

SDG11 in Focus: 'Glocalisation': Catalysing Local Implementation of Global Goals in Asia and the Pacific

March 27, 2023

Organizer(s): United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific (UCLG ASPAC), Urbanice Malaysia, Melbourne Centre for Cities – University of Melbourne, Monash Sustainable Development Institute (MSDI)

Co-organizer(s): Ministry of National Development Planning of the Republic of Indonesia (Bappenas), Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What is the meaning of "glocalisation" and how does it relate to the implementation of SDGs 6,7,9,11 and 17 in Asia and the Pacific?
- What are the challenges faced by subnational governments in implementing SDG11 at the local level, and how can they be addressed?
- What approaches and tools have been effective in promoting local implementation of SDG11 in Asia and the Pacific, and how can they be scaled up?
- How can the involvement of local communities and stakeholders be increased in the implementation of SDG11 at the subnational level?
- What role can regional and international cooperation play in supporting the glocalisation of SDGs 6,7,9,11 and 17 in Asia and the Pacific?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- The objective of the panel discussion was to consider the impact, progress, challenges, and application of sustainable development in cities and intermediary cities.
- The focus was on localizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach.
- The discussion aimed to showcase strategies for encouraging the uptake of Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and the interlinked action of SDG11 with SDG6, SDG9, and SDG17, using case studies from Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, and Australia.
- The panel discussion was divided into two parts, with the first panel discussing national and subnational strategies for enabling local action, while the second panel shared experiences, successes, learnings, and outcomes of localised SDG implementation by local champions

Aligning Extractive Industries with the Sustainable Development Goals

March 27, 2023

Organizer(s): ESCAP

Co-organizer(s): UN DESA and Government of Mongolia

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What are the main implications of the energy transition for CRM production and the extractives sector more broadly?
- How can we strengthen the relationship between CRM production and the Sustainable Development Goals to ensure that the sector contributes to just, sustainable, and inclusive growth?
- How can we ensure that CRM supply chains are secure and resilient?
- What policies and best practices should be implemented in the region to align CRM production with sustainable development?
- What is the role of the UN and other regional and global bodies in supporting the sustainable development of CRMs in Asia-Pacific?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Priority areas of action include improved revenue management, people-centered production, and maintain environmental integrity
- CRM-rich countries should focus on planning the CRM development by minimizing the life-cycle cost (mining, processing, land reclamation and recycling); establishing environmental regulations and operational standards; and collecting and managing revenue from CRM development.
- CRM-poor countries should focus on securing supplies, mainly through diversified supply as well as efficient and transparent international markets; promoting recycling and a circular economy, including 3Rs for better efficient use of critical minerals; cooperation with others for investment, information sharing and technical development.
- The international community should establish common operational rules for markets, green finance and standards; enable knowledge-sharing and capacity-building; enable regional and international coordination.
- Policies and initiatives should also consider the role of women in and impact of the sector on vulnerable populations.

Conclusions :

ESCAP will continue to work on this topic and to identify opportunities to engage with and support member States in their own efforts to sustainably develop critical raw materials. Countries and sub-regions - in particular ASEAN - are working to develop sustainable development strategies for critical raw materials. Focus includes decarbonization of the sector, inclusive development, and developing strategies for moving up the value chain for CRMs. Next steps include the development of country case studies and continued collaboration with other stakeholders, including through the UN's Global Working Group on Transforming the Extractive Industries for Sustainable Development.

Integrated Climate Action for Low-Carbon and Resilient Cities in Asia and the Pacific

March 28, 2023

Organizer(s): ESCAP (Urban Act partners) and CityNet

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- Deep dive into the key regional and national actions and partnerships to localize the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for city climate action
- Leverage on the policy measures and partnerships to unlock climate finance for cities and identify new opportunities to integrate climate action into planning, management, and governance mechanism to ensure no one and no place is left behind.

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Key points emerging from the discussion: to integrate climate action into urban planning, taking into consideration inclusivity, decentralization, multilateral governance, harnessing existing platforms for regional cooperation, collaboration, and knowledge exchange, up taking and upscaling innovative projects, capacity building and upskilling of local government authorities, and mobilization of resources.

Conclusions :

Next flagship event is the 8th Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-8) taking place in Suwon City, Republic of Korea, from 23-25 October 2023.

Future Generation: Multi-Stakeholder Roles for Strengthening Space Applications and Sustainable Development

March 29, 2023

Organizer(s): Government of Indonesia (National Development Planning Agency/BAPPENAS and National Agency for Research and Innovation/BRIN) and ESCAP
Co-organizer(s): Arthur C. Clarke Institute for Modern Technologies (ACCIMT) of Sri Lanka; Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency (GISTDA) of Thailand; Philippine Space Agency (PhilSA); Agency of Space Research and Technology under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Uzbekspace); United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH); United Nations Satellite Centre (UNITAR/UNOSAT); Asian Institute of Technology (AIT); Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK); Chulalongkorn University; and University of Hong Kong (UHK)

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What are the successful examples of youth- and stakeholder-led initiatives on leveraging space science and technologies to advance progress on the SDGs in their countries and in the region? How can good and transformative practices be scaled up and supported?
- How can Governments and UN agencies inspire the participation of the youth in accelerating progress on the SDGs through space science and technologies? What partnerships are important?
- What are Governments and UN agencies doing to advance the role of women and gender parity in the space sector?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Ensuring that the utilization of space technologies contribute to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a collective responsibility of all stakeholders.
- The ability of space agencies and industries to engage the youth is key to ensuring a vibrant ecosystem of space players.
- Stakeholder partnerships are important in addressing the challenge to leverage space and geospatial information and frontier technologies for advancing the SDGs, such as lack of policy coherence, funding gap, and low level of participation of women and girls.
- The United Nations is actively promoting the participation of women and girls through initiatives such as, Women for Water Partnership and Space4Women.
- Upskilling and long-term capacity development through employment and educational opportunities for youth, including young women, on-the-job-training, scholarships and exchange programmes would be crucial.

