

FORMAT FOR WORKSHOP REPORTS FOR APPFSD 2019
24-26TH MARCH, 2019, BANGKOK, THAILAND

1 Workshop Title:

Grassroots empowering themselves to ensure No One Is Left Behind: Lessons from Four Countries

2 Name of Organizer : ASEC – Asian Solidarity Economy Council & RIPESS Asia

3 Session Name: People Workshop 4.0 – Harnessing movements for a fairer, just & equitable Asia Pacific

4 What were the key issues discussed in your workshop?

Seven case studies from six countries were presented. (Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka. We recognise that local communities have the potential for self-organising and self-empowering. Social solidarity economy namely community based enterprises have a potential for effective implementation of SDGs at the grassroots level where people, profits, planate can become a key agenda with good governance and effective values.

We discussed issues pertaining to discrimination and inequality faced by the urban poor & informal sector including street vendors, rural poor indigenous & tribal people including forest based communities, ethnic minorities disadvantaged by the caste system (Dalit) and women

We noted the interconnected nature of SDGs. As well as the disadvantage like poverty and land rights, not having a legal identity and issues pertaining to citizenship rights.

At an organisational level we noted the limited resources and funding especially the lack of sustainable finance.

We noted that grassroots communities must empower themselves as the powerful in any society including the elites will not want a dynamic grassroots movements. Therefore there is a need for self-organising and empowerment of grassroots organisations.

5 What are the important lessons from the workshop (in bullet points)?

We recognised the value of the case study approach taking a vulnerable community namely without the intervention and assistance would remain poor and disadvantaged.

We noted that specific target groups must be identified and we must work with them under the theme of no one is left behind.

We recognised that national data is at the macro national level however we noted that to ensure no one left behind we must collect data on a disaggregated basis.

6 Key recommendations coming from the workshop (in bullet points):

- 1) Think about SDGs in a horizontal and holistic manner and avoid silo action. Recognise the interconnected nature of SDGs.
- 2) Adopt a multi-dimensional approach in defining the ground issues and in solutions found to ensure no one is left behind.
- 3) Link work on the grassroots level issues, challenges and concerns faced by marginalised communities including the Bottom 40 back to the bigger structural issues.
- 4) Implement SDGs at the local level in cooperation with local actors including grassroots communities.
- 5) Promote public and private investments into rural areas, urban poor neighborhoods and post conflict zones for examples like Jaffna to generate more job opportunities especially for young people.
- 6) Promote capacity building initiatives of all citizens especially marginalised communities on citizens' rights including political, access to justice in the legal provisions, access to credit through affordable public finance schemes.
- 7) Submit model budgets of grassroots programs to local banks for funding.
- 8) Promote a culture of solidarity economy which is community based (governance and participation as well as profit sharing in an open & transparent manner.
- 9) Build legal and regulatory frameworks to bring clarity accompanied with a wide range of strategies to support the development of social solidarity economy.
- 10) Seek active participation and support of national parliaments especially work in partnership with parliamentarian in monitoring delivery as well as holding local agencies accountable for service provision to marginalised communities at the Bottom 40 socio-economic divide.
- 11) There must be effective and affordable provision of sustainable finance through public and private sources. Making available to community based enterprises is essential as the impact is not individual financing but a collective one impacting sizable number of families.
- 12) Developing local markets especially for community products are essential. There can be collaborative efforts in addressing these. For example the concerns of the informal sector for the public space to sell.
- 13) Training and research focusing on measuring social impact especially of the community based enterprises established by local communities.
- 14) There is a need to approach social solidarity and community empowerment of marginalised communities from a total ecosystem.

7 Does your workshop relate to any specific SDG Goal(s)? If so, which ones?

Yes, SDG 1 & 2 on poverty and hunger. Key to our discussion was SDG 8:3 on decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, micro and small enterprises which also includes community based enterprises such as fair trade, cooperatives, micro credit, community supported agriculture. SDG 10. 1 on defining the low income as the Bottom 40 socio-economic divide, SDG 10:3 on addressing inequality and discrimination by providing equal opportunities as well as reducing inequality of outcomes. Issues of discriminatory laws, policies and practices are also significant. In SDG 16 access to justice is key via legal empowerment and legal advocacy including public litigation in addressing issues of injustice such as land grabbing, violence etc through legal redress.

8 Give a one paragraph summary/message (of not more than 60-70 words) of key concerns and recommendations from the workshop for possible inclusion in the APPFSD statement (please note that this may be shortened, edited or combined with other inputs by the Drafting Committee):

Social solidarity economy or community based enterprises has a good potential to be recognised as an effective implementation tool of SDGs at the grassroots level. Social solidarity economy namely community based enterprises have a potential for effective implementation of SDGs at the grassroots level where people, profits, planet can become a key agenda with good governance and effective values. Grassroots communities are truly transformative economist on the ground creating local wealth and confronting injustices through people empowerment.

Disaggregated data collection through micro studies can complement macro data. The micro studies provide a face to the people and illustrates the interconnected nature of SDGs as they impact a particular group. For example the organic farms of the indigenous people address issues pertaining to poverty and hunger SDG 1 & 2 but at the same time it addresses concerns of SDG 8 pertaining to decent work and wages. At the same time it addresses SDG 12 on responsible production and consumption and issues pertaining to land and forest use impacting SDG 13 and 15. SDG 16 access to justice due to legal action on their lands as well as SDG 17 on multi stakeholder is also relevant.

9 ATTACH A DETAILED REPORT

Enclosed workshop program & Six power points of presentations made by panel speakers.