



# Milestones towards pro-poor Adaptation

## Civil society achievements in promoting effective and equitable adaptation to climate change

Southern Voices is a coalition of organisations from Asia, Africa and Latin America, many of whom have been working together on climate change advocacy since 2009, following COP 15 in Copenhagen. More recently, focus has been on the promotion of pro-poor adaptation policies to support marginalised and vulnerable communities in their efforts to adapt and strengthen their resilience to the impacts of climate change. This has led to a reaffirmation of our identity, including an update of our name to Southern Voices for Adaptation (SVA).

SVA members have actively collaborated, one of their main achievements has been to pool together their experience and analysis in order to define what “good” adaptation policies should look like. They have compiled this into the **Joint Principles of Adaptation (JPA)** – a shared product that serves as a working tool, (see *overleaf*) The seven principles and the twenty-eight accompanying criteria serve as an agenda for monitoring, as a basis for

advocacy, and a vehicle for building partnerships and alliances with other organisations. It works!

While the JPA was developed, tested and updated during 2014 – 15, it was launched in December 2015 at COP21 in Paris. From 2016, the SVA partner networks all prepared “influencing strategies”, defining key objectives for policy change and action plans with milestones on how to achieve their policy influence.

Southern Voices members are proud to share at COP23 their considerable progress in reaching milestones and policy changes everywhere – see *back page for a list of SVA partner members by country*. Most of the successes reported below owe themselves to the degree of effort contributed by SVA partner members and their civil society allies. In some cases, they have recently cooperated with their national governments in preparation for COP23.

# Good news – some areas of progress

## A. Sub-national level planning for adaptation is improving:

- In Ghana, district action plans now include many elements on gender-sensitive climate change adaptation, with district officers following up on implementation. The JPA have been used for capacity building of municipal officers and officials in twenty-two districts
- In Cambodia, technical guidelines for mainstreaming climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction have been incorporated into local investment plans by communal or district authorities
- In Nicaragua, civil society organisations are developing local adaptation plans incorporating the JPA with four local municipalities in two areas.

## B. Local people are becoming more aware about climate change adaptation

- In Nepal, a formal working group established by the government has determined that education and awareness on climate change through local consultations will be a key element in the preparation process for the National Adaptation Plan (NAP). Dissemination of information about the NAP process and progress has been well recognised
- In Guatemala, at the behest of the indigenous peoples' climate change platform, the environment ministry is developing a popular version of the law on climate change, making it accessible and relevant to the most vulnerable people in the country.
- In Malawi, civil society is using more press and media to raise awareness on climate change and the NAP process
- In Nicaragua, a localised version of the JPA in Spanish, with cartoon illustrations and pictures, deepens people's understanding of the proposed draft of a new climate change law for the country including how to develop a national adaptation plan.

## C. Adaptation policies are more inclusive and reach neglected sectors of the population

- In Nepal, the government has recognised the principle "Leaving no one behind" while preparing its NAP, and has adopted local consultations as part of the process
- In Malawi, civil society organisations have assessed the vulnerability of local communities to climate change in their project areas – and this is feeding into the government's NAP planning
- In Cambodia, technical guidelines for local investment plans have improved regarding the practical and strategic needs of women.

## D. Civil society engagement with government to improve adaptation policies and plans

- In Malawi, SVA partner member CISONNECC is now represented on the government's NAP core team and helped formulate an application to the Green Climate Fund for NAP readiness funding
- In Nepal, SVA partner CEN is coordinating closely with the government on the first and second rounds of the regional consultation program on the NAP process and its progress
- In Ghana, SVA partner ABANTU is participating in the National Climate Change Steering Committee with a focus on gender, children and social protection.

The JPA is what makes SV-Adapt unique and we should continue to promote them

# 80%

**OF TEN  
SVA PARTNERS  
AGREE**

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## Joint Principles for Adaption

Download the full text on the seven principles and twenty-eight accompanying criteria in the JPA at [www.southernvoices.net](http://www.southernvoices.net)



- In Vietnam, SVA partner CCWG has provided climate information and adaptation models as inputs to formulate the country's National Adaptation Plan and Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)
- In Cambodia, SVA partner The NGO-Forum represents civil society in the new interministerial Climate Change Technical Working Group. The emerging policy framework on environment and natural resource management also reflects the Joint Principles for Adaptation (JPA).

### E. The JPA tool has been appreciated and used by other organisations and partners

- In Cambodia, UNDP and PLAN have used the JPA in reflection workshops with their partners, and are in dialogue about how to use the JPA in a localised version
- In Nepal, the topic "climate change" is now compulsory for master and bachelor level students at the public university, with a chapter on the JPA in some courses
- In Sri Lanka, work is under way to set up a NAP monitoring system, incorporating the JPA and SDGs, with interest from government and also major donors such as the Asian Development Bank, Global Environment Facility, World Bank and World Food Program. The international think tank, Stockholm Environmental Institute, has noted the JPA as a good example of non-state actors using their influence within and between states to influence climate change adaptation
- In Nicaragua, the JPA has been well received by the Central American University Faculty of Law, alongside civil society allies in Honduras
- The UNFCCC regional training on national adaptation programs in south-east Asia (held in the Philippines), gave representatives from Cambodia, Nepal and Vietnam the opportunity to present JPA as a tool.

The results listed above have been achieved by SVA members, using the JPA either explicitly or as inspiration for other actions. They have had different levels and forms of success in their efforts to promote adaptation, largely because of unique circumstances in each country. Critical factors determining this variation include: the degree of openness of government to cooperate with civil society; the capacity of government staff and structures at national and local levels; and the readiness of governments to develop the domestic policy frameworks needed to complement international agreements on climate change, such as National Adaptation Plans.

As adaptation funding increases, although slowly **the JPA are the best way of ensuring that extra money is spent well**

# 90%

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**THE SOUTHERN VOICES ON ADAPTATION PARTNERS**



**We believe that having a set of agreed joint principles for national adaptation policies will help all stakeholders in a country unite their efforts to confront the threats posed by climate change, particularly for the most vulnerable people.**

**Southern Voices on Adaptation**

The project is coordinated through three regional facilitators from southern partner NGOs, and the Secretariat in Copenhagen hosted by CARE Denmark. The project is funded by the Climate and Environment Fund of CISU/DANIDA, through the Climate Capacity Consortium, comprising of CARE Denmark, DanChurchAid, and OxfamIBIS.

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