



# Promoting Pro-poor Adaptation to Climate Change

Civil society from across the world using the **Joint Principles for Adaptation** to build resilient communities and enhance adaptation governance

## PURPOSE OF THIS LEAFLET

Within these pages, we describe the experience of several civil society organisations from the Global South in promoting equitable adaptation to climate change in their countries. This leaflet has two purposes. Firstly, it is to document and share the success of these organisations, drawing on their solidarity and mutual learning. Secondly, it is an invitation to others, from different organisations and countries, to also share this learning, and make use of the tools we offer in ways that further your own aims and suit your ways of working.



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Photo: Community Adaptation  
Planning, ©CARE Ghana

# INTRODUCTION

Climate change is now universally recognised as a phenomenon that threatens the entire planet, with its effects constantly increasing. No day passes without some part of the world suffering from its impact, often putting the welfare and security of its populations at risk. Despite the fact that extreme weather events make the headlines, in most cases the consequences of a changing climate are part of a more gradual and continual process, undermining peoples' livelihoods, opportunities, and hopes for the future.

Responding to climate change, or “adaptation” as it is commonly called, demands resources, which is most challenging for the world's poorest countries. Furthermore, within all countries, some communities are marginalised due to geographical, economic, and socio-political factors, and thus face greater obstacles in responding to a changing climate. Similarly, there are disadvantaged groups that suffer particular disadvantages arising from gender, ethnicity, age or other forms of social discrimination. In those poorest countries, these vulnerabilities are more severe, and addressing them more difficult.

To build resilient communities, adaptation to climate change must therefore be both effective and equitable. Achieving this is a high priority for civil society organisations (CSOs) in many countries throughout the Global South, where the most severe impacts of climate change are felt.

Since 2014, a group of organisations from ten different countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America have convened as the Southern Voices for Adaptation (SVA), to learn from and support each other, in order to improve the way climate adaptation is addressed. Together, they have pooled their experience and aspirations to develop a common agenda known as the Joint Principles for Adaptation (JPA) to foster pro-poor and equitable adaptation throughout the world.

SVA partners have seen that in some countries there are indeed examples of specific adaptation projects or programmes that have improved the resilience of vulnerable communities. However, there are many other communities that do not yet benefit.

Why not? The answer arising from the shared experience of SVA partners so far is that poor communities are hindered from adapting to climate change by three principle factors: **shortage of resources, of official support, and of shared knowledge.**

## THE JOINT PRINCIPLES FOR ADAPTATION

The Joint Principles for Adaptation (JPA) establishes a framework to overcome these barriers, and to succeed in making adaptation possible for the most vulnerable populations. The JPA were developed over 2014 and 2015 by civil society networks working on climate change from Africa, Asia, and Latin America and have undergone several revisions after testing in countries throughout the world.

The JPA takes the form of seven principles:

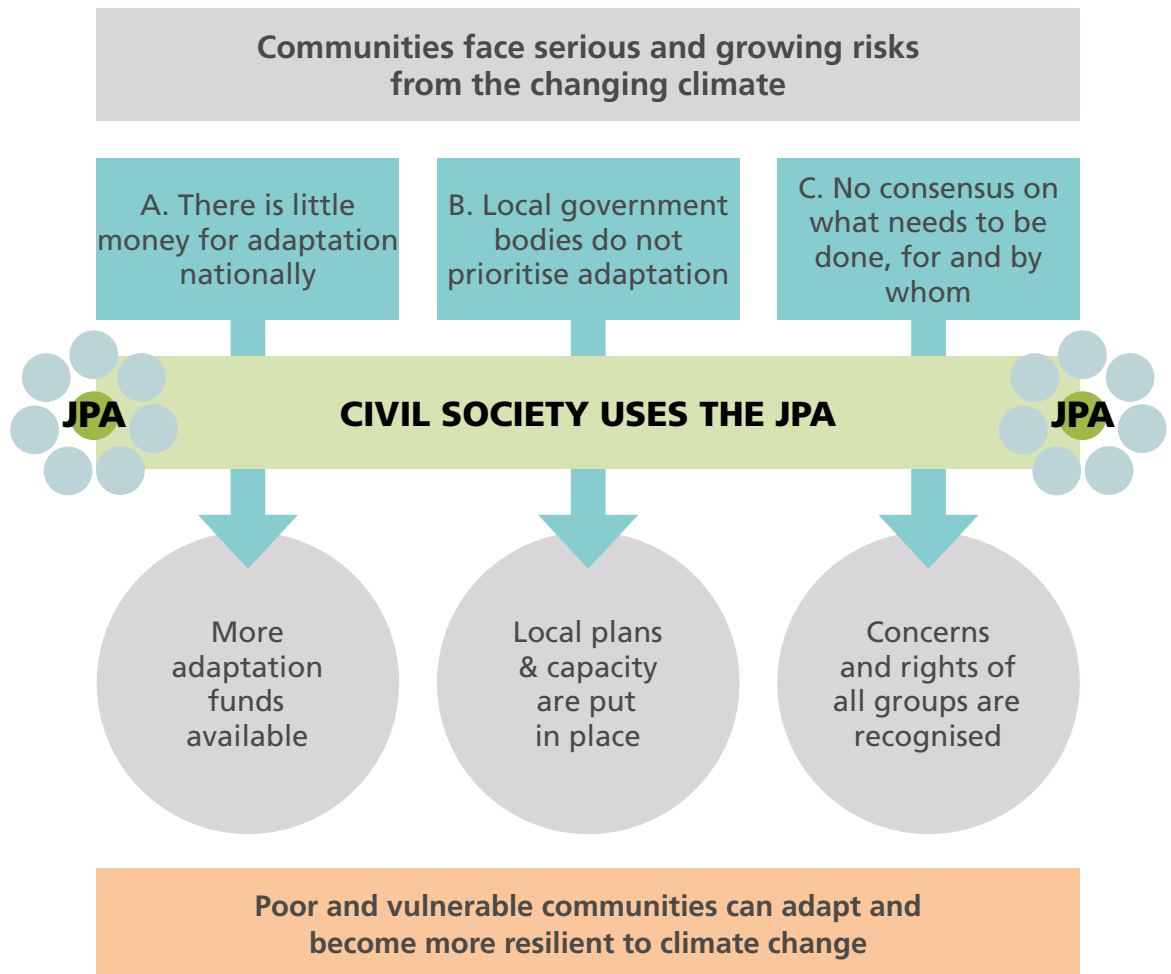


The JPA is what makes SV-Adapt unique and we should continue to promote them

**80%**  
OF SVA PARTNERS  
AGREE

Survey April 2017

Using them has in practice been effective in many places. In summary, the overall story they tell can be depicted as follows:



To demonstrate how the Southern Voices project and Joint Principles for Adaptation can overcome these barriers to adaptation, case stories from across the Global South have been selected. These stories come from different contexts and reach different outcomes, however what they all share is an approach driven by the JPA in pursuit of climate adaptation that benefits and empowers those that need it most.

