

Review of Climate Budget and Recommendations for Climate Public Finance Management in Bangladesh

Distinguished Guests

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Context

The physical, economic, and social impacts of the climate related risks are widely acknowledged in Bangladesh. In response to address the impact of climate change in Bangladesh, the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) formulated the National Adaptation Plan (NAP)¹ in 2022. The implementation of NAP will require USD 230 billion during 2023 to 2050. Moreover, developing climate resilience² will require seven times the current spending at a rate of USD 8.5 billion per year, with USD 6.0 billion per year from external sources or international climate funds and development partners (MoEFCC, 2022). In the medium-term by 2025, Bangladesh will need at least USD 12.5 billion, approximately 3 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for climate action³ (World Bank, 2022). These numbers indicate that Bangladesh will need a large amount of financing for climate action both in mid and long-term period. However, there exists a large gap in climate related expenditures despite national and global commitments on climate finance. Public expenditure is one of the crucial sources of climate finance which plays an important role in mobilising climate funds from other sources.

In this regard, Green Public Financial Management (PFM) can play a vital role in improving the allocation of public expenditures for climate and environmental goals by revenue generation through green fiscal measures which are aligned with climate and environmental objectives. Green PFM refers to the integration of an environment and climate-friendly perspective into PFM processes, systems, and frameworks, particularly the budget process to promote climate and environment sensitive fiscal policies. The Organisation for Economic

¹NAP was formulated to identify country-specific adaptation needs; develop and implement strategies to address the adaptation needs as well as help decide actions to protect vulnerable communities.

²Climate resilience refers to the ability of individuals, communities, organisations, and systems to anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the impacts of climate change.

³Climate action refers to a wide range of efforts, policies, and initiatives aimed at addressing climate change by reducing the Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and promoting sustainability.

Co-operation and Development (OECD) established the Paris Collaborative on Green Budgeting in 2017 which subsequently created an inventory of green budgeting building blocks and successful national experiences, particularly in advanced economies. However, green PFM practices remain nascent in most countries, including advanced economies. Only 14 countries of the OECD members are currently implementing some form of green budgeting (Austria, Canada, Columbia, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden). In Bangladesh, the climate change relevance of the National Budget has increased since the first implementation of the climate budget in FY2016–17.

Keynote Presentation

“Climate budgeting should be reformed so that it is considered as an all-inclusive strategy aligned with national priorities. The reform should be integrated with public finance management reform agenda ———

Dr Fahmida Khatun



Climate Fiscal Framework in Bangladesh

In 2014, the Climate Fiscal Framework was established with the aim of estimating the costs and priorities associated with climate actions. This framework also sought to access funding from both international and national sources dedicated to climate finance. Another key objective was to ensure the effective delivery of climate finance, track climate-related expenditures, and establish accountability for these financial allocations.

Furthermore, in 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and PFM also came into focus. The SDGs encompass a multitude of targets and goals, among which climate action holds significant relevance. This aligns with the objective of adopting SDGs to address various global challenges. Notably, a comprehensive PFM Reform Strategy spanning five years, from 2016 to 2021, was also introduced. A subsequent noteworthy development occurred in

2020 when the Climate Fiscal Framework (CFF) was updated to reflect the changing landscape. This updated framework aimed to harmonise with new development strategies and engage pertinent stakeholders in the pursuit of climate-related goals. It endeavours to encompass the participation of the private sector, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), fostering a citizen-centric orientation while simultaneously enhancing the framework’s visibility. In conjunction with fiscal measures such as taxation, Value-Added Tax (VAT), subsidies, and pricing, the framework places deliberate emphasis on specific policies such as lending and insurance. These policies, tightly intertwined with government fiscal strategies, collectively constitute the framework’s components.

Climate Budget in Bangladesh

Following the recommendation of CFF prepared by the Finance Division, Ministry of Finance (MoF), published in 2014, the first climate budget report was

published in 2017. In FY2017–18, six ministries and divisions namely—the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), Local Government Division (LGD), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF), Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), and Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), were considered to prepare the climate budget. At present, in the FY2023–24, a total of 25 ministries and divisions have been considered in preparing the climate budget. Climate-relevant allocations are accounted for by considering the total allocations within the six thematic areas specified in the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) across all 25 ministries and divisions. These areas include: (1) Food security, social protection and health, (2) Infrastructure, (3) Mitigation and low carbon development, (4) Comprehensive disaster management, (5) Research and knowledge management, and (6) Capacity building and institutional strengthening.

Budgetary Allocation under BCCSAP Thematic Areas

Climate relevant development expenditure increased from 40 per cent of total climate budget expenditure in FY2015–16 to 62 per cent of total expenditure in FY2023–24, a positive initiative by the Government of Bangladesh (GoB). The cumulative budget allocations for 25 Ministries/Divisions account for 54.09 per cent of total budget, of which 8.99 per cent are climate relevant. The budget allocation has decreased by 0.45 per cent in FY2023–24 compared to the revised budget in FY2022–23. The total revised budget allocation for climate change increased by 0.85 per cent. This increase is measured as a percentage of the total revised climate budget, which grew from 4.78 per cent in FY2021–22 to 5.63 per cent in FY2022–23. However, as a share of GDP, the total allocation increased to 0.84 per cent in FY2022–23 from 0.71 per cent in FY2021–22, a small increase by 0.13 per cent.

