



Asia Development Alliance

Annual report: April 2022- March 2023

Executive summary

A year of New Hope!

Before the COVID-19 pandemic struck, Asia had been a global success story in fostering economic growth and reducing poverty. The current context is characterized by uncertainties and changes, including democratic backsliding, disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and emerging health crisis, global financial crises, the worsening climate emergency, economic recession caused by Russia-Ukraine war and overall shrinking civic space.

COVID-19, rising interest rates, and sluggish growth worldwide made it difficult for Asia's big economies to roar in 2022. A COVID-free world would have resulted in 4.7 million more people living in dire poverty in 2021, and 9.3 million more jobs created that year. In spite of attempts at recovery, the region's aggregate output this year is expected to remain below what it would have been without COVID-19. The possibility of another pandemic is not far-fetched. However, the world already has seen the vulnerability of our public health sector as well as a global collaboration of vaccine distribution in times of crisis. It is needless to say, a shift is critically needed, from reactive responses toward preparation and prevention measures.

For Asian countries to remain competitive in the global economy, it is essential to address rising income inequality. As we have learned from countries like Srilanka, Myanmar, and Afghanistan this year—growing inequality undermines the foundations of society and is a bane to growth. A rising income and credit gap impair education and skill development for those with low skill levels, diminishing labor productivity. As a result of rising inequality, social cohesion is also compromised.

ADA together with its members working to strengthen the capacity of national CSO platform to influence public policies and effectiveness and impact of civic engagement and advocacy on the SDGs at the local and national level, regional and global levels with focus on monitoring and review of UN Sustainable Development Goals.

ADA as the Asia Civil Society platform, strongly believes that our world is one in which meaningful participation and partnership exist between governments, international institutions, and civil society organizations; where political and economic power is actively shared between the Global North and Global South; and in which countries end militarism, while meeting and exceeding their international obligations, including the Paris Climate Accords and Sustainable Development Goals.

Now the time is to act. Let us act to end inequality from all spheres of life and act to build peace, justice, strong and accountable institutions.

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ADA Governing body

We organized our 9th Annual General Body Meeting, chaired by Mr. Hideki Wakabayashi (JANIC) ADA chair ! Thanks so much for your guidance and support past 4 years as ADA Steering Committee Member and Chair! We also want to thank two more outgoing Steering Committee Members Arjun Bhattarai (NFN) and Sun Putheary (CCC) for your constant support !



We welcome three newly elected SC members
Denison Jayasooria (CSO SDG Alliance, Malaysia)
Jay Hung (Taiwan Aid)
Harsh Jaitli (VANI , India)

ADA current SC members are now (2022-2024)
Jamila Asanova (ARGO, Kazakhstan)
Urantsooj Gombosuren (CHRD Mongolia)
Linh Nguyen (MSD Vietnam)
Abdul Awal (SUPRO Bangaldesh)
Denison Jayasooria (CSO SDG Alliance, Malaysia)
Jay Hung (Taiwan Aid)
Harsh Jaitli (VANI , India)

Thanks to all ADA members for your solidarity and support !

Brief history of ADA: Our work and achievement

Asia Development Alliance (ADA) is a regional network of 28 National NGO Platforms (NPF) in 19th countries in Asia. ADA works to strengthen the capacities of members to ensure their effective and efficient participation in achieving the SDGs of Agenda 2030. ADA also advocates for the defense of an enabling environment for civil society organisations in the context of continued shrinking civic space to influence public policy at the national, regional and international level.

ADA is also a regional member of Forus, CIVICUS AGNA, TAP and other global CSO networks and coalitions engaged in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Since its inception in February, 2013, ADA has emerged as a strong network for members, as a credible, legitimate, effective and sustainable institution, actively contributing to building it as an international community with growing membership with a pan Asia outreach.

As an international CSO learning platform, ADA brings together and strengthens CSO networks at global, regional and national level through joint collaborative efforts on preparing advocacy reports on national VNR process, issues of policy coherence, climate change, producing a tool kit on CSOs engagement in the VNR process, national indicators for goal 16, global report on goal 16 based on national case studies in collaboration with the global platforms like TAP network, Forus etc.

