

Community Resilience Partnership Program PARTNERSHIP FORUM 2024

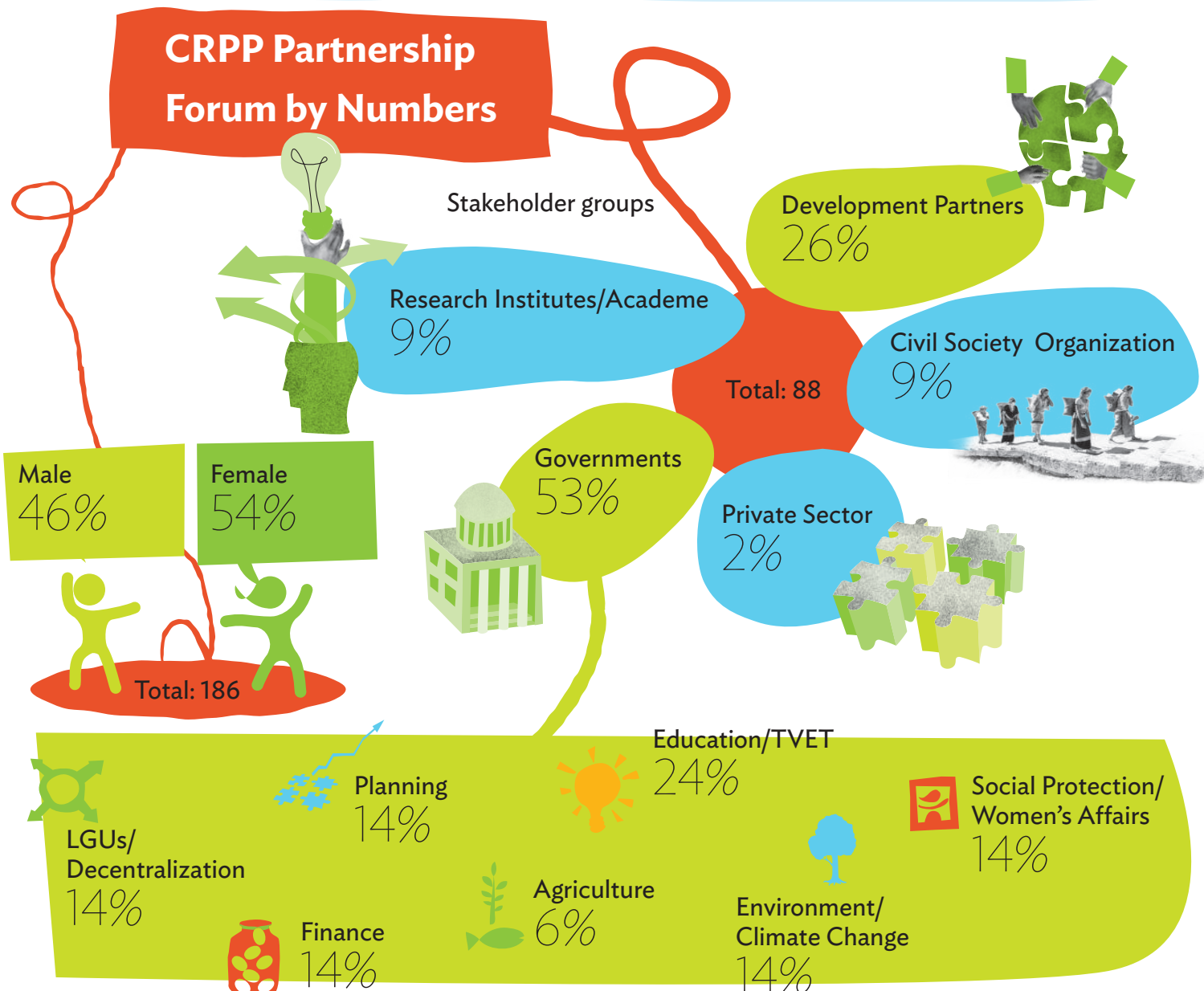
27-28 February 2024 | Bangkok, Thailand

PROCEEDINGS



About the Community Resilience Partnership Program (CRPP) Partnership Forum. The Partnership Forum of the CRPP is an annual event that brings together community leaders, government officials, policy research organizations, development partners, and financial institutions active in Asia and the Pacific region to discuss **what role poverty reduction policies and programs can play in building climate resilience** at the community level. The focus is to identify solutions for climate adaptation that while directly responding to the needs of local communities, can be implemented at scale through government systems. Such solutions should address the nexus of climate, poverty, and gender.

