National Adaptation Plan process in focus: Lessons from Bangladesh

Bangladesh

Bangladesh is a country of 147,570 km² located in the Bay of Bengal, in the floodplain of several major rivers flowing from the Himalayas. The land is largely low and flat, with some hilly regions. Bangladesh is also home to the Sundarban, the largest natural mangrove forest in the world. The climate is tropical, with a monsoon and a dry season. The country has a population of 161.8 million (2016), of which around 70% live in rural areas. Bangladesh is a least-developed country (LDC); however, the poverty ratio has fallen from 49% in 2000 to 23.2% in 2016. Agriculture accounts for around 15% of GDP, but employs approximately 40% of the workforce. Industry accounts for 32% of GDP, whilst services, including transport and construction services, accounts for 53% of GDP.

Climate change risks

Bangladesh is often considered as one of the countries most vulnerable to extreme events, climate variability and change (Global Climate Risk Index; Climate Change Vulnerability Index). The country’s location in the Bay of Bengal makes it susceptible to seasonal cyclones. It’s location on a major floodplain increases the risks related to seasonal flooding. Low-lying coastal land is also vulnerable to future sea level rise. An estimated temperature rise of 1.6°C and an increase of precipitation of 8% is expected by 2050. Floods, tropical cyclones, storm surges and droughts are likely to become more frequent and severe. Sea level rise and salinity intrusion is already being observed.

Climate change will impact a range of sectors. Rice, the predominant crop, has been found to be climate sensitive. Yields are expected to drop, with direct impact on food security. Changes will occur in forest ecosystems, including the Sundarban, with a decline in valuable tree species. Climate change has already altered the distribution areas of certain vector-borne diseases, such as malaria. Extreme events will affect both rural and urban infrastructure. Climate change is expected to directly affect livelihoods, and worsen the economy and poverty rates.

Groundwork for supporting the NAP process

Policy, planning and budgeting:

Substantial engagement on climate change and adaptation planning has taken place in Bangladesh. Bangladesh was one of the first two LDCs to submit its National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) in 2005. The NAPA identified and prioritised adaptation projects for immediate and urgent implementation. It was updated in 2009, and additional projects were added. The Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) was approved in 2009 and runs until 2018. It sets forward six pillars for climate change adaptation and mitigation, whilst identifying 44 priority programmes. Work is on-going to update the BCCSAP.

Adaptation is included in the key national development plan, the Seventh Five Year Plan (2016-2020). Under the related Annual Development Plans (ADP), climate change screening tools have been integrated into development project proposals. Adaptation has been integrated to a limited degree in key sectoral policies, such as water and agriculture. The Nationally Determined Contribution of Bangladesh (2015) identifies an adaptation goal to “protect the population, enhance their adaptive capacity and livelihood options, and to protect the overall development of the country in its stride for economic progress and wellbeing for the people“. It also identifies key adaptation areas and more specific adaptation priorities for Bangladesh, as defined in the table overleaf.
### Priority adaptation activities (INDC 2015)

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<tr>
<th>i.</th>
<th>Improved early warning system for tropical cyclone, flood, flash flood and drought</th>
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<td>ii.</td>
<td>Disaster preparedness and construction of flood and cyclone shelters</td>
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<td>Tropical cyclones and storm surge protection</td>
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<td>Inland monsoon flood-proofing and protection</td>
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<td>Climate resilient infrastructure and communication</td>
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<td>Climate resilient housing</td>
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<td>vii.</td>
<td>Improvement of urban resilience through improvement of drainage system to address urban flooding</td>
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<td>viii.</td>
<td>River draining and dredging (including excavation of water bodies, canals and drains)</td>
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<td>ix.</td>
<td>Stress tolerant (salinity, drought and flood) variety improvement and cultivation, including for crops, livestock and fisheries</td>
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<td>Research and knowledge management</td>
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<td>Adaptation on local-level perspectives etc.</td>
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<td>xii.</td>
<td>Adaptation to climate change impacts on health</td>
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<td>xiii.</td>
<td>Biodiversity and ecosystem conservation</td>
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<td>xiv.</td>
<td>Capacity Building at individual and institutional level to plan and implement adaptation programmes and projects in the country</td>
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Under the Climate Finance Governance Project of Ministry of Environment and Forests, Department of Environment is conducting "Nationwide Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA)" covering the 64 districts of the country, as well as selected hot spots (coastal, drought prone and flood/flash flood prone areas) with the technical assistance of GIZ. The CVA will be completed by March 2018. The CVA is expected to be one of the major building blocks of the future National Adaptation Plan. Based on the CVA a Climate Vulnerability Index will be developed, which is expected to be one of the decision-making tools of the government for better allocation of resources to the most vulnerable areas.