The highest share of climate budget, 42.28 per cent, was allocated for ‘Food security, social protection and health’ theme of BCCSAP. On the other hand, the lowest share of climate budget (only 3.02 per cent) was allocated for ‘Research and knowledge management’ theme. Two important thematic areas, ‘Mitigation and low carbon development’ and ‘Comprehensive disaster management’ are not among the top recipients of climate budget. The allocation for ‘Mitigation and low carbon development’ increased over the years from 9.32 per cent in FY2015–16 to 13.21 per cent in FY2023–24, and the allocation for comprehensive disaster management decreased over the year from 11.68 per cent in FY2015–16 to 6.91 per cent in FY2023–24.

Budget Allocation for the MoEFCC

The allocation for the MoEFCC has seen a slight increase, rising from 0.031 per cent of GDP in the revised budget of FY2022–23 to 0.033 per cent of GDP in FY2023–24. However, it is important to note that this allocation remains significantly below the targets outlined in the Eighth Five-Year Plan (8FYP), which aims for a budget allocation of 0.10 per cent of GDP by 2025 and 0.5 per cent of GDP by 2041. The allocation for the climate criteria related to ‘Strengthening institutional capacity for climate risk management’, which falls under the BCCSAP thematic area of ‘Capacity building and institutional strengthening’, experienced a substantial increase for the ministry. Specifically, it rose by 58.66 per cent in the revised budget for FY2022–23, increasing from BDT 3.87 crore in the revised budget for FY2021–22 to BDT 6.14 crore. However, budget utilisation has decreased to 75.71 per cent in FY2021–22 from 90.71 per cent in FY2020–21 under the criteria ‘Strengthening institutional capacity for climate risk management’. Budget utilisation of this climate criteria should be increased since strengthening institutional capacity is crucial for climate risk management.

Where Are the Priorities for Climate-related Budgetary Allocation?

‘Food security, social protection, and health’ is the top priority of 10 ministries and divisions. The MoA and Ministry of Industries (MoI) have the highest allocation of 93.9 per cent and 97.22 per cent respectively under this category. The MoI received more than 95 per cent of total allocation under BCCSAP thematic area ‘Food security, social protection and health’ for development of climate resilient cropping systems and production technologies. However, this actually includes expenditures for construction of 47 new buffer warehouse (out of which 13 were approved in 2017 and 34 were approved in 2018) in various districts with the goal of facilitating fertiliser distribution and addressing damages caused by climate change. This contradicts with environmental objectives because these are chemical fertilisers which can be harmful for the environment and human health. Allocation for ‘Mitigation and low-carbon development’ is only BDT 0.38 crore or 0.15 per cent of total climate relevant budget of the MoI. For environment friendly and sustainable infrastructure, the Road Transport and Highways Division has an important role. Allocation for this division on climate relevant activities has increased to 3.22 per cent of total climate budget in FY2023–24 from 2.14 per cent in FY2022–23.

However, allocation for BCCSAP theme ‘Mitigation and low-carbon development’ has declined drastically from 81.29 per cent (revised) of total climate change related allocation in FY2021–22 to 21.06 per cent (revised) in FY2022–23 and to 24.54 per cent (budget) in FY2023–24. Besides, in FY2023–24, BDT 6,897.85 crore was allocated for directly affected climate vulnerable people which is 6.07 per cent of total allocation in Social Safety Net Programme (SSNP).

Bangladesh has been investing in solar power projects, particularly through the installation of solar home

systems and solar mini grids in rural areas. The government has also implemented policies to promote investment in wind, biomass, and hydropower projects. However, the allocation for renewable energy in Annual Development Programme (ADP) shows a fluctuating trend over the years. Only 3.08 per cent of total allocation for energy sector was allocated for renewable energy in FY2023–24. The share of allocation for renewable energy in ADP should be increased in order to achieve the target of 40 per cent power generation from clean energy by 2041.

Climate Budget Utilisation

The budget utilisation has shown a fluctuating trend since FY2015–16. The utilisation of development expenditure remained lower than non-development expenditure. The climate budget utilisation in FY2015–16 was 94 per cent. Since then, the utilisation rate decreased over the years except in FY2018–19 when it was 94 per cent. In most years, utilisation of non-development climate budget remained higher than utilisation of development climate budget.

Assessment of Coherence, Implementation and Adequacy

As part of its medium and long-term strategies, the government is committed to undertake a number of activities. For example, the government is committed to strengthening the Climate Change Trust Fund (CCTF). As of June 2023, the size of the CCTF is over BDT 1,435.90 crore which is way behind the target of mobilising more than BDT 8,000 crore from 2020 to 2025 as stated in 8FYP.

The government will ensure third party monitoring of CCTF, so that the funds are not misused by any actors undertaking unproductive projects. Besides, as of June 2023, a total of USD 374 million under the Green Climate Fund (GCF) financing facility for seven projects was approved for Bangladesh.

Bangladesh submitted its first NAP to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

(UNFCCC) in 2022. The NAP will facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation into relevant new and existing policies, programmes, and activities in a coherent manner, in particular development planning processes and strategies, within all relevant sectors and at different levels, as appropriate.

