



EVALUATION SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first-ever Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Forum held in Bangkok from October 21 to 22, received an overwhelming nod of approval from the participants. Almost all of them said it was a big step in the right direction, and they looked forward to seeing it become part of the annual calendar of climate change adaptation activists.

Most participants were also all praise for the large and eclectic gathering of experts on the occasion, and the wide-ranging gamut of topics under discussion. But many found the schedule too cramped for comfort. The feeling among a section was that the organizers had tried to pack in too much in too little time, two days in this case. However, most were satisfied with the networking and experience-sharing it allowed them to conduct.

The introduction of a provocateur along with a moderator during panel discussions also elicited a positive response. But what frustrated some was the tendency of panelists to overlook the questions posed by provocateurs, and carry on with their prepared speeches. This led to the call for altering the format of the discussions just a little to include a pre-event meeting among the panelists.

The presence of young participants and representatives of the private sector was also welcomed by most, as was the thrust on adaptation for children.

Although quite satisfied with the contents of the Forum, a few participants wanted the next Forum to adopt a sectoral approach to topics. They also pointed out the almost complete absence of gender from the deliberations this year.

Giving suggestions for the future, some participants called for laying more stress on the “how” of adaptation. They felt that more experience-based adaptation models from the grassroots would benefit a larger number of people.

Though almost everyone was pleased with the hospitality extended to them by the organizers, many found the long distance between the venue of the Forum and their accommodation irritating.

But all in all, the Forum received a big thumbs up from the participants, who found the experience very rewarding, and looked forward to repeating it.

AIM

The aim of this evaluation was to get informed feedback on the maiden Forum, to find out whether the participants were satisfied or not with the relevance, content and design of the Forum as well as the stay arrangements. The organizers also wanted inputs of the participants to make the next Forum more meaningful.

METHODOLOGY

An exhaustive e-evaluation form with both objective and subjective questions (Annex 1) was mailed to the participants almost a week after the Forum on October 28. They were then given time till November 5 to fill it up. A total of 103 participants filled up the evaluation form with comprehensive comments and suggestions.

The form asked the respondents to rate the Forum on relevance, content, design, schedule, participation, general arrangements, et al. They were presented with a choice of statements, and asked whether they strongly agreed, agreed, were neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the statements.

Besides the objective questions, they were also asked a host of subjective questions, urging them to elaborate on what they liked or disliked the most about the Forum, the topics they would like to hear more about in future, as well as their suggestions for Forum 2011.

FINDINGS

A statistical analysis of the objective questions posed in the e-evaluation form shows that an overwhelming 76% of the respondents found the Forum relevant and useful. And a mere 13% sounded a note of dissent.

The design/approach of the Forum also received a positive response with 64% of the respondents happy with it. But 20% of them did find the design wanting.

The rating for the pace of the Forum was even lower with 25% of the participants finding it too hectic for their liking. This percentage of respondents also found two days too less for a Forum of this magnitude. But almost 60% of the participants were fine with this duration.

Relevance of the content also got the approval of more than three-fourth of the respondents even though 13% of them strongly disagreed with it. The content coverage too was assessed as satisfactory with 13% very enthusiastic about it.

There were not many extreme responses to the order of the sessions with 27% of the respondents preferring to stay neutral.

The opinion was equally divided on increasing the number of presentations, with an equal number of respondents (37%) for and against it. But a sizeable 60% wanted more discussions even as 15% of them were virulently opposed to this idea.

As far as time for networking was concerned, most respondents seemed contented with almost 31% marking themselves as neutral.

When it came to the question of global versus regional experts, the dice was loaded in favor of the latter. Almost 59% rooted for regional masters against 39% for global specialists. Equally strong was the voice for getting more practitioners from the ground (54%) to take part in the Forum. More respondents also tilted toward heterogeneous participation (56%) and focused groups (53%). But when it came to the question of reducing participation, the number of nay-sayers (37%) was only a little less than those supporting the move (43%).

The arrangements at the venue and the session rooms received a big pat on the back from the respondents with 78% of the respondents praising the facilities in the session rooms. Only 20% found the amenities lacking.

But the hotel accommodation had a number of critics with almost 29% unhappy with the arrangements. The transport arrangements received even more brickbats with the number of dissatisfied respondents (41%) crossing those satisfied with it (37%).

The social activities did not elicit any strong responses with 37% of the respondents deciding to stay neutral though they were far more vocal in signaling their satisfaction with the networking the Forum allowed them.

