



### News from CDKN: Making the connection between Disasters and Climate Change

Over the last quarter, CDKN’s programme in India got a major boost with four new research projects being launched, the successful applicants to the CDKN/START South Asia research call on Disaster Risk Reduction. The new insights, evidence and learning which will emerge from these projects will significantly advance understanding on effective DRR policies and practices in the country.

The projects will develop and test new strategies and approaches for integrating DRR, adaptation to climate change and development at various levels in India. They will also forge lasting relationships with policy-makers, practitioners and experts from the DRR, climate and development ‘communities’ who usually work in isolation.

### Highlights of Recent Impact

- The **Government of Himachal Pradesh** has become a partner with Development Alternatives (DA) as part of CDKN’s project to design and deliver training sessions on **low carbon and climate resilient construction** and will use the results within their state programme on green buildings.
- After participating in the CDKN/ IPCC SREX Regional Outreach Event in Delhi in May 2012, the **National Institute for Disaster Management (NIDM)** is now a policy partner for two new CDKN research projects (see below) on integrating DRR with adaptation to climate change. They have already expressed interest in integrating the new evidence and insights within their training programme.
- A **TV documentary called ‘Life Apps’** supported as part of a CDKN project has changed the lives of its subjects. It explored how a mobile phone app can help Indian farmers adapt to climate change. There was unprecedented demand for the film to be broadcast across India including multiple screenings on Shubhvartha and Shubhsandesh, in Telugu and in Hindi, and it will soon be reaching Indian audiences outside the country on channel DD.

Following its broadcast, the Society for Eradication of Rural Poverty (SERP) and Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture (CMSA) are going to be piloting the App with a million farmers in Andhra Pradesh. The UN is also supporting the App developers to produce a version for women elected representatives across South Asia.

### How we provide support in India

Providing technical assistance and research which promotes innovation on climate compatible development at the State level.

In particular, supporting States to prepare for implementation on the State Climate Change Action Plans.

*Total budget committed to date: approximately GBP 1 million*

### CDKN Partners in India:



# Gender at the heart of climate change policies



*“Gender considerations should be at the heart of climate change policies and programmes across Asia. The reality is that women are differentially affected by climate change. They also have an important role to play in adapting the impact of climate change...”*

*... Their voice needs to be loud and clear in the decision-making process. CDKN is helping them to be visible and influential actors.”* **Ali T. Sheikh, CDKN Asia Director**

## Story of Change

Alternative Futures are just at the start of their [pilot project](#) to influence four State Governments to mainstream gender and inclusiveness in their draft State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCCs). But the results are already coming.

The project will look in detail at four states, (Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttarakhand) but the Central Ministry of Environment and Forests has agreed to collaborate to incorporate gender dimensions in all State Action Plans on Climate Change (SAPCC).

The Chair of the Expert Committee on SAPCCs requested all states to revise their action plans to incorporate gender related recommendations. Two of the states involved in CDKN’s project (Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand) have already used Alternative Future’s support to revise their plan.

*“The UAPCC also recognizes the different roles that men and women play in society and because of the unequal power relations between them...”*

*...Women’s vulnerability to climate change differs from men and climate change interventions that are not gender-responsive often result in deepening the existing gender divide”*

(Excerpt from Uttarakhand’s draft Action Plan on Climate Change showing new recognition of the gender dimension of climate change)

India’s National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) identifies poor women as the most climate affected group. Through this project, Alternative Futures will analyse adaptation-related public policies, programmes and schemes, including best practices, and assess delivery of these programmes from a gender perspective.

The team will also research six emerging adaptation models in three vulnerable agro-climatic zones (flood, drought and cyclone-prone zones) in depth from a gender perspective. The research is timely because the plans are soon to be delivered, and discussion is underway about which activities should be prioritised.

# Snapshot of CDKN Projects in India

**Developing the Knowledge Architecture around Low Carbon Construction** (June 2011- March 2013) – Development Alternatives (DA) are supporting the State Governments of Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh to integrate climate concerns into construction projects. Draft training modules for building professionals, artisans and policy-makers are currently undergoing expert review.

These training sessions will be rolled out over the following months in partnership with the respective Governments who are in different ways aligning and integrating the initiative within the climate change and green growth plans and programmes.