Conclusions :

The side event strengthened the commitment of organizers and co-organizers to continue engaging the youth in innovation and applications of space science and technology in advancing the SDGs, particularly along the six thematic priorities of the Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development adopted by ESCAP members, namely disaster risk reduction and resilience, management of natural resources, connectivity, social development, energy, and climate change. In response to the demand conveyed by the participants, scaling up of specific initiatives, such as ESCAP's bi-annual youth forums on innovative geospatial applications for sustainable development, was agreed during the side event.

APFSD Youth Forum Call to Action 2023: Agenda Setting for Strengthening Partnerships to Accelerate the Recovery from the COVID-19 with Human Rights and Gender Equality at the Forefront

March 30, 2023

Organizer(s): Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women (ARROW) and Stepping towards Enhancing Policy Structures (STEPS - India)

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What is the current status of young people's universal access to SRHR information and services in the region taking into account the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic?
- What are some of the actions taken by governments, UN agencies, youth networks and young people to advance young people's universal access to SRHR information and services in the region?
- What are some of the innovative ideas for scale up and replication to advance the implementation of Agenda 2030?
- How are the current SDGs under review including: Water and sanitation, Clean affordable technology, industry, innovation and infrastructures, sustainable partnerships connected with realisation of SRHR in the region?
- What can young people do to contribute to effective policy implementation and how can SRHR be prioritised? How can we ensure meaningful youth participation?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- It was recommended to prioritise gender equality, human rights, equity, meaningful and inclusive youth engagement, comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).
- Empower, invest in and support youth-led and youth serving initiatives and organizations led by young women and girls that are working to address the barriers to COVID-19 recovery and to achieve the SDGs by providing funding, technical support, and other resources to help them scale up and expand their impact.
- Increase equitable representation, visibility, voice and meaningful engagement of all youths with disabilities.
- Centralize the nexus of water-youth-climate issues, innovation -youth-sustainability issues at the heart of SDGs and peak them as a political agenda for all stakeholders.

Conclusions :

- The side event specifically interrogated universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) information and services on the foundations of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), especially for young people with an intersectional, human rights and justice based lens. Systemic and structural issues affecting the realization of youth sustainable development, equitable access to SRHR information and services was further discussed from the lens of strengthened partnerships. ARROW will put these concerns and recommendations at the forefront of its advocacy, programme and monitoring plans, thus ensuring an increased and consistent generation of demand for young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender equality.

Catalysing Local and National Action on Plastic Pollution to Achieve Regional Priorities and Global Goals in South-East and East Asia

March 29, 2023

Organizer(s): The Government of Republic of Korea, Secretariats of the Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) and the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP) [administered by United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP]

Co-organizer(s): United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- How can countries and stakeholders in the region effectively leverage existing regional mechanisms of Regional Seas Programmes to achieve and track progress on global goals and transboundary challenges in the Asia-Pacific?
- Are there emerging global, regional and national issues that would soon require robust waste management data, e.g. waste diversion through extended producer responsibility, reduction of plastic leaking into the world's oceans, etc?
- What are examples of plastic circularity and waste management approaches that are suitable to highly urbanized and secondary cities or urban communities?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Discussions showed that ambitious local targets and frameworks can drive action at the national level toward regional priorities and global goals. Effective solutions exist at the local level that require knowledge-sharing at the regional level for replication and scaling up impact.
- Barriers identified include the lack of (access to) data and data comparability, and limited capacity of local and national governments.
- Discussions highlighted that priority should be given to promoting open access to robust and comparable data, and that technology solutions can support monitoring and assessment of plastic pollution through regular surveys.
- Inclusive solutions are also crucial, considering the perspectives and engagement of all stakeholders, including youth, communities, and the informal sector, while ensuring the protection of human and environmental rights for effective solutions.

Conclusions:

To effectively address transboundary plastic pollution, it is crucial to strengthen and harmonize approaches to monitor and sources, flows, and impacts of plastic pollution and waste leakage from cities and countries in the region for evidence-based action at local, national, regional, and global levels. It is also necessary to promote access to robust and comparable data and inclusive solutions engaging all stakeholders at all levels. Capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and technical assistance are essential components to scale up local solutions. COBSEA and NOWPAP will continue to foster regional partnerships and knowledge sharing, including through the Regional Nodes of the GPML, and to harmonize marine litter monitoring in the region toward achieving the Regional Action Plans on Marine Litter. UNEP and UN-Habitat will continue to support pollution action at local, national, regional, and global levels, to scale up efforts for inclusive impact.

