Dear partners in development,

We are very pleased to present this Directory of Development Cooperation Initiatives in Asia and the Pacific. The directory gives an overview of regional cooperation initiatives, supported through the Strategy for Sweden’s regional development cooperation in Asia and the Pacific Region. These regional organisations, programmes and projects have one thing in common: they all aim to contribute to a sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific where the environment and human rights are protected and respected. The many initiatives presented in the following pages show the wide range of development work and results produced by dedicated actors in the region. They demonstrate how it is possible and fruitful to work regionally in an integrated way with human rights, democracy, gender equality, environment and climate change. We also hope that the directory will inspire to further cooperation and new partnerships, working strategically for more effective delivery of programs and good results.

We wish to thank all our partner organisations for all good work and collaboration over the years, and for making this publication happen.
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THE ASEAN CSR FELLOWSHIP

AT A GLANCE

Founded in December 2010, ASEAN CSR Network (ACN), an accredited ASEAN entity, is a regional network that promotes responsible business conduct to achieve a sustainable, equitable and inclusive ASEAN Community. Its vision is to create a responsible business community that makes ASEAN a better place to live for all.

ACN creates change by influencing and working with different actors, ranging from ASEAN bodies and ASEAN member states to the private sector, civil society and international organisations who have the power to improve the way businesses operate. It provides a platform for networking and cooperation at the ASEAN level, supports capacity building and training activities, helps catalyse thought leadership and collective action on key issues including business integrity, business and human rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability, and provides a link with regional and international bodies interested in supporting the advancement of responsible business in the region.
25-40
Age range of ASEAN professionals rights for the fellowship

1
Top programmes

15
Fellows from eight ASEAN neighbour countries

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

In 2017, a total of 15 fellows from eight ASEAN countries were chosen for the fellowship with the following expected outcomes:

1. A new network of “internal champions” across ASEAN made up of leading CSR practitioners in various fields, including business, government and civil society.

This will be supported by a valuable platform for peer learning and sharing, an alumni network for fellows to support each other throughout their CSR careers. The network will also promote ACN’s agenda in ASEAN as fellows advocate to their peers in their home countries and act as a valuable point of contact, providing an honest voice on ground realities in their home countries.

2. Guidance for fellows while they do their Capstone Project and mentorship as their projects develop into more ambitious initiatives.

The Capstone Project allowed fellows to put their CSR knowledge and experience into practice. The project follows similar criteria and scope as ACN’s Small Grants Fund, which focuses on advocacy, capacity building, collective action or research and publication projects. Some examples of ideas from the 2017 fellowship included a mobile app to provide factory workers in Vietnam with offline information about their labour rights based on the country’s employment laws, a programme in Singapore to encourage businesses to consider a more robust CSR strategy and a financial inclusion programme in the Philippines to facilitate lending to small and medium enterprises.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The programme is committed to building capacity on responsible business practices that have human rights, the environment and ethical concerns integrated into business operations. The internationally-accepted standards on responsible business such as the UN Global Compact’s 10 Principles have been included in the core curriculum of the programme. These standards directly encourage the private sector’s contribution to human rights, gender equality, the environment and climate change.

In addition, the programme recognises mutual interaction of these issues in three ways:

1) Fellows gain an understanding of global challenges, from land rights to sustainable production, in four different ASEAN countries. As a result, fellows quickly understand that these issues are interlinked and often mutually reinforced.

2) The Capstone Project delivered by each fellow also often addresses issues related to the environment, gender equality and human rights. For example, the top Capstone Project for 2017 was an responsible agricultural investments covered issues such as environmental sustainability and labour rights.

3) The alumni network set up also allows for continued learning and sharing of resources among practitioners from diverse backgrounds, including land rights activists and environmental management managers, fostering cross-sector understanding and collaboration.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

To promote regional understanding, the programme connects CSR practitioners with various ASEAN organisations. For example, fellows visited the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta and learned about key ASEAN strategies such as the ASEAN 2025 Blueprint, led by staff from the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, Fellows also met with three country representatives from the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) - Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines, and attended the ASEAN Inclusive Business Summit co-organised by the ASEAN Business Advisory Council. Throughout all activities, fellows had several opportunities to connect with the ASEAN intergovernmental mechanism.

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ASEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR REGIONAL ACTIONS ON DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ASEAN (PRADHA)

AT A GLANCE

Asean Parliamentarians for Human Rights (APHRI) was founded in June 2013 with the objective of promoting democracy and human rights in Southeast Asia. It represents a regional response to human rights concerns, utilising the specific characteristics and abilities of parliamentarians and former parliamentarians to advocate for the protection of human rights throughout ASEAN.

APHRI’s founding members include many of the region’s most progressive parliamentarians with a proven track record of human rights advocacy work.

APHRI is guided by the assumption that parliamentarians who are engaged in APHR events, connected to a wider network of lawmakers, civil society and other stakeholders across the region and are supported by a strong and effective secretariat and staff will be able to effectively use their unique positions, including their representative and advocacy capacities, to strengthen human rights and democracy regionally, leading to improved human rights protections and diminished violations.

PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR REGIONAL ACTIONS ON DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ASEAN (PRADHA)

APHRI seeks to create an ASEAN region that allows space for people to live in dignity, free from all forms of discrimination and violence, where human rights are at the center of development, and strong national and regional institutions exist that are transparent and accountable to the people.

Its objectives is to provide significant contribution to the shaping of regional responses on human rights and democracy in Southeast Asia by parliamentarians exercising their role on representation and advocacy, especially for those who are vulnerable and marginalised, and by providing oversight on democracy and human rights in Southeast Asia.

To meet the objective, the following key activities have been implemented under the programme:

- Regional response and advocacy
- Network building and partnerships
- Capacity building for parliamentarians
- Institutional strengthening
Effective monitoring and response to serious human rights issues and violations using APHR’s advocacy and intervention strategies

Over the past three years, APHR has maintained its unique approach to regional human rights concerns, increasing the organisation’s visibility and credibility, as well as that of its members, with key decision-makers and the wider public.

A series of private meetings for APHR members and parliamentarians were organised across 17 countries and three continents.

In terms of visibility, APHR was mentioned 546 times in local, regional and international media, including in the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Guardian and Wall Street Journal. Between January and October 2017, APHR recorded 244 media citations in 2014 and 227 in 2015. From January to October 2017, APHR also released a total of 34 statements, 12 joint statements and 13 press releases, as well as hosting 7 press conferences and releasing one report.

Strengthened capacities and network of APHR members in addressing human rights issues at regional and national levels.

APHR membership has grown more than 10-fold over the course of the first three years of the project, with 80 official members across eight Southeast Asian countries by the end of 2017. Over this period, APHR has developed into a strongly connected network of parliamentarians mutually supporting one another in the struggle to advance human rights and democracy in the face of rising authoritarianism and specific human rights threats against parliamentarians themselves.


diagram

Workshops and seminars were hosted with an aim to build the capacity of parliamentarians to advance a range of human rights issues. Numerous fact-finding missions were also conducted including two missions to Myanmar, to explore religious freedom issues and human rights situations in Rakhine State and Kachin State and a mission to Cambodia to look into large-scale investments and their human rights and environmental impact.

Improved collaboration and partnerships with key human rights actors, mechanisms and policymakers at global, regional and national levels.

APHR is increasingly becoming the “go-to” body in Southeast Asia among a wide range of stakeholders working to promote human rights in Southeast Asia.

The APHR network includes: civil society organisations and individuals, national human rights institutions (NHRI); UN agencies; ASEAN secretariat bodies; governments, both within and outside of the ASEAN region; donor agencies; foreign embassies and missions; international organisations and parliamentary groupings; and other parliamentarians, former parliamentarians and influential persons and policy drivers.

APHR ensures cross-cutting issues such as human rights, democracy, gender equality and the environment are addressed in all APHR work.

The organisation locates gender and environment sensitive indicators, to support the planning, monitoring and evaluation of the project to better guide the organisation in its work.

Gender mainstreaming strategies have been adopted. In membership, APHR always try to achieve gender balance. As of November 2017, representing only 9% difference between the male and female members.

Achieving gender balance in APHR is a success in itself to ensure equal participation of all sexes to give a balanced and gender-sensitive direction to APHR’s work.
SUPPORT TO THE ASIA PACIFIC FORUM OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (NHRIS)

FOCUS AREAS:

HUMAN RIGHTS	DEMOCRACY	GENDER EQUALITY	ENVIRONMENT	CLIMATE CHANGE

APF AT THE NUMBERS:

24
Core and associate members as of 2017, including NHRIs of Bangladesh and Iraq

18
Training activities organised during 2016–2017

276
NHRIs representatives took part in diverse range of training topics. Of the total, 53% are female

AT A GLANCE

All people should have a right to live with dignity, free from violence and discrimination. The Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) works hard to protect and promote human rights across Asia Pacific region. A sustainable way to achieve this goal is to support the establishment of national human rights institutions (NHRIs) – independent statutory bodies with a mandate to promote and protect human rights. The agency believes that strong and effective NHRIs will vigorously advocate and defend human rights and deliver tangible changes to improve lives.

For more than 20 years APF has grown by leaps and bounds, reflected in an increasing number of members from only four since its establishment in 1994 to 26 members from all corners of the region in 2017.

SUPPORT TO THE ASIA PACIFIC FORUM OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (NHRIS)

A key objective of the APF is to increase the number of NHRIs in the region that are established in compliance with the United Nations and international standards for human rights. To ensure that each NHRi is well-governed and functions effectively in the area of complaints, education, monitoring, advocacy and reporting, the APF undertakes activities in the following five key areas: advising, networking, capacity-building, regional and international engagement, governance and promotion of gender equality.

The agency shares expertise in standardising human rights networking and cooperation among regional and international partners and stakeholders. Gender mainstreaming is implemented across all of the APF’s work.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

New Partnerships to Counter Violence and Discrimination
A series of ground-breaking APF-UNDP workshops has helped established country-level partnerships across the region to promote and protect the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people in Asia-Pacific.

Addressing the Root Causes of Family Violence
A landmark national inquiry was launched by Samoa’s NHRI to address the widespread incidence of family violence in the Pacific Island nation. The APF provided financial and technical assistance to the NHRI to undertake this crucial work by conducting a ground-breaking national inquiry into family violence.

Participation in UN Bodies
NHRRs have been recognised and included in the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing as independent participants. As a result, NHRRs can contribute directly to and deliberate the content of a possible convention on the rights of older persons.

Stronger NHRRs Building Fairer Communities
Growing the capacity of NHRRs and APF members to deal with the challenges they face is a core outcome of the APF’s key trainings, advice, networking and other services. The APF seeks to make a meaningful difference, with direct benefits for people in countries across the Asia Pacific region.

Growing APF Membership
Membership of the APF grew to 26 as of 2017, with the NHRRs of Bahrain and Iraq admitted as the latest associate members.

Widespread Support for Rights Bodies in the Pacific
Consultations in Tuvalu, Nauru, the Cook Islands and the Marshall Islands have shown strong support for the establishment of NHRRs that could help to address human rights challenges in these Pacific States. A bill to establish an NHRI in Tuvalu, which the APF helped to draft, has recently been passed by that nation’s parliament.

Equip NHRR Staff with New Skills
The APF organised training activities during 2014-2017. A total of 274 NHRI representatives (59% female, 41% male) took part in these training programmes. The courses covered a diverse range of topics including rights of women and girls, LGBTI people, workers in the garment sector, people with disabilities, human rights and climate change, and monitoring economic, social and cultural rights.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Philippines
The APF has provided assistance to Commission on Human Rights working to help residents in communities adversely affected by the Carbon Majors, companies or business activities that are source of greenhouse gases emission. The Commission is investigating the matter on the basis of both domestic and international law.

Samoa
Financial and technical support enabled Samoa’s NHRI to conduct training sessions for the agency’s staff members working on national inquiry into gender violence seen as a critical social issue in the country. In December 2016, the country’s first national probe into gender violence was launched.

Pacific Islands
APF, communities and intergovernmental bodies work to establish NHRRs in order to protect the rights of people and address community-wide challenges. Consultation team members from Tuvalu, Nauru, the Cook Islands and the Marshall Islands showed strong support for establishment of a NHRI in their countries in the consultations. The agency also assisted in preparation of legislation to establish an NHRI in Tuvalu.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

Even though the human rights challenges across the region are vast, no regional court has yet been established as a protection system for people to voice their concerns about human rights and related issues. Hence the agency and stakeholders aim to support the establishment of independent NHRRs in the region to tackle pressing regional human rights challenges.

Continuous discussion over the issue of human rights during the Pacific Islands Forum and ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights in Southeast Asia reflects the importance of intergovernmental mechanisms in driving regional cooperation to seek solutions to the challenges.
A SUPPORT ACROSS APWLD’S NINE PROGRAMMES AND SEVERAL CROSS-CUTTING INITIATIVES

To tackle challenges facing women’s rights, nine programmes are launched in a bid to build the capacity, knowledge, opportunities and movements of Asia Pacific women, particularly of the most marginalised. The nine programmes are comprised of: 1) Breaking out of Marginalisation (BOMM) 2) Climate Justice (CJ) 3) Feminist Development Justice (FDJ) 4) Feminist Law and Practice (FLP) 5) Grounding the Global (GGG) 6) Labour-Women Organising (LWO) 7) Migration 8) Women in Power (WIP) and 9) Women Interrogating Trade and Corporate Hegemony (WITCH).

During the strategic plan of 2017-2021, these programmes were designed to strengthen feminist movements particularly of the most marginalised groups at all levels. They are also amplifying influence, impact, and voice of Asia Pacific women as well as facilitating evidence-based research and tools for advocacy. APWLD uses these activities as key approaches to build the capacity of women’s rights organisations and activists using rights-based perspectives and interrogating the intersection of patriarchy, globalisation, fundamentalisms and militarisation.

APWLD’s high-achieving main strategy in conducting above initiatives is using Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR), an extensive research aimed at creating a powerful change through both personal and organisational capacity. Conducted by rural, indigenous, immigrant and urban poor women together with their organisations and local communities, the FPAR strategy enables young women to document their issues, develop agendas and drive for structural solutions that will collectively improve their lives through participatory and practical approaches such as Theory of Change, Power Mapping and Critical Pathway Planning.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

During 2015-2017, APWLD successfully conducted capacity building in analysing, organising, advocating and driving social changes for over 4,000 feminists, women’s rights advocates, and partner organisations particularly from grassroots and marginalised women communities from 27 countries in Asia Pacific. APWLD also has equipped them with over 100 new feminist tools and resources of knowledge.

The women’s voices in Asia Pacific has been amplified through APWLD’s support to at least 140 grassroots feminist and women’s rights activists to participate in over 35 high-level advocacy stages and negotiations.

Nineteen regional and international initiatives, networks of alliances to advance women’s human rights and Development Justice including intergovernmental platforms are led by APWLD’s members to foster and build new alliances, networks and collaborations.

WORKING REGIONALY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

FPAR has been proven to be an effective tool to deliver outcomes and capacity building at both personal and organisational levels. Several groups of marginalised women amplify their voices, access to wider space and foster new movements. For examples, with FPAR method, the Urdu-speaking Bhutan women in Bangladesh who committed to ending gender-based violence and increasing women’s political power, were able to set up a meeting with local communities and participate in policy decision-making. APWLD’s partners in Myanmar advocated for an amendment to China customary law to ensure women’s equal rights to inheritance, marriage and divorce. Several APWLD’s partners in Indonesia, India and Taiwan also successfully used the FPAR method to engage in policy discussion, women’s rights defending and forming alliances.

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REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

APWLD is a membership-based, driven network, particularly successful in influencing multiple regional and international spaces and mechanisms, including SDGs and the Paris Agreements in strengthening Asia Pacific women’s voices and feminist analysis.

In shaping and facilitating Asia Pacific women’s voices to influence regional and global policy makings, APWLD plays a crucial role as a co-chair of the Asia Pacific Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM), a civil society platform that coordinates civil society advocacy to reach sustainable development in the Asia Pacific region. Being built on the United Nations’ major groups while incorporating other constituencies and sub-regions and enabling cross-constituency coordination and solidarity; AP-RCEM ensures that voices of all sub-regions of Asia Pacific are heard in intergovernmental processes.

APWLD actively continues strategic engagement at regional and international mechanisms, including identifying existing and emerging opportunities from engaging with various organisations such as UNTACO, FAO’s Committee on Food Security, and UN Human Rights Council (HRC).

Left and above: APWLD members foster and build new alliances, networks and collaborations to advance women’s human rights.

4,000 feminists from grassroots and marginalised communities from 25 countries are trained.
27 FPAR projects have been created and fostered feminist movements.
10 grassroots and marginalised women’s organisations achieved tangible results in shaping policies, actions and laws and policies shifts.
160 grassroots feminist women’s rights activists were supported to engage in over 55 high-level advocacy opportunities.
100 new feminist tools and knowledge resources produced.
19 regional and international initiatives, networks or alliances have APWLD as an active leading participant.

22/23
The ADB was conceived in the early 1960s as a financial institution that would be Asian in character and foster economic growth and cooperation in the region. ADB is composed of 67 members, 48 of which are from the Asia and Pacific region. As a multilateral development finance institution, ADB provides loans, technical assistance, and grants to its member governments. Direct assistance is given to private enterprises of developing member countries through equity investments and loans. ADB facilitates policy dialogues, provides advisory services and mobilises financial resources through co-financing operations that tap official, commercial, and export credit sources.

**ADB’s Projects**

01 Cities Development Initiative for Asia (CDIA)  
02 Clean Energy Financing Partnership Facility (CEFPA)  
03 Core Environment Programme, and Biodiversity Conservation Corridor Initiative in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS)  
04 Implementing the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) Agriculture Programme Phase II  
05 Sustainable Development and Climate Change (SDDC) Brussels Development Support

**FOCUS AREAS:**

- HUMAN RIGHTS
- DEMOCRACY
- GENDER EQUALITY
- ENVIRONMENT
- CLIMATE CHANGE
CITIES DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE FOR ASIA (CDIA)

CDIA was born 10 years ago at the International Conference on “Investing in Asia’s Urban Future” in February 2007. Jointly organised by the German government and ADB, the conference was held to determine how new approaches can be used to better the lives of 1.4 billion people in the Asia Pacific. Of the total, more than half are the poor living in urban areas. Urban poverty is pervasive as it is trapped in deteriorating sanitation and environmental conditions, inadequate access to land, housing, infrastructure, service facilities and livelihood sources; and exposed to climate change risks.

CDIA’s objective is to enhance the institutional capacity of cities and partner organisations at the national and regional levels to prepare sustainable urban infrastructure investment projects, with focus on the development impacts of environmental improvement, climate change mitigation, adaptation, and good governance. Key activities can be categorised into the following three tracks:

**Bridging the capacity gap**
- Developing, updating and/or localising CDIA process tools that mainstream environment, climate change, pro-poor, gender and good governance.
- Training and supporting partner organisations in localising and using CDIA process and tools.
- Capacity building of cities in use of CDIA process and tools.

**Bridging the planning—financing gap**
- Supporting cities in managing the preparation of sustainable urban infrastructure investments projects.
- Preparing infrastructure investment projects with a demonstrable pro-poor focus.
- Preparing infrastructure investment projects for private sector participation and funding.

**Bridging the institutional gap**
- Documenting and disseminating innovative good practices.
- Developing and updating strategies to ensure linkages to national development processes and financing.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

To fulfill the “market niche” by supporting cities to bridge planning—financing gap through preparing and structuring their urban infrastructure investment projects, 138 cities have been provided with technical assistance across 18 countries in Asia and the Pacific as of September 2017. A total of 52 investment prioritisation exercises were conducted in 49 cities. Eighty-five pre-feasibility study interventions were conducted and covered 127 infrastructure projects. Of the total, 30 percent contribute to environmental management, 75 percent to poverty reduction and enhancing inclusiveness, 75 percent to good governance, 13 percent to climate change adaptation and 12 percent to climate change mitigation.

More than half of the cities which underwent investment prioritisation are in India, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Most of the priorities were related to urban transportation, water supply, wastewater management, flood and drainage management, and solid waste management. By financing institutions, half of the projects were linked to ADB, one-sixth were funded by local funding institutions, 6 percent were funded through private-public partnership and the rest are from development banks like IDB and World Bank.

In terms of capacity development, a total of 37 training courses for 727 participants have been conducted at city, country, and regional levels.

**CDIA by the Numbers**
- 138 Cities in 18 countries provided with technical assistance as of Sept 2017
- 52 Investment prioritisation exercises in 49 cities completed
- 85 Pre-feasibility study interventions completed

**US$ 6.8B**
Work of investment reported from 79 projects

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Apart from gender considerations mainstreamed in all interventions, CDIA’s support is also reflected in the following four development impact principles: Urban environments; sustainability; reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and helping cities prepare for local impacts of climate change.

