



▲ National dialogue meeting on eco-village development in Nepal. Photo by CRT/N, Nepal.

# Eco-Village Development as Climate Solution

## Regional Presentation

On October 17-19, 2016, the Eco-Village Development (EVD) concept was presented at a parallel session on the 5th Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) Adaptation Forum, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

### Fitting Regional Platform

The Adaptation Forum provided a fitting regional platform for policy advocacy of the low-carbon, pro-poor, Eco-Village Development (EVD) concept.

The Forum of the Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) brought together adaptation practitioners worldwide to share their experiences on adaptation practices and solutions. It was an opportunity for cross-training and for the sharing of ideas among diverse stakeholders.

The Forum, hosted by the Government of Sri Lanka, is also one of the series of events organised to promote the programme “Sri Lanka NEXT – A Blue Green Era” with an aim to present low-carbon development as a development strategy for Sri Lanka.

### Parallel Session: October 17, 2016

The key principles and experiences of the EVD Concept were promoted at the parallel session “Coordinating Policy Initiatives for Adaptation in South Asia”.

Experiences and case studies were shared from India, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka by the Project partners and the co-chairs of the Panel.

The cases demonstrate the various climate impacts faced by communities, challenges in executing the EVD approach in the areas, and the outcomes of such approaches. The case studies also argue for urgent policy measures to expand EVD concept and solutions.

The session focused on the linkages, which demonstrate the effectiveness of the EVD approach in meeting climate-change-adaptation objectives as well as the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

*Read more on the EVD Concept in the 60-page Publication, the Policy Briefs, and on some of the recent activities in the next two pages.*



▲ Parallel Session at the Adaptation Forum where the EVD Concept was presented in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Participants (from left to right): Lokendra Thakkar, CDM Agency Coord. Dep't of Env't, Gov't of Madhya Pradesh, India; Niraj Shrestha, CRT/N, Nepal; Raymond Myles, INSEDA, India; Vinod Menon, Founder Member, National Disaster Management Authority, India; Atiq Rehman, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies, Bangladesh; Zareen Myles, WAFD, India; Dumindu Herath, IDEA, Sri Lanka; and Santosh Patnaik, CANSA.

See: INFORSE Side Events at UNFCCC COP22. Page 3 and Back Page.

### Eco-Village Development (EVD) Concept

The EVD concept addresses the rapid-development imperative and emission-reduction objectives of developing countries. It involves low-carbon, low-cost, locally adapted solutions. It reduces poverty and drudgery in the lives of women, generates income, and improves lifestyles of rural people.

The solutions include planning, renewable energy, efficient cook stoves, water management, agriculture, gardening, and housing. Combined together, these concepts can generate improved agricultural productivity; diversify livelihood; generate employment; and provide affordable, safe, clean energy for lighting and cooking.

Most EVD solutions have multiple effects, as they address both climate-change mitigation and adaptation.

*EVD was developed by INFORSE-South Asia members in cooperation with CANSA within the framework of a Project in 2015-17. The Project is supported by the Climate and Environment Fund of CISU - Civil Society in Development, Denmark. Read more at INFORSE-South Asia: [www.inforse.org/asia/EVD.htm](http://www.inforse.org/asia/EVD.htm).*



▲ The 60-page publication, and the Policy Briefs are available online.



▲▲ Sri Lanka: Exhibition at the Environmental Day; Efficient Cookstoves; Conference "Localizing the Transformation". Photos by IDEEA, Sri Lanka.

▲ (left) India: National Dialogue Meeting's opening and group photo. Photos by INSEDA and WAFD, India. (right) Bangladesh: Exhibition at the Environmental Fair. Photo by Grameen Shakti.

## Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, Eco-Village Development (EVD) solutions are being tested and implemented actively in villages, with the support of local community-based organisations (CBOs) and governmental officials.

Through village planning and the raising of awareness, communities have been strengthened against socio-economic and climatic challenge. Specific skills promoted include organic farming, livelihood development, disaster-resilience-building, household-energy conservation, and efficiency improvements.

The EVD concept and its local demonstration activities were brought into focus nationally by two events in 2016:

- On June 5, 2016, an exhibition marking the *World Environment Day* was organized by the Ministry of Mahaweli Development and Environment at which the Integrated Development Association (IDEA) exhibited EVD solutions, attracting a lot of interest.
- On June 27, 2016, the first provincial sustainable-development engagement platform, "*Localizing the Transformation*", was organized by the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Wildlife (SDW). The high-profile event was attended by the Chief Minister of Central Province and by the Minister of SDW. Mr. R M Amerasekera, director of IDEA, participated on a panel and briefed attendees on the importance of EVD activities such as sustainable village planning in localizing transformations for sustainability.

### On the Road to Large-scale use of EVD

EVD is promising for use throughout Sri Lanka, especially given the current national context. Committing to the COP21 Paris Agreements, Sri Lanka launched the "Sri Lanka NEXT Blue Green Era" initiative in January, 2016, acknowledging the need for low-carbon strategies in national development.

