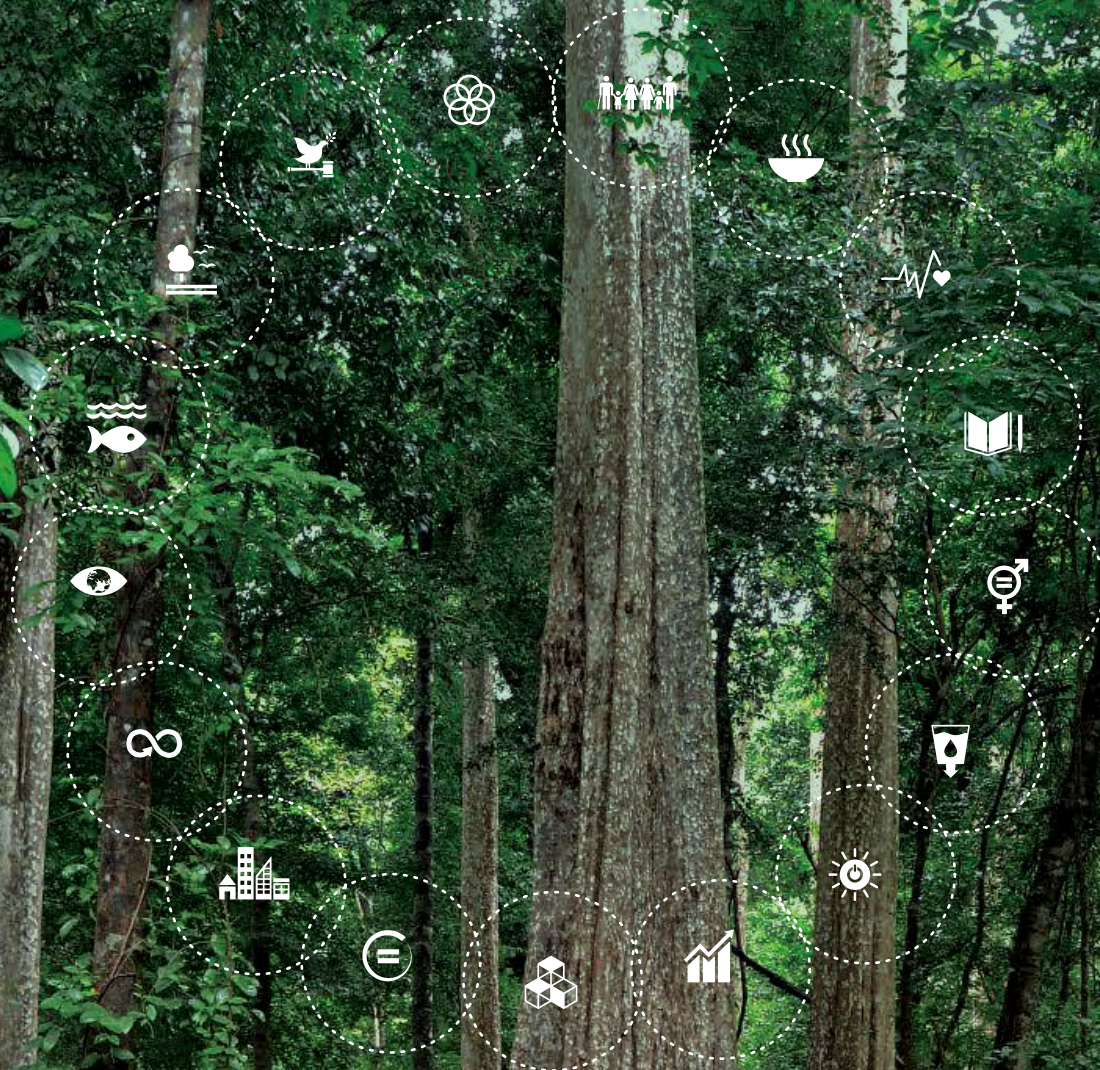


RESILIENT FOREST LANDSCAPES:

EMPOWERED COMMUNITIES, STRENGTHENED INSTITUTIONS AND SHARED PROSPERITY

Strategic Plan 2018–2023



**Resilient forest landscapes:
Empowered communities, strengthened
institutions and shared prosperity**

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The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC)
Strategic Plan 2018-2023

**Resilient forest landscapes:
Empowered communities, strengthened
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Total Request: US\$ 7,500,000 per year for five years, for a total of \$37,500,000

Program Duration: Five years (2018-2023)

The Asia-Pacific region displays some of the world's most diverse landscapes: majestic forests, rich wetlands, thriving riparian, coastal and marine ecosystems, and increasingly crowded urban and built environments. The challenges of balancing development and ensuring sustainability pose an urgent need for innovative solutions. To meet those needs and challenges, the Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC) has developed an innovative new strategy to help local people find solutions together with government, the private sector, development partners, local institutes, academia, media and others.

For more than three decades, RECOFTC has empowered local people to find solutions for threatened forest landscapes and vulnerable communities. The Center has helped communities stop deforestation and prevent environmental catastrophes and strengthened their capacities to find alternative livelihoods within forest landscapes. The Center has also enabled communities to better advocate for safeguards, thereby preventing many conflicts and transforming others. Building on its previous strategic phases, the 2018–2023 Strategic Plan puts people at the center of change, by empowering communities, governments and the private sector with rights, opportunities for dialogue, networking, technical expertise, tools and knowledge. The Center's results will help 4.8 million people in and near forest landscapes live more equitably, with dignity and greater empowerment to protect themselves from the injustices of poverty and environmental degradation.

The Center will support people and forests by achieving four strategic goals in 2018–2023:

1. Landscape Collaboration in a Changing Climate

Rights of local people in forest landscapes are protected and exercised through collaborative management. Local people will manage forests integrated together with other sectors within their landscapes to meet climate change mitigation commitments and address adaptation challenges and opportunities as part of their livelihood strategies.

2. Governance, Institutions and Conflict Transformation

Governments, the private sector, communities and others in forest landscapes adhere to the principles of good governance, which include being accountable for their actions and transparent in their processes. The Center will strengthen relationships through mutually beneficial strategies, and developing appropriate skills and responsive services to prevent and transform forest-based conflicts through strong institutions, relationships, strategies and services.

3. Private Sector Engagement and Enterprising Communities

Economic value of forests and landscapes for communities is increased through sustainable investment, community-based enterprises, certification schemes and/or mutually beneficial partnerships between governments, the large scale private sector and community enterprises.

4. Social Inclusion, Gender Equity and Public Action

Rights, capacities and economic opportunities of women and other marginalized people are enhanced. Public awareness is raised, and norms and behaviours are changed to support people-centred forests and land policies.

By implementing this plan over the next five years and continuing its legacy with Community Forestry (CF) development, the Center will work to support the forest rights for over 36,000 local groups to help improve the lives of additional 600,000 people, reaching to a target of 4.8 million local people. In addition, the Center will contribute to the legal recognition of an additional 1.1 million hectares per year, for a total of 5.5 million hectares over the duration of the programme. It will also contribute to strengthening over 2,000 communities, 200 businesses and 14 government offices/ministries/institutions to help transform conflicts into landscape processes and decisions that will ensure rights of local people and improve forest governance. The Center will facilitate over 200 community-based enterprises (CBEs) through business partnerships to help improve the market success. Through these interventions, social inclusion and public awareness campaigning, the Center expects the sales of CBE products and services will increase by 10 percent.

The Center will implement an aspirational yet achievable fundraising strategy to expand its business operations and meet the growing demand for the approach and activities that underpin this Strategic Plan. By implementing this Strategic Plan over the next five years, the Center will contribute to the establishment of a new cultural norm for the respect for community enterprises, community based products, ecosystem services emanating from community forests and more acknowledgement on the need for local land rights across the Asia Pacific region. As a result of this Plan and in subsequent decades, the indirect beneficiaries will include all people and economies that benefit from reduced deforestation and land degradation, reduced carbon emissions, more resilient communities and landscapes, lessened land use conflicts, enhanced security and more prosperous forest landscapes across the region.

INTRODUCTION

At the forefront of modern global development, the Asia-Pacific region is growing richer and more economically integrated and closely connected through a complex web of roads, rail, hydropower dams, economic zones, energy grids, natural resource exploitation and agricultural supply chains. This brings great economic opportunities for communities, countries and beyond, but the potential comes with unsettling risks. Forests are cut down, burned or degraded. Sensitive environments are destroyed as human and natural thresholds are surpassed. Carbon emissions continue to rise as climate impacts and disasters hit more frequently. Meanwhile, local people are often cut off from the benefits of development but bear the greatest risks. Many people – especially women, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable populations – have had their lives upended by forces far beyond their control and millions more are at risk of displacement, strife, poverty, conflict and tragedy.

The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC) envisions a future where the people of the Asia-Pacific region live equitably and sustainably, in and alongside thriving forests and healthy, resilient landscapes. Realizing this future means overcoming a complex set of environmental, social and economic challenges. The Center for People and Forests is also well positioned to present local people's concerns in the global discussions on forests and to drive the gender equity debate, particularly on the social dimension of emerging political, economic and environmental issues that will impact the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) level of success.

The Center's History

In 1987, the Center was founded as the Regional Community Forestry Center for Asia and the Pacific (RECOFTC) by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Government of Switzerland (through the Asian Development Bank) and Kasetsart University, Thailand, as a regional hub for training and research on community forestry (CF). It was led by Dr. Somsak Sukwong of Kasetsart University. Throughout the 1990s, its training programmes and partnerships benefitted thousands of government officials, local communities, development practitioners, and others across the Asia-Pacific region and it grew into a global leader on CF.

In 2000, the Governments of Thailand and Switzerland along with governments of other countries in the Greater Mekong Subregion formally recognized RECOFTC as an autonomous international organization. Throughout the 2000s, RECOFTC expanded its partnerships and programmes and established country offices in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam. In 2009, RECOFTC became "The Center for People and Forests," to reflect the broader focus on strategies that include landscape management, livelihoods and conflict transformation, as well as the broader scope of training the Center provides on other facets of capacity development.

Today, the Center works locally, nationally, regionally and globally on CF to support people and forests through a diverse but interconnected programme of network building, capacity development, policy change, conflict transformation, research, field projects and strategic



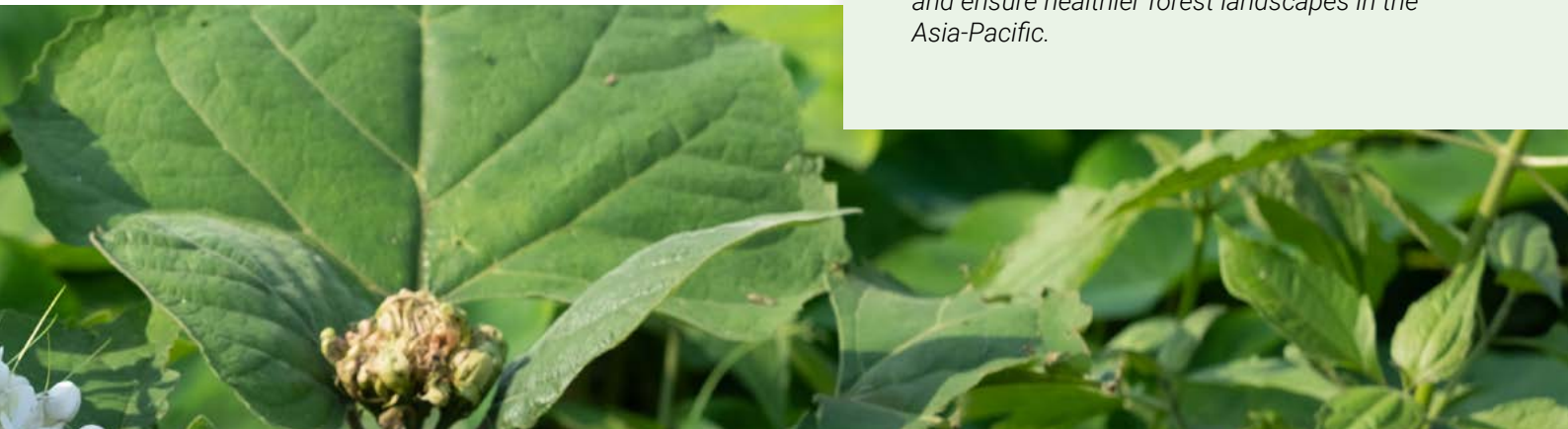
communications. For over 30 years, the Center has partnered with local communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), governments and the private sector to change the way forests are managed in the Asia-Pacific region. Its most notable impacts are summarized below.