Building Accessible and Inclusive Cities and Communities in Asia and the Pacific

March 28, 2023

Organizer(s): United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) b. United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

Co-organizer(s): Ministry of National Development Planning/BAPPENAS, Republic of Indonesia

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What are some good practices, innovative approaches and lessons learned regarding the development of accessible and inclusive cities and communities including the built environment, transportation, and the digital environment?
- How do we promote data/evidence-based decision and policy making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation to ensure efficient disability-inclusive service delivery in cities and communities?
- How do we fully and effectively engage persons with diverse disabilities and their representative organizations in policy formation, planning and management as well as implementation processes related to urban and community development?
- What are some effective strategies to create a multi-stakeholder mechanism for achieving disability inclusion in cities and communities that engage governments, civil society organizations, organizations of persons with disabilities, development partners and other stakeholders such as the private sector?
- How do we ensure vertical and horizontal integration in policymaking processes for translating policy into practice to achieve inclusive city/community development at the local level?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Ensure universal accessibility and disability inclusion in line with the United Nations Convention. Develop innovative assistive technologies and ensure disability inclusion is mainstreamed in all sectors, including mobility, WASH, ICT, and in the skilling of future urban and rural community planners.
- Mainstream disability inclusion across different levels of governance mechanisms and incorporate the rights of persons with disabilities into policies, plans, and laws to enable a whole-of-government approach to disability inclusion.
- Establish forums, platforms, and stakeholder networks to engage and build capacities of persons with disabilities.
- Recognise the disproportionate impact of disasters and climate change on persons with disabilities and incorporate their unique needs into disaster risk reduction and management strategies and planning in cities and rural communities.
- Facilitate the collection, analysis, and management of data and inform inclusive policymaking, planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring & evaluation processes.

Conclusions :

- The Asia-Pacific region has made great strides in disability-inclusive development in recent decades and can build on this success to create more accessible and inclusive cities and communities. The Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Jakarta Declaration on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2023-2032, provide a pathway to guide this work.

Green jobs for Circularity

March 27, 2023

Organizer(s): UNEP/GO4SDGs

Co-organizer(s): SWITCH-Asia, ILO, The Finnish Embassy in Bangkok

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What are the enabling policies to accelerate the transition towards an inclusive circular economy?
- What are some of the existing skills gaps in scaling circularity in high impact sectors? What is required to overcome this gap?
- What do you think are the priority areas where acceleration of green jobs needed to achieve circularity?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Circularity is a key driver in achieving the Agenda 2030 by addressing the overconsumption of natural resources, which is one of the root causes of the triple planetary crises.
- In Asia and the Pacific region, focusing on the creation of green jobs is beneficial for the circular transition. With an increasing population of youth with limited opportunities, the green transition also provides opportunities for youth.
- All stakeholders have their role to play in scaling green jobs. The governments are needed to create regulatory frameworks and incentives for green industrial development and green businesses. The private needs to be creative in identifying the skills of the future and reskilling their workers. Educational institutions should include green skills cross cuttingly when training professionals of the future. To create change, the stakeholders must work together.

Conclusions :

Transitioning to a circularity supports achieving the Agenda 2030. Businesses are increasingly adopting circular business models and creating profit while reducing the need for virgin raw materials.

According to ILO, adopting sustainable practices in business operations to limit global warming to 2°C will create some 24 million jobs, offering youth – both men and women – job opportunities that will also contribute to the transition to a green and circular economy. The youth in the region can be a solution to ensuring skilled workforce for circular businesses but this requires identifying needed skills and focusing on adequate education.

This side event focused on the opportunities and challenges for Asia and the Pacific region to move towards circularity while creating new green jobs. It will focus on three high impact sectors: textiles, food packaging and agri-food sectors. The textile industry accounts for 55% of the global textiles and clothing exports and employs around 60 million workers (approx. 80% women). Green jobs in agriculture and agri-food sectors are expected to increase as much as 60% in primary-sector employment and a 20% increase in global gross domestic product by 2050.

Building a sustainable and resilient Asian Highway network to support SDG implementation in Asia and the Pacific

March 27, 2023

Organizer(s): ESCAP Transport Division

Co-organizer(s): Permanent Mission of China to ESCAP

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What are the key challenges involved in implementing green and resilient road infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region, and what are the differences or concerns between the Asia-Pacific region and other regions?
- The best national practices and initiatives to foster sustainable and green road infrastructure development.
- To enhance the multi-stakeholder cooperation, how can international organizations, such as the United Nations or other regional organizations, support countries in developing and implementing sustainable and resilient road transport infrastructure? What role can the private sector play in these partnerships?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- The regional legal framework on sustainable and green road infrastructure is needed, to provide a general guidance and direction to countries.
- Enhancing multi-stakeholder cooperation, particular the leadership of ESCAP, support countries in developing and implementing sustainable and resilient road transport infrastructure through capacity building activities and technical assistance.

Conclusions :

The side event provides a great opportunity for stakeholders to share their experiences, discuss challenges and opportunities, and identify concrete steps for enhancing sustainable and resilient road transport infrastructure along the Asian Highway network.

Actions to Harnessing Synergies between the Paris Agreement and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Enhancing City to City Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific

March 29, 2023

Organizer(s): Ministry of the Environment,
Government of Japan

Co-organizer(s): Institute for Global
Environmental Strategies (IGES), Embassy of
Japan in Thailand

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- How can multiple global agendas be better integrated?

