

# Climate Change

COUNTRY REPORT: APRIL 2013

## Mainstreaming climate change resilience into development planning in Bangladesh

Mousumi Pervin



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.

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## About the author

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The Poverty, Environment, Climate Mainstreaming (PECM) project, has been implemented by the General Economics Division of the Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning, Bangladesh, with the aim of mainstreaming poverty, environment and climate change issues into national level planning and budgeting processes. The UNDP and UNEP Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI) has been providing technical support through the PECM project to mainstream poverty, environment and climate change issues into national level planning and budgeting processes.

The International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) is an independent, non-profit organisation promoting sustainable patterns of world development through collaborative research, policy studies, networking and knowledge dissemination. IIED's Climate Change Group works with partners to help secure fair and equitable solutions to climate change by combining appropriate support for adaptation by the poor in low and middle income countries, with ambitious and practical mitigation targets.

## Introduction

Climate change impacts are likely to undermine planned development outcomes in a number of countries, and pose significant challenges to the resilience of many livelihoods and ecosystems. Development planning responses play an important role in addressing these challenges, and integrating climate change resilience into these responses is fast emerging as a major policy agenda item.

Between November 2011 and October 2012, government staff from diverse backgrounds came together at a course facilitated by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) at the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) to share and reflect on their countries' experience and needs around integrating climate change into development planning. Based on these discussions, they identified three building blocks for successful mainstreaming: an enabling environment, policies and planning, and projects and programmes.

The enabling environment for mainstreaming includes the political will to make climate policy and the information services that guide it. Political will may be evident in high-profile bodies such as the Cabinet Review Committee on climate change led by the prime minister of Bangladesh. The second block, planning and policy, includes the policy frameworks together with institutional arrangements and finance mechanisms. The projects and programmes block takes mainstreaming to the project level. The three blocks are non-hierarchical and non-sequential; in some cases, strategic planning led by technocrats may come before high-level political will, or a country may be pursuing important development goals mainly through individual projects.

This country paper reflects Bangladesh's experience against this building blocks framework.

Bangladesh is one of the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that by 2050, 17 per cent of Bangladesh will have been claimed by rising seas, forcing 20 million people to relocate. In order to reduce the level of vulnerability the country faces, the government is stepping up its efforts to establish an institutional

and legal framework, which is strongly conducive to the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation and mitigation. This paper explains how political will facilitated a climate-resilient development planning process in Bangladesh. In addition, it will provide an introduction to climate financing mechanisms and the development planning process.

# 1. Enabling environment

## 1.1 Political will

Bangladesh's vulnerability to climate change is due to various hydro-meteorological and socioeconomic factors. In 2010, the Global Climate Risk Index stated that in 1990–2008, 8,241 people died in Bangladesh while the cost of damage was US\$2.2 billion per year and loss of GDP was 1.81 per cent. However, the political will to address this and incorporate climate change issues into national-level planning does exist. The National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) demonstrated this in 2005, led by the Ministry of the Environment and Forests (MOEF), in close consultation with the prime minister and other politicians and officials.

Bangladesh is moving incrementally towards the implementation of its NAPA, involving the participation of ministries, departments, local government, civil society and others. The honorable prime minister of Bangladesh said in the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) in 2009: "The Bangladesh government is fully committed to take all measures so that climate change is managed in a way that people are fully protected from its adverse impacts as promised in our manifesto."

The issue has been reflected in the ruling party's election manifesto and climate change has become an environmental, as well as a development, issue. In the manifesto, it is stated that an integrated policy will be formulated to protect the country from the adverse effects of global warming; a pollution-free environment will be created and water resources saved. Projects will be undertaken for river dredging, water conservation, flood control, river erosion and forestry. Attempts will also be made to restore and maintain the ecological balance.<sup>1</sup>

The government that came to power in 2009 (with climate change in its manifesto) wished to examine the actions suggested in the BCCSAP – especially how this fits in with priorities for future economic, social and human development. The government formed a cabinet committee under the leadership of the planning minister. This committee reviewed the BCCSAP, including contributions to the eradication of poverty by 2021, and it was formally adopted in 2009.