- In Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar, Community Forestry Working Groups were established. Regionally, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) established the Working Group on Social Forestry, a formal policy-setting body for the region.
- Networks of local-level CF groups have been established in Cambodia, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam.
- More than 4.2 million people are participating in CF in the region.
- More than 32,000 CF user groups have been established in the seven countries where the Center focuses its interventions.
- More than 100 legislative instruments have been enacted with support from the Center, resulting in improved forest tenure and livelihood security of local people. Over the last five years, 17 new or revised legislative instruments have been passed that will improve tenure and livelihood security in the Center's focal countries.
- Approximately 9 million ha of forest land are under community/smallholder management in the region.

Key Definitions:

*The Center embraces a broad definition of **community forestry** that includes all aspects, initiatives, science, policies, institutions, and processes that increase the role of all local peoples—including women, youth and disadvantaged groups—in governing and managing forest resources. It consists of informal, customary and indigenous, and formal or government-led initiatives. Community forestry includes a variety of institutional arrangements such as indigenous management of sacred sites of cultural importance, direct community control or management of forest areas, small-scale forest-based enterprises, forest out-grower schemes, company-community partnerships, and other forms of decentralized and devolved forest management. Supporting and assisting government, non-government, and community partners, the Center has shown that community forestry and related approaches can deliver results that both improve livelihoods and safeguard the environment.*

*Similarly, **forest landscapes** refers to forests in the broader context of the landscape, that is, the heterogeneous mosaic of different land uses (agriculture, forestry, soil protection, water supply and distribution, biodiversity conservation, pasture provision, etc.) across a large area of land or watersheds. With this definition, the Center advocates involving stakeholders from all affected land-use sectors and applying participatory decision-making processes to strengthen rural livelihoods and ensure healthier forest landscapes in the Asia-Pacific.*



KEY DRIVERS AND TRENDS AFFECTING FORESTS

The external environment for the Center for People and Forests is politically, socially and economically complex and is constantly shifting. The Center and its staff continually analyse these developments to make sure programmes and initiatives anticipate or respond to those trends. Through continuous grassroots, national and regional research and engagement, the Center works with the most informed and innovative strategies and partners to meet new challenges head on. The following key trends help guide the 2018–2023 Strategic Plan.

Economic development and integration: Development is racing across the region with the ASEAN Economic Community, China's Belt and Road initiative (including the Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC) and other massive development projects spanning borders and crossing landscapes. Agricultural projects, hydropower, special economic zones, mining, transportation and rapid urbanization are multiplying and bringing risks as well as opportunities for forest landscapes and communities. Forest landscapes could be changed irretrievably. Communities are sometimes forced, and sometimes are encouraged or enticed, to adopt practices contrary to sustainable development, and poorly managed development can result in major forest loss and the displacement of people. Development brings greater risk of land-grabbing and increases the pressure on land, often with little regard for safeguards. Nevertheless, people and forest landscapes can benefit in many ways from investment, market drivers, business environments and economic incentives, though a pro-active approach must be collectively taken by all stakeholders.

Increasing conflicts: As development progresses, conflicts around forest landscape management are becoming more common, more complex and more severe. These conflicts put communities at risk of economic and social hardships, infringe on civil and human rights, and even violence. For investors and governments, conflicts cause financial loss, damage to reputations, lost opportunities to capitalize on local knowledge and delays in project development. Rising conflicts have created an unmet need for specialized experts and training on conflict transformation in forest landscapes.

Private sector investment: Along with rapid development and regional integration, the stakes and opportunities for private businesses are rising as investments flow in and out of countries. Investments may have serious impacts on forest landscapes and communities. While businesses aim to make socially and environmentally responsible decisions for the sake of their bottom line and long-term reputation, the impacts on communities must be integrated into how businesses make social

and environmentally responsible decisions. There are opportunities to engage business through advocacy, collaboration, connecting local people to business opportunities and acting as a watchdog to ensure practices are responsible.

Governance: Power relations, policies and politics impact communities and land-use decisions. Across the region, some governments have centralized power, while others have decentralized. A few have made some strides in accepting stronger civil society and the proliferation of community-based organizations, but many others are tightening their control. This is leading to reduced channels for bottom up policy-making, which is diluting social and environmental safeguards. In addition, the power is shifting among relevant agencies. Overall, governments in the region need more support to ensure forests are protected, communities have a strong voice and the rights of people are secured. Smart organizations track and respond to the changes in government priorities and practices, and support governments for better governance.

Migration: People across the Asia-Pacific region are increasingly mobile. Rapid urbanization is driven by people leaving the countryside for economic opportunities in cities, but also by land degradation or the loss of land overtaken by large-scale developments. Economic development and integration also cause people to move not just within countries, but from country to country. Migration in the region is also a reflection of distress caused by climate change. These trends heighten risks to forest landscapes, including land conflicts, depletion of resources, poverty and loss of traditions. But they also provide opportunities to work at regional and cross-border levels, advocate for greener cities and engage newly diversified populations.

Consumer demand: The growing middle and upper class in Asia and the Pacific are increasingly being aware and more open to environmentally and socially responsible products and services, motivating companies to meet higher standards. Externally, demand from the European Union and other international markets for certified forest products is increasing, and global consumer demand may be closer to reaching a critical mass. Incentives may spur further progress. Establishing links between local communities and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through other value chain actors can bring local, sustainable products to wider markets.

Information and technology: Information, communication and technology (ICT) is growing more sophisticated, complex and competitive. New technologies help forest managers track and use data, address environmental





challenges, ensure forest governance, reach key stakeholders and improve forest-related products and services. Technology and social media can be harnessed as tools for advocacy, market information, access and sustainability with the potential to reach audiences locally and around the world. Technology can help monitor land use and environmental and social impacts. Investors want real-time data to assess investments. To help people and forests, cutting edge organizations will harness ICT advancements, including big data, mobile applications (apps) and portals, social media, e-learning, agricultural and land-use innovations, and new energy technologies.

Funding: In the Center's early days, its budget was provided almost exclusively by development donors, and the Center spent little time or effort on fundraising.

However, as the Center's work has grown and become more ambitious, specific projects have become dependent on external funding. The Center has been increasingly successful in securing project funding, but securing sufficient support for core functions remains a challenge. Under this Strategic Plan, the Center aims to maintain its financial position through the strong support of its donor partners. During the Center's next strategic phase, it will seek substantial support and investment from the international community. This proposal lays out an ambitious though realistic plan to maintain the rich portfolio of activities that form the foundation for the Center's continued work, while pursuing complementary strategies to fully leverage the potential of additional investment by new development partners.

The Center's Thought Leadership

To seize new and emerging regional and global opportunities that address inequalities, advance gender equality and scale up efforts over the period 2018–2023, the Center will build on proven strategies, initiatives and programmes to maintain its thought leadership in CF and participatory approaches. The following table goes through the key drivers and trends affecting forests and how the Center will continue to provide innovative strategies and initiatives for Asia and the Pacific.

At a glance: The Center's thought leadership on key trends affecting forest landscapes and how they are managed

Trend	Strategies and initiatives
<p>Economic development and integration is increasing rapidly throughout the region</p>	<p>Empowering local communities to protect and claim rights. Facilitating the information flows and dialogue to ensure CF benefits are shared between actors. Creating investible and organized communities with improved business skills. Helping prepare local authorities to respond to investment projects to minimize negative impacts on people and forests. Collaborating with research institutions and universities on regional connectivity and responsible investment issues. Supporting champions who can influence companies' safeguards. Sharing best practices and resources among country programmes.</p>
<p>Conflicts are increasing over land, resources and power</p>	<p>Empowering communities through CF in the face of climate change. Collaborating with the private sector and governments. Providing conflict transformation capacity and services within those landscape-based conflicts around forests, land tenure, resources and power. Training on free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). Developing Integrated landscape management - including capacity development and coordination/facilitation of multistakeholder management platforms.</p>
<p>Private sector has an increasing stake in forest landscapes</p>	<p>Promoting mutually beneficial partnerships between communities and larger scale private sector for better management and to leverage business opportunities for local enterprises. Advocating for responsible business practices. Influencing national and subnational governments during selection/approval of development projects.</p>
<p>Government roles are shifting, including changes to stability, degrees of centralization and support for civil and human rights</p>	<p>Ongoing analysis and alliance building. Empowering local communities to engage with governments. Strategizing policy advocacy for tenure security. Helping local authorities to become CF champions and to change the way they work. Advocating FPIC with fair and just compensation and impartial and effective grievance mechanisms for all those affected to safeguard the rights of local and indigenous women and men.</p>

Trend	Strategies and initiatives
<p>Migration is increasing, people are moving from the countryside to cities and across borders</p>	<p>Transforming CF to include urban and youth focus. Expanding CF to include secondary processing and food systems. Linking communities at urban-rural areas for resource mobilization. Advocating for CF issues through the ASEAN working group. Developing economically viable community based enterprises (CBEs).</p>
<p>Consumer demand for green products and services is increasing, as is general awareness, but needs more support</p>	<p>Supporting local communities and SMEs to develop in-demand products. Helping to move products from farm/ forest to market, generating profits for local businesses. Facilitating value chain development, generating profits for local businesses and community enterprises. Championing marginal groups in community-based livelihoods, including development of women entrepreneurs. Advocating to improve certification schemes, increase demand and cost/benefits for certified forest products.</p>
<p>ICT tools are becoming more sophisticated and widely available</p>	<p>Advocating through social media and sharing information. Generating and using real-time data. Monitoring for biomass, forest quality, carbon sequestration etc. Collaborating on the development of an information portal, providing climate and market/price information.</p>
<p>Funding is subject to shifting donor interests and limitations</p>	<p>Expanding to include private sector partnerships, crowdfunding, impact investments, service provision and other strategies.</p>

PHILOSOPHY, VISION, AND MISSION

Through decades of work from the Center, partners and others around the world, evidence is growing that CF brings results to communities, environments and economies. Across the world, examples of the value of CF are growing. Research indicates that through applying CF:

- local livelihoods are increasing;
- forests are being more sustainably managed and deforestation is reduced;
- conflicts are minimized;
- barriers to women, youth, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable populations are lessened, resulting in greater equity;
- landscapes are better able to withstand natural disasters and the uncertain impacts of climate change.

The Center envisions a world where empowered local people are effectively and equitably engaged in the sustainable management of forest landscapes.

The Center's mission is to enhance capacities for stronger rights, improved governance and fairer benefits to local people in sustainable forest landscapes in the Asia-Pacific region.

