

Summary Report

Findings from meeting implementing partners of FCE funded projects, at COP21 Paris

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1. Introduction

CISU conducted a visit to UNFCCC's COP21 in Paris on the 3rd- 5th December 2015. The purpose of the visit was to promote learning by meeting with the implementing partners of projects supported by the Fund for Climate and Environment (FCE) which CISU manages on behalf of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The strategic focus of the FCE is to support capacity building and specific advocacy on behalf of or together with poor and underrepresented target groups in the South, primarily linked to regional and international political, strategic and professional development processes and negotiations on issues regarding climate and environment. FCE was launched in 2013 and at the present time there are 11 interventions in progress.

The UNFCCC's COP21 negotiations taking place in Paris, France from the 30th of November to the 11th of December 2015 provided an excellent opportunity to meet, share and collect experiences among partners from the majority of the interventions now in progress as well as to see their advocacy activities in action. The objective for the visit as well as for this report was to compile experience and observations from the organisations from FCE supported interventions participating in COP 21 as the basis for an analysis at a general level (and not project specific level) leading to general reflections on the relevance of the FCE.

A cross-cutting characteristic for these interventions is that they are network-based initiatives with multiple partners operating in several countries. The specific focus of our discussions was on the value of working network-based in these projects and what their experiences were of working from national to international level advocacy, including their experience of taking part in international processes such as COP21.

The method used was to interview partners based on an interview guide (project by project; for some projects we conducted multiple interviews when partners were not able to convene at the same time). In total, we met with representatives from 9 of the interventions, representing 36 organisations, and approximately 67 people took active part in the interviews.

This report summarises the findings from the interviews. As the objective was to carry out an analysis at general level (and not project specific level) the report includes a number of quotes reflecting general points from the interviews.

2. Why is it important to take part in international processes, such as the COP? What role do you play at the COP?

There was great emphasis placed on the importance of attending the COP21 by all partners we met. Each and every partner mentioned that by attending the COP21, they have had the opportunity to reach out and have dialogue with relevant representatives from their own, as well as other, country-representatives, negotiators, media, some private sector and other policy influencers – which they would not have been able to do at home.

By organising a side event at the COP, whether in the official area or in the areas accessible to the public, they were able to inform the global audience on their project, issues related to climate change and generally create awareness and provide information. In addition to side events at the official area of the COP (which most projects had organised at least one of), some held side events at the civil society area (open to all); participated as panellist at other events; provided flyers/brochures/DVDs/information materials and disseminated them in both areas of the COP; held meetings with negotiators, Ministry delegates, government officials, other CSOs, donors, academics/researchers, private sector and networks during the time at the COP. In this way all organisations saw COP as an excellent opportunity to networking and getting relationships cemented as well as creating visibility around the interventions supported by the FCE.

Partners explained that the ease of access to the officials at the COP was remarkable. They found it very easy to get access to the relevant people which gave them the opportunity to share a wide range of information, as well as set up meetings for after the COP (many informed that they anticipated follow-up meetings as well as visits from high level policy officials to their local areas in the near future). They perceived these contacts as extremely important for their advocacy work and for getting their messages across. They found that they were often called to meetings and requested to respond to certain issues on climate change related to their area of work (civil society, indigenous people, gender, youth or other specific issues) following their first meetings with the representatives. These channels gave them the chance to feed in their local knowledge to national and international level agendas, which they said were also highly appreciated by the officials. Some representatives of civil society organisations were even included in the official delegations of their countries. The role of civil society was to update the negotiators and provide them with evidence from the grass root level. On the other hand civil society was able to follow – and maybe even influence – the negotiations much closer than otherwise. This was also mentioned as a way of developing stronger ties between civil society and governments.

By taking part in the COP, they felt *able to bring local issues to a global audience by having a global voice*. Additionally, the organisations and the individuals representing the organisations mentioned that they were strengthened at many levels from taking part in such a global event. They gained knowledge from others on specific technical issues related to climate change, but also on issues which are not directly related to climate change. For some, this was their first or second time out of their country and the amount of exposure they gained at such an event was ground breaking for them on a personal and professional level. They gained motivation for their work and also input and inspiration – and brought back a number of contacts for their network.

Some partners informed that they have had dialogue with some level of national government/representatives of government drafting the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), prior to going to COP21. And by taking part in the COP, the organisations expressed that they strengthened their credibility and legitimacy amongst the policy makers/negotiators/officials as well as amongst other audiences (other CSOs, for example). They showed that they are credible partners on issues of climate change by being present, having their voice heard and engaging in serious dialogue.

