ASIA CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (APSD)

Annual Report 2018

Asia Civil Society Partnership for Sustainable Development (APSD)

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1. **APSD-GCAP Twitterthon on Women's Day (March 8)**

APSD-GCAP launched a Twitterthon on the day with #PressforProgress #FacesofInequality #IWD, where organisations and individuals participated raising the messages of gender equality. Coalition members and partners in countries like India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan undertook different forms of actions apart from the Twitterthon. The message on gender equality, violence against women etc linking to various sustainable development goals were posted by people.

2. **Side events by APSD at APFSD**

The fifth Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD), a regional and inclusive preparatory event for the HLPF was held from March 28 – 30 in Bangkok participated by representatives from about 47 governments in the region, UN agencies, private players, civil society and other institutions to discuss the regional perspective of the implementation of Agenda 2030 (SDGs), and reviewed the performance of the cluster of goals as preparation for the high level political forum (HLPF) to be held in New York to from 9 – 18 July. Before this meeting, the Asia Pacific people's Forum on sustainable Development (APPFSD) meeting was held for three days where the civil society deliberated key issues on SDGs and issued a statement as part of its input to the official meeting.

Asia Civil Society Partnership (APSD) issued a statement by APSD-ADA highlighting key issues of concern.

Media piece: http://www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/what-does-sustainable-development-mean-in-an-unequal-world--60571

APSD did 3 side events in APFSD. They are as following:

a. **CSOs participation in the VNR process and Follow up Mechanism:** Organized by ADA, APSD and Action4SD on March 30, 2018

b. **Role of Faith in Development:** Organized by World Vision International, ACT Alliance, Islamic Relief, Soka Gakkai International, Arigatou International and APSD

c. **Leaving No One Behind in the Asia-Pacific Region: What Will it Take? :** Organised by ODI, GCAP, APSD and UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub

a. **CSOs participation in the VNR process and Follow up Mechanism:** Organised by ADA, APSD and Action4SD on March 30, 2018

Essence of discussion:

- It discussed the challenges and opportunities for the CSO's to engage in VNR process

- Voluntary National Reviews are extremely important processes which constitute a vital entry point for engagement between CSOs and governments at the national level
- Its necessary to link the UPR and VNR processes. The need on Means of implementation (MoI) and systemic issues were also stressed.
- The Philippine VNR report in 2016 consisted of narrating the MDG achievements and the preparations for the SDGs in terms of data. Social Watch did a Spotlight Report, which highlighted the need to adopt a plan with clear policies and programmes that will reduce poverty and inequality, adopt to climate change and reduce disaster risks.
- Sri Lanka had a high government momentum in 2015, once it signed 2030 agenda. It also came up with action plans. It's going to prepare voluntary national review this year. However there is criticism on how the report is being prepared. Some actors from civil society and other sectors have formed a multi-stake holder platform to do an independent report on SDGs.

b. Role of Faith in Development: Organized by World Vision International, ACT Alliance, Islamic Relief, Soka Gakkai International, Arigatou International and APSD

Essence of discussion:

· The Asia-Pacific Faith-based Coalition (APFC) for Sustainable Development was launched

· The principles of the coalition are: a. Adhere to the international human rights standards, b. do no harm, c. Non-discrimination and equality d. Transparency and accountability

· The faith-based organisations (FBOs) have been doing excellent work on providing service. They worked extensively recently in the Nepal earthquake in 2015 and Japan earthquake in 2011.

· Faith can have impact on Sustainable consumption (Part of Goal 12 of SDGs)

· Its suggested that the FBOs can have joint position paper on climate change

· The coalition announced that it will start working on goal 5 (Gender), goal 10 (Inequality) and goal 16 (Peace)

c. . Leaving No One Behind in the Asia-Pacific Region: What Will it Take?: Organised by ODI, GCAP, APSD and UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub

Essence of discussion:

· **Moizza Binat Sarwar (ODI) on LNOB:** Under LNOB (Leave no one behind) we need to fast-track the progress for the poorest of the poor. It's just not the outcome but the mechanism to achieve the sustainable development goals.

· **Aly Neel (UNF) on Measuring Progress:** Countries involved in the VNR process in 2016 and 2017 felt it as an important tool to review SDGs. For some countries both the process of engagement and making of the report and the policy discussions (substantive aspects) were equally important though for some it was only the process part. Nepal VNR report discussed the inter-linkages among the goals

· **Beckie Malay (GCAP) on addressing Inequality:** We want social protection and progressive laws to address inequality and discrimination. CSOs have a role to play. The challenge is how and where do we put our resources, mobilize people, strategize our actions to determine the development which is for the people at large, not only for a few sections.

· **Siope Vakataki Ofa (UNESCAP) on Data and potential of technology:** The LDCs and small Ireland nations need a lot of support on data collection use etc. Enhancement of their capacities is needed. The governments should make budgetary allocations for collection of data and their analysis and a system ought to be in place to feed these inputs into the policy making. There has to be a system of monitoring the SDGs indicators.