In order to fulfil this mission the Center embraces a philosophy, which remains anchored in lessons learned from 30 years of implementation, that local people are the best managers of forests and their landscapes. The Center for People and Forests empowers and strengthens local people to embolden them to seek fairer benefits from forest landscape resources, enhance local livelihoods and address climate change and its impacts. The impact of that work promises a much brighter future for people and forests within landscapes.

Guiding Principles

- **Clear and strong rights** are essential if local people, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, are to actively engage in and benefit from forest management. The Center works on strengthening local people's rights to access, manage, and own forests through tenure, policy and market reforms.
- **Meaningful engagement** between communities, the private sector and government must be achieved to find shared interests and sustainable solutions. The Center helps communities to build partnerships with the private sector and government based on trust, accountability, transparency and mutual respect.

- **Good governance** is essential for the development and implementation of 'community friendly' national forest policies, programmes and regulatory frameworks. The Center promotes the rule of law, transparency, accountability and the meaningful participation of people in local decision-making processes. Local people must be empowered to make their own choices and have their voices heard.
- **A fair share of benefits** for local people from forests is needed to help reduce poverty and motivate active participation in forest governance and sustainable management. The Center aims to increase and diversify sustainable income generation opportunities and business development from forest management and ensure that benefits are shared equitably. The Center continues to learn from women's full and effective engagement in community forestry to demonstrate how stakeholder inclusion, local people's rights and issues of equity and poverty are adequately addressed to respond in ways that benefit people and forests alike.

The vision, mission, philosophy, work, relationships and decisions of the Center for People and Forests are guided by these principles of CF, an approach to forest landscape and natural resource management. At the heart of this approach is the belief that local people are the key to managing forest resources. In its various forms, CF empowers local people with the right to make decisions and deliver sustainable solutions for sustainable forest management. Forest landscapes can be managed to benefit local people, build resilient local economies and protect the environment for future generations.

There are many opportunities and urgent requests for the Center to help transform forest-based conflicts and empower vulnerable communities to manage and restore their landscapes. Through the five-year Strategic Plan, the Center will help the region work towards shared prosperity while protecting forests and communities. Through engaging, training and connecting communities, governments and the private sector, people will be more empowered to meet rapidly growing challenges in the Asia-Pacific region. This strategy will help people to transform landscape management in the region, preserve and restore forests and protect the rights and prosperity of local people.

As a local, decentralized and collaborative process, CF includes formalized customary, indigenous and government-led approaches. It guides stakeholders in managing and balancing sometimes conflicting



dimensions of social, economic and conservation demands from landscape management. In practice, CF enables local communities to work alongside local authorities and investors to govern resource use, decide for themselves on issues that impact their communities and the environment, and work together on local initiatives (such as community-company partnerships, indigenous management of cultural sites, small-scale community enterprises and smallholder forestry schemes). These powerful, transformative initiatives need to be applied across integrated landscapes to better support people and forests.

Challenges that CF must meet include ensuring the benefits accrue to all local people including women and the poorest or most marginalized and not only to elites, and closing the gaps between local knowledge, science, policy and practice. Too often, the benefits accrue to better informed and organized actors in value chains, and local people are denied their fair share.¹ Addressing these challenges and opportunities equitably also includes strengthening collaboration between the different stakeholders. The dynamic economic drivers of the Asia-Pacific region demand strategic changes to uphold the rights of local people, ensure they receive fair benefits and secure the sustainable management of forest landscapes.



¹–May not be purposeful denial, but lack of information and action by local people that hinders their understanding and negotiating for their fair share.

FOUR STRATEGIC ACTIONS TO 2023



Theory of Change

The Center has identified the following four interlinking pathways of change, consistent with its mission and approach. These pathways, or strategic goals, are designed to help create the necessary pre-conditions for communities to transform these landscapes based on their secure rights.

The first pathway recognizes that land opportunity costs and climate change impacts within forest landscapes are increasing with the growing number of landscape actors. It prioritizes and secures community rights within forest landscapes and aims to protect local communities against the impacts of climate change. This **Landscape Collaboration in a Changing Climate** pathway assumes that all stakeholders respect those rights and, that communities will work together and with others to protect and manage forest landscapes to benefit from climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies. This includes developing community adaptive capacity to cope with the impacts of climate change, particularly for poor people and women who are vulnerable and therefore impacted more, and increasing institutional capital, livelihood resilience and food, water and energy security while strengthening sustainable forest management practices.

The second pathway of change is empowering local people and creating capacity for better **Governance, Institutions and Conflict Transformation** through strengthening local institutions for communities to have greater leverage and capacity to negotiate for an equitable share of benefits. This pathway assumes that preventing and transforming conflicts will increase the quality of collaboration in the landscape and lead to better governance. Conversely, good governance reduces the potential for conflict and fosters collaboration. Improving the quality of relationships and communication between different stakeholders over time will eventually lead to more sustainable management of the forest landscape. With better relationships and alliances, communities and other stakeholders will continue to protect and manage the forests, institutions will be strengthened, and solutions and compromises will take on a rights-based approach.

The third pathway provides an incentive framework for the sustainable management of the landscape for all stakeholders by creating alternative business partnership models with the private sector and certification bodies. By strengthening our **Private Sector Engagement and Enterprising Communities**, the Center will create enough economic value through CBEs to prevent communities, industries and investors from shifting land use away from forests, agroforests and sustainable landscapes. This pathway assumes that markets, business partners

and investors can be incentivized to engage in long-term partnerships and that CBEs can compete with other existing land-use business models. The Center assumes that these partnerships will provide net benefits to communities. Historically, many communities end up either losing out or not gaining significantly when compared to other communities that have not entered into similar partnerships. By adhering to its private sector engagement strategy, the Center has thought through these issues and will carefully design these partnerships.

The last pathway of change focuses on creating an enabling environment for communities as forest managers, especially through social inclusiveness and gender equity. To generate more balanced and equitable **Social Inclusion, Gender Equity and Public Action**, the Center will use public opinion to build demand for products from community based enterprises (especially those owned by women) to drive policy change. This pathway assumes that with a greater awareness of CF values and products, people will decide to take action to support policies and products that favour local CBEs and promote social inclusiveness and gender equity. By changing public behaviour, this final pathway will enhance accountability to the public and strengthen the voice of the public in determining the values and governance of forest landscapes, especially women, youth and vulnerable populations that can and should share their values and amplify these public sentiments. The importance of public action is increasing in Asia and the Pacific where urban populations becoming influential consumers and constituents in political processes. Public action campaigns must be led by gender-focused groups and empower women, youth and vulnerable populations as entrepreneurs, consumers and as decision-makers and address issues that are important to them.

The Center's Theory of Change will rely on these four strategic actions and a system-wide approach so that these four pathways are implemented with mutually reinforcing programmatic strategies. This Theory of Change asserts that by driving change along these four pathways while monitoring the key assumptions, community rights will be recognized, the distribution of the benefits of forest landscapes will be fair and equitable, and the probability will increase that these forest landscapes will be fairly and sustainably managed. These three key assumptions underpin this Strategic Plan will be reviewed through knowledge management, risks and mitigation strategies assessed through annual planning and a rigorous monitoring and evaluation system that evaluates and tests these assumptions every two years during the lifespan of this Strategic Plan (2018-2023).

THE CENTER FOR PEOPLE AND FORESTS' THEORY OF CHANGE

2018-2023



Strategic Goal 1:

LANDSCAPE COLLABORATION IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Rights of local people in forest landscapes are protected and exercised through collaborative landscape management. Local people will manage forests and landscapes to meet climate change mitigation and adaptation challenges and opportunities.



Strategic Goal 2:

GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONS AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Governments, the private sector, communities and others in forest landscapes adhere to the principles of good governance, which include being accountable for their actions and transparent in their processes. Equitable relationships, mutually beneficial strategies, responsive services and appropriate skills are built, maintained and strengthened. Conflicts are prevented and transformed through strong institutions, relationships, strategies, services and skills.



Strategic Goal 3:

PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT AND ENTERPRISING COMMUNITIES

Economic value of forests and landscapes for local communities is increased through sustainable investment, community forestry enterprises (CFE), certification schemes and/or win-win scenarios for government, the private sector and community enterprises.



Strategic Goal 4:

SOCIAL INCLUSION, GENDER EQUITY AND PUBLIC ACTION

Rights and capacities of women and other marginalized people are enhanced. Public awareness, norms and behaviours are changed to support people-centred land policies.

OUTPUT TO OUTCOME

2023 ONWARDS

IMPROVED FOREST
GOVERNANCE WITH
INCREASED BENEFITS
TO LOCAL PEOPLE

EMPOWERED
LOCAL PEOPLE
IN MORE
SUSTAINABLY
MANAGED FOREST
LANDSCAPES

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME

VISION / MISSION

Core Values

The Center is innovative - The Center for People and Forests seeks out, supports and pilots cutting-edge strategies and solutions for forest landscapes. The Center assesses new challenges and adapts priorities and activities to meet them head-on, and it takes shrewd, well-researched risks. Through reflection, experimentation and innovation, the team finds the most creative solutions and develops innovative strategies and programmes that work for local people and forest landscapes.

The Center has adaptive learners - The people at the Center for People and Forests are flexible, open to change and ready to adapt to new circumstances. They value creative space, incentives for learning and constant improvement, and foster an enabling environment for cross-cultural and diverse knowledge sharing and learning. The Center also prioritizes partnerships with other programmes and thought leaders. With open-mindedness and willingness to learn, the Center's people continually improve their ideas and activities, manage risks and opportunities effectively and find ways to improve strategies and partnerships for prosperous and resilient forest landscapes.

The Center works in collaboration and trust - Trust forms the foundation of the Center's collaboration with communities, NGOs, governments, the private sector and other partners. The Center builds trust through transparent two-way communication. No voice is marginalized. The Center maintains trust by working with mutual respect, open communication and accountability to stakeholders and to each other.

The Center nurtures commitment, responsibility and ownership - The Center builds commitment by working

with partners on a common purpose and providing formal, informal and social support while ensuring people retain ownership over their work. Through this support, the Center builds teams that work with tenacity, celebrate results, take responsibility for decisions and regularly reflect on core values.

The Center is committed to sustainability - In helping local people manage forest landscapes, the Center aims to reflect sustainability, including social sustainability, and environmental consciousness in all its work. Thus, it takes great care to meet the needs and concerns of local people, with special consideration to vulnerable populations. From procurement to partners to programmes, impacts on people and the environment are prioritized in all of the Center's decisions.

The Center continually nurtures participation, social inclusion and gender equity -- The Center creates opportunities for women, indigenous peoples, youth, seniors and other vulnerable people to participate in decisions impacting their lives and forest landscapes. People, platforms and processes need to be culturally sensitive, and the Center will take effective measures to ensure equal access to information and resources and opportunities for leadership within their communities. The Center continually ensures women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life. The Center has long understood that the long-term viability of community forest management is dependent on the inclusion of women and as such, the Center aims to reflect this belief through creating an equitable workplace.