3. What are the advantages from working in networks?

All partners agreed that global issues need global solidarity and global action. The south countries around the world face the same challenges and therefore it makes great sense to work network-based as similar challenges require similar solutions.

Sharing of experiences and information generates cross learning

Facing the same challenges, members of the network can share experiences, knowledge and methods of working. Evidence gathered at grass root level can be aggregated and shared and in this way mutual learning is generated. We also found that the connections and personal relationships formed within networks encouraged and motivated people in their work. As such, each organisation's work was strengthened by being part of the network. Partners also mentioned that it is a "push factor" to see partners from other countries progress and that an organization in this way is inspired to move forward. *'The experiences of others make you see challenges and barriers as well as opportunities.'*

Coordination of work

Working network-based makes duplicating of efforts in each country less likely *'which would be a waste of resources as we would be trying to each invent things by ourselves'*. Organisations mentioned that having access to the experiences of others made them see challenges and barriers as well as opportunities. It also made it possible to draw on the knowledge accumulated by the network and in this way build on each others' work. Having a common vision made it possible to coordinate action/planning and avoid going completely different directions with the same message. In this way working in networks can strengthen interventions.

Stronger voice and outreach

All organisations told us that the benefit from working in networks and alliances was that they got a **stronger voice** and were taken seriously by the decision-makers in government and also by the media. Networks were easier heard, brought together different voices, expertise and contributions. The case studies and evidence from the local level were also brought to the international level by sharing with the networks and partners in the projects – and further out to international audiences – such as the COP.

Organisations that were members of a global network mentioned that their **outreach** was much greater and that they were able to reach a global audience with their message. It broadened the scope of the intervention and reached more people/organisations. Another advantage mentioned was that membership of a network can give access to other member organisations' networks and in this way possibility to reach more people with the message.

We were also told that organisation's credibility is enhanced when being part of a strong and recognized network. It was *'important for networks at national level to say they are part of a bigger network – a bigger picture'*. This had in some cases spurred a growing interest from new potential partners and opened doors to new donors and to new departments of government. *'Government has to listen to you when you have a strong network'*. Also working with the media is easier when you are organized as a network. By having worked together on a global tool (such as CARE's Joint Principles for Adaptation), the government could see that it was not just a local/national initiative trying to "audit" the government but a global initiative being used elsewhere.

Challenges

The challenge mentioned of working network-based was the expenses of meeting physically across continents or countries which makes it difficult to meet frequently. Partners use teleconferences and Skype, but acknowledged that it is not as good for interaction as a physical meeting. Language barriers were also mentioned as a challenge by the international networks. Another challenge mentioned was that processes can be delayed either when network partners do not agree on what direction to move or when one partner is delayed in their work it can sometimes delay the whole process. Lastly, it was mentioned that funding for networks is a challenge and that it is important with a certain amount of resources to be efficient.

While the organisations emphasised the benefits from working in networks with multiple actors at multiple levels, some also they also mentioned that in order to be effective, networks require some amount of coordination and clarity on roles and responsibilities of the various partners. Coordination of the networks varies from project to project.

4. What difference has the funding from the FCE done for your work?

The strategic focus of the FCE is to support capacity building and specific advocacy on behalf of or together with poor and underrepresented target groups in the South, primarily linked to regional and international political, strategic and professional development processes and negotiations on issues regarding climate and environment.

We found that the projects all have elements of connecting practice at local level to policy at national level and higher levels: by bringing local level case studies or examples and issues from local level, forward to the national level and on to regional and/or international level advocacy. Some projects also provide examples of how they were working on *planning* at local level in districts/municipalities with the relevant authorities. If plans were not done well and made relevant at local level, then issues of climate change and adaptation were not taken forward to national level and the national level planning would often not include local level elements on adaptation.

By providing cases and examples to national level, authorities are able to see evidence of 1) climate change effects on local communities, and 2) examples of how local communities are dealing with issues of climate change by means of adaptation initiatives and mitigation. It is important to generate evidence and knowledge from local community level in order for 1) communities themselves to become aware and knowledgeable, and 2) for policy makers, policy influencers, and policy implementers to become more aware and knowledgeable. *"We work to ensure that local needs are reflected and addressed appropriately in national/regional and global agendas."*

It was evident from all meetings that there is a clear demand as well as need for funding for advocacy work in the Global South. Many pointed to the fact that hardly any donors offer funding for networks of this type and funding for advocacy work from local level to international level can also be difficult to find. Partners explained that the FCE has provided support for some processes which had been initiated but were often put aside due to lack of support and prioritisation. The fund has enabled them to build on these processes. Gathering evidence for use in advocacy related work requires time and resources, which this fund has provided. This link between policy making and practice is often not made, leaving policy and practice far from each other, with poor results.