A key mechanism for the government is to enhance the national capacity to improve the measures for adaptation to climate change at the local level. As part of this, a multi-donor collaborative initiative of GoB, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), European Union (EU) and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) has been undertaken which aims to enhance the capacity of vulnerable communities, Local Government Institutions (LGI) and CSOs for planning and financing climate change adaptation solutions in selected climate vulnerable areas. Moreover, the government is committed to address climate change induced migration in various plans such as NAP and Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan (MCP) through extension of SSNP. However, only 6.07 per cent of total SSNP is allocated for climate vulnerable people.

The MoEFCC undertakes co-ordinating functions and plays the lead role in developing and enforcing environmental policies. The 8FYP proposed a significant increase in the ADP allocation for environment and climate change. However, the proposed ADP allocation in the budget for the ministry continues to fall behind the target as stated in 8FYP.

As a part of its commitment to reduce Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) emissions, the government plans to sharply increase the total power generation from renewable sources. Bangladesh has set a target of 40 per cent power generation from clean energy by 2041. However, given the country's current share of budgetary allocation in ADP for renewable energy, the government needs to increase the budgetary allocation for power generation from clean energy.

Besides, the government prioritised the gender transformative climate action. In 2013, the government formulated Bangladesh Climate Change and Gender Action Plan (ccGAP). The plan has recently been updated and is to be approved by the policymakers.

Since FY2018–19, the Finance Division has been quantifying the amount of climate finance in the Climate Budget Report from the built-in Climate Public Fiscal Tracking methodology in the Integrated Budget and Accounting System (iBAS++). Bangladesh has adopted a hybrid approach (mix of objective based and benefit-based approach) that was described as 'Objective-Based Cost Component Approach' in Climate Public Finance Tracking in Bangladesh in 2018. Only public finance has been considered for tracking at this stage. There is a scope in the methodology to incorporate tracking of private sector financing if it is introduced to the system.

Importance of Green PFM

Green PFM aims at adapting existing PFM practices to support climate-sensitive policies. Green PFM can enable an integrated government strategy to combat climate change. Green PFM ensures that green policies are effective and funded within fiscal constraints.

Bangladesh has laid the foundation for Green PFM mechanism by formulating necessary policies and initiatives. However, the country needs to design and implement a comprehensive Green PFM. Bangladesh actively seeks climate finance from international sources, including the GCF, Global Environment Facility (GEF), and bilateral sources. These funds are used to support climate-related projects and programmes. Despite the approval of highest amount of climate fund, the share of disbursed climate fund is lower compared to other Climate Vulnerability Forum (CVF) countries in Asia and Pacific due to lack of bankable projects. Hence, projects should be developed with support from experts. Capacity development for project designing is also needed.

Mobilisation of resources for CCTF should be expedited. Utilisation of development climate budget should be enhanced. The project tagging in various BCCSAP thematic areas are weighted following objective based method which warrants more clarity. Private sector fund from developed countries to developing countries is a significant source of climate funding. In Bangladesh, private finance flow should be integrated into the system. Allocation for climate vulnerable people should be increased in the SSNP.

Climate budgeting should be reformed so that it is considered as an all-inclusive strategy aligned with national priorities. Climate budgeting reform should be integrated with PFM reform agenda. The MoF

should be in charge to drive climate budgeting reforms. Other ministries should be part of the reform process to establish their ownership in the process. Methodologies for reporting, monitoring, verification of climate related expenditures should be robust. Broader stakeholders including the private sector, non-government organisations, civil society organisations, and community-based organisations should be engaged in the formulation and implementation of climate budget process. For better integration of climate budget tagging into the national budget process, and for better tracking of climate related expenditures, capacity development of relevant human resources is essential.

“The Ministry of Finance should be in-charge to drive climate budgeting reforms. Other ministries should be part of the reform process to establish their ownership in the process ———”

Summary of the Discussion



“ *Bangladesh is set to graduate from the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) group in November 2026, highlighting significant changes in our access to climate-related financing from developed countries. The fund for LDCs will no longer be accessible to Bangladesh after its graduation. Therefore, it is evident that financing matters will assume greater importance as we move forward beyond 2026* **”**

Professor Mustafizur Rahman

Among developing countries, Bangladesh distinguishes itself with its commendable efforts in policy implementation and diligent tracking of fiscal budgetary measures. Nonetheless, it appears that although the essential elements are in position, some of the critical factors remain absent. These include the requirement for new policies, enhanced co-ordination, proficient mainstreaming, sufficient financing, and a comprehensive approach to tackle climate change impacts, adaptation, mitigation, and resilience. The iBAS++ typically monitors public finance, but the system could be expanded and extended to encompass the private sector as well.

Bangladesh is set to graduate from the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) group in November 2026, highlighting significant changes in our access to climate-related financing from developed countries. The fund for LDCs will no longer be accessible to Bangladesh after its graduation. Therefore, it is evident that financing matters will assume greater importance as we move forward beyond 2026.

The significance of accountability is particularly pronounced in the realm of financial resource

management due to the inherent scarcity of funds and the multitude of competing demands. Making sure we use funds wisely is very important. This means we must focus on accountability to ensure responsible and efficient utilisation of funds.

