



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

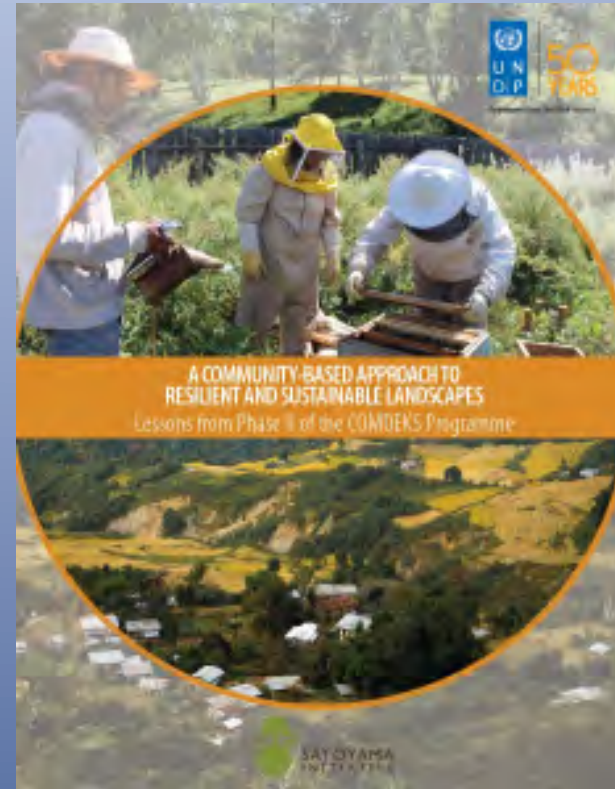
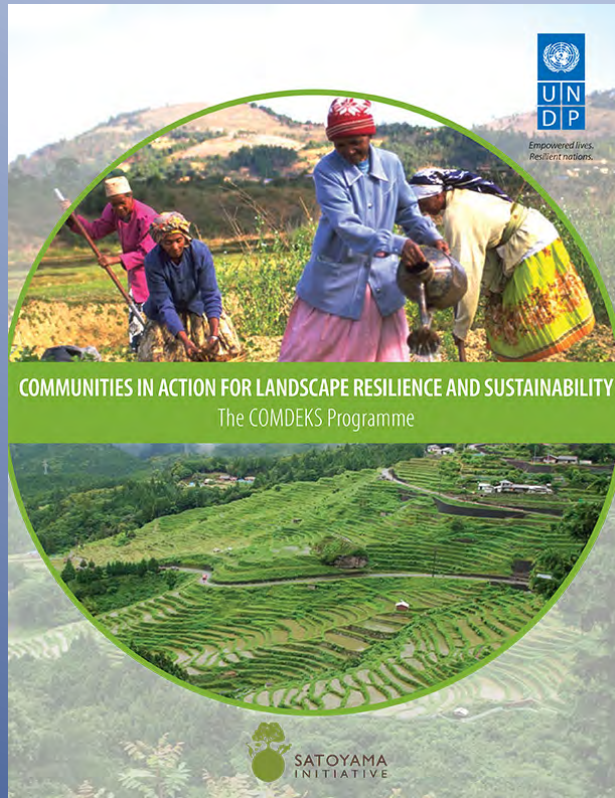
COMDEKS Community-Based Landscape Approach

Process and Lessons Learned from Phases I and II

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Phase I:

- Brazil
- Cambodia
- Ethiopia
- Fiji
- Ghana
- India
- Malawi
- Nepal
- Slovakia
- Turkey



Phase II:

- Bhutan
- Cameroon
- Costa Rica
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Indonesia
- Kyrgyzstan
- Mongolia
- Namibia
- Niger

Results from COMDEKS Pilots in 20 Countries:

- 100 projects since 2011
- Documented in Two Reports

The COMDEKS Landscape Approach

❖ Emphasis

- Management of Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLS)

❖ Goal

- Build and Maintain Landscape Resilience

❖ Method

- Participatory Landscape Planning and Project Management by Local Organizations

- Adaptive Management That Evolves as Conditions Change and Knowledge Grows



❖ Result

- Landscape-Level Outcomes that Can be Scaled Up

Why a Landscape Approach?

