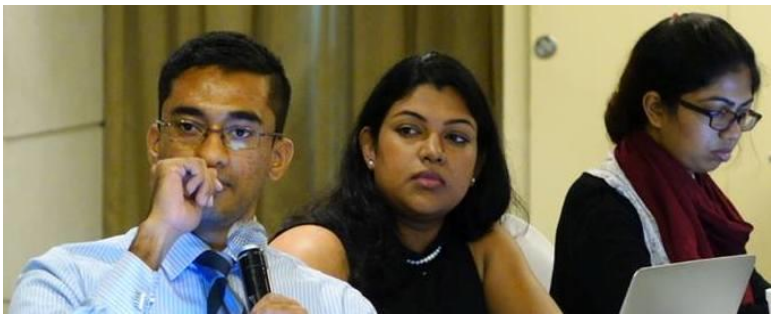

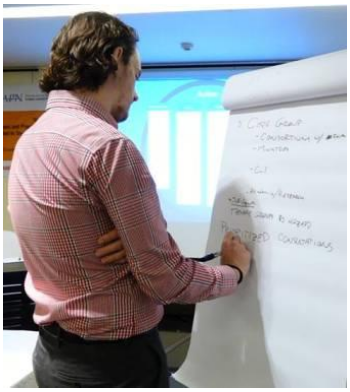

Workshop on Capacity Building of Policymakers & Practitioners on Loss and Damage Related to Slow-Onset Events

September 22-23, 2015, Colombo, Sri Lanka

Contents

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

AIT	Asian Institute for Technology
APAN	Asia Pacific Adaptation Network
APN	Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research
CAA	Climate Change Adaptation
CANSA	Climate Action Network South Asia
CKD	Chronic Kidney Disease
CSO	Community Service Organization
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
IGES	Institute of Global Environmental Strategies
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IWMI	International Water Management Institute
L&D	Loss and Damage
RRC.AP	Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEI	Stockholm Environment Institute
SOE	Slow Onset Event
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework on Climate Change Convention

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Millions in South Asia, who depend on natural resources for their livelihoods, are affected and stand to be further affected by the impacts of climate change. This holds true whether the impact is due to rapid onset events like cyclones or slow onset events like sea level rise, increasing temperatures, ocean acidification, glacial retreat and related impacts, salinization, land and forest degradation, loss of biodiversity and desertification. While rapid onset events garner immediate attention due to their sudden and devastating nature, slow onset events are yet to be comprehensively addressed at the policy level in South Asia. The Workshop on Capacity Building of Policymakers & Practitioners on Loss and Damage Related to Slow-Onset is the first step in a major project which will attempt to enhance the capacity of policymakers in Sri Lanka, India and Nepal to address current and future losses from slow onset events.

The objective of this workshop was to holistically consider these issues in the context of policymaking amongst Sri Lankan stakeholders, with input from both national and international experts. The workshop provided the opportunity for a diverse group of stakeholders in climate change research to gather and discuss slow onset events in Sri Lanka, and related loss & damage. Those invited included government representatives, academicians, private researchers, development practitioners, and non-governmental organizations' representatives.

During the course of 2 days, presenters and participants sought to address the most serious SOE threatening Sri Lanka today : rising sea levels, increasing temperatures, salinization, land & forest degradation and desertification. The consistently intensifying and prolonged drought patterns in Sri Lanka and its implications for loss & damage also emerged as a common theme during the course of the workshop. Rising sea levels have dire consequences for Sri Lanka, a country dependent on fisheries, coastal agriculture and tourism. The pressing need for Sri Lanka to firstly address the loss & damage and secondly, to realize that it is interconnected with Disaster Risk Reduction and, adaptation and mitigation measures was a key point made during the sessions. Another highly relevant theme to Sri Lanka was the relationship between sustainable development and the loss & damage caused by climate change.

As the purpose of including a wide range of stakeholders in the workshop was to gain as broad a perspective on the issue as possible, some time was dedicated to group discussion. The aim was to increase collaboration and to arrive at certain recommendations for Sri Lanka to begin seriously addressing loss and damage and slow onset events.

The information gleaned from the workshop has wide ranging implications for policymaking and decision making as per slow onset events in Sri Lanka.

Thus this report concludes by setting out the identified gaps in Sri Lanka's approach to slow onset events & loss and damage, as well as outlining certain important recommendations and steps to be taken. It is imperative that a national governmental platform on slow onset events and loss & damage is established , without which it will be difficult to commence meaningful national dialogue on these issues.