STRATEGIC GOAL 1

LANDSCAPE COLLABORATION IN A CHANGING CLIMATE



STRATEGIC GOAL 1: LANDSCAPE COLLABORATION IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

Rights of local people in forest landscapes are protected, exercised and compensated through collaborative landscape management

Collaborative management including everyone in a landscape – community members, civil society organizations (CSOs), community-based organizations, the private sector, forestry officials, governments and others – will help protect the rights of local people and the forests everyone relies on. Decisions on the best way to manage forests, natural resources and landscapes, especially given the challenge of climate change, will be made collaboratively through integrated landscape management, where local people and powerful actors and/or decision-makers are on a level playing field. Deforestation and forest degradation has a large impact

on local forest users, and the Center will support policies and approaches that help reduce the climate impacts of forest loss through promoting local forest management. The Center will build on its three decades of experience helping local people to manage forest landscapes more sustainably. Through CF and integrated landscape management, local people will know and claim their rights, access knowledge and skills, and collaborate across communities, governments and the private sector. Together, all stakeholders will make better, smarter and more responsible decisions to benefit people and protect and restore forest landscapes.

Expected results by 2023

Building upon its 30-year legacy, the Center will work to support the forest rights for over 36,000 local groups to help improve the lives of additional 600,000 people, reaching to a target of 4.8 million local people – including women, youth, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups. The people will use their rights, knowledge and collaborative partnerships to improve decisions on landscape management and governance across forest landscapes in Asia and the Pacific. This will result in landscape protection and recovery, improving its resilience to climate change, better governance and improved living conditions of local people in forest landscape.

RATIONALE: Why is this Goal vital?



What are the best ways to use, protect and restore forest landscapes, while benefiting local people? How are decisions made about water, land and natural resources? Top-down decisions often harm communities, amplify risks for governments and businesses, and destroy forests and interdependent environments. Local people are all-too-often sidelined – and ultimately harmed – in landscape management decisions, even though local people have the skills and experience to be the most effective forest managers. Progress has been made through the work of the Center and its partners, but as development intensifies across the region, risks are escalating and hard-earned best practices are being left behind.

Given the breadth and pace of development, forest management needs to be viewed holistically, within the broader, integrated landscape. Different land uses often rely on the same resource base, so decisions

made about forests need to be coordinated with other functions of the landscape that support water, energy and food security. Poor management of one sector or area can harm others. Addressing governance and sustainability challenges at a landscape level can help bring together multiple land users – from smallholders, communities and civil society, to large businesses and regulators of resources. Adopting these holistic, collaborative approaches that reject silos and embrace interconnectedness will ensure environments and communities are better protected.

Long-term investment in collaborative approaches at landscape levels increases benefits to communities, empowers marginalized people, cuts risks for large and small landholders, reduces costly and dangerous conflicts and ensures the forest's services continue to contribute to healthy climate, water, energy and food systems.

BUILDING BLOCKS: What will the Center support to enable this Goal?



Enhancing and building new partnerships to address climate change: The Center will expand the focus of its partnerships and programmes to ensure that landscape solutions are cross-cutting, sustainable and address effective and equitable climate change mitigation and adaptation. Local people will benefit from incentives, engagement and fair distribution of the vital environmental services forests provide. This includes building community resilience to cope with the impacts of climate change, increasing institutional and livelihood resilience, and implementing more sustainable forest management practices. In some countries, programmes to support Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) provide opportunities for promoting the involvement of local people in forest management. The Center will seek to ensure that these programmes include CF as one of the key approaches for reducing deforestation.

Strong institutions in rights-based settings: Landscapes will be managed by strong government, non-government and collaborative institutions. This foundation enables sectors to work toward common goals. Institutions rely on supportive policies and legal frameworks. As well, tenure and rights among landscape stakeholders need to be understood, formalized, publicly recognized and exercised by people and institutions. Institutions need to support effective stakeholder and sector analysis, participatory land-use analysis and planning with defined goals, capacity development, information sharing and collaborative landscape leadership.

Multistakeholder platforms: Communities, governments, businesses and others will connect through strong platforms that enable all stakeholders to share, learn

and discuss potential solutions while increasing mutual understanding and reducing risk. A high priority will be on ensuring investors and other private sector actors are positively engaging with local communities. Platforms need to have:

- fair and transparent rules, regulations, norms, governance and gender equity;
- a stake in fostering common interests, goals and/or agendas among actors within the landscape;
- buy-in from partners in the private sector, government and civil society; and engagement in transparent, accountable ways;
- mechanisms for adaptive learning;
- strong and transparent coordination, communication and knowledge sharing.

Local capacity: Local people have the skills, knowledge, information and connections to effectively collaborate on landscape management. This may include understanding rights and responsibilities, CF knowledge, leadership skills, negotiation and engagement skills, policy knowledge and accessible information. Local people need opportunities to use these capacities in dialogues with decision-makers.

Collaborative agreements for sustainability: Landscape stakeholders need to establish long-term agreements with shared roles and responsibilities. The agreements ensure ongoing engagement, beneficial solutions for all stakeholders, priorities and interventions for collaborative landscape management, fair grievance mechanisms and shared roles and responsibilities to move forward. Such agreements consider the impact of other development projects or programmes within the landscape.

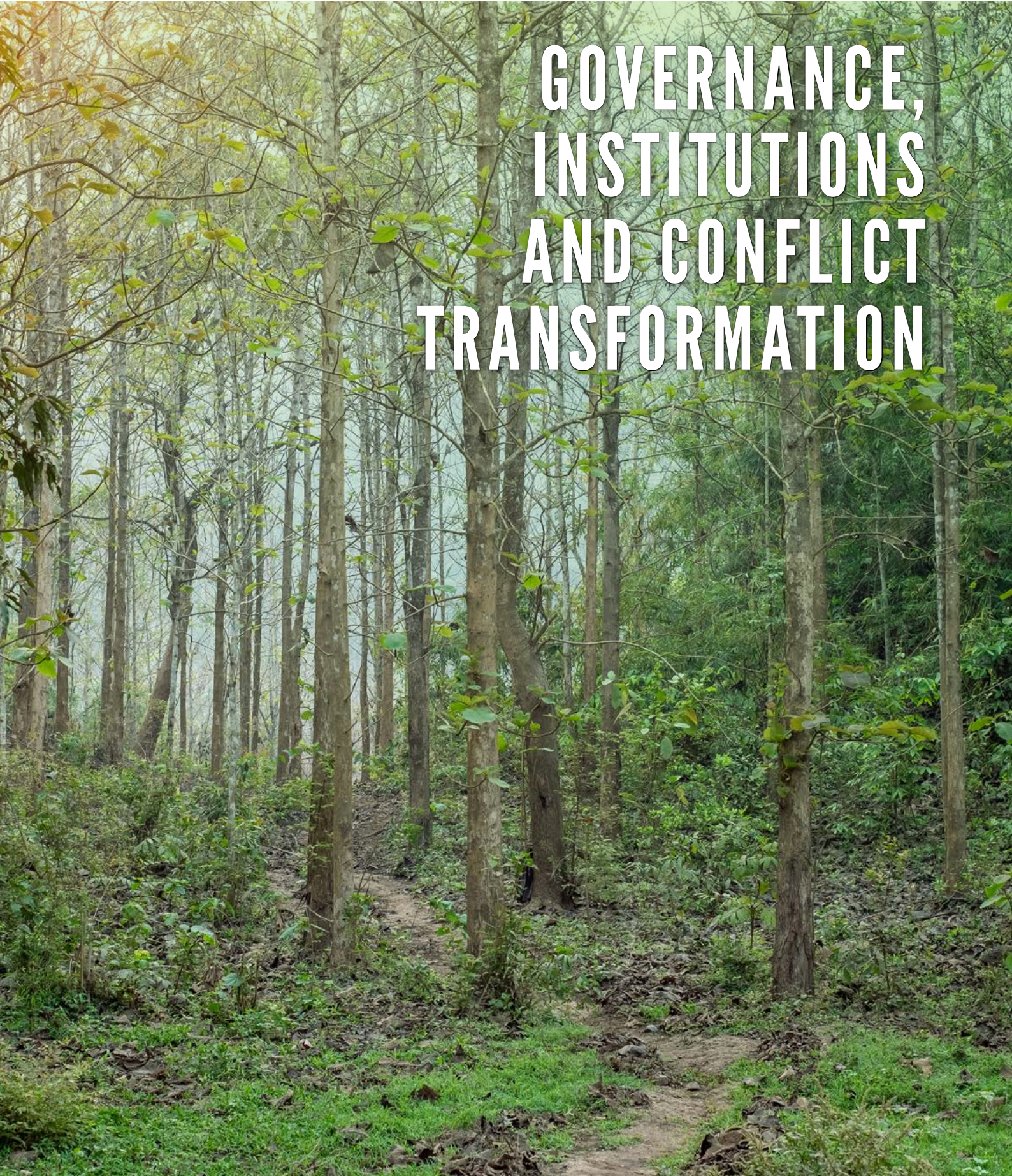
INITIATIVES: What programmes and actions will the Center deliver?



- *Capacity development:* Capacity development in CF with local people, government officials, private sectors and others will continue as the primary hallmark of the Center's work, both to empower rights holders and to ensure improved service provision by duty bearers. The Center will support its cohort of alumni across the region and develop a new core group of qualified, skilled and experienced collaborative landscape management leaders to enhance regional institutions. Building on the Center's renowned RECOFTC CF capacity development programmes, the Center will train partners in CF implementation, tenure rights, forest restoration, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and related issues based on local needs. Capacity development is part of a more expansive integrated landscape management approach. Continuing capacity development needs assessments will ensure programmes meet local needs.
- *Platform facilitation:* The Center will build on its record of facilitating local platforms for forest landscape stakeholders. These enable stakeholders to learn and share experiences as they work toward collaborative management of forest landscapes. These may include multistakeholder management committees, working groups, partnerships and dialogues.
- *Landscape management plans and better governance:* Through platforms and partnerships, the Center will assist stakeholders in producing, monitoring and revisiting their plans to manage forest landscapes in collaborative, integrated and sustainable ways that promote good governance.
- *Policy engagement:* Through platforms, analysis and networking with stakeholders, the Center will advocate for forest tenure and other reforms that give local people legal and institutional rights and protection.
- *Research:* Through participatory action research and analytical work with partners, the Center will assist governments and people to develop the enabling policies, laws and institutions. This may include analysis of policies and legal instruments, and community action research and case studies. Research results will be made available through platforms, publications, events, social media and local knowledge sharing mechanisms.
- *Resources:* To help stakeholders reach the goal of collaborative landscape management, the Center will produce resources which may include guides, reports, curricula, community education resources, policy briefs, fact sheets, social media products and others. These may be targeted toward local people, business, governments or the public.
- *Pilots and demonstrations:* Piloting and demonstrating that integrated landscape management is both possible and effective will also help to achieve this goal. The Center will assist governments, businesses and communities to implement programmes on the ground. The demonstrations will focus on learning, assisting partners in using that learning and sharing it with other landscapes and countries.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONS AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION



STRATEGIC GOAL 2: GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONS AND CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Good governance is promoted and conflicts are prevented and transformed through strong institutions, relationships, strategies, services and skills.

Worldwide, there is growing understanding that violations of the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, women and youth are a major risk and source of conflict. Many people within Governments, as well as well-meaning investors are increasingly unable to ignore those violations. The Center for People and Forests has three decades of experience developing capacities to transform conflicts through the principles of FPIC and other approaches, supporting conflict mediation and empowering local stakeholders in forest landscape governance. The Center works in partnership with stakeholders in disputes to develop their capacity to engage with each other and seek transformative solutions.

The Center's theoretical framework for good forest landscape governance is built on a foundation of participation and deliberation. Thus, the more participatory and deliberative the interactions within a given institution, the higher the quality of governance.

