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# NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS DIALOGUE

**Eco Village Development Project, India**

Dehradun, India

28th June 2016



Global Project Partners: DIB, INFORSE EUROPE, GRAMEEN SHAKTI, IDEA, CRT/N



*Inauguration of the Dialogue with the Lighting of the Lamp by the Chief Guest, Dr. Mathew Prasad*

## Objectives of the National Dialogue

- Introduce the EVD concept as evidence for a multi-pronged, integrated approach to development and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Begin work on a cross-sectoral framework for implementing the EVD concept with multi-stakeholder participation.
- Encourage a bottom-up and consultative approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Replicate the EVD concept at a larger scale throughout the country through policy support.

The First EVD National Stakeholders' Dialogue was held in the capital of Uttarakhand, Dehradun on June 28th, 2016. The dialogue was jointly organised by INSEDA, WAFD, INFORSE South Asia and CANSA . It served as a multi-stakeholder forum to share the Eco Village Development concept with various practitioners and policymakers and to brainstorm on the effective mainstreaming of EVD into India and Indian states' development agenda. The 45 participants were a mix of national climate negotiators, representatives of Indian ministries and the government, researchers, academics, civil society organisations, practitioners, environmental activists, private sector representatives, beneficiaries and journalists.



**Zareen Myles**  
WAFD



**Raymond Myles**  
INSEDA



**Sanjay Vashist**  
CANSA



## **Excerpts from the Opening Remarks of the Chief Guest, Professor Dr. Mathew Prasad, the Vice Chancellor of Uttarakhand University of Horticulture & Forestry and Punjab Agriculture University.**

- Choosing villages for implementing development projects is a very important move. Targeting smaller areas to implement climate resilience technologies and practices will help bring about smaller, more effective iterative change.
- While we can't reverse or halt climate change but we can slow it down by a more balanced and conscientious approach to environmentally sensitive development. By integrating a participatory, context-driven approach the EVD concept can potentially solve many complex and niche development issues.
- Women are quicker at adopting new technologies that can improve their lives and the lives of their families. Therefore, it is important to focus on them. By including income generation, self employment options women can be empowered and also motivated to continue with the EVD practices. Incorporating Value added services that are economically viable and technically feasible will help to reach out to more policy makers.
- NGOs and voluntary organizations do the best development related work. It is not possible for the government to get involved everywhere for whatever purpose. Identifying honest NGOs important to do this is key. Once there is momentum in these NGO activities, it is easier to convince policymakers of the relevance of their activities. Setting up an evidence base and getting the buy-in of the beneficiaries is the first step to this.

## **Expected Outcome of the National Dialogue**

- To introduce the participants to the most compelling cases in our EVD evidence base, making a case for implementing EVD solutions in more villages across states in India.
- To facilitate a multi-stakeholder dialogue exploring how to incorporate EVD principles and precepts into the broader developmental framework of India including policies.
- To discuss and finalise a blueprint to incorporate EVD as a complementary strategy for achieving India's INDCs as well as state action plans for climate change.
- To host knowledge sharing sessions with other NGOs.
- To present EVD as a frugal approach to climate change that includes a strong sustainable development component.
- To encourage inter-sectoral, multilevel coordination within the different levels of government to enhance climate institutions.
- To advocate for decentralized environmental solutions that are created through a very participatory approach.

### THEME 1

How to ensure ease of dialogue between policy makers and grassroots solution providers

### THEME 2

How to bring convergence between various stakeholders, policies and finances to scale up EVD

### THEME 3

How to make EVD interesting for the media to provide visibility to solutions and best practices

## Highlights from the multi-stakeholder panel discussion

**Facilitators:** Dr. V.R.S Rawat (REDD-plus negotiator at UNFCCC), Shailendra Yashwant (Climate Consultant and Journalist), Dr. V.K. Painuly (Climate Expert and Climate Change Advisor to Uttarakhand Government)

### THEME 1

- Many aspects of the eco village are not a new concept—the way of the old, honoured our ties to nature. We need to re-learn ecologically sensitive resource management and bring back our jungles. We need to cease to treat them like an exploitable resource for capitalist gain. The degraded condition of the Himalayas is a symptom of this estrangement from nature.
- Communities need to exercise ownership over their shared resources. In places where the responsibility of community resource

management, *nalla* management, is shifted from the community to the government, there is a trend of neglect towards those resources. The will to protect these resources and agency to act in their best interest is diminished. There shouldn't be so much responsibility put on governments to fix every community issue. Earlier, villages used to handle issues of cleanliness, maintenance and so on. Now, government institutions and bureaucracies have replaced these village communities, and these bureaucratic behemoths are so distant from the real issues.