- ❖ Integrates the Mosaic of SEPLS Land Uses
 - Coupled land uses require an integrated approach that views the landscape as a single system
- ❖ Accommodates Landscape-Scale Processes
 - Ecological: watershed functions; habitat quality
 - Social and Economic: cultural identity; migration; rural markets
- ❖ Encourages Cross-Community Interactions and Synergies



Why Community-Based?

- ❖ **Communities must own the process of landscape planning and management if it is to be sustainable**
 - They are custodians and everyday users of SEPLS
 - No one has greater incentive to restore landscape productivity
 - They are a repository of locally adapted knowledge
 - They are the frontline of local innovation
- ❖ **Community action brings political empowerment beyond the local level**



Key Steps in the COMDEKS Approach

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- ❖ **Landscape Identification**
 - Preliminary survey of landscape assets and threats
 - Agreement on landscape definition and boundaries
 - ❖ **Participatory Landscape Planning**
 - Community Consultations and Baseline Assessment
 - Participatory Landscape Strategy Development
 - ❖ **Community-Led Projects**
 - Capacity development through learning-by-doing
 - ❖ **Learning and Knowledge Generation**
 - Project monitoring and evaluation
 - Lesson extraction and application
 - ❖ **Dissemination and Upscaling of Successes**
 - Knowledge products and networks
 - Policy input at regional and national levels

Step 1: Landscape Identification

- ❖ Preliminary but essential work
- ❖ Defines and sets boundaries on the target landscape
- ❖ Surveys current assets, land uses, and threats
- ❖ Identifies stakeholders
- ❖ Gauges interest of local communities and willingness of government to support local landscape projects
- ❖ Identifies potential partners and allies



Step 2: Participatory Landscape Planning: Community Consultation and Baseline Assessment

- ❖ **Common understanding:** information on landscape conditions and how these affect livelihoods and influence local social and economic trends
- ❖ **Community validation:** Primary information sources are community members themselves
- ❖ **Social capital:** Group process provides the social foundation for communication and cooperation among diverse stakeholders



Baseline Assessment: Applying the Resilience Indicators

- ❖ **Resilience in the local context:** puts a local face on landscape conditions and what they mean
- ❖ **Provides a framework for discussion and analysis**
- ❖ **Creates a neutral space for communication and a common vocabulary**
- ❖ **Provides a basis for negotiation among stakeholders and the formation of multi-stakeholder partnerships**



Baseline Assessment: Additional Participatory Tools

- ❖ Resource mapping and inventories:
visualizing what and where

- ❖ Governance situation:
Landscape Governance Self-Assessment Tool

- ❖ Agroecosystem conditions:
Agroecosystem Vulnerability Assessment Manual



Step 2 (cont.): Participatory Landscape Planning: Developing the Landscape Strategy

The Landscape Strategy:

- ❖ Shared vision of a resilient and productive landscape.
- ❖ Specifies landscape outcomes and performance indicators agreed by all stakeholders
- ❖ Comprises the basic blueprint that guides landscape actions in the near and longer term



Step 3: Community-Led Projects

Portfolio of Landscape Projects:

- ❖ Planned and directed by local CSOs and NGOs and carried out through community action
- ❖ An interlinked set of locally driven solutions

Goals:

- ❖ Capacity development through learning-by-doing
- ❖ Positive changes in livelihoods, ecosystems, governance that inspire further action



Step 4: Learning and Knowledge Generation

Adaptive Management: learning, innovation, and improvement based on observed results. Yields locally adapted solutions.

- ❖ Project monitoring and evaluation to assess performance and progress toward goals
- ❖ Ex Poste Baseline Assessment to gauge overall impact and identify successful innovations
- ❖ Knowledge products to document and communicate learning



Step 5: Dissemination and Upscaling of Success

- ❖ COMDEKS' global impact rests on its commitment to share lessons learned. Dissemination of knowledge products and creation of knowledge networks are crucial to scaling up.
- Sharing best practices spurs adoption in other landscapes
- Documenting successes garners attention of decision-makers and provides policy input at regional and national levels
- Community members are most effective advocates



Lesson: Success Starts with the Participatory Landscape Planning Process

Four crucial processes occur during the Community Consultations, Baseline Assessment, and Landscape Strategy development:

- **Lasting relationships are established among stakeholders.** This provides the fuel for collective action and the basis for multi-stakeholder partnerships.
 - **The knowledge of local people is recognized and their right to participate in landscape governance is endorsed.** This is the basis of local empowerment and the leadership of local organizations.
 - **Landscape resilience takes on local meaning.** This is the basis for the vision embodied in the Landscape Strategy.
 - **A landscape perspective is adopted.** This allows the effort to transcend strictly local concerns and become the common vision of many communities.
- **Take-away: Time invested in these initial participatory processes is time well spent and will pay dividends later on.**

Lesson: Integrated Solutions are Anchored in Livelihoods and Food Security

The Landscape Strategy provides a framework for an integrated set of local projects that explicitly link the economic, social, and environmental factors at work in the landscape.