Funding the watch dog role of civil society organisations was also found important – and within a network this role can be multiplied and the voice of the people has the opportunity to become louder and reach further. The fund is important to enable partners to coordinate their work, which ultimately makes the work more efficient and effective. *"The funding has enabled us to reach further and gain a multiplier effect."* Some partners mentioned that even though the funding is relatively small (as it is spread out across many partners) when working in this type of network-based initiative, they find it highly relevant and valuable as it provides the opportunity to actually work across partners, countries and continents on issues of common interest. It funds activities which are otherwise difficult to find resources for.

It is recommended that the value of each partner in a network is considered during and at the end of the projects. In some cases there are examples of many partners in the network, with some having very small roles to play. Coordination of their engagement needs to be considered in relation to efficiency and effectiveness. Some partners mentioned that there may be less partners involved in possible future phases of their projects.

5. The importance of the partnership with a Danish organisation

Some of the discussions with partners also centred on the role and value of the partnership with their Danish partner. Generally, the partners we met expressed that they have mutual benefit and mutual learning from the partnerships. *“Equal partnerships provide a space for fruitful dialogue.”*

Many have had a long term relationship with each other where they expressed the importance and motivation of working together on long term common goals and also the value of working together at a partnership level rather than at project level – expressing that the collaboration goes beyond the project framework. One organisation expressed that *“the organisational support to us is just as important as the actual project. It is important to feel that our Danish partner finds the organisational development part of the partnership important - this gives us strength. We have gained knowledge on transparency and sustainability of the organisation. We value that our partner takes interest in developing us as an organisation.”*

Danish partners often provide knowledge on technical or specific issues as well as provide contacts to other potential partners or networks, as well as knowledge on possible funding opportunities. They also assist partners in understanding donor requirements. The Danish partner was often acknowledged as having experience with national and international advocacy work, which is valuable for the partners to learn from. Additionally, the Danish partner is highlighted as being important for making projects, results and partner organisations visible in other fora and networks, which broadens outreach. One partner also mentioned that if they did not have an international partner, they would find it difficult to operate at international level. The Danish partner also provides them with important information from the north, which is important for their international advocacy work (this could for example be which international processes are taking place; or European level processes/fora and discourses of relevance).

The Danish partner highlighted that the partnerships are important for them as the partners provide them with evidence which they can use for their own advocacy and information work. They also found that the partnerships gave them input, knowledge and motivation to work towards common long term goals. They found value in linking partners with each other across countries/projects/continents to cross-fertilise learning and enable knowledge sharing and working together with partners on finding common solutions/seeing whether there are common solutions to similar problems in different contexts. *“The partnership really does go both ways.”*

6. Conclusion

Our meetings with many partners of interventions supported by the Fund for Climate and Environment provided us with an overall positive perspective on the purpose, effects and results of these interventions. We experienced that partners found the opportunity to work in partnerships as well as in networks across countries and continents from local to national, to regional and international levels, as relevant and important. While the organisations emphasised the benefits from working in networks with multiple actors at multiple levels, they also mentioned that the networks need a minimum amount of coordination as well as clarity on roles and responsibilities of the partners, including consideration of value added of each partner, in order to minimise the risk of having a diluted network spread out on many small partnerships. It is therefore recommended that the assessment of future applications will address these observations on networks.

The interviewed organisations valued the possibility of bringing local level evidence to national and international advocacy levels and appreciate the opportunity to share experiences and learn from many other partners on issues of common interest, but with many perspectives and angles, within climate change. Participating in international

processes such as the UNFCCC COP21 was a great opportunity for the many partners and provided space for them to voice their knowledge and expressing opinions as well as gave them contacts for the future. The partnerships are perceived as mutually beneficial at levels beyond the scope of these projects.

We therefore conclude that the Fund for Climate and Environment lives up to its strategic focus of supporting capacity building and specific advocacy on behalf of or together with poor and underrepresented target groups in the South, primarily linked to regional and international political, strategic and professional development processes and negotiations on issues regarding climate and environment.