· There were group discussions following the presentations.

3. APSD supports the civil society processes in the VNR countries in Asia region:

Minus the Arab region, five countries did Voluntary National Review (VNR) this year. They are: Sri Lanka, Laos, Bhutan, Singapore and Vietnam.

Action4SD, the global civil society formation partnered with APSD to support the civil societies in Sri Lanka and Laos to engage in the VNR process. APSD-A4SD-ADA supported the civil society processes in Lao and Sri Lanka..

a. CSO processes in Lao PDR:

APSD supported the Lao CSOs Coordination Office (LCCO), the nodal body of the CSOs, through one of its partner Sustainable Agriculture and Environment Development Association to engage in the VNR processes in the country. Given that most CSOs in Lao are engaged in the implementation processes, this was a unique opportunity for them to engage in advocacy.

On 26 and 27 April LCCO held a national workshop to discuss on SDGs and on the draft VNR report of the government and provide inputs on all the 17 goals. About 40

civil society members from across the country representing various sections participated. They have come up with a set of recommendations in response to the government draft VNR and have sent to the government. Some of their suggestion found place in the final VNR report.

The recommendations of the CSOs are here: https://action4sd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2018-04-30-Lao-CSOs-Recommendation-to-GoL-VNR-2018-of-SDG.pdf

APSD also facilitated the process of participation of the CSO representative from Lao Thongdam Phongphichith in the HLPF 2018.

b. CSO processes in Sri Lanka:

APSD and Action4SD also supported the civil society process in Sri Lanka, another VNR nation. Civil society, private players, academia etc together formed a "Stakeholder SDGs Platform" to engage in the VNR process in Sri Lanka. We supported the process through Centre for Environment Justice, a NGO. On 26th April it held a national consultation on the Voluntary people's Review (VPR) and did several sub-national and thematic consultations to come up an alternative report, called Voluntary People's Report (VPR). The link is here: https://action4sd.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/SRI-LANKA-Voluntary-Peoples-Review-on-the-SDGs-to-HLPF-2018.pdf

The report has both the narrative element and the "Traffic Light Paper" where some key indicators on each goal have been assigned scores to evaluate how they are doing.

The civil society also participated in the consultations initiated by the government in the process of taking inputs to the official VNR process. Action4SD and APSD supported a representative from Stakeholder SDG platform to participate in the HPF 2018.

In Vietnam and Singapore APSD's partner ADA held a civil society workshop on SDGs there.

4. APSD at the HLPF:

Members of Asia Civil Society Partnership for Sustainable Development (APSD) actively participated in the HLPF 2018, which was held in New York from July 9 -18,

2018 in the UN building. APSD was partner/co-organizer in the following events. Asia Coordinator actively supported in organizing the events.

- Civil Society weekend workshop by Action4SD on "Resilient Societies, Resilient People: inclusion of civil society in the 2030 Agenda" held on Saturday and Sunday, 14 and 15 July at UN Church Center.
- Side event on Voluntary National Reviews – Building an Inclusive Process by Action4SD and others on Monday, July 16 at UN Church Centre
- The global Launch of the Faces of Inequality Campaign of GCAP on Thursday, 12 July at UN Church Center
- Side Event by GCAP and others on SDG 6 and Leave No Woman Behind on Friday, 13 July at AARP office.

It was interesting to listen to the member nation's presentations and the CSO interventions. Some progresses are understood to be made by the nations towards realization of the goals under Agenda 2030. However, the civil society feels that it's not enough and very rightly so. It is of the opinion that the HLPF processes need to be strengthened. There is a need for HLPF reforms. With this understanding APSD organized a webinar on HLPF reforms on September 7, 2018.

An article calling for HLPF reforms:
https://www.counterpunch.org/2018/09/07/sustainable-development-goals-no-more-complacency-urgency-needed/

5. **APSD Webinar on HLPF Reforms:**

In the HLPF it was felt by many civil society members that the process of review of the SDGs through the process of VNR is not exhausting its full potential. Therefore there is an urgent need to discuss the reforms at the level of HLPF and VNR. APSD organized a webinar on HLPF reforms on September 7 where about 20 civil society actors (More than 1/3rd women participants) from 7 countries participated and shared their experience on the VNR process, how HLPF is doing and suggested the reforms. Based on the discussion the report proposal has been put forward by APSD and widely circulated.

Here is the link to the document: https://gcap.global/news/apsd-proposes-reforms-for-the-hlpf-and-the-vnr-processes/

6. **Action4SD-UN SDG Action Campaign – GCAP – APSD call for the Global Day of Action:**

APSD took ownership and partnered with Action For Sustainable Development, GCAP, and UN SDG Action Campaign to organize actions on the global day of action i.e. September 25 in the region. More than 20 campaigns/networks/organisations did their actions in 8 countries. Within the networks also
many individual organisations have undertaken various actions as part of collective. Some actions are shared in the table below:

1. **Nepal:**

a. NGO Federation Nepal (GCAP Nepal): It organized a joint consultation with National Planning Commission.