- Climate change mitigation/adaptation focus is on pro-poor, in which the needs of the disadvantaged groups are addressed in infrastructure provision.
- Urban poverty reduction and inclusiveness.
- Good urban governance promoting financially and institutionally sustainable urban infrastructure investments to meet the needs of all citizens in cities, cognizant of social, cultural and political economy dimensions.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

Apart from the capacity building and project preparation study support to individual cities, the other added value of CDIA at the regional scale is its partnership with organisation of city governments to upscale CDIA approaches, innovations and good practices. These organisations include the United Cities United Cities and Local Governments—Asia Pacific (UCU-LGAS-PAC), Local Governments for Sustainability (LGFS); Regional Network of Local Authorities for the Management of Human Settlements (CityNet), and the Clean Air Initiative for Asia Cities (CAIA). CDIA together with regional partners organised training and advocacy activities for staff and city members so they can familiarise themselves with CDIA mechanisms, guidelines, training materials and advice on how to put into practice city development, Peer-to-peer learning is done through the Good Practice Laboratory on Effective Urban Infrastructure Programming. Completed city infrastructure project pre-feasibility studies are used as case studies.

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CDIA ambition is to enhance the institutional capacity of cities and partner organisations at national and regional levels to prepare sustainable urban infrastructure investment projects.
CLEAN ENERGY FINANCING PARTNERSHIP FACILITY (CEFPF)

The Clean Energy Financing Partnership Facility helps to provide financing to developing member countries (DMCs) to improve energy security and access and mitigate climate change through increased use of clean energy.

In the Solomon Islands, the multi-donor Clean Energy Fund (CEF) supports the Higher Education in the Pacific Investment Programme, contributing to the competitiveness and diversification of the Pacific nation’s economy. A grant of USD 1.6 million was provided from CEF for the installation of a solar PV system on the new campus of the University of South Pacific (USP). The campus will have a combination of renewable energy, solar power and power supply from the local power supply authority. The project includes:

- Construction of classrooms, laboratories and faculty and administrative facilities, all with solar energy support
- Enhancement of B-T based education
- Improvement of student support services
- Strengthening of USP governance and management
- Strengthening project management capacity of USP staff who will be involved in project implementation

The CEF grant supports the installation of a solar energy system, ensuring that USP will have a combination of renewable energy and local power supply. USP also offers technical vocational and training programmes for youth, including renewable energy maintenance that will be able to leverage the efforts of these inputs.
CEPF BY THE NUMBERS:

US$4B
Contribution to energy in the ADB's clean energy investment by 2020

US$270.7M
Actual contribution as of 2017, allocating to 177 projects.

9.4M
Tons of CO2 reduction per year.

1,569.4
Megawatts of renewable energy capacity installed

7
Tons of energy saved per year.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

The use of renewable energy for the USP campus reduces the load on the local power supply, lowering carbon emissions from diesel generators employed by a majority of local power providers. The campus serves as a demonstration site for replication by 13 other regional campuses. USP also offers technical vocational and training programmes for youth that include renewable energy maintenance, leveraging the efforts of these inputs.

The installed capacity is expected to be 650 kW while expected reduction in CO2 emissions will be around 400 tons each year. The project design has set a target for female students to enroll in degree programmes by 2020. The project will improve student support services at the USP Solomon Islands campus to provide extensive pre-enrolment information, employment advice and counseling services including skills assessment and work options, job search techniques and job placement services to link students to available opportunities and a USP alumni database.

The grant was approved in October 2014, and the contract with the Architectural Engineering Services and Construction Supervision Consultants was awarded in February 2017. Bids for civil works, including the EEF grant for the solar energy system, opened in October 2017. Construction for the university campus is anticipated to begin in early 2018, followed by completion of the solar energy system.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

CEPF seeks to address climate change, promote gender equality and environmental awareness, and provide access to energy and energy-related livelihoods to the poor. Beyond energy projects, it supports cross-sector development interventions. It targets a decrease in the rate of climate change by promoting clean energy and slowing CO2 emissions in developing member countries. Its framework monitors the CO2 emissions reduction, energy savings, installed renewable energy capacity and renewables generation as the use of clean energy is promoted by supported projects. In the Solomon Islands, improved access to quality higher education at USP will contribute to human resources and skills development in the Pacific, and will promote inclusive growth enabled by a more productive and diversified regional economy.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

To date, CEPF has allocated a total of US$77 million to regional projects, covering subregional and inter-regional operations projects.

Project results and lessons are shared across ADB's operations departments that form a part of the regional technical assistance programme provided to EMIs. Successful pilots become models for replication and scaling. Key private and government stakeholders participate in additional knowledge-sharing events that yield support of project development in their respective countries.

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Left and Above: Improved access to quality higher education at USP will contribute to human resources and skills development in the Pacific countries.
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME AND BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION CORRIDOR INITIATIVE IN THE GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION, PHASE II (CEP-BCI)

The project is an ADB regional capacity development technical assistance (TA) designed to implement the GMS’ Programme Framework document for the Core Environment Programme and Biodiversity Conservation Corridors Initiative Phase II during 2012-2016. It also aims to improve biodiversity conservation and climate resilience across the GMS and seeks to achieve the following four outputs:

Output 1: Improve environmental planning systems, methods and safeguards.
Output 2: Improve management of transboundary biodiversity conservation landscapes and local livelihoods.
Output 4: Improve institutions and financing for sustainable environmental management.

FOCUS AREAS:

- Human Rights
- Democracy
- Gender Equality
- Environment
- Climate Change
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

CEP has made significant achievements both regionally and in GMS member countries. Major achievements include:

- Stimulating environmental and climate investments: including (i) US $30 million for climate interventions including the Green Freight Initiative, 15 Forest Investment Programmes (FIPs), Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (PPCR), and Global Environment Facility (GEF) support for climate resilience in biodiversity conservation corridors, and (ii) US $70 million for biodiversity conservation investments.

- Promoting sustainability through policy and strategic planning support: by (i) strengthening technical capacity and developing regulatory frameworks for undertaking Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA), (ii) performing over 10 SEAs in economic corridors, land use management, and key sectors such as energy and tourism, (iii) the environmental and social screening of Regional Investment Framework (RIF) pipeline projects, (iv) achieving legal recognition and regulatory provisions for biodiversity conservation corridors, (v) enhancing technical and institutional capacity to monitor environmental performance, and (vi) supporting the development of national strategies for biodiversity conservation, environmental management, and pollution control, for example, Cambodia’s National Environmental Strategy and Action Plan, and the Pollution Control Strategy of the Laos.

- Capitalising knowledge and establishing information management and a sound decision support system: by (i) launching a GMS Information Portal, (ii) applying spatial multi-criteria analysis to RIF pipeline projects, (iii) embedding spatial analyses (land use modeling, ecosystem service valuation, mapping, etc.) into key strategic plans, (iv) undertaking climate vulnerability assessments in agri-firm communities, and (v) introducing an industrial pollution projection tool to strengthen pollution control policy and planning. So far, CEP has held over 500 capacity building events involving over 13,000 technical staff from the government and other stakeholders.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER INEQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

CEP has been contributing to safeguarding the environment by (i) strengthening environmental governance, capacity to mainstream environment in sector development through better strategic environmental planning and safeguards support and (ii) instituting improvements in social and gender inclusiveness environment and climate change projects.

CEP ACHIEVEMENTS BY THE NUMBERS

- 3,000 community residents benefited, 50% of them are women

US $70M investment in biodiversity corridor conservation in three major priority corridor projects

US $20M investment in climate resilience

10 Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) in projects, like economic corridors, land use, energy, and tourism sectors

500 capacity building projects with 13,000 technical staff from governments and stakeholders from GMS countries to be trained

Strategic Planning and Safeguards

CEP continues to support the GMS countries in developing and strengthening their environmental policies and strategies, recent major initiatives include leading support to Cambodia to develop a National Environmental Strategy and Action Plan, developing a national pollution control strategy and a presidential provision on environmental taxation in Laos, and to Vietnam for a new Circular on Environmental Protection Planning.

CEP also played a lead role in supporting Myanmar in creating its Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) system approved by Cabinet in early 2016. Support on the finalisation of EIA technical guidelines continues.

These activities have created an enabling environment, Decision support system was improved, strengthening overall environmental governance to ensure fundamental human rights such as access to access to a healthy ecosystem and a safer environment.

Investing in Natural Resources

CEP provides ongoing support for biodiversity conservation in three major transboundary biodiversity landscapes: the Mekong Headwaters (PRC/Myanmar/Laos), the Sino-Vietnam Karst landscape (PRC/Vietnam), and the Cardamom and Elephant Mountains landscape (Thailand and Cambodia).

CEP supports the improvement of the design and implementation of REDD+ at the local level through capacity building targeting local level stakeholders focusing on pro-poor equitable benefit sharing systems. The encouraging progress in Laos on community-based MAR and guidelines for REDD+ benefit sharing piloted in 13 communities in Attapeu Province.

CEP also promoted the role of Climate Risk Financing in climate change adaptation strategies for rural communities in the GMS. Initial work was a stocking exercise to identify viable local-level financial instruments and strategies that could provide households with financial protection. The findings of the study were summarised in a publication entitled "Risk Financing for Rural Climate Resilience in the Greater Mekong Subregion".

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The transboundary collaboration under the CEP has gained momentum since the first Regional Biodiversity Landscapes Forum was held as a part of the Fourth GMS Environment Minister Meeting (EMM) in 2015.

Two memoranda of understanding (MOUs) have been signed to strengthen collaboration in managing the Sino-Vietnam Karst and Mekong Headwaters landscapes. One was signed in May 2015 between Guangxi, PRC and Cao Bang, Vietnam, and the other in September 2015 between Yunnan, PRC and I Luang Namtha, Laos.

These MOUs focus on developing a joint management strategy for transboundary conservation and work together on creating new biodiversity protection areas and corridors, collaborating on research, assessments and monitoring, and conducting awareness-raising and capacity building activities. These collaborative mechanisms provide a solid foundation and mandate for scaling up collaboration.

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CEP has been contributing to safeguarded environment by strengthening governance and capacity.

CEP provides ongoing support for biodiversity conservation corridors in the Greater Mekong Subregion.
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION (GMS) AGRICULTURE PROGRAMME PHASE II

The ADB regional policy and advisory technical assistance (TA) programme was scheduled to be carried out between 2012 and 2018 in a bid to create a more integrated and climate-friendly agricultural sector in the GMS through the following outputs:

• Strengthened regional policy framework and capacity for agri-food quality management
• Established electronic trade of environment-friendly agri-food production of smallholders
• Increased adoption of gender-responsive and climate-friendly agriculture
• Facilitated knowledge management and dissemination
• Strengthened regional cooperation on agriculture in the GMS

To achieve the goal, the key activities of the project can be categorised as follows:

Strengthened regional policy framework and capacity for agri-food quality management
Regional capacity for agri-food product assurance should be built at the farm level, including organic and other kinds of certification. Trainings are provided for farmers and trainers. At least two pilot studies on participatory guarantee system and six pilot studies on value chains are carried out based on suitable farm assurance and electronic traceability systems.

Established electronic trade of environmentally friendly agri-food production of smallholders
Studies on eco-friendly products and consumer preferences on agri-products will be carried out at the start and end of the project. GMS capacity on e-trade platforms will be reviewed to identify opportunities and challenges and capacity building for a suitable e-trade framework. Regional consultations with stakeholders on the role of the agriculture information network service (AINS) in the marketing and trade of eco-friendly products will be conducted.
Increased adoption of gender-responsive and climate-friendly agriculture

Proposals for innovative financing mechanisms will be developed to scale up pilot projects in rice and other climate-friendly agri-products. Facilities and mechanisms for private sector engagement will ensure their participation in climate-friendly agri-products. Publications and multimedia products, including a DVD animation in local languages, will be developed for poor and illiterate female farmers. Gender-sensitive forums, extension services, and training programmes on climate change adaptation are organized with an aim to build and strengthen farmers’ groups. Regional studies on nitrogen-efficiency and other related activities are also conducted. Capacity building activities relating to efficient use of nitrogen fertilizers, nitrogen-cycle management and policy forums on green water management for stakeholders will be organized.

Facilitated knowledge management and dissemination

Regional studies will be conducted, upgrading ANIS to become an electronic knowledge platform and identifying centers of excellence for agriculture to facilitate knowledge exchange among experts and stakeholders. Piloted social network programmes will be implemented for knowledge exchange and preparation of distance-learning, related materials and training modules for efficient use of nitrogen and green water and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Strengthened regional cooperation on agriculture in the GMS

The plan includes convening 10-12 Working Group on Agriculture (WGA) meetings, establishing national GMS secretariats in each country, and building a framework for improved coordination among the countries. Consultation meetings with development partners and private sector businesses for resource mobilization will be conducted, with coordination with working groups on environment, trade and transport, and tourism to identify areas for collaboration.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

The Core Agriculture Support Programme (CASP) continued its efforts to improve agricultural productivity and efficiency, with a focus on pilot projects and demonstrations. The programme aimed to increase farmers’ access to technology and inputs, as well as to improve the sustainability of agricultural production.

Some highlights include:

- Increased adoption of climate-friendly practices in rice production
- Improved access to inputs and technology
- Enhanced farmer organization and capacity building
- Increased awareness and adoption of sustainable land use practices

The programme also focused on gender-responsive agriculture, with an emphasis on empowering women and improving their access to resources and information.

GROSS AGRICULTURE VALUE-ADDED AS % OF GDP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>20.67</td>
<td>20.68</td>
<td>20.69</td>
<td>20.70</td>
<td>20.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: World Bank

GMS INDICATORS: Source: ADB, BIS, PRD Data Center, and UNCTAD

- 3,618,093 SQ KM
- 234M POPULATION
- 7.5% Average annual growth rate of GDP (2000-2014)
- 12.3% Average growth in merchandise exports (2000-2014)
- 11.5% Average growth in merchandise imports (2000-2014)
- 3.9B GMS Intra-regional trade (2014)
- 413B GMS Intra-regional trade (2014)

The successful Second GMS Agriculture Ministers’ Meeting held in September 2017 recommended the GMS Agriculture Ministers after a decade since the first meeting. The ministers endorsed the strategy for promoting safe and environment-friendly agrifood value chains in the Greater Mekong Subregion and Slim Food Action Plan 2014-2022, reinforcing collective commitment to CASP’s vision for the GMS to become a leader producer of safe and environment-friendly agriculture products through a value chain integration involving smallholder farmers, rural women, and small and medium agri-enterprises.

The programme is working to harmonize food safety policies to ensure consumers and producers protection in an inclusive and sustainable manner. Ongoing work for the next phase of CASP is underway to support the implementation of the recently-endorsed strategy.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

ADB works closely with the ministries of agriculture to enhance market access for environment-friendly agricultural products. It works to achieve a more integrated climate-friendly agricultural sector in the GMS by:

- Providing the enabling environment
- Empowering women through participation in the programme activities and enhancing women’s capacity to be more resilient to climate change
- Minimizing environmental risk through adoption of gender-responsive and environment-friendly agriculture practices.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

CASP implements activities through letters of agreement between ADB and the GMS agriculture ministries, which contributes to the modernization of a resilient and productive agricultural economy. The project collaborates with the United Nations, the Asian Development Bank, FAO, and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to promote the trade of GMS geographical indications. Collaboration with FAO also focuses on a participatory agreement, capacity-building activities and geographic indications.

The CASP has initiated a partnership between the Food Industry Asia (AFA), a non-profit industry association that represents and promotes the views of multinational agriculture leaders in the food and beverage sector, and FAO. CASP works to achieve sustainable agricultural development in the GMS and to promote the use of sustainable agricultural practices.

The collaboration with FAO will enhance the skills of scientists and farmers in the GMS and the international community.

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Consultation meetings with stakeholders and other interested parties are also conducted.
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE (SDCC)’S INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

This five-year regional technical assistance project aims to promote greater awareness of and investment in inclusive business in ADB developing member countries.

ADB defines Inclusive Business (IB) as a business entity that generates high development impact by improving access to goods and services for low-income populations, and providing income and employment opportunities to low-income people as producers, suppliers, distributors, employers and employees. An inclusive business must be commercially viable and must meet non-competitive operation standards of viability.

IB integrates poor people into the mainstream economy as consumers, by providing essential goods and services that meaningfully improve people’s lives, and as suppliers or distributors, by creating income-earning opportunities. This approach helps create decent jobs that benefit unemployed, underemployed, and low-income workers.

Source: Standard Explanatory Data, Indicator, Definition
May 2017 https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/339620/inclusive_business_definitio...
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Mid-term review of ADB Strategy 2020
ADB will increase its support to businesses that are financially viable, generate high development impact and provide services to the poor. It will build on its experiences with IB, such as agribusiness development connecting farmers to local and global food markets, and off-grid energy solutions that make energy sources available to underserved consumers.

Asian Development Bank Support for IB 2016–20
Seven proposed key action points include: building ADB’s IB portfolio, securing new funding for the ADB IB initiative, recognising IB accomplishments, generating and disseminating knowledge, partnership-building and collaboration around IB, and finally building internal coordination for IB support.

Increased investment in IB projects
In 2018, eight non-sovereign IB projects focusing on agriculture and finance were approved, amounting to US$924 million of investments in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and the People’s Republic of China (PRC), and two regional scope. Six to eight IB projects have been approved each year since 2014 compared to 2-3 projects in 2012-13. A total number of 21 non-IB projects were approved since 2014.

Pre- and post-investment support for IB companies
Twenty IB companies have been supported to date on provision of technical assistance, tailored advice, seven pre-investment assessments, five due diligence studies and IB training for bankers.

Impact assessment of IB companies
Impact assessments of three potential IB companies have been completed to date.

Raising IB awareness among governments and business associations
IB-related policy work and programmes initiatives are ongoing in Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, PRC and Tajikistan. IB workshops have been conducted in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, the PRC, the Philippines, and Tajikistan.

Knowledge generation and exchange among IB investment community and development partners
The programme sponsored the first APEC and first ASEAN Inclusive Business Summits in 2015 and 2017 in support of the IB agenda, introduced by the Philippine Government as APEC chair in 2015 and ASEAN chair in 2017. The programmes supported the 2016 2nd IB Forum for Asia, which brought together 400 participants from private, financial and government institutions and agencies in Asia and Latin America.

ADB partnered with IFC’s Credit Suisse, the Philippine Board of Investments and the ASEAN Business Advisory Council for the launch of the first ASEAN Inclusive Business Awards’ category in the 2017 ASEAN Business Awards. Six IB model companies from the ASEAN countries of Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand were recognised. The project also funded a total of 16 IB-related studies that cover gender, finance, energy, textile sectors, social enterprise and the role of development banks, as well as country and region-specific topics in Indonesia, PRC, Tajikistan, APEC and ASEAN.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The project helps shape pioneering IB perspectives, prospects and approaches in Asia Pacific, and its engagement with regional bodies such as APEC and ASEAN fast-tracks IB promotion among their member economies and states. IB is expected to be implemented in-country and cross-national cooperation towards IB promotion and development.

Notable outcomes of these engagements are the inclusion of IB as a strategy in expanding economic opportunities in the Philippine Development Plan 2017–2011 and inclusion of IB fiscal incentives in the Philippine Investment Priorities Plan 2017–2019. ADB adopted the inclusive business framework which institutionalises and mainstreams IB into ASEAN’s economic community building efforts, particularly on micro-, small- and medium-scale enterprises. Finally, APEC promoted inclusive business and community engagement to encourage investments that support inclusive economic growth in its 2017 Joint Ministerial Statement.
HUMAN RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY

Asia-Pacific is a large and diverse region with many human rights challenges. Freedom of expression and civil society space are limited in many countries and there is no regional mechanism to protect human rights.

Regional cooperation can strengthen human rights and address discrimination, inequality and injustice. Strengthening human rights – economic, social, cultural, civil and political – will provide opportunities for women and men and girls and boys to enhance their capacities as actors to meaningfully participate and promote greater accountability and increase democratic space while promoting human rights and gender equality.
BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH INCLUSIVE AND CLIMATE-ADAPTIVE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN ASIA-PACIFIC

AT A GLANCE

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) is an independent regional non-profit organisation that works to build the resilience of people and institutions to disasters and climate change impacts in Asia and the Pacific. Established in 1994 as a technical capacity building center, ADPC has grown and diversified its expertise across social and physical sciences to support sustainable solutions for risk reduction and risk management across a broad range of specialist areas. It is guided by a vision of safer communities and sustainable development through disaster risk reduction.

ADPC develops and implements cross-sectoral programs and projects on the strategic themes of risk governance, urban resilience, climate resilience, health risk management, preparedness for response and resilient recovery. Its strategic themes are complemented and underpinned by the cross-cutting themes of gender and diversity, regional and transboundary cooperation as well as poverty and livelihoods.

