PROGRAM REPORT

SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE (SCC) 2023
POKHARA

2023
Nepal-U.S. Alumni Network (NUSAN) collaborated with Institute for Strategic and Socio-Economic Research (ISSR) to organize the Summit on Climate Change (SCC) 2023-Pokhara, with financial support from the U.S. Embassy, Nepal. NUSAN and ISSR served as co-implementers of the Climate Action Champions Network (CACN), aiming to harness the potential of youth in the region.

The 2-day Summit on Climate Change (SCC) witnessed active participation from over 60 CACN cohort Nepal, Wider pool, and USG alumni.

Throughout the duration of two days, the summit curated a remarkable lineup of esteemed keynote speakers who shared their expertise and insights on the subject matter. Attendees had the privilege of engaging in interactive workshops, where they actively participated and gained practical knowledge. Moreover, the summit provided an immersive experience in the local context, allowing participants to understand and appreciate the unique environmental challenges and sustainability practices specific to the region. The event also fostered valuable networking opportunities, enabling individuals to connect, collaborate, and build meaningful relationships with like-minded professionals and experts in the field.

The program aimed to create a collaborative platform for USG alumni and climate action champions in the region, enabling knowledge-sharing and collective action. The Summit on Climate Change (SCC) empowered participants to become effective advocates for climate action in their communities by providing them with essential skills, knowledge, and networks. Bringing together over 60 CACN cohort Nepal, Wider pool, and USG alumni, the program harnessed their potential and inspired collective action towards addressing climate change challenges. Through keynote speakers, interactive workshops, immersion in the local context, and networking opportunities, the program fostered a deeper understanding of regional environmental challenges and sustainability practices, promoting collaborative efforts for a more sustainable future.
Pravina Amatya, Vice-President of NUSAN, commenced the Summit on Climate Change, with a welcoming address on behalf of NUSAN. She expressed gratitude to the Climate Champions Network Cohort Nepal, its wider pool, and USG alumni for their valuable participation and support.

Naresh Shrestha, Board of Director at ISSR, welcomed all participants attending the Summit on Climate Change. He emphasized the importance of collaborative efforts for effective climate action.

Santosh Paudel, a member of the Climate Action Champions Network Nepal Cohort, delivered inspiring remarks on the importance of climate action during his welcome address.
Dhan Raj Acharya, the Mayor of Pokhara Metropolitan City, emphasized various climate change initiatives during his speech as a special guest. He mentioned that Pokhara Municipality is actively working towards declaring Pokhara as a tourism capital, with a budget allocation of approximately 7.5 billion. Acharya expressed his goal to transform Pokhara Metropolis into a carbon-neutral city. Furthermore, he highlighted an ongoing collaboration with KOICA to develop green systems, with an investment of about Rs 6 billion.

Hon. Surendra Pandey, the Chief Minister of Gandaki Province, graced the program as the Chief Guest, underlining the paramount significance of public awareness regarding climate change. In his address, Pandey expressed his concern that the current efforts to raise awareness on climate change are inadequate and emphasized the necessity for intensified action. Highlighting the commitment of Gandaki Province, Pandey stated, "We have allocated a budget to effectively address the adverse impacts of climate change." He called upon all stakeholders, including local governments, to unite in combating the effects of climate change.

Garrett E. Wilkerson, Public Affairs Chief at the U.S. Embassy in Nepal, emphasized the United States substantial investments of over $270 billion to mitigate carbon emissions. He highlighted the active demonstration of adaptation and resilience measures, including in Nepal, through organizations like USAID. Mr. Wilkerson reiterated the US Government's commitment to supporting disaster resilience efforts and providing assistance for hydropower development in Nepal.
Ms. Janita Gurung (PhD), Intervention Manager, Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC), Intervention Manager of Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC), delivered an insightful speech on the importance of acting locally to adapt to global climate change impacts.

She emphasized the need for community involvement and highlighted the various initiatives and strategies implemented by HWC to mitigate the challenges posed by climate change. Her speech provided valuable insights into the practical aspects of addressing climate change at the community level.

RESULTS FROM AUDIENCE POLL

During her engaging session, Ms. Janita skillfully employed the Mentimeter platform to gather valuable insights from the participants on pressing climate change questions. Through this interactive approach, she effectively surveyed the audience, fostering active participation and encouraging diverse perspectives on the topic.

The survey offered valuable insights into participants' backgrounds, perspectives on climate actions, and their specific areas of interest. This comprehensive exploration provided a deeper understanding of their diverse views on addressing climate change. These insights will help tailor future discussions and initiatives to meet participants' needs and interests effectively.
Ms. Prakriti Bhattarai Basnet, Chairperson, of Political Literacy for Women, conducted a session on Narrative Building: Crafting Compelling Stories for Effective Communication and Engagement focused on equipping participants with the skills to craft compelling stories for effective communication and engagement.