Conclusions :

The UN Secretary-General stated that the climate action is a 21st Century's greatest opportunity to drive forward all the SDG goals, and it is essential to understand how Climate actions and SDGs are connected to each other. Maximizing synergies between the actions across the different goals, Paris Agreement and SDGs, as well as the newly adopted Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework could help accelerate progress. The potential for synergies is particularly great at the local level, such as in cities. Backed up with national-level initiatives, local and city-level actions could contribute to sustainable, net-zero transitions while ensuring a harmonious relationship with nature.

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Transparent methods for evaluating benefits and trade-offs between climate change and other SDGs is critical for boosting national-level accountability for synergistic actions; global dissemination of these national-level efforts can help to spread synergies beyond national borders.
- Moving from traditional siloed ways of working to more multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder policymaking and project planning is essential for mainstreaming synergies.
- Local governments could play a critical role in demonstrating and achieving synergies; local governments are well-positioned to build the trust, communicate the benefits, provide the support, create the deliberative fora, and empower citizens in ways that can bring synergies to life.
- Equipping citizens with accessible knowledge on synergistic solutions to climate and other sustainability challenges is crucial. Well-designed awareness raising, collaborative engagement processes, and innovative funding mechanisms also enable the implementation of synergistic actions.
- Intermediaries who coordinate and support peer learning as part of city-to-city cooperation could help promote synergies, generate the understanding among diverse stakeholders, promote active participation, and facilitate communication on synergies in relevant international processes and high-level events.

Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Cooperation between Cities, Regions, Business and Governments – Practices Exchange

March 29, 2023

Organizer(s): United Nations Association of Russia

Co-organizer(s): The Government of Moscow, the Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Kingdom of Thailand, Department for External Economic and International Relations of Moscow, UN Information Centre in Moscow

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- Sustainable urban development, ensuring a safe, smart, attractive urban environment and sustainable mobility
- Economic development and investment attractiveness of Russian cities and regions
- Trends of sustainable business interaction in the Asia-Pacific region
- The role of business in SDGs achievement and reporting
- The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the progress of achieving the 2030 Agenda
- Ways to accelerate the development of achieving the SDGs in Russia and the Asia-Pacific region
- Mobilization of a wide range of stakeholders and the formation of multilateral partnerships

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- The participants of the UN Association of Russia program “Russian Regions and the SDGs” (Moscow, Sverdlovsk Oblast, the Republic of Tatarstan and Samara Oblast) are ready for strengthening existing and forging new partnerships on different levels and in a variety of sectors for accelerating the achievement of the SDGs.
- Cities face unprecedented problems related to climate change and air pollution and the overcoming of these problems depends largely on common joint actions of different actors.
- Businesses, including small and medium companies, and NGOs shall be more involved in the preparation of the national voluntary reports on the achievements of SDGs.
- Responsible financing and investments in sustainable development are of high importance.
- Access to technology and innovation, exchange of experience and cooperation in these fields are required for the SDGs achievements.

Conclusions :

Further coordinated cooperation and joint actors from different sectors –governmental, private, academia, NGOs – are required to accelerate the achievements of the SDGs, including providing access to technology and innovation, mobilizing financial resources and joint investment. The development of guidelines for countries on the business and NGOs involvement into the process of the VNRs preparation can be considered. Moscow, as a city highly committed to the SDGs implementation can be considered for detailed presentation within the ESCAP work so as to replicate its experience for others.

Community Networks: Complementary Solutions, Innovations and Partnerships to Bridge the Digital Divide

March 29, 2023

Organizer(s): Institute for Social Entrepreneurship in Asia, Association for Progressive Communications

Co-organizer(s): Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC) Foundation, Angels of Impact, Internet Society, Global Digital Inclusion Partnership, Technological Innovations for Sustainable Development Platform, Asia Pacific Regional Civil Society Engagement Mechanism (APRCEM) - Social and Community Enterprise Constituency

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What are community networks and what is their role in achieving SDG 9 and in bridging the digital divide?
- How can we build an enabling environment for community networks to strengthen their impact in connecting the unconnected and in bridging the digital divide?
- What initiatives and opportunities facilitate and encourage mainstreaming and sustainability of community networks? How can these be leveraged for partnership and collaboration avenues with Technological Innovations for Sustainable Development Platform?

Conclusions :

The speakers envisioned the platform to help build complementary partnerships to break silos among different sectors and stakeholders; facilitate investments in community network development initiatives and movement-building; and advocate for enabling government regulatory and policy support to community networks.

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- The COVID-19 pandemic illuminated the reality that low-income communities around the world that lack reliable and/or affordable access to internet connectivity are being left behind, there still remains a big and widening gap in internet usage, affordability of internet connection and mobile devices, and meaningful access.
- Community networks build on the progress made under SDG 9 - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation.
- Common Room Networks Foundation Indonesia developed a model of community networks that can be described by 5Ls - low tech, low energy, low maintenance, low learning curve, and local support. This model considers the local context of the project areas and highlights the learning and training component of community networks.
- Community networks need an enabling ecosystem and a supportive policy environment to grow and be mainstreamed toward effectively bridging the digital divide.
- Organizations such as the Internet Society, APNIC Foundation, and the Global Digital Inclusion Partnership are supporting complementary access networks and solutions throughout the Asia-Pacific region by strengthening community network-building efforts, providing funding opportunities, and advancing evidence-based policy reforms.

