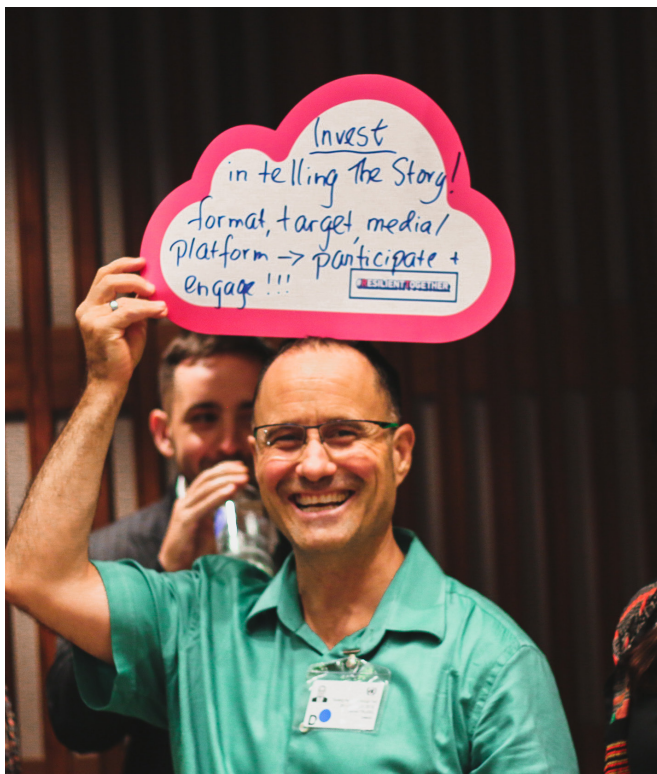
The solution lab session was a targeted intervention in triggering participant behaviour to follow through after the workshop by taking action.

Participants were invited to first position themselves along a human spectrum with the extremes being "easy to work on action steps" and "almost impossible to work on action steps". They were also encouraged to speak about why they chose their positions.

This session was invaluable in giving participants the time and space needed to not only conduct in-depth discussions but also identify a simple action item or idea that can be executed right after they leave the workshop.

Here are a few sample actions and ideas that participants came up with:

1. An idea to create a digital platform for all the partner organisations that work with the Embassy of Sweden to enable knowledge sharing.
2. A targeted action to invest more in storytelling
3. A question that aims to explore how opportunity costs of participation can be covered.



2.2-4 Interactive Panel Discussion

After the Solution Lab, the next session was an interactive panel discussion on accelerating the role of Asia-Pacific regions towards building resilient communities : “How might we support the Asia-Pacific region and countries to implement Agenda 2030 and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals?”

The three panelists were:

- **Stefanos Fotiou**, Director, Environment and Development Division – UNESCAP
- **Holy Ranaivozanany**, Head of Corporate Social Responsibility – Huawei
- **Madhushree Narayan**, Project Manager - Climate Finance – VNV Advisory

The unique nature of this panel was the active (instead of traditionally passive) involvement of the audience. After the panelists introduced themselves and presented their opening statements, the audience was invited to crowdsource questions and upvote them. The most popular upvoted questions were then presented to the panel :

1. *How do we get long term sustainable policies when we have short term structures of political power?*
2. *When is CSR more than greenwash? Huawei, for e.g., has been called out for its poor track record on climate change and renewable energy compared to other brands*
3. *What are the biggest barriers for NGOs to function as entrepreneurs to attract private sector investment?*
4. *Does Huawei also try to change its core business model to contribute positively to SDGs? Or is it more CSR initiatives on the side?*
5. *Has the public private partnerships has gone beyond CRS to creating ecosystem business models that are inclusive and profitable?*

A summary of the panelists’ responses to the above questions are available in the next few pages.



1.How do we get long term sustainable policies when we have short term structures of political power?

Summary of Stefanos' response:

Long term sustainable policies are definitely a challenge but achievable with healthy participation from all stakeholders at all levels. Change is also needed at all levels to ensure efficient delivery of services. One way in which ESCAP emphasizes strengthening institutional capacities is by cooperating with United Nations entities and other intergovernmental organizations in the region. Strengthening regulatory and institutional frameworks also result in better long term policies.