Institutions engaged in forest landscape governance must have the appropriate attitudes and skills to approach conflict in a constructive manner aiming for transformation. The Center works with partners, including at the landscape level, to build their skills and knowledge through accountability and transparent practices. It uses qualitative principles, criteria and indicators to evaluate the structures and processes of governance and encourages partners to mainstream commitments to environment, social and governance principles. Conflict transformation relies on factors that create sustainable, peaceful outcomes and tackle the underlying causes of conflict. For example, a conflict may emerge because of weak tenure and rights in an area where local people have limited livelihood opportunities. Some conflicts also emerge due to illegal or illicit activities that reduce the access of local people to forest resources. To transform the conflict, alliances must be built, institutions must be strengthened, and solutions and compromises must be rights-based. Development can improve the well being and livelihood opportunities for communities while still meeting goals of investors and other stakeholders.

Expected results by 2023

The Center will contribute to strengthening over 2,000 communities, 200 businesses and 14 government offices/ ministries/institutions to help transform conflicts into landscape processes and decisions that will ensure rights of local people and improve forest governance. Success stories will highlight best practices to help the region achieve more peaceful, fair and positive solutions for forest conflicts, especially through the Center's partners.

RATIONALE: Why is this Goal vital?



As economic development accelerates in the Asia-Pacific region, there is growing competition for land and natural resources. Growing economic development, and continuously evolving drivers of conflicts (such as the Belt and Road initiative and the LMC) coupled with lack of tenure security is making the Asia-Pacific region a forest landscape conflict hotspot. The social and environmental consequences of land-use decisions have led to standoffs between local communities and others (such as governments and private sectors) who seek to change their traditional uses of forests and resources, and those conflicts have significant economic, environmental and social costs.

Although most stakeholders are motivated for effective conflict transformation, many of them lack the capacity to achieve this. The process is vital and provides an opportunity to address long-standing social issues, such as weak tenure.

A key challenge remains how to best facilitate effective dialogue and communication between stakeholders, especially the private sector as it relates to pathway 3 on how best to engage and develop conflict mitigation strategies. The process of conflict transformation must ensure companies and governments understand that it is in their interest to respect the rights of local people and safeguard their livelihoods interests. Good practices save money and build reputations, and adhering to FPIC principles can safeguard company profits and profile.

Global mechanisms (such as the European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade [EU-FLEGT] and Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks [REDD+]) and national initiatives (such as the One Map initiatives in Indonesia, Myanmar and Thailand) can help to address some of the underlying causes of forest landscape conflicts if stakeholders have the capacity to ensure effective participation and putting forth their relevant concerns and issues. Strengthening the capacity of key stakeholders, including local and indigenous peoples, to transform conflict in positive ways is the principal means of reaching this Goal.

Piloting conflict management on the ground is challenging as the Center does not seek to directly manage conflicts on the ground. It does however, seek to influence the way conflicts evolve and are managed by strengthening the institutions and capacity for community forestry, and by striving to build consensus amongst various stakeholders of community forestry: in other words, by approaching the potential for collaboration and consensus.

Broadly the Center strives to better understand the causes, impacts, and solutions of forest conflict and strengthen its work on conflict transformation by:

1) Conducting research and analysis to enhance the knowledge and understanding of forest-related conflicts within landscapes in the region. This includes research on the root causes of conflict, the impacts conflict has on local and indigenous people, and the management approaches to deal with conflict.

2) Build the capacity of key actors, and of their institutions to understand, and manage conflict more effectively.

3) Communicating, using a wide range of tools, the critical importance of forest conflict transformation, especially for local people.

4) Engage with all stakeholders and build active collaboration at the ground level to demonstrate community forestry and other participatory landscape approaches.

BUILDING BLOCKS: What the Center needs to enable this Goal?



Good governance: Institutions that can transform forest landscape conflicts must be in place and effectively governed. Institutions at different levels need support to ensure their governance systems are effective:

- Regional organizations and bodies (ASEAN), governmental and intergovernmental bodies (FAO), CSOs and the private sector.
- National organizations and bodies including governmental institutions, CSOs, the private sector and certification bodies.
- Landscape-level organizations and bodies including governmental institutions, CSOs, the private sector, law enforcement and the organizations of local communities.

Conflict transformation capacities: Good governance requires that the people in institutions have the skills, knowledge and resources to be effective in conflict transformation. Stakeholders may need access to training, resources, mentoring and expertise.

Enabling policies and regulatory instruments: Clear guidance and regulation must be in place to enable

the transformation of forest-related conflicts within landscapes. Policies, laws and regulations must provide clear and strong definitions of the rights of local people (including women, youth, senior people and other vulnerable populations) and stipulate requirements for private sector partnerships with communities. In many cases, illegal forest activities happen at the expense of local communities. Governments should work with civil society, including community-based organizations, to develop and implement policies, laws and institutional capacities on forest landscape management and governance.

Conflict transformation mechanisms: Multistakeholder-based conflict prevention and transformation practices are needed in forest landscapes. Stakeholders must accept that the conflict exists and agree on informed social sanctions or mechanisms to deal with conflict. Stakeholders need people outside the forest landscape to help secure rights, and solutions must be sensitive and responsive to women, indigenous cultures and practices of other vulnerable groups. Stakeholders must recognize the value of conflict transformation and understand its methods.

INITIATIVES: What programmes and actions will the Center deliver?



- *Situational analysis and capacity development needs assessment:* Good governance and conflict transformation begin with identifying capacity development and policy reform strategies, gathering baseline information, identifying capacity gaps and analysing the policy and legal situation. These steps are part of the capacity development needs assessment. In conflict scenarios, the Center and local partners will undertake analyses to understand barriers and opportunities to improve governance systems and capacities for conflict transformation. The baseline analysis leads to a plan to create an enabling environment for good governance and conflict transformation.
- *Capacity development programmes:* Key stakeholders (identified in the capacity development needs assessment as 'change makers') build core capacities for transforming forest landscape conflicts through the establishment of Center-supported learning groups and participation in trainings. Training and resources may be provided to communities, government officials, the private sector and others on the following topics:
 - legal and human rights;
 - FPIC policies and practices;
 - conflict transformation frameworks, tools and methods;
 - communication and negotiation skills;
 - other themes identified through the capacity development needs assessment.
- *Legal and advisory supports:* The Center and its partners support local people to access resources, find affordable legal and protection services, understand and use grievance mechanisms, and take other needed actions in a conflict setting.
- *Learning networks:* The Center has a strong history of maintaining learning networks, especially among the more than 60,000 alumni of national and regional trainings and capacity development programmes. The Center and its partners view the alumni as champions of regional good governance and change makers for conflict transformation, and offer a mentoring programme and support for knowledge management. The alumni network shares best practices and supports each other across and within countries and landscapes. They are experienced, connected governance and conflict transformation/ mediation experts who can serve as advisors, mediators, trainers, mentors or consultants across the region and elsewhere.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT AND ENTERPRISING COMMUNITIES



STRATEGIC GOAL 3: PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT AND ENTERPRISING COMMUNITIES

Economic value of forest landscapes for local people is increased through sustainable investment and CBEs

To secure forest-based livelihoods and environmental services, current 'business as usual' practices at the landscape level need to change. Market and governance failures, that now drive deforestation, need to be corrected by working with communities and public and private entities to eliminate existing economic incentives for deforestation.

Deforestation and forest degradation is largely being driven by the current boom of investment in high value commodities – such as timber, palm oil, rubber and other agricultural commodities – which fails to recognize the social, cultural and environmental value of forest landscapes. Public and private sector players must calculate the 'triple bottom line' of the economic, social and environmental value of maintaining forests in landscapes. The private sector and financial markets must recognize the value of investing in and building economic value from businesses that uphold sustainable land-use practices.

The Center enhances the livelihoods of local people through securing their tenurial rights and building their capacity for market analysis and some small-scale enterprise development. A range of constraints, including forest and non-forest policies and regulations, have limited the ability of local people to develop viable business models and link effectively to local markets. The private sector and governments are looking for local partners with leadership, strong social capital and productive capacity (in terms of quantity and quality).

After performing cursory risk analyses of the opportunities in the land-use sector, and discovering legacy issues and tenurial rights complications, potential investors and buyers may lose confidence. These barriers contribute to a narrow view of the potential of CF to make a viable economic contribution in a landscape or to national or subnational socio-economic targets. The Center now seeks to strengthen the capacities of CF entrepreneurs and support their business initiatives while increasing incentives for long-term viable private sector partnerships to minimize risk while building confidence on all sides.

Expected results by 2023

The Center will help remove barriers to creating successful CBEs through facilitating over 200 community business partnerships in at least seven countries and supporting 200 pilot enterprises from community entrepreneurs. The Center and its partners will create viable and innovative models of CBEs that can be scaled up or adapted in other landscapes.

RATIONALE: Why is this Goal vital?



Bold and innovative business models and partnerships for CBEs in the region must respond to heavily competing interests and markets that drive deforestation and destroy existing forest-based livelihoods. Business ideas and investment propositions are needed that support sustainable forests and land use and build on secure tenure and respect for communities as stewards of these landscapes. The private sector has significant influence in shaping land-use management and private sector incentives can be aligned with responsible investments and supply chains.

Today, the need for global progress toward sustainable and equitable development, and climate change mitigation and adaptation must have a foundation in the rights and livelihoods of indigenous and local peoples. Responsible investments must adhere to the principles of FPIC, support sustainable resource use and attract the technical and financial support that communities urgently require. To achieve this type of sustainable and equitable development, the Center and its partners must advocate for integrating CF principles into sustainable incentives and investments in forest landscape management.

The region must also go beyond models of small-scale subsidized CBEs. Local people need bankable projects and the support of responsible investors in CBEs at a landscape level and beyond. The Center will build on its past achievements and identify business models and investment partnerships that will lead to profitable CBEs. These initiatives will clearly address limitations on the productive capacity of communities, such as consistent supply of quality raw material.

There are challenges associated with this approach, particularly ensuring equitable benefits to communities and safeguarding existing livelihoods systems. The Center has expertise to meet those challenges, including significant experience in enhancing livelihoods through CF management across the region's different contexts. With a clear understanding of the opportunities and obstacles to establishing CBEs, the Center will intensify and expand its efforts with new partners and seek innovative solutions and models of CBEs.

Without the Center's deliberate action and advocacy, emerging solutions may fail to incorporate the necessary CF entrepreneur lens and rigorous social safeguards. This strategic goal requires new thinking and creative mechanisms to identify business opportunities with new private sector partners, either at a landscape scale or through innovation investment or financing beyond forest landscapes to look at broader consumer trends and how the Center may influence change for CF entrepreneurs. This kind of strategy requires community entrepreneurial capacity at scale, innovative investment or financing and mentoring for entrepreneurs to enable them to expand the implementation of profitable and sustainable business models. There is an urgent need to help CBEs overcome barriers to private sector investment and collaboration.

Strong partnerships between communities and the private sector based on viable business models and safeguarding each other's interests may help to secure the range of social and environmental services that a forest landscape provides. To build those partnerships, the relationships between different actors, including the Center itself, must change. Linking local people with private sector partners who have a strong capacity for business and market access can help to fill capacity gaps. Learning from the terms and arrangements of successful partnerships can help other partnerships and businesses flourish.

BUILDING BLOCKS: What will the Center support to enable this Goal?



Private sector engagement: Dialogue with the private sector (both large enterprises and SMEs) and responsible investors in appropriate forums to find realistic solutions for CF business models, including addressing relevant policy constraints, and linking to relevant government and economic targets.

Business partnerships: The establishment of partnerships between communities, responsible investors and (local) private sector actors across relevant landscapes and value chains.