There is no costed plan of the assessed needs of Bangladesh in respect of climate change (see the Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Review, 2012). The main climate change strategic framework is the BCCSAP. There are six themes within the plan, but no detailed costing or priorities are noted beyond an initial infrastructure spend of US\$500 million in Years 1 and 2, and a total of US\$5 billion over five years.

In addition, the government has incorporated climate change into national-level planning. The Planning Commission is supported by the Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI)<sup>2</sup> of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) through the Poverty, Environment and Climate Mainstreaming (PECM) Project. It has incorporated climate change into various plans and projects; for example, the Perspective Plan, the Sixth Five-Year Plan, the Annual Development Programme, the Delta Plan and other policy documents.

The MOEF formed the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) and together with the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF) it makes up the main funding instrument for the BCCSAP. This demonstrates the government's commitment to the process – particularly given that the BCCRF is public money. It is overseen by an all-party parliamentary group. In 2009–12, the government, allocated US\$350 million from the non-development budget and 107 projects have already been approved for implementation in different vulnerable areas, worth 1,272 million Bangladeshi Taka by one estimate. The BCCRF has been created to attract additional funding from development partners amounting to US\$170 million.

A climate change cell was established in the MOEF in 2004, and there is a focal person in each ministry dealing with climate change activities and mainstreaming climate change into sectoral activities. This helps to build institutional memory of, and capacity for, climate change in each ministry. All focal points are coordinated by the climate change cell, under the MOEF. The cell provides secretarial services to manage the BCCRF and BCCTF. This has made a success in helping to mainstreaming climate change into national-level planning.

<sup>1</sup> Awami League election manifesto, 2008

<sup>2</sup> The UNDP-UNEP PEI supports development planning and budgeting to reverse environmental degradation in ways that will benefit the poor and enable sustainable development.

## 1.2 Information services

Despite the high degree of political will shown on climate change, a challenge remains in translating it into concrete action and policy. This is partly due to an information gap that exists on the detailed impacts of climate change and appropriate responses.

Unequivocal evidence of the direct impacts of climate change on development is scarce, but information on disaster response is plentiful. The BCCSAP focuses on climate-related disasters and their consequences, such as increasingly frequent and severe cyclones, heavier and more erratic rainfall, the melting of the Himalayan glaciers, lower and more erratic rainfall, and rising sea levels. The ministry's local staff have brought insights up to the national level.

Each ministry has its own system for collecting and using data and information. For example, the Ministry of Water Resources generates data and analysis in relation to water. Disaster-related information sits in the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management. Some agencies, such as the Meteorological Department, are generating climate information, particularly surface and upper-atmosphere observations, data from radar and satellite stations, and in the agro-meteorological, geomagnetic, seismological, and meteorological fields.

While there are some systems and provisions in place for information generation and dissemination, it remains weak at the sectoral and local levels. In addition, the coordination of data and information remains challenging. Every ministry has its own set-up at the local level, with local staff sending information and reports up to the national level. Based on this local-level data, the ministry publishes reports; but there is a huge information gap among ministries. Due to the multi-sectoral nature of the impacts of climate change, decision makers need in-depth information, including specific scientific information from across the sectors for effective planning and investment. Planners have depended on the analysis of past cases to determine trends, but with climate change, 'after-casting' is

not sufficient because of its unpredictable nature.