Capacity-building and training courses at all levels are designed and developed to enhance the capabilities of national training centers. Its Bangkok headquarters and country offices/representation in Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Nepal, Philippines, Pakistan, Indonesia and India host experts in strategic as well as cross-cutting thematic areas to work towards inclusive development goals across these areas.

ADPC has supported the Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC), as its secretariat, since its establishment in 2000. RCC consists of 24 countries in Asia and the Pacific and is a unique forum that brings National Disaster Management Organisations (NDMOs) of member countries together every year and focuses on the implementation of disaster and climate risk management initiatives. RCC facilitates the implementation of the global and regional frameworks at the national and regional level.
BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH INCLUSIVE AND CLIMATE-ADAPTIVE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN ASIA-PACIFIC

The five-year programme aims to enhance regional capacity for cooperation on disaster and climate risk management with an overall objective of building resilience of people in Asia and the Pacific region. To achieve this goal, good practices are built and technical assistance is provided to governments, civil society organisations and regional bodies.

Key focus areas of the programme include emergency preparedness and humanitarian response management, facilitating the use of risk information and sex-age-disability disaggregated data by policy makers and disaster managers, integrating disaster and climate change concerns into development policy and programmes, promoting inclusion and protection sensitive approaches in risk reduction and disaster preparedness, promoting gender equality and women leadership for risk resilience, enhancing the role of the RCC to support member countries on implementing global frameworks and serving as a conduit for South-South learning, transboundary risk reduction, and knowledge sharing.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Key outcomes of the project include:
- **Strengthened capacity for regional cooperation**
- **Uptake of risk-informed approaches to development and social protection to reduce disaster and climate risk and vulnerability**
- **Enhanced gender equality and rights-based approaches in disaster risk management and climate change adaptation in the region**

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Since 2014, ADPC has been working on ways to integrate gender perspectives into its work. As these efforts grow and are learned from they are being mainstreamed into ADPC’s institutional approach to all of its work. The skills, knowledge, and leadership from the Stockholm Environmental Institute, the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights, as well as specialist subject matter experts from academics, will be developed into a capacity building programme for ADPC and its partners. Both build values and understanding of the organisation, as well as looking at new institutional systems and operating methods which will be a good basis for rights and gender inclusive practices across the organisations which will reach across programmes in the region.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The key mechanism for engagement is through the Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC). The added value is through knowledge sharing, promotion of best practices and promotion of South-South cooperation. The RCC has a membership of 24 countries in Asia and the Pacific, to which ADPC is the secretariat. The project will also engage with other existing regional mechanisms to address disaster risk reduction and climate resilience in Asia and the Pacific.
INSTITUTIONAL THREE-YEAR PROJECT

The main objective of the project is to provide a strengthened leading and coordinating role in building a regional human rights movement through effective international solidarity action and engagement with states and other stakeholders in Asia. Adoption of rights-based approach, promotion of democracy and public participation and enhancing transparency, check and balance systems, public accountability through the support for three basic freedoms – the freedom of expression, of assembly and of association are integral to the objectives.

The project activities include support and inputs to members and partners in five result areas comprising advocacy, capacity building, coalition building, documentation and research, and, institutional/organisational development of FORUM-ASIA itself.

The support and inputs include advocacy workshops and advocacy missions, capacity building trainings; inter-organisational exchange of sharing and learning; side events on key current issues during Human Rights Council; such as Rohingyas, repressive laws, shrinking of civic space and issues related to the freedom of expression, assembly and association; fact-finding missions on pertinent human rights issues; emergency assistance; election monitoring; facilitation of academic visits of UN special rapporteurs; documentation of human rights situations and supply of information to the concerned special rapporteurs.
WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY
AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

• FORUM-ASIA has developed a training programme to train young and emerging human rights defenders and activists focusing on the mutual interaction of human rights, democracy, gender equality and key elements that constitute the Sustainable Development Goals. It will be a flagship programme that aims to train at least 30 human rights advocates regionally every year and around 60 sub-regionally.

• FORUM-ASIA, in partnership with 12 NGOs and networks from different parts of the world, is delivering the EU human rights defender mechanism (products/nearby), working on environmental rights are regarded as one of the key target groups, and others at broader level.

• FORUM-ASIA’s engagement with NHRRs and ACHR focuses on intersectionality of these elements as human rights promotion and protection is not possible in absence of democracy and in isolation from climate justice and gender equality issues.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

FORUM-ASIA works closely with inter-state mechanisms, such as the ACHR, building on the experience of its members working on the ground and bringing the voice of the people through civil society organisations to the standard setting process. It advocates for reform of policies and facilitates the policy process by firming of partnership between civil society organisations and state representatives, FORUM-ASIA’s regional added value is, thus, its leverage and capacity to work as the bridge between people and the state.
MEKONG REGIONAL PROGRAMME

PROGRESS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

AT A GLANCE

EarthRights International (ERI) was established more than 20 years ago with the goal of bringing the power of law to some of the most remote and marginalised communities. Founded during the dawn of the age of globalization, the organization recognised the unfulfilled promises of open markets leading to open societies, and the inevitable abuses that occur as increased demands for land and natural resources outpace the development of regulations fundamental human rights and environmental protections.

Corporate globalization without a corresponding globalization of law and justice can result in exploitation of the poor and marginalised, and increasingly concentrated power and wealth for global financial and government elites.

ERI’s unique methodology combining the power of law and the power of people has resulted in legal victories, behind-the-scenes contributions to critical policy shifts, and the intensive and sustained leadership development of new earth rights defenders all over the world. Its pioneering litigation and campaigns have dramatically changed corporate business practices to weigh human and environmental rights.

MEKONG REGIONAL PROGRAMME

As a nonprofit organisation, ERI combines the power of law and the power of people in defense of human rights and the environment defined as “earth rights.” ERI specialises in fact-finding, legal actions against perpetrators of earth rights abuses, training grassroots and community leaders and advocacy campaigns. Through these strategies, real solutions to promote and protect human rights and the environment in the Mekong region through the following activities:

- Increasing awareness of communities, campaigners and lawyers
- Building the leadership of campaigners and lawyers
- Leveraging the power of networks in the Mekong region
- Community access to justice and remedies
- Leveraging independent scientific evidence in development projects
- Strengthening ERI’s implementation
- Strengthening transboundary mechanisms
- Strengthening ASEAN social and environmental banking framework
- Focusing on Chinese and Thai foreign direct investment frameworks
- Improving the capacity of earth rights defenders to manage their own safety
- Empowering women as agents of change

FOCUS AREAS:

- Human Rights
- Democracy
- Gender Equality
- Environment
- Climate Change
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

ERI’s outcomes are as follows:

Outcome 1
Awareness of earth rights issues and advocacy and campaigning tools and strategies in ERI thematic areas has significantly increased in areas affected by abuses. Particularly gender issues, women’s rights, ethnic minority and indigenous people’s rights.

Outcome 2
EarthRights School Mekong and Mekong Legal Advocacy Institute Alumni actively work on ERI thematic priorities by adopting legal and campaign strategies into their own campaigns and organizations or by doing so with other organizations, including on gender issues, women’s rights, ethnic minority and indigenous people’s rights.

Outcome 3
Project-affected community leaders and local CSOs/NGOs partners actively integrate legal and regional campaign strategies from ERI trainings or meetings into their own community strategies particularly on gender issues, women’s rights, ethnic minority and indigenous people’s rights.

Outcome 4
Policymakers, quasi-governmental agencies, CSOs/NGOs and corporations increasingly reference and/or integrate ERI’s recommendations into their own policies.

Outcome 5
Women in project-affected communities increasingly participate around earth rights issues in ERI’s case.

Outcome 6
Mekong legal network organisations: There is at least one active earth rights public interest law group in each of the five lower Mekong countries (excluding China)

Outcome 7
Awareness in the protection and safety of earth rights defenders in the network has improved.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

ERI’s entire organisational model is built on the intersection of and relationship among these themes. Earth rights as reflected in the intimate connection between human beings and environment, around the world, the limitless appetite for natural resources, and the profits they accrue violently clash head on with the rights of people to their safety, homes, lives, clean air and fresh water.

Earth rights also include rights that enable communities to protect their environments, including freedom of speech and association, and the right to access information and participate in development decisions. Since women are often disproportionately affected by unsustainable and unrepresentative development, it is critical that we increase their decision-making power and participation.

ERI’s work helps communities access justice by increasing local capacity and engaging with stakeholders through training sessions and meetings.

Training programmes are the primary vehicles that ERI uses to educate regional activists and lawyers about the intersection and relationship of human rights, democracy, gender equality, the environment and climate change. They are then able to take their new knowledge and skills back across the Mekong region to communities and networks.

The EarthRights School (ERS) is an annual, six-month leadership development programme for civil society and community advocates from the Mekong region, and the Mekong Legal Advocacy Institute (MLAI) is an annual two-week intensive training programme for junior lawyers and community advocates from the Mekong region. Each programme cover a broad range of topics related to human rights, access to information and participation, gender equality, indigenous peoples’ rights, land rights, climate change, environmental impacts of development projects and more. Training participants also learn how to use campaigning and legal tools (including transboundary mechanisms) to fight abuses and stand up for their rights.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

ERI helps build regional networks of communities, campaign and lawyers through training, engagement with government and corporations and advocacy. ERI links communities to the regional networks it facilitates like the Mekong Legal Network and the over 350 EarthRights School alumni.

ERI’s strategic support and facilitation enabled Cambodian lawyers representing communities to pioneer the first transboundary cases in both the Thai and Malaysian Human Rights Commissions. The first lawsuit in Thailand eventually led to the development of the Thai Human Rights Commission’s transboundary jurisdiction, and has become an important mechanism to hold regional Thai investors accountable. ERI also worked with the Community Resource Center to file a transboundary case in the Thai Administrative Court challenging the power purchase agreement for the Khun Dan Nam Lao, ERI also provides international legal advice to local groups engaging regional institutions, for example, the Mekong River Commission, the Asian Development Bank and ASEAN.

ERI has directly engaged the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group about its financing of a coal plant. As a member of the Save the Mekong Coalition, ERI has engaged the cascade of proposed hydropower dams on the Mekong River through letters and at public meetings of the Mekong River Commission (MRC). The organisation has also requested information from the Asian Development Bank about development projects in the region.

Community leaders at its EarthRights School and Junior Lawyers at the Mekong Legal Advocacy Institute are also trained on how to engage with non-governmental mechanisms in the region. ERI also provides strategic legal and other assistance to the Mekong Legal Network for them to engage the MRC and ASEAN.
FOJO: MEDIA INSTITUTE

THE SOUTHEAST ASIA MEDIA TRAINING NETWORK (SEAMTN)

FOJO Media Institute was founded in 1972 as a government agency aimed at strengthening the capacity of Swedish journalists. Since 1991, FOJO has engaged in international media support in Africa, Eastern and Central Europe, Asia, Latin America as well as the Middle East and North African (MENA) region.

The institute strengthens free, independent and professional journalism, supporting freedom of expression in Sweden and worldwide. For more than 45 years, FOJO has augmented their partner organisations’ institutional capacity and trained more than 10,000 journalists from more than 100 countries. Jointly with their partners and individual journalists we have engaged in a wide range of issues related to journalism and democracy, such as media convergence, business management, investigative reporting, fact checking, access to information and managing threats and hate speech. Capacity building also includes special themes such as gender, environment, conflict sensitivity, climate change and corruption as well as safety and security.

THE SOUTHEAST ASIA MEDIA TRAINING NETWORK (SEAMTN)

AT A GLANCE

The project is aimed at strengthening free, independent and professional journalism while supporting freedom of expression. In Southeast Asia the project aims to strengthen the capacity of mid-career journalism training institutions in a regional network that initially covers Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam through the following approaches.

Active community building
Members develop a common vision that will promote a cohesive, mutually supportive active network that grows over time to promote and sustain the standards of professional media training. They will then have the potential to act as a driving vehicle for democratic media development in the region.

Knowledge management and sharing
Members are enabled to directly draw on each other’s expertise and exchange experiences, and learn from each other in a peer-to-peer network on topics such as the implementation of training needs assessments and the further development of standards and curricula.

Resource mobilisation
The network taps into regional media training expertise and knowledge for capacity development and digital security.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

- Establishment of a regional mechanism for peer-to-peer learning and regional cooperation, including partners from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam.
- Increasing network members’ understanding of the significance of regional and cross-border reporting on issues of regional relevance, such as environment and climate change and gender equality.
- Network members are expected to manage mid-career training institutes efficiently and effectively.
- Network members offer systematic, high-quality mid-career training to media practitioners in the region, meeting contemporary needs of the media industry.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The project’s gender studies in Cambodia and Vietnam challenge the stereotypes that confront female journalists, with the aim of creating an understanding of the need for gender policies in media houses and a balanced reporting of issues that affect women as equally as men.

Through its collaborative bidding process, the project encourages and stimulates the development of innovative courses for journalists that focus on regional issues including climate change and gender equality. The project also supports the development of new leadership and management in the future that challenges the historical bias brought on by an older, more conservative and predominantly male media class.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Collaborative Bidding Process is designed to stimulate the development of special interest journalism drawn directly from the Government of Sweden’s Strategy for Regional Development Cooperation for Asia and the Pacific, 2014-2021. The partners have been encouraged to develop courses of mutual interest to countries in the Mekong region that are viable across different political systems and contexts.

The programme also promotes regional value through the Southeast Asia Media Training Network, a platform designed to share information, resources, knowledge and best practices between countries.

UNESCO, a strategic partner of the programme, assists with dissemination of the project’s gender studies in Cambodia and Vietnam and provides facilities at its regional office in Bangkok. The programme works closely with the Southeast Asian Press Association which has its regional office in Bangkok and has 13 members in ASEAN countries and Timor Leste.

The project intersects with the United Nations system to provide information and resources for the Collaborative Bidding Process, with partners in Laos and Vietnam themselves representing their Ministries of Information.

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STRENGTHENING HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN ASEAN/SOUTHEAST ASIA (SHAPE-SEA)

FOCUS AREAS:

- HUMAN RIGHTS
- DEMOCRACY
- GENDER EQUALITY
- ENVIRONMENT
- CLIMATE CHANGE

AT A GLANCE

The Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies (IHRP) is the result of a merger between Mahidol University’s Center for Human Rights Studies and Social Development and the Research Center for Peace Building. IHRP combines the experience and perspective both centers have to offer—redefining the fields of peace, conflict, justice and human rights studies, in the Asia Pacific region and beyond.

Established in 1998, the Center for Human Rights Studies and Social Development was served until its merger as an academic institution specialised in human rights, with a track record in providing postgraduate education as well as training programmes. The Master of Human Rights (International) is the longest running graduate degree program in Human Rights in Asia while the PhD in Human Rights and Peace Studies established in 2004 is the first programme in the region.

The Research Center for Peace Building was founded in November 2004 with an aim to create peaceful solution to the southernmost conflicts in Thailand. By focusing on cooperative efforts and dialogues at national and international levels to reduce the violence and to identify needs of community and society, the projects provide input for new public policies, in order to transform conflicts and build a just and peaceful society.

STRENGTHENING HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN ASEAN/SOUTHEAST ASIA (SHAPE-SEA)

The overarching objective of this project is to contribute to the improvement of human rights of peoples in Southeast Asia through education and applied research.

The research and education programme directly involves and engages universities in the region to play a more significant role in the sustainability of human rights protection by contributing research, and increasing knowledge on human rights and peace by incorporating these issues into the programme. Its research studies support and contribute to the existing knowledge on human rights and peace in Southeast Asia.

Academic partnership and public advocacy create spaces for awareness, knowledge building and dissemination among the academic community and other human rights and peace stakeholders. Publications and production dissemination are also available for diverse audiences in the region.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Project outcomes include the following:

- Mobilised resources and support for more than 50 research grants on human rights and peace in ASEAN/Southeast Asia.

- Conducted academic research training for 94 research project grantees and 145 non-grantees. The training curriculum included the following: research methodologies, critical legal frameworks, gender and feminisms, project management, monitoring and evaluation writing, and academic publishing.

- Co-organised six national seminars in Kuala Lumpur, Surabaya, Hanoi, Manila, Suva, and Luang Prabang, and one Regional Dialogue titled Strengthening Women’s Rights Work in ASEAN: Alternatives for Regional Integration, Governance and Justice in Manila. These seminars were intended to provide a forum for the dissemination of research on human rights and peace in the ASEAN region.

- Co-organised the 4th International Conference on Human Rights and Peace in Southeast Asia. Reclaiming Lost Ground on 10-12 October 2016 in Bangkok. Sixty-seven conference papers presented, with 326 registered participants. Thirty NGOs, CSOs and NGOs participated in the conference in varied capacities.

- Facilitated six academic exchanges that included lecture tours and teaching collaboration.

- High-level outreach to university officials and administrators and government representatives was conducted in Laos, Myanmar, Ho Chi Minh University of Law, Vietnam, Can Tho University, Vietnam, Universidad Nacional Timor Leste, Timor-Leste and Mahasarakham University, Thailand.

- Publication of an annual Human Rights Outlook in Southeast Asia.

- Development of an online platform for disseminating information about the SHAPE-SEA Programme and resources: www.shapesea.com

SEA-SHAPE ACHIEVEMENTS BY THE NUMBERS:

- 200 Academic research training
- 50+ Research grants supported
- 6 National seminars organized in ASEAN countries
- 10 Regional dialogues held

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The four components of HRP’s programme are geared towards the realisation and promotion of human rights, democracy, gender equality, environment and climate change through various SHAPE-SEA-supported research projects, its trainings, conferences, publications, education, and textbooks, etc. It also covers the key themes of ASEAN and human rights, business accountability, peace and security, governance and justice, and academic freedom.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

As a joint effort between ASEAN University Network – Human Rights Education (AUN-HRD), which is part of ASEAN structure and Southeast Asian Human Rights and Peace Studies Network (SEAHRN), the SHAPE-SEA programme requires regular communications and engagement with ASEAN’s education department. The programme also contributes to ASEAN Vision 2025 as well as the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals focusing on human rights and peace.

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Academic partnership and public advocacy create spaces for awareness, knowledge building and dissemination among the academic community and other human rights and peace stakeholders.
AT A GLANCE

Established in Nepal in 1983, ICIMOD is a regional knowledge development and learning centre serving the eight regional member countries (RMCs) of the Hindu Kush Himalayas (HKH)—Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Myanmar, and Pakistan.

Globalisation and climate change have an increasing impact on the stability of fragile mountain ecosystems and the livelihoods of mountain people. ICIMOD aims to assist mountain communities understand these changes, adapt to them, and make the most of new opportunities while addressing upstream-downstream issues.

The Centre supports regional transboundary programmes through partnerships with regional partner institutions, facilitates the exchange of experiences, and serves as a regional knowledge hub.

As an intergovernmental organisation, ICIMOD strengthens regional and global networking among regional and global centres of excellence to develop an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem to improve the living standards of mountain populations and to sustain vital ecosystem services for the billions of people living downstream—now, and for the future.

FOCUS AREAS:

- Human Rights
- Democracy
- Gender Equality
- Environment
- Climate Change

ATMOSPHERE INITIATIVE & HIMALAYAN CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION PROGRAMME (HICAP)

Atmosphere Initiative

The initiative aims to improve public understanding of atmospheric issues and promote regional cooperation for addressing such challenges in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region. The initiative works to ensure that effective measures and policies are adopted to reduce air pollution and its impacts within the HKH region, improve knowledge and enhance the capacity of partners in the region.

Key activities of the Atmosphere Initiative include:

- Regional collaboration on promoting clean energy solutions that reduce air pollution impacts
- Capacity building of RMC individuals in research and other skills to address atmospheric issues
- Engaging regional and global planners on developing sustainable urban transport solutions for RMC cities
- Developing atmospheric data public information systems
- Public awareness
- Regional collaboration on atmospheric and climate research.

ICIMOD REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

- Adaptation & Resilience Building
- Transboundary Landscapes
- River Basin & Cryosphere
- Atmosphere
- Transboundary Landscapes
- Mountain Knowledge & Action Network

- To foster transformative action in light of environmental and environmental change
- To enhance cooperation across borders for safeguarding ecosystems services
- To develop more effective water resource management and disaster risk reduction
- To inform, policy and practice to address air pollution challenges
- To make better decisions from village to country, to regional levels
- To build capacities of academics and cultivate future generation of scholars and leaders in the HKH

ICIMOD'S CORE COMPETENCIES

- Livelihoods
- Ecosystem Services
- Water & Air
- Geospatial Solutions
- Gender
- Knowledge Management and Communication

ICIMOD ACHIEVEMENTS BY THE NUMBERS:

- Atmosphere Initiative

- 1,895
  Professions and PhD students, science and government employees in HKH region participated in Atmosphere Initiative’s capacity enhancement activities.