CONTEXT & BACKGROUND

The South Asian Context

South Asia is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, including slow onset events: Sea level rise, increasing temperatures, ocean acidification, glacial retreat and related impacts, salinization, land and forest degradation, loss of biodiversity and desertification are described as slow onset events. The region, of which the population and economy are highly dependent on natural resources and climate sensitive sectors, is already witnessing the loss of livelihood, reduction in agricultural productivity, negative health impacts and displacement.

Though various stakeholders are engaged actively in climate change adaptation work and its integration in the development policies, the understanding of slow onset events causing loss & damage to various sectors is limited among the stakeholders. The proposed project is aimed at diagnosing the extent to which the problem persists in areas and what approaches can be developed linking with the existing work in relation to DRR, CCA and development policies and practices.

The Sri Lankan Context

Sri Lanka is extremely vulnerable to climate change impacts. This not only includes cyclonic activity but also slow onset processes such as sea level rise, increasing temperatures, ocean acidification, salinization, land and forest degradation, loss of biodiversity, and desertification. Since the majority of the population living in Sri Lanka is dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods, climate change will put at risk millions of individuals through its impacts on food and water security, shelter, and health. Consequently, there will be adverse impacts on livelihoods structures and economic sustainability. It is the purpose of this project therefore to frame the climate situation in Sri Lanka, specific to slow onset climatic events and review the policy and practical structures existing within the country to adapt to such environment stressors.

ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

In order to address the need for policies that are developmental sensitive and taking into consideration the afore mentioned issues a two day workshop was organized by Climate Action Network South Asia, in partnership with Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research, Asia Pacific Adaptation Network, and Action Aid International.

The workshop, conducted in Colombo, Sri Lanka, focused on impacts of climate change and loss and damage, and the impacts of loss and damage from slow onset events in Sri Lanka.

The workshop was a first step in a long term project that will aim to mobilize scientists, policymakers, and practitioners towards a comprehensive strategy to minimize losses and damages from slow onset events by understanding how different measures are able to address current and future losses.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Partner Organizations

Climate Action Network South Asia

Climate Action Network South Asia is the regional node for Climate Action Network International which is a network of over 1000 civil society organisations. CANSA has over 120 members in South Asia, in Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Maldives, Bangladesh and Bhutan. The network focuses on issues related to climate change and development, and works towards ensuring that vulnerable communities' needs are addressed when finding solutions to climate change. The key areas of work focuses on capacity building, advocating for pro-poor and pro-vulnerable climate change policies and actions, and the UNFCCC process, and the SDG process. CANSA works with multi-stakeholders including policy makers, CSOs, youth, academia, as well as the private sector and the media.

Further information: cansouthasia.net

Asia Pacific Adaptation Network

The Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) is a regional programme for managing and applying adaptation knowledge in the region, and supports governments and other organizations working on adaptation, with special emphases on the management of knowledge and capacity building. The mission of APAN is to build climate change resilient and sustainable human systems, ecosystems and economies through the mobilization of knowledge, enhanced institutional capacity and informed decision making-processes, and facilitated access to finance and technologies.

The purpose is to equip key actors in Asia and the Pacific Region with adequate knowledge for designing and implementing climate change adaptation measures, building capacity to access technologies and finance in support of climate change adaptation, and integrating climate change adaptation into policies, strategies and plans.

APAN operates through its regional hub located in Bangkok. Sub-regional activities of APAN are carried out by the sub-regional nodes and thematic nodes of APAN located in the five sub-regions of Central Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia and the Pacific.

The sub-regional nodes operate with the help of national implementing partners located in the countries falling within each sub-region. The core partners are Institute of Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Regional Resource Centre for Asia and the Pacific (RRC.AP) located at Asian Institute for Technology (AIT), and Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI). UNEP ROAP acts as the secretariat in charge of Steering Committee and for providing technical inputs to APAN.

http://www.asiapacificadapt.net

ActionAid

ActionAid is an international organization, working with over 15 million people in 45 countries for a world free from poverty and injustice. This is the only international organization with the head office based on Africa, with offices across Asia, the Americas and Europe.

ActionAid is working with communities, and challenging world leaders, to protect poor people from the disastrous effects of climate change caused by human action.

If not urgently addressed, climate change is likely to place millions of more people at risk of increased hunger, disease and disasters.