Decision makers are unable to take concrete decisions because of a lack of specific information on adaptation and mitigation. For example, the BCCSAP (page 9) states that:

*In the last 25 years, Bangladesh has experienced six floods. In 2007, two successive and damaging floods inundated the country in the same season. During high floods, riverbank erosion is common. It can result in the loss of thousands of hectares of agricultural land and scores of villages, and displace many thousands of people from their homes. Flash floods can also be a problem in the more hilly north-eastern and south-eastern regions of the country.*

This is too general to enable decision makers to invest in a particular sector for flood management. Therefore, the following issues need to be taken into consideration as Bangladesh's efforts on tackling climate change advance:

- Sector-specific studies and research on climate impacts are needed, particularly for agriculture, infrastructure, water resources, food security and land.
- Published information needs to be kept and made available for all to use.
- There needs to be strong coordination, communication and information sharing among sectors.

The Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) has the mandate to monitor projects in coordination with the line ministry and is involved in the whole gamut of project activities from preparation to completion and evaluation of impact. But there is no common framework for monitoring and evaluation of climate change adaptation and mitigation activities. The General Economics Division has been developing a draft indicator framework, with support from the PEI. This generic framework will cover the entire government system, focusing on adaptation. The information will be used by the monitoring cell and planning professionals to design adaptation projects and evaluate them.

## 2. Policy and planning

### 2.1 Policy frameworks and institutional arrangements

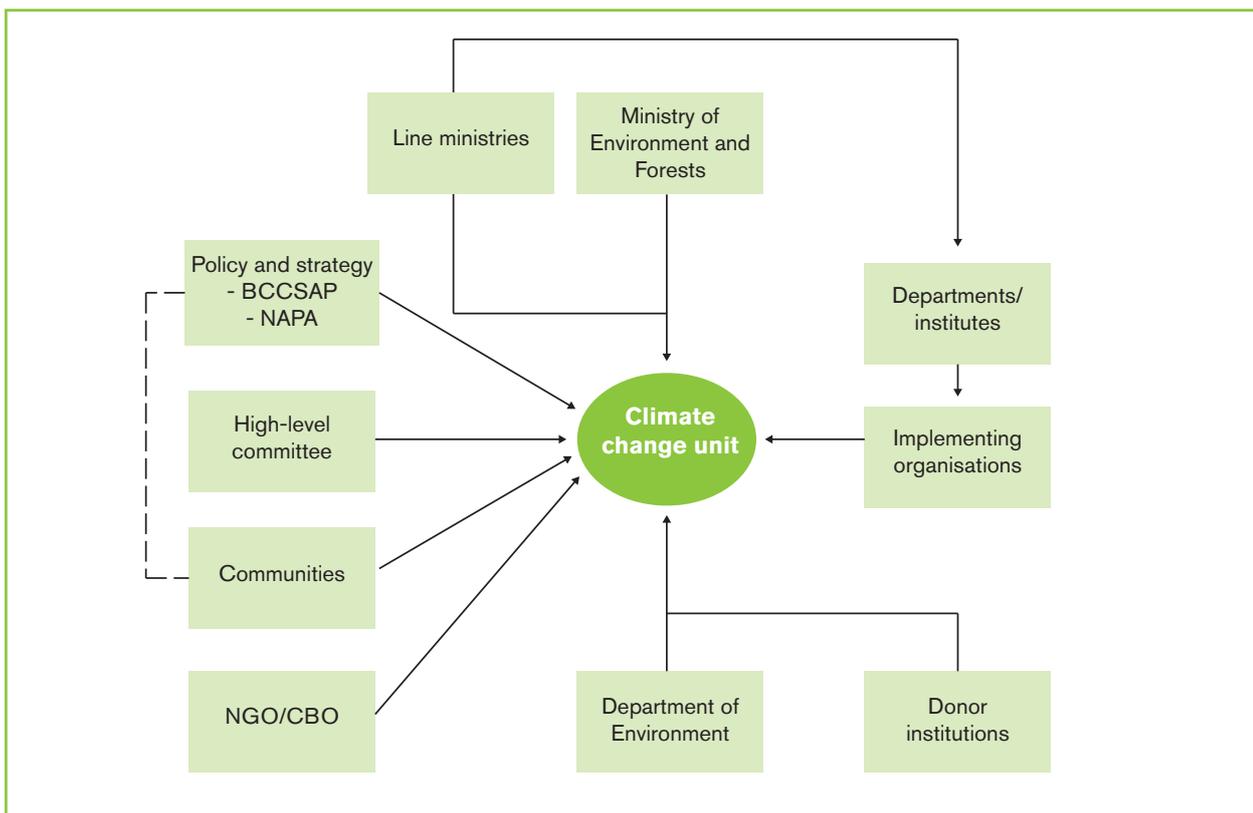
Climate change is a cross-cutting issue, necessitating a broad range of policy and institutional arrangements. In Bangladesh, the institutional and legal framework is strongly conducive to the mainstreaming of climate change adaptation. The government has established steering committees on climate change. The institutional architecture that is being rolled out to plan for climate change is new and it overlaps or bypasses the traditional institutional architecture, led by the Planning Commission and various ministries. Synergies between institutional roles and responsibilities for climate change planning need to be encouraged (see Figure 1).