Media coverage:

http://www.sadrishya.com/samachar/2018/09/25/23060/

https://merotribune.com/2018/09/26/11065/

b. Ageing Nepal: Ageing Nepal in collaboration with Jorpati Senior Citizens Society organized sports competition among older people of the area. Older people participated in musical chair, apple eating competition, spoon race and pot breaking competition and many more actions under the banner of 3rd anniversary of the SDGs.

TV interview: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKeaiTcRP88

2. **Afghanistan:**

Sanayee Development Organisation (GCAP Afghanistan): Social media campaign

3. **Pakistan:**

a. **Pakistan Development Alliance (GCAP Pakistan):** Local mobilization at the district level; letter to the PM and twitter campaign etc

b. **CHANAN Pakistan:** It's a youth organization, which organised Sports Festival to send the message on peace.

YouTube link here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6eW260tDPU&t=1s

4. **India:**

a. Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (GCAP India): Online Photography, essay competition and photo stunts and videos

Videos links:

i. Kidizens of India demand that we are included in the manifestoes of all political parties**:** https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GC6-XQVg35kAmvJKMQbd5UhUQYshWdwq/view

ii. Video on Goal 10 with the special focus on Sewer Death highlighting 'Leave No One Behind'. **Link:** https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GC6-XQVg35kAmvJKMQbd5UhUQYshWdwq/view

b. Gopal Kiran Samaj Sevi Sanstha (GKSSS), Gwalior: Candlelight March, awareness sessions with children, self help group women and citizens in Gwalior in India. Children also made the colour images on the floor and many other actions .

Videos: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VbfgEKoAtn0sMGw2dK9ibDxQICMkPbmD/view?usp=drive_web

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1DAYfBBtATDFn46_lt_Z7Ei8ShlXUhOIq/view

c. LEADS India, Jharkhand: Workshop on SDGs by LEADS on Global Day Of Action

5. Sri Lanka:

a. SUNFO (GCAP Sri Lanka): A 1200 meters long (collection of) banner on the coast in Sri Lanka with messages on SDGs

Video link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAWqET5BfA8&feature=youtu.be

b. Earth Lanka:
Earth Lanka launched training programs for women and building their capacity towards coastal and marine conservation linking to life below water and SDGs

6. Japan:

Japan civil society network on SDGs (GCAP Japan) organized a seminar with Policy Forum of the East Japan Block of JTUC-Rengo, the largest trade union federation of Japan, in Yokohama city. Another event organized on Disaster and SDGs in Tokyo on Global Day of Action.

7. Bangladesh:
a. CSOs in Bangladeh: "Stand Up for SDGs Programme" on Global Day of Action organized by Bangladesh CSOs in front of Bangladesh National Parliament Bhavan in Dhaka

b. GCAP Bangladesh: It organized interactions with political parties to influence party manifestos on SDFGs

8. Philippines:
Philippines Rural Reconstruction Movement (GCAP Philippines):
Costal clean up in Philippines by Philippines Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM)/GCAP Philippines:

Video link here:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WUm4rupwC67QGJBLCVOCOwNUsir3CTNI/view?usp=sharing

7. **Participation in the UNESCAP South Asia sub-regional meeting on SDGs in New Delhi on 4th and 5th Oct:**

Some APSD members and APSD Coordinator attended the south Asia sub-regional meeting in New Delhi. APSD Coordinator made a presentation about the work of Asia level CSOs including of APSD, ADA, APRCEM and the inequality work on GCAP. We also participated in the preparatory CSO meeting organized by Parvi, GCAP -ADA, WNTA and APRCEM on 3rd Oct for the Sub-Regional

8. APSD in Action4SD Facilitation Group:

APSD Steering Committee unanimously nominated Zia-Ur Rehman as the member of the newly constituted Facilitation Group of Action4SD. From Asia we have another member Ms. Dian Kartika Sari in the Facilitation Group. She is the representative from ADA.

9. APSD SC meeting held:

APSD Steering Committee members were regularly held to give direction to the partnership. It was held four times in 2018. One face-to-face meeting was held in January in Busan. Three online meetings were held in June, September and December. The members of Steering Committee are as follows:

1	Ms. Beckie Malay	GCAP Asia
2	Zia-Ur Rehman	GCAP Asia
3	Ichal Supriadi	Asia Democratic Network (ADN)
4	Sugeng Bahagijo	Asia Development Alliance (ADA)
5	Hyunbong Yoon	Asia Development Alliance (ADA)
6	Abid Gulzar	World Vision Asia
7	Deepesh Paul Thakur	World Vision Asia
8	Anoop Sukumaran	Act Alliance
9	Mags Catindig	AsiaDHRRA
10	Marlene Ramirez	AsiaDHRRA

10. Membership of APSD:

APSD is a network of networks. The networks are it's voting member. But it has opened itself for membership of individual and individual NGOs for larger ownership. This constitutes its general body. By end of 2018 its membership stands at 300.