A growing body of evidence, including the recent reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), paints a picture of falling crop yields, problems with access to water, the degradation of many eco-systems, and an increase in diseases such as malaria, spread by insects.

As well as responding to climate-related disasters, ActionAid is working with communities to help them deal with a changed climate. We are also campaigning for change at the global level, because international action is needed to make a difference.

http://www.actionaid.org/

Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research

Asia Pacific Network for Global Change Research is created with the vision of an Asia-Pacific region that is successfully addressing the challenges of global change and sustainability.

The mission of the APN is to enable investigations of changes in the Earth's life support systems and their implications for sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region through support for research and science-based response strategies and measures, effective linkages between science and policy, and scientific capacity development. The APN, therefore, supports investigations that will: Identify, explain, project and predict changes in the context of both natural and anthropogenic forcing; Assess potential regional and global vulnerability of natural and human systems; and Contribute, from the science perspective, to the development of policy options for appropriate responses to global change and sustainable development.

http://www.apn-gcr.org/

PRESENTERS AND PARTICIPANTS

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Indu Abeyrathne	*Centre of Disaster Management*
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Sadishani Yeddehige	*Assistant Director, National Disaster Relief Services Centre*
Sarath Ekanayake	*Secretary of CABRE* *Board Member of CANSA-SL*
Vishaka Hidellage	*Country Director, UNDP*
Vositha Wijenayake	*Policy & Advocacy Coordinator for CANSA*

AGENDA

Workshop on Capacity Building of Policymakers & Practitioners on Loss and Damage Related to Slow-Onset Events, September 22-23, 2015

Time	Activity
September 22, 2015 : Day 1	
09:30	Registration & Evaluations
10:00	Welcome Remarks and Introduction
	• Welcome Remarks- Vositha Wijenayake, Policy and Advocacy Coordinator CANSA • Round of Introductions: *Circle name game OR Bicycle Chain Game* - names are said around the circle along with an adjective or animal that starts with the same letter as their name, and if you'd like, a movement which everyone repeats *One minute intros OR Elevator Pitches:* Everyone in the group gets one minute to introduce themselves in whatever way they want. Opening: • "Some wishes I have for this workshop are…" • "Some fears or reservations I have for this workshop are…" • "Some support I could use from you might be…" Closing: • "Something I learned that I can't wait to take home is…" • "Some ways I noticed you shine in this workshop are…" • "My hope for you is that….
10:45	Tea Break
11:15	Technical Session 1: Mr. Harjeet Singh & Mr. Jack Bolland
	• Loss and Damage Introduction • The rise of Loss and Damage in the UNFCCC • This presentation will tell us how L&D came on the agenda; how it gained importance quite rapidly in the last few years; what the next are; and how we might be able to influence and contribute • Addressing slow-onset events • Q&A

12:15	Lunch
13:15h	Technical Session 2: Mr. Menaka Wijesinghe & Ms. Bhagya Wikramasinghe, facilitated by Ms. Vositha Wijenayake
	• SOE in Sri Lanka • Participatory Mapping and Stakeholder Responsibility • Q&A
14:30h	Group Activity / Discussion Thematic Groups: By sectors; Specialty; Hazards; Approach to L&D Management (i.e Soft vs Hard)
	• Experts will determine and analyze key activities and approaches needed for an integrated climate risk management approach given the country's individual goals and existing list of activities and how the different activities fit together for a comprehensive approach • Groups will identify relevant stakeholders necessary to undertake the key activities and their different roles (public-private partnerships, development partners, etc). Furthermore, they will examine the different institutional realities in how they can assist/hinder a given comprehensive climate management strategy. • Groups will discuss what preconditions are needed for policies. • Experts will outline sequencing options for the proposed activities for implementing a comprehensive climate risk management approach in given country. • Each group will discuss some of the remaining challenges that need to be addressed by the country before setting up a SOE management approaches. In particular, groups will focus on issues for implementation and how to break through possible "policy silos" and foreseen policy conflicts. • Report back Session
16:30h	Break for tea End of Day 1

September 23, 2015 : Day 2	
09:00h	Brief welcome
09:30h	Session 03: Guest Presenter on Sri Lanka – Mr. Menake Wijesinghe
10:45h	Break for tea
11:15h	Session 04 – Panel Session on sectoral aspects – Mr. Sarath Ekanayake , Representative Meteorological Department, and DMC Specialists – Facilitated by Mr. Harjeet Singh
	• Where Sri Lanka is on Climate Stressors and SOE • Addressing Areas and Potential Gaps Identified • National Ways forward
13:00h	Lunch
14.30h	Session 05: Addressing loss and damage with Sustainable Development Goals
16.30	Closing Remarks, tea and end of workshop.