During the capacity-building session, Mr. Pradip Khatiwada, General Secretary of NUSAN, explained about the session which was primarily aimed at enhancing participants' knowledge and skills in addressing climate change challenges through informative and engaging presentations delivered by expert speakers.

Mr. Kushal Gurung, CEO of Wind Power, Nepal, presented on renewable energy solutions for sustainable communities. Attendees gained insights into community-based renewable energy projects and their potential for mitigating climate change impacts.

The session highlighted successful case studies and practical approaches to implementing renewable energy initiatives at the community level.

Dr. Hemu Kafle, Founder & Director of Research at Kathmandu Institute of Applied Sciences (KIAS, Nepal), conducted a session on assessing and monitoring the impact of extreme climatic conditions. The session provided attendees with an understanding of the scientific methods and tools used to assess the impacts of climate change on various sectors.

Dr. Kafle shared her expertise and research findings to highlight the importance of comprehensive monitoring and assessment for effective climate change adaptation strategies.
Following the capacity building session, an engaging World Café session took place, where participants delved into a range of significant topics. Led by five different team leaders, the discussions centered around five distinct climate diplomacy agendas. This interactive format allowed participants to actively engage in meaningful conversations, exchange ideas, and explore diverse perspectives on each agenda. The World Café session fostered a collaborative environment that encouraged participants to contribute their insights and collectively deepen their understanding of the complexities surrounding climate diplomacy.

Mr. Rajan Thapa, National Project Manager at WWF Nepal, led a session on climate education and youth engagement.

The session focused on the significance of climate education and strategies to effectively engage youth in climate change initiatives. Attendees learned about the importance of youth involvement in shaping sustainable and resilient communities.
Each team leader facilitated group discussions and encouraged active participation from all participants. Through this collaborative approach, attendees had the chance to share their perspectives, exchange ideas, and contribute to the collective learning experience.

The World Café session fostered meaningful interactions and enabled a comprehensive exploration of the key themes related to climate change on following topics.

- Climate Finance
- Climate Policy
- Climate Adaptation
- Carbon capture & storage
- Renewable Energy
Following the World Café session, the program continued with a captivating Speech/Q&A session on the topic of GESI (Gender Equality and Social Inclusion) and Natural Resource Governance.

The session was titled "Promoting Inclusive Governance Structures and Decision-making Processes in Natural Resource Management" and was conducted by Sujita Dhakal, an esteemed GESI & Wildlife Researcher at Resources Lab.

The Speech/Q&A session provided a platform for attendees to engage in thoughtful discussions, pose questions, and gain valuable insights into promoting inclusivity in natural resource governance. Participants benefited from Sujita Dhakal's extensive knowledge and expertise in the field, further enriching their understanding of the subject matter.
During the closing speech of Day 1 of the Summit on Climate Change (SCC)-Pokhara, 2023, Mr. Baman Kumar Ghimire, Secretary of NUSAN, highlighted key activities of the day and emphasized the importance of climate advocacy and collaboration.

Mr. Ghimire also reinforced the importance of individual and collective efforts in combating climate change.

During the entire two-day event, a dedicated Parking Lot (a box) was managed, where participants who were interested in learning about the US Embassy's Grant Processes (notices, application, implementation, M&E, etc.) could drop their queries at any time throughout the event. Dhurba B. Shah, Ph.D., Public Engagement Specialist (Emerging Voices) from the Embassy of the United States of America, addressed the participants' grant-related queries that were received in the parking lot.
During Trip A of the Summit on Climate Change, participants had the opportunity to join the Armed Police Force (APF) Nepal, No. 4 Muktinath Brigade Pokhara and APF Nepal No.24 Kalika Battalion, Pokhara.

The trip involved engaging activities such as boating and live demonstrations, which provided practical and tangible examples of the challenges and solutions related to climate change and disaster management.

During the trip, participants gained firsthand knowledge about the various aspects of climate change and its impact on communities. They were sensitized to the crucial role played by the Armed Police Force in addressing these issues and were able to witness their dedication and expertise in action. The boating activity allowed participants to explore the natural surroundings and understand the vulnerabilities and risks associated with changing climatic conditions.

Live demonstrations further enhanced the learning experience by showcasing practical strategies and techniques for disaster risk reduction. Participants were able to witness the implementation of various measures and protocols to mitigate the impact of disasters and promote community resilience. This hands-on approach provided valuable insights into the importance of preparedness, response, and recovery in the face of climate-related challenges.