**The first part** of this publication, “overcoming barriers to effective adaptation”, shares case stories that illustrate what we have done to address these three obstacles to create a positive impact for communities.

**Afterwards**, “Tools for effective advocacy” explains some of the ways SVA have achieved results, the tools and approaches used to get there, and how these efforts have translated to the international level.

**Finally**, “What happens next” details how Southern Voices for Adaptation will continue into the future.

# OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE ADAPTATION

## A. Shortage of resources

Governments face budgetary constraints in almost all sectors, including mainstream services that communities should benefit from such as health, education, agricultural extension, or general infrastructure. The additional cost for climate change adaptation must also somehow be funded. In the short term, this means sufficient resources are not easily available at national level. One solution is gaining access to international finance through global mechanisms supporting adaptation, such as the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund, set up through UNFCCC<sup>1</sup> negotiations. In addition, other multilateral and bilateral funding can also contribute to adaptation while addressing other global priorities, such as meeting the Sustainable Development Goals or supporting Disaster Risk Reduction.

To gain access to any or all of these funds and create the conditions for communities to adapt to climate change, governments need to demonstrate that they have adequate plans, policies, and mechanisms in place – they must also demonstrate how they can make adaptation resources available to those at the local level.

Engaging in the climate finance processes of their countries can be a challenge for many civil society organisations. Yet some SVA partners have successfully done so.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change



SV-Adapt Asia Regional Facilitator Vositha Wijenayake address a conference in Vietnam on the outcome of COP22, Dec 2016 ©Oxfam Vietnam

## Civil society partners help their countries seek access to adaptation finance:



CISONECC (Civil society Network on Climate Change) is a civil society network based in Malawi with 39 member organisations.

### **MALAWI: THE COUNTRY PREPARES FOR ADAPTATION FUNDING**

The Government of Malawi currently seeks to develop a National Adaptation Plan (NAP) to reduce vulnerabilities to climate change and integrate adaptation into its ongoing plans. It embarked on this process in 2014 to identify medium- and long-term adaptation needs, as well as develop strategies and programs to address these needs in multiple sectors. Yet by 2017, Malawi had not completed the steps recommended by the NAP technical guidelines, due principally to a shortage of both financial and human resources.

SVA partner Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC) sought to influence this challenging context and help to secure funds to complete the NAP. It supported the government throughout 2017 to formulate a proposal to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for a grant under its NAP Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme. With partners, CISONECC facilitated inputs from experts across key sectors including health, energy, climate change, disaster risk management, and agriculture to generate initiatives that could be undertaken as part of the the preparations for the NAP. The draft was further worked on by the NAP Secretariat, and stimulated other organisations such as The Food and Agriculture Organization to support the finalisation of the proposal.

At the time of writing, the funding application has received positive feedback from GCF. This shows that the application clearly contributes to the Readiness Programme's objectives, including strengthening country capacity, engaging stakeholders in consultative processes, and providing access to finance. If the readiness funding is approved, CISONECC and SVA will have contributed to the development of Malawi's NAP, overcoming two years of stalled progress. This will in turn address the needs of the poor and vulnerable communities of Malawi in the face of climate change.

This story in particular highlights the application of two JPA principles: A: participation and inclusion in the formulation of plans, and B: integrity in the application of finance to adaptation. In time, when the NAP itself is developed and implemented, there is good potential for other JPA principles to become incorporated and integrated, both explicitly and/or by implication.

## SRI LANKA: INTERNATIONAL FUNDING FOR NATIONAL ADAPTATION PROJECT IS SECURED

Sri Lanka was facing difficulties when its irrigation adaptation project proposal to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) received critical comments from the Independent Technical Advisory Panel (iTAP), risking non-approval. However, 19 Sri Lankan civil society organisations, including Southern Voices partners, were able to demonstrate strong endorsement of the project for its contribution to building resilience and reducing vulnerabilities related to climate change.

In the event, SVA national partner CANSA<sup>2</sup> Steering Committee of Sri Lanka successfully supported the country to secure \$38.1 million dollars in adaptation finance, its first allocation from GCF.

These efforts demonstrate the success of engaging civil society stakeholders in the process of gaining access to climate finance. This can be an immediate positive outcome of inclusive and participatory adaptation policies and plans – as highlighted in principle A of JPA. Furthermore, it highlights the persuasive power of upholding principle E, on building the resilience and addressing the vulnerabilities of target populations.



The seven member organisations of CANSA in Sri Lanka – engaged in the initiative – as well as other NGOs from Sri Lanka. CAN South Asia has a membership of over 112 CSOs spread across 7 countries in South Asia which work on climate change related issues. The story was provided by the SV-Adapt regional facilitator for Asia – based in Sri Lanka,

## GHANA: THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN ARE REPRESENTED IN NATIONAL CLIMATE ACTION COMMITMENTS

A governmental working group had been outlining plans and programmes for Ghana with regard to climate change interventions, including adaptation. The emphasis was initially on environment, science, and technology, with inadequate attention to social issues such as discrimination and marginalisation faced by some groups of people in adapting to climate change.

SVA partners ABANTU and GACCES attempted to bridge this gap by ensuring that the ministry responsible for gender, children, and social protection was represented on this working group. This allowed the issues of vulnerability, women's resilience, and other aspects of marginalisation to be addressed in Ghana's policies, including in a Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) submission to the UNFCCC. Most significant for vulnerable people, gendered perspectives will also be included in the implementation of Ghana's NDC.

