

Sustainable Civil Society Initiative to Address Global Environmental Challenges (SCSI)

Transition from pilot intervention to policy engagement for scaling up lessons

Demonstration at pilot scale- Phase I (2008-2012)

The SCSI in its first phase was designed as an action-research exercise with objectives to enhance adaptive capacities of identified vulnerable communities in Bundelkhand, develop community based institutional models for promoting 'green economic growth' and influence local facilitating agencies to support community actions.

The first phase piloted climate change adaptation models for farmers, women and building artisans and identified mechanisms that may be required to scale up the successes. Additionally, the initiative worked with facilitating agencies at the local and state levels to share knowledge outputs and initiated action to amend policy instruments. The pilot demonstrated a potential for efficiencies in resource use while enhancing incomes and reducing climate induced risks.

Achievements in the pilot phase were:

- Identification of simple technology options that increase resource-use efficiency, enhance productivity and livelihood security.
- Packaging of technology based measures into community based green enterprise models.
- Knowledge sharing partnership platform in response to a felt need of local agencies and partners - the Bundelkhand Knowledge Platform (www.bkpinidia.net)
- Documented measurable benefits in resource saving, energy efficiencies, incomes, behavior shifts towards more sustainable practices and positive response from local facilitating agencies.
- Varied approaches in response to local micro-conditions with lessons in both positive and regressive shifts.
- Communication of the technical and institutional innovations piloted at community level to national and global audiences.
- Knowledge products to share lessons with global and national audience and training modules in vernacular available for replicating technological and institutional innovations at scale.

Lessons emerging from the pilot phase specifically are:

- Institutional supports for capacity building are needed for enabling desired changes in practice. **Technical and capacity building support services can be delivered to the community through common-interest groups organized for the purpose.**
- Support systems for knowledge sharing, information, technical solutions, capacity building, institutional finance and market linkages enable farmers to shift to less resource intensive practices. However, inconsistencies across development programs conflict with desirable practice shifts. **Policy and program coherence across water-energy-forest and agriculture is required to scale up identified climate responsive practices.**
- Water management and water use efficiencies need to be integrated. This can be done through including the concepts at the village and district level planning – **mainstreaming climate change response in planning processes.**
- **Development of cluster based agro-models require dialogue between scientific institutions and local communities**– Five packages of practice were compiled during the pilot exercise.
- **Demonstration to showcase sustainable practices is essential to inform and inspire policy development.** The demonstration centers developed during the pilot attracted the attention of government line departments and other supporting agencies.
- Knowledge sharing and **communication of results from ground to key institutions at state and national level can help leverage resources and inspire policy development.** Results from DA's work have found a place in the MP-State Action Plan for Climate Change, and changes in the state led rural housing scheme.

Policy engagement to scale-up lessons - Phase II :

The second phase indicates a strategic shift towards engagement with policy processes with an aim to enhance community adaptation to climate variability and change. It conceptualizes strategies to inform policy and support development programs in setting up systems and mechanisms for up-scaling sustainable agriculture practices. The second phase will address concerns of food-security through reducing resource (water-energy) vulnerability and promote integrated approaches for the same. Following **strategies** have been conceptualized towards this end:

- **A move from community to state level policy** engagement and links of **planning processes** at village and cluster level to district and state planning systems in order to contribute to systemic measures to address climate vulnerability.
- Integrating **concepts of watershed management with water use** for food security and of energy policies and water extraction designed to address the food-water-energy nexus.
- Promotion of **innovative technologies and practices** that reduce water and energy foot-print of agriculture activity and promote agro-bio-diversity based on scientific and traditional wisdom.
- **Benchmarking regional vulnerability** to climate change to help reporting the change being brought about through interventions over a longer period.
- **Strategic partnerships** with state level agencies responsible for policy formulation and implementation, development financing and scientific support to facilitate the institutional mechanisms for the promotion of identified practices.
 - DA has built functional relationships with nodal state and national level agencies engaged in preparing and tracking climate action plans, rural credit and development and Civil Society Organizations across the regions as partners for scaling-up implementation.
 - Engagement with Columbia Water Center (CWC) – a unit of the Earth Institute at the Columbia University is useful from the perspective of global sharing along with research skills.
 - DA's associations with state planning boards and Planning Commission as the National Resource Cell for District planning (NRCDP) will help in inform planning processes to mainstream climate response in development planning.
- **Communication to enable the project to position itself at the state level and link grassroots lessons to policy processes** through strengthening the Bundelkhand Knowledge Platform, partnerships with media (radio) and strategic multi-stakeholder workshops at state and national levels.
- In order to facilitate the setting of systems for capacity development and support services for sustainable agriculture practices and climate risk, **the project will be able to demonstrate:**
 - partnerships of science, community and policy action
 - convergence of policy strategies and planning systems
 - practice to policy connects through knowledge and communication systems.
- Policy coherence across water management, agriculture and energy sectors reflected through convergent planning, monitoring and tracking is integral to the phase-II. Guidelines, measurement indicators, integrated agro-planning models at village and district levels will form the repertoire of practical tools relevant for similar regions globally.
- The second phase is aligned with India's national priorities and also with the key global concerns for sustainable development - green economy, food and water security in the 2012-2015 scenario of global sustainable development discussions.