

Stakeholder Participation

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Climate Change Practice Note

Summary Recommendations

Stakeholders are at the center of climate change initiatives, be it women and their families, members of community based organizations, local and national level decision makers, or private sector actors. Climate change is a new topic for most stakeholders in Cambodia and therefore motivation for participation and engagement is still a challenge. However, it also presents an opportunity at all levels nonetheless. Participation in climate change initiatives is, in itself, not enough. Considerations must be made by all climate change practitioners concerning how to ensure that meaningful, constructive, and sustainable attention is given by stakeholders so that their interactions and actions bring positive changes. Cambodia Climate Change Alliance (CCCA) project experiences show that the interaction and collaboration of various stakeholders at any given time enables climate change adaptation to take root. However, more needs to be done to ensure that climate change initiatives are not simply implemented in an isolated sector specific manner that only addresses the interests of the sector specific stakeholders. Ideally these initiatives will be implemented in a manner that fosters cross sector and cross stakeholder engagement, collaboration, and coordination.

Cambodia's Climate Change Context

Cambodia's development challenges are many fold including historical, political, economic, social, and environmental. Climate change is expected to compound and amplify Cambodia's development challenges, stresses, and problems. Like other countries in Southeast Asia, Cambodia is expected to experience higher and more intense rainfall. The effects are likely to include periods of more severe freshwater scarcity as well as more frequent flooding, which may result in crop failures and food shortages. Coastal communities and eco-systems are likely to be affected by rising sea levels. Higher temperatures and humidity create conditions for increased incidences of malaria and dengue fever. Poor and marginalized communities, particularly women and children, are the worst affected.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SUPPORT CHANGE

In Support of Women and vulnerable groups

Women and men are affected by climate change differently and thus climate change initiatives require the application of a gender lens. Nevertheless, fostering collaboration between women and men in analyzing their context and environment as well as formulating corresponding responses may serve as a good model for addressing the gender paradigm of climate change. Building upon women's comparative strengths and leadership potential by empowering and supporting women in leading roles at all levels and equipping them to address rapidly changing contexts will also be vital. The following recommendations are also valid for vulnerable groups (elders, children, etc.)

What can climate change practitioners do?

- ◆ Ensure that gender analysis is done for all climate change actions and that women participate in decision making in order to design actions that best resonate with them.
- ◆ Support and design initiatives that enable women and men to take joint action on climate change, including

support for women's leadership.

- ◆ Link and network women across communities so that they can share their experiences and support each other.
- ◆ Gather the voices of women to capture the knowledge generated from climate change projects and share these at all levels including national level policy making.

In Support of Sub-National Actors

Local authorities play an important role in integrating climate change principles and practices into local development and investment plans. As deconcentration and decentralization take full effect, their role will be increasingly important in influencing decisions regarding interventions that support local development ambitions and efforts. Involving sub-national actors in climate change initiatives from the onset is a key to success in addition to fostering good collaboration and facilitation of information between sub-national actors, especially commune councils.

What can climate change practitioners do?

- Engage sub-national government actors at the onset of climate change project design and build upon partnership principles that reinforce collective decision making and collaborative efforts by all stakeholders at the sub-national level.
- Collectively define good working relationships among stakeholders at local levels and foster timely and appropriate information flows between actors.
- Review commune development and investment plans and work collaboratively with local authorities to ensure that projects which are introduced will add value to existing plans and initiatives.
- Collectively monitor the implementation of plans and budgets and support the strengthening of local governance by establishing clear and consistent guidelines to motivate and support sub-national actors.
- Enable provincial level authorities to provide technical support on climate change proofing standards to commune level officials when needed or when such skills are not available at the community level.

In Support of Community Based Groups, Organizations, Associations, and Networks

Community based groups, organizations, associations, and networks can be decisive in ensuring the sustainability of climate change initiatives. This is mainly because these local arrangements build ownership and trust amongst community members, foster the collective monitoring of contexts, and enhance learning and responses to opportunities and challenges in rapidly changing contexts. Furthermore, groups that come together on a broader scope, such as Help Age International's Older People's Associations, may provide for greater inclusion and sustained interest among its members and allow for an easier introduction to new initiatives for learning, including climate change. At the same time, practitioners should reflect on the time needed to build and sustain quality community groups with clear institutional arrangements that promote community ownership, accountability, and transparency.

What can climate change practitioners do?

- Implement climate change projects through community networks, groups, and associations that have been established prior to the introduction of climate change initiatives, as these can serve as a good catalyst to deliver climate change initiatives.
- Support networks and groups that pull together communities on a broad goal (i.e. older people's associations) rather than a narrow goal (i.e. a livestock raising group), as these may facilitate additional learning and may be sustainable for longer periods beyond the project intervention.
- Allow adequate time for the creation of new groups and networks and build members' capacities so that groups can function and remain sustainable for a long time. It is important to ensure that group structures are accountable and transparent to all members. Keep in mind that short term climate change projects may pull together people for the duration of the project but their relevance may disintegrate once the project concludes, especially if no additional follow up is planned.