Objectives of the 2024 Forum. The CRPP Partnership Forum 2024 convened a wide range of CRPP stakeholders to discuss **how decentralization processes and skills development** programs could be leveraged to address climate risk, reduce poverty, and promote gender equality at the community level. Dedicated discussions sought to help inform practical ways to design and deliver such processes and programs so that they respond to current and future climate risk, address the underlying causes of vulnerability, promote gender equality, and empower communities.



HIGHLIGHTS

The forum's opening session focused on the scope for public investments that could build resilience and empower communities. Speakers focused on sharing lessons from their experiences and perspectives, identifying the following key priorities:

Viewing women as agents of change and empowering women's groups.

Women and women's groups are already collaborating and providing strong platforms for designing, delivering and learning from climate adaptation solutions, thereby acting as agents of change. Further empowering such women's groups by formally recognizing their role, enabling them to train their peers and communities, and investing in their own solutions will help inform and shape government policies and investments and allow solutions to reach scale.



Build supportive national systems to increase effectiveness of local institutions for adaptation action.

Local governments are pivotal in facilitating, planning, investing, and implementing community-led adaptation but cannot deliver on adaptation needs alone. These units need significant support to fulfil their potential. National policy and institutions need to provide the enabling environment for local governments to undertake coordinated planning and investments that are essential for climate adaptation: fragmentation of institutions and roles and responsibilities at the local level can lead to maladaptation. They require predictable and adequate fiscal transfers, capacity to manage these finances and incentives, and knowledge to integrate community priorities and climate risks and vulnerabilities into their operations. Supportive national policy reforms – for example, climate and gender-responsive results-based budgeting, could help local government better articulate pro-poor and gender responsive adaptation results they aim to achieve and accordingly direct resources and mobilize partnerships for achieving such results.



Leverage existing roles and responsibilities of national and local institutions. A low hanging strategy for undertaking adaptation at scale will be to examine and leverage the existing roles and responsibilities of local authorities and financial mechanisms in administration and service delivery. By understanding the current scope of their responsibilities and its relevance to adaptation, we can better understand the scope and opportunities for integrating adaptation-related needs into their operating procedures. These could support systemic and systematic investments, rather than project-based investments.



PLENARY and ROUNDTABLE 1

Decentralization Programs for Building Climate Resilience from the Ground Up

Responsibilities for climate adaptation planning and implementation are slowly being devolved to local authorities. This is due to the recognition that local authorities are closer to the citizens, have better local knowledge, and thus are in a better position to respond to local needs. This provides a unique opportunity to work through a country's decentralization processes to support scaling up of local level adaptation investments by ensuring that adaptation is an integral part of local government service delivery, subnational planning, and budgeting processes, and that communities are meaningfully involved in such decision-making processes. Some clear messages came out of the discussions at the forum.

Local climate risk and vulnerability context needs to inform program and investment decision-making at the local level. Communities, local and national governments need to have timely input into and access to localized and granular climate risk and gender disaggregated vulnerability data to inform their prioritization, planning, investment, and investment decision-making around adaptation and resilience needs. These data and information need to be shared and communicated in ways that can be easily understood and used by these actors. Investing in systematic capturing of climate risk and vulnerability data at the local level becomes critical for scaling up effective adaptation solutions.

Box 1: Indonesia's Climate Village Program (PROKLIM)

In Indonesia, a nationwide program managed by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, PROKLIM, actively encourages the involvement of communities and other stakeholders in decision-making around village level adaptation and mitigation efforts. As of 2023, over 6,600 villages are registered in the PROKLIM program, identifying adaptation priorities and activities around flood risk management, addressing drought, sea level rise, improving food security, and community health and well-being. Village-level committees nominate priorities for investment, which are then verified and reviewed by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and a Steering Committee, who then recommend and administer funds to awardees. The government also carries out PROKLIM pilot projects in parallel in some villages with selected partners.

This bottom-up approach has also resulted in raising awareness at the local level, building of local leadership around climate-related issues, and the institutional build-up necessary for fiscal transfers to the local level for adaptation activities.