Regarding localisation, it is important to consider both administrative zoning and ecological/climatological zoning. Climate impacts do not adhere to administrative boundaries, so ecological and climatological zoning can provide a more accurate understanding of local vulnerabilities and adaptation needs. It is essential to have a comprehensive approach that integrates both perspectives to effectively address climate change impacts at the local level.

Cross-border co-ordination is indeed critical, especially when it comes to issues related to water and rivers. Climate change impacts on water resources often extend beyond national boundaries, and co-operation between countries is necessary to manage shared water resources and mitigate the effects of climate change collectively. The involvement of the Bangladesh Water Development Board and other relevant stakeholders can greatly contribute to fostering cross-boundary coordination in water management.



“It is crucial to gain a comprehensive understanding of the funding gap for Bangladesh in relation to climate finance and assess the adequacy of available resources —

Mr Saber Hossain Chowdhury, MP

One aspect that requires emphasis is the funding gap for Bangladesh in terms of climate finance. It is important to assess the adequacy of funding and understand the resources needed before looking at allocations. However, the recent figures for Bangladesh’s funding needs are based on outdated assumptions, such as a 1.1-degree Celsius temperature rise. The reality today is far different, with temperatures projected to rise by 2.4 or even 2.5 degrees Celsius. Therefore, we need to reassess our needs based on the changing scenario and apply foresight when it comes to climate change.

Accurately determining the necessary resources is a vital step before delving into our requirements. We also need to evaluate whether the existing framework is delivering as intended and if it is fit for purpose. Climate change is a cross-cutting issue that affects every sector of the economy, and we must consider the costs and impacts of climate change, including displacement.

When it comes to public and private sector involvement, it is unrealistic to expect significant private sector investment in adaptation as it does not offer immediate profits. We must recognise the limitations in relying solely on private funds and acknowledge the significant allocation of USD 3 billion that Bangladesh has already made for climate change.

Furthermore, the mention of climate justice raises an important dimension of climate injustice—the difficult choices forced upon us. We find ourselves in a situation where funds that could be allocated to

health, education, infrastructure, science, technology, and research must instead be invested in addressing climate change. This predicament underscores the inherent unfairness of the situation. Additionally, it is crucial to examine the actual disbursement and utilisation of funds.

The funding gap has been a pressing concern, with the numbers indicating a significant increase over time. In 2017, the funding gap stood at USD 6 billion, which rose to USD 7 billion in 2020. Looking ahead, the projections indicate further increases to USD 9 billion by 2025 and USD 12 billion by 2030. This upward trend raises the question of why the costs keep escalating. It is important to note that the increasing costs are not exclusive to climate-related issues. This observation is not intended to assign blame or create an ‘us versus them’ dynamic. Instead, it underscores the fact that climate change is a collective challenge that requires collaboration and collective action from all stakeholders involved.

The SDGs have been consistently underfunded since their inception. There was a staggering shortfall of USD 2.4 trillion in financing the SDGs from the beginning. Unfortunately, it is likely that this shortfall has only increased, possibly reaching four and a half or five trillion dollars now. This reality becomes even more apparent when we observe how financial resources are allocated in other areas. During times of stability and economic prosperity, money does not flow adequately towards SDGs. However, in times of crisis or conflicts, funds seem to become readily available. This stark contrast highlights the lack of financial resources dedicated to addressing the existential challenge of climate change. It is disheartening to witness the disparity in

financial support when comparing the availability of funds for other causes, such as wars or financial crises, to the limited resources allocated to combat climate change. The global economy size implies that money exists, but it appears to be insufficiently directed towards climate change initiatives.

As we approach the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28), we face a critical juncture. It is a make-or-break opportunity for the international community to demonstrate solidarity and commitment to addressing climate change. The question remains whether we can collectively rise to the challenge and secure the necessary funds to tackle this pressing global issue. Global solidarity and a united effort are essential to mobilise the financial resources required to effectively combat climate change and build a sustainable future. It is crucial to recognise a significant point — solving the problem of climate change must happen at a faster pace than the rate at which it is being created. We need to address climate change more expeditiously than it is progressing. If we fail to achieve this, the allocations made will be inadequate. We cannot continue emitting greenhouse gases, investing in fossil fuels, and then expect to effectively adapt to and build resilience against climate change. Such actions are counterproductive and ultimately self-destructive.

The urgency of the situation demands that we take climate change seriously. Unfortunately, the world's level of seriousness falls short of what is needed, considering the scientific evidence and the gravity of the issue. We refer to ourselves as climate vulnerable, and it is not a matter of if, but when all countries will face climate vulnerability. The impacts experienced by Bangladesh today will eventually affect every country. This understanding is crucial.

While there are areas that require improvement, we appreciate the comments and feedback provided during our discussion. We welcome this constructive engagement because, despite the challenges, life goes on, and we must continue to advocate for international finance, emission reduction efforts, and narrowing the trust gap. Speaking of adaptation gaps

and funding gaps, it is important to address the trust gap as well. Pledges and promises made by the international community have not always been honoured, which has eroded trust over time. This constraint hampers progress. Therefore, we must find ways to rebuild trust and ensure that commitments are fulfilled. In terms of our capacity to utilise climate funding, we are ahead of the curve, and our Prime Minister has a clear vision of wanting to be a leader in global thought and action on climate change. We aim to increase our capacity and take comprehensive action, not just in words but also in deeds.