ADA is reclaiming the discourse of development and connecting language, bringing forward diverse opinions of members, prioritizing areas linked to SDGs, deploying civic diplomacy to secure resources for CSO networks and helping in pushing the local agenda and defending the CS space (Central Asia, NE Asia)

In an efforts to localise SDGs , ADA has been organising training and capacity building initiatives called Glocal Advocacy for leadership in Asia (GALA) at regional, sub-regional and national levels, a bottom – up approach to train more than 500 CSO professionals/activists who have been leading their training and advocacy efforts to engage with various stakeholders on SDGs implementation, monitoring and review mechanism at the local levels apart from representation at various platforms. ADA has organised these trainings in Bangkok, Nepal, Cambodia, Bhutan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Kazakhstan etc. to name a few with support from Forus and KOICA, TAP Network and other regional platforms.

Vision: Strong CSO Platforms representing inclusive voices and the citizens enjoy all human rights.

Mission: Strengthening civil, society action through capacitating, communicating, collaborating & coordinating and advocating

Who we work with:

Asian civil society: By Asian civil society we mean firstly our member national platforms, individual CSO members working for achieving the SDGs in their home countries advocating at sub-national, national, regional and global levels, other local level civil society organizations and movements working on human rights, environment and development issues relevant to the SDGs, particularly those of youth, regional and national networks who are challenging the structural challenges in engagements for a just development policies and practices.

Strategic partners: Including but not limited to, international and regional non-governmental organisations, international and regional networks & alliances, funders and non-traditional allies such as artists and art institutions, academia, research institutions, media and advocacy platforms to build solidarity and amplify our strategic interventions for achieving the SDGs, introducing

human rights based approach, enhancing civic space for development policy strategy and planning in Asia.¹

State institutions and policy makers: Institutions and/or mechanisms for influencing pro SDGs policies and regulations and enhancing accountability at the national level such as Development Planning, Managing and Oversight Institutions (ministries, committees or commissions), likeminded parliamentarians, executives including ministers and officials.

Mechanisms: We facilitate the participation of member national platforms, individual member CSOs, Asian civil society representatives and conduct advocacy with international and regional mechanisms such as the United Nations High Level Political Forum on the SDGs, UN ESCAP Asia Pacific Forum on SDGs, sub-regional Multi-stakeholders Forums on the SDGs, C20 forums...

Diplomatic community, bilateral and multilateral development and financial organizations: Including embassies, missions and international development organizations, development banks and their representatives at international, regional and national level from across the world to influence their agenda, discussions and to achieve outputs in favor of Asian civil society partnerships to contribute in achieving the SDGs in particular the SDG16 with all targets, SDG17.14, SDG17.16 and SDG 17.17 targets in their countries.

The context we work:

External analysis: The current context is characterized by uncertainties and changes, including democratic backsliding, disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and emerging diseases, global financial crises, the worsening climate emergency and environmental degradation, economic recession caused by Russia-Ukraine war and overall shrinking civic space. Whether direct or indirect, all these impact the progress in achieving the SDGs. In response to the challenges Asian governments tend to adopt authoritarian models of governance. This can be observed through the cases in number of Asian countries like Myanmar, Afghanistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and many others how autocratic regimes come to replace democratic institutions. CSOs in Asian countries face common challenges with the fragile democracy and hostile governments. CSOs access to foreign funding has been restricted by different laws such as the Foreign Contributions Regulations Act (FCRA) in India, or the Foreign Donation (Voluntary Activities) Regulation Act in Bangladesh . It becomes a common trend in developing countries to tighten the regulations on financial transaction and reporting in the name of prevention from terrorist attacks and money laundering. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia-Ukraine war are other contributing factors hindering Asian civil society to source and mobilise financial resources for sustainable operations.