**Sheltering from a Gathering Storm** (Nov 2011 – Nov 2013) – ISET is carrying out research to improve understanding of the costs and benefits of climate resilient shelter design and create the institutional frameworks to guide climate conscious development over the long-term. Field work will be carried out in Viet Nam and India although the lessons learnt will be applied globally.

**Understanding Flood risk and Resilience in eastern India** (July 2012 – Dec 2013) – GEAG is partnering with the NIDM, ISET and local academic institutes to study the systematic factors within Gorakhpur that contribute to resilience or exacerbate vulnerability.

It will also offer policy options for bridging the gap between the national policy framework and local contexts and the horizontal gap between sectoral development programmes to integrate DRR and CCA practice, with a particular focus on the DDMA. The team are currently collecting secondary data on climate variability and planning shared learning dialogues.



**Ability of Local Multi-Stakeholder Action to Catalyze shifts in Program and Policy Environment towards mainstreaming DRR and Climate Change Adaptation** (July 2012 – Aug 2013) – SEEDS, Kyoto University and IIT are studying the recent floods in Leh and Barmer districts to identify 'windows of opportunity' for DRR and adaptation integration at the local level, and defining standards for multi-sectoral action to facilitate such action.

**Getting Climate Smart for Disasters** (July 2012 – Oct 2013) – Intercooperation, together with the AIDMI and Institute of Development Studies, UK, is looking at the institutional barriers and opportunities for integrating DRR and climate change adaptation at various levels. It will be applying and testing Climate Smart Disaster Risk Management approach with the NIDM, State Disaster Management Institutes in Orissa and Bihar and with community NGOs in these states.

An inception meeting was held in Delhi to finalize the methodology and approach. The NIDM were already identifying opportunities to take forward this project within their ongoing work.

## What does the IPCC SREX report mean for India?

by Mihir Bhatt, *coordinating lead author of the IPCC SREX, and Director of the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute*

The value of any report, once it is published, is its use: who uses it, how, where, and why. The huge Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on “Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation (SREX)” is no exception. This note outlines three major themes from these discussions, on how SREX messages could influence policy and practice in India.

First, the findings and messages of the SREX report must filter down to state level in India: many of the report’s messages are clear on actions that can be taken now. It is the states who manage disaster risks as well as make adaptation plans in India. The All India Disaster Mitigation Institute’s (AIDMI) ongoing disaster risk reduction work in 10 states of India indicates that the state authorities and NGOs are closer to risk and risk reduction measures than national government. The states set objectives and mobilise teams. Therefore, without raising awareness of SREX findings and recommendations at state level, direct concrete actions on the ground may be lacking.

For example, Concern Worldwide and Sabuj Sangh’s work to build the resilience of communities living in the Sunderbans delta can draw on SREX findings, to help determine the location of harbours, inform construction of embankments, and to foster sustainable forestry. The Government of India must find ways, then, to disseminate the SREX report’s important messages to inform the states, and to encourage them to turn the recommendations into context-specific actions.

Second, the messages of the SREX report apply differently to different sectors of India’s growing economy. Key sectors should be identified – perhaps infrastructure, finance, urban development, and agriculture – and the recommendations should be contextualised for these sectors as soon as possible. For example, significant resources will be spent on roads and railways infrastructure in India in the coming decades, but how these can be designed so that they are protected from disaster risk and changes in climate? The challenge is huge.

Third, more work should be done now to find ways to incorporate SREX recommendations in disaster response, reconstruction, and recovery plans. This work could be done by a range of organisations, from National Disaster Management Authorities, international non-governmental organisations such as IUCN or Save the Children, UN institutions such as UNICEF or UNEP, to local community based organisations.

The above three streams of activities will lead towards better and faster use of SREX messages in India.

For the full version of this article, visit [www.cdkn.org/regions/asia/](http://www.cdkn.org/regions/asia/)

## What is the Climate and Development Knowledge Network?

CDKN is an alliance of six private and non-governmental organisations operating across four continents. The network provides support to decision makers in developing countries to design and deliver climate compatible development. We do this by combining research, advisory services and knowledge management, in support of locally owned and managed policy processes. We work in partnership with decision-makers in the public, private and non-governmental sectors.

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