Fit for Purpose?: Forwarding the localization agenda to address the conflict and climate crises in the Asia-Pacific region

March 29, 2023

Organizer(s): Reality of Aid-Asia Pacific (RoA-AP)

Co-organizer(s): North-East Affected Area Development Society (NEADS), Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organisations (PIANGO), Coastal Development Partnership (CDP), CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness-Asia (CPDE Asia)

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- How can the localization approach contribute to SDG 17 and Agenda 2030?
- How have donor countries, multilateral institutions and international non-governmental organizations localized their operations and worked with local CSOs in achieving Agenda 2030 ?
- What are the roles of CSOs in the localization process and how can they be better engaged in these initiatives?
- How have CSOs promoted local and innovative solutions to the nexus of conflict and climate crisis in their own communities?
- What challenges do CSOs face in pursuing the localization agenda?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- In pursuing localization, there are best practices from donor countries, multilateral institutions and INGOs, like UNESCAP's Voluntary Local Reviews, Australia's Disaster Ready Program and Start Network's Facility Aiding Locally-led Engagement. While there have been inroads in localizing and decentralizing development processes, more work needs to be done to ensure that it will truly shift the power to local actors and respond to the needs of communities. Genuine and effective localization initiatives are based on inclusive and meaningful partnerships among development actors, a human rights-based approach, the development justice framework, and promotion of local leadership.

Conclusions :

The side-event became a rich ground for discussions as development actors and civil society both navigate the localization agenda. RoA-AP and its members will continue fostering spaces for inclusive and meaningful dialogue among development actors in order to clearly define how the localization agenda can genuinely address the needs of communities, CSOs towards inclusive, sustainable development. CSOs have also committed to participate in consultations on localization of other development actors.

The localization agenda does not only ensure that humanitarian and development actions are fit for purpose, but also serves as a step towards shifting the power to the people, who are the real drivers of development.

A Regional Intergenerational Dialogue: Girls' Rights and Environmental Justice

March 27, 2023

Organizer(s): Plan International

Co-organizer(s): AYF Secretariat

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- How have girls and young women been experiencing the impact of COVID-19, climate crisis specifically access to clean water and sanitation, and disasters?
- Were policies and programs that seek to address these problems gender transformative? Have they provided space for girls and young women's participation so their needs were considered and proposed solutions heard?
- What have been girls' initiatives to accelerate COVID-19 response, promote climate justice and disaster resilience? What were their strategies? Challenges? Lessons Learned?
- What can older advocates share as guidance and support to girls and young women advocates?
- What are concrete ways that states can do to accelerate COVID-19 response, pursue climate justice and disaster resilience in a gender transformative manner?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- The specific needs and challenges of girls to environmental harm should be acknowledged and addressed
- Supports girls action on climate justice is urgently needed
- Avoid youth washing and encourage meaningful youth and girls participation
- Build youth-adult partnership is something possible

Conclusions :

We need to enhance intergenerational dialogue between adult and girls in responding climate crisis. From this side event we learn how powerful are girls as a central of climate protection, inspiring other girls, who experience layered and specific impact of climate crisis. In this side event, we heard voice of girls from developed countries like Singapore, and from developing countries like Bangladesh and Nepal. All of them are outstanding and all of them are amazing in contributing to solve the climate injustice and crisis.

Youth-driven Actions for Sustainable Local Development in Southeast Asia

March 30, 2023

Organizer(s): Children and Youth Constituency for Sustainable Communities (CYCSC), ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability Southeast Asia (ICLEI SEA), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in Vietnam

Co-organizer(s): City of Baguio - Philippines, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) - Vietnam, World Resources Institute - Indonesia

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What does youth inclusion look like from a cross-generation perspective?
- How can cities encourage youth participation and inclusion toward sustainable development?
- How can cities leverage their resources, especially culture, and foster multi-stakeholder partnerships to promote city identity and implement sustainable development activities?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Young people in ASEAN have a critical role to play in promoting sustainable and inclusive urban development, and in achieving SDG 11.
- Youth can be the local governments' reliable partners in city planning and development. They are more than willing to lend their energies and skills—all they need is a meaningful platform where they can collaborate with decision makers.
- Youth are not just the receiver or consumer of culture and technological advances, but they are also key creators and innovators in shaping place identity that fit with their and their communities' needs.

Conclusions :

Youth-led development is extremely relevant to the context of Southeast Asia, a rapidly urbanizing region that is economically dynamic, culturally rich, and biodiverse.

Youth-led development is largely devised and implemented by youth, generally grass-roots, and small in size.

National and local governments, the UN, and other NGOs/INGOs should continue to join hands to empower and enable enthusiastic young people who want to get involved in the sustainable local development process to spread the positive impacts of their grassroot actions on a bigger scale.