By actively participating in activities and witnessing real-life demonstrations, they gained valuable knowledge and skills that can be applied in their own communities and contribute to building a more resilient and sustainable future.
During Trip B of the Summit on Climate Change, participants had the opportunity to visit the Himalayan Life Plastic and Waste Management and Recycling Centre, which was coordinated by Santosh Poudel, a Climate Action Champions Network (CACN) Champion based in Pokhara.

The objective of this visit was to enhance participants' understanding and sensitivity towards recycling and waste management initiatives.

Participants gained valuable insights into the operations and processes involved in effective waste management and recycling. They observed the collection, sorting, and treatment of plastic waste, witnessing firsthand how these materials were being repurposed and recycled to minimize environmental impact.

Santosh Poudel played a pivotal role in coordinating the visit and ensuring a comprehensive learning experience for the participants. He shared his knowledge and expertise on recycling and waste management, emphasizing the importance of these initiatives in mitigating the environmental consequences of improper waste disposal.

The visit to the Himalayan Life Plastic and Waste Management and Recycling Centre provided participants with a practical understanding of the challenges and solutions related to waste management. It served as an inspiration for participants to actively promote and adopt sustainable practices in their own communities, contributing to a cleaner and greener future.
During Trip C of the Summit on Climate Change, participants had the opportunity to explore Damside, Pokhara through a guided nature walk.

The nature walk was facilitated by conservationist and journalist, Krishna Mani Baral, who provided valuable insights into the contextual climate and alarming Fewa lake water level issues. He also highlighted the importance of vulture conservation and discussed waste management challenges in the vicinity of Damside.

As the participants walked, Krishna Mani Baral shared his knowledge, engaging participants in informative discussions about the ecological significance of the area.

The hike led the participants towards the tail of Fewa Lake, where they were able to witness firsthand the contextual preservation efforts and appreciate the significance of nature in the region.

Through this trip, the participants gained a deeper understanding of the local climate challenges, water conservation, vulture conservation, and waste management issues.

The nature walk provided an immersive experience, allowing participants to connect with the environment and appreciate the importance of preserving nature for a sustainable future.
Following a day of immersive trip sessions, participants returned to the hotel for lunch. They then split into their respective groups to reflect on their field visits and prepare presentations for the plenary session.

In their groups, participants engaged in discussions about their firsthand experiences and identified solutions for the observed challenges. These group sessions allowed for 40 minutes of in-depth brainstorming and idea generation.

Afterward, all participants gathered in the main hall for the plenary session. Each group presented their learnings and shared insights with the entire audience. The presentations facilitated knowledge exchange and stimulated thought-provoking discussions.

The sharing of observations, solutions, and learnings enriched the participants' collective understanding. They gained valuable insights from diverse perspectives and experiences, fostering a collaborative learning environment.
During the concluding moments of the Summit on Climate Change, Sachin Timalsena, Master of Ceremony and NUSAN Executive Member, extended an invitation to the participants for a reflective session. In this session, attendees were encouraged to share their thoughts and provide feedback on their experience during the two-day summit.

This reflective session served as a platform for the participants to voice their opinions and reflect on their experiences during the summit. It provided a valuable opportunity for the organizers to receive feedback and make informed decisions to further enhance the quality and impact of future climate change events.
In the closing session, Garett Wilkerson, Public Affairs Chief at the U.S. Embassy in Nepal, expressed his appreciation for the active participation and advocacy demonstrated by the participants throughout the Summit on Climate Change.

He congratulated participants for their valuable contributions and highlighted the success of the event.

Mr. Wilkerson commended the participants for their commitment to addressing climate change and emphasized the importance of continued collaboration and action in creating a sustainable future.

During the closing ceremony, Saroj Bista, President of NUSAN emphasized the significance of sustained collaboration in addressing climate change.

He expressed unwavering confidence in the positive impact of the summit and highlighted NUSAN's commitment to this cause.

Mr. Bista also mentioned the organization's active engagement, including its social media presence and the ID generation feature on the NUSAN website for registered members.

Mr. Bista also extended heartfelt gratitude to the co-implementers, expert speakers, delegates/participants, representatives from American Corners, Organizing Committee and volunteers of the Summit recognizing their dedication and commitment to combating climate change and reiterated the importance of their continued efforts in driving positive change.

SCC news in Media:
https://www.xotkari.com/article?id=2c24dd2987dfe2cfd537f97a2be4a496
https://english.khabarhub.com/2023/30/309076/
https://ekantipur.com/pradesh-4/2023/06/28/1687966655559572427

PARTICIPANTS REVIEW

CACN (Wider Pool)  22.8%
CACN Cohort, Nepal  17.5%
USG Alumni  59.6%

END OF SCC - POKHARA 2023