- **From the start, the project portfolio is designed to be integrated and interlinked, rather than sectoral.**
 - Each initiative contains activities that contribute to local livelihoods, increase household incomes, empower local families, and help restore the productivity of local ecosystems.
- **The emphasis on local livelihoods and food security is important.** Feedback from the field shows the popularity of activities that address alternative livelihoods and sustainable agriculture. These activities create a context for other activities directed toward landscape recovery and better governance.
- **Take-away: The project portfolio must carefully balance activities that directly affect household well-being with activities that gradually improve landscape conditions and governance.**

Lesson: COMDEKS Processes are Time-Intensive, Making Time Management Difficult

COMDEKS deals with processes that are inherently time-consuming, but the timeframe for accomplishing these is limited, creating a tension.

- Organizing and carrying out Community Consultations
- Conducting the Baseline Assessment
- Drawing up and approving the Landscape Strategy
- Capacity building so that CBOs can design and manage landscape projects
- Assembling a balanced portfolio of local projects
- Waiting for measurable landscape changes to manifest
- Extracting and applying lessons to new work

A common observation from local groups and NCs is how difficult it is to fit these essential steps into the COMDEKS grant cycle.

- **Take-away: Scheduling tensions are hard to escape, increasing the need for sound sequencing and time management. But compressing steps is often counterproductive—some things take time to mature!**

Lesson: Local Outreach Drives Grassroots Scaling and is Part of the Internal Development of Local CBOs

CBOs that participate in COMDEKS are very effective advocates for the COMDEKS approach, spreading it to other communities in a process of “grassroots scaling.”

- Works through direct outreach, peer-to-peer networks, trainings, knowledge products, and mentoring. COMDEKS CBOs become landscape experts.

At the same time, scaling activities are good for local CBOs:

- The process of identifying trends, distilling lessons from community experience, and communicating these through a variety of knowledge products helps grow the analytical and outreach capacities of CBOs, and expands their internal capacities too—their ability to manage their own affairs and grow as an organization.
- **Take-away: Grassroots scaling brings internal and external growth. Encouraging grassroots outreach efforts should be an integral part of the COMDEKS process.**

Lesson: Sustaining COMDEKS Achievements Requires Development of a “Landscape Community”

Achieving and sustaining the vision of the Landscape Strategy requires the development of a “landscape community”—a group of engaged stakeholders who understand but can look beyond the village or town level.

A multi-stakeholder group with representatives from:

- CBOs and NGOs from different communities in the landscape
- Government agencies with resource governance responsibilities
- Support organizations

COMDEKS projects nurture this kind of group. They are linked by:

- A common understanding of local conditions
- A common vision for landscape resilience
- A common set of project experiences

➤ **Take-away: Multi-stakeholder partnerships are the basis of a “Landscape Community” that can be a key source of ideas, expertise, and advocacy for good landscape practices after COMDEKS activities end.**

What's Next?: COMDEKS Will Help Shape the “Landscape” of OP-6 and OP-7

As COMDEKS Phase II ends, COMDEKS insights and lessons will find immediate use in SGP's OP-6 and OP-7.

OP-6 Guidance calls for SGP Country Programmes to transition to a Community-Based Landscape and Seascape Approach.

- The COMDEKS Programme will provide a ready source of field-proven experience and examples of this approach.



What's Next?: COMDEKS Will Help Shape the “Landscape” of OP-6 and OP-7

COMDEKS findings and experiences will have particular relevance for the 15 Upgrading Country Programmes—the oldest and most mature SGP programs.

- There is great potential for fruitful interaction between COMDEKS and these Upgrading Country Programmes as they develop their portfolios in OP-6 and OP-7.
- Take-away: COMDEKS insights will continue to grow and be enriched by “cross-pollination” from the Upgrading Country Programmes during OP-6 and beyond.



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Thank You!