- We mustn't advocate that the government intervene at the village level. It is up to the village panchayats and cooperatives to do this. A few decades ago all our villages were eco villages. Now, we need to look backwards—what we refer to as progress will bring us some issues that exacerbate these climate issues. Let's keep some of those traditional knowledge systems that helped villages of old be self sustaining eco villages.
- Grassroots experience shows that it requires only about INR 1.5 lakh to 2 lakh per household with 3 technologies to implement an Eco village per village. Since we need to consider about 6,50,000 villages we must utilize panchayat and other existing funds to take this model of development forward. This way, we can construct a much more decentralized approach of getting the actual stakeholders to make a case for EVD.
- Awareness needs to be built about the various development, ecology and climate related schemes so that the intended beneficiaries can be empowered to apply for them. Local Government Units like Panchayats too need to be sensitized about the schemes that are meant for them.
- Financial transparency and accountability is key for the effective and expeditious implementation of grassroots climate related schemes, especially given the urgency for action and the general paucity of funds.
- Following up with projects, even when the project period is over is important to continue learning from the beneficiaries and also to continue building the goodwill from the project.
- The convergence between NGO programmes should take place with the village or district heads (Pradhan) overseeing them. This way, the Pradhan can help connect various NGOs who otherwise work in isolation, prevent overlaps and allow stronger implementation pathways.
- In a massively populated country like India with its demographic diversity, an inclusive and decentralized pathway to policy design is the only way to ensure adequate interest representation. This is especially true of subaltern views.
- Financial transparency and accountability is key for the effective and expeditious implementation of grassroots climate related schemes, especially given the urgency for action and the general paucity of funds.
- Social audits need to be held so that practitioners and NGOs can go right up to the beneficiaries to learn more from them.
- Partnerships between the stakeholders in important.
- People's councils must be empowered to bring about substantive change. Policy planning and designing should get inputs from impacted people and be a more bottom-up process.

## THEME 2

- Panchayats that used to be the model of biodiversity are now being corrupted by policies that are harmful to the ecosystem.
- Civil society organizations and community members need to promote activities that safeguard traditional practices and prevent further ecological degradation. Natural resource management needs to be taught to Panchayats.
- People driven policies can be evolved by training the Panchayat members and the local level bureaucrats.
- The concept of *Bhagidari*, or community stewardship of resources needs to be revived. People should play an even more active and involved approach in this.
- Policies are made to reach as many people as possible and are therefore the product of consensus. Unfortunately, this has the effect of only catering the the few and not the many, with all their multitudes of needs.
- Psychological aspects do play a role. Aspirations define community investment in a concept. They don't want to remain rooted to tradition and neither do they want to continue or revive old practices since these do not give them access to modern objects of desire.

## THEME 3

- The media is necessary so that there is replication, and the rapid and widespread dissemination of information so that we can influence policymakers.
- The media broadcasts stories which can yield great power. They have a fleeting life but they run very quickly and can get the attention of those in power.
- The power of compelling narrative can excite the private sector, people with money and Corporate Social Responsibility endeavours so that we can get more people to invest in projects such as the EVD. This is why we want to approach or use the media.
- We must leverage human interest stories to excite the media. Using the power of connection can drive attention to important issues. For instance, forest fires in the town of someone significant or a journalist would get instant coverage. Stories which feature the transition from victim to victor are excellent means are popular amongst journalists as well since they help break the hard news cycle.
- Knowledge and documentation is a core asset to advocacy. We need to continue to write about our experiences because without documentation our ideas and work remain hidden.





- Social media can be very useful for this as well. This is especially true because the media nexus within the industry prevents free and fair motive. The profit motive overrides all social motive. Today the most democratic form of media is social media. They are a good target and a form of propaganda that is free and accessible. The media space for traditional media has shrunk, the space has become smaller for diverse, niche issues. Yet their dissemination has become very fast through the internet.



- Innovations or inventions should be showcased and with the power of journalism, an innovation in a remote part of the world can make its way to the mainstream.
- The print media is more powerful than the television media. It is important to focus on regional media, the language of the masses. The vernacular media is the main constituency of NGOs and practitioners and not the English media. The same goes for community radio which has an even greater reach since even the illiterate can access it.

## Our EVD Champions



*Jaswant*



*Krishna*



*Anita*



*Bimla*



*Kidi Devi*



*Mukesh*

Transparent and accountable governance is important. EVD is a set of best practices that can be disseminated. We need convergence within all levels of policymaking. In India, Panchayats have the ability to implement EVD and but there needs to be work done on their capacity building so they can monitor such projects.

**DR. V.R.S. RAWAT**

Women need to be at the centre of all development activities. It is they who are disproportionately impact by climate change and it is they whose drudgery increases as a result. Community driven approaches facilitate their participation.

**ZAREEN MYLES**

Including food security along with energy security is important for a equitable sustainable development strategy. Organic farming methods are important for this and the state agricultural bodies are playing an active part educating people about this method and how to get certification.

**DR. A.K. VERMA**

Gandhi said that we needed to look towards the village. But if we want to take this concept abroad, we need to link this to sustainable development, climate change and mitigation.

**RAYMOND MYLES**

Media recognition of Eco Villages is important. Media needs to play a role, and it needs to bridge the information gap. Climate change is a fact that people have accepted and the era of skepticism around this phenomenon is over.