But the Forum as a whole received a rousing ovation with almost all the respondents, excepting three, recommending it for future.

SUBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT

KEY LIKES: The insightful discussions on various topics by well-known experts, experience-sharing with a host of participants, the introduction of new breakthroughs, and the venue. Following are some of the features that the respondents liked the most about the Forum:

- Presence of so many experts and grassroots workers under one comfortable umbrella. As one respondent put it: “The participants were heterogeneous...the event was well-organized, topics and issues were well-chosen, and good reading material was available at the lobby for free. “

- The expert participation was noted and appreciated. Many wanted the present experts to be repeated at the coming Forums.
- The “extreme coverage of topics” and the interactive nature of discussions that allowed the audience to share notes with experts.
- The introduction of provocateur, who asked leading questions at panel discussions on the nine themes presented during the Forum.
- The presentation of new breakthroughs in the private sector as well as the introduction of new adaptation tools, and the launch of an adaptation platform website.
- The presence of young participants and the thrust on adaptation for children.
- The participation of private sector representatives.
- The opportunity for networking.
- The well-appointed venue and the gracious hospitality.
- The free reading material available at the lobby. One respondent also applauded the fact that there were no registration fees.

KEY DISLIKES

Though quite fulsome in their praise of the Forum, the respondents were equally scathing in pointing out the parts they least liked about it. Here is what they found lacking in the Forum:

- Time, or rather the lack of it, for both speakers and the topics under deliberation. “There were too many themes, but too little time for every theme,” said a respondent. Another rued that “not much new was said.” Yet another wrote: “It seemed a terrible shame that we had three minutes to listen to global experts who then did not have the time to say anything meaningful on the topics given to them.”
- Too many parallel sessions. Many respondents rued that this left them with no option but to attend one of the sessions even though they wanted to be present at both.
- Faulty formatting that allowed long-winded speakers to get away without cutting them short. As one respondent put it: “There were several very frustrating sessions in which facilitators spoke endlessly, or where panelists

came in with prepared speeches on their favorite topics, and refused to respond to questions posed by the provocateur.”

- Inadequate representation from countries such as India, China, Japan, South Korea and the Pacific islands. As a respondent groused: “The Forum appeared to be a road-show for the UN family of organizations and NGOs.”
- Presence of too many development professionals vis a vis people working on the ground.
- Too many “launches” during lunch break, and the distracting mix of presentations on the one hand and cultural programs on the other.
- The long distance of the venue from the hotel.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FORUM 2011

The respondents had a host of suggestions for making Forum 2011 an even greater success. Here are some of them:

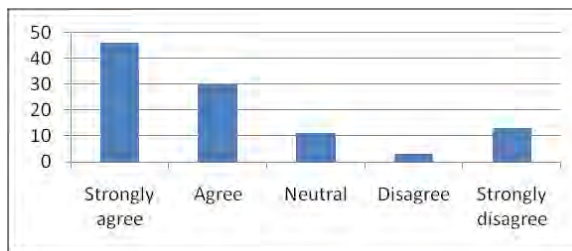
- Bigger platform for sectoral issues such as agriculture, forest, water, energy, health.
- Sessions elucidating the major impacts of climate change on the daily lives of people.
- More focus on gender in adaptation.
- Greater emphasis on explaining the “how” of adaptation by either making available tools for this purpose, or by facilitating experience-sharing with people who were already practising this, or through field trips. “We need more stories from the ground.” There was a consensus that participants need to go home with practical solutions to adaptation.
- Greater participation of the private sector, and the need to figure out the finances required. “We must understand the cost of adaptation, and who is going to foot it,” wrote a respondent.
- Greater involvement of the youth along with the education sector. Also, larger presence of government representatives or policy-makers from developing countries.
- Dialogue among disparate actors on the climate change adaptation scene, say between NGOs and private sector, et al.

- Participation of people working in diverse fields such as town planning, engineering, architecture, etc.
- Tailor the existing format of discussions to make these less susceptible to hijack by either speakers or audience members. As a respondent wrote: “Brief the panelists better about the expectations from them. They should be asked to submit a 1-2 page note stating their position on a panel theme. All other participants, even if they don’t give a formal presentation, should be asked to contribute notes about their work, which can then make up for a valuable resource and documentation of the event.”
- Increase information-sharing by uploading all presentations and seminar outcomes on the net.
- Show more visual presentations.
- Engage translators for non-English speaking panelists, whose English was difficult to follow.
- Keep the venue close to the accommodation and the aircon “less chilling .”