Annex 1: Organisations met at COP21, Fund for Climate and Environment

COP 21 Monitoring visit Schedule

Fund for Climate & Environment, CISU

Participants from CISU: Iben Westergaard Rasmussen & Lotte Asp Mikkelsen

Date	Approximate Time	Danish grant Organisation	Partner organisations	CISU Project ref. No.	No. of organisations met	No. of people met
Thursday						
03-dec	13-14	DanChurchAid	ACT Alliance Uganda	14-1566-LI-okt	1	1
03-dec	14-15	IWGIA	PINGOs Forum, MPIDO, ILEPA Kenya	14-1571-LI-okt	4	7
03-dec	17-18	Verdens Skove	OJEW, APCOB, Fundación del Rio	13-1388-LI-okt	4	8
03-12-2015	19-20	DIB	INFORSE South Asia, INSEDA, CANSA, Grameen Shakti, Centre for Rural Technology (CrRT) Nepal, Women's Action for Development (AWFD), Integrated Development Association (IDEA), INFORSE DK	14-1569-LI-okt	8	15
Friday						
04-dec	12-13	CARE	LIDEMA, Centro Humboldt, Asociacion Sotz'il	1381	2	3
04-dec	13-14	IWGIA	POINT Myanmar & IPF Thailand	15-1686-LI-sep	2	2
04-12-2015	15-16	SustainableEnergy	ENDA/INFORSE West Africa	13-1385-LI-okt	1	1
04-dec	17-20	Danish Red Cross	Red Cross partners: Georgia; Armenia; Kenya; Malawi; Nepal, IFRC Resource Center	1565	7	15
Saturday						
05-dec	9-11	CARE Denmark SV-Adapt+ALAP	CISONECC/Malawi CEPA/Malawi, PACJA, CARE Kenya, PFSC/CC/DD Niger, CCWG Vietnam; Nepal partner	1381, 1564	8	15
TOTAL				9 projects	37 organisations	67 people

Annex 2: Terms of reference

ToR for visit to

COP21, Paris December 2015

Donna Mayer and Iben W. Rasmussen

1. Background

The Fund for Climate and Environment for Danish civil society organisations' interventions in partnership with civil society organisations in the South (henceforth called the Fund for Climate and Environment) supports Danish popular organisations' cooperation with partner organisations, networks and alliances, primarily in developing countries. The FCE is financed by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which has also laid down the overall framework for grants.

The strategic focus of the FCE is to support capacity building and specific advocacy on behalf of or together with poor and underrepresented target groups in the South, primarily linked to regional and international political, strategic and professional development processes and negotiations on issues regarding climate and environment.

FCE has been functioning since 2013 and at the present time there are 11 interventions in progress.

A cross-cutting characteristic for these interventions are that they are network-based initiatives with multiple partners operating in many different countries.

The UNFCCC's COP21 negotiations taking place in Paris, France from the 30th of November to the 11th of December 2015 gives us an excellent opportunity to meet and share with partners from the majority of the interventions now in progress as well as to see their advocacy activities in action.

2. Objective

In order to promote learning for The Climate and Environment Fund and how it is to be monitored

Specific areas of interest for our visit were the following:

a. Cross-cutting learning and sharing between grant-holders and their partners

- How the FCE inventions support the work of the **grant-holders and their partners** in affecting regional and international processes and negotiation, in this concrete case, the COP21.
- Their experiences with developing and/or affecting law-making and/or agreement documents on country, regional and international level.
- Their experiences with monitoring and tracking of agreed-upon measures, such as INDCs.
- Their views on how legitimacy, transparency and accountability relates to the goal of advocacy taking root among poor target groups.

b. Cross-cutting monitoring of FCE

How are these interventions concretely contributing to the strategic objective of the fund in its entirety and generate inputs which can inform the decisions CISU makes in regards to further development of the requirements, guidelines and application processes for the FCE.

3. Outputs

The visit will lead to the following outputs:

- Brief report on main findings
- Thematic meeting with the secretariat and the Assessment Committee
- Findings will be used in our result reporting to MFA
- Capacity building activities in Spring of 2016 (to be planned – one possibility could be after-work workshops with Danish grant holders for the CISU member base)

4. Organisations to be involved in the visit

The journey will include contact and dialogue with the following main grant holders and their partners:

CARE Denmark, VedvarendeEnergi, Verdens Skove, Dansk Røde Kors, Folkekirkens Nødhjælp, DIB and IWGIA.

5. Plan of work

Prior to the visit:

We are already in contact with the 7 organisations (with 9 inventions) who are participating in the COP21.

Their programs are yet to be confirmed. When this is known, we will develop our travel plan.

The visit will be based on the following main methods and activities:

- Individual meetings with grant holders and their partners
- Participation in events or meetings arranged by grant holders and their partners

6. Travel schedule

We will use 3 days for meetings and for travel during the period 3-5 December 2015.