Source: Fadlillah, Nurul. 2024. *Scaling Up Adaptation/Climate Resilience Investment in Indonesia* [PowerPoint slides].
<https://az659834.vo.msecnd.net/eventsairseasiaprod/production-adb-public/941ff70fd60a4950beef5c2c9db3286>.



Community Resilience Partnership Program
PARTNERSHIP FORUM 2024



Meaningful participation from local community and government is crucial for sustainable adaptation solutions. Communities and local governments must have opportunities to meaningfully participate and provide input into resource allocation decisions around adaptation measures. This requires significant support and strengthening of participatory processes, partnership facilitation, and capacities to understand climate risk and engage in adaptation-related decision-making. The participation of communities is linked to the principle of subsidiarity; i.e., decisions should be made at the most local level possible depending on the decision at hand and should be balanced with considerations around maladaptation and jurisdiction. Additionally, local champions – like mayors, council representatives, village leaders, women’s grassroots organization leaders – should be identified and leveraged to help advance inclusive decision-making.

Box 2: Kenya’s County Climate Change Funds

The Financing Locally Led Climate Action program in Kenya is a country-wide program that is strengthening county and national governments’ capacities to manage climate risks. At the county and community levels, the program is investing in building capacities to conduct community level risk assessments and resilience planning, convene local level committees to understand risks and prioritize adaptation solutions, and using Kenya’s existing fiscal mechanisms to transfer grants for implementation. These grants are based on performance metrics related participatory processes and local action – to incentivize the meaningful involvement of local communities. The program is designed to address the 3 levels of governance simultaneously, thus strengthening vertical and horizontal collaboration where necessary.

Source: Arnold, Margaret. 2024. *How can decentralization support locally led climate action?* [PowerPoint slides].
<https://az659834.vo.msecnd.net/eventsairseasiaproduct/production-adb-public/614b81a59d6943818574299516b91037>

Policy, legal, and institutional reforms are needed to facilitate channelling and use of resources at the community level. Evidence from multiple pilots globally indicates that community- and local-led adaptation investments are possible, and that the focus now needs to shift towards garnering the political will needed to support community- and local-led adaptation designs and investments at scale. For example, inter-governmental fiscal transfers, such as village funds when accompanied by bottom-up planning processes could provide a good platform to advance community level investments in climate change adaptation. However, so far, limited support has been directed towards exploring how this or other similar mechanisms could be leveraged for adaptation decision-making and financing. There is significant need to update policies, legal frameworks, and institutional procedures to facilitate and support these shifts. Additionally, there needs to be greater transparency and accountability systems at the community level to ensure appropriate safeguards are applied and to avoid elite capture and misuse of adaptation resources. Local governments and communities could be involved in monitoring and auditing use of such resources – including by being involved in developing and applying appropriate performance indicators.



SPOTLIGHTS

Decentralization Programs for Building Climate Resilience from the Ground Up

Spotlight 1: Fiscal Transfers for Building Community Resilience

Fiscal decentralization is key for **scalable** climate action at community level. The evolution of fiscal systems includes working at increasing levels of decentralization right down to the local level and increasing sophistication in terms of **targeting** the most vulnerable communities and **incentivizing climate action that aligns with both local and national goals** through these transfers. Form must align with function.

The institutions established through fiscal decentralization provides a **platform** that enables other **development actors** to engage and also **'top-up'** assistance for climate action through instruments such as **performance-based grants**. The ability of **local government to mobilize** finance is also essential and important to sustain investment.

While top-down fiscal transfers are important, it is equally important that actors at **community level are empowered to influence and engage** in how this money is spent. This also includes the ability of communities to assess performance of government, for example, through social audits. There needs to be **interactive and inclusive learning** conversations on the success or failures of the use of these funds.

This requires transparency in how funds are spent. Data, including a solid taxonomy and **budget classification system**, is critical for enabling performance-based transfers because it enables countries to monitor the financial flows and their impact at community level.



Spotlight 2: Building Climate Resilience through Community- Driven Development

Generating demand for **climate-resilient community-driven development approach** requires data and evidence to support informed awareness among community members and local government entities. This awareness should extend to climate change risks and their impact on both women and men's lives and livelihoods. Information should be translated into **simple, easy-to-understand messages that resonate with people in communities** - ensuring accessibility and clarity of information is crucial for a diverse audience within the community.