### Implementation of adaptation actions

Bangladesh has extensive experience in implementing adaptation projects, and is a global pioneer in community-based adaptation (CBA). Project funding comes from domestic sources and international sources including bilateral, multi-lateral and private funding. Some highlights include:

- More than 420 implemented projects under national funding of the BCCTF, including on river bank protective works, cyclone resilient housing, afforestation and stress-tolerant crop and seed varieties.
- Four Global Environment Facility (GEF) Least Developed Country Fund (LDCF) projects on CBA and Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA), both on-going and closed.
- Six projects under the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR), with both private and public sources of funding, in agriculture, infrastructure, coastal zone management and capacity building.
Bangladesh’s NAP process

Institutional arrangements

In order to oversee climate change policies/strategies and actions in a more comprehensive way, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has created a Climate Change wing. The wing, inter alia, will monitor implementation of the NAP. Establishment of a Policy Support, Investment, Monitoring Unit (PSIMU) at the Ministry is also in process, to support climate change actions in Bangladesh.

NAP process timeline

- **January 2015** – Roadmap for Developing a National Adaptation Plan for Bangladesh was approved.
- **February 2015 onwards** – Development of GEF proposal to support NAP process, in particular implementation, began.
- **September 2015** – The intended formulation of NAP was included in Bangladesh’s INDC to the UNFCCC.
- **September 2016 onwards** – GCF NAP Readiness proposal development began.
- **November 2016** – NAP Advisory Committee was established.
- **March 2017** – National Stakeholder Dialogue on Stocktaking for Bangladesh’s NAP Process: Achievements, gaps and way forward held to identify next steps for NAP process. Around 80 representatives from government, NGOs, academia and civil society. Mapping exercise of on-going activities by MoEF.

What is the process to formulate and implement the NAP?

The Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) established the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process in 2010, to enhance country-led planning and preparedness for climate change adaptation (CCA) in the medium and long-term. The objectives of the NAP are to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and to integrate adaptation into all levels of development planning. The NAP process is multi-sectoral, involving Ministries of Environment as well as Planning and Finance, in addition to other key Ministries. By bringing greater institutional integration and coordination to adaptation planning, NAPs can enhance ongoing national development planning processes, safeguard development gains, and build resilience.

NAP support

The NAP process in Bangladesh has been supported by the Government of Norway, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the joint UNDP and UN Environment NAP Global Support Programme.
Challenges

Challenges remain in Bangladesh, with regards to institutional coordination and integration of climate change adaptation into budgets and performance frameworks, especially across various sectors. Institutional coordination is also needed to deliver on the parallel processes of the NDC and NAP.

Several prioritised adaptation options are still to be financed and implemented. Technical capacity to collect, generate and disseminate climate information remains weak, and climate information is yet to be integrated into policy development.

Successes

Bangladesh has long-term experience in implementing adaptation projects, in a range of sectors and especially at community level. This provides a good base from which to scale up adaptation actions. In addition, a solid national policy framework enables planning on adaptation and identifies adaptation priorities. Adaptation is a national priority and has strong government support. The approach of having a nationally driven climate trust fund remains unique. In many regards, Bangladesh has been a pioneer in adaptation and provides an interesting model for sharing lessons learned with other LDCs.

Opportunities

Climate change risks can be integrated into national and sectoral planning and budgeting processes in the medium- to long-term, through the guidance of both the NAP and the NDC. This includes medium-term national development planning processes, such as the ADPs and the upcoming 8th Five Year Plan (2021-2026), as well as long-term planning under the Perspective Plan to 2040, and the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, which identifies delta issues and future scenarios for 50-100 years. The achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through adaptation can be articulated within these and other policies.

Prioritised NAP activities include: establishing an inter-institutional NAP coordination mechanism; enhancing climate data and use in planning; carrying out sectoral, regional and ecosystem level vulnerability assessments; drafting a NAP, based on consultations; developing sectoral action plans and budgets; doing appraisal and costing of adaptation options; updating the Climate Fiscal Framework; and establishing a monitoring framework for the NAP process.

Key documents

- Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, 2009
- Second National Communication, 2012
- NDC, 2015

About the NAP-GSP

The joint UNDP-UN Environment National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme (NAP-GSP) was launched in June 2013, financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF). The NAP-GSP, together with partners, are assisting developing countries to identify technical, institutional and financial needs to integrate climate change adaptation into medium and long-term national planning and financing. The NAP-GSP provides technical expertise and guidance on country NAP processes, and provides opportunities for knowledge exchange on NAPs.

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