While there is as of yet no additional adaptation funding following on from the NDC, the strong gender policy perspective can only serve Ghana well with other potential climate donors in the future.



ABANTU for Development in Ghana is a gender and policy advocacy NGO. It currently hosts a coalition of organisations and activists working on gender and climate change: Gender Action on Climate Change for Equality and Sustainability (GACCES) with a specific national focus on Ghana.

<sup>2</sup> Climate Action Network South Asia



## B. Shortage of official support

The immediate point of contact for climate-affected communities seeking support is their local government. Yet local government bodies rarely have the skills and capacities to deal with climate change, nor the ability to reach out to the poorest and most vulnerable communities. As much as national governments face budget constraints, so too do local governments struggle to maintain conventional services, making it difficult to add climate change adaptation to the list of demands made to them.

Local governments can serve communities better if their role in adaptation is linked to priorities for climate action set at the national and international level. National policies and plans that are integrated with local plans and priorities make it possible for more resources for adaptation to flow to the local level, thus reaching vulnerable communities.

### Civil society partners help enhance official plans and priorities for adaptation:



The NGO Forum on Cambodia  
It is a membership organisation that builds NGO cooperation and capacity. Within the Forum the Environment and Climate Change Alliance (NECA) addresses climate change and environment issues.

#### **CAMBODIA: COMMUNITY NEEDS ARE ADDRESSED IN COMMUNE DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

In the past, commune planning in Cambodia failed to consider climate risks and response strategies. The concerns of communities regarding climate change impacts such as drought have also not been well reflected in the development and investment plans of district government representatives.

The SVA partner NGO Forum of Cambodia (NGOF), chose to harness community participation to support the integration of climate change adaptation with local development plans. They found that the JPA was the ideal tool for introducing the same concepts to community members, commune councillors, and other officials from provinces all over Cambodia. Examples of the improvements NGOF successfully advocated for include addressing drought by building awareness, increasing water storage capacity, and introducing rainwater harvesting into local investment plans.

Another success has been highlighting the perspectives of ethnic minorities and women. Kampuchea Women's Welfare Action (KWVA), a NGOF member, had experience from working with local authorities on rural development in Kratie province, but limited technical knowledge on climate change mainstreaming. Building their capacity on the JPA, as well as other tools such as vulnerability assessment and risk mapping, has been critical in reaching communities particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts, and ensuring that their concerns are addressed in commune development plans. Taking into account the capacity of women, and of people's different capacities in disaster situations, has been specifically noted.

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Overall, using the JPA has been a constructive and innovative process, allowing tools for mainstreaming climate change to be introduced at several levels of governance, and has at the same time promoted effective and equitable climate change adaptation. The JPA were also used to reach government representatives, development partners, academia, NGOs, community-based organisations, and the private sector, thereby influencing Cambodia's Sectoral Climate Change Action Plan.

Good coordination between the national and sub-national responses is very important to effectively address climate change. As a result of NGO's capacity-building, and its support in developing the government guidelines for mainstreaming climate change into sub-national planning, now numerous 5-year local development plans integrate adaptation.

As communities assess their context and create their own plans, they can use these plans with a variety of stakeholders and can feed into the government's planning and policy-making. As well as contributing to much higher community ownership of the process, the JPA also promotes a sustainable dialogue between government, civil society, and communities. Find the extended version of this story at [www.southernvoices.net](http://www.southernvoices.net)

## **GHANA: DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PLANS SUPPORT CLIMATE ADAPTATION FOR WOMEN**

SVA partner ABANTU's campaign aimed to incorporate gender into national climate policy to foster cultural changes within district government through preparation for their forthcoming District Medium-Term Development Plans. These plans now not only better integrate climate change adaptation with development, but also strongly focus on gender and the needs of women.

Due to a general lack of understanding and experience by government employees on these topics, ABANTU selected 22 target districts to build the capacity of district government officials, and also people from the local communities through workshops throughout the country.

To complement these efforts, ABANTU targeted the media by introducing journalists to the JPA and gender issues. The result was improved reporting on climate change and greater linkages to the challenges women face. That increased coverage highlighted the importance of community adaptation, and how women can provide the solutions to climate adaptation, leading to a cross-cutting integration of gender and climate into Ghana's District Medium-term Development Plans.

Overall, this targeted campaigning has created a cultural shift in local government's understanding of gender, whilst securing greater finances to support women's role in driving climate change adaptation and sustainable development.



The Climate Change Working Group provides a forum for Vietnamese NGOs and international NGOs to work on climate issues in Vietnam. The CCWG working group on adaptation is hosted by CARE Vietnam.

## VIETNAM: COMMUNITY-BASED CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVES OFFICIALLY RECOGNISED

The government of Vietnam has an established norm of top-down policy-making and planning which typically limits involvement from most stakeholders, particularly civil society organizations. In the context of climate change, this makes it difficult for government programs to identify or implement the most appropriate adaptation measures for vulnerable sectors of the population at local level.

To change this, The Climate Change Working Group (CCWG) of Vietnam assembled evidence from the field experiences of CSOs across the country working on climate change. This was used to advocate for community-based climate change initiatives to be reflected in Vietnam’s Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) submission to the UNFCCC.

In its close work with the national ministries of natural resources, environment, agriculture, and rural development, CCWG has emphasised the necessary involvement of CSOs and vulnerable groups. CCWG has then been encouraged to submit further evidence of good grass-roots models to influence the country’s National Adaptation Plan, and engage with provincial governments on its implications for local implementation.

At the core of its dialogue with decision makers, CCWG has emphasised three of the JPA principles A: participation and inclusion; D: local level adaptation; and E: vulnerability and diversity. The fact that the JPA arose from shared learning and experience across 12 countries strengthened their value and credibility in these dialogues.



The Nicaraguan Alliance on Climate Change (ANACC) is a joint platform for non-profit organizations, academia, social movements and trade unions and operates through the regional environmental network SUSWATCH. ANACC is hosted by Centro Humboldt

## NICARAGUA: LOCAL ADAPTATION PLANS PAVE THE WAY FOR NATIONAL POLICIES

Within vulnerable communities in the Caribbean coastal region of Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan Alliance on Climate Change facilitated the creation of three municipal plans and one local community plan to promote initiatives for adaptation to climate change. However, the country lacks effective mechanisms for implementing such plans.