SUMMARY - DAY 1

Inaugural Session

The inauguration and the initial technical sessions of the workshop were held on the 22nd of September. The inaugural ceremony was held with the participation of the Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Disaster Management- Dr. S Amalanathan, Mr. Ranga Pallawala- CEO Janathakshan (Gt. Ltd.), Dr. Kokila Konasinghe –Senior Lecturer from the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo, Ms. Vishaka Hidellage- Country Director, UNDP, Ms. Nilmini Ranasighe- Environment Management Officer from the Ministry of Environment and Mahaweli Development, Mr. Sarath Ekanayake – Secretary of CABRE and Board Member of CANSA-SL, Mr. Indu Abeyrathne- Technical Expert from the Centre of Disaster Management representing the various stakeholders representing the government, private sector and the academia. Mr. Harjeet Singh- International Climate Policy Manager from ActionAid, Ms. Vositha Wijenayake- Policy & Advocacy Coordinator for CANSA, Jack Bolland- Regional Coordinator for ActionAid & CANSA were also present at the event.

Technical Session 1

The first technical session commenced with an initial discussion on the international mechanism to address loss and damage. During Technical Session 1, the focus was on the international policy making processes and the development of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and slow onset events. Participants were made aware of the emerging nature of the subject and the difficulty in arriving at an international consensus on how to address loss and damage.

The importance of addressing loss and damage in the context of each country was also considered. The discussion resulted in a country specific discussion on the emerging health impacts and the issues faced by Sri Lanka especially in terms of the Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) that spread through the North Central Region of the country. It seems the health impact has gained more attention from the policy makers and decision makers.

The presentation was based on the specific events and the possible mechanisms to identify the country specific slow onset events and thereby move on to the process of policy and decision making. It was noted that the intensity and frequency of the occurrence of floods in Sri Lanka certainly seems to be increasing. One participant remarked that Sri Lankans face numerous types of disasters and that the frequency of damage caused is very high, thus the task of assessing the damage is very challenging.

It was observed that in terms of addressing Loss and Damage, there is a lot of focus on insurance in terms of risk transfer. He also noted the importance of planned relocation and allocation rather than unplanned adaptation measures, which would include monitoring the changes of the sea level rise. A discussion on the significance of economic and livelihood diversification and building up climate resilience systems also emerged.

Technical Session 1 concluded with a brief overview of how practical measure to address loss and damage include adaptation measure, DRR, DRM and sustainable development.

Technical Session 2

The second session for the day was based on slow onset events in Sri Lanka. The representatives of the government and non government sector contributed towards the discussion on the country specific issues in the country. The representatives noted the difficulty faced by the government sector in that they are to measure a particular damages, which is a challenge faced by the National Disaster Relief Centre. The presenters drew attention to the need to revise the Flood Ordinance. It was also observed that a project has been initiated with the collaboration of the UNDP and the Ministry of Disaster Management, to measure particular damages. A pressing obstacle is that there is no clarity at the national level as to what constitutes a slow onset event. This is most likely the result of a focus on short term events, and it is only in recent years that the government has adopted a comprehensive disaster management approach.

In terms of the Sri Lankan context the officials noted that there is a clear lack of evidence due to the fact that the relevant data is lacking in analysis from climate change and loss and damage perspective. It was also noted that the International Water Management institute is engaged in a project related to building up a drought warning mechanism for the whole of South Asia.

A further point of discussion was whether there are any related ongoing projects in Sri Lanka. The consensus seemed to be that data collection is already taking place - such as the number of people affected by the events, levels of rainfall etc.. However what is lacking is analysis of the collected data through a climate change perspective. Other participants disagreed and contended that there is simply insufficient data gathered to make any kind of comparative analysis.

The lack of coherent policy in relation to land use was a troubling aspect that was highlighted. This means that although the vast majority of the population is dependent on agriculture, there are only isolated land use policies. In the context of agriculture in Sri Lanka, a participant remarked that at present, droughts pose the most serious threat to people as it can and has adversely affected food security due to the destruction of crops or food storage facilities.

Despite being an island , it was remarked that Sri Lanka does not appear to consider SLR as a serious threat. In any case, participants noted that a broad national level discussion is needed on this issue, as the Coastal Conservation Department alone cannot handle the consequences of SLR. It is hoped that with early planning, the impact of SLR can be minimized by options such as relocation of people who stand to be worst affected.

