E-Discussion/E-debate on Agricultural reconstruction on Small Islands after a climate disaster (Natural disaster).

Wrap-up of Day two and three contributions

Contributions from Olu (The Netherlands):

Scenario building is increasingly being used as an approach for robust planning for policy in a number of sub regions especially in the area of challenges of climate change and other disasters. SIDS can explore the use of this approach policy planning. Lessons learnt from other regions could provide some useful insights for such venture in SIDS
There is much awareness on climate change and its economic importance in the region and many efforts and initiative to address climate change. It will be good to reflect how the different efforts on climate change and on-going initiatives have (have not) created synergies among them for more effective response to climate change and disasters. Experiences from previous projects can help to inform the design and implementation of new ones. What practical mechanisms can be used to improve such synergy?
I would like to read the insights and views of colleagues

Moderation:

CCAFS - a CGIAR research program on FS, Agriculture and Climate change - has issued a report that can give hints on Q3. Would facility such as the Caribbean Global index insurance (see PDF) works in other part of the world? What lessons from index insurance can be learnt from other parts of the world? Please find the link to the report here : https://cgspace.cgiar.org/bitstream/handle/10568/53101/CCAFS_Report14.pdf

They have also developed an infographics to explain how index insurance can be helpful to smallholder farms: http://bit.ly/194VVmp

Contributions from Jean Claude (country not specified):

It's not easy for a developing country to gain life quickly after a strong hurricane or any other kind of disaster, I know some cases , where countries after experiencing erosions, they fall into a big famine and some people begin to flee their countries or migrate to some part of the country, because all the natural fertilizers have been taken away by the erosion and it's not easy for them to exploit the soil again, since it has been damaged. for the hurricanes, they destroy the way of communicating as infrastructure so roads can't be accessible, telecommunication become a big issue since everything has been taken away, so accessing the remote areas becomes something not feasible, so the result harvest will no longer be taken to market places, fertilizers will no longer get to farmers in villages, so damage to infrastructure is something to be discouraged in order to keep agriculture production increase.

Contributions from Samson (The Netherlands):

I can only agree with you on this one. Furthermore, in order for crops to grow, the soil needs to be healthy which means that the indispensable nutrients should be readily available. A soil that is poor on nutrients (after a natural disaster happened) is a huge challenge for countries faced with Natural disasters especially in the context of Small Islands where the land availability is already a problem due to other problems (over population, competition with urban development etc.).
One of the questions here was about the Indigenous knowledge (IK). Could IK help in mitigating impact of Natural Disaster?
I think it is good to begin by saying that we have always faced with natural disasters over the years and even centuries. In many parts of the world (e.g. Islands), people have managed to survive through natural disaster and thanks to indigenous knowledge or traditional knowledge. The knowledge on IK has been used from generations to generations. Many studies have proven that the usage of IK can help in reducing the impact of a disaster. It has also been demonstrated that Science must NOT neglect the importance of Indigenous knowledge and that both can help in reducing the impact of natural disaster (http://bit.ly/1Cx1nuA, http://bit.ly/1Lx7XHb, http://bit.ly/1MQWbTt).

In most island countries in the Pacific region, IK is very much alive in the community in a sense that it helps in not only in the reduction of the impact of a natural disaster but it (IK) is widely used in all walks of life (traditional medicine

in health, agriculture, fishing etc.). Pacific region is a region that is prone to cyclones and for many many years Pacific Islanders rely heavily on IK to minimize the impact of natural disasters. For examples, houses are build in a certain way that they will be rooted by the strong gale force wind. Another example would be food preparation and storage which will then be used in a period like the Cyclone. Nowadays, we tend to forget our IK or our Traditional knowledge as we are running into modern ways (sometimes called western ways) and that do not match the environment we live in (in that case islands). A very good example would be Cyclone PAM in Vanuatu where most concrete houses have fallen and even caused injuries to people. Unofficial responses in the country have said that people living in traditional house have not been injured as opposed to concrete.