To make sure that local plans are supported by national policies, institutions and resources, ANACC drafted a comprehensive climate change law proposal. In doing so, ANNAC encouraged the involvement of multiple stakeholders to define priorities, and disseminated the final draft to wider society to gain public support. ANACC’s campaign slogan “The climate is changing, so is my life, demand a law!” was well received.

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The draft climate change law has now been presented to the national government. Its approval will pave the way for preparing a National Adaptation Plan, which Nicaragua does not yet have. A stronger legal framework for climate change can redirect public investment towards the most vulnerable sectors, whilst creating consistency between national and local policies that can identify and protect communities most exposed to climate change. This shift could also open the door to international finance, as well as incentivise the development of municipal and local adaptation plans throughout the country.

Find out more about ANACC's nationwide campaign at [www.southernvoices.net](http://www.southernvoices.net)

## **KENYA: LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS CONTRIBUTE TO COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLANS**

Kenya's Climate Change Act 2016 requires county governments to mainstream climate change into their programmes and plans. Mainstreaming of climate change is therefore also a critical component of the country's newly created County Environmental Action Plans (CEAP), yet in many cases they are hampered by poor local capacity and insufficient involvement of stakeholders.

SVA partner National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK) chose to address this in two counties by bringing together faith leaders to promote good participation in environmental management and climate change adaptation. They recruited community level climate change champions to create awareness among the community members, with guidance from NCCCK and the county government officers. Concerns about farming methods leading to low resilience became a priority, and conservation agricultural practices were promoted. The champions identified further challenges, and proposed adaptation options for the CEAP.

The JPA was instrumental in providing the scope of issues to consider in mainstreaming climate change. Priority was given to JPA principles A: involving multiple stakeholders' participation; and D: ensuring that local plans promote the resilience of communities. This whole process led to a comprehensive CEAP that integrates climate change adaptation and is owned by both the county government and local stakeholders. Read about NCCCK's story at [www.southernvoices.net](http://www.southernvoices.net)



**NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES OF KENYA**

The National Council of Churches of Kenya is a family of Christian communions and Christian organisations. NCCCK is mobilising faith communities to advocate for pro-poor legislations on climate change.

## **MALAWI: CIVIL SOCIETY DELIVERS COMMUNITY PRIORITIES TO MALAWI'S NAP**

At the onset of Malawi's National Adaptation Plan, one of the key challenges facing the government was a lack of information – particularly on the needs of local communities – and the technical expertise to gather such information. Recognising this issue early on in the process, SV-Adapt partner in Malawi, Civil Society Network on Climate Change (CISONECC) set out to supply the government with the data it needed. This closely followed its key objective for the Southern Voices project – that the NAP process adopts and implements the priorities and options set by vulnerable groups.

CISONECC also knew that to obtain sufficient influence: they would need to earn an important position in support of the government. Central to CISONECC's strategy has been leveraging the JPA to promote dialogue with government, to identify capacity-building needs, and to ensure significant stakeholder involvement in the process.

Therefore CISONECC went forward to gain CSO support, media awareness, and establish a cooperative and supportive relationship with the Malawian government. The first activity this culminated in was a consolidated report on CSO expectations for the NAP, which was then shared with the National Technical Committee on Climate Change, laying the groundwork for the relationship between civil society and government. CISONECC subsequently became part of the NAP core team and further sectoral teams connected to the NAP. What ensued was capacity-building support for civil society and government employees alike, engagement with academia, and reaching-out to communities critical to an inclusive NAP, such as the representatives of local communities and women farmers.

Thanks to CISONECC's wide-reaching member network and good engagement with national academia, they were able to produce two vulnerability assessments in 2015 and 2017 that mapped out the scale, nature, and solutions to many adaptation challenges throughout the entire country. This contribution, in addition to CISONECC's earlier report expressing the expectations of civil society, placed CISONECC as a leading organisation in the development of the NAP in the government's eyes – leading to their inclusion on the NAP core team and the National Technical Committee on Climate Change (NTCCC).

This central position has given CISONECC the influence and credibility to see vulnerable communities' interests move to centre-stage in Malawi's NAP. Now, in part thanks to CISONECC's role formulating and convening stakeholders for Malawi's application to the Green Climate Fund mentioned earlier, it is hoped the country can proceed with a genuinely equitable and effective adaptation process.

Find our in-depth story on CISONECC's work at [www.southernvoices.net](http://www.southernvoices.net)

## **GHANA AND CAMBODIA: INFLUENCING NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL ADAPTATION PLANNING**

Influencing district level adaptation planning is often a priority for civil society organisations. Nevertheless, making an impact in a meaningful or systematic way can often be a challenge, as was the case in both Cambodia and Ghana.

To overcome this, Southern Voices partners in both countries targeted national guidelines regarding local and district development to amplify their influence, thereby promoting gender and climate change mainstreaming on a national scale.

To do so, both enhanced government engagement using district and local level 'training of the trainer' workshops to emphasise the importance of gender and climate mainstreaming, whilst promoting the Joint Principles for Adaptation to initially gain widespread support. Later, this translated to change at the national level.

In Cambodia, the government was unsure of how to mainstream gender into their plans. Thanks to their capacity-building efforts with government employees throughout the country, SVA partner The NGO Forum of Cambodia earned an invitation to consult on gender mainstreaming. This led to the promotion of the practical and strategic needs of women in the National Technical Guideline of Climate Change Adaptation in Commune Development Plans, which will now serve as a central planning document across the entire country.

Similarly, ABANTU held capacity-building and training of the trainer workshops for gender desk and planning officers in districts throughout Ghana. This enhanced local government and community-level support on the climate change and gender nexus, and its integration into local development plans. Arising from these efforts, ABANTU gained access to national level committees hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation. Thanks to these positions, climate change was mainstreamed into the country's National Development Planning Commission Guidelines, which have in-turn influenced the integration of gender and climate change into district planning throughout Ghana.

Thus in both countries SVA partners successfully promoted gender sensitive adaptation in local planning by targeting national guidelines. This has achieved important shifts in the attitudes and approaches of government at district and national level whilst reaching concrete, long-term policy change as both countries' NAPs are rolled-out.