However, one aspect that has not been mentioned is the importance of data and statistics. It is crucial to understand the extent to which data is aggregated and reliable. We cannot rely on outdated information when discussing budgets and financial management in 2023. To effectively manage public funds, we must focus on outcomes and impacts. This dialogue has been highly valuable as it quantitatively measures the allocation and expenditure of funds. We need to assess the impact derived from these investments, which has been a challenge for Bangladesh and many other countries. It is not just about the amount of money allocated and spent; we must also monitor and quantify the actual impact generated. Having indicators to measure progress could be an effective approach. This brings me to the question of whether we are considering changes in existing PFM to align with the goals of climate change. Adaptation and reform are essential considerations in this regard. This is not only relevant to Bangladesh but also applies to many other countries.

The MoEFCC in Bangladesh, along with several other countries, often finds itself on the periphery of government and lacks the influence to drive the climate finance process. It is important to note that finance should not be the sole driver in this context. Instead, finance should gather the requirements from various ministries, such as water resources, agriculture, and fisheries. Determining who will be at the forefront of climate finance is a critical consideration. I view this as part of an overarching effort. I hesitate to use the term 'reform' because our

aim is to lead in global thought and action. Bangladesh's contribution to the world lies in how we respond to climate change, not just at the community level or in terms of local adaptation, but also in enhancing our capacity and capabilities. As public representatives, our responsibility is to ensure that we maximise the value derived from every dollar spent. To achieve this, we need to thoroughly analyse alternatives, assess opportunity costs, and determine where the money should be allocated. Unfortunately, it is unclear if all this analysis is readily available.

Capacity building is likely to be a crucial area of focus. Institutional knowledge and expertise must be developed and retained, ensuring that valuable insights are not lost when individuals with critical knowledge leave the MoF. It is essential to establish a legacy and institutional memory that can drive the climate finance agenda forward. These challenges present opportunities for growth and progress, and I wholeheartedly welcome them. Bangladesh has already taken important initial steps, and I believe in our ability to overcome these hurdles and make significant contributions to addressing climate change.

Taking the step to look at PFM has been crucial for Bangladesh, and I take pride in the fact that we are among the few countries that have undertaken this endeavour. Through this process, we have gained valuable insights into the challenges we face. Now, the key is to convert this understanding into action. A vital aspect of this action is to ensure better co-ordination, particularly between the MoEFCC, MoF, and other relevant ministries. With various plans in place, such as the MCPP and the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, it is essential to establish a coordinated approach that sequences our priorities. Without proper sequencing, we risk becoming overwhelmed by the sheer number of outcomes and areas to address. Therefore, having a comprehensive plan that all stakeholders are familiar with is crucial. While the Delta Plan is important, it holds more strategic significance. The performance of the MCPP

will shape our response to the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100. Thus, the sequencing of actions becomes paramount in maximising impact, creating synergies, and maintaining momentum for subsequent interventions. These considerations hold great importance and deserve our attention.

In Bangladesh, we are facing an existential challenge, and it is commendable that we have made significant progress in achieving certain SDGs. The SDG 4, which focuses on quality education, SDG 12, which promotes responsible production and consumption, and SDG 13, which addresses climate change, are the areas where Bangladesh is on track. This achievement is remarkable considering that many reports indicate stagnation or regression in SDG progress worldwide. Our success can be attributed to our efforts in mitigation and investment in renewable energy. Meeting these goals is a significant accomplishment for our country.

Furthermore, when considering the spill-over effects within Bangladesh and its regional context, Bangladesh ranks 46th on the spill-over index. This ranking signifies that we have a significantly positive impact and fewer negative consequences on neighbouring countries. It is crucial for us to adopt a transboundary approach, recognising that air pollution, for example, is not limited to national borders. The wind patterns result in approximately 30 per cent to 35 per cent of Dhaka's air pollution originating from West Bengal in India. Similarly, the Punjab region in Pakistan contributes to air pollution in Punjab, India. Therefore, a regional approach is necessary to address these shared challenges and work towards common solutions. Our progress in meeting SDGs, as well as our commitment to regional co-operation, exemplifies Bangladesh's dedication to sustainable development and addressing environmental issues. By continuing our efforts in these areas, we can further contribute to positive change, both within our borders and in collaboration with our neighbouring countries.



“ *It is vital to involve grassroots communities in climate change adaptation and increase their awareness* **”**

Mr Tanvir Shakil Joy, MP

To begin, I would like to share an experience I had attending an event in Shillong, India during July. The event, organised by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) and the Meghalaya government, focused on nature-based solutions and locally led adaptation. During the event, speakers discussed various topics, including financing and the roles of government and other stakeholders. Notably, numerous knowledgeable researchers were present there. This issue holds relevance for both Bangladesh and its government. Representatives from organisations such as UNDP, World Bank, and private financing institutions were also present. However, during discussions on financing, it became apparent that international and private institutions were hesitant to invest in nature-based solutions and locally led adaptation due to insufficient data supporting the effectiveness of these measures in addressing climate change issues. Even the international representatives expressed a lack of confidence in providing financial support for such initiatives.

