

Scaling Up Good Adaptation Action – COP 21, Paris

With the different countries and more than 150 Heads of States coming together for collective action on climate change in Paris, 21st Conference of Parties for climate change in Paris. The climate conference also provided a unique opportunity for India to showcase its efforts on both low carbon development and climate change adaptation.

Where the heads of states from different countries came together to decide the fate of climate change issues globally, India not only shared its key efforts to combat climate change but also reiterated the fundamentals of climate justice.

The changing climate of the earth has raised concerns on the existence of not only humans but all life forms on the planet. Its direct effect with each passing year has become conspicuous with extreme weather events across the globe in the last few years. At the local level, the effects being felt for years now have been realised with farmers reporting crop failure or reduced yield regularly —adding to the issue of food security in India. It has been a while that adaptation has been characterised by individual efforts and through small projects. These projects are often focused at grassroot level limiting their capacity to benefit larger populations or resulting in policy reform.

Representing Development Alternatives at WRI (World Resource Institute) side event at COP 21, Paris, Mr. Anand Kumar, Senior Programme Director, Development Alternatives highlighted the need for scaling up adaptation initiatives. In India, scaling adaptation is of particular importance in rainfed agricultural areas, where crops depend upon monsoon rains. In 2012, rainfed agriculture occupied approximately 58 percent of India's cultivated area and contributed 40 percent to its food production (Venkateswarlu and Prasad 2012). Projections indicate that, without adaptation, climate change will stress rainfed agricultural systems, with potentially significant decreases in yield and a loss in farm level net revenue of between 9 percent and 25 percent in the South Asia region (Manava and Robert 2011).

Anand said that scaling up adaptation interventions requires identifying frameworks and approaches for ensuring long term sustainability of initiatives. Based on the experiences of Development Alternatives, he emphasised four things:

- 1) Partnerships and strategic engagements with various stakeholders is crucial for ensuring ownership for scaling up adaptation interventions
- 2) Need for understanding vulnerabilities and context specific climate science right at the design phase of developing adaptation interventions
- 3) Continuous training and capacity building support to institutions, decision makers and practitioners

4) In order to scale good community based models identifying the resources such as the technology needs to be appropriately selected, local finance should be leveraged. Financial resources can be leveraged from existing on-going programmes. It is therefore important to focus on integrating climate change adaptation models within the existing sub-national planning

In response to the queries flagged by the audience on climate finance, impact of negotiations at national and sub-national level and bridging the two, he said that climate finance coming from global and national level will not be able to meet all the adaptation intervention requirements and therefore it is important to look at existing national and sub-national resources. He said that it is important to understand the frameworks which can help to integrate these efforts in national and sub-national planning. He shared the example of Development Alternatives which is working at sub-national level in India with the state of Madhya Pradesh for integrating climate change resilience issues in agriculture, water, forests and urban sectors in the state.