## C. Lack of shared knowledge

While poor and vulnerable communities are beginning to experience some of the immediate consequences of a changing climate, they may not fully understand the risks they face, or how these might escalate in the future. The same problem can also be identified at different levels of government. Furthermore, certain sub-groups within communities (perhaps based on social class or gender) can be both more vulnerable and less vocal in expressing their needs to institutions, such as local government, that should support their efforts to adapt. Thus developing and sharing a good understanding of the problems they face, and how those could potentially be treated, is an important step in enabling communities to adapt adequately to a changing climate.

### **Civil society gives voice to vulnerable people and communities to express their needs to others:**



Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) is hosting the CAN South Asia network in Nepal and is a non profit policy, research and implementation organisation focusing on research based education and advocacy campaigns on sustainability, environment, and climate change.

#### **NEPAL: ADAPTATION TEACHING FORMS PART OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

At national level, experts within the government of Nepal have been taking a progressive approach to climate change by developing an overall climate change policy, adopting a National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), and instituting its equivalent at the local level, called Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPA). Nepal's process for developing a NAP has been considered exemplary and widely appreciated thanks to its participatory "Leaving no one behind" approach. By supporting this, SVA partner Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) has succeeded in getting local level climate change awareness-raising into the NAP process.

Nevertheless, knowledge and skills relating to adaptation, its importance, and how to implement it are not widespread throughout the country. In short, more capacity is needed at the local level.

CEN has used its close collaboration with government to increase public awareness and advocacy related to climate change adaptation. They have leveraged a coalition of youth organisations and academia to gain support for a multi-stakeholder approach to adaptation planning. A critical step in this process has been to incorporate adaptation, and the practices represented by the JPA, into the climate education process of Nepal.

By doing so, CEN has succeeded in formalising climate change in the curriculum of Tribhuvan University, into which the JPA have also been incorporated as a key climate change adaptation tool. Tribhuvan University spans the entire country, with over 600,000 student enrolments (making it one of the largest universities in the world). This educational input will lead not only to public officials who are better able to work on climate change adaptation, but also to more citizens who can mobilise public opinion, support, and action in this crucial area. Find out more about CEN's story at [www.southernvoices.net](http://www.southernvoices.net)

## **NICARAGUA: PERSPECTIVE OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES IS RESPECTED IN MUNICIPAL PLANS**

After a series of studies on the current and potential future impacts of climate change in Nicaragua, the Nicaraguan Alliance on Climate Change (ANACC) identified a set of localities where to engage with communities. With its local counterpart, the Southern Caribbean Coastal Alliance, community workshops took place in Loma Fresca, 19 de Julio, San Pedro y Tiktik Kaanu, and Puerto El Bluff, in addition to coordination with local municipal authorities and other social actors.

The act of introducing the content of the JPA to male and female community representatives, including indigenous peoples, promoted some of the key principles of the JPA – A: multi-stakeholder participation, and E: attention to the differential vulnerabilities of different sectors of the population.

Thanks to the local adaptation plan created in the community of El Bluff, the municipality has assigned a reasonable budget for the implementation of adaptation actions. Furthermore, the success of the community in influencing their municipal authorities has inspired communities in other localities to follow and pursue their own adaptation projects, like building storm shelters and improving crop resilience.

The relationship with municipal government is now rooted in an approach that respects local cultures and the vision of indigenous peoples and afro-descendant communities, whilst also promoting the welfare of people most vulnerable to climate change.

## **GUATEMALA: INDIGENEOUS PEOPLES GAIN THEIR RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION**

The Indigenous Platform on Climate Change in Guatemala (La Mesa Indígena de Cambio Climático de Guatemala, MICCG) noted that within the national plans for climate change the government had not considered the perspective of indigenous peoples, ignoring their recognition and participation in proposed actions. This discrimination, characteristic of the official treatment of indigenous peoples in Guatemala, could lead to their exclusion from the design and implementation of most climate-related initiatives in the country – including adaptation.

Yet measures to support adaptation are essential for indigenous peoples, whose culture, livelihoods, and lifestyles are under the greatest threat from climate change. Thus, MICCG took advantage of its representation on the national climate change council to push for significant involvement of indigenous peoples in implementing adaptation actions. MICCG also gave focus to the issue of disseminating information on climate change in indigenous language and forms that people could understand and use to become more involved.



Sotz'il is hosting The Indigenous Platform on Climate Change in Guatemala (La Mesa Indígena de Cambio Climático de Guatemala, MICCG). Sotz'il is a Mayan organisation with the aim of ensuring the rights and participation of indigenous peoples in the implementation processes of policies related to climate change, environment, natural resources and land.

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Working sessions with different indigenous peoples' organisations applied the JPA as a tool in a way that suited the unique context in each indigenous people's location. Most relevant were principles A: on inclusive participation, C: on good coordination, and D: on building community resilience; (and specific criteria particularly relevant to indigenous peoples within each principle). This led to the inclusion of indigenous groups' proposals in the National Action Plan on Climate Change.



Janathakshan is hosting the CAN South Asia network in Sri Lanka. It is a non-profit company promoting sustainable and green solutions in development to Sri Lanka and beyond

## **SRI LANKA: CLEARING THE AIR AROUND CLIMATE ADAPTATION THROUGH INFORMATION AND AWARENESS**

In many countries coordinating climate adaptation activities and finance is a challenge. It prevents the smooth interaction amongst and between various stakeholders, including civil society and local communities, and policymakers.

Without such coordination, it is difficult to synthesise improvements to adaptation. There is no straightforward way to ensure that the country's scarce adaptation resources are allocated most effectively. It is also just as difficult to see how or if these projects are facilitating the adaptation of vulnerable communities, especially those that suffer from multiple overlapping vulnerabilities.

In Sri Lanka, Climate Action Network South Asia – Sri Lanka (CANSAs-SL) and Janathakshan have been working to create an Adaptation Database and Preparation Tool (ADAPT) to collect, classify, and verify adaptation activities and finance. The goal is to create a publicly available database that provides easily accessible information on ongoing adaptation projects and finance, thereby enabling cooperation and coproduction.