I shared this experience to emphasise the importance of identifying Bangladesh’s specific requirements, as well as those of other vulnerable countries, when addressing climate change issues. Currently, there exists a substantial gap between our requirements and the level of support we are receiving. We consistently highlight our funding requirements at COP, often requesting more than what is strictly necessary. However, despite our efforts, the funding gap remains considerably significant. It is essential to recognise that without bridging this funding gap, our situation cannot be improved solely through capacity building, awareness campaigns, or increased accountability measures.

Integrating the local government in climate budget is important. From my experience and perspective, based on my interaction with the local government, I do not see how the local government is implementing the climate budget. Within our organisation, Climate Parliament, we have several members who are also members of the parliament. Throughout our visits to various locations in Bangladesh, including both the southern and northern regions, we have engaged in conversations with representatives from these areas. Unfortunately, we have not observed any indications of awareness regarding the climate budget in any of these interactions. The most effective implementation of the climate budget can be achieved through the involvement of the local government, as they possess the ability to directly engage with grassroots communities. However, I am doubtful that the local government is adequately informed about the risks posed by climate change or the importance of the climate budget.

The widespread belief in our country is that planting trees alone will solve the climate problem, but this notion is far from accurate. It is crucial to recognise the significant role that local governments can play in effectively addressing climate issues. The involvement of the local government ministry is particularly vital as it directly influences the development from rural towns to cities. The members of parliament, civil society members, think tank organisations, local government and the development partners all need to collaborate and take collective initiatives to address the climate issues. The nature-based solution and locally led adaptation can only be implemented through awareness and bottom-up approach. Initiatives

should be taken to involve the people of the local communities in mitigating climate risks.

We already have the framework for mitigating climate risks, now the main challenge will be involving the grassroots people, particularly the people living in regions vulnerable to climate risks. We need to plan if its implementation will be done community wise or individually. We have a forum called Bangladesh Parliamentarians' Caucus on Migration and Development, and I am a member there. A few days ago, the World Bank Published a report that said that almost 40 million people will be displaced in the next 30 years. This a major emerging problem. We have observed that even when people who migrate from one union to another union, they are considered as nomads/outcasts, despite of belonging to the same Upazilla. This is one of the biggest challenges of our society. Many people think that we give shelters/ lands to the for political agendas. But we provide them lands/ houses because they have nowhere else to go, especially if they migrate due to river erosion. Through providing shelters or any such activities that protect the suffers of climate change, we can address and mitigate climate risks. Investing funds in activities like these can prove to be quite beneficial.

In case of renewable energy, we are not even close to achieving our existing targets. There is a Global crisis related to power and energy security due to the Russia Ukraine War and Coronavirus Pandemic. With the funding challenges, we will not be able to reach our renewable energy targets. Despite of these crises, we still need to think of a way to increase the

renewable energy percentage in energy mixes. Bangladesh will not be able to executive this alone, it will need regional corporation. Regional co-operation is very important for implementing renewable energy. Bangladesh has created a contract with Nepal for importing hydroelectric power. Bangladesh also created a contract to import solar power from India. Instead of creating separate contracts, an initiative can be taken as a part of regional corporation.

The Climate Parliament's initiative, called the Bangladesh Bhutan India (BBIN) collaboration, aims to enable the exchange of energy resources among South Asian countries. This endeavour is particularly significant given the importance of transitioning to renewable energy in promoting green investments. It is worth noting that a substantial proportion, approximately 94 per cent, of the allocated funds have consistently been directed towards fossil fuels, with this percentage never falling below 90 per cent. The rationale behind this allocation stems from the prevailing prioritisation of uninterrupted electricity supply during energy crises or load shedding, which often takes precedence over green investments. Consequently, regional cooperation becomes imperative in addressing this challenge.

Capacity building is a crucial component, as individuals responsible for implementing projects aimed at mitigating climate risks need to possess adequate knowledge about climate dynamics. Simply providing funding is insufficient; having the necessary capacity to effectively execute these initiatives is equally vital.



“A legal and governance framework, approved by the parliament, should be established to monitor the allocation of the climate fund ———

Dr M Asaduzzaman

There is a necessity of an overall legal and governance framework for climate change issues, including impact mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage, as well as climate change-related disasters, both natural and man-made. The importance of creating such a framework cannot be overstated. Without it, climate finances become merely the final part of the puzzle, without clarity on what needs to be done, where it should be done, and for whom. This clarification must come from an act of parliament specifically addressing climate change and its impact. While there are existing policies and partial legal frameworks in place, as mentioned by one of the participants, they lack integration. The actions taken by different ministries may counteract each other, and there is a need for coordination and integration to address these issues effectively.

The MoEFCC, established in the 1970s, was originally tasked with overseeing all climate-related matters. However, it has proven to be insufficient in managing the multitude of challenges. While it can provide coordination at the policy level, the actual actions are carried out by various ministries, such as those related to food security and nutrition, as rightly pointed out. However, it is disheartening to learn that some food-producing ministries are oblivious to the potential impacts of climate change on their output and nutritional outcomes. This further highlights the need for a comprehensive legal and governance framework that encompasses all relevant sectors.

