

The Asian Co-benefits Partnership (ACP) serves as an informal and interactive platform to improve information sharing and stakeholder coordination on co-benefits in Asia. The ACP was launched with the support of the Ministry of the Environment, Japan in 2010 to help mainstream climate and environmental co-benefits into decision-making processes in Asia. Learn more about us at our website. <http://www.cobenefit.org/>



Highlights

Delivering Gender and Social Benefits from Clean Brick Factories in Nepal



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International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in collaboration with the Federation of Nepal Brick Industries (FNBI) brought 40 brick entrepreneurs together for a Workshop entitled Towards Cleaner Brick Production Design for Gender and Social Action Research. Participants discussed potential action research that would not only reduce air pollution from brick kilns but also deliver important social benefits for those male and female workers working at the brick factories. The ACP interviewed Dr. Kamala Gurung and Dr. Arabinda Mishra, Livelihoods Area, who managed the workshop.

Can you explain the Workshop ICIMOD organised in July this year on Cleaner Brick Production Design for Gender and Social Action Research and your motivation and role there?

The overall motivation for the gender and social component of Clean Brick Initiative is to generate evidence that improving working and living conditions of male and female factory workers (as well as animals supporting the work of the kiln) can result in significant productivity gains for factory owners. As a part of the process, a rapid gender needs assessment (RGNA) was carried out that highlighted three main concerns common to both male and female workers, as well as the brick owners: 1) **Health** conditions of male and female workers; 2) **Education** for workers' children; and 3) **Lighting** in the working or living areas. To address these three concerns, action research was designed with three interventions (health insurance, e-education, solar lighting) for select brick factories at different locations in Nepal.

The workshop (mentioned in the question) was important because it aimed to develop a shared understanding regarding the scale and scope of the action research interventions, and also to identify key implementation issues regarding the action research. Our role was that of a facilitator, bringing the factory owners face to face with the developer for the education intervention and a private business entity for the health insurance providers and solar lighting intervention.

What were the findings of the event, especially in relation to the co-benefits approach?

We hope to convince brick factory owners that their investment in improving working and living conditions for male and female workers (as well as animals supporting the work of the factories) will not only bring social benefits, but also will pay them back through higher productivity gains. Better conditions in the factories will motivate workers and also attract more

experienced and skilled workers. The branding of the sector as socially responsible can deliver higher returns and also elicit attention from policy makers.

Can you elaborate your future plan based on the results ICIMOD received from the workshop?

ICIMOD will organise a follow-up meeting with the Federation of Nepal Brick Industries (FNBI) in order to

advance the plan of action. FNBI will take ownership and guide the implementation of action research in the selected districts and brick factories as the show case factories. ICIMOD will keep integrating entrepreneur concerns in action research planning while implementing in the field. Based on the workshop results, ICIMOD's Clean Brick Initiative will follow up with potential action research partners to move the conversation forward.

Updates

10th Better Air Quality (BAQ) Conference was held in Kuching, Malaysia November 2018

The 10th BAQ was organised under the theme, *Regional Action, Global Impact* and sought to strengthen collaboration in the development of new solutions, designs and approaches to air pollution. The Secretariat of ACP held a session on the Multiple Benefits of Clear Air: From Quantitative Models to Policy Applications on 15 November and shared presentations on quantifying the multiple benefits of clean air and its possible policy implication in Asia (based on the third ACP White Paper). The event was attended by approximately 30 participants, including policymakers and leading thinkers working on air pollution and climate change in Asia.

Publications

UN Environment Report, **Air Pollution in Asia and the Pacific: Science-Based Solutions** (70 page technical summary), was launched at the WHO Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health in Geneva, Switzerland in October 2018. This is the first comprehensive scientific assessment of the air pollution outlook in Asia and the Pacific. It aims to support efforts to address air pollution in the region by providing 25 policy and technological measures that will deliver significant benefits across sectors. Effectively implementing these 25 measures would result in:

- Safe air quality levels for 1 billion people by 2030, reducing premature mortality from outdoor air pollution by a third;
- A 20% reduction in carbon dioxide and a 45% reduction in methane emissions, preventing up to a third of a degree Celsius in global warming;
- Crop losses reduced by 45% for maize, rice, soy and wheat

The report can be accessed: <http://ccacoalition.org/en/resources/air-pollution-asia-and-pacific-science-based-solutions> and a full report will be released in January 2019.