Upon its completion, the database will be able to compare past, ongoing, and future adaptation projects. To do so collaboration on case studies to support the data-driven approach of the ADAPT system has taken place to learn from past projects. It will also take into account climate shocks, SDG goals, and JPA principles to produce resilience outcomes.

ADAPT's classification system has already been used in partnership with the government during the Climate Next Workshop in 2017. It has also attracted attention from the likes of academia, governance institutes such as the Global Environment Facility, and international economic institutions like the World Bank and African Development Bank, suggesting its significance could spread far beyond the borders of Sri Lanka.

With this tool in place, governments, organisations, and communities will be able to coordinate, collaborate, and create adaptation plans that respond to the lessons of the past and efficiently produce pro-poor adaptation for communities in the future.

## Our Conclusions

The examples above have shown how SVA members, across different countries and contexts, have used the JPA to address all three factors constraining adaptation for poor communities.

The JPA have been shown to:

1. ... **ease national access to international adaptation finance.** The JPA have been used to contribute to the formulation of National Adaptation Plans and other climate policy documents<sup>3</sup>, and have helped guide applications to the GCF and other funders. By demonstrating that attention has been given to issues of stakeholder engagement, gender sensitivity, and other aspects of due diligence such as resilience and vulnerability, potential conditions or quality standards for the approval of funding can be met. In its own way, the exercise of the JPA can help national governments use a focus on climate change as an entry point to engage with other areas of international concern, such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and the concept of resilience.
2. ... **promote the flow of resources (funds, information, skills) from national to local government levels.** Using the JPA can provide a common language for different levels of government to discuss and agree how to make adaptation effective, appropriate, and equitable. Making adaptation a shared priority issue, applicable to different levels and sectors, eases the negotiation and allocation of available resources.
3. ... **ensure that the adaptation needs of vulnerable communities receive due priority.** The JPA contain several specific principles that can be respected by both communities and officials, including due attention to vulnerability and diversity, participation and inclusion, and a balance of investment between hard infrastructure and “soft” capacity-building. The JPA becomes a mechanism for structured communication and planning by allowing dialogue between actors that may otherwise not occur.

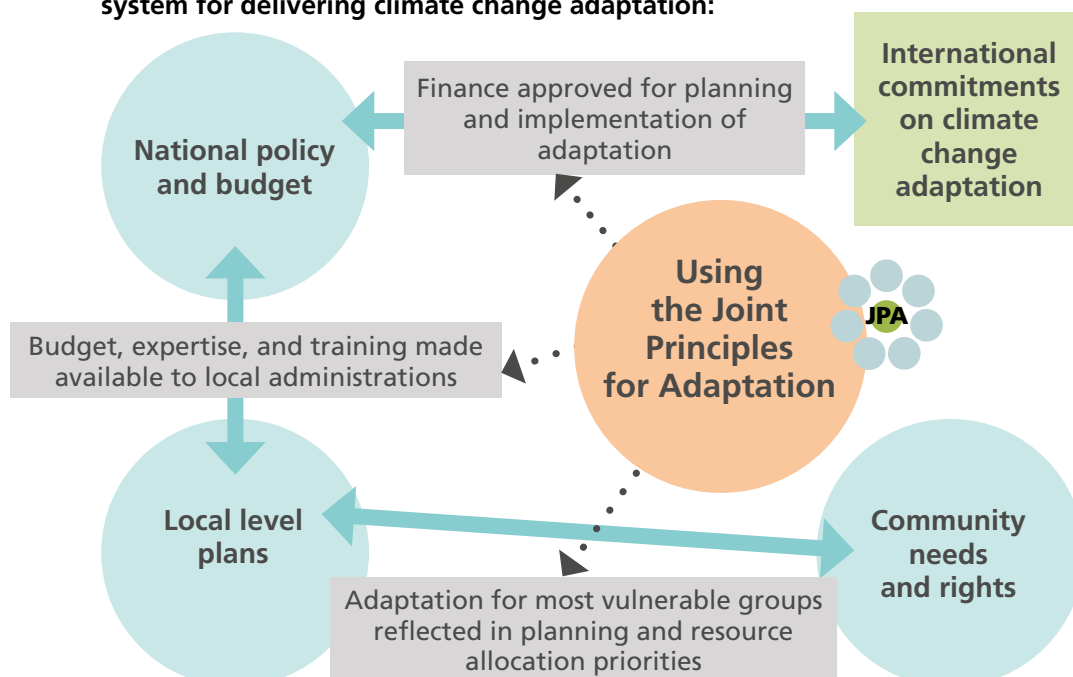
As adaptation funding increases, although slowly the JPA are the best way of ensuring that extra money is spent well

**90%**

**OF TEN SVA PARTNERS AGREE**

Survey April 2017

**How the JPA have been used to improve linkages between key elements of the system for delivering climate change adaptation:**



<sup>3</sup> Such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

# TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE ADVOCACY

Vital to Southern Voices partners' success has been the tools they have developed and used. Included below are some examples that can be picked up and applied by actors anywhere around the world.

**"The strategy milestones were modelled along the NAP Process which made it easy (...) to design activities that would maximize impact".**

CISONECC Spokesperson  
– Survey April 2017

**"We addressed many challenges in preparing our influencing strategy and, in the process, improved our advocacy capacities."**

NGOF Spokesperson  
– Survey April 2017

## The JPA as a monitoring and advocacy benchmark

The JPA, developed by civil society partners working together as Southern Voices for Adaptation, consists of seven principles that have been tested in ten countries thus far. An overwhelming majority of SVA members believe that the best way to ensure that climate change adaptation is conducted to serve the interests of ordinary people is by employing the principles to monitor adaptation projects, propose new policies, and determine the priorities of adaptation plans.

SVA partners have found that the JPA is a versatile tool for advocacy in the international sphere and with national and local governments, for capacity building, and for dialogue between government, civil society, communities, and other stakeholders. In essence, they together capture what may be described as "good adaptation policy and practice".

SVA partners universally recognised that the Joint Principles for Adaptation assisted in their advocacy planning. The JPA were a valuable frame of reference for identifying and planning how or where they would exert influence. They could be used as a checklist, to help partners go through the policy areas to be influenced, and thus to identify advocacy priorities. Partners also saw the JPA as central to building capacity, both within their own organisations and also with peers and allies to achieve their goals.