Access to Safe and Sufficient Water: A Right of Children and Future Generations

March 29, 2023

Organizer(s): Save the Children International

Co-organizer(s): United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Regional Office for South-East Asia, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Youth Empowerment in Climate Action Platform (YECAP), Child Rights Coalition Asia, Government of Philippines

Key questions discussed in the side event:

Within six panelists including a congresswoman from the Philippines, four children and youth from Thailand, the Philippines and Nepal, and a representative from the Commission on Human Rights, the Philippines, the guiding questions were:

- What are the climate and environmental impacts on the children's rights to water and sanitation, especially those from marginalized groups? How is water scarcity and pollution being felt and what are its implications for their future?
- Since it was first drafted 100 years ago, how has the Declaration on the Rights of the Child, which eventually resulted in the CRC, supported or contributed to the achievement of SDG 6? What actions need to be taken in terms of children's rights to speed up efforts to achieve SDG 6 targets?
- What challenges do Child and Youth Human Rights Defenders face in advocating for climate and environmental action and access to clean and safe water? How can their safety and protection be ensured as they continue to demand the fulfilment of their rights?
- How has your country contributed towards ensuring that everyone has safe and clean water to drink and that they have a safe and respectable place for defecation, especially for girls?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Climate change and environmental degradation disproportionately affect children's rights to water and sanitation. Disasters, such as typhoons and earthquakes, interrupt and destroy water supplies, while changing rainfall patterns impact agriculture and food security. Several child and youth panelists also described how industrial development projects often lead to the contamination of water resources, impacting the health of local communities.
- A lack of access to water and sanitation may hinder the enjoyment of other rights, including the right to education, with one child panelist noting that "there are still many schools which do not provide access to clean drinking water and proper toilets". This often disproportionately impacts girls, as well as children in stateless situations as one child said in the message board exhibit.

Conclusions :

Achieving SDG6 targets is crucial in fulfilling the rights of all children and future generations as it helps ensure they are well-nourished, protected from diseases, and able to enjoy sexual and reproductive rights. However, the triple planetary crisis hinders and undermines progress as it exacerbates water scarcity, contaminates water sources, and threatens access to clean water. Children and youth are bearing the brunt of environmental crises.

Next steps are listed below:

- The report is shared with the UN human rights mechanisms
- Save the Children and partners to follow up on commitments made by representatives from the Philippines
- Evaluate the event process with children to improve child-friendly regional and global platforms; support follow up actions to be identified by mobilized children and youth groups

Recovery for Whom? Challenging Corporate Power in Development

March 30, 2023

Organizer(s): Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)

Co-organizer(s): Asia Pacific Regional CSOs Engagement Mechanism (APRCEM), UNESCAP

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What are the major crises needing immediate and urgent action? What are the alarming trends in relation to corporate capture in development?
- What are the key policy demands to address these structural challenges? and what should be the role of the UN, government and peoples movements?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- It's high time to reconcile the rhetoric with reality
- It's high time for Development Justice
- Time to Dismantle Neoliberal Framework
- Time to walk the talk on Leaving No One Behind, The Transformative Change and the Global Social Contract, The Decade of Action and Delivery, The Building Back Better, Our Common Agenda and so on...
- The clue is simple: all of it can only be realized if systemic barriers like global inequalities of wealth, power and resources, international economic, trade and monetary frameworks, militarism & conflict, patriarchal authoritarianism, and marginalizing governance are addressed

Conclusions :

This side-event unpacked the different systemic barriers and challenges in means of implementation of the SDGs in the context of the multiple crises—from debt to the climate crisis. It also shed light on how the heavy reliance on corporate support has been more detrimental to the recovery from the pandemic, and how it further deteriorated the state obligations and the responsibility to provide public services and social protection to the peoples.

Cambodian CSOs' Inputs to the CSDGs Implementation on Goals 6, 7, 9, 11 & 17 for Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) 2023

March 28, 2023

Organizer(s): The NGO Forum on Cambodia

Co-organizer(s): Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What are the key enablers in leveraging Cambodian CSOs in the VNR process?
- How do Cambodian CSOs integration and initiatives benefit the VNR process and report, and what impact do they have on SDG acceleration efforts?
- What support can the UN system provide to facilitate and support in integrating Cambodian CSOs and in the VNR process and report, and beyond?
- What lessons can be learned about Cambodian CSOs in the VNR process and report that can be extended to broader initiatives globally to promote SDG leaderships and accelerate SDG progress?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Addressing disparity, paying more attention to the poor and marginalized group
- Mobilizing financing for WASH, beyond public sector
- Improving service delivery pathway and system, Which also include: Resources in WASH including human resources and capacity. Multi-sector collaboration including academic institutes; WASH prioritization in development agenda; Technology and affordable products; People behavior and social norms
- Grow entrepreneurial mindset at all level of the society
- Develop shared food processing labs to enable small scale food manufacturers
- Provide sanction to those who are not building energy/wastewater efficient buildings.
- Fill up the missing middle by providing prototyping funds to young entrepreneurs.
- Build inclusive/accessible infrastructure

Conclusions :

This side-event unpacked the different systemic barriers and challenges in means of implementation of the SDGs in the context of the multiple crises—from debt to the climate crisis. It also shed light on how the heavy reliance on corporate support has been more detrimental to the recovery from the pandemic, and how it further deteriorated the state obligations and the responsibility to provide public services and social protection to the peoples.

