

Strengthening capacities for sustainable coastal development

Coastal zones are rich, dynamic and diverse environments that provide opportunities for an ever increasing number of people. Over half of the world population is estimated to reside or work in coastal areas, a number steadily rising with urbanisation, migrations and population growth. Coastal zones are also sensitive areas, and managing increasing human pressure to sustain the diversity of ecosystem goods and services provided by coastal and marine environments has proven to be a complex and challenging task.

The difficulties posed by increasingly complex and compartmented governance systems were recognised more than six decades ago. Since then, efforts to improve coordination between stakeholders – public, private and civil society – have been at the core of initiatives to manage coastal and marine resources in a more sustainable manner. Sida has long acknowledged these efforts and promoted integrated approaches to sustainable coastal and marine governance in several of its programmes. One such programme, which acquired prominence over the past five years, is the International Training Programme on 'Integrated Sustainable Coastal Development' (ISCD). More than just a capacity development intervention, this programme has served as a forum for stakeholders from different countries to exchange their knowledge and experiences of coastal development.

Commissioned by Sida two ISCD programmes were organised by NIRAS Indevlop in partnership with Gothenburg University: a global programme directed at countries in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, delivered jointly with the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Organisation (WIOMSA); and a programme for five countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, delivered jointly with the Royal Marine Conservation Society of Jordan (JREDS) and the Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med). In line with



Photo: Sida

Sida's International Training Programme concept, the ISCD programmes were designed to promote change in organisations involved in coastal zone development through training of professionals from Swedish cooperation countries.

The overall objective of the programme was to contribute to an integrated sustainable development of coastal zones in which the needs and rights of poor people are taken into account. Broader stakeholder engagement and stronger accountability mechanisms have been key issues in all programme components. Through changes in their own attitudes and behaviours, as well as the results of their individual projects, ISCD alumni have brought about improvements in their organisations and their countries.

SAMPLE OF RESULTS

The results at the organisational and institutional levels in the ISCD partner countries reflect the multiplicity of sectors and organisations active on the coastal zone, and which have been selected to the programme. One participant from Bangladesh for example established an agreement between the Bangladesh Water Development Board and local community organisations for these to conduct periodic monitoring and small repairs of shoreline protection infrastructure. This not only provided work and income opportunities for community members, but also reduced total maintenance costs.

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“Some very powerful examples of how the programme contributed to personal relations building and collaboration between organisations are the protocol signed between the Shore Protection Authority and Alexandria University, and the memorandum of understanding and cooperation developed between the Shore Protection Authority and the Coastal Research Institute.”

Prof. Aly El-Bahrawy, Ain Shams University, Egypt, ISCD-MENA national facilitator

In another example, a Lamu County Assembly member used her ISCD project to elaborate a bill on stakeholder participation in planning processes. Once approved, the act will apply to new developments affecting Kenya's northernmost coastal county. Because participation is meaningless without information, two ISCD participants from the Preah Sihanouk Province administration in Cambodia worked together to set up a social media-based platform for the local planning office to disclose information to the public about plans and projects affecting the coastal zone.

A Tunisian participant from the Bizerte Governorate set out to address the challenges of insufficient power and resources often faced by local government authorities when trying to manage the coast in a participatory and integrated manner. Aiming at a new distribution of roles between central and local level authorities, he carried out a series of activities for the five municipalities surrounding Lake Bizerte

to coordinate their actions to protect and rehabilitate the lake, including the drafting of an inter-municipal agreement. Better understanding and harmonisation of the roles of the different coastal stakeholders is something that not only ISCD participants, but especially Sida is committed to through its different programmes across the globe.

Sida's International Training Programmes

Sida's International Training Programmes aim to support and strengthen the participants' own plans for change on organisational and sectoral levels. The programmes cover areas of strategic importance to the social, environmental and economic development of co-operating countries and are based on identified priorities and needs.

The Sida financed International Training Programme ITP 286 Integrated Sustainable Coastal Development (ISCD), has been implemented between 2011 and 2016. In total four programmes have been provided for approximately 100 participants from five countries in the Middle East and North Africa. In Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, nine programmes have been directed at 12 countries making it possible for 250 participants to work on an individual change project within its organisation. The participants came from a wide range of organisations such as government ministries and public authorities/agencies at national and subnational levels, research institutes and universities, NGOs and private companies.

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