Stefanos Fotiou

1.Does Huawei also try to change its core business model to contribute positively to SDGs? Or is it more CSR initiatives on the side?

Summary of Holy's response:

Huawei is committed to support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and we also work closely with partners up and down the supply chain to create a sustainable Better Connected World.

One example of Huawei's commitment is the Huawei Supplier Social Responsibility Code of Conduct. It has been developed in response to the needs of customers and integrated with the CSR assessments and standards in Huawei's supplier qualification program. Huawei requires suppliers to comply with all the applicable laws and regulations as a prerequisite for cooperation with Huawei. We also encourage suppliers to draw on internationally recognized standards and best practices to improve their standards of CSR management in an ongoing way.



Holy Ranaivozanany

2.When is CSR more than greenwash? Huawei, for e.g., has been called out for its poor track record on climate change and renewable energy compared to other brands

Summary of Holy's response:

Almost every company around the world is facing social as well as global economic challenges. In addition to seeking growth and profits, companies are now expected to fulfill more social and environmental responsibilities. We firmly believe that close internal as well as external collaboration with upstream and downstream industry players can result in a robust business ecosystem. In the area of energy, Huawei follows a strategy of "Green Pipe, Green Operations, Green Partner, Green World". Exploring innovative ways to maximize products' energy utilization as well as efficiency are critical to the company's success. At the same time, we aim to minimize our carbon footprint and negative environmental impacts. In addition, we invest in innovative green initiatives to provide energy-saving products and green ICT technologies that empower all industries – and even society as a whole – to decrease carbon emissions.

1.To attract more private sector investments, what are the biggest barriers for NGOs to train entrepreneurs?

Summary of Madhushree's response:

NGOs work towards creating a conducive ecosystem to imbibe the spirit of entrepreneurship within the local communities, empowering them and at the same time building a sense of ownership towards the particular business model.

When looking for private sector investment, embedding the component of entrepreneurship is essential. For an NGO, there are two big barriers when it comes to developing an entrepreneurship program – financial and human capital. Handling the financial capital required to facilitate capacity building and building entrepreneurial management skills of the local community. While access to finance is critical to the creation and development of a scalable business model, it is the management of this capital by the NGO that is of prime importance to the private sector.

Similarly, ensuring that the NGO has a fairly large geographical reach is another attribute private sector pays attention to. This is not just to look into the scalability of the business model, but also to build and maintain a qualified workforce which will sustain (maintenance and monitoring) the initiative on a long term basis.

2. Has the public private partnerships gone beyond CSR to creating ecosystem business models that are inclusive and pro table?

Summary of Madhushree's response:

CSR still plays a catalytic role urging businesses to look at inclusive development along their value chain. However, the transition from creating inclusive business models to instead creating an inclusive business ecosystem is rightly taking prominence. Incorporating the sustainable development goals into their business strategy, more private players are looking at addressing the issue of scalability by looking into the systemic gaps which often the cause for failure.

“Business ecosystem” in this context refers to the independent players who determine the success of an inclusive business model. Therefore an ecosystem approach is preferred over a business model approach. When all these players are involved and, the challenges such as ineffective regulation, lack of knowledge, inadequate infrastructure etc are addressed to ensure social and financial well-being of all the stakeholders within the ecosystem.