The role of universities in carrying out research and influencing policymaking was also explored. The ideal situation would be similar to what is taking place in the USA, where research by prominent universities is taken seriously into account by the government and decision makers. It was noted that in certain Sri Lankan universities, the government only consults the academic researchers as a formality, after all the major policy decisions have been taken or formulated.

Group Activity

For this session, groups of participants selected a SOE specific to Sri Lanka and discussed matters relevant to that particular SOE. One of the groups chose to focus on droughts. An important point which came to light was the fact that the phenomenon of drought is often misunderstood in Sri Lanka. What the media and the general public refer to as "drought" is actually the dry season of Sri Lanka. For a SOE to amount to a drought, it has to be repetitive and rotational (i.e. occurring at the same calendar period every year) , causing similar loss and damage each time it occurs. Thus the key feature is the prolonged nature of the event, rather than its frequency or intensity, which characterizes a drought.

One of the participants remarked that there is evidence of the drought in Sri Lanka worsening.

There seemed to be a general consensus among the participants that Sri Lanka needs an efficient water management system, and to address the agrochemical and industrial pollution affecting water resources, and deal with the loss & damage (depletion of water) arising from SOEs. The potential for loss and damage was also explored. Relevant outcomes which could be classified as loss and damage includes damage to crops, loss of drinking water, agrochemical and industrial water pollution, as well as increasing soil salinity. There is also indirect damage caused by wild animals who, having lost their usual sources of water, will seek out reservoirs, causing damage to crops and water management systems in their search for drinking water.

Participants noted that according to data by the Tea Research Institute and the Agricultural Ministry, the production and quality of yield of tea and potatoes has been adversely affected.

SUMMARY - DAY 2

Technical Session 3

The third technical session was a discussion of the Slow Onset Events in the Sri Lankan Context, based on the Warsaw Framework, where the presenter analysed data relevant to SOEs in Sri Lanka. It was noted that the hazard profiles in Sri Lanka do not indicate the change of the impact of the hazards. Another related factor was whether the loss of life due to the increase in animal attacks could be related to SOEs.

The impact of increasing salinity and flooding related to SLR on the fishing community was discussed at length. The dire implication of increasing temperatures for fish stocks was noted, and its potential ability to change the spawning areas and migration patterns of commercially significant fish stocks. The impact of salinity on agriculture was also noted, particularly the lack of proper irrigation, resulting in the water-logged fields of rice farmers in the Hambantota district , seriously compromising their crop yields.

Technical Session 4

The fourth technical session of the workshop drew attention to sectoral aspects of SOEs and related L&D, as well as attempting to articulate the national way forward for Sri Lanka with regard to these issues. Participants agreed at the onset that hazard profiles should be compiled under different thematic groups.

Next, the discussion turned towards finding solutions for the problems discussed throughout the workshop. For example, gaps in the framework of the rain water harvesting policy. One clearly identifiable technological gap in Sri Lanka is the lack of an effective early warning system. The key aspects of any solution would include proper water management, data sharing across all governmental departments, climate modeling predictions, capacity building, creating awareness through knowledge management

Nearing the end of the workshop, there was talk of how the knowledge gained through the sessions could be brought to policy making. It was decided that a Care Group should be formulated, for coordinating between all the different groups and stakeholders. Participants agreed that if there is to be a Care Group Meeting then certain key stakeholders must be invited to such a meeting. They would include the Ministry of Disaster Management and all related Ministries that deal with irrigation, agriculture, environment and water resources. Other non governmental entities such as the UNDP, IWMI, IUCN and IOM should also be present. Participants also pointed out the importance of university academics specializing in areas related to climate change being able to give their input, and agreed that their views should be given due regard.

Technical Session 5

The fifth and final session of the workshop was based on exploring how to address loss and damage with reference to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. 12 of the 17 SDGs relate to climate change and there is a separate goal dedicated to climate change itself. Goal 13 calls on all countries to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. Sri Lanka has made some progress as per one of the targets of Goal 13, with the government's commitment to disaster risk reduction. For one, Sri Lanka has a fairly well established Ministry of Disaster Management. Under the Disaster Management Act, there is a Regional consultative committee (RCC) on Disaster Management which mainstreams disaster risk reduction into development (MDRD). Participants who were representatives from the Disaster Management Center were keen on this goal, and agreed on the need to address it in an effective manner.