Despite these challenges and the context ADA is situated in, we are encouraged by our members and partners' advocacy work to mobilise for achieving the SDGs, protecting civic space,

¹ Kindly [click here](#) to read our full strategy paper.

democratic governance, access to information, the right to participation in decisions for development priorities, demanding accountability and effectiveness from governments to deliver their commitments to sustainable development. A growing number of civil society beyond the ADA membership are equipped to engage with regional and international mechanisms on the SDGs, especially the UN HLPF, in attempts to amplify voices of people by providing firsthand messages of their issues.

ADA will continue its role to encourage and support members to build their capacity for engaging with governments to improve policy coherence for sustainable development (SDG 17.14 target), to enhance global partnerships complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources for achieving the SDGs (SDG 17.16), to monitor and demand the commitments of governments to encourage and promote effective partnerships including civil society partnerships building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships (SDG 17.17).

In the year 2022 we have worked on various levels of capacity building trainings as well as outreach and advocacy events. Brief below

Outreach and Advocacy level

A. Report Launch! Climate Justice & Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development - Lessons from the Asia-Pacific Region

The report is an initial study on Climate Justice & PCSD, containing case studies drawn from 17 countries from 4 different sub-regions in Asia and the Pacific.

The report being launched was compiled by the Asia Development Alliance, in collaboration with Forus and Janic, and with the contributions of various civil society leaders who have worked extensively on the 2030 Agenda & Climate Justice.



REPORT LAUNCH

**Climate Justice & Policy Coherence
for Sustainable Development -
Lessons from the Asia-Pacific
Region**

Thursday 9 March
14:00 New Delhi, 17:30 Tokyo, 20:30 Fiji, 9.30 Paris

REGISTER!



Read it here <https://ada2030.org/publication-detail.php?url=climate-justice-and-policy-coherence-for-sustainable-development---lessons-from-asia-pacific>

Publications and statement

- ✓ [Declaration of the SDG16+](#)
- ✓ [Asia Pacific SDG partnership-report](#)
- ✓ [Asia and the pacific SDG Progress report](#)

Co-organizers/Side events

A. UN ESCAP Bangkok- Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development - Side Event

Overview and Comparative Analysis of SDG Implementation in Asia through the Voluntary National Reviews (2016 to 2022) and People's Scorecard (PSC) (2020-2022)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at the crossroads in 2023, a half-way mark of the 2030 Agenda roadmap (2026-2030). Alarm bells are already ringing in many monitoring reports by both international organizations and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). In only a few countries SDGs are on the right track, while many are too slow, behind schedule, or off-track. 2023 is a time to critically assess the SDGs for the last 7 years (2016-2022), to draw on the lessons learned, and to formulate strategies for the coming 7/8 years (2023-2030). The proposed side-event aims at providing a comprehensive diagnosis of the status, trends and challenges to

SDGs through international comparative data and monitoring reports by research institutions and CSOs such as Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report, Sustainable Development Solution Network (SDSN), People's Scorecard (PSC), etc.

Organisers: Asia Development Alliance (ADA), Asia Civil Society Partnership for Sustainable Development/SDGs (APSD)

Co-organisers: Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC) South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE) Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD) Forus International Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)

B. Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD) virtual side event

Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

Date - March 30th,2023

Organiser: Karachi Research Chair (KRC)

Co-organisers: Asia Development Alliance (ADA), Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN), Asia Pacific Regional CSOs Engagement Mechanism (APRCM), CEODECON

The Asia Pacific region is at the receiving end of severity of climate crisis, rapid biodiversity loss and ever-increasing pollution, with Asia accounting for one-third of the extreme weather events and climate disasters. The region is off track on the 2030 Agenda, unlikely to be achieved before 2065, while efficient COVID 19 recovery remains a pipedream urgently requiring policy coherence, across national, regional, and global processes. The side event explores country progress on Policy Coherence for Climate Action in Asia and the Pacific, in the light of PCSD report, as well as recommends strategies for inclusive, efficient, and accountable governance at the national levels that dovetailed with a regional and global call for action.