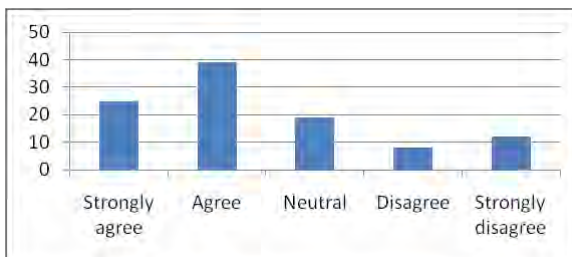
But the overriding sentiment could be easily summed up in one sentence: “Tell us how.”

Statistical analysis of the objective questions

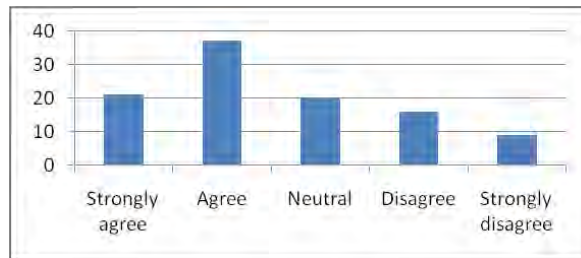
A.1 The Adaptation Forum 2010 theme-Mainstreaming Adaptation into Development Planning was relevant



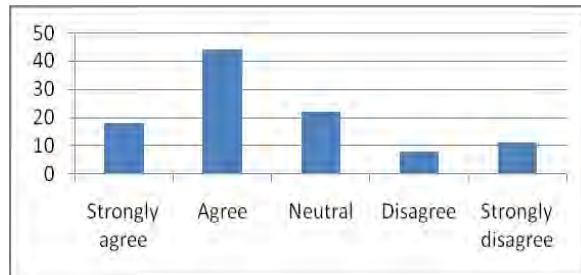
A2. The Adaptation Forum 2010 design/approach were clear



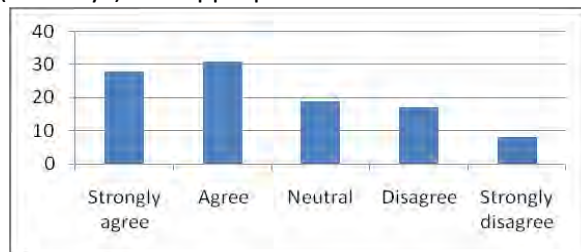
A3. The pace was appropriate



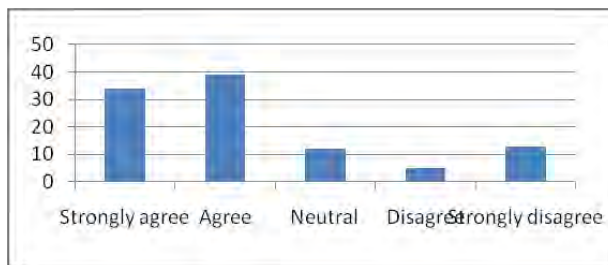
A4. The scheduling was appropriate



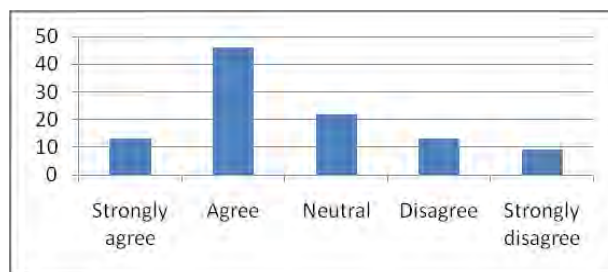
A5. The duration (two days) was appropriate