It was highlighted that climate change must be clearly understood, and the updated BCCSAP addresses this to some extent. While the process of finalising the updated draft of BCCSAP has faced delays, it is crucial to consider its 11 themes, some of which have

been separated and identified as new areas of focus. These include natural resource management in a changing climate, with a particular emphasis on water, which is essential for all climate-related actions and food production. Other themes, such as food and nutrition security, health and well-being, social protection, gender, industry, power, regional and urban dimensions of climate change, comprehensive disaster management, and infrastructure, are also important aspects to be considered. The integration and understanding of how these themes interact with each other, identifying possible synergies and conflicts, will allow for the development of an integrated and coordinated approach. This, in turn, will enable the effective allocation of climate finance.

Furthermore, the governance, legal institutions, and policy aspects of climate change need to be prioritised. Gender considerations should not only be limited to social protection but also incorporated across all areas. Social inclusion should be a fundamental part of all themes, addressing not only technical aspects but also human aspects. It is crucial to bridge the gap in understanding climate change, as it is not simply about the climate but about climate change and its wide-ranging impacts.

Financial aspects also require attention. While the climate fiscal framework was developed in 2020, its practical implementation and impact on resource generation need to be assessed. Proper allocation of taxes, including carbon taxes, and subsidies, is essential. Additionally, exploring the potential of financial incentives, such as payment for ecosystem services, can play a significant role in sustainable water management, particularly in reducing groundwater extraction. Water scarcity is a pressing issue under climate change, and innovative

approaches are needed to promote water-saving technologies and practices.

To address these challenges comprehensively, capacity building is crucial. Enhancing human skills and improving project planning and preparation will

contribute to more successful funding proposals. Bangladesh does not necessarily need new ideas but rather a consolidation of existing ideas, with a co-ordinated legal framework. This will lay the foundation for further progress in addressing climate change effectively.



“Inclusive budgeting can address various climate and environmental objectives together, such as funding climate-adaptive infrastructure and waste management, yielding benefits for emission reduction and public health”

Ms Nayoka Martinez Bäckström

For over 51 years, Bangladesh and Sweden have collaborated extensively, primarily focusing on environmental issues. However, in the past two decades, the joint efforts of these countries have been particularly concentrated on tackling climate change and implementing effective mitigation strategies.

The PFM encompasses not only the allocation of the budget but also how the decisions made with taxpayer money are effectively communicated back to the public. As a representative, it is my responsibility to bridge the gap and ensure that the public understands how these decisions contribute to the development of our society. While this may sound like a broad concept, it encapsulates the core ethos of PFM. Drawing from the experiences of countries like Sweden, which have a longstanding tradition of effective PFM, we can learn valuable lessons.

The process of achieving environmental and climate goals is an ongoing and intricate one. When we consider the additional challenge of collective decision-making within a democratic system for budget allocation, it becomes evident that it is not a simple task. However, it is crucial to recognise the long-term effects of inclusive budgeting. One interesting aspect to highlight from this analysis is the

fact that several budget measures can contribute to multiple climate and environmental goals simultaneously. This aspect is worth capturing and communicating effectively. For instance, investing in climate adaptive infrastructure can have clear effects on sustaining livelihoods, reducing displacement, and more. Similarly, decisions regarding increased investment in waste management, such as solid waste management, have direct implications on reducing emissions and promoting public health.

Another interesting aspect from a public standpoint is the realisation that certain budget measures may have unintended consequences, contrary to our original intentions. I recall a similar discussion in Sweden, where I was actively involved, regarding investments in wind farms and the concerns raised by biodiversity advocates. However, with an evidence-based budget system, we can make informed decisions that ultimately satisfy the public's interests. This brings us to the question of how we can effectively capture the evidence that was so eloquently mentioned. Doing so requires investments not only in tracking but also in monitoring and conducting comprehensive assessments to validate the implications of budget decisions. I am aware that the EU is currently discussing the duration of tracking and monitoring efforts. How long should we track? How long should

we assess? These considerations are crucial in utilising the evidence obtained to influence future plans, such as the next five-year plan, and beyond.

I am delighted to share that we are currently witnessing a promising phase in our approach. The Local Government Initiatives on Climate Change (LoGIC), a programme spanning two years, is aimed at establishing a bridge to institutionalise the valuable experiences we have gained while working with local governments. The primary objective is to enhance their capacities in allocating resources effectively for climate adaptation. Furthermore, LoGIC actively involves civil society and engaged communities. One noteworthy instrument that has emerged from LoGIC is the performance-based Climate Resilience Grants. These grants not only strengthen accountability mechanisms but also encourage active participation from the community. It goes beyond local climate planning by promoting

community auditing, which is an area we hope to see further development in. Through community auditing, we can assess the performance of both the local government and specific projects, enabling us to identify successful decisions that can be scaled up or replicated in other areas.

Lastly, I would like to emphasise the role of Sweden, as a development partner, and our position on the board of the GCF. This platform provides us with an opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions on how to effectively channel and utilise Climate Finance for countries like Bangladesh. It is crucial that we leverage this relationship to foster a more constructive approach, moving beyond mere complaints about the challenges of accessing these funds. By actively participating in the GCF, we can work towards finding innovative solutions and ensuring that the necessary resources are made accessible for addressing climate-related issues.



“When discussing renewable energy and inclusive growth, the incorporation of themes like green growth, with a specific focus on a just transition, is vital ———”

Dr Haseeb Md Irfanullah

Over the last eight years, Bangladesh’s national budget grew by 2.6 times and climate budget grew 3.1 times. However, when examining the structure of the climate budget, it is worth noting that it has been organised according to the BCCSAP, which was formulated in 2008 and later revised in 2009. This strategic plan was undoubtedly revolutionary, and I do not mean to express disappointment when I say that it has not been revised recently.