In the existing development planning process, projects are approved by the Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning, and then the executing agency implements

them. But for climate change projects, the MOEF applies for support from either of the two main funds and the application is reviewed by the climate change cell. If the project is below US\$250 million it will not need to go to the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC), which is the highest authority for approving development activities. In this case, the Ministry of Planning can approve it directly, to avoid delay and increase flexibility. In order to mainstream both the funds within the national planning process and integrate them into local level, management functions of BCCTF and BCCRF need to be reallocated in line with other ministries, like the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives.

The role of local bodies and NGOs in adaptation planning needs to be articulated. NGOs are also implementing some projects through donor funds and contributing to mainstreaming through awareness, capacity building and information.

**Figure 1. Institutional arrangements in Bangladesh.**



The Planning Commission has already incorporated climate change issues into ten-year, five-year and annual development plans and projects. Any project submitted to the Commission is checked for alignment with existing plans and policies, thus integrating climate change into higher-level plans and reinforcing mainstreaming. There is no separate policy for climate change issues, rather climate change is managed within the existing policy framework that encompasses the environment (1992), forests (1994), water (1999), land use (2001), fisheries (1998) and environmental management (1995).

However, some policies, such as exports and industry, have components that can conflict with climate change concerns – for example, expanding shrimp cultivation in coastal areas without land-use planning (shrimp culture increases salinisation and erodes biodiversity – challenges exacerbated by climate change). Plans and policies were devised before the issue of climate change rose up the agenda. There are no plans to update the policy because this is a long and complex process and it is easier to make a new policy rather than update an existing one.

The Planning Commission is currently reviewing all existing policies from ministries to assess whether they conflict with climate change issues. If conflicts are identified, they will advocate changing the policy, potentially a lengthy process.

## 2.2 Financial frameworks

Bangladesh has several different institutional funding mechanisms on climate change adaptation.

**The annual development programme.** The lead agency for the annual development programme (ADP) is the Planning Commission, while the Ministry of Finance handles the non-developmental budget. Programmes delivering climate-response activities represent up to 4 per

cent of GDP. Between 20 and 25 per cent of government expenditure is on programmes with a climate change dimension.

**The non-developmental budget.** The finance ministry operates this fund, supporting salary, wages, training expenses, etc. The non-development budget is mainly incremental in nature; the 2012 Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Review found that the non-developmental budget funds a larger proportion of social protection, while the ADP funds a greater proportion of infrastructure adaptation. In 2009–2010, programmes related to climate change in the non-developmental budget increased from 24 to 115.

**Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund.** Bangladesh allocated US\$100 million for the 2010–2011 financial year to implement the BCCSAP. In early 2009, the government approved a policy for the fund and the Climate Change Trust Fund Act was passed in 2010; of the total amount, 66 per cent can be spent on projects related to climate change and the balance for emergencies.