In Support of National Level Policy Makers

The Royal Cambodian Government recognizes that climate change is a development issue which, if left unchecked, can have a profound impact on the future of its people. Thus, policies and practices must be conducive to climate change adaptation as well as mitigation efforts being delivered in the country. These include sector specific strategies as well as delivery plans for priority areas including agriculture, forestry and fisheries, health, education, water, energy, and infrastructure. Given the impact of climate change on women, consideration of their needs will be paramount. However, policy formulation alone will not be enough. The government needs to build strong capacity within national and local decision makers to deliver on policies in a way that brings about cross sector collaboration and coordination and fosters transparency and accountability.

What can climate change practitioners do?

- Involve policy makers from the start of project identification and design. Define policy makers' roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis projects and possible policy interventions.
- Capture best practices of various actors delivering climate change initiatives. Feed case studies and relevant information to policy makers and government actors in the form of policy notes for more efficient fact-based policy making.
- Provide opportunities for policy makers and other actors to collectively gain direct climate change intervention experiences through field visits and learning events.
- Support and monitor budget allocation to climate change intervention at the national and sub-national levels.

In Support of the Private Sector

The potential that the private sector brings to climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives must not be undervalued. To date, CCCA experiences show that the private sector plays a minimal and often stand alone role in supporting community adaptation initiatives, mostly as supplier of goods and services. Yet their potential to complement and support adaptation best practices in the long run cannot be underestimated. The green growth development initiative may serve as a good way to explore potential partnerships with the private sector on community based adaptation, for example as part of efforts to climate-proof agricultural supply chains, or to develop affordable, climate smart products for vulnerable households.

What can climate change practitioners do?

- ◇ Equip sub-national actors, especially provincial departments, with integrated climate change knowledge so that they can strengthen the quality of small scale infrastructure project implementation.
- ◇ Ensure that clear linkages are established between relevant actors, including the private sector, and communities to manage and upkeep small scale infrastructure projects in a sustainable manner.
- ◇ Engage and inform private sector actors on climate risk and the need to climate-proof their value chain for their own benefit.
- ◇ Undertake private sector analysis for climate change projects. Support communities to link directly to markets either as suppliers or buyers. For inputs, select companies and businesses that have a closer proximity to participating communities and have earned a good reputation for quality.
- ◇ Foster initiatives that build upon the principles of corporate social responsibility and partnership with the private sector. As a starting point, undertake learning initiatives that highlight the potential of private sector engagement in the context of climate change.

NEXT STEPS

Engage: While the participation of various stakeholders in climate change adaptation and mitigation projects is taking place, there is room to deepen their involvement. CCCA projects serve as excellent examples for building interest and fostering the learning of various actors. Furthermore, genuine engagement that embraces meaningful relationship building amongst key actors and incorporates participatory decision making may enhance the quality and sustainability of such projects.

Build Knowledge: Knowledge building serves as a good basis for bringing various stakeholders together. Building the capacity and knowledge about climate change awareness is a good starting point to fostering stakeholder participation. However, knowledge generation, capture, and dissemination should be purposefully and systematically integrated into government initiatives as well as development programs. Opportunities for communities and key stakeholders to learn and share must be paramount, while systems to capture knowledge must be established and supported by all. These systems must be simple, easy to use, and accessible to all.

Link, Collaborate, and Network: Climate change cannot be tackled in isolation by different sectors or stakeholders, be it government, donors, civil society, the private sector, or communities themselves. It requires collaborative approaches from different government sectors as well as other practitioners, including the private sector. Supporting and fostering cross sector learning and implementation is therefore an effective basis for climate change initiatives. Conducting an in depth stakeholder analysis can be a principal tool for establishing who performs what role as well as determining how linkages, collaboration, and networking can be further enhanced.

Finance: Climate change adaptation projects can produce a significant impact on the daily lives of affected communities. CCCA climate change projects are already a testament to what positive change small financial contributions can trigger. As communities build their knowledge about the effects of climate change and identify possible responses, they cannot be left alone to fend for themselves. Many CCCA project areas have already integrated climate change in commune development and investment plans. Financing and resourcing these and other initiatives will be essential in fostering continued motivation and more importantly in enabling communities to have a say in their own development for the future. The international community plays an important role in ensuring sufficient and timely financing for Cambodia's climate adaptation efforts. The government of Cambodia, in turn, plays an equally important role in ensuring that it equips itself with a sound mechanism to manage climate financing in a transparent and accountable manner.

The Summary Recommendations are taken from CCCA commissioned publication: Climate Change Practice Note – Stakeholder Participation, January 2014. For a full version of the document please visit www.camclimate.org.kh.

The Cambodia Climate Change Alliance (CCCA) was launched in February 2010 as a collaborative endeavor among development partners and the Royal Government of Cambodia to address climate change in the country. The initiative is led by the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and is supported by the European Union, the Governments of Denmark and Sweden, and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).



January 2014