Contributions from Laureene (The Netherlands):

Climate change is a "shock" and by shock,t fits in with the social shocks, health shocks, political shocks, environmental shocks and any other type that causes distraction to communities there by compromising their food security and way of life. Because we never really know when these "shocks" will hit, we are seeing a constant threat to people's lives, food and nutrition security and it is becoming more important than ever to help people become more resilient, not just to be able to recover from shocks but to be able to improve their well being and be less vulnerable to the next shock. Therefore, we need to be able to identify key knowledge gaps and highlight policy programs needed to address specific shocks. Haiti is still re-building

Quite a lot of emphasis is being put on climate change, but approximately 1.5billion people now live in areas of conflict (World Bank 2011) - please allow me to digress, i will get to the point. Conflict displaces people not just in the country affected but in the receiving countries too, this puts more pressure on the physical resources and human capital for the receiving countries and the affected countries. Something that climate change shares, along with other "shocks" like floods, tsunamis, etc. The population shifts affect agriculture production thereby threatening household level food and nutrition security. Humanitarian activities in response to shocks have saved lives, but in many cases done little to help communities withstand the next shock that comes along (Headey and Kennedy 2012). However, longer term development activities designed to ensure FNS, poverty reduction, economic growth, have done little to incorporate responses to inevitable shocks, and could even exacerbate vulnerabilities

Sure, we talk of the MDGs, SDGs, XYZDGs, but until we can prepare communities to address the challenges raised by shocks and link these 'possibilities" to longer term development activities, until resilience can be incorporated as a development goal, we will always be faced with vulnerabilities. Our food systems are crucial to building resilience and this is not just for individuals but whole communities, at the same time, the same systems need to be resilient to shock to help preserve food reserves and ensure accessibility when shocks occur. How can we create food systems that contribute to human resilience through FNS while making it equally resilient to shock?

Experiences of building resilience from rural development projects; examples from the Dhamar Participatory Rural Development Project (DPRDP) - http://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/yeme...

AND the AL-Dhala Community Resource Management Project (ADCRMP) - http://operations.ifad.org/web/ifad/operations/country/project/tags/yeme... both funded by IFAD...sure, they may not be the "top" case studies, these experiences can be scaled out elsewhere, especially given that the reason for the outcomes of the projects was due to insecurity of the region

I am referencing conflict here, but it like climate change is a "shock" and perhaps we should not look at climate change in isolation but consider other "un natural" disasters, other "un expected" scenarios that threaten people's state of well-being, community assets, safety, livelihoods.. etc

I would like to understand what the role of indigenous knowledge is in the mitigation or adaption to natural disasters - but this is my PhD research question :)

Contributions from Cheryl (Australia):

A couple of examples from TC Pam is communities that, when they heard a cyclone was coming, dug holes in the ground and buried containers of water and food. It was safe underground and once the cyclone had passed they

could dig it up again for consumption. I have heard that many people on the outer islands sheltered in caves instead of in buildings, which may have prevented some deaths. People also have local knowledge about sources of fresh water springs which provide valuable drinking water

There is also much TK around agriculture (timing of planting/harvesting based on phases of the moon or other natural signals, pest & disease control through cultural and herbal methods, companion planting, etc) which is held collectively and differs from community to community even across a single island. A colleague of mine based at the Vanuatu Agriculture College has been doing some work on this over the last couple of years, surveying communities and compiling the info shared, and is incorporating it into their curriculum so that young people interested in ag are able to learn it too

UNSECO's ICHCAP program has a publication on 'Traditional Knowledge for Adapting to Climate Change: Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Pacific', which you can download here - http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002253/225313E.pdf [PDF]

Contributions from Enricka (Trinidad and Tobago):

A1. At present I am doing a course called SIDS Natural Resource Management as part of my post graduate studies at the University of the West Indies, Trinidad and we recently looked at climate change, land use and the rising seas levels. As part of a case studied we looked at Barbados who if you are not aware suffers from water scarcity.

Barbados however has some of the most advance adaption and mitigation polices in the Caribbean. They have been replanting the sea grass to help deal with erosion on the coast.

Has well as they have strict physical planning policies that dictate where citizens can build. Plus the government has developed a relationship with the hotel owners on the coast and beaches to help rebuild the coast line

Contributions from Samson (The Netherlands):

it's true that our Islands need sometimes to take tougher measures to prevent our people from building habitations in places prone to natural disasters.

I think with the current situations we are faced with today in our environment, countries need to share their policies on best practices. We need to consolidate our efforts when it comes to coping with the impact and the aftershock of natural disasters in all areas especially in Agriculture.

More information about our contributors (Biodata) will be inserted in the E-debate synthesis.