- 5
  Regional workshops focusing on cross-sector collaboration between regional countries were organised.

- 1
  International workshop series on Atmospheric Composition and the Asian Monsoon launched.
Himalayan Climate Change Adaptation Programme (HICAP)

HICAP aims to reduce knowledge gaps on climate change in the region by improving understanding of vulnerability to climate change and identifying opportunities and potential for adaptation, contributing to efforts to enhance the resilience of mountain people, particularly women.

Key activities of the HICAP Initiative include capacity enhancement on climate change issues, research, knowledge, product development, and policy engagement.

**PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS**

**Capacity Enhancement**

EIMOD’s Atmosphere Initiative enhanced the capacities of 1,879 professors, PhD students, and government employees in 10 countries. The Nepal and Bhutan governments were supported by establishing state-of-the-art observatories. Data from the observatories are being used by both governments and the public for decision-making on air pollution issues, and by PhD fellows for thesis research.

In the wake of the 2015 Nepal earthquake, EIMOD and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) prepared design manuals for cleaner cooking technology. The new, more environmentally-friendly design has been widely adopted in Nepal and was recently introduced in Pakistan. EIMOD also serves in the CCAC’s steering committee as lead partner in urban health, air quality, and regional assessment initiatives.

A workshop on the topic “Air Quality Public Information System: From Data to Action: Public and Positive Decision Making” held in Kathmandu brought together 98 stakeholders from national government, municipalities, traffic police, academia, healthcare, media, private sector, and development partners to discuss and take action on the environmental challenge.

The Atmosphere Initiative organised five workshops focusing on regional scientists to discuss cross-border collaborations, and also piloted an international workshop series on Atmospheric Composition and the Asian Monsoon.

**ICIMOD Achievements by the Numbers:**

- **23,620** mountain people benefited from the project (70% are women)
- **650** trained through the National Monitoring Programme since 2012
- **93** women trained in research approaches and data collection techniques since 2015
- **5** women graduates of the scholarship master’s programme started with ICMOD support in 2015
- **14** districts benefited from the Government of Nepal’s recent approval of the national programme to scale up the Resilient Mountain Villages

**Scaling up Policymaking and Local Innovation**

HICAP objectives were put into practice as the Government of Nepal approved a national programme to scale up the Resilient Mountain Villages (RMV, formerly Climate Smart Villages) approach in 14 districts.

Adaptive capacities of women, men, and children facing socio-economic and environmental change, including climate change, in the HKH region were enhanced and supported through appropriate policies and practices.

The Resilient Mountain Villages pilot was awarded the 2016 Adaptation at Scale Award by the Global Innovation Award for Impact Programme. The GBP 10,000 prize will be used to support further efforts to upscale the RMV approach. The Improved Income Support Programme (IBSP), Pakistan’s largest social safety net programme, has taken up elements of the RMV approach previously adopted by IBRD Nepal and several EIMOD initiatives.

HICAP has also supported Nepal and Bhutan’s national adaptation planning (NAP) processes, and the Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) policy in Nepal.

**WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH**

The Atmosphere Initiative and HICAP programmes are based on an interdisciplinary approach. Gender equality, social dimensions, governance, disaster risk reduction, climate change mitigation and resilience are integrated across HKH countries to help attain common goals related to sustainable development.

Both projects promote sustainable production systems to ensure food, nutrition, and livelihood security, with particular attention to women’s changing roles in agriculture and the achievement of gender and social equity through inclusive and transformative change in the mountainous areas.

**Regional Engagements**

EIMOD’s main strategies are to utilise its intergovernmental status to engage with board members at country level and policymakers at all scales with evidence-based knowledge in order to foster regional mechanisms and effective cooperation. The agency also builds up global community awareness on major environmental and socio-economic challenges facing the region through science and policy dialogues. Scenarios provided by the agency, concerning transboundary issues, have highlighted potential challenges and led to transboundary cooperation in water and landscapes-related issues among HKH countries.

The agency also builds cross-border governance mechanisms for regional cooperation on trade and investments, sustainable resource management, disaster risk reduction and the development of “packages of cooperation” comprising of products and services of regional interest.

EIMOD believes that successful grounding of partnerships with diversified networks of local, national, regional and international organisations must be based on the key principles of synergy, equity, transparency and mutual benefits.
DECENT WORK IN GARMENT SECTOR
SUPPLY CHAINS IN ASIA

GARMENT INDUSTRY
BY THE NUMBERS:

US$ 600B
Value of garment, textile and
footwear exports from Asia,
accounting for 60% of the total
value of global garment trade.
China accounts for 44% of the
global clothing value.

43M
Employees work in
Asia’s garment sector.

FOCUS AREAS:
HUMAN RIGHTS
DEMOCRACY
GENDER EQUALITY
ENVIRONMENT
CLIMATE CHANGE

AT A GLANCE

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a UN agency devoted to advancing social justice by promoting jobs and protecting people. The agency was formed in 1919 in the wake of World War I. The driving forces behind its creation were issues related to security, humanitarian, political and economic considerations and it was founded on the premise that social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace.

The ILO became the first specialized agency of the UN in 1944 and it received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969. Within a unique tripartite structure, the ILO brings together governments, employers and workers of its member states to promote decent work for all women and men by setting labour standards, conducting research, shaping policies and devising programmes. Today, it is recognised as the world’s authority on the world of work.

Differences between male and female wages in Asia can range from 17% to 64%.
Women are paid less in 14 countries in the Asia Pacific region.
DECENT WORK IN GARMENT SECTOR SUPPLY CHAINS IN ASIA

Asia is a key region for production of the world’s garments, producing 60% of the world’s output and employing 43 million people. The garment industry and its rapid expansion have contributed to economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction across the region. However, it has emerged with various and frequent decent work deficits, the inadequate representation and voice of female workers and negative environmental impact.

Launched in 2017, the project aims to contribute to a regional dialogue and consultation on challenges to decent work, gender equality and environmental sustainability in garment sector supply chains in Asia with the goal of designing a regional project that addresses these challenges.

In particular, the scoping phase of the project consists of three key activities. The first is researching the current context, opportunities and challenges to decent work, gender equality and environmental sustainability in garment sector supply chains in Asia. The second is setting up a regional meeting attended by governments, employers and worker organisations from leading garment-producing countries in the region, as well as other stakeholders involved in the sector. Its purpose is to discuss the findings of the research and to consult on the feasibility of a regional project engaging with questions of decent work, gender equality and environmental sustainability.

The third key activity is developing a project proposal based on findings from research and outcomes from the regional meeting.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

The project’s achievements include the following:

- A comprehensive overview of the common and country-specific challenges to decent work, gender equality and environmental sustainability.
- A process of consultation among governments, employers and worker organisations from leading garment-producing countries in the region, as well as other stakeholders involved in the sector (civil society, global trade unions, brand and donors), to exchange views and experience and to build a common understanding of the challenges facing the sector.
- A project proposal to engage with the challenges to decent work, gender equality and environmental sustainability at the regional level through a multi-stakeholder approach.

GARMENT INDUSTRY FACTS & FIGURES

IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION

- In Cambodia, half of all garment sector employees work more than the allowed 48 hours per week. In Pakistan and Vietnam, more than 40% work overtime.
- Non-compliance rates to the share of wage employees paid less than the minimum can be as high as 25%.
- Differences between male and female wages in Asia can range from 15% to 64% and women are paid in 10 countries in the Asia Pacific region.
- In Indonesia and Vietnam, 40-60% of factories are still non-compliant with national legislation.

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WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The project proposal developed with aims to strengthen the links between decent work, workers’ rights, gender equality and environmental sustainability by focusing on the key challenges of poor social dialogue and industrial relations institutions, processes, and actors; gender inequality, poor environmental practices and low productivity; and concerns over competitiveness.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The project proposal developed under this phase of the project pursues regional-level interventions by enhancing synergies with existing country-level programmes and by strengthening the dialogue and collaboration among the various stakeholders active in the garment sector in Asia.
CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY IN ELIMINATING SLAVERY AND TRAFFICKING IN ASIA (CREST)

AT A GLANCE

Established in 1951 as an operational logistics agency to help European governments identify resettlement countries and arrange transport for nearly a million migrants uprooted by the Second World War, IOM has progressively broadened its scope to become the UN migration agency in 2016. Today, IOM is the leading international agency working with governments and civil society to advance the understanding of migration issues, encourage social and economic development through migration, and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

With 164 member states, a further 8 states holding observer offices in over 100 countries, the agency works to ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.

IOM activities include the promotion of international migration law, policy, debate and guidance, protection of migrants’ rights, migration health and the gender dimension of migration.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY IN ELIMINATING SLAVERY AND TRAFFICKING IN ASIA (CREST)

CREST project was initiated in October 2017 in light of disproportionate vulnerability and exposure of forced labour and exploitation of migrant workers, many of whom are subjected to unethical recruitment processes, including excessive fees, low wages, unreasonable physical demands and excessive overtimes spent in remote locations, including at sea.

The initiative is aimed at enabling the private sector and regional actors in key industries and supply chains to increasingly protect the human and labour rights of women and men migrant workers in Asia by promoting the employer pays’ business model for ethical recruitment and the application of the International Recruitment Integrity System Standard, working in partnership with companies to address risks of forced labour and exploitation in supply chains under the CREST Framework; engaging with relevant business platforms to drive protection of human and labour rights among migrant workers in Asia and collaborating with public and private partners at the regional and national level to raise awareness of ethical recruitment and advocate for supportive policy environments.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

WORKING REGIONALY WITH
ENVIRONMENT. GENDER-BASED
APPROACH.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

RECRUITMENT FRAMEWORK

Promoting implementation of ethical
recruitment processes.

Regional engagement involving
deficiencies and decent work for women
and girls.

Ethical recruitment and decent work
within the supply chains of
regional economic communities and
the global value chain.

Protection of female migrant workers
for the prevention and social resilience.

Ethical recruitment and decent work
within their supply chains.

Regional employment policies and
national policies for more effective
multi-stakeholder cooperation.

Migrant workers in Asia remain
vulnerable to exploitation and
discrimination due to the
complex supply chains and
lack of adequate protection.

Emergency support is critical
for migrant workers in times of
crisis, such as during pandemics.

A strong network of partners and
stakeholders is essential for
providing comprehensive support.

ERASMUS+ project.

ERASMUS+ project.

ERASMUS+ project.

ERASMUS+ project.
AT A GLANCE

IUCN is a membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental bodies with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place at once.

Created in 1948, IUCN is the world’s largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge and resources of more than 1,300 member organisations and some 10,000 experts. It is a leading provider of conservation data, assessment and analysis. Its broad membership enables IUCN to fill the role of incubator and trusted repository of best practices, tools and international standards.

IUCN provides a neutral space in which diverse stakeholders including governments, NGOs, scientists, businesses, local communities, indigenous peoples’ organisations and others can work together to forge and implement solutions to environmental challenges and achieve sustainable development.

IUCN also implements a large and diverse portfolio of conservation projects worldwide. Combining the latest science with the traditional knowledge of local communities, these projects work to reverse habitat loss, restore ecosystems and improve people’s well-being.

IUCN is involved in several key international environmental agreements including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), the World Heritage Convention, and the Ramsar Convention on wetlands, all of which resulted from resolutions/recommendations adopted by members at various IUCN general assemblies.

MANGROVES FOR THE FUTURE (MFF)

A unique partner-led initiative was established in 2006 to promote investment in coastal ecosystem conservation for sustainable development. MFF provides a platform for collaboration among the many different agencies, sectors and countries which are addressing challenges to coastal ecosystem and livelihood issues. Co-chaired by IUCN and UNDP, and with its secretariat hosted at IUCN, the initiative is aimed at addressing the resilience of ecosystem dependent coastal communities in 11 countries in the region based on the following activities:

Strategic planning and consensus building

MFF has supported the development of National Strategy and Action Plans prepared under the guidance of National Coordinating Bodies to align with national priorities for sustainable coastal development, and identify geographic and thematic priority areas for MFF investment.

Cross-cutting themes

MFF has cross-cutting strategies for capacity development, knowledge management and communications, gender integration, and private sector engagement. These strategies support the design, planning and execution of activities promoted and supported by MFF at all levels. The strategies also contribute to ensuring sustainability beyond current donor funding.

Grant facility

The MFF Grant Facility is the main vehicle for delivering results on the ground. The facility offers small, medium, and regional grants to support projects and other initiatives in member countries.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

More than 250 regional and national partners have joined forces in the MFF’s inclusive approach and interventions which have enhanced livelihoods and empowered more than 400,000 men and women to participate in the governance of coastal ecosystems.

Since its inception, around 380 projects have been implemented in member countries addressing a variety of coastal management issues including mangrove restoration, establishing co-management mechanisms, livelihood diversification, community-based waste management, developing private sector partnerships, and scientific research.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The programme aims to strengthen resilience of coastal ecosystems and the communities that depend on them through protection and conservation and the promotion of environmentally sustainable development, by linking the rights of people to secure their livelihoods and enjoy healthy and productive ecosystems with climate change and other challenges.

Because empowerment is most effective when exercised in conjunction with established agencies, the initiative works strategically with civil society, private sector and government organisations to build the capacity of community groups to effectively participate in management of their natural resources, strengthening coastal communities’ access and control over their resources and providing a greater chance for economic benefits to accrue locally.

Development of the MFF Resilience Framework and of the Gender Analysis tool supports fundamental procedural rights to enable individuals, community groups and NGOs to participate in decision-making in local sustainable development, building shared vision through multi-stakeholder processes, integration of gender equality and women’s empowerment goals, and negotiation of shared resource management.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Regional Steering Committee (RSC), a multi-stakeholder forum for regional level dialogue and strategic leadership for policy change, is comprised by the initiative.

Two representatives of all MFF member countries serve on the RSC along with Institutional Partners including regional agencies, such as UN Environment (UN), Wetlands International, and ASEAN Center for Biodiversity and programme donors. Other regional institutions, such as Partnership in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PESFA) and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), attend the RSC as observers to further broaden the reach of MFF at the regional level.

MFF aims to strengthen resilience of coastal ecosystems and the communities through protection, conservation and promotion of environmentally sustainable development.
EARTH JOURNALISM NETWORK IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

GeoJournalism sites are interactive web-based platforms that develop original socio-environmental content that are less or rarely covered by mainstream media.

EARTH JOURNALISM NETWORK IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

Internews developed the Earth Journalism Network (EJN) in the Asia-Pacific to empower and enable journalists from the region to cover environmental issues more effectively through the following activities:

1. GeoJournalism development and special project awards

GeoJournalism sites are interactive web-based platforms that develop original socio-environmental content that is underrepresented by mainstream media. Aggregate stories from across networks, visualise data and distribute content among a variety of media houses. The project strengthens the development of at least three GeoJournalism websites and uses special project awards to generate original content that amplifies the voices of women and marginalised groups.

2. Fellowships

The project will provide annual fellowships to individual journalists in the region to participate in high-level environmental summits. These fellowships will enable training and content production and allow underrepresented voices to be heard within international forums, especially for journalists from vulnerable and underrepresented communities.

AT A GLANCE

Established in 1982, Internews has worked in more than 100 countries worldwide. With global expertise and reach, Internews trains media professionals and citizen journalists, introduces innovative media solutions, increases coverage of vital issues and helps establish policies needed for open access to information. Its programmes create platforms for dialogue and enable informed debate, which bring about social and economic progress. The organisation commits to research and evaluation and creates effective and sustainable programme even in the most challenging environments.

FOCUS AREAS:

- Human Rights
- Democracy
- Gender Equality
- Environment
- Climate Change
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

The project started in August 2017 and is currently in its inception phase. It is expected to contribute to the following outcomes:

- Increased reliable access to socio-environmental information, data and sources
- Improved quality and quantity of socio-environmental news and information
- Increased inclusion of women and marginalised groups in the distribution and as the focus of socio-environmental information
- Increased peer-to-peer engagement and multi-stakeholder knowledge sharing and/or collaboration around socio-environmental information

So far two stakeholder assessments have been completed on media landscape, needs and gaps of environmental journalism in the Pacific, South Asia and Southeast Asia. The organization is in the process of conducting organisational capacity assessments and content analysis with partners as well as planning for the Training of Trainers that is scheduled to take place in late March 2018. In the GEO-Journalism sites, the local teams are developing editorial plans and commissioning environmental stories that will amplify the voices of those communities that are vulnerable to environmental impacts. In addition, a technology roadmap is being developed and a firm has been hired to provide operational support to these GEO-Journalism sites.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

This project mainstreams women’s leadership and voices through promoting and ensuring equal access for women to training, courses for journalists as well as integrating gender-related content in our environmental reporting training curriculum and grant-making activities. The story grants and special project awards support the production of in-depth and multimedia stories that examine the human dimensions of climate change, environmental policies and human rights as well as provide examples of potential solutions that could support sustainable development.

The fellowship activity gives priority to women and indigenous journalists to attend annual United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Climate Conferences or the Parties (COP), who would otherwise be unable to engage in these global policy discussions. Through these fellowships, the project ensures that underrepresented voices can be heard within international forums, and generates content that will inform policy makers of the impact of the environment and climate change on these vulnerable communities and of their rights in sustainable development.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

This project builds on IJN’s existing journalists networks and platforms to engage more intensely with journalists in the Asia-Pacific region to improve the quantity and quality of environmental journalism. The project also adds value by fostering linkages between media organisations and other research organisations to communicate important environmental research findings and viable solutions in a way that is accessible to the public, especially to those communities that are most vulnerable to environmental and climate change impacts.

In terms of engaging with intergovernmental mechanisms, the project through the fellowship activity, supports journalists from marginalised communities and less-represented countries/regions to participate in the annual UNFCCC Climate COP conference so that they can directly engage with this global mechanism and influence its outcomes. Through the training and organisational grants, the project also builds the capacity of partners and ensures that they engage with other intergovernmental mechanisms such as the Paris Agreement and 2030 Agenda through generating content that can inform and influence policy makers and local communities.

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Gender inequality and discrimination are obstacles to sustainable development in the Asia and the Pacific region. Gender-based violence is still widespread. Discriminatory legislation, social norms and gender stereotypes are obstacles to greater gender equality.

There is a clear link between gender equality and peaceful and democratic societies. Regional cooperation contributes to strengthening actors’ capacity to effectively promote gender equality towards the fulfillment of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), international human rights laws and standards, and the Sustainable Development Goals 2030. Gender equality is a goal in itself, and it is also essential for the achievement of peace, poverty reduction and sustainable development.
Founded in Britain in 1942, Oxfam began as a food supplies campaign for starving women and children in Greece during the Second World War. Since then, the organisation has been recognised as one of the world’s leading non-governmental agencies responding to emergency relief, inequality and poverty reduction. Around the globe, it works to find practical, innovative ways for people to lift themselves out of poverty and thrive.

In Asia, Oxfam focuses on challenging systemic inequalities, mobilising active citizenship, and in particular, ensuring that marginalised groups in the society are benefiting from sustainable economic growth and environment. Through programmes like GRASEA, which is being managed by Oxfam GB, and Fair Finance Asia and TROSA, which are being managed by Oxfam Novib, Oxfam takes part in a global movement of people working together to end injustice and poverty for everyone.

Oxfam GB and Oxfam Novib are part of the Oxfam Confederation, an international confederation of 20 affiliates that work with strategic partners at local and regional levels in over 90 countries.

Oxfam’s Projects

01

Gender Transformative and Responsible Agribusiness Development in South-East Asia (GRASEA)

02

Fair Finance Asia

03

Transboundary River of South Asia (TROSA)
GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE AND RESPONSIBLE AGRIBUSINESS INVESTMENTS IN SOUTH EAST ASIA (GRAISEA)

Oxfam, in partnership with the Swedish Government, runs GRAISEA with an aim to improve the livelihoods of both female and male small-scale producers in the Southeast Asian Region and in Pakistan through more responsible and inclusive value chains and private sector investments.

Through empowering economic and responsible business leadership, particularly small-scale women producers in remote communities, the project has boosted financial viability, gender equity and sustainable supply chains in the targeted agribusiness sector.

GRAISEA convenes diverse stakeholders in the selected commodity value chains and in targeted countries to discuss a series of forums and roundtables in a bid to develop inclusive and innovative financial solutions. Training sessions, best practices and essential resources are shared among women, smallholders, government officials and buyers of these smallholders.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Gender Transformation

The Fishertellos Network in southern Thailand, a model of women-led social enterprises, has raised awareness on sustainable wild catfish. 

Awareness of Corporate Social Responsibility

By working with CSR Asia, a business organisation that promotes sustainability awareness, hundreds of members, including hotels and retailers are encouraged to put in place seafood sourcing policies and assessments on governance, challenges, inclusion of smallholders, impact on women and recommendations for more responsible and sustainable sourcing policies.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

GRAISEA, in partnership with ASEAN CSR Network (ACN) and Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, engaged civil society organisations in drafting the National Action Plan in Indonesia on business and human rights. Women’s economic empowerment is among key elements proposed.