One SVA partner used the JPA to form the basic issues they would lobby key decision-makers to mainstream into the NAP. For some other partners, as well as using the JPA in its entirety (perhaps as an entry point), it became productive to focus on a subset of selected specific principles.

## The JPA National Adaptation Policy Assessment Tool

Some partners successfully used the JPA as an evaluation and monitoring tool by employing a national adaptation status report to "score" the adaptation policy environment at the outset, and their progress in achieving improvements. This tool utilised the JPA's criterion to provide ratings of a particular policy or policy environment based upon a 4-point scale indicating, "no start made" to "substantial achievement". This same tool was used at multiple points throughout the project period and was intentionally designed to be modified for national, regional, or even local contexts.<sup>4</sup>

The principles and criteria are as follows:

<sup>4</sup> The National Adaptation Policy Assessment Tool can be found here: <http://southernvoices.net/en/documents/key-documents/63-jpa-assessment-tool-nov-2015-draft/file.html>

## THE JOINT PRINCIPLES FOR ADAPTATION

### National frameworks for climate change adaptation are more equitable and more effective when:

| PRINCIPLES  | Criteria   |
|---|--|
| A. The formulation, implementation and monitoring of adaptation policies and plans is participatory and inclusive                 | 1. Multiple stakeholders (including, but not limited to civil society, sub-national governments, research institutes, academia, private sector, and indigenous peoples) participate in defining options and priorities as well as in implementation and monitoring |
|   | 2. The knowledge and experience of local communities and indigenous peoples is incorporated  |
|   | 3. Plans and policies are publicised in ways that local people can understand and engage with  |
| B. Funds for adaptation are utilised efficiently, and managed transparently and with integrity                                    | 1. The implementation and financing of plans is periodically monitored by a body on which civil society is represented   |
|   | 2. Adaptation funding is made available through a transparent process of allocation  |
|   | 3. There is full and free access to information on how adaptation funds are being spent (finances and processes)   |
|   | 4. There is a mechanism in place to safeguard against initiatives that might have negative impacts   |
|   | 5. A secure mechanism for expressing grievances and seeking redress is available   |
| C. All government sectors and levels of administration have defined responsibilities and appropriate resources to fulfil them     | 1. National adaptation plans carry the authority to enable different government sectors to work in a coordinated way   |
|   | 2. Existing initiatives and sector plans are enhanced to take climate change and disaster risk into account  |
|   | 3. Funding for adaptation is explicitly provided for within the national budget and respective sectorial allocations   |
|   | 4. Local level adaptation plans are guided by mechanisms to ensure coherence with national adaptation policies   |
| D. Local adaptation plans are developed through approaches that build resilience of communities and ecosystems                    | 1. Communities affected by climate change participate in defining adaptation options and priorities  |
|   | 2. Local adaptation plans are formalised and integrated into the development priorities of local administrations.  |
|   | 3. Significant resources are allocated towards implementation of local adaptation plans  |
|   | 4. Financing arrangements make commitments for multi-year programmes of support to vulnerable communities  |
| E. The resilience of groups who are most vulnerable to climate change is promoted   | 1. Plans and policies address the issues affecting different groups of women, men, boys and girls  |
|   | 2. Groups of people who are vulnerable to social, cultural, economic and environmental conditions are identified, targeted   |
|   | 3. Initiatives take into account the differentiated needs and capacities of women and men in different age groups  |
|   | 4. Initiatives promote social equity and cohesion while protecting people's livelihoods  |
| F. There is appropriate investment in the building of skills and capacities for adaptation, as well as in physical infrastructure | 1. Adequate resources are made available to improve the effectiveness of institutions responsible for managing climate change adaptation   |
|   | 2. Adequate resources are made available for raising public awareness and education about climate change   |
|   | 3. Investment plans contain targets for developing human capacities, natural capital, and physical infrastructure  |
|   | 4. The capacities of local people and their structures are developed in ways that contribute to the empowerment of individuals and communities   |
| G. Plans and policies respond to evidence of the current and future manifestations and impacts of climate change                  | 1. Adaptation plans consider how exposure to climate-related stresses and extremes is affecting existing vulnerabilities   |
|   | 2. Vulnerability, exposure and adaptation scenarios are based on the best available science and evidence from the ground   |
|   | 3. Interventions are modified as new information becomes available   |
|   | 4. Climate information is made accessible to enable adaptive decision making by all stakeholders   |

## Influencing Strategies

To plan their advocacy in support of climate change adaptation, Southern Voices partners all prepared “influencing strategies” centred on their desired outcome – that is, one or more specific policy change objective. This tool was closely intertwined with the JPA, which served as the basis for constructing the strategies. The aim was to be able to achieve change in areas that lay beyond those that partners could influence directly. Developing these influencing strategies<sup>5</sup> was a serious stepwise process to determine who to influence, how, and when. Validation workshops using the JPA among national and local CSOs created a powerful sense of ownership of the policy influencing strategies partners adopted.

To complete the strategies, partners identified and mapped all the actors important to the decision-making process they wished to influence, and then established a plan to engage with them. Each partner organisation analysed the opportunities, risks, and assumptions applicable to the context they were working in. Issues that were typically important included the degree of political stability, availability of funding opportunities, and the status of relations between government and civil society. Between them, these factors could define the degree of space available for civil society to exert their influence.

The strategies then employed ‘milestones’ to identify key points or smaller achievements necessary to reach their policy objectives. In some cases, these milestones could mirror the official process that was being influenced – for example, CISON ECC in Malawi mirrored their milestones with the official steps along their country’s NAP process, making it easier for their activities to have an impact.

# 90%

**Of partners agree that The JPA have served the purpose of helping to identify their advocacy agendas.**

Survey April 2017

# 90%

**Of partners agree that there is good potential for the JPA to be further promoted and disseminated to other organisations and countries beyond SVA.**

Survey April 2017

<sup>5</sup> To learn more about using the influencing strategy approach visit: <http://southernvoices.net/en/documents/the-advocacy-toolkits-en/4-toolkit-2-planning-advocacy-en/file.html>

# THE JPA AND SOUTHERN VOICES AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

## What partners achieved

The combined impact of the JPA, and the influencing strategies they helped to facilitate, is demonstrated through the significant strides towards their policy change goals. As illustrated above, partners mainstreamed gender and adaptation into local development plans, gained representation in NAP planning groups, supplied vital information for adaptation measures, and overall exerted significant influence on national policy in countries across the Global South.