Madhushree Narayan

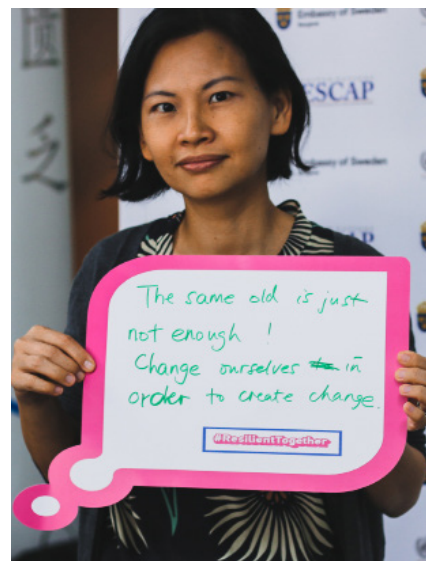
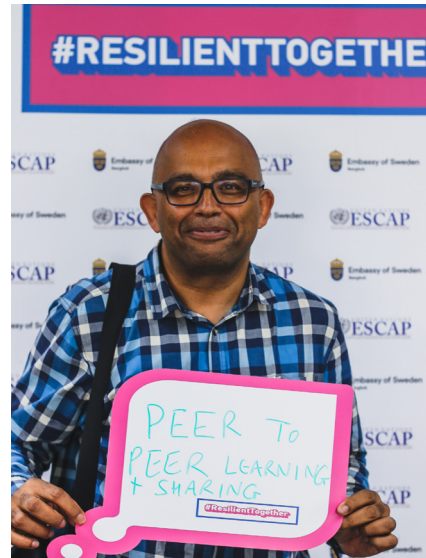
2.2-5 Learning Carousel, Retrospective & Peer based Goal Setting

After the interactive panel discussion, participants were given another chance to learn key participatory skills from each other using the Learning Carousel. In this session, a moving conversation allowed participants to seek and participate in learning conversations whose topics were chosen in connection with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Finally, after two busy days of ideas, interactions and participatory solutions, it was time for the participants to reflect and look back. The retrospective session gave participants the opportunity to visualize their journey from the beginning of the workshop till its end and think about the most important insights they would like to take away.

After reflecting on their journey, participants were nudged to set actionable goals for the year ahead in one-on-one discussions with collaborators.

The draft key messages were presented at the end of the day and participants were invited to comment or add to the content of the messages. The final key messages document aimed to summarise the the workshop's broad discussions into proposed actions to convey to the governments in the APFSD.



3. SIDE EVENT

PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES FOR RESILIENCE

Ideas and Experiences from a Meeting of Regional Partners in the Asia-Pacific

Contributors: Anne-Charlotte Malm, Daniel Klasander, Embassy of Sweden, Bangkok
 Rakesh Kasturi, The DO School

The side event, moderated by Rakesh Kasturi, from The DO School, focused on translating the insights from the Annual Regional Workshop into an experiential conversation for guests. In order to achieve this, the Creative Tensions format was chosen: a collective conversation, expressed in movement, wherein participants reveal where they stand on an issue by where they stand in the room.

Key messages and actions compiled at the end of the workshop were translated into a combination of a statement and a spectrum, that were explored by participants at the side event.

The collaborative approach conveyed a diversity of thought and perspective across players in civil society and local and international organisations. It became very apparent the particular types of challenges and priorities that affected the different players. Conveyed the intersectionality of the challenges besetting the various players. Even when participants were diametrically opposed on the spectrum, they had the opportunity to articulate and discuss with each other their particular viewpoints.

The following questions were debated in the side event:

- » Participation needs to be facilitated by...governments (or) communities
- » Policies can be designed...with people (or) for people
- » Participation is usually...quantitative (or) qualitative
- » Resilience building is influenced by...defining participation (or) defining outcomes but leaving participation open
- » Diversity of stakeholders...enhances (or) disrupts
- » Governments identify and train stakeholders to encourage participation...agree (or) disagree
- » In order to build resilience...build capacity first (or) demonstrate that the participatory model works first
- » Corruption impacts participation as an...enabler (or) disabler
- » Performance incentives for participation...include (or) exclude
- » Meaningful participation relies heavily on...traditional media (or) community media
- » Taking action should be left to...UN agencies (or) agencies with experience in action.



4. VISUAL STATEMENTS

Participants were asked to share their views on the challenges they faced while working to make communities more resilient. The following visual statements were compiled as inspiring, motivating quotes highlighting the work done by partner organisations to promote resilience using participatory approaches:



"We are hoping that we can identify a better approach to bring the policy maker, the technical expert, and the representative from the local community to collaborate better and to come up with some good initiatives for the Mekong people."