Training and Capacity building

1.GALA-ELSAH Training of Trainers (ToT) Finale

The GALA-ELSAH Training of Trainers (ToT) is an online capacity-building program for civil society advocates who are interested to learn and willing to conduct training programs at national and/or international level in Asia about how to engage in policy advocacy on the SDGs through human rights-based approach (HRBA) in partnership with ADA, the Korean Association of

Human Rights Studies (KAHRS) ,Asia Civil Society Partnership for Sustainable Development (APSD), JANIC, Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) and the Action for Sustainable Development (A4SD) with financial support from the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

This year 107 participants from all over Asia and including few from the United States and Europe applied for the 4 days training program from 1-4 November 2022. The four days training program, was preceded by 6 bi-monthly webinars with 10 home-works sub-divided into Quiz -A and B over the period of past 2.5 months. There were final 30 selected participants who finished the home-works along with attending most of the webinars and were given certificates.

The Two months long Online training came to an end from 1st November to 4th November, 2022.

2.GALA 2023 Capacity Development for the VNR Countries, Date 22-23 February 2023

Countries - Brunei, Cambodia, Fiji, Maldives, Mongolia, Singapore, Timor Leste, Tajikistan*, Turkmenistan*, Uzbekistan*, Vietnam.

SDGs under review this year are: Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation); Goal 7 (Affordable and clean energy); Goal 9 (Industry, innovation, and infrastructure); Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) and Goal 17 (Partnership for the Goals).

The VNR countries from Asia Pacific reporting are: Brunei, Cambodia, Fiji, Maldives, Mongolia, Singapore, Timor Leste, Tajikistan*, Turkmenistan*, Uzbekistan*, Vietnam.

ADA in HLPF

This High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) 2022 after two long years of Pandemic has been an amazing two weeks experience for both in-person and virtual participants. Though, the challenges of participation and process were still very much there, they were further aggravated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Many of our members and allies could not be physically present with us due to several political and logistical reasons. While there were many challenges for participation and significant delays with visas, nevertheless we worked within the NGO Major Group and with UN DESA to ensure that a wide range of community representatives was able to share their views at the UN.



We were very happy to work with many partners in Asia-Pacific and across the globe and got engaged via the Major Groups & Other Stakeholders, Asia Pacific Regional CSO Mechanism, and other ADA members and partners. We made sure to raise the diverse voices of the communities from the global south who are most affected by the converging crises of climate, Covid, and conflict heard at the UN!

However, we were still ready to demand and advocate for system change. There is still much work needed to ensure that we move towards a more accountable and effective Agenda 2030, for

a peaceful, sustainable and equitable future for all, and to recover from the pandemic to a system centered on human rights and care. It uplifts us, however, to know that we'll work together to bring this transformative change, and to bring to reality this system that we, envisioned collectively.

During the 2022 HLPF, 45 countries presented a Voluntary National Review (VNR), and four countries from Asia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Philippines and Kazakhstan presented the VNR. We coordinated with our members and partners in these countries along with APRCEM by being part of the VNR Task team and came up with some strong CSO statements. As part of the VNR task team, we ensured the participation of a new and strong voice to represent the countries in the UN.

Event photos of 2022-2023



ADA institutional Focus in 2023

Goal and Objectives

Goal: ADA aims to strengthen and empower the capacity of national CSO platforms that bring together a wide range of civil society experts and activists to enhance and influence public policies and effectiveness and impact of civic engagement apart from advocacy on SDGs by providing ground-breaking and innovative capacity-building tools and programs, and also learn from and benefits from the invaluable expertise, experiences and unique perspective of its members.

Objective 1: Training and Capacity Building

To become one of the key players in training and capacity building for effective advocacy and campaign through the human rights-based approach to development (HRBA) from national to global levels, using interlinking SDGs (with a focus on Goal 16) as a tool for multisectoral engagement.

Expected Outputs

ADA members have the capacity to be legitimate and influential actors representing NGOs' voices in their national environment.