Collaborating with local governments can help raise their buy-in and enhance engagement with vulnerable groups, especially women. Community members should be engaged in decision-making processes to ensure the full ownership of these community-driven approaches.

Climate-resilient and gender-responsive infrastructure (e.g., physical structures) should be complemented by soft components (such as capacity-building programs) in community resilience programs for **integrated approaches to resilience**.

Local organizations are crucial in community-driven development approaches. **Strengthening the leadership capacity of local organizations**, including women's groups, is critical. These organizations should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to assess risks and advocate for necessary attention and resources. Networking and peer learning at the community level fosters collaboration and shared expertise. Resources to engage local organizations and grassroots groups need to be sustainable over time.

For community-driven development programs to be successful and sustainable, communities need to be empowered to manage and effectively utilize available resources, including resources in local government budget, and have capacity to mobilize additional resources when needed.



There has been significant focus on needed green skills for a low-carbon economy globally. But not much has been explored or discussed regarding the kind of skills needed to accelerate and thrive in a more climate-resilient economy. This theme at the forum focused specifically on understanding the opportunities for and experiences around integrating climate resilience considerations into skills development, especially targeted at vulnerable communities.

Building climate resilience through skills development cannot be treated in isolation. Skills development needs to be looked at in the context of the wider economy and enabling environment. It is a means to gainful employment in a world with more intense extreme climate events and heat stress, and the design of climate-resilient skills programs needs to be situated within the trajectory of the communities and country's development and its employment markets.

Building demand for climate-resilient skills development. Currently, limited understanding of practical implementable solutions to build skills for adaptation at the community level, particularly for informal workers, hinders demand for and design of climate-resilient skills programs. Significant awareness raising of the opportunities and possibilities are needed, thus generating demand for skills that are related to climate change adaptation.

Need for systematic assessment of current skills development approaches. There is a need for diagnostic assessments that can provide deeper understandings of what types of skills are being prioritized and imparted in countries and the mechanisms through which these are being transferred. This assessment needs to consider both the demand and supply side of skills development, the types of skills being promoted for adaptation, and whether these are aligned to what are increasingly uncertain current and future employment markets within the local, national, and regional contexts. This is critical to limiting fragmented approaches, filling gaps on adaptation and climate-resilient skills, and establishing a skills ecosystem at all levels, and in particular, at the subnational level. A national registry of courses and entities that are supporting climate-resilient skills development would be helpful for coordination and coherence.

Supportive national policies are needed to enable integration of climate resilience. National level frameworks such as technical, vocational, and educational training (TVET) laws, development plans, or programs must incorporate climate change considerations and respond to the challenges of climate change to create an enabling environment for pursuing climate resilience skills development. Ownership of these policies and leadership from national and local governments, as well as space for input from communities is required, but there is often a lack of alignment.

Greater decentralization of skills programs is required to respond to adaptation needs. Decentralization of design and delivery of TVET courses to local and subnational institutions can help make courses more context specific and respond to regional jobs markets. Local communities need to have greater say on the types of skills programs offered to support their communities. Communities, skills education providers, and governments at the subnational level could jointly identify elements of the most wanted and appropriate skills needed in support of more climate-resilient local and national economy. Organized community groups such as women's cooperatives can provide a structure and mechanism for jointly developing and delivering such skills and training. Indigenous knowledge must be recognised as a valuable part of skills development and must be incorporated into curricula, particularly in sectors such as agriculture and forestry.

Promoting transferable skills will help workers to prepare for changing contexts and employment markets. Climate-resilient skills programs need to be developed in context of changing employment markets and potential migration. Issuance of standard certification related to prior learning would help in verifying capabilities. Transboundary recognition of such skills and experience is needed to allow movement and critical in accessing employment opportunities for climate migrants.

Improving access of poor, marginalized, and vulnerable communities to formal TVET programs is critical in ensuring that these programs are able to reach the most vulnerable. Stable, continued access to formal TVET programs is difficult for many communities due to existing minimum education requirements, location of centers, climate-related or other shocks and stressors that result in lower attendance or drop out from these programs or need for immediate incomes. When designing these programs, it is important to pay attention to the circumstances of the communities being targeted and their abilities to consistently access and participate in such programs.