Financing and Safeguarding a Just Transition in Asia: Trends and future pathways for a just and inclusive transition to a zero-carbon economy

March 29, 2023

Organizer(s): Fair Finance Asia, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (UNOHCHR), and Swedwatch
Co-organizer(s): Stockholm Environment Institute Asia

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- How important is a just and inclusive renewable energy transition in the Asia Pacific region to meet the SDGs, especially Goal 7 and 9?
- What are the key trends, opportunities, and critical financial and institutional gaps in accelerating renewable energy transition that is inclusive and equitable?
- How can different stakeholders and rightsholders engage to accelerate effective actions to safeguard a just and inclusive energy transition in the Asia Pacific Region?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- To renew commitments to "energy transformation," which not only require duty bearers to align efforts to mitigate climate change and environmental harm through the adoption of clean energy but also implementing practices that safeguard social and climate justice for everyone, especially groups in vulnerable situations.
- To implement policies that accelerate the transition from fossil fuel-based energy system and promote equitable access to clean energy.
- To adopt institutional mechanisms that promote green standards and responsible investment practices while ensuring communities affected by projects are informed and invited to meaningfully engage in decision-making processes without repercussions, and further provided access to rightful remedy.
- To ensure equitable distribution of benefits and costs of adopting renewable energy projects and ensure that energy transition does not further aggravate and increase social inequity and environmental harm.

Conclusions :

To meet the global commitments to limit temperature rise and to ensure equitable access to affordable sources of clean energy, duty bearers in Asia Pacific region must accelerate their effort to transition away from fossil fuel-based energy. However, increased investment in renewable energy projects should not come at the cost of environmental sustainability and social justice. It must ensure that the ecological integrity of the environment is protected across national boundaries, while human rights of all people, including the most vulnerable populations are protected. What the region urgently need is a structural transformation. It also requires the duty bearers to proactively adopt green standards and streamline policies to encourage responsible investment.

Strategic Partnership for Policy Impact: Multi-stakeholder Engagement for Advancing the Sustainable Development Goals in Asia

March 28, 2023

Organizer(s): Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) Asia

Co-organizer(s): UN Habitat, Asia Indigenous People Pact, Office of the National Water Resources Thailand, Asia Ventures Philanthropy Network

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- What are the pathways to accelerate the achievement of SDG 2030?
- How to make sure inclusivity in implementing Agenda 2030 especially ensuring that no one leave behind?
- How to mobilizing financial resources to address financial gap in achieving the SDGs?
- What are the policies framework to support sustainable policies for water resources governance?
- How to transitioning away from fossil fuels for a net-zero world?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Participation and collaboration are crucial in driving the policies for sustainable water resources management.
- Indigenous people rights need to be promoted and protected in the decision making processes especially in policies that linked to national and international framework to achieve SDGs target such as NDCs target.
- It is crucial to find investment pathways that can have direct impact to people's livelihood pathways and also targeting climate action.
- In response to the multiple crises we are facing, it is urgent to sustained a long term policy interventions to phase out coal oil and gas production and use in a rapid and equitable manner to protect public health and welfare

Conclusions :

We need to foster collaboration and partnership and share how scientific evidence and innovative ideas transform into action.

Furthermore, decision makers also need to consider the risks of engaging on unproven carbon dioxide removal or carbon capture and storage technologies as well as consider how different climate mitigation strategies might be aligned with the achievement of other SDG and also with equity principles. How we can mobilize more capital to address these critical issues SEI together with its partners are now underway to re-energize commitment, scale-up action, and solicit scientific input to push on the agenda in the run-up to September' s SDG Summit.

The strategic role of government libraries in providing evidence to support the preparation of Voluntary National Reviews

March 30, 2023

Organizer(s): Winston Roberts (Chair, IFLA Regional Division Committee for Asia-Oceania)

Co-organizer(s): Michelle Lau (IFLA Regional Officer Manager, Singapore)

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- How to make funding for library services sustainable in difficult economic circumstances, by developing ways to assess the intangible economic benefits of social capital?
- How to leverage library services to help increase basic literacy and digital literacy in the information society?
- How to innovate in library services to keep them responsive to social change, in countries at different stages of development?
- How best to communicate national results in those areas to UN planners and the High-Level Political Forum?

Key messages:

- Publicly funded library services and networks reach into many sectors of society and the economy, supporting progress in (for example) education, health, business and research. Managers of these services are informed about national developments; they provide data and advice to assist policy and decision-makers. Government libraries in particular are repositories of such evidence, which can be used by officials compiling a Voluntary National Review (VNR) of progress towards the UN SDGs.

Recommendations:

- That countries make arrangements for regular consultations between library sector leaders and officials responsible for national periodic reporting to the UN;
- That countries include in their VNRs notes and data received from their national library services;
- That they explicitly acknowledge the role of such services in society and the economy by reference to available indirect measures such as budgets, literacy statistics, education outcomes, etc.;
- That they comment in their VNR on the relationship between their national investment in library services and their policies for reducing the digital divide, reducing social inequalities, and enabling citizens' access to economic opportunities.

Conclusions :

- In some countries there is less than adequate policy linkage between publicly-funded library services and national government agencies. In such cases there is a risk that data and evidence held by the former may be overlooked by the latter. Alternatively, aggregated national data may be correctly reported but the contributions (costs and benefits) of individual sectors may not be fully recognised. IFLA frequently arranges meetings for its members on working toward the SDGs, and will continue to do so. IFLA looks forward to continued engagement with ESCAP in this work, and plans to participate in regular UN reviews of progress.