GRAISEA’s climate change approach focuses on “adaptation with mitigation as co-benefits.” Small-scale farmers are encouraged to adopt their farming method to changing weather patterns and to adapt sustainable production practices aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and water usage.

GRAISEA supports women’s economic empowerment by working with communities and companies to address gender-related issues and promote business models that particularly support the livelihoods of female smallholders in the shrimp, palm-oil and rice value chains.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

GRAISEA acts as a convenor with the Business & Human Rights Caucus in ASEAN, and through its partner ACN its member civil society organisations’ lobby to include social and gender criteria in the regional CSR strategy of ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights.

The promotion of gender transformative and responsible business practices was delivered through the ASEAN Peoples’ Forum 50th anniversary attended by WEAVE, the ASEAN Business Advisory Council and ASEAN Inclusive Business Summit.

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FAIR FINANCE ASIA: BUILDING A RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL SECTOR IN ASIA

Asia is the world’s largest and most populous continent, with 60 percent of the current global population. The region is experiencing impressive economic growth but also facing considerable sustainable development challenges. While formal commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from most Asian countries is strong, and financial actors are showing more awareness on sustainable banking and the reputational and commercial risks of harmful investments, much remains to be done to translate these commitments into laws, regulations and operational policies adhered to by all parties.

Financial institutions such as banks and investors can potentially play a large role in enforcing social and environmental change by driving capital towards companies that are creating long-term value for societies and away from projects which pose excessive social or environmental risks.

Oxfam and partners in the region see two main strategies for financial institutions to take up this role. First, banks and investors can adopt policies that compel businesses they invest in to comply with sustainability standards and human rights principles. This will also require financial sector institutions operating in Asia to become more transparent and accountable in their operations. Second, they can proactively look for more sustainable and pro-poor investment opportunities that contribute to positive changes in the lives of poor people living in Asia and their environment.

By stimulating transparency and accountability in the financial sector, and by encouraging integration of human rights standards and environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria in financial actors’ policies, this programme aims to help reduce the negative impacts of national and cross-border bank investments on human rights, the environment and climate change across the region.
ENVIROMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE (ESG)

ESG criteria are central in measuring the sustainability and ethical impact of an investment in a company. Environmental criteria look at a company’s energy use, waste, pollution, natural resource conservation and animal treatment. They also evaluate which environmental risks might affect a company’s income and how the company is managing those risks. Social criteria look at the company’s business relationships. Do the company’s working conditions show a high regard for its employees’ health and safety? Are stakeholders’ interests taken into consideration? Does it work with suppliers that hold the same values that the company itself claims to hold?

With regard to governance, investors want to know that a company uses accurate and transparent accounting methods and allows common stockholders to vote on important issues. They want companies to avoid conflicts of interest in their choice of board members and prefer not to invest in companies that engage in illegal behaviour or use political contributions to obtain favourable treatment.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

For the Fair Finance Asia (FFA) programme, the following outcomes are expected:

**Short term:**
- Increased awareness and political will among national governments, regulators, banks and banking associations to adhere to ESG standards
- Improved interaction and mutual influence of champions among national governments and banks with regional bodies

**Increased awareness of integration of ESG and human rights criteria into loan and investment policies of financial sector institutions by regional bodies, including governments, civil society organisations (CSOs) and financial sector-development banks and investors**

**Long term:**
- Improved regulations on integration of ESG and human rights criteria in the financial sector by national governments and other financial sector regulators put in place along with improved policies and practices by national banks
- Creation of conditions for a multi-stakeholder initiative, as well as the implementation of a regional multi-stakeholder dialogue, including CSOs and allies, that results in a joint multi-stakeholder roadmap

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The programme is aligned with the regional strategy of “mutual interaction between human rights, democracy, gender equality, environment and climate change” and puts the strategy into practice across the region together with civil society and other relevant actors to promote human rights, gender equality, the environment and the climate to increase sustainable economic development.

The programme focuses on direct engagement with banks to promote due diligence when considering investment in national and transboundary projects such as hydropower in the Mekong River Basin and to apply ESG criteria requiring, for example, participative social and environmental impact assessments, free prior informed consent from indigenous peoples and traditional communities, and adequate complaint and mitigation mechanisms from the companies and projects they provide with investments and loans. These criteria become even more relevant in countries where rule of law is lacking.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

FFA adds value at the regional level by influencing banks, insurers, regulators and authorities on a national level in their home country and by working with regional networks, platforms and institutions—examples include the Southeast Asian Central Banks’ Research and Training Centre, ASEAN Secretariat, ASEAN Commission on Human Rights and the Mekong River Commission.

FFA’s focus will be on strengthening organisations active on the national and regional levels, promoting a multi-stakeholder dialogue leading to a regional roadmap towards a transparent and sustainable financial sector. The programmes will raise awareness among banks on ESG and support the banks in growing and building the business case for sustainable finance and building a joint agenda for sustainable finance on a regional level.

Many of the threats that human rights defenders, journalists, trade unionists and environmentalists perceive from governments and private actors are directly or indirectly linked to environment and climate issues. Investment of the financial sector in strengthening human rights provides opportunities for women and men from various generations to preserve and protect natural resources and the environment, benefitting their livelihoods.

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The Fair Finance Asia programme is aligned with the regional strategy of “mutual interaction between human rights, democracy, gender equality, environmental and climate change.”
TRANSBOUNDARY RIVERS OF SOUTH ASIA (TROSA)

The five-year regional programme (2017-2021) is designed to reduce poverty and marginalise vulnerable river basin communities through increased access to and control over riparian water resources on which their livelihoods depend.

It works with communities in the transboundary river basins of the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) in Nepal, India and Bangladesh and the Salween in Myanmar by focusing on strengthening the capacity of river basin leaders, communities and Civil Society Organisation (CSO) networks, public and private policy and decision makers.

The Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Salween rivers are at the heart of culture and religion, and their waters and rich sediment loads support fisheries and agriculture of national and global significance. The waters connect nations and provide the means for trade. Yet hundreds of millions of people living in these basins have limited secure access to water due to growing competition over natural resources, infrastructure development, agricultural, urbanisation and the effects of climate change.

To respond with these challenges, the following activities are being implemented:

Building capacity
River basin leaders, communities and CSO networks public and private policy and decision makers are among the target for strengthening capacity and engagement.

Supporting leadership and negotiating capital
One of our primary focuses is to support leaders from remote, marginalised communities, particularly women and youth, so that their voices and rights are recognised and respected.

Building an evidence-based, demand-led policy/practice-relevant research
The project is often partnered with universities and research bodies, Evidence-based study can inform and influence change.

Facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues
The programme promotes multi-stakeholder dialogues in the GBM and Salween basins as a key mechanism for the consideration of policy options and lessons, and as a means of achieving greater participation of those most directly affected by water governance into decision making.

FOCUS AREAS:

- Human Rights
- Democracy
- Gender Equality
- Environment
- Climate Change
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

The TROSA programme works towards the following outcomes:

- Government policies and practices at all levels in water resource management are more inclusive of community concerns and meet national & international standards. This will be done by analysing river programmes and plans, facilitating consultations and dialogue with river basin communities, and engaging with all stakeholders.

- The practices of private sector respect community access to water resources by actively contributing to reduced conflict. Awareness-raising strategies on good practice expectation will be developed and dialogue events will be organized with private sector.

- CSOs increasingly participate in influencing trans-boundary water governance, through their inclusion and the resolution of water conflicts. The programme will build awareness of trans-boundary water resource issues and strategies and strengthen the capacities of CSOs in water governance.

- River basin communities increasingly influence trans-boundary water governance policies and processes. Awareness-raising strategies will facilitate community members to have gained new information about water rights and strategies by which they can claim them, including information about trans-boundary rights and responsibilities for water management.

- Women increasingly influence in trans-boundary water governance, policy and processes, building capacity on gender mainstreaming in water governance as well as identification of women leaders and facilitation of their involvement in water governance decision-making processes, and training of project team on transformative leadership for women’s rights.

During the first year of the project, inception partners were negotiated and established with organizations like International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, World Wildlife Fund, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Stockholm International Water Institute and International Rivers, as well as local community organizations. In the second half of the same year, a shared understanding on trans-boundary water governance among project partners was developed. Key strategic stakeholders, including national governments, were informed about the TROSA programme to ensure their engagement in the programme. Also an analysis of conflicts and cooperation in the Ganges– Brahmaputra–Meghna and Salween River Basins was done to inform the programme strategy on cooperative and sustainable water sharing.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The TROSA programme adds to the regional strategy of firmly embedding the environment and a human rights-based approach in the following ways:

Firstly, by strengthening and promoting a human rights-based approach to transboundary water governance in the focus basins/sub-basins of GIM and Salween. All programme activities have a strong focus on promoting gender equality and rights of women and girls and other marginalized and minority communities in these basins.

Secondly, through building capacities of communities, civil society organizations (CSOs) and young researchers to better engage with and contribute to regional and bilateral processes of water governance, including water resources-related investments by the private sector.

Thirdly, through partnering with existing networks and platforms such as the IUCN-convened Building River Dialogue and Governance to influence strategic and sub-regional processes and decisions which impact transboundary rivers in the region.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

TROSA’s added value is the localisation of regional and transboundary water cooperation through a bottom-up process of dialogue and trust building. The programme focuses on building strong community-to-community linkages and forging cooperation for the equitable sharing of water resources.

The engagement strategy for intergovernmental mechanisms is based on evidence and insights gathered from community-level activities and strategic partnerships with other networks for collective representation. A proactive and constructive approach is adopted under the programmes in a bid to engage with intergovernmental mechanisms for example, the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and South Asia Sub Regional Economic Cooperation and similar mechanisms.

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Gangtok

Growing competitive over natural resources, infrastructure developments and the effects of climate change are changing lives of hundreds of millions of people in the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) basin.
PARLIAMENT INSTITUTE OF CAMBODIA (REGIONAL PROGRAMME)

AT A GLANCE

Parliament Institute of Cambodia (PIC), an independent, non-partisan capacity development institute, was established in 2011 under the request of members of the Cambodian Parliament and its General Secretariat. PIC aims to strengthen the capacity of parliamentary staff to support the functioning of the Parliament and to share experiences with others Parliaments across the region and beyond.

PIC also seeks institutional, party and gender balance in all activities.

FOCUS AREAS:

HUMAN RIGHTS  DEMOCRACY  GENDER EQUALITY  ENVIRONMENT  CLIMATE CHANGE
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Training on parliamentary research methodology
- Ten training sessions held for Cambodian parliamentary staff (50% women participants)
- Four training sessions held for parliamentary staff from ASEAN participating parliaments (74% female participants)

Training on parliamentary communications
Five training sessions held for Cambodian parliamentary staff (60% female participants)

Training on fiscal and budget analysis
One ongoing training session for Cambodian parliamentary staff (60% female participants)

Training on parliamentary diplomacy (new)
One ongoing training session for Cambodian parliamentary staff (38% female participants)

Non-partisan research
Over 210 parliamentary research papers have been produced based on PIC’s pedagogical approach. These neutral, concise and informative papers address a large number of subjects such as rural development, implementation of decentralisation and deconcentration, environmental protection, health sector, employment and vocational training, labour migration, and gender and development.

The parliamentarians can obtain background information about issues facing by their constituents from these parliamentary research briefing notes and papers prior to conducting public consultations and field visits.

Some research papers have been produced as part of the preparatory support provided by PIC to 35 study and knowledge sharing missions, carried out by parliamentarians and parliamentary staff, including for their participation in international parliamentary events.

Seminars and outreach activities
A total of 4 regional seminars and expert hearings on issues of common interest such as labour migration, rural development and decentralisation were organised in order to share the findings and foster exchanges among regional parliamentarians.

Support was also provided for 84 outreach activities in Cambodia, including public consultations, local forums, fact-finding missions and follow-up visits. Public Consultation Guidelines, outlining the importance of public consultations in supporting all three functions of the Parliament—representation, legislation and oversight—were also developed to guide the planning, implementation and evaluation of a public consultation to ensure its effectiveness and inclusivity, and for the use of experiences gained to improve such events in the future.

Priority is given to the importance of hearing the voices of the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups in society, including women and girls, and taking their interests into account.

WORKING REGIONALY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Democracy
Through staff training on a wide range of activities, PIC helps strengthen the impartiality and professionalism of the Cambodian Parliament and improves relations with its regional and international counterparts.

Gender Equality
Equal training opportunities are offered to all parliamentary staff. The guidelines for public consultations are also available for staff to take into account the interests of the most marginalised and disadvantaged groups of society, including women and girls. Research papers on specific gender issues such as agriculture production, gender and access to health services were also conducted. The research papers “Financial Inclusion of Women as a Driver of Development for SDGs: Review of Women’s Opportunities in Cambodia” and “Promoting the Health of Women Migrant Workers” were also published.

Environment and Climate Change
Environmental protection is an important issue for parliamentarians in light of their oversight function. The research paper “Benefits of Environmental Protection in the Coastal Areas and Islands of Cambodia Coastal and Marine Protection and Management” was published as preparation for parliamentarians’ fact-finding visits to coastal provinces in February 2017 to monitor socio-economic, environmental and safety conditions.

A regional seminar on climate change was scheduled in March 2018 as part of its parliamentary research fellowship programme.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

PIC does not work directly with the executive branch but with parliamentary institutions from the region and aims to strengthen the professional capacity of parliamentary staff to deliver information and analysis to parliamentarians, particularly through the production of parliamentary research. The support of PIC for Cambodian parliamentarians to participate in regional meetings such as General Assemblies of ASEAN Parliamentarians for Peace and the Inter-Parliamentary Union’s (IPU) through production of research papers, also fosters exchange of experience and dissemination of best practices.

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Seminar and expert hearings on issues of common interest such as labour migration, rural development and decentralisation were organised to foster exchanges among regional parliamentarians.
RWO REGIONAL ASIA PROGRAMME ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (2017–2021)

AT A GLANCE

Established in 1994, Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (RWI) is an independent academic institution that combines evidence-based human rights research and direct engagement with international organisations, governments, national human rights institutions, justice sector institutions, local and regional authorities, academic institutions, and private companies to drive human rights change.

Since the early 1990s, RWI has been engaged in development cooperation in the human rights field with a wide number of institutions and organisations in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East. RWI has offices in Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Kenya, Turkey and Sweden with around 60 staff members in total.RWIs work focuses on the four thematic areas of Inclusive Societies, Fair and Efficient Justice, People on the Move, and Economic Globalization and Human Rights.

1) Strengthening knowledge on the connections between human rights, gender equality and the environment with the aim to clarify linkages and underpin and influence policy and legal development mainly through a variety of research initiatives including regional studies, capacity development of researchers and collaboration between human rights and environmental scholars.

2) Strengthening multi-sector synergies pursuing constructive collaboration and inclusive and rights-based action towards Agenda 2030 targets, and building bridges and offering platforms for exchange, learning and dialogue. This includes annual regional multi-stakeholder courses, advice to stakeholders and support to local and central development plans regarding human rights linked to environment and SDGs.

3) Promoting fair and efficient justice for all in society in relation to the environment and for cross-border violations and actions of non-state/private actors, providing adequate measures for marginalised and discriminated groups - through capacity development and dialogues with and between judiciaries, National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), corporations and regional bodies such as the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR).
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

The pilot phase of the programme started in 2017. Strategies, partnerships and arrangements of implementation are being fine-tuned and consolidated in consultation with partners and stakeholders.

The expected programme outcomes by 2021 are that local, national and regional development plans, as well as regional and national policies, standards and practices, are increasingly informed by and incorporate human rights, and that justice is increasingly accessed, delivered and administered in accordance with international human rights standards in the region, including environmental protection and cross-border violations and actions of non-state and private actors.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The programme focuses on links between human rights and the environment, and its overall aim is to contribute to a just, inclusive and sustainable development in the region through mutually reinforcing protection of human rights, gender equality and the environment. This is reflected in the programme activities and implementation approaches towards Agenda 2030 targets to ensure that mechanisms are available for addressing national and regional problems related to human rights, gender equality, the environment and climate change.

The programme’s added value is seen in bringing together stakeholders across sectors and countries, offering expertise in and support of human rights including gender equality, and its recognized links to environmental protection as well as platforms and opportunities to enable joint analyses and the translation of theory and analysis into practical actions. Multi-sectoral collaboration on human rights, development and the environment in Asia, facilitated by RIH, are accordingly key elements with a common framework of dialogue enabling more and better synergies towards sustainable development goals.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The programme brings together stakeholders across sectors and countries, offers expertise and support from human rights and gender equality perspectives. Platforms and opportunities are provided to enable joint analyses and translation of theory into practice.

Multi-sectoral collaboration and “bridge-building” on human rights, development and environment in Asia, facilitated by RIH are key elements enabling better synergies towards sustainable development goals.

Cooperation with regional actors, such as the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and with national actors such as NHHRs and judiciaries in regional forums, as well as among academics under the programme strengthen capacities, research and policy efforts related to human rights, environment and SDGs.

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FISHING AND HABITAT MANAGEMENT,
CLIMATE CHANGE AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

AT A GLANCE

In Southeast Asia, marine fishery resources are abundant. However, with fishery technology development coupled with human population growth and the demand for fish and fish-based products, fish landings have substantially increased which leads to growing pressure on marine resources and eventually results in overfishing. Moreover, the impact of climate change contribute to the instability of stock abundance as well as deviations of fish migration routes.

Founded on December 29, 1967, Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre (SEAFDEC) is an intergovernmental organisation aiming to promote sustainable development and management of fisheries and aquaculture in order to alleviate poverty and enhance food security and the livelihood of people in the Southeast Asian region.

SEAFDEC’s members comprise 10 ASEAN nations and Japan. Its Secretariat in Bangkok coordinates the work in five technical departments: 1) Training Department in Thailand; 2) Aquaculture Department in the Philippines; 3) Marine Fisheries Research Department in Singapore; 4) Marine Fisheries Research and Management Department in Malaysia; and 5) Inland Fisheries Research and Development Department in Indonesia.
FISHERIES AND HABITAT MANAGEMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

In partnership with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Fisheries and Habitat Management, Climate Change and Social Well-Being in Southeast Asia project aims to create the sustainable use of aquatic resources and reduce vulnerability to climate change by coastal/rural fishing communities in Southeast Asia.

The project, which is being implemented in the Gulf of Thailand, the Andaman Sea, the Mekong River, and the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas, focuses on capacity building and integration of habitat and fisheries management and climate change adaptation, for example, ASEAN-wide implementation of the regional plan of action for Nurtic Tuna and assessment stocks and spawning of Indo-Pacific mackeral in the Gulf of Thailand.

Secondly, the project aims to build capacity, improve systems, and develop networks for monitoring, control, and surveillance. Third, the project is committed to improving the policy development process for regional and sub-regional agreements and implementation.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Since 2013, SEAFDEC’s planned process has moved from raising awareness to capacity building developing, finalising and managing regional action plans. Agreements between SEAFDEC Council, ASEAN and partner countries are also aimed at implementing the following plans:

- Regional Plan of Action for Nurtic Tuna and Fishing Capacity adopted by SEAFDEC Council and ASEAN.
- In partnership with Japan Trust Fund (JTF), ASEAN Catch Documentation Scheme was developed and endorsed.
- Bilateral dialogues leading to Memorandum of Understanding between Cambodia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos with positive further dialogues with Malaysia and Thailand, Myanmar, and Thailand, and between the three countries.
- Together with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), JTF and other partners paved the way for the improved implementation of FAO Agreement on Port State Measures.
- Working with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and NGOs has increased attention in labour issues and working conditions in fisheries and promoting the FAO’s Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries (SSGFI) with human rights and gender aspects.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Since the beginning, SEAFDEC has put effort into balancing and integrating social well-being, the environment and human rights in project implementation. Regional plans of action include social well-being, environment as well as good governance.

In the process of promoting the regional approach to the FAO-SSF Guidelines, importance of social well-being, environment (integrating fisheries and habitat management), gender equality, climate change and human rights has been emphasised and clarified. Partners are required to address how social well-being will be enhanced based on capacity building, environmental protection, promotion of gender equality and climate change adaptation approaches.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

SEAFDEC is an intergovernmental organization with all ASEAN states and Japan as members. The regional dimension is the core and mandate of the organisation. With the project “Fisheries and Habitat Management, Climate Change and Social Well-Being in Southeast Asia”, it has a central element in promoting regional cooperation and development of regional agreements such as action plans and MOUs. The project has been successfully engaged with partners in all ASEAN, sub-regional and bilateral scales.