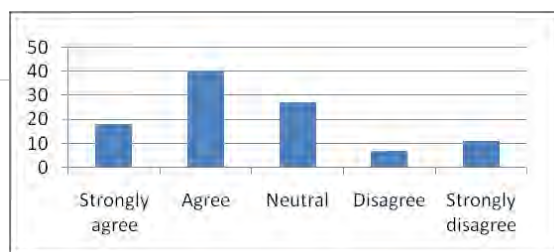
B1. The content was relevant



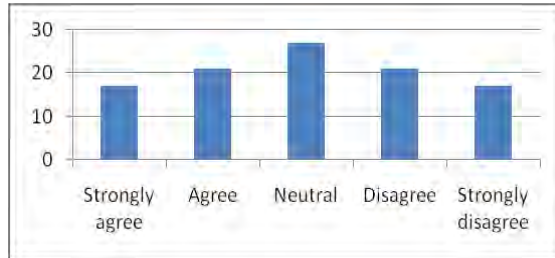
B2. The content coverage was sufficient



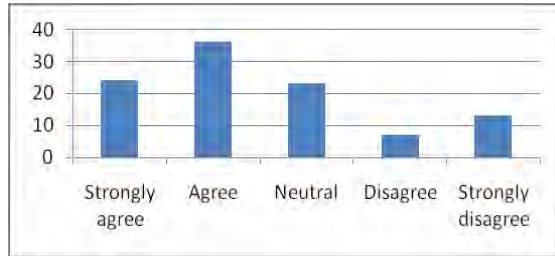
B3. The order of the sessions made sense



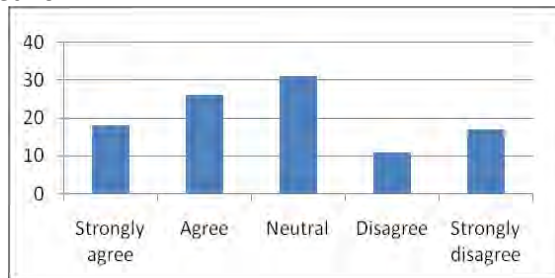
C1. More presentations



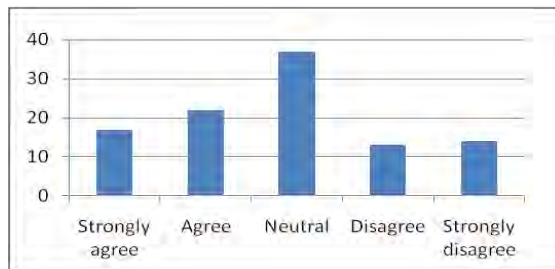
C2. More discussions/debates/Hard Talks



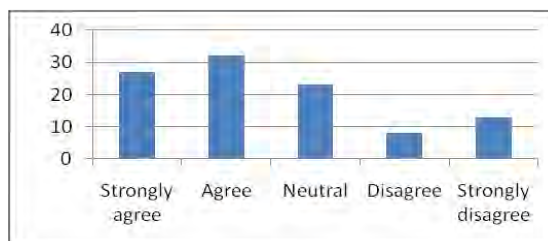
C3. More time to network



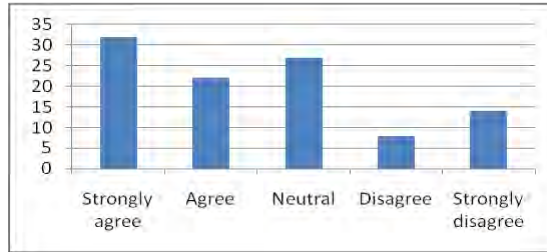
D1. More global experts



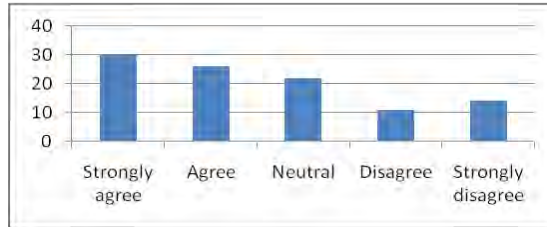
D2. More experts from the region-Asia and the Pacific