Nhu Duong Hai,
Mekong River Commission, Laos

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"One of the challenges we face working with small island countries is the lack of resources and the capacity at the country level to take on board the good practices to promote, protect and fulfil human rights."

Rose Martin,
Human Rights Advisor,
South Pacific Community (SPC), Fiji

[#ResilientTogether](#)



"I think the whole agenda around participation is absolutely critical because when you talk about resilience, it has to be bottom up, it has to be inclusive, and it has to be gender sensitive."

Jyotiraj Patra, OXFAM Cambodia

[#ResilientTogether](#)



“One of the main challenges I face while working with communities is figuring out how to bring them together with other key stakeholders such as Government line agencies, and the private sector, so that they can reach their goals.”

Dr. Neera Shrestha Pradhan
International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Afghanistan

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I am especially excited this year to partner with UNESCAP, linking this workshop, the discussions and the co-creation with the Agenda 2030 process in the Asia-Pacific region.”

Staffan Herrström
The Ambassador of Sweden in Bangkok

#ResilientTogether



“True resilience for everyone can only be achieved through participatory, inclusive processes.”

Anne-Charlotte Malm,
Head of Development Cooperation
Embassy of Sweden Bangkok

#ResilientTogether



“We provide scholarships for women to study law in Cambodia in order to promote and push the number of female lawyers, female professionals, females in politics and in civil society in the future. We can already see some positive outcomes from our support over the last 6 years.”

Bun Sokseila,
Programme Officer,
Raoul Wallenberg Institute in Cambodia

#RESILIENTTOGETHER

5. TEXT STATEMENTS

Participants were asked to share insights and lessons while working to make communities more resilient. The following text statements were compiled as inspiring, motivating quotes highlighting the work done by partner organisations to promote resilience using participatory approaches:

Rama Kumari Paudel, RECOFTC

"The adaptive capacity of the community members is high and they are very sensitive to climate change."

"They have developed the community as a learning center and people from other areas, they come to learn about climate change."

"Women in the community know not only about adaptive capacity, they know much more than that."

"Women can take action to action to reduce gender inequality not only in Nepal, but in South Asia."

"Women are more vulnerable to climate change so if we support them we observe three major benefits; first is easier understanding of their capacity, second their empowerment and third reduce gender inequality."

Anna Francis Olsson, NIRAS & partners

"Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) is the tool to integrate environment in government plans."

Marc Goichot, WWF Mekong

"Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) is to make Environmental impact assessments (EIA) effective."

Phouy xay (Eddie) Sitthivanh, Ministry of Planning, Lao PDR

"SEA is quite important process because in Laos, high economics comes from natural resource, for example mining and hydro power. That is why SEA is very important to reduce environment impact."

Soe Naing , CF Chairman, Tanintharyi Region, Myanmar

"You can't prevent forest fire to happen. A project by RECOFTC on forestry was introduced where they combined different kind of training such as fire management, community establishment management and helped the communities get certificate from the forest department to own the land previous owned by the government."

Malin Oud, Raoul Wallenberg Institute

"We aim to educate about Human Rights, through Human Rights and for Human rights."

"Participation itself is Human Right."

"One should not assume that Human Rights education is by nature, participatory and inclusive. In fact, in our fields, often the ones researching and teaching on International Human Rights comes from Western Europe or the US and they are all men."

"One important issue we are working on is how to build capacity in Asia is to teach and do research on Human Rights."

Maeve Nightingale, IUCN

"The process of organization creates a critical mass that is also political, and enters the arena to have their voices heard."

"There needs to be mechanisms at the national level which recognizes local rights to manage local resources."

"As the capacity increases, the need for input starts declining."

"Resilience building is about bouncing back."

James Fahn, Earth Journalism Network/Internews

"The space for free press as a whole is closing around the world."

"Regional and global reach really helps if a story can't be published in one place, but it is important that the world knows about it - it can be published regionally on our sites."



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Bangkok



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