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SEAPA is a non-profit, non-governmental regional network campaigning for genuine press freedom in Southeast Asia. Established in Bangkok in 1999, it aims to unite independent journalists and press-related organisations in the region into a force for advocacy and mutual protection. SEAPA’s goal is to provide a forum for the defence of press freedom, giving protection to journalists and nurturing an environment where free expression, transparency, pluralism and a responsible media culture can flourish. Membership is open to independent press advocacy organisations with a proven track record of working for press freedom.

**AT A GLANCE**

1. **Improved Safety for Media**
   - aim to alert and monitor press freedom and freedom of expression violations, build databases, report and analyse media situation in 10 out of 11 Southeast Asian countries and conduct missions and campaigns on key issues.

2. **Ethics & Professionalism Enhancement**
   - activities focus on media ethics training and reporting media's conduct during elections, organising an annual reporting fellowship programme with emphasis on key regional issues.

3. **Improved Legal Environment**
   - activities engage national media policy development altering the press and online media through advocacy activities, and engage regional mechanisms on freedom of expression and human rights.

4. **Better Organisational Effectiveness**
   - activities focus on building a strong regional network by expanding the organisation, developing good governance policies, and coordinating with international organisations engaged in similar activities.

**SUPPORT OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN PRESS ALLIANCE TO THE PROJECT STRATEGY 2012–2017**

To strengthen media freedom towards human rights, compliance, democracy and good governance at the national and regional levels in Southeast Asia, SEAPA translates its mission and visions into implementation of activities based on the following four areas:

- Human Rights
- Democracy
- Gender Equality
- Environment
- Climate Change
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

The project has made notable progress and attained multiple outcomes since its inception.

Improved Safety for Media:
Documentation systems have been established at the Secretariat to support members and partners. The Secretariat has received consistent media requests for SEAPA comments on emerging media issues and promoting journalist safety in the region.

Ethics & Professionalism Enhancement
Implementation of the project activities has increased member expectation for SEAPA to conduct media and election reporting activities. A total of 114 fellowships have been provided to participants from around Southeast Asia—60-70% of whom continue to interact with one another online, with some serving as resource persons for SEAPA activities and trainings.

Improved Legal Environment
The project has increased recognition of SEAPA’s role in discussions on national policy proposals, as well as recognition of SEAPA’s leading role in regional activities on internet freedom. Its activities received interest from targets on new initiatives to find alternative regional mechanisms for freedom of expression.

Better Organisational Effectiveness
In recent years, the project has expanded from 6 to 19 members, improved its leadership accountability through an internal election system, supported a new membership strategy, played a prominent role in the Global Network Defending and Promoting Free Expression (IFEX) with council members from SEAPA or members, and maintained a leading role in regional initiatives in Asia region.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

SEAPA’s vision and mission directly address human rights, particularly freedoms of expression and press that have an enabling role in the attainment of other human rights, as a central element of the Sustainable Development Goals. SEAPA’s activities address both human rights and democracy as recurring structural issues affecting press freedom in the 11 countries within its scope of work.

On issues of gender, SEAPA undertook secretariat and network consultations and meetings to discuss how to integrate gender issues into its core work. These activities’ outcome was the adoption of gender issues into the SEAPA strategy toward developing a network-wide gender policy. SEAPA’s gender policy mainstreams gender concerns, balance, women’s empowerment and the work of member organisations. Its outreach advocacy work stimulates discussions on the importance of gender within the broader media community, including research, monitoring of gender content and practical manuals for gender-sensitive reporting.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

- Engagement of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of freedom of expression and opinion, by organising and participating in civil society activities to contribute to requests for information
- Contribution to stakeholder reports with related civil groups on internet freedom of expression issues in Southeast Asia
- Advocacy against impunity for attacks on journalists, a key element in the strategy that seeks implementation of UN programme of action for the safety of journalists
- Participation in Internet Governance Forums
- Cooperation with UNESCO on access to information, safety of journalists and press freedom, by holding events such as a Mekong-wide consultation on access to information in 2015, training on safety of journalists in Jakarta in 2016, participation in World Press Freedom Day in Jakarta in 2017, and a regional seminar on impunity in Colombo in 2017
- Engaging press councils and national human rights institutions toward establishing cooperation to address press freedom and freedom of expression issues at the regional level

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Formally established in 1989 by the Swedish Government, the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) is an independent international research institute focusing on environment and development issues from local to global policy levels. With headquarters in Stockholm and nine offices located around the world, SEI comprises international staff equipped with knowledge and experience on diverse projects.

Ranked as the world’s second-most influential environment think tank in 2017, SEI’s teams of experts develop peer-reviewed, evidence-based science, which has been transformed into policy briefings and integrated extensively by key decision-makers in a bid to solve the most pressing environment and development problems.

SEI Asia, based in Bangkok, plays a key role in bridging science and policy while helping advance sustainable development through research, capacity-building and stakeholder engagement. SEI Asia’s work is clustered based on critical areas: gender, environment and development, reducing disaster risk, water resource management, adaptation to climate change, sustainable energy, agriculture in transition, Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET), and urbanisation.

It aims to produce evidence-based science, crucial for leaders in civil society, private sector and government, to positively influence policy decisions throughout Asia and beyond following a vision of ‘sustainable future for all’.

**SEI’s Projects**

**01**
The Sustainable Mekong Research Network (SUMERNET)

**02**
Strategic Collaborative Fund
STRATEGIC COLLABORATIVE FUND

The Sida-SEI Strategic Collaborative Fund aims to enhance policy coherence in order to address environmental issues in ASEAN, to develop regionally-appropriate and gender-responsive Sustainable Development Goals and Sustainable Development Indicators through a bottom-up process, and to foster knowledge exchange between stakeholders from public, private and civil society sectors in relation to local, national and regional processes.

The programme comprises four components:

- China-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Forum (CAECF), a platform for policy dialogue and information exchange between China and ASEAN member nations, to provide policymakers opportunities to address important environmental issues.

- Asia Europe Environment Forum (ENFORUM) for Sustainable Development Goals, a forum aimed to support the articulation of SDGs drawing from the richness of sustainable development management experience of Asia and Europe.

- Regional Environment Conference (REC), a stage that offers opportunities to event organisers addressing environmentally sustainable development, gender equality, and poverty reduction. The selection of events is based on open and competitive calls, scheduled on a rolling quarterly basis, to submit concept notes.

- Programme Management, which ensures the effective use of programme resources as well as providing appropriate monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Providing a Regional Platform for Gender Diversity and Poverty Reduction

Through Strategic Collaborative Fund, technical support on diversity of participants and gender inclusion have been strengthened as seen from the 2014 CAECF Forum. Of the total participants, 15% were from ASEAN Member States and 35% of resource persons were women, compared to the baselines of 11% and 13%, respectively.

ENFORUM, hosted by Asia Europe Foundation (ASEF) and supported by Strategic Collaborative Fund, brings together more stakeholders from public, private and civil society sectors to discuss issues concerning implementation of SDGs in Asia. The annual conference has been organized to delve into key issues of SDG implementation, particularly gender equality.

As an active member of the ENFORUM Steering Committee, SEI was able to influence the event’s agenda, resulting in a special stakeholders session on gender. Speakers shared their insights concerning support on women’s welfare, female empowerment and women’s rights following the UN Agenda 2030 of Sustainable Development Goals.

Since 2014, Strategic Collaborative Fund has funded 14 regional events and fora, consisting of a total of 149 sessions, the sessions have displayed an increasing trend in themes related to gender equality and poverty reduction with an increase from 0% in 2013 to 59% by the end of the programme in 2014. Poverty reduction-themed sessions show a similar trend.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Gender Integration into Programme Development

The Sida-SEI Strategic Collaborative Fund mainly supports regional events and fora on environmental sustainability, addressing emerging regional issues. However, the programme aims to integrate gender equality into different programmes during each event via the following approach:

- Establishing and using criteria that emphasise integration of gender equality aspects into the proposed event. Additionally, the programme has provided technical criteria and relevance of the event’s theme. These criteria are clearly explained in the inception of the partnerships between SEI and grantors, and continuously monitored during the process of preparation and implementation of the supported events. Through the programme, the SEI Technical team and gender experts provided advice and support on mainstreaming gender and during planning programme events, implementation and post-event evaluation.

- Developing awareness and capacity of the grantee partners on integrating gender into their events and institutional programming, SEI conducted a training workshop on gender at work on 4-5 July 2014 for key partners, CAEFT and ASEF, and other partners from competitive grantee.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The CAEFT and ENFORUMs are examples that reflect Strategic Collaborative Fund objective of providing a platform to engage with intergovernmental mechanisms on critical development and environmental issues.

The agency actively engages in facilitating dialogue between China and ASEAN Member States on environmental cooperation and emerging regional issues while integrating more gender and social equality.

Through ENFORUM, SEI emphasises the importance of SDGs implementation into the Asia-Europe dialogue as government agencies, NGOs and other stakeholders in Asia and Europe discuss SDGs in action, particularly the issue of gender and social equality, and shared experience and lessons learned.

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OF THE TOTAL 149 SESSIONS COLLECTED FROM 134 PARTICIPANTS FROM THE GRANTED EVENTS

70% of the stories mentioned about change and awareness after attending SEI-funded events

50% more from female participants

30% participants changed their attitude and practice

30% addressed the theme of networking during the event

25% related to gender theme

20% has built up concrete cooperation after the event
THE SUSTAINABLE MEKONG RESEARCH NETWORK (SUMERNET)

An initiative for research and policy engagement bringing together research partners working on sustainable development in the countries of the Mekong Region, Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

Since 2005, SUMERNET has supported policy-relevant research and outreach activities to engage policymakers, planners and stakeholders. SUMERNET pursues an evolving agenda in response to questions and policy issues on development and the environment that arise in the region.

Since its inception until the present Phase 3, the long-term goal of the SUMERNET programme is to achieve sustainable development of the Mekong Region through strengthening knowledge-based policy processes. SUMERNET Phase 3 objectives focus on 1) building capacity and delivering high-quality policy research, 2) stimulating bottom-up and demand-driven collaborative research, 3) supporting regional assessments and comparative policy analyses and 4) engaging with policy processes.

In the next phase, SUMERNET 4 & 5 (2018-2022), the regional research network will continue to help improve policy and practices in reducing water insecurity for all, in particular for the poor, marginalised and socially vulnerable groups of women and men in the Mekong Region.
SUMERNET BY THE NUMBERS

14
Funding member institutes

60+
Member institutes

130+
Individual members working in the Mekong and Southeast Asia countries joining the network of partners

100+
Project products including peer-reviewed publications, newsletters, policy briefs, and books have been published

10
Research projects conducted in Phase 1 and 21 projects in Phase 2

22
Young researchers benefited from SUMERNET Phase 3

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Twelve years of the SUMERNET journey demonstrates how the collective effort of this growing community can lead to positive benefits and changes in the Mekong Region. SUMERNET achievements can be categorised in four dimensions:

1. Expanding the network membership and cross-border collaboration in the Mekong Region

The key benefit of cross-country collaboration is strengthening the relevance of SUMERNET research findings beyond the sub-national and national levels and into the regional policy level. While maintaining the diversity of its membership, a key feature of the network, SUMERNET has also expanded its partnerships from 14 institutes in 2005 to almost 70 institutes in 2017.

2. Improved scientific research and policy-influencing capacity

The success of the capacity-building support for researchers was illustrated by more than 100 project products including 20 peer-reviewed publications, working papers and one high-quality book published in Phase 2 (2010-2013). Most of these products are led by the researchers from the Mekong countries. A number of similar products are being prepared for release in Phase 3.

3. Increased visibility as a credible regional research network in the Mekong Region

As a network, SUMERNET is regarded as a research player with greater visibility in the region given the active participation of SUMERNET researchers and partners in policy and research engagement at multiple levels. Many requests for hosting convening and facilitating policy and research engagement events submitted to SUMERNET have reflected not only the increased capacity and confidence of Mekong researchers in policy and research areas and initiatives, but also the growing credibility of SUMERNET in policy engagement. The Mekong River Commission (MRC)’s ‘Regional Consultation Meeting on Pak Beng Hydropower Dam Development and MRC Council Study’ in February 2017 was a recent example, as SUMERNET members served as overall facilitators for the meeting.

4. Influencing policy and practice through strengthening boundary partner engagement

SUMERNET has been supporting many project partners on the research-policy continuum. Nine stories of change (see list from “Story of Change from the Mekong River” booklet) recently published inspired a wide group of partners, especially those who are in their early career researcher path, to continue their important work in delivering credible knowledge on policies and decision-making based on the best available evidence. The nine stories are:

1. Reducing flood risks for local communities along the Cambodia-Vietnam border
2. How urbanisation impacts the hinterlands
3. Green tourism pathways: Promoting climate-friendly urban tourism in Hue and Hoi An
4. Understanding payment for environmental services in Vietnam
5. Directing benefits to the rural poor in contract farming
6. Gender and climate risks in the delta of the Mekong Region
7. Providing insights for better forest conservation: Engaging with REDD+ policymakers in Cambodia, Myanmar and Thailand
8. Chindwin Futures: Setting up a river basin organisation
9. Co-producing knowledge to build resilience and recover regional wetlands

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

SUMERNET emphasises and values mutual interaction between human rights, democracy, gender equality, environment and climate change for achieving long-term sustainability in the Mekong Region. In SUMERNET’s research connectivity, gender and social equity are a key criteria for selection. Trainings and regular advice are provided to partners in order to integrate gender perspectives in their research. Additionally, SUMERNET regularly monitors and applies key performance indicators using a gender lens in performance evaluation.

The design of the next phase of SUMERNET will include human rights and democracy with the focus on reducing water miscarriages for all, in particular for the poor, marginalised and socially vulnerable groups of women and men in the Mekong Region which is expected to take into account gender equality, social equity, human rights, environmental integrity and poverty reduction.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

SUMERNET has worked closely with intergovernmental agencies such as the ADB Working groups related to environment, climate change and water resources management, ADB Greater Mekong Subregion Initiative, Mekong River Commission (MRC), and Lancang-Mekong Cooperation Framework. SUMERNET also contributes to key regional dialogues organised by these regional mechanisms, serving as an example for the moderating of the First Regional Consultation Meeting on Pak Beng hydropower development and the MRC Council Study. The project also seeks an opportunity for conducting knowledge sharing, joint publications, and partnerships and collaboration with new emerging intergovernmental mechanisms.

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Left and Above: Artwork Greater Mekong River on Water, Land and Energy held in Bangkok. The Asia launched a report of future between stakeholder and the critical environmental issues in the Chindwin River Basin in Myanmar.

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RECOFTC employs a rights-based approach to the delivery of products, services and solutions that aim to strengthen the institutional capacities of multiple stakeholders in the sustainable management of forested landscapes. Under its current Strategic Programme 2013-18, the Center focuses its work on four interlinked areas:

- Securing Community Forestry
- Enhancing Livelihoods and Markets
- People, Forests and Climate Change
- Transforming Forest Conflicts

RECOFTC also emphasizes the three crosscutting issues of:

- Social inclusion and gender sensitivity through a rights-based approach
- Community forestry leadership development
- Participatory monitoring and evaluation

Studies show that community forestry (CF) helps reduce forest degradation, enhances forest carbon stocks, and supports reforestation and sustainable forest management efforts.

AT A GLANCE

The Center for People and Forests was founded in 1997 by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the Government of Switzerland and Thailand’s Kasetsart University to promote community forestry and empower local people for stronger rights and equitable benefits of local communities in Asia Pacific. The Center works with stakeholders to improve practices, policies and institutions for community forestry in the region.

Headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand, RECOFTC has programme offices in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, and Vietnam. Since its establishment, RECOFTC has trained over 60,000 people, 30% of which are women, from more than 60 countries.

RECOFTC ACHIEVEMENTS BY THE NUMBERS

24%
Increase in locally managed forest area in more RECOFTC focal countries since 2013

16%
Increase in number of households and forest user groups (FUGs) formally managing forests in RECOFTC focal countries since 2013

75,000
Households directly benefiting from RECOFTC work since 2013

FOCUS AREAS:

- Human Rights
- Democracy
- Gender Equality
- Environment
- Climate Change

SUPPORT OF REGIONAL COMMUNITY FORESTRY TRAINING CENTER FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

RECOFTC’s Strategic Programme 2013–18 has the overall goal of increasing the forest area formally under community management, and number of legal and active local managers, by 10%. The organisation’s work has made successful contributions to these goals: in RECOFTC’s seven focal countries, the area under community forestry (CF) and other local management regimes has increased by 2.3 million hectares (24%) since 2013, and the number of households involved in formally-recognised forest user groups (FUGs) has increased by over 600,000 households (16%) since 2013.

The organisation has directly supported the development of almost 390 FUGs comprising over 75,000 households and some 270,000 hectares of forest since 2013.

RECOFTC has also supported the improvement of legal forest tenure policy frameworks and institutions for community-based and smallholder forest management. Key progress has been made in simplifying procedures to transfer tenure rights to local people, expanding their rights to sell certain forest products and increasingly recognising the role that social forestry can play in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Strengthening the forest tenure rights of local people

A core component of RECOFTC’s work, and a foundational tool with which local people can better their lives, preserve their dignity and gain formal tenure rights over forests, this mechanism legitimises local forest management and use practices, offers livelihood options for local people by allowing commercialisation of forest products, and affords them legal avenues to protection and compensation in the event of outsider encroachment.

Sustainable forest management through community forestry

A vital strategy in reducing global greenhouse gas emissions, as well as proactively minimising the adverse impacts of climate change in the region, sustainable community-based forest management also contributes to increasing local adaptive capacities and resilience to climate change. RECOFTC strategically works through partnerships to develop institutional and stakeholder capacities for more meaningful incentives, engagement and fair revenues to local people for vital environmental services.

Scaling up Gender Leadership Programme

Women play a critical role in forest and landscape management in the Asia-Pacific region, yet they often face inequities in decision-making processes and within institutions. This hampers forest management conditions and constrains the ability of women to reach their potential and give back to their communities, RECOFTC works to empower women and other vulnerable groups to exercise greater decision-making roles and ensure their needs and interests in natural resource management are met.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

In its 30-year history, RECOFTC has been increasingly recognised as a regional convener and knowledge management hub for learning and sharing community forestry management. Since 2009 RECOFTC has supported the development of the ASEAN Working Group on Social Forestry (AWG-SF), which has been initiated as a formal governmental regional mechanism for social forestry development and exchange. AWG-SF allows RECOFTC and partners to share learning on community forestry across 10 ASEAN member states and to promote recommendations for better policy and practice.

RECOFTC also closely engages at international and regional levels to various UN agencies and initiatives such as the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD), the World Agroforestry Centre, the Rights and Resources Initiative, and the Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation (APFNet). As part of the Global Forest Network, on Communication, RECOFTC leads the Asia-Pacific Network that actively engages all partners and ensures forestry priorities are effectively disseminated and advocated throughout the region.
AT A GLANCE

Started in 1993 as a programme funded by Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), EEPSEA’s mission is to strengthen local capacity in Southeast Asian countries in the economic analysis of environmental problems so that researchers can provide sound advice to policymakers.

Through its 23-year support of training courses and research projects, EEPSEA has helped build a generation of environmental economists in Southeast Asia, who help their governments formulate policy on environment issues. It is the only regional programme that provides economic and environmental researchers with resources and opportunities to gain expertise in economics research.

This four-year programme, to be conducted during 2017-2020, will assist SEA governments in the research implementation, training and partnership-policy interaction considered to be the key components of the development of a greener, cleaner and inclusive path. EEPSEA, in partnership with the Economy and Environment Institute - Lower Mekong Subregion (EEI-LMS), will bring into focus the negative impacts of any development activities and programmes on the people, environment, and natural capital in the region.

The project supports researchers in communication with relevant decision makers’ findings that can be used as policy inputs and programme implementation to achieve the greener, cleaner and inclusive development path.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

The project’s planned deliverables by 2020 are:

Research Implementation
A total of 30 small research grants allocated to researchers from Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia would equip the skills needed in developing and conducting subsequent research, as well as effectively teaching their students with research-oriented methods: A minimum of 20 research reports would be required from the grants, recognising that some of the research grants will largely be for training or instructional purposes only. Up to four research proposals per year will be conducted each year. At least 60 researchers will participate in a training course on communicating research for environmental economics researchers aimed at improving the capacity of environmental economics researchers to effectively communicate with their target audience, making research results understood and ultimately used by others. A minimum of 125 researchers, environmental economists and those from partner organisations are expected to attend the planned regional course on environmental economics and the transdisciplinary research approach.

Partnership and Policy Interaction
At least three new partnerships will be established each year by the EEPSEA Partnership, Workshops to be organised each year will provide an accessible platform for networking among researchers and partners to exchange information and communicate research findings for policymaking and advocacy.