In so doing, many found that the process of devising and following an influencing strategy improved their advocacy capacities. It helped them define their objectives more precisely, such as geographical targeting, and sharpened their discipline in keeping abreast of changes in their operating context, as in the cases of unpredictable election results or greater restrictions of civil society. In one country, for example, a law on associations and non-governmental organisations, and the fall from grace of an opposition political party, became key challenges for mainstreaming adaptation at the sub-national level.

In this regard, the combination of both an influencing strategy and the JPA provided civil society organisations with sufficient structure and flexibility to achieve meaningful change.

## The JPA and Southern Voices at the international level

Another area of success and potential tool for partners' advocacy connected to the Southern Voices project has come at the international level.

The development of the JPA has coincided with the advent of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) as a leading instrument of adaptation planning, which emerged from the UNFCCC and is championed by the Least Developed Countries expert group (LEG). As governments became interested in the NAP process, so too has civil society sought to use the JPA to influence NAP development. This contributed to the JPA's recognition as a valuable tool in promoting good adaptation policy, most notably by its addition as a supplementary material to the UNFCCC's NAP technical guidelines.<sup>6</sup>

In connection to this, SVA has been consistently involved as a knowledge resource at NAP Expos, organised by the LEG of the UNFCCC, from 2014 onwards. This has included contributing through the involvement of the Advisory Group for NAP Expos, and organising thematic sessions focusing on the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement in NAPs. SVA has also assisted with regional training conducted by the LEG as both participants and resource persons, contributing to training sessions on issues ranging from stakeholder engagement to gender throughout the NAP process.

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<sup>6</sup> Find the Joint Principles for Adaptation via the UNFCCC's supplements page here: <http://www4.unfccc.int/nap/Guidelines/Pages/Supplements.aspx>

More recently, SVA has contributed to both the LEG meeting and the NAP Expo in 2018 to assess NAP progress<sup>7</sup>, with a focus on participation and transparency through stakeholder engagement. Partners provided their insights on NAP processes using the JPA as an evaluation benchmark, which will contribute to future recommendations to the COP. At the LEG expert meeting in Sharm El Sheik, Southern Voices colleagues were able to highlight challenges including finances, capacity gaps, and resources. They were also able to supply prescriptive recommendations to guide both countries' individual NAPs but also the areas to address on the international level such as earmarking of adaptation funds, publicly available documentation on decisions, and translation of plans into local languages.

In this regard, we believe the JPA has and can assist actors' advocacy in the international sphere, magnify their influence, and provide a crucial claim to international legitimacy when engaging with national governments.”

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

In 2018, four years after they were originally devised by the original Southern Voices network, the JPA are ripe for wider adoption by other organisations. They have been tested in a range of different contexts, with different climate risks, and with governments that have different approaches to dealing with climate change, including their relationship with civil society. As a tool, the JPA have demonstrated themselves to be versatile, robust, and flexible enough to be modified as necessary.

The JPA have begun to demonstrate their utility beyond the membership of Southern Voices for Adaptation. Other actors, such as the Adaptation Fund NGO network, have found it useful to draw on the JPA. As more adaptation funds inevitably become available in the face of accelerating climate impacts, the JPA's utility as an advocacy, monitoring, and campaigning tool will continue to grow.

## Southern Voices as a learning platform on adaptation advocacy

Following COP15 in Copenhagen the Southern Voices programme has been strengthening civil society networks in the Global South to advocate for climate change benefiting poor and vulnerable people. Since 2014, the focus has been on adaptation advocacy and the Southern Voices on Adaptation project has supported a coalition of 14 networks in Asia, Africa, and Latin America with funding from CISU/Danida.

As the CISU funded project is ending, CARE Denmark will continue supporting the Southern Voices from its DANIDA partnership agreement. – now turning Southern Voices on Adaptation into a learning platform on adaptation advocacy. SVA engagement in Nepal, Vietnam, Kenya, and Ghana will continue with the same or new partners, in addition to new advocacy partners in Niger, Mali, Tanzania, Uganda, and Mozambique, joining CARE Denmark country programmes during first half of 2018. The platform will also be open for adaptation advocacy networks supported by SV-Adapt's consortium partners – DanChurchAid and IbisOxfam

A continued ambition is to strengthen southern ownership; therefore, plans to transition the SVA secretariat from Copenhagen to a new location in the Global South are already underway for the second half of 2018.

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<sup>7</sup> Find the Southern Voices on Adaptation's Report on Progress in Participation and Transparency in NAPs here: <http://southernvoices.net/en/documents/key-documents/69-southern-voices-report-on-participation-and-transparency-in-national-adaptation-plans-2018/file.html>



Group Photo Southern Voices  
planning workshop developing  
JPA version 2, Nairobi, April 2018  
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## GET IN TOUCH

We cordially invite new partners to engage in the process of rolling out the Joint Principles for Adaptation in future. And for getting in touch with the SV-Adapt learning platform. This might include:

- CSOs who wish to promote pro-poor adaptation frameworks at national and sub-national levels
- Civil society in countries where SVA has not yet demonstrated its success or made progress
- Representatives from other sectors with an interest in adaptation principles, such as research & academia, development assistance, governance & policy, or even finance & banking

The precise modalities of future collaboration on the JPA have yet to be developed, but meanwhile, for all interested, please get in touch!

### Contact information:

SV-Adapt Secretariat  
Peter With  
Programme Coordinator  
CARE Denmark  
pwith@care.dk

Contact for Latin America  
Alejandro Aleman  
Sustainability Watch Network  
Nicaragua  
milenio@humboldt.org.ni

Contact for Africa  
Obed Koringo  
PACJA  
Kenya  
koringo@pacja.org

Contact for Asia  
Vositha Wijenayake  
SLYCAN  
Sri Lanka  
vositha@gmail.com

For Southern Voices partner networks – find contacts at [www.southernvoices.net](http://www.southernvoices.net)