Action

- ADA organizes (virtual or physical) training and capacity building events (GALA) and regional/national/and regional levels

Expected Outcomes

ADA's capacity to take the lead on international advocacy initiatives and to influence decision-making process

hosts 2nd SDG 16 Plus Forum- Asia

ADA's organizes side events during regional and global events like APFSD (Bangkok), HLPF (New York), C20 (Japan) various democracy forums, and other events in 2023

ADA's participation/representation at national/regional/global platform]

ADA co-authors research reports/position papers, shares with UN institutions/member states and present them at various national and internal forums

Declaration of SDG 16 Plus Forum-Asia

At least 2 ADA members speak as resource persons at various national/regional and global forums (APFSD, HLPF, C20)

One position paper on CSO's engagement in the G/C 20 before C20 2022 and Linking SDG 16 Plus in the discussions.

Objective 2: Advocacy

Enhance effectiveness in representation and coordination among Asian CSOs at the international level (regional and global)

Expected Outcomes

ADA's capacity to take the lead on international advocacy initiatives and to influence decision-making processes has been strengthened

Engagement with international organizations

ADA engages with the following key inter-governmental and multilateral institutions and processes in Asia and globally as a priority;

- 1) UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)
- 2) UNESCAP – Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (APFSD)
- 3) UNDP Regional Knowledge Exchange (RKE)
- 4) Asia Development Bank (ADB)
- 5) G20 Summit (G7, BRICS, MIKTA)
- 6) C7 and C20 summit

ADA at a glance



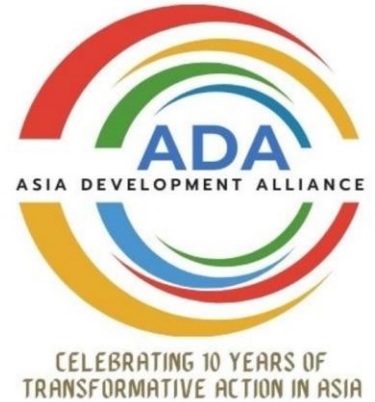
Background

The Asia Development Alliance (ADA) was established on 2 Feb. 2013 at the founding assembly in Bangkok, Thailand. The founding assembly was initiated by four national CSO/NGO platforms – VANI (India), CCC (Cambodia), Code-NGO (Philippines) and KCOC (Korea) – with the support from Forus, CIVICUS Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA) and Good Neighbours International (GNI) in partnership with Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP) Asia.

Since its foundation, ADA has been working as a regional (Asia) network of the national CSO/NGO platforms in terms of capacity-building, networking and policy advocacy on issues related to the post-2015 development agenda process (before 25 Sept. 2015) and now UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development known as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

About Us

The platform was created to serve and hear the people's voices on SDGs implementation in the region as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were coming to an end and SDGs were being discussed through beyond 2015 campaign, with a huge support and consultations from the civil societies across the world and there were discussions over triangular cooperation on various thematic issues like climate justice, gender and income equality and so on and so forth. The SDGs have also provided immense opportunities of engaging with the civil society.



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| <p>Mr. Jay Hung, Taiwan Aid-Taiwan – Co-Chair</p>  |  | <p>Ms. Linh Phuong Nguyen, MSD-Vietnam – Co Chair</p>  |
|  | <p>J.Ms. Jamila Asanova, ARGO-Kazakhstan – Chair</p> |  |
|  | <p>Mr. Abdul Awal, SUPRO-Bangladesh, Treasurer</p> |  |
| <p>Mr. Denison Jayasooria, Malaysian CSO-SDG Alliance, Malaysia</p> | <p>Ms. Urantsooj Gombosuren, Mongolian CSOs Network on SDGs – Mongolia</p> | |

Asia is a diverse region and each sub region has a different ethnicity, culture, geo-politics and demographic structure. Apart from that, the region is also home to extremism, violence, shrinking civic spaces (mostly South, South - East, and Central Asia) and the nuclear threat coming in from South Asia (India-Pakistan) and North East Asia (N.Korea and S. Korea Peace issues), apart from suffering from migrant crisis (Rohingyas) and democratic violations (Hong Kong, China and many South East and South Asian countries). In such diverse situation, its difficult to get a unified regional voices/voice of solidarity and that was the reason , various civil societies from across Asia, decided to get united and represent the voices of Asia by forming a regional coalition/platforms of national CSO platforms , called Asia Development Alliance (ADA) with its registered office in Seoul.