TRAINING

At least 150 regional participants per year will attend a training course on Environmental Economics for Improved Natural Resources and Environmental Management.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The project plans to support research studies by integrating knowledge concepts and different strategies of men and women, different ethnic groups or community related, social and gender factors and economic and environmental values will be taken into consideration in trainings so that results can be delivered to involved parties and integrated into policymaking.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

EEPSEA partnership provides a unique regional platform for environmental economics and transdisciplinary research that will contribute to addressing and finding solutions to complex environmental challenges at the country and regional levels. The project will work with other partners to communicate these research findings to relevant decision makers so that they can be used as inputs in designing policies and programmes that foster a greener, cleaner and inclusive development.
The environmental and climate-related challenges of the Asia-Pacific region are severe, but can be managed or solved. Cooperation, in many forms and by all kinds of stakeholders, is a key tool to address the challenges. Since the challenges often transcend borders, they require regional and transboundary cooperation to be fully addressed or solved.

Environmental and climate problems, such as pollution, degradation of natural resources, or natural disasters, negatively affect people’s lives and human rights. In response, environmental policy and decision-making must build on gender equality and inclusion of marginalised groups at all levels. Democratic governance is essential for environmental sustainability and effective climate change response. Regional cooperation and regional actors that adopt an integrated approach, joining environment and climate change with human rights, democracy and gender equality, improve the chances of achieving sustainable, impactful results in line with the Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals.
THE PACIFIC-EUROPEAN UNION MARINE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

AT A GLANCE

Comprised of 28 member states, the European Union (EU) is a key player in the development and humanitarian field. Partnering with global organisations, communities and countries across the world, the EU promotes good governance, human and economic development and tackles universal issues such as fighting hunger and preserving natural resources.

The EU is one of the largest donors in the Pacific region with longstanding partnerships in the sustainable use of natural resources, climate change adaptation and mitigation, regional economic integration and rural development. Since 1975 the EU has supported several large regional fisheries projects in the Pacific during this time, including Science for Coastal and Ocean Fisheries and the Development of Tuna Fisheries in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) Countries Project (DEVFISH phases I and III), which were both jointly implemented by the regional organisations, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

The Pacific-EU Regional Partnership Programme (PERMP) programme has been designed based on experiences and lessons learned from a multitude of programmes and in complementarity with existing and planned initiatives to catalyse real changes in this sector. A long consultative and participatory process with different stakeholders has been key to secure an integrated and demand-driven approach in which ownership is key.

THE PACIFIC-EUROPEAN UNION MARINE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

The PERMP programme aims to improve the economic, social and environmental impact of the fishing industry for 15 Pacific ACP states by strengthening regional economic integration and the sustainable management of natural resources and the environment. It takes a comprehensive approach, integrating issues related to oceanic fisheries, coastal fisheries, community development, marine conservation and further capacity building under a single regional action. The programme is co-financed by the European Commission and the government of Sweden.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

PEUMP is expected to start implementation in mid-2018. The programme focuses on six key results’ areas that are based on six identified areas of challenge that are aligned with two regional policy frameworks: the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) and the Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries.

The six key results cover the following areas:

1) High-quality scientific and management advice for oceanic fisheries provided and utilised at the regional and national level.

2) Inclusive economic benefits from sustainable tuna fishing as a result of supporting competent authorities and strengthening the capacity of the private sector to create employment.

3) Improved sustainable management of coastal fisheries resources and ecosystems through better quality scientific information, legal advice, support, mentoring and empowerment at the community level.

4) Reduce illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing through enhanced monitoring control and surveillance of both oceanic and coastal fisheries, improved legislation, access to information and effective marine area management.

5) Sustainable utilisation of the coastal and marine biodiversity promoted through improving marine spatial planning, increasing climate change resilience, enhancing conservation/mitigation and rehabilitation measures.

6) Increased capacity building through education, training and research and development for key stakeholder groups in fisheries and marine resources management.

PROGRESS TOWARD SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

PEUMP is a gender sensitive programme that includes a consistent human rights-based approach. The point of departure is the "EU rights-based approach toolbox", whose approach aims at enhancing accountability, participation transparency, and non-discrimination at regional and national organizations in the Pacific. The point of departure for the gender perspective is the EU Gender Action Plan "Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women."

The integration of gender considerations and a rights-based approach will be further defined during the inception phase of the programme. The results framework will also be fine-tuned to assure that the selection of relevant indicators for gender equality and human rights are present and can measure the effective mainstreaming of human rights and gender equality.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The main organizations responsible for implementing the PEUMP programme are the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA).

SPC is the principal scientific and technical organisation. SPREP has a mandate from Pacific governments and administrations to protect and secure the sustainable development of the region’s environment; and FFA aims to strengthen national capacity and regional solidarity for sustainable tuna fisheries.

In addition, the University of the South Pacific (USP), the main regional capacity builder, is responsible for the implementation of a specific component of the programme focused on education, training and research.

These regional organisations work closely with national governmental agencies and departments responsible for fisheries and the environment in each country and also engage directly with coastal communities and the fishing industry.

SPC, FFA, SPREP and USP will also partner with several international and regional non-governmental organisations and with the private sector to deliver quality results at community national and regional levels.
EU FLEGT Facility

STRENGTHENING REGIONAL AWARENESS AND OWNERSHIP OF FOREST GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN THE GREATER MEKONG REGION DURING 2014-2018

As an executing agency, the European Forest Institute hosts the EU FLEGT Facility to support the implementation of the action plan. The facility supports the EU in its negotiation with countries producing and exporting timber products to tackle illegally produced timber trade.

Any country that signs a Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the EU will commit to developing legality assurance systems which will be used to verify law compliance of timber products. Then VPA partner countries will issue FLEGT licences for exports of verified products to its regulated market, which is prohibited from placing illegal timber products.

FOCUS AREAS:

- Human Rights
- Democracy
- Gender Equality
- Environment
- Climate Change

AT A GLANCE

Established in 2003, the European Union’s Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan aims to reduce illegal logging by strengthening sustainable and legal forest management, improving governance and promoting trade in legally produced timber.
STRENGTHENING REGIONAL AWARENESS AND OWNERSHIP OF FOREST GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN THE GREATER MEKONG REGION DURING 2016-2018

The EU FLEGT Facility’s Asia Regional Office has worked with timber-producing countries in the region to alleviate illegal logging and promote better governance in forest management. As countries engage in the negotiation of VPA’s and the development of legal frameworks, strictly enforcing the law and regulations could harm small and micro enterprises (SMEs) in the formal and informal sector, potentially increasing poverty. VPA processes therefore need to consider such risks and explore support mechanisms for SMEs and smallholders (tree growers) to overcome legal barriers. Unfortunately, there is the near absence of reliable data on this sector. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) therefore supports the facility to address this issue in four Mekong countries: Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam—aiming to fill these information gaps and help small-scale operators to operate legally. It pays particular attention to the potential impacts of VPA’s on women.

Entitled Strengthening Regional Awareness and Ownership of Forest Governance Issues in the Greater Mekong Region, the Sida-supported project covers a period from 2016 to 2018 and has the overall goal to contribute to poverty eradication and sustainable forest management.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

This facility has strengthened efforts of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member countries to tackle illegal logging and improve forest governance. It has also raised awareness among state agencies and the private sector about the importance of legal timber products. It has improved understanding on how small forest product enterprises operate in Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

The facility has prepared recommendations for policy and regulatory reforms that take into account the needs of small enterprises and women.

The project has further developed support mechanisms that strengthen regional ownership and cooperation in Asia. Policies and support measures have been identified and implemented to help SMEs and smallholders comply with the EU market’s requirements.

In addition, the project resulted in the strengthening of ASEAN structures and stakeholder forums contributing to improved forest governance. Major consumer markets have also worked towards putting in place strategies and legislation complementary to the facility’s goals and actions.

PROGRESS ON VOLUNTARY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

NOVEMBER 2016

Indonesia became the first country in the world to issue FLEGT licenses to the certified legal timber products it exports to the EU.

MAY 2017

Vietnam concluded a VPA negotiation with the EU and later signed the VPA and implemented FLEGT licensing process.

OTHER ASEAN COUNTRIES

Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam are still in the process of negotiating VPA’s.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The facility has incorporated gender equality as a key element in activities it organised for small and micro-sized enterprises. This has helped them gain understanding that can be further shared with national stakeholders and policy-makers.

There has also been progress in legislation. The facility has engaged lawmakers in the region on drafting laws prohibiting illegal logging. ASEAN has included FLEGT principles in its processes.

Through these activities, the facility has promoted dialogue that integrates diverse issues covering human rights, democracy, gender equality, environment and climate change.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The EU FLEGT facility has assisted ASEAN to develop mechanisms that help strengthen regional ownership and cooperation. It also assists ASEAN’s members with identifying and piloting policies and measures that have enabled SMEs and smallholders to comply with the changing timber market requirements.

It has also provided support to the Work Plan for FLEGT in ASEAN (2016-2020), which enables its member countries to consider common positions on a possible regional code of conduct on timber trade.

Regional cooperation has also been carried out with support to civil society organisations and the private sector. The facility in particular facilitates the participation of SMEs in ASEAN’s processes. It has assisted stakeholders to overcome regulatory barriers and obstacles including those specific to women in the Mekong region.
THE MRC’S STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR 2016-2020

The MRC is an intergovernmental organisation working as a supportive platform for water diplomacy and cooperation within the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB) region for its member countries – Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam – which share benefits from the common water resources of the Mekong River. The MRC enables its member countries to work together in order to finance, develop, manage and conserve the LMB in the issues of fisheries, flood control, irrigation, hydropower and navigation. The MRC was the first international river body to take on responsibilities for the finance, management and maintenance of water resources of the world’s tenth-largest and second-most bio-diverse river.

AT A GLANCE

Established in 1995, MRC is an intergovernmental organisation working as a supportive platform for water diplomacy and cooperation within the Lower Mekong Basin (LMB) region for its member countries – Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam – which share benefits from the common water resources of the Mekong River. The MRC enables its member countries to work together in order to finance, develop, manage and conserve the LMB in the issues of fisheries, flood control, irrigation, hydropower and navigation.

The MRC was the first international river body to take on responsibilities for the finance, management and maintenance of water resources of the world’s tenth-largest and second-most bio-diverse river.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

For more than 20 years, the MRC has been supporting its member countries to jointly develop and manage the Mekong sustainably. Several achievements have been recognised, for example, the first Mekong Basin Development Strategy and the use of water resources procedural rules were developed. Scenarios of the countries’ water development assessment were conducted. Additionally, various agreements were reached, such as between the MRC and China for sharing technical knowledge and running joint assessments, as well as an agreement between Cambodia and Vietnam on water-based transport.

With its 2016-2020 Strategic Plan, the MRC is expecting these key outcomes,

- Increased common understanding and application of evidence-based knowledge by policymakers and project planners,
- Optimised environment management and the development of sustainable water resources by national sector planning agencies to provide basin-wide benefits,
- Improved guidance of the development and management of water, as well as related projects and resources, by national planning and implementing agencies.

MRC GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The agenda of gender mainstreaming in sustainable water resources management has been widely acknowledged by all MRC member countries.

In 2000, the MRC Gender Policy was endorsed by the governments of the riparian countries.

In addition, the Basin Development Strategy 2014-2020 presents gender trends and outlooks and highlights gender mainstreaming in the Lower Mekong region. In the MRC Strategic Plans 2016-2023, seven gender indicators were integrated in all four key MRC outcomes.

In 2017, the MRC developed and adopted the Gender Action Plan to integrate and operationalise gender in key MRC work and activities.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

The MRC is an intergovernmental organisation working with stakeholders across the region. Aware of a “whole basin” approach through the cooperation between the member countries and the upper riparian countries – Myanmar and China – is crucial for the Mekong River development and management, the MRC has developed regular communication, information sharing and technical exchanges with China and Myanmar with the aim to institutionalise a more extensive information sharing system on river flows and reservoir operations as well as joint technical studies, state of basin reporting and experience exchanges in flood and drought management.
THE REGIONAL RIGHTS RESOURCE TEAM (RRRT)

The Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) is the human rights programme of the Pacific Community (SPC). Established in 1995, SPC RRRT is a pioneer of Pacific human rights capacity development and lead in human rights technical assistance. RRRT works with Pacific states and civil society to build a culture of human rights, and to assist Pacific states to commit to and observe international human rights and good governance commitments, obligations and standards.

Through its work, RRRT is a leading regional change agent in the Pacific. RRRT supports states and civil society to take greater responsibility in prioritising human rights issues and responding effectively to these issues including gender inequality, violence against women and children, climate change, migration, social inclusion and non-discrimination.

FOCUS AREAS

HUMAN RIGHTS
DEMOCRACY
GENDER EQUALITY
ENVIRONMENT
CLIMATE CHANGE

AT A GLANCE

Over the past 20 years, SPC RRRT built strong and enduring relationships of trust with parliaments, judges, magistrates, lawyers and lay magistrates; a range of government ministries and departments; and civil society organisations (CSOs) throughout the region, RRRT is able to leverage these relationships to sustain political will and action to advance human rights and good governance.

Having a total of eight member states and an office based in Suva, Fiji, RRRT continues to enjoy a comparative advantage in interpreting and applying international human rights in the context of Pacific cultures and the Pacific way of life.

In 1998, the team won the United Nations Maurice Pate Award for groundbreaking work in the Pacific region and in July 2013 SPC RRRT was nominated by the Ambassador of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Wellington, New Zealand for the global Human Rights Tuip Award.

RRRT has a strong record of success in embedding the culture and practice of human rights in the region.
THE REGIONAL RIGHTS RESOURCES TEAM

SPC RRRT plans to implement many activities at the regional and country levels over the next five years with the following focus:

Mainstreaming a rights-based approach
This approach includes supporting current projects within SPC to use a rights-based and gender-inclusive approach in their implementation, through training of project staff and capacity development with implementation teams in project countries. In addition, this will include capacity support to divisions that are trying to apply a rights-based approach through needs assessment and technical assistance to design project documents, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

Increasing women’s access to justice
The approach will be reflected in RRRT’s pilot project in Tonga: the opening of a legal aid centre for survivors of domestic violence. The centre will provide free legal assistance to survivors of domestic violence to enable them to access protection orders and other related family law services.

Capacity development of CSOs
Activities will include supporting the ongoing Pacific People Advancing Change (IPAC) programme by mentoring CSOs in selected countries to develop human rights advocacy campaigns. Small grants will also be provided for groups to carry out the campaign.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Based on the key activities, these are the project’s anticipated achievements:

- Strengthened capacity of SPC projects and government partners to apply a human rights and gender-based approach to development. It is anticipated that a human rights-based approach will be put into practice upon completion of the project by governments and communities;
- Women facing domestic violence have knowledge on access to justice. The Tongan L’egal Aid Centre is an innovative and one-of-a-kind project in the Pacific and will be dedicated solely to providing free legal assistance to women. It is anticipated that women will be able to access the services free of charge including support with formal protection applications to the court and referral to other service providers. This should increase women’s knowledge and agency to access justice and other support services;
- CSOs have increased capacity to monitor and advocate for human rights. CSOs in a number of countries have already been trained in developing human rights campaigns. This project will build on these gains and expand the scope of work to the outer islands. CSOs throughout the Pacific Islands will have increased capacity in human rights advocacy and hold their governments and other stakeholders accountable.

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WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

The project seeks to mainstream human rights-based approaches and put into practice among all Pacific Islanders, and specifically those who are marginalised. For example, climate change projects which do not address issues around gender inequality can never purport to further human rights and the needs of all populations.

Gender inequality is endemic in the Pacific and needs to be specifically addressed within development projects to ensure that the half of Pacific Islanders who are female are not further marginalised by projects which might not take their specific needs into account.

CSOs are empowered to call for better protection and rights from their governments. The issues of gender inequality and climate change will be brought to the forefront of the national dialogue as these are the most pressing issues facing Pacific Islanders. It will force governments to recognise the mutual interactions between all of these issues and realise that development cannot be progressed without ensuring that this is done in an inclusive manner.
KEMI
Kemikalieinspektionen

TOWARDS A NON-TOXIC SOUTHEAST ASIA

FOCUS AREAS:

HUMAN RIGHTS  DEMOCRACY  GENDER EQUALITY  ENVIRONMENT  CLIMATE CHANGE

AT A GLANCE

Established in 1986, the Swedish Chemicals Agency (Kemi) is a supervisory agency under the Ministry of Environment and Energy of Sweden, responsible for ensuring that companies producing or importing chemicals take responsibility for the safety of products placed on the Swedish market. Kemi works to reduce the risk of harm from chemicals to humans and the environment.

In Sweden, Kemi develops legislation and provides suggestions to the government to strengthen the rules on chemicals, and reviews applications for the sale and use of plant-protection and biocidal products. Kemi also supervises and inspects importers and producers of chemical products and pesticides.

At the international level, Kemi supports preventive chemicals control in both developing countries and those in economic transition. Kemi has collaborated with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to deliver chemical management programmes in Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia.

TOWARDS A NON-TOXIC SOUTHEAST ASIA

Kemi works in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific (PANAP) and the Field Alliance (TFA) to launch a programme with an aim to strengthen capacity to monitor, regulate and manage chemicals used in agriculture and forestry. Rapid industrialisation and chemicals management are among challenges facing Southeast Asia. To reduce health and environmental risks in the region, and in particular the Mekong region covering Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam as well as Guangxi and Hainan provinces in China, the following key activities have been introduced under the programme:

- Monitoring the use of pesticides at the community level and reporting results to policymakers at local, national, regional and global levels,
- Raising awareness of risks of pesticides, risk-reduction measures and alternatives to chemicals through trainings and meetings, educational programmes, and the production and distribution of informational material and use of conventional and social media,
- Supporting community development of action plans to reduce the exposure and use of hazardous chemicals, to forward adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) by smallholder farmers through participation in Farmers Field Schools, and promotion of scaling up of farmer education on IPM and pesticide risk reduction by local governments and other donors,
- Supporting an improvement of legislation on pesticides, industrial and consumer chemicals and capacity for efficient enforcement of such legislation,
- Assisting regional collaboration on chemicals management through organisation of regional forums and workshops for information sharing, networking and capacity building.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Among KemI’s, the programme’s 2017 highlighted outcomes are:

- Adoption of new and revised policies and legislation on pesticides, industrial and consumer chemicals in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

- Decreased use of hazardous chemicals and pesticides, fewer poisoning cases, and preserved ecosystem services have been observed in project areas where farmers have attended IPM (Integrated Pest Management) training and have switched to more sustainable and profitable farming methods.

- Increased knowledge and attention to risks from pesticides to children, including introduction of measures to protect this particularly vulnerable group.

- Knowledge and results from the programme contributed to global attention and support for phasing out the most Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs), identified as an issue of concern within the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), as well as the development of relevant guidance and tools to support this work.

- KemI’s programmes support regional capacity building and exchange for studies and development of educational programmes and measures to protect and minimise pesticide exposure.

100,000

KemI’s work has improved occupational safety of farmers.

78,000

The country’s first chemical law enactment; adoption of a national monitoring system on pesticide management; increased access to control technology; increased awareness raising activities and activities to promote responsible use of pesticides; improved capacity of chemical hazardous waste management; and increased awareness and involvement of the general public.

LAOS

Increased knowledge and attention to risks from pesticides to children, including introduction of measures to protect this particularly vulnerable group.

MYANMAR

Knowledge and results from the programme contributed to global attention and support for phasing out the most Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs), identified as an issue of concern within the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), as well as the development of relevant guidance and tools to support this work.

110,000

Rural community members have taken part in various awareness raising activities and for training on risk and alternative farming practices, including agro-ecology.

5,000

Teachers, officials and community members strengthened in their understanding of agro-biodiversity and impact of pesticide use. Close to 4,000 students have also participated in the Rural Ecological Agriculture for Livelihood (REAL) activities.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

Regional harmonisation of chemicals legislation can strengthen the protection of human health and the environment, facilitate trade and efficiently utilise government resources.

To support this development, the programme has created a regional chemicals management forum for capacity building, information exchange and networking, and a dialogue with the ASEAN Working Group on Chemicals and Waste on how to cooperate and enhance sound chemicals management in the region.

The programme also actively engages with the Asia Pacific Plant Protection Commission, regional subsidiary of the International Plant Protection Convention.
The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is a multi-lateral development agency that mainly works to eradicate poverty and reduce inequalities and exclusion in nearly 170 countries and territories. Formed in 1965, the agency also supports the countries in achieving sustainable development of natural resources through policymaking, skills, partnership and institution establishment so that they can be as effective as possible in achieving their goals.

UNDP is the UN’s global development network advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. UNDP’s vision is to support countries in achieving the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion.