Feasible business models: Investible community business plans and models developed using relevant social safeguards at the landscape level. This may involve multiple products and buyers and a phased approach to testing the business model.

Business capacity: Local community enterprise and business skills development through enhancement of self-organization, local business incubation services and improved access to finance and regular information about markets.

Supportive institutions: Different institutional models for community forestry business established with appropriate capacity for engagement with responsible private sector partners.

Preservation of traditional livelihoods: Within communities, livelihoods have been passed from generation to generation, and for some it is vital to maintain these traditions. Wherever possible, traditional livelihoods should be protected or adapted in harmony with, or as part of, new enterprises.

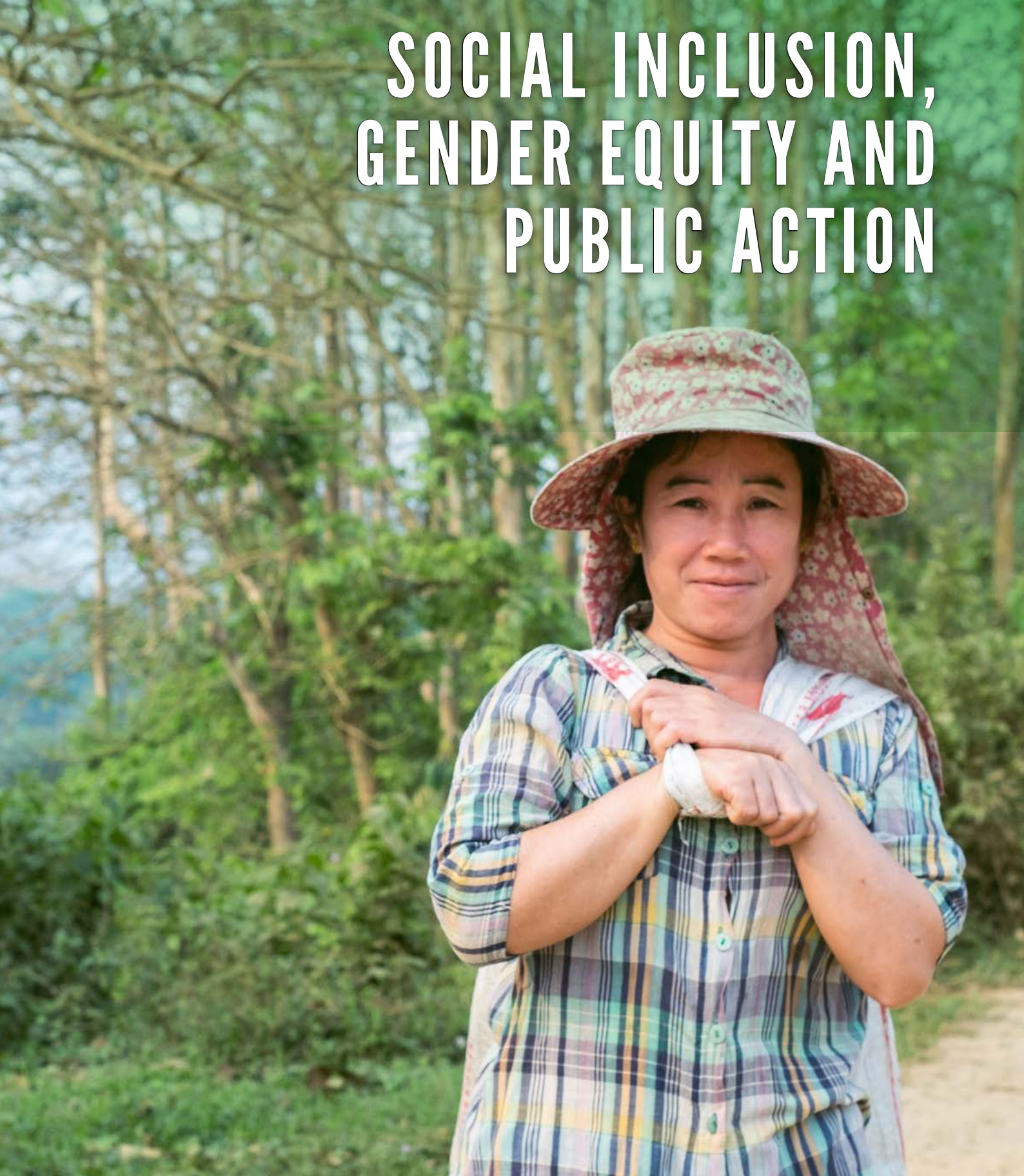
INITIATIVES: What programmes and actions will the Center deliver?



- *Platform and event facilitation:* Facilitation of multistakeholder forums and networking events with landscape actors developing an enabling environment, including:
 - advocating for policies to promote livelihood development/commercial initiatives through community based (enterprise) models;
 - developing mutual agreements in support of viable business models including land use, safeguards, information (legislation, technology and markets) and communication (media, urbanites);
 - organizing events and networks that support women entrepreneurs and others from vulnerable populations.
- *Capacity development:* Develop the capacity of community entrepreneurs in resilience approaches and in venture and business skills. Workshops and coaching may include business skills programmes such as business planning, start-up, management, bookkeeping and managing risk and vulnerability. The Center will also build capacities of private sector actors to work with local people, especially to appreciate their concerns and limitations. The Center will need to adapt appropriate handbooks on forest management and business development for enterprising communities. The Center will also link to technology providers.
- *Financing support:* The Center will connect communities with investors, microfinance institutions and banks and help entrepreneurs prepare for loan officer meetings and pitches.
- *Supply chain and partner facilitation:* The Center will connect community enterprises with supply chains, clients, business services and customers, through:
 - facilitating networks and partnership agreements;
 - organizing product exhibitions and fairs;
 - supporting certification bodies and Fair Trade initiatives for export;
 - exploring and facilitating landscape investments (for example, investment banks may be interested in forest landscape restoration).
- *Community knowledge management:* Gather and disseminate information relevant to community enterprises in forest landscapes, including internal, external, urban and consumer trends. This may include developing or contributing to online portals or apps to help entrepreneurs understand market conditions.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4

SOCIAL INCLUSION, GENDER EQUITY AND PUBLIC ACTION



STRATEGIC GOAL 4: SOCIAL INCLUSION, GENDER EQUITY AND PUBLIC ACTION

Women, youth, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable people are an active and empowered part of forest management. Public awareness, norms and behaviour are changed to support people-centred land policies.

As the region grows more prosperous, the public plays a greater role in determining its own future. With increasing education, social mobility and access to technology, the public can be part of the solution to protect people and forests. Both advocacy and marketing can use public awareness to encourage better consumer habits. Encouraging consumers and businesses to adopt and follow certification schemes will strengthen environmentally and socially responsible consumer behaviour from the public, governments and businesses. The Center and its partners will harness public opinion and purchasing power for positive change.

Similarly, over the last three decades, the Center has taken a leadership role in mainstreaming gender in NRM fields to ensure that all activities address gender gaps between women and men, while also responding to a desperate need to develop a stronger regional understanding about the participatory tools that facilitate achieving development benefits among both women and men in the forestry and NRM fields. The Center and its partners will continue to advocate and enhance the rights and capacities of women and other marginalized people. Public awareness for social inclusion will be raised, and, norms and behaviours are changed to support people-centred land policies.

Expected results by 2023

By attracting consumers including youth and people in urban areas, and international and other markets, sales of CBE products and services will increase by 10 percent. The Center will facilitate over 200 community-based enterprises through business partnerships to help improve the market success of CBEs, especially those enhancing livelihoods of women, youth, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable people.

Establish recognition in the forest landscape community that women are increasingly managers as well as beneficiaries of community forests, local change agents and political leaders at national, regional and global levels. Enhance collaboration at the landscape scale with strong definitions of the rights of local people, including women, youth, senior people and other vulnerable populations.

RATIONALE: Why is this Goal vital?

The Center strongly believes that the public – especially consumers – are significant drivers of social, economic and environmental change. The Center also strongly believes that the public has a genuine desire to support the livelihoods of women, youth, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable people. The Center recognizes that women have unique knowledge about forest products and their uses, and women have a role in managing them. In Asia, successful cases have demonstrated effective forest management through partnerships between local communities and supportive governments and partners. The public can support this process by driving decisions about policies, investments, products, services and donor choices.

Urban people, especially youth are likely to have many misconceptions about forest management. They may also lack understanding on the preferences and role of rural men and women in forest product use and forest management, and they may not understand the social, cultural and economic relationships of rural populations with forests. They may erroneously believe that people should be kept out of forests for effective forest management and biodiversity conservation. Urban people often find it hard to connect life in cities with the forests or to next generation issues, and they may perceive forests and natural areas as merely spaces for recreation and holidaying.

To build support for better policies and practices, and raise awareness, the public needs a broader view of forest management and ecosystem services and the role of rural men and women in maintaining those services. Urban and youth consumer purchasing power for products from CBEs is generally low, but market sophistication has the potential to increase demand.

Strengthening urban consumer and social impact investment support for CF must be built on a correct understanding of people and forests in the region. That understanding can help to shift public behaviour towards supporting stronger people-centered forest policies and demanding the services and products of CBEs.

BUILDING BLOCKS: What will the Center support to enable this Goal?



Evidence and understanding: To mobilize the public as allies in support of CF, the Center must first understand dominant consumer beliefs and behaviour in the region and elsewhere and identify incentives for consumers to take action. The region's best market research must be analysed and new research undertaken to fill gaps and show what political and economic actions the public are willing to take and which market trends have the potential to support CF. The power of consumer behaviour to influence forest-related policy and practice must be made clear. Key strategies for behaviour change must be evidence-based, especially those that have the potential to build political will and support the livelihoods and entrepreneur skill development of women, youth, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable people.

Further gender mainstreaming and empowering women's leadership and entrepreneurship: To mobilize the public as allies in support of CF, it must continue its leadership role in mainstreaming gender in NRM fields to ensure that all activities address gender gaps between women and men. Utilizing an improved gender strategy and series of regional activities, the Center and its partners will develop and implement more gender-equitable interventions and monitor public action for sustainable and equitable outcomes in the forestry, agriculture, and land use sector. This will be achieved through: (1) increased regional sharing, outreach, and dissemination to increase the reach of interventions, share best practices and encourage replication of successes; (2) more informed gender-equitable policies and effective use of social media to amplify the reach of these policies; (3) strengthened women's leadership and entrepreneurial skills; and (4) improved capacity of national and regional organizations to address gender-related issues.

Awareness and use of certification schemes: Certification schemes that promote CF are in place and supported by urban and other consumers. Businesses and consumers need to know about these schemes. Businesses need incentives to adopt them and consumers need incentives to purchase certified products and services. CBEs need to understand these schemes, apply for relevant certifications and see significant and sustained returns from these certification schemes.

Market-friendly products and services: People in forest landscapes need to offer products and services that appeal to urban, youth and international markets, that are marketed with the interests and behaviours of those markets in mind. Communities need support to tailor their products and services to consumers outside of their communities.

Effective and compelling policies: Specific forest policies need to be identified that the public (urban and rural) can advocate for. International, national and local policies and development decisions need to be framed to appeal to the interests of potential allies. Policies and issues, especially those that can support the livelihoods of women, youth, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable people, must be 'marketed' in a compelling way to motivate influencers to pressure governments and businesses to make socially and environmentally responsible decisions.

Audience reach: Traditional media, social media, branding, events, and other means can reach urban, international and other consumers and the public to raise awareness of the policies, decisions, products and services that support CF. Marketing and advocacy campaigns must compete for attention by being original, compelling and targeted to the right audience. Advocacy and marketing should also draw media attention.