Participants agreed that for Sri Lanka's focus on economic development to be inclusive, it needs to use SDGs as a tool for participatory decision making. In relation to climate change and slow onset events then, there should be awareness programs to educate the public on issues of loss and damage, and how any development initiatives would impact them.

Recent developments on loss & damage hold special significance for developing countries like Sri Lanka that are vulnerable to climate change. It was highlighted that loss and damage is a key topic when addressing climate change, and sustainable development. In that light, when developing policies on SDGs, this needs to be kept in mind.

One of the key issues that was highlighted was the issue of agriculture, food security and the impacts of loss and damage to crops. This impacts sustainable development and achieving the goals of food security, and the participants further highlighted the need for compensation that is necessary for crop damage the farmers suffer. Goal 2 involving food security expressly refers to sustainable agriculture. One of the targets for this goal is doubling of the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers including fishers. Target 2.4 involves ensuring sustainable food production systems - with explicit reference to climate change : "..that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters .."

There was an interest on the part of the participants to focus on this issue, with the government of Sri Lanka also taking a keen interest in addressing the issues of the agriculture sector, and merging it with sustainable development.

Thus loss and damage from slow onset events should be considered an important part of achieving the SDGs' overall aim of leaving no one behind in development. The key action is for Sri Lankan policymaking to take into account the loss and damage due to slow onset events caused by climate change impacts, into its development agenda.

CHALLENGES TO MEANINGFUL POLICYMAKING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Amongst national institutions, there is demand to better understand the national position on L&D; relevant existing policies; the synergies and linkages between L&D, Disaster Risk Reduction and Comprehensive Disaster Managements for the purposes of developing a National Strategy as well as inclusion in INDCs; and procedure for evidence-based assessments of losses and damages with Sri Lankan examples.

Commencing the L&D conversation is timely given then increasing impact on the economy and while Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) programs are being developed. Unfortunately there is a very limited supply of initiatives in Sri Lanka that aims to address neither L&D nor SOE. The key challenges to L&D policymaking and recommendations for improvement are given below.

Challenges

The short-sighted vision of impact valuation

In assessing possible impacts, the range of threats are narrowed to one or two hazards with short-term impacts. This is turn causes organizations to focus their attention, efforts and resources on immediate threats. The slowest type of hazard which warrants immediate attention is drought because it has a present impact, whereas SOE like desertification (which stems from reoccurring droughts) or sea-level rise do not strike a sense of urgency and remain unexplored.

The lack of analytics and cross collection/correlation

There is a dearth of evidence and background research . There is a clear lack of relevant data and data analysis related to slow onset events in Sri Lanka. In order to inform policies and programs, it is in imperative to have accurate data on hazard monitoring and climate modeling.

Insufficient coordination and collaboration

This is a bureaucratic road block where government departments and institutions operate in silos, delinked from civil society or academia. To make matters worse, conditional funding from donors can be restrictive whilst the bureaucratic processes within sectors are not conducive for establishing nonpartisan arrangements and networks for knowledge sharing and awareness.

The potential for L&D in Sri Lanka can be used to improve comprehension of impacts to build scenarios and evaluate adaptation measures by setting a baseline and implement futuristic planning which can be interlinked with finance.

Measuring particular damages

This is a challenge faced by the National Disaster Relief Centre, there is a deficiency of such estimations.

Recommendations

Establish a governmental platform for L&D and SOE

This should ideally be a forum for discussions where various Ministries (Environment, Disaster Management, Finance and Planning) can convene to further unpack the underlining threats and explore solution ranging commercial mechanisms for funding/financing to knowledge and information sharing. Moreover, where information is available, there needs to be improvements in the IT systems for knowledge management so that information to be accessed and deployed more appropriately

Improve institutional networks

This would allow for public-private partnerships that could better engage stakeholders as well as involve academic research as policy influencers. Furthermore, such a consortium would allow for the revision of policy appropriateness and effectiveness. For instance, although there is a Land Use Policy, it requires greater clarity and enforcement while the Flood Ordinance needs to be revised and the government should establish a rain water harvesting policy.

Accountability mechanisms for environmental policy and decision making

Further areas of concern for Sri Lanka's environmental sustainability which should be addressed revolve around the carbon heavy energy pathway, in turn leading to Air Quality issues. Other environment related issues include the need to address human rights within the context of the right to land and shelter, the depleting reserves of natural resources and in development planning.