### **Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund.**

This fund consists of US\$110 million from the EU and Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK to support implementation of the BCCSAP.

**Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience.** This is one of the three climate investment funds administered by the World Bank: US\$11 million was approved in October 2010 – US\$50 million as grants and the balance as concessional loans.

These funds support different types of mainstreaming. The government budget supports more integrated climate resilience. The climate funds are stand-alone and support pilot projects under BCCSAP. The Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience is also in parallel to existing systems, supporting projects in line with BCCSAP but this money is not being managed by the trust funds and this reduces synergy.

### 3. Projects and programmes

Bangladesh's NAPA focuses on 15 priority activities identified in consultation with different ministries, local government agencies, civil society, NGOs, donors and other stakeholders. They include awareness raising, capacity building and projects in particularly vulnerable regions (with a special focus on agriculture and water). The NAPA was updated in 2009 and identified 45 adaptation measures, with 18 short- and medium-term adaptation measures.

The MOEF prepared the BCCSAP in 2009 to follow a low-carbon pathway towards development – widely recognised as a major achievement and a basic reference for aligning investments. The programmes are categorised

under four timelines, from immediate to long-term, and via various pillars. It has drawn on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and has six thematic areas, with 44 programmes that in turn include 145 actions.

More than 100 projects have been approved under the BCCTF, for adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer, action research, knowledge management, and others. The investment, to implement six thematic areas of BCCSAP, shows that 44.24 per cent (the highest allocation) goes to infrastructure and 1.93 per cent (the lowest) goes to capacity building and institutional strengthening.

## Conclusion

Bangladesh is stepping up to address climate change issues in national-level planning processes by mainstreaming climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as establishing climate financing mechanisms. Multi-sectoral involvement and coordination at national

level, cascading into local-level planning processes, could have the potential to bring tangible benefits for the nation. But synergies between plans and programmes need to be strengthened to achieve pro-poor, environment-friendly and climate-resilient development.

**Table 1. Summary of experience in Bangladesh against the building block framework**

Enabling environment		
Political will	Information	
<p>Driven by technocrats and politicians (parliamentarians and Prime Minister)</p> <p>Responsive to national and international demands</p>	<p>Sources: IPCC Reports &amp; CC documents (NAPA); Data on disasters is strong. Collected by Ministry of Food &amp; Disaster Management (CC discourse embedded within disaster response in Bangladesh); sector specific data collected by Line Ministries; CC information is generated by Metrological Department; Research based CC evidence collected by external agencies. Data sources based on past and current observations. Scenarios and projections lacking.</p> <p>M&amp;E Framework focusing on adaptation is being developed by the Ministry of Planning. Project based M&amp;E systems are also being developed (example PPCR).</p> <p>Systems: M&amp;E Framework for designing and evaluating adaptation projects under development.</p>	
Policy and planning		
Policy framework	Institutional framework	Financial framework
<p>NAPA (2005)</p> <p>Election manifesto</p> <p>Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action plan (2009)</p> <p>Climate Change Trust Fund Policy (2009) and Act (2010)</p> <p>Perspective Plan, Five-Year Plan, Annual Development Plan</p>	<p>MoEF lead institution, responsible for coordinating climate change activities across ministries</p> <p>Climate change cell (2004) under Department of Environment, coordinates focal points located in other ministries</p> <p>Climate change unit under MoE acts as Secretariat to BCCTF</p> <p>National Steering Committee and All Parliamentary Committee on Climate Change steers the BCCRF</p> <p>Cabinet review committee established to review BCCSAP</p> <p>Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning, integrating climate resilience into national development planning.</p>	<p>Resource mobilisation strategy relies on national and international sources.</p> <p>All funds support implementation of BCCSAP (thus support a 'programmatic action plan');</p> <p>Projects below 250,000,000 BDT are approved by the MoEF as fast track projects. Projects above that value need approval from the Planning Commission.</p>

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