Awareness and behaviour change: Urban people, youth, and other consumers need to be aware of the costs, value, geographical origin and cultural context of forest products. They must be made aware of how CF is relevant to them, and be motivated to change their consumer choices – even if it means paying extra – to buy CBE

products, services and certified goods. Advocacy campaigns must produce the desired behaviour, including putting pressure on governments and the private sector to make socially and environmentally responsible decisions.

INITIATIVES: What programmes and actions will the Center deliver?



- *Gender leadership:* The Center will intensify its work, strengthening the capacity of women and youth for leadership in landscape management. Working with key partners, the Center will develop and scale up its gender leadership programme, focused on strengthening women's leadership capacities for active decision-making.
- *Gender and social inclusion:* The Center will ensure that natural resource management efforts at all levels are gender-sensitive and responsive. The Center will work with institutions, platforms and networks, and advocate for policies and practices to create opportunities for the effective participation of women, indigenous peoples, youth, older people and other vulnerable people in decisions impacting their lives and landscapes. Their skills and knowledge will be enhanced so that they can champion CF.
- *Women entrepreneurship:* The Center will develop capacities of women entrepreneurs for recognizing their roles and opportunities in existing or new supply chains, link them with emerging markets, and ultimately benefiting financially from CBEs, thus empowering rural women economically.
- *Advocacy campaigns:* The Center will develop and support regional, national and/or local campaigns in support of people and forests. These may be related to policy proposals, investment and development projects, land-use decisions, adoption and support of certification schemes, local/eco-friendly purchasing, the value of CF, fundraising or other strategic issues prioritized by the Center, communities and partners. Campaigns may include social media, video, photography, promotional material, celebrity events, educational material, policy briefs, competitions or other channels and materials that can reach the intended audience.
- *Capacity development:* The Center will provide training and resources to local CF-related CSOs on strategic communication and advocacy to support local people in advocating for better policies and decisions.
- *Research on markets and perceptions:* To gain understanding of dominant norms, attitudes, and behaviours, the Center and its partners will analyse available market research and advocacy information. Where gaps exist, new research will be undertaken. Research results will guide strategies for marketing and advocacy campaigns, and be made available to local people and other stakeholders. This information will:
 1. Help CBEs target their products and services to urban, international and other markets.
 2. Help advocacy campaigners, communities and NGOs strategize and tailor messages on CF-supportive policies and decisions.

GOVERNANCE, OPERATIONS AND CORE VALUES

Governance

The Center's Board of Trustees oversees governance and strategic direction. Volunteer members from across the Asia-Pacific region bring perspectives and experiences from governments, the private sector, NGOs and CSOs, research and educational institutes. They bring expertise in forestry, natural resource and environmental sectors, as well as finance.

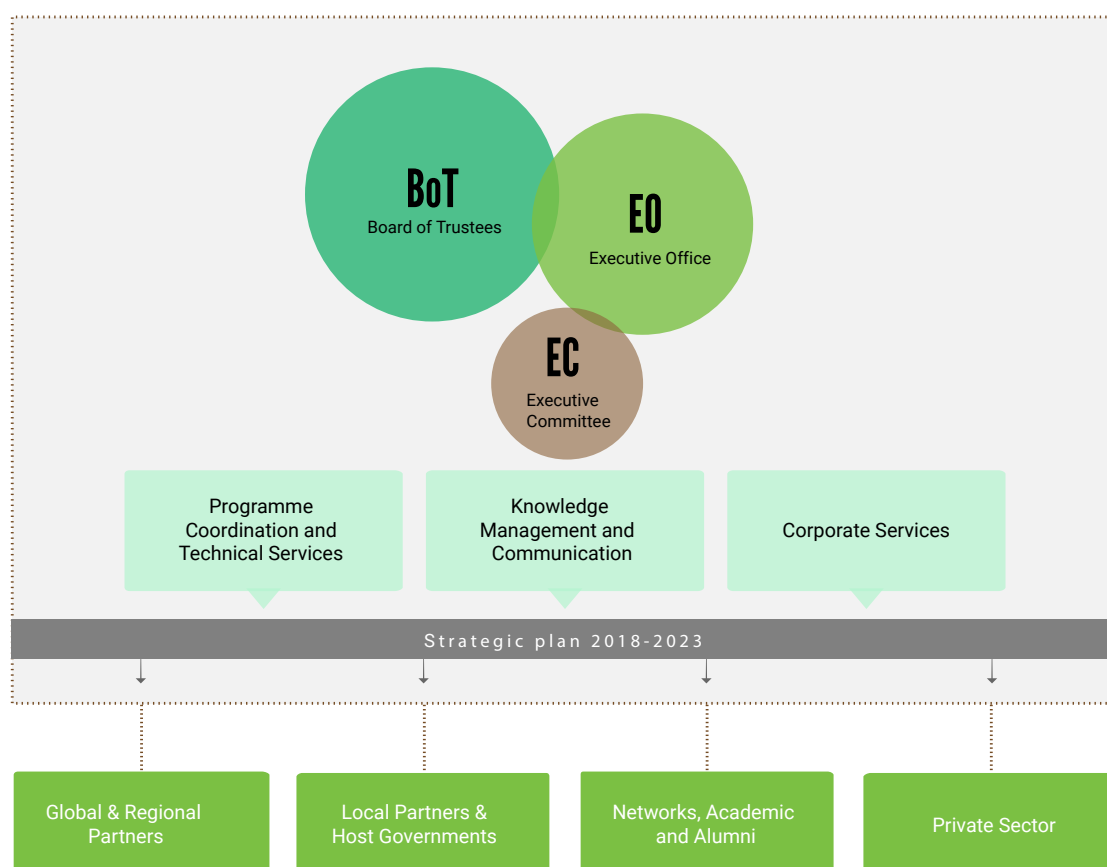
Management and Coordination

The Center has undertaken steps to strengthen its performance in the coming years, including efforts to build its technical resource capacities, improve internal management structures and enhance operational efficiencies. The Executive Office and Executive Committee manage the Center, with the Executive Director ultimately overseeing programme coordination, technical and support services. The lead components

of the Bangkok regional office will continue to function under three distinct service categories with a stronger emphasis on how the services may be streamlined to effectively support the work on the ground:

- Programme Coordination and Technical Services coordinates programmes and projects, and oversees technical services delivered from Country Programmes, multicountry and regional approaches.
- Knowledge Management and Communication leads regional communication, supports national-level communication, and designs and administers knowledge management systems at all levels.
- Corporate Services manages human resources, finance and accounting, office administration and information technology.

THE CENTER'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Partnerships

The Center prioritizes collaboration and bridge building. Benefits of the Center's programmatic and partnership approach include opportunities for synergies, innovation, scaling, increased flow of knowledge and pooling of resources. Partnerships are forged with national governments and with subnational agencies, intergovernmental bodies and multilateral organizations, community networks and associations, NGOs and CSOs, educational and academic institutions, and the private sector. The Center works closely with over 50 partner organizations to expand its reach and impact, and aims to forge new partnerships by 2023, particularly those working with behaviour change, the private sector and urban concerned citizens.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Center has a robust framework to track outputs and indicators of programme delivery to measure and analyse outcomes of its strategic goals. Its participatory monitoring and evaluation system details not only objectively verifiable indicators, baselines and targets, but also the means of verification and specifies how, when and by whom relevant information will be collected. The Center will continue to use tools to measure

outcomes including in-depth participatory studies, programme analysis, stories of change and case studies from communities, and quantitative and qualitative assessments of achievements and lessons learned through regular stakeholder surveys and evaluations.

The Center regularly undertakes external evaluations to assess organizational performance, programme delivery and management responses. The findings and recommendations of the reviews are assessed by management, staff and the Board of Trustees, and enable the Center to remain an adaptive and cutting-edge organization.

Accountability and Transparency

The Center models the accountability and transparency it hopes to build across the region. Decisions and processes are open and transparent, with as much stakeholder inputs as possible. The governance of the Center has various levels of oversight, including the Board of Trustees, Executive Office, Executive Director, engaged staff, and regular independent evaluations. The Center condemns any conflict of interest, harassment, and corruption in its Policies and Procedures Manual, Code of Conduct, staff contracts, and collaborative agreements with partners/subcontractors.

The Center and the Sustainable Development Goals: At a Glance

Moments of great turbulence also offer hope for positive transformations, thus the Center has confidence that its efforts to secure the rights of people across the Asia-Pacific region can lead to significant progress toward climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the Sustainable Development Goals, agreed to by the members of the United Nations as a global framework for future development. The Center's four Strategic Goals contribute to several Sustainable Development Goals as presented below.

Sustainable Development Goals

The Center's strategies and initiatives



- Community participation in natural resource decisions through CF and landscape collaboration
- Protecting rights and supporting rights-based action
- Enhancing livelihoods through forest-based community enterprises
- Increased incomes through private sector partnerships
- Better health outcomes through sustainable land-use and livelihoods
- Decline in negative health and well-being impacts of conflict through transformation initiatives



- Providing a diversity of food and a safety net for farmers through landscape collaboration
- Forest preservation boosts food security during times of drought, crop failure, floods etc.
- Sustainable scaling up of forest food products through community enterprises
- Cleaner water and sanitation through sustainable collaborative landscape management decisions
- Protecting and restoring water-related ecosystems, including forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes



- Developing learning materials, tools and platforms (especially e-learning) relevant to emerging CF issues
- Promoting development of educational and extension systems sensitive to the forestry needs of rural communities – particularly to underserved groups such as women and youth
- Facilitating the sharing of knowledge, skills and experiences between CF-related networks and other collaboration mechanisms
- Mainstreaming approaches on social inclusion, gender equity and rights-based approaches into curriculum
- Participatory approaches to develop a cadre of educators with knowledge on landscape governance, Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade and REDD+
- Partnering with Universities to facilitate landscape collaboration and on behaviour change/ consumer awareness



- Mainstreaming gender and inclusion through all programmes, activities, and evaluations
- Improving women's opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life through the gender leadership programme
- Training and activities on social inclusion, gender equity and rights-based approaches for both staff and clients
- Supporting women entrepreneurs and their contributions to forest and household livelihoods
- Partnering with indigenous communities to facilitate landscape collaboration



- Removing barriers to community forestry and associated enterprises through market research, training, resources, and alliance building
- Support communities to pilot sustainable and innovative enterprises
- Linking community enterprises to private sector and financing
- Supporting events and networks that support entrepreneurs, especially women and others from vulnerable populations
- Supporting public action to buy sustainable forest products
- Advocating for the improvement, public awareness, and use of certification schemes



- Advocacy to change the understanding and behaviour of urban people regarding the role of forest ecosystem services to cities
- Marketing to drive consumer behaviour to buy ethically sourced forests products, particularly from community and smallholder enterprises
- Facilitating links between urban-based conservation groups and rural communities
- Expanding CF to include secondary processing and food systems.
- Linking communities at urban-rural areas for resource mobilization.
- Developing economically viable CBEs with marketability to focus on sustainable cities.