Leave No Issue Behind

March 28, 2023

Organizer(s): Association for the Rights of Children in Southeast Asia

Co-organizer(s): International Alliance of Inhabitants

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- How are street connected children, evictions, and homelessness related to and reflected in SDG 11, its targets, its indicators and its processes and discourse?
- What is the significance and impact of directly including or not including issues such as evictions, homelessness and issues of street connected children in SDG 11 and its processes and monitoring?
- How can these issues be substantially articulated if not officially included in the SDG 11 discourse, processes and monitoring?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- For SDG 11 to truly leave no one behind, street connected children, evictions and homelessness should be directly, substantially and consistently articulated in its processes and discussions. The concept of leaving no one behind should not only be appreciated as the objective of Agenda 2030 but also as a concept to be applied in the process of achieving the objective. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to truly leave no one behind if we are already leaving some people behind in the process of working towards Agenda 2030.

Conclusions :

There should be continued efforts to raise these concerns in the SDG 11 processes including those happening in the HLPF and SDG Summit, as well as in the urban forums to be organized by UN Habitat in the next months. These can also be discussed in UNICEF's Child Friendly Cities Initiative, which gives priority to the excluded.

Best Practices towards Inclusive Sanitation in South Asia

March 29, 2023

Organizer(s): International Training Network Centre, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (ITN-BUET), Environment and Public Health

Organization, Dasra, United Cities and Local Governments Asia Pacific, Global Water and Sanitation Centre, Asian Institute of Technology

Co-organizer(s): International Alliance of Inhabitants

Key questions discussed in the side event:

The side event discussed the concept of Citywide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS) and its landscape in the South Asian countries: Bangladesh, India and Nepal. The discussion was guided by the following key questions:

- What type of capacity-building support is needed and for whom to create an enabling environment for effective sanitation service delivery?
- What kind of innovations have been promoted in each country, and how are they utilized at the city-level by practitioners?
- How does using principles of CWIS facilitate improved occupational health, safety and dignity for those working in the sanitation value chain?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Inclusive sanitation is crucial for achieving citywide sustainable, safely managed sanitation services for the people across South Asia.
- The virtual event aimed to promote discussion and knowledge-sharing among experts, practitioners, field implementers and service providers to advance the narratives on inclusive sanitation and establish a platform for peer-to-peer learning.
- Collaborative ecosystem and initiatives are needed to accomplish the successful implementation of CWIS principles.
- The important enablers include health and safety for sanitation workers, South-South collaboration, data-driven decision-making, organizational support, effective teamwork, and women's empowerment in the WASH sector.
- The insights and lessons shared during the event will help accelerate progress towards achieving inclusive sanitation and serve as a foundation for continued collaboration and peer-to-peer learning among stakeholders in the sector.

Conclusions :

- The panel discussion emphasized the importance of empowering sanitation workers and the need for leadership development, creating a collective platform for solidarity, and regional collaboration to achieve milestones for safely managed sanitation.
- The event highlighted the importance of having data on safely managed fecal sludge for effective service delivery and the introduction of DPHE's SanBoard, an online sanitation information platform that can serve as a useful tool for advocacy and decision-making.
- The event's anticipated outcome is to engage decision-makers and practitioners through moderated discussions to learn from best practices across the region and inspire peers to capture and contextualize those learnings.

Multi-stakeholder Partnership in Facilitating Inclusive Economies and Protecting Rights of Migrant Workers

March 28, 2023

Organizer(s): International Labour Organization (ILO) and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Co-organizer(s): European Union, Australian Department Foreign Affairs and Trade, The Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia, and Ministry of Labour of the Government of Thailand

Key questions discussed in the side event:

- How do MRCs benefit from and contribute to strategic partnerships towards effective prevention of violations and protection of the rights of migrant workers? What are the roles of trade unions and MRCs in Indonesia?
- What does Migrant Worker Assistance Centre do and what are the services they offer? What prompted the Ministry of Labor of Thailand to establish this initiative?
- What is the unique feature of Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC) in the protection of migrant worker in Malaysia and what support services are provided through the Migrant Worker Resource Centre (MRC)?
- Given the current social economic reality in the region, what can relevant actors do in upholding the human rights of migrants and making sure those in vulnerable situations are protected?

Key messages, outcomes, recommendations :

- Strategic partnerships are important in ensuring better protection of the rights of migrant workers. A good practice can be seen in Indonesia where strong partnership exists between local and district governments, ILO, workers' unions and civil society organizations enabling adoption of a holistic approach. Building confidence of migrants is key in making such partnerships effective.
- Gender responsive approach: The needs of women and men migrant workers, their legal protections, their risks to violence all have a gender dimension.
- Inclusion of voices of the rights holders: Workers unions represent workers voices and unions play a vital role in ensuring information and services are rights-based, gender-responsive and migrant workers are able to access these services. Unions also organise migrant workers for collective bargaining.
- Range of services provided: Migrant Worker Assistance Centres (MWAC) offer extensive services to migrant workers. This includes information and advice related to documentation, interpretation services, COVID-19 interventions, and referral to shelters. Malaysian Trade Union Congress (MTUC) offers a comprehensive approach to address the issue of migrant workers, which involves legal assistance and advocacy programs.

Conclusions :

The side event focused on the underlying structural inequalities in temporary labour migration programmes, the vulnerabilities faced by migrant workers, especially women, as well as those facing intersectional vulnerabilities on the bases of their sector of work and other factors. The priority should be in making an active effort to integrate migrant workers in the socio-economic processes, as well as providing them access to better living, working conditions, healthcare, and education.