**MANJU KAK**

In India, Panchayats have the ability to implement EVD but there needs to be work done on their capacity building so they can monitor such projects.

**SANJAY VASHIST**

Green technologies like biogas can be an important tool for empowering women.

**AMARESHWARI MORLA**

Private sector companies need to play an active role in promoting grassroots climate change programmes and increasing their reach.

**RAKESH DHAWAN**

Climate change has already caused irreversible loss in local flora and fauna species. There has already been a marked decrease in floral diversity in Uttarakhand due to emigration of local species and immigration of exotic species. Immediate responses are required. The structure and productivity of economically important species has also reduced.

**DR. S.P. JOSHI**





## Event Agenda

**11:00 - 12:05**

**SESSION 1:** Welcome and Context-Setting

**Chair:** Sanjay Vashist, CAN South Asia; **Co-Chair:** Raymond Myles

11:00 – 11:10	11:35 – 11:50: Raymond Myles, INSEDA/ INFORSE South Asia
11:10 – 11:20	<b>Status of EVD in India &amp; Big Challenges; Introducing EVD Concept:</b> Zareen Myles, WAFD
11:20 – 11:35	Inaugural Address on <b>Policies for EVD in Uttarakhand and Strategic Direction: Remarks on Role of Indian Villages in Climate Change:</b> Professor Dr. Mathew Prasad, Vice Chancellor of Uttarakhand Agriculture University and Punjab Agriculture University
11:35 – 11:50	<b>Forestry Based Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation and Potential of Forest Based Carbon Trading in Uttarakhand:</b> Dr. V.R.S Rawat, (REDD-plus negotiator at UNFCCC)
11:50 – 12:05	<b>Analysis of Uttarakhand Policies for Eco Friendly Villages which focus on low carbon development:</b> Dr. V.K. Painuly, Climate Expert and Climate Change Advisor to Uttarakhand Government

**12:05 - 13:30**

**SESSION 2:** Grassroots EVD Case Studies for Policy Inputs

**Chair:** Zareen Myles, WAFD; **Co-Chair:** Amareshwari, AIWC

12:05 – 12:35	<b>Practitioners presentations from Villages of Ranichauri - Introduction:</b> Ms Zareen Myles , Rajkumari Singh and Dr. Rajesh Singh
12:35 – 12:45	<b>All India Women’s Conference – EVD work in Bihar:</b> Mrs. Amreshwari Morla (Treasurer, AIWC)

12:45 – 12:55	<b>Climate change impacts on the higher ranges of Himalayas and it's fall out on Uttarakhand:</b> Professor Dr. S.P. Joshi Principle DAV College
12:55 – 13:30	Moderated discussion groups for policy inputs on chosen themes <i>How to ensure ease of dialogue between Policy makers and grassroots solution providers: Dr. V.K. Painuly</i> <i>How to make EVD interesting for Media to provide visibility to solutions and best practices: Shailendra Yashwant</i> <i>How to bring convergence between various stakeholders, policies and finances to scale up EVD: Dr. V.R.S Rawat</i>
<b>13:30 - 14:15</b>	Lunch Break
<b>14:15 - 15:15</b>	<b>SESSION 3:</b> Policy & Communications Support to EVD: Gaps and Opportunities <b>Chair:</b> Shailendra Yashwant, CAN South Asia
14:15 – 14:45	Group Presentations
14:45 – 14:55	<b>Implications of International Policy Frameworks on EVD:</b> Mr. Sanjay Vashist
14:55 – 15:05	<b>Media Support to EVD:</b> Mr. Shailendra Yashwant
15:05 – 15:15	<b>Policy on Organic Farming on Agriculture in Uttarakhand:</b> Dr. A.K. Verma
<b>15:15 - 15:35</b>	Tea
<b>15:35 - 16:20</b>	<b>SESSION 4:</b> Way Forward <b>Chair:</b> Raymond Myles, INSEDA
15:35 – 15:45	Open-house Feedback
15:45 – 15:55	<b>Concluding Remarks for Policy-makers and Implementor Interface:</b> Mr Sanjay Vashist
15:55 – 16:05	<b>Concluding Remarks for Media Recognition of EVD:</b> Manju Kak
16:05 – 16:15	<b>Concluding Remarks for EVD Scale-up:</b> Raymond Myles
16:15 – 16:20	<b>Vote of Thanks:</b> Dr Rajesh Singh

## Contact Details

### **Integrated Sustainable Energy and Ecological Development Association (INSEDA)**

A pan India NGO network of 30 practitioners and civil society organizations that work on renewable energy technologies and climate resilience.

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### **Women's Action For Development (WAFD)**

An Indian NGO that has been working on gender, development and climate issues since 1978.

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### **International Network For Sustainable Energy- South Asia (INFORSE South Asia)**

A South Asian network of NGOs that work on sustainable energy, development and climate issues. This is the South Asian Chapter of INFORSE International, a global network.

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### **Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSA)**

A coalition of 149 civil society organisations from South Asia promoting equity and sustainable development and the development of an effective global strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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