- Increasing share of renewable energy in global energy mix through supporting sustainably managed biomass production
- Providing economic opportunities for renewable energy through community enterprises
- Piloting mitigation and adaptation solutions in forested communities. Supporting successful models across other landscapes and countries
- Through engagement and public action, influencing policy-making to better integrate the role of forests in climate change



- Through landscape collaboration, supporting sustainable management of forests and land, halting deforestation, restoring de-graded forests and substantially increasing afforestation and re-forestation
- Supporting sustainable management of coastal ecosystems, including by strengthening their resilience and restoration
- Advocating for public action and good policy on land and water management
- Supporting community enterprises that protect land and water

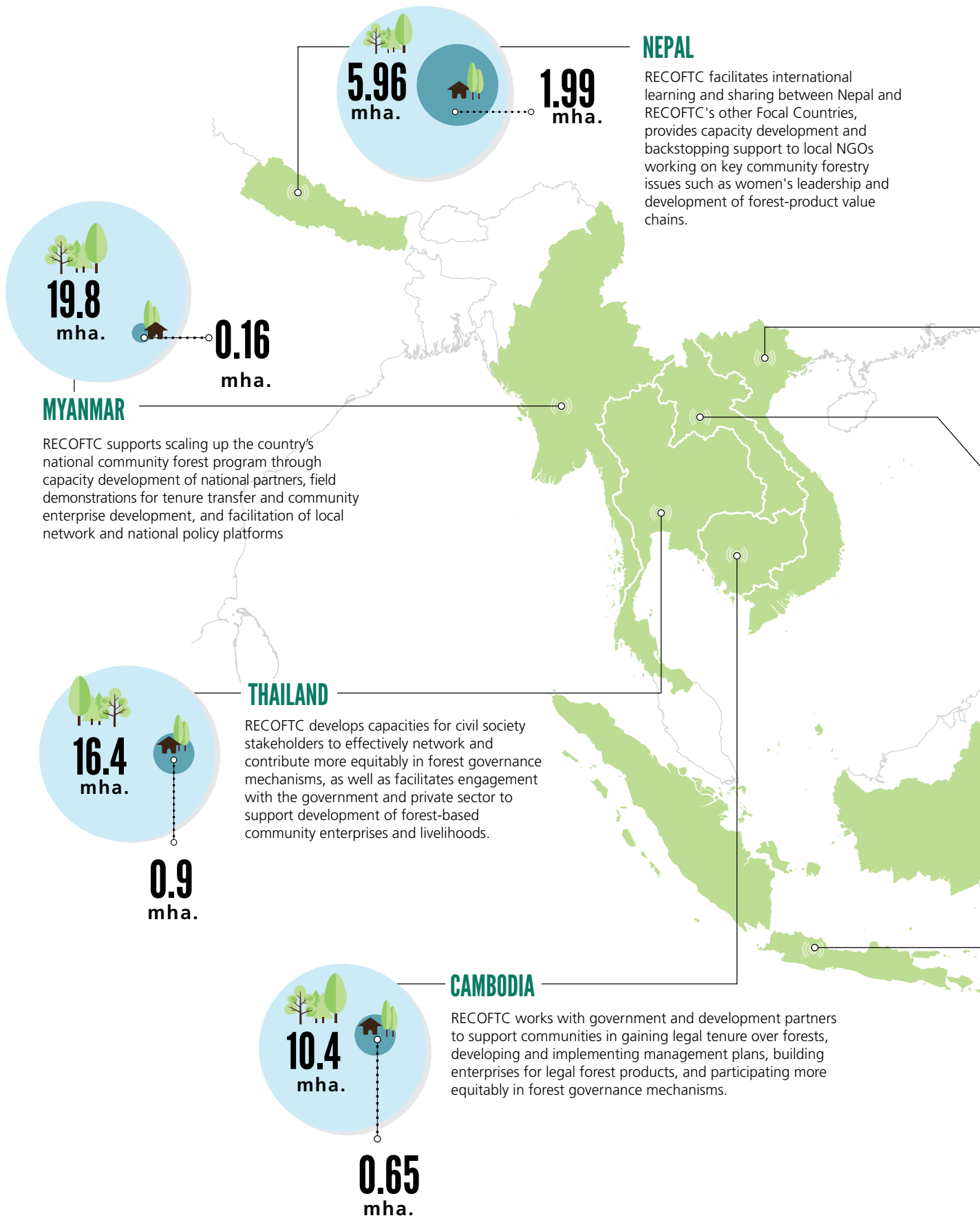


- Through collaborative landscapes, promoting responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making
- Transforming forest and landscape conflicts through engagement, training, and mitigation/transformation services
- Supporting institutions, bodies, and organizations with training and resources to strengthen their governance
- Supporting peace and justice through building collaborative relationships among communities, governments, and the private sector
- Empowering women and other vulnerable people to be leaders within communities and institutions



- Implement effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans
- Support North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, and encourage and promote effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and re-sourcing strategies of partnerships

WHERE THE CENTER WORKS



MYANMAR

RECOFTC supports scaling up the country's national community forest program through capacity development of national partners, field demonstrations for tenure transfer and community enterprise development, and facilitation of local network and national policy platforms

THAILAND

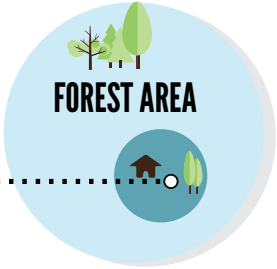
RECOFTC develops capacities for civil society stakeholders to effectively network and contribute more equitably in forest governance mechanisms, as well as facilitates engagement with the government and private sector to support development of forest-based community enterprises and livelihoods.

CAMBODIA

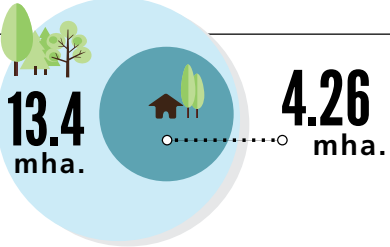
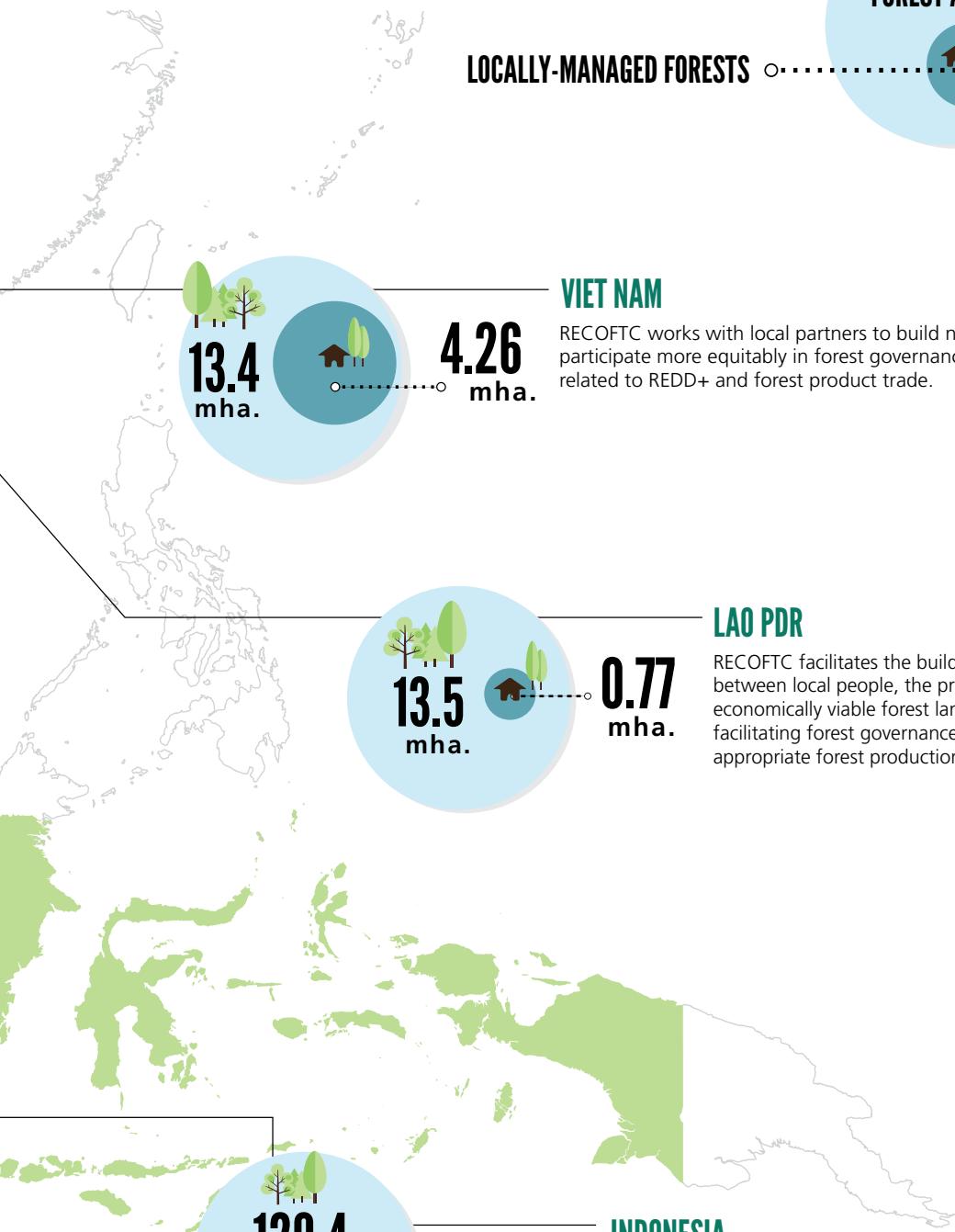
RECOFTC works with government and development partners to support communities in gaining legal tenure over forests, developing and implementing management plans, building enterprises for legal forest products, and participating more equitably in forest governance mechanisms.

NEPAL

RECOFTC facilitates international learning and sharing between Nepal and RECOFTC's other Focal Countries, provides capacity development and backstopping support to local NGOs working on key community forestry issues such as women's leadership and development of forest-product value chains.

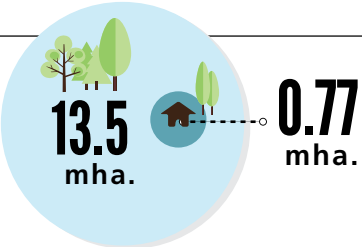


LOCALLY-MANAGED FORESTS



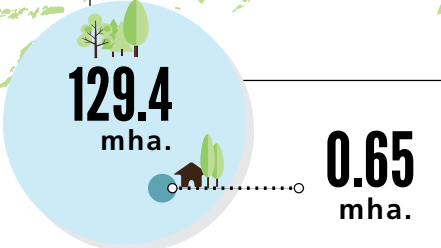
VIET NAM

RECOFTC works with local partners to build non-state actor capacities to participate more equitably in forest governance mechanisms, particularly related to REDD+ and forest product trade.



LAO PDR

RECOFTC facilitates the building of innovative partnerships between local people, the private sector and government for economically viable forest landscape restoration, through facilitating forest governance platforms and demonstrating appropriate forest production technologies.



INDONESIA

RECOFTC develops capacities with partners to mainstream good governance practices in the management of protected areas and to scale up the successful implementation of community forestry enterprises within Forest Management Units across the country.



RECOFTC's mission is to enhance capacities for stronger rights, improved governance and fairer benefits for local people in sustainable forested landscapes in the Asia and the Pacific region.

RECOFTC holds a unique and important place in the world of forestry. It is the only international not-for-profit organization that specializes in capacity development for community forestry. RECOFTC engages in strategic networks and effective partnerships with governments, nongovernmental organizations, civil society, the private sector, local people and research and educational institutes throughout the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. With over 30 years of international experience and a dynamic approach to capacity development – involving research and analysis, demonstration sites and training products – RECOFTC delivers innovative solutions for people and forests.

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