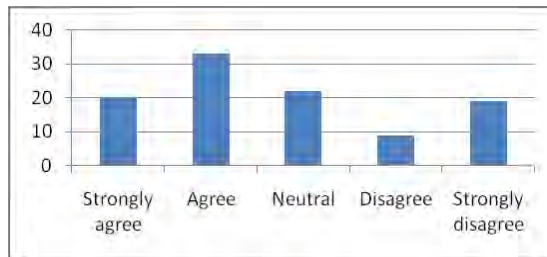
D3. More practitioners from the ground



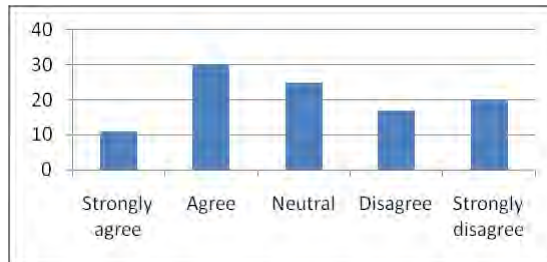
D4. Prefer heterogeneous participation



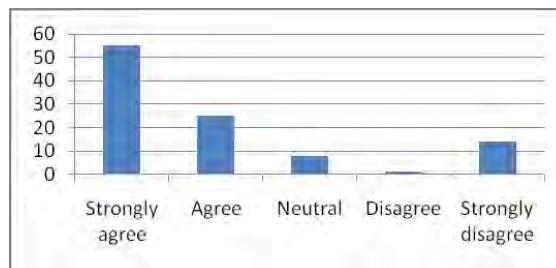
D5. Prefer focused group



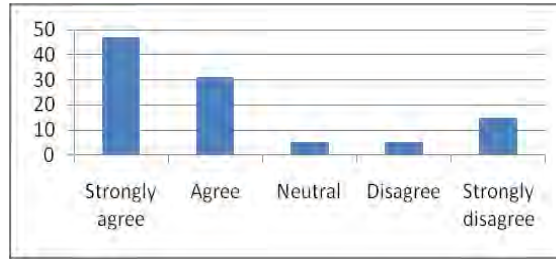
D6. Prefer smaller number of participation



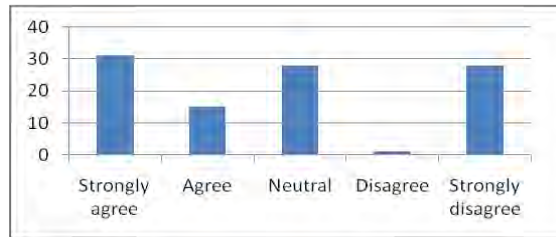
E1. I felt comfortable with the arrangements at the Venue-UNCC



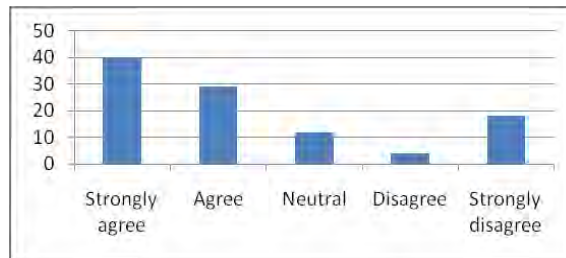
E2. The session rooms was well-equipped with facilities



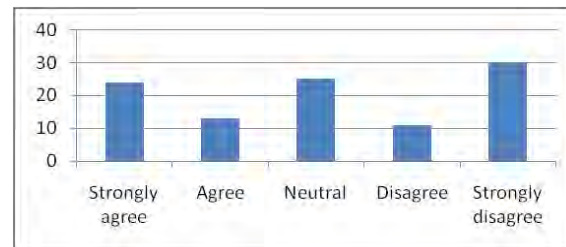
E3. I was satisfied with my hotel accommodation



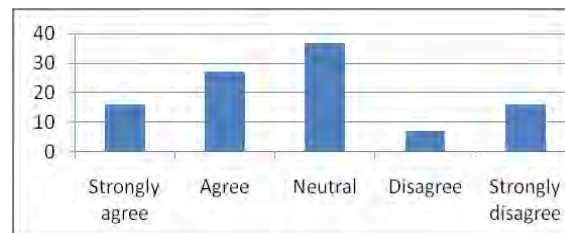
E4. I was satisfied with the coffee/tea break provisions



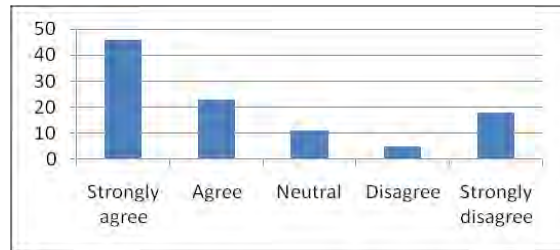
E5. I was satisfied with the transport facilities



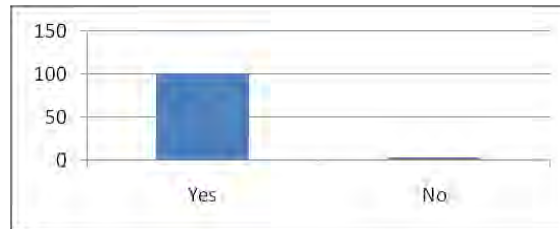
E6. The social and cultural activities were appropriate



F. The Adaptation Forum 2010 was valuable for networking and socializing with colleagues?



K. Would you recommend such forum in future?



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