### Focus Areas:

- Human Rights
- Democracy
- Gender Equality
- Environment
- Climate Change

### UNDP’s Projects

01  
Being LGBTI in Asia, Phase 2

02  
Strengthening the Governance of Climate Change Policies to Enhance Gender Equality

03  
The United Nations Action for Convention against Trafficking in Persons (CWT)
BEING LGBTI IN ASIA, PHASE 2

Being LGBTI in Asia, Phase 2 (BLIA) is a regional partnership between the UNDP, the Embassy of Sweden in Bangkok, USAID and the Faith in Love Foundation (Hong Kong). The programme aims to reduce the marginalisation and exclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) people. Launched in 2012, BLIA works with civil society organisations (CSOs), national and regional institutions, and governments to empower civil society and advance protective laws and policies through policy advocacy, operational research and strategy development between a range of stakeholders.

Key activities include building the capacity to strengthen the governance of LGBTI organisations and networks to effectively advocate and contract to policy dialogue and community empowerment activities, engaging governments and national human rights institutions (NHRIs) to create laws and policies that protect sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) rights, and reducing stigma, discrimination, and harmful practices against LGBTI people.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

BLIA has increased the social inclusion of LGBTI persons across Asia by bringing their voices to places where they were previously unrepresented.

For example, the programme has enabled civil society to take part in the drafting of legal gender recognition legislation in India, Pakistan, Thailand and Vietnam, anti-discrimination legislation in the Philippines, and gender responsiveness in the justice systems in Thailand and the Philippines.

The programme has also helped civil society organisations address LGBTI issues more effectively by advocating and contributing to policy dialogues. This includes helping the ASEAN SOGIE Caucus and Asia Pacific Transgender Network become legally registered, and strengthening their governance and sustainability.

In total, the programme has engaged over 1,000 organisations and groups across Asia Pacific, both those working directly on LGBTI issues and groups working on relevant areas of education, gender and women's issues, human rights, health, employment, media, faith and more.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

Through its regional platform, BLIA is able to approach issues that might be deemed too sensitive for local work, and it shares the good practices of one country with others in the region. This fosters South–South learning by sharing regional knowledge with both government policy makers and civil society across the region.

Regional engagements include workshops and the submission of shadow reports on SOGIESC issues in Indonesia and the Philippines.

The programme has also helped relevant submissions be made to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (international issues in Nepal), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (SOGIESC issues in Thailand as part of a joint civil society statement), and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (joint statement by women's groups in Thailand).

Seven submissions have been made to the Independent Expert on SOGIESC and one to the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Children. Ten letters were sent by programme partners in support of the independent experts on SOGIESC's mandate.

BILA REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS

1,000
Organisations

130
Governments

357
Civil Society Groups

17
NHRIs

88
Private Sector Organisations

30
Schools, human rights, LGBTI and youth organisations in 11 countries

55,100
People reached through social media

200
Private sector participants attended a global dialogue highlighting LGBTI inclusion in working processes

110
Media professionals were trained on SOGIESC issues at media roundtables in China, the Philippines and Thailand

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

BLIA has strengthened the voice of LGBTI people in the region's development discourse. Consequently legal gender recognition and anti-discrimination laws and policies have been prioritised. The BLIA programme draws on learnings from UNDP's portfolio that cuts across sectors to address human development with efforts to scale-up human rights and gender equality approaches in national, regional and global AIDS responses.

In order to mainstream SOGIESC into the wider human rights work, BLIA has partnered with the Asia Pacific Forum (APF) to provide training for NHRIs to support the human rights of LGBTI persons. In addition it has increasingly engaged private sector companies in the discourse on LGBTI inclusion.

BLIA makes special efforts to ensure balanced representation across all SOGIESC, supports and reaches out to underrepresented groups within it, including trans men, intersex people, lesbian women and bisexual men and women. Specific support has been given to the nascent intersex rights advocacy movement, and research focusing on economic empowerment is currently planned.

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STRENGTHENING THE GOVERNANCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE FINANCE TO ENHANCE GENDER EQUALITY

The Governance of Climate Change Finance (GCCF) Programme brings together a diverse team of climate change and climate finance, governance, gender, and human rights specialists providing tools and services to support better management of climate budgeting and financing. The main objective is to support countries to unlock the sustainable development potential for climate finance. In order to secure increasing climate finance (both domestic and international) as well as to optimize their benefits in terms of gender equality, poverty reduction and respect for human rights, governments need well-considered, transparent and effective budgets.

From late 2014, GCCF has been expanding its partnerships to include sector ministries, social ministries, and ministries leading on gender mainstreaming. While continuing to focus on climate change mainstreaming as the entry point for sustainable planning and budget reforms, GCCF also aims to support climate actions in terms of gender equality, poverty reduction and respect for human rights.

The project’s key activities are as follows:

- Assisting governments in making more risk-informed, effective planning and budget decisions taking into account climate change and gender equality.
- Supporting countries to develop budget tagging to more effectively track resources and results.
- Creating tools and partnerships with CSOs and Parliaments to increase the transparency of spending, providing greater accountability of line ministries and promoting international trust in a country’s use of climate finance.
- Assisting governments to adopt investment appraisal guidelines and budget circulars that require the integration of climate change, poverty and gender equality in their designs.
- Building the capacity of regional and national institutions to promote climate responsive budgets that are gender responsive, benefit the poor and enhance human rights.
- Providing clear budgets, data sets and evidence to make the case for additional financing.
From 2012-2016, the programme leveraged US$ 24.2 million in Bangladesh, Indonesia and Thailand, Climate Change Financial Frameworks in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal and Pakistan were developed, in Thailand and Cambodia, Sector Ministries have been supported to develop climate compatible budget proposals for funding from Ministries of Finance. Over a dozen analytical papers relating to financing local responses to climate change were produced. These papers illustrate all methods to conduct the tools and reviews used by GCF specialists and publication of the team’s findings. Over 16 national climate finance consultations involving over 500 technical experts were held. Capacity development workshops were organised with over 100 participants receiving best-practice training on climate change-related financing and budgeting skills.

Six regional dialogues were held with 14 Asia Pacific countries and over 1,000 participants from governments, civil society organisations, parliamentarians and other international organisations. Direct South-South exchange has been facilitated between Bangladesh and Indonesia, and China and Pakistan where experience in climate budget tagging systems was shared and led into design of reforms.

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

GCF works to harness political commitments on climate change to advocate and provide public policy solutions that facilitate climate responses through the budget that also promotes gender equality and human rights.

The programme assists governments in the creation of Climate Change Financing Frameworks (CCFF) in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal and Pakistan. The frameworks that broadly engage all stakeholders to better mobilise, manage and target domestic and international climate change finance. This also strengthens and highlights opportunities for the better integration of climate change and human rights, gender equality, and democracy.

Established climate budget tagging in Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal has generated critical data on climate investments, enabling public scrutiny, strengthening accountability and laying critical ground for better climate change interaction with democracy, gender equality and human rights concerns.

The programme works to integrate gender and human rights into climate dimensions. The Climate Change Budget Integration Index (CCBIII) is used as a tool to measure an integration of climate change into the public financial management system.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

GCF works with governments, civil society groups and accountability actors to ensure that domestic and international climate finance is equitable and effective through well-considered, transparent and effective budgets. This includes work at the local level with provincial governments and the national level along with assisting states to work with each other through numerous South-South Exchanges, technical exchanges and regional dialogues.

GCF BY THE NUMBERS

US$ 26.2B
Levended in Bangladesh, Indonesia and Thailand

15+
National Climate Finance Consultations involving over 500 Technical Experts

100+
Participants received best-practice training in climate change financing

6
Regional Dialogues with 14 Asia Pacific Countries engaged over 1,000 Participants

GCF PROCESS FOR STRENGTHENING CLIMATE FINANCE AND BUDGETING

Step 01

Work with government, NGOs and donors to agree on needs and entry points for improving climate budgeting.

Step 02

Provide tools and support to the government to address funding gaps and integrate climate plans and financing into public financial and economic management.

Step 03

Create an integrated Climate Change Financing Framework

Continuous Awareness-raising and galvanising support for budget reform through:

Policy Brief
Civil Society Engagement
Parliamentary Advocacy

OUTCOMES:

1. Solution of climate change finance challenges
2. Agreement on required policy responses
3. Building capacity on the need for budget reform
4. Building government climate change financing capacity, improving budget tracking, proposals and expenditure reports
5. Suggest a framework for delivering government integrated financing
6. Outcome: An effective whole of government response to climate change built into integrated national budgetary and planning processes
UN-ACT is one of the remarkable regional projects aimed at tackling human trafficking issues in six countries in the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS): Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. The project addresses human trafficking in the region comprehensively after the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking in the sub-region ended in 2014. Since then, the following activities have been implemented:

- Supporting the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) governments in counter-trafficking, by providing technical support, coordination, and engaging other stakeholders through UN-ACT’s role as Secretariat to the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking (COMMIT), a multilateral, government-led initiative to comprehensively combat trafficking in persons.

- Engaging governments and regional actors including ASEAN to collaborate in counter-trafficking with COMMIT.

- Conducting research and advocacy on human trafficking contributing to the evidence base in the sector for policy makers and other stakeholders.

- Supporting other actors, including civil society, private sector and other non-government agencies in contributing more effectively to counter-trafficking efforts.
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

Capacity Development
Through facilitating the development, agreement and implementation of the fourth COMMIT Sub-regional Plan of Action on Trafficking addressing protection, prevention, prosecution and policy, and annual national COMMIT work plans, six member countries are equipped with capacities needed to drive the COMMIT process.

Supporting Regional Engagement
UN-ACT supports engagement of other regional actors with COMMIT countries in counter-trafficking, including ASEAN, through the development and implementation of common indicators of trafficking in persons.

Research and Advocacy
Carried out by UN-ACT, a study on Forced Marriage between Cambodia and China is used to raise awareness among transnational marriage applicants of potential forced marriage crimes, bringing attention and policy changes to an under-addressed area of human trafficking in women. The organisation has also worked with NEXUS Institute and World Vision to develop a new guidebook to support the reintegration of trafficking survivors based on research conducted with more than 200 victims of trafficking—brining the voice of victims to policy and programming decisions.

Building Multi-sectoral Collaboration
The project has supported civil society in developing counter-trafficking initiatives through a human-rights based approach, including through grants, technical support, providing platforms for collaboration between agencies, and in advocacy to governments.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING FACTS:
Gangs R.U.O.

8,138+
Women were referred and supported through national and transnational referral mechanisms as part of the COMMIT process over 2014-2016

20
Police related to human trafficking have been arrested and imprisoned in all six countries supported by UN-ACT

727
Police and trafficking survivors were repatriated from Indonesia where they were found stranded on an island to Medan, Indonesia, Thailand and Laos through collaboration between governments, civil society, media and the UN

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

UN-ACT addresses human rights and gender discrimination through research and programming on trafficking and the protection and assistance of women trafficked for forced marriage.

The project has highlighted the nexus between human trafficking and illegal fishing. Both issues relate to environmental degradation in Thailand and Southeast Asia.

Grants, training and advocacy implemented under the project have created a platform for civil society to engage women’s groups and youth, particularly gender and human rights issues with governments and intergovernmental agencies through COMMIT in reducing vulnerability to trafficking and exploitation.

Regional Engagements
As the Secretariat to the COMMIT process, an intergovernmental mechanism between the six governments of the Greater Mekong Sub-region, UN-ACT provides technical and coordination support between COMMIT and ASEAN and other stakeholders including youth, civil society organisations and private sector. As a result stakeholders within the multi-sectoral platform for regional human-rights advocacy and policy development are engaged in sharing good practices and collaboration across borders to effectively combat human trafficking.

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AT A GLANCE

The United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) is the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment. UN Environment’s Asia and the Pacific Office geographically serves 41 countries across the region to promote and implement sustainable development solutions. It works in close partnership with key stakeholders including governments, the private sector, civil society, and other UN agencies.

Established in 1977 and headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, UN Environment hosts several multilateral environmental conventions, secretariats, and inter-agency coordinating bodies. The agency works across seven broad areas: climate change, disasters and conflicts, ecosystem management, environmental governance, chemicals and waste, resources efficiency, and environment under review.

REGIONAL ENFORCEMENT NETWORK FOR CHEMICALS AND WASTE

Implemented by UN Environment in 25 countries in Asia-Pacific, the project is aimed at combating illegal trade in harmful chemicals and hazardous waste. It commenced in 2012 and current activities will end in February 2018. The project covers five priority areas through the following activities:

1. Information and Intelligence Sharing
   • Intelligence sharing facilitation among national and regional customs organisations and environmental authorities
   • Desk studies and research and analysis on illegal trade and problematic chemicals and waste streams
   • Website and newsletters

2. Enforcement Operation Facilitation
   • Support to global and regional enforcement operations in partnership with The International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL), World Customs Organization, and other partners
   • Support to national enforcement operations

3. Technical Assistance for Problem-Solving
   • Organising capacity-building workshops for Customs, Police and Environmental authorities, including on gender and human rights issues
   • Production of technical tools and guidance such as handbooks and inspection apps
   • Technical support to strengthening national legislation

4. Networking and Awareness
   • Organising annual workshops to facilitate networking among national focal points and partners
   • Organising the Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards to celebrate and reward excellence in enforcement efforts in combating pollution crime.

5. Partnership for Sustainability
   • Creating partnerships within and beyond the region to build a sustainable enforcement network
   • Support national multi-agency cooperation
   • Facilitate inter-regional cooperation for better cooperation and regulatory harmonisation efforts
PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS

- Over 1,000 frontline enforcement officers trained
- Hundreds of thousands of tons of illegally traded waste and chemicals identified and seized
- Enforcement partnerships established with key agencies, such as UNODC, INTERPOL, and WCO
- Networks of national focal points established in all participating countries
- Practical enforcement tools created, including handbooks in several languages
- Two Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards ceremonies successfully delivered
- Intelligence-exchange networks established between countries and organisations in and beyond the region
- Working partnerships established with civil society
- Gender awareness established in the network, with foundations for concrete gender activities planned in a follow-on phase

WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Pollution as Human Rights Issue
Over 100 constitutions around the world now guarantee environmental rights in some forms, including the right to a clean environment, clean air and clean water. By reducing illegally traded harmful chemicals and hazardous waste imports into the region, UN Environment safeguards fundamental human rights. Pollution harms the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat.

Gender Awareness
At the project’s inception there was limited gender awareness among frontline enforcement officers such as customs officials. UN Environment partnered with civil society organisations to integrate gender and human rights training into national capacity development workshops. This has raised gender awareness among frontline enforcement officers and has provided an important platform for action. Gender awareness helps customs officers ‘humanise’ pollution and leads to more enforcement actions in the areas of chemicals and waste.

Human Rights for the Future
The project has helped raise awareness on human rights issues in relation to ship dismantling in South Asia. This is an early initiative, but an important first step to future work.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

UN Environment can use its unique platform as both a UN agency and the global leader in environmental issues to convene governments and other stakeholders in a politically neutral forum to combat environmental challenges, a neutrality essential when working with international trade issues and with politically-sensitive enforcement operations.

UN Environment’s expertise in environmental issues and broad network among environment authorities in the region makes it an effective partner to coordinate efforts to combat illegal trade in chemicals and waste. The agency’s role in supporting Multilateral Environmental Agreement Secretariats gives a unique advantage in supporting countries to meet their obligations and commitments under these international conventions.

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By reducing illegally traded harmful chemicals and hazardous waste imports into the region, UN Environment safeguards fundamental human rights.

Left and Below: Chemical pollution harms the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat.
AT A GLANCE

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) was established to better address, coordinate and comprehensively response to the interrelated issues of illicit trafficking and abuse of drugs, crime prevention and criminal justice, international terrorism, and corruption. These goals are pursued through three primary functions: research, guidance and support to governments in the adoption and implementation of various crimes, drugs, terrorism, and corruption-related conventions, treaties and protocols, as well as technical/financial assistance to governments facing needs and challenges in these fields.

UNODC’s anti-corruption efforts in the region focus on supporting countries to meet the requirements of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) by providing technical assistance and facilitating regional exchanges to translate the provisions of the convention into effective legal frameworks, policies and practices and to build national bodies of highly skilled anti-corruption practitioners that will allow member countries to be well-equipped with skills and efficiency in preventing and combating corruption. The project also aims at building partnerships between governments, private sector and civil society organizations to jointly develop and implement anti-corruption strategies and foster collective action initiatives to meet the requirements.

Activities at both the regional and national level are designed to foster international cooperation, South-South learning, and the exchange of experiences, best practices and lessons learned.
**PROJECT OUTCOMES & HIGHLIGHTS**

The project’s main achievements so far include:

- Ongoing dialogue aimed at creating a regional anti-corruption agenda at an inter-governmental level for the ASEAN region. A Memorandum of Understanding between the ASEAN Corporate Social Responsibility Network (ACRN) and the various chambers of commerce in the region paved the way towards a private-sector-led strategy against corruption at the regional level.

- UNODC is regularly invited to the meetings of Southeast Asian Parties Against Corruption (SEA-PAC) to provide capacity building support and advice on the most recent anti-corruption legislative developments.

- All anti-corruption agencies in Southeast Asia received strategic capacity development assistance for the effective implementation of UNCAC. Country-specific work plans were developed and targeted trainings at the regional and national levels were delivered.

- The development of the legal and institutional framework in some of the most challenging areas of reform was supported through a number of regional events, including the areas of foreign bribery, liability of legal persons, beneficial ownership, whistle-blower and witnesses’ protection, and mutual legal assistance in corruption investigations.

- Substantial, technical and administrative support were provided to Cambodia, Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand on the first cycle of the UNCAC Implementation Review Mechanism, and to Laos, Vietnam and Myanmar for the second review cycle to ensure a timely, inclusive and comprehensive review process and outcome. The participation of civil society and private sector representatives in the review mechanism of the two cycles was facilitated.

- Legislative drafting support was provided to the Ministry of Justice in Vietnam, the Philippines Department of Justice, the Cambodian Anti-Corruption Unit, the Corruption Eradication Commission in Indonesia, the National Anti-Corruption Commission of Thailand, the Anti-Corruption Commissions of Timor Leste and of Myanmar on the development of anti-corruption laws, codes of conducts for public officials and members of the judiciary, and regulations on the liability of legal persons for corruption offences.

- The latest online knowledge tools and news relating to the latest anti-corruption developments were promoted among policymakers, anti-corruption practitioners, academics and NGOs in the region through the AP-INACT Network. The emailing network established and jointly administered by UNODC has been a very useful network for those practitioners.

- In cooperation with the World Bank/UNODC Stolen Asset Recovery (STAR) Initiative, conducted a comprehensive assessment of the capacity of relevant agencies to carry out asset recovery and to identify needs for legislative and capacity improvements.

**WORKING REGIONALLY WITH ENVIRONMENT, GENDER EQUALITY AND A HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH**

**Human Rights and Democracy**

Several aspects of the project contribute to upholding civil-economic and political rights and promoting democratic governance.

A regional workshop on strengthening access to information and participatory decision-making in the region was held at the margins of the annual Southeast Asian Parties Against Corruption (SEA-PAC) held in Manila in November 2017. In working groups, the participants developed a number of recommendations to address the identified challenges, and which are to be implemented under the leadership of the SEA-PAC members.

UNODC organised a regional workshop in 2016 to gather practitioners representing anti-corruption agencies as well as NGOs to discuss ways to improve the whistle-blower and witnesses’ protection systems. The agency also supported the development of the witnesses and whistle blowers’ protection laws in Cambodia in 2017 and helped the APEC Anti-Corruption working group to develop standards for witnesses and whistle blowers’ protection to be proposed as a model for APEC countries.

**Gender Equality**

UNODC has initiated work to address these issues in cooperation with national authorities in the region. Among examples are:

- A roundtable on gender and corruption was organised in Jakarta with an aim to share experiences, discuss and raise awareness on particular challenges facing women when it comes to confronting and combating corruption and to what extent combating corruption can empower women.

- On the occasion of celebrating the International Anti-Corruption Day in Thailand in 2017, the theme focused on the issue of gender and corruption. At a public symposium with women narrated their stories of empowerment by calling out and becoming a public voice in the fight against corruption.

**Environment**

In 2014 UNODC organised a regional workshop addressing corruption in forest management particularly timber and wildlife trafficking. UNODC organised a regional workshop addressing corruption in forest management particularly timber and wildlife trafficking.

In 2017, a similar initiative was conducted in the fishery sector, covering Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Myanmar. In Southeast Asia, smuggled migrants and trafficked people often work in the regional fishery industry under often inhumane and forced labour conditions. Corruption was highlighted as one of the main enablers behind illegal fishing and human trafficking in the region.
### SUMMARY

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**Notes:**
- Activities/Programmes include advocacy, campaigning, research, analysis, and support.
- Outcomes focus on capacity building and empowering people.
- Impacts aim to influence policy and promote equality and justice.

**Additional Information:**
- Collaboration with various regional and international organizations.
- Focus on human rights, environment, and gender equality.
- Aim to achieve positive impacts through advocacy and support.