Under this initiative, 10,000 eco-friendly Haritha Suhuru villages ("Climate Smart" villages) are to be developed until 2021.

To implement this programme within the period of 2016-2020, the Sri Lankan government will collaborate with community organizations. These include the community-based Sanasa Movement and the Sarvodaya Movement, a social-uplift organization. Linkages and involvement with these community organizations should pave the way to incorporate EVD activities actively into future national programmes.

## India

The First Eco-Village Development (EVD) national stakeholders' dialogue in India was held in Dehradun, the capital of Uttarakhand, on June 28, 2016.

The meeting was organised jointly by the Integrated Sustainable Energy and Ecological Development Association (INSEDA), Women's Action For Development (WAFD), INFORSE South Asia, and CANSA.

The 45 participants included national climate negotiators, representatives of Indian ministries and the government, researchers, academics, civil society organisations, environmental activists, private-sector representatives, EVD beneficiaries, and journalists.

The main objectives of this meeting were:

- to introduce the EVD concept into India as a flexible, integrated approach to development as well as to climate-change mitigation and adaptation, and
- to brainstorm on ways to mainstream EVD effectively into national and state development agendas.

Local beneficiaries shared their personal experiences with EVD. Candid discussions addressed environmental and developmental challenges. Useful strategies were formulated for scaling up EVD and for enhancing its effectiveness.



▲ National Dialogue Meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal.  
Photos by CRT/N, Nepal.

To extend EVD practices, four main themes emerged:

1. *Emphasize community ownership of resources*, with participatory management that leverages social and community knowledge to achieve environmental sustainability.
2. *Decentralize planning and development*. The inputs of grassroots populations can be taken more effectively through a devolved and participatory system. NGOs working with them can be effective conduits in communicating the needs and aspirations of the people.
3. *Leverage print, radio, online, and social media* to share human-interest stories about development and climate change. For India the spoken-language media is a powerful communication tool to reach the masses. Replicating the EVD concept at a larger scale throughout the country can be done more effectively by engaging not just policymakers, but also opinion makers and the general population via the media.
4. *Persistently mainstream gender and equip women* with the leverage that they require. Practitioners and policymakers repeatedly noticed that the involvement of women in development programmes has led to better implementation and to the building of social networks that add resilience to those programmes.

## Nepal

More than 50 people discussed Eco-Village Development (EVD) at a national interaction meeting in Kathmandu on May 9, 2016.

The meeting was organised by Centre for Rural Technology/Nepal (CRT/N). Participants included concerned stakeholders from villages, districts, and the national level, as well as representatives of media and of project-beneficiary villages.

The main objective was to provide a common platform on which to share the rationale of developing climate- and environment-friendly villages in the contexts of rural development in Nepal.

The meeting included an introductory panel session and four interactive sessions, with presentations on concrete initiatives of the EVD Concept, perspectives of project beneficiaries, panel discussion, and an open forum.

Among the highlights were the importance of integrating *climate-friendly agro-practices* and *renewable energy*, as well as *gender-mainstreaming* in rural development and planning processes.

Participants stressed that EVD should be integrated into the conventional planning process, where it has great potential to boost the progress of national agendas concerning:

- energy, tourism, and agricultural sectors;
- development by enhancing livelihood;
- conservation of surrounding environment;
- climate-change mitigation and adaptation;
- Indicators mentioned in Environment Friendly Local Governance Framework (2013); and
- SE4ALL initiative to double the share of renewables and to improve access to modern energy technologies.

Participants concluded that the best way to expand EVD would feature

- direct dissemination of information to grassroots and other stakeholders about ongoing plans, policies, and programs;
- reaching out to media; and
- building capacity in required skills.

The dialogue meeting participants decided to continue to work further with sharing of knowledge and with establishing coordination among the concerned stakeholders.

## Bangladesh

In 2016, the activities organised by Grameen Shakti to promote the EVD concept included:

- Demonstrating community-based solutions like solar-powered street lights and pumps for drinking water, as well as a bamboo cage for the slurry-pit of a biogas plant.
- Exhibition stall at the National Environment Fair in August, 2016. The theme of the stall was "Eco-village Development with Focus on Renewable Energies". The visitors included many representatives of NGOs, governmental officials, researchers, and students.
- A national discussion is planned at the National Energy Week in December, 2016.

Project Partners are 6 INFORSE member organizations and CAN-South Asia.

NEPAL:  
CRT/N - Centre for Rural Technology  
[www.crtnepal.org](http://www.crtnepal.org)



SRI LANKA:  
IDEA - Integrated Development Association  
[www.ideasilanka.org](http://www.ideasilanka.org)



BANGLADESH:  
Grameen Shakti  
[www.gshakti.org](http://www.gshakti.org)



INDIA:  
INSEDA: Integrated Sustainable Energy and Ecological Development Association  
[www.inseda.org](http://www.inseda.org)



WAFD - Women's Action For Development  
[climateandgender.org](http://climateandgender.org)



REGIONAL NETWORKS:  
CANSAs  
[www.cansouthasia.net](http://www.cansouthasia.net)



INFORSE-South Asia  
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