Women's access to resilience training and skills development programs need to be prioritized. Due to unfavorable socio-cultural norms or discriminatory practices, women often lack access to skills development programs. Additionally, when women do have access, they are often stereotyped into certain types of courses, like jewellery making. There is an urgent need to challenge these preconceptions of the types of courses and skills that women need, including in relation to adapting to climate change.

Innovative ways of promoting resilience skills should be explored. Governments should look to build on existing programs and mechanisms to deliver climate-resilient skills programs to communities that need it, rather than just rely on formal systems. For example, skills development programs could be combined with existing social protection programs to deliver improved knowledge and capacities on climate resilience skills to beneficiary communities.



SPOTLIGHTS

Skills for Climate-Resilient Communities

Spotlight 3: Empowering Women with Skills for Climate- Resilient Agriculture

Some of the **building blocks for empowering women** with skills for climate-resilient agriculture include building women's agency, changing power relations between the different groups engaged in agriculture, and transforming formal and informal structures to enable women to participate more productively. Having access to gender-disaggregated data and robust gender action plans would be helpful in designing appropriate skills development programs.

Additionally, the whole agriculture value chain should be examined to identify opportunities for integrating and empowering women into the full value chain, not just in production and in harvesting. Other opportunities could be in processing or delivery.

Women should be consulted and engaged at every step of the process to understand their needs and requirements while designing skills programs for climate-resilient agriculture, including through gendered risk analyses. Measures should **consider women's constraints** (e.g., time poverty, unpaid care work, community context) to help women transition to climate-resilient practices and employment opportunities. Addressing cultural norms will be critical in ensuring their continued access to and use of such programs and knowledge imparted.

Women's cooperatives should be leveraged as viable models for adopting collective green practices, leveraging finance, and providing skills such as business management, financial literacy, and digitization.

Climate-resilient agriculture skills development programs require attention to innovations in both farming (such as restoring indigenous practices) and non-farming measures (such as eco-tourism, skills building in other sectors) to provide more holistic employment opportunities for women. Additionally, agriculture needs to not only account for gender-sensitivity but also age-sensitivity (e.g., passing on traditional and indigenous practices from older generation to younger generation).



Spotlight 4: Skills Development through Adaptive Social Protection Systems



Existing indigenous social protection systems and generational knowledge must be tapped into and leveraged while discussing and designing skills development and social protection programs. Currently, non-Western cultures, value systems, and traditions are ignored in this discourse.

For innovative social protection, sustainability and scalability must be thought through from the beginning to ensure the system is not overloaded. They must be coordinated and sequenced such that combinations of programs – including how asset and skills building in the face of extreme shocks and cash transfers – can be supportive of each other and be successful in building resilience of vulnerable communities.

Social protection programs could be combined with skills development programs that provide opportunities for vulnerable communities to transition to more climate-resilient jobs within employment markets. As an example, climate-smart poverty graduation social protection programs could be combined with skills development interventions to support advancement of communities. These programs must include often-overlooked informal workers, for instance, by tweaking the inclusion criteria to ensure their coverage and participation in such programs.

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Build LOCAL CAPACITIES

Promote anticipatory actions
Identify potential model

Promote anticipatory
Identify potential model
and invest in it
Best practise and lesson learnt documentation

CRPP VISION
Supporting entrepreneurs to grow local and global markets

Forum Proceedings

The Community Resilience Partnership Program (CRPP) Partnership Forum is planned as an annual event that would bring together community leaders, government officials, policy research organizations, development partners, financial institutions, civil society organizations, and the private sector active in Asia and the Pacific region to discuss solutions for scaling up climate adaptation interventions that address the nexus of climate change, poverty, and gender equality in communities.

The overarching objective of the CRPP Partnership Forum is to discuss what role poverty reduction policies and programs can play in building climate resilience at the community level. Two themes are selected each year to discuss how policies and programs in these selected themes can be leveraged to scale up investments in climate adaptation at the community level. Through the CRPP Gender Window, a call for solutions is launched prior to the forum which aims to gather innovative pro-poor adaptation solutions from women practitioners in Asia and the Pacific region. Selected innovative solutions are then presented at the forum.



CRPP initiated the forum following the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which highlighted that the largest adaptation gap can be found in low-income population groups and that integrated and multisector adaptation solutions that address social inequalities can be more effective.

Condensed from the Forum Proceedings
Community Resilience Partnership Program Partnership Forum
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