Another important point to consider is that there are certain activities that overlap or should be grouped together but are segregated in the current structure. For instance, under the categories of food, social

protection, and health, we discuss adaptation to drought, salinity, submergence, and heat. However, adaptation to cyclones is categorised under infrastructure. To ensure a more cohesive approach, it is essential to address these overlaps and align activities accordingly.

Since our goal is transformation, it is crucial to establish themes that facilitate measurement of progress. One such transformative theme could be nature-based solutions, which can incorporate conservation agriculture and promote sustainable resource management in both rural and urban areas. Additionally, if we want to emphasise climate governance, we should consider highlighting locally led adaptation, which has been proven successful by

numerous countries and organisations worldwide. By integrating these ideas into the budget structure, we can foster greater coherence, effectiveness, and accountability in addressing climate challenges.

When discussing renewable energy and inclusive growth, it is indeed important to incorporate themes such as green growth, with a particular emphasis on a just transition. This approach ensures that the transition to renewable energy sources and sustainable practices is carried out in a fair and inclusive manner, benefiting all segments of society. Similarly, when addressing disaster management, it would be beneficial to integrate the concept of loss and damage. This addition would enable us to not only focus on disaster and risk management but also consider aspects such as disaster risk finance and shock-responsive social protection. By including these elements, we can enhance our ability to effectively manage and respond to disasters. In short, restructuring our climate budget to align with these suggested themes and considerations would provide a more comprehensive and holistic approach. It would enable us to promote green growth, facilitate a just transition, and enhance our disaster management efforts. By adapting the structure to our evolving needs, we can optimise the allocation of resources and ensure a more effective response to climate challenges.

The second point is about inclusivity and how we can make the budget more inclusive. A few important aspects were rightly mentioned, including the LoGIC Project and the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme (CDMP). These initiatives have provided us with 15 years of experience in engaging local government institutions, helping them plan, secure funding, and implement projects. To enhance inclusivity, we should consider allocating funds in our climate budget, not only based on where the money is currently going but also where it should go, at the union, Upazila, and city corporation levels. By adopting this approach, we can ensure that the budget addresses climate-related concerns at a local level. Additionally, it is worth noting that our climate budget should not be limited to specific divisions or

solely focused on the CCTF. Instead, we should aim to integrate climate-related considerations throughout the entire budget, promoting a comprehensive and holistic approach to addressing climate change challenges.

Another crucial aspect of inclusion is the involvement of youth in climate action. Among the 25 ministries and divisions mentioned, the youth ministry is absent. This omission gives the impression that youth are not actively engaged in climate-related initiatives. However, it is evident that worldwide, over the past five years, youth have been actively participating in and advocating for climate action. To ensure the meaningful involvement of youth in our climate budget, it is essential to include the Department of Youth Development and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. By incorporating these entities, we can allocate resources and develop programmes that specifically target youth engagement in climate initiatives.

My third point focuses on tracking and monitoring. It is important to track the funding received over the last 12 months for projects like Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, NAP, Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), and MCPP. Instead of listing the needed funds, it is crucial to highlight the actual funding received. Regarding accountability, expanding iBAS++ may be challenging, but we can explore other options. Currently, the climate budget is released in the first week of June, which enhances transparency and accountability. In this case, it would be beneficial to establish a dedicated climate finance portal. This portal could serve as a centralised platform, bringing together the private sector, International Non-governmental Organisation (INGOs), and other stakeholders. It would provide transparency and enable us to monitor climate finance activities effectively. With half a billion dollars allocated to the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF) over the last 13 years, it would be worthwhile to allocate a reasonable budget to establish this portal.



“The finance division lacks a dedicated co-ordinating mechanism. Addressing this gap is vital, involving the identification of a capable entity or individual for effective co-ordination”

Dr Maliha Muzammil

The UNDP supported the government in the formulation and updating of the climate change fiscal framework in 2020. However, there has been no update since then. There are various local development plans such as the NAP and the Delta Plan. Yet, none of these were integrated into the climate fiscal framework. We are actively working towards finding ways to support the government in updating this plan to ensure its alignment with other development policies.

Currently, the finance division lacks a dedicated coordination mechanism or body to fulfill the role of co-ordination. It is crucial to address this capacity gap and identify the appropriate entity or individual who can effectively carry out the co-ordination mechanism. Besides, there is a lack of emphasis on sectoral plans and financing strategies related to climate change within the relevant ministries. It is imperative to develop public investment and service delivery programmes with climate change considerations in collaboration with these sectoral ministries. We are currently engaged in efforts to support these ministries by assisting in the design of their key performance indicators. Our aim is to align these indicators with their climate change goals, thus aiding them in achieving sustainable outcomes.

Another crucial aspect that requires attention is the broader fiscal regime of the government. This includes taxation policies, subsidies, pricing policies, and debt management strategies. It is essential that these components are climate-inclusive and gender-inclusive. UNDP has recently initiated collaboration with the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and finance division to examine their policies through a gender lens and consider gradual policy reforms in this domain. Although this is a complex

and ongoing process, we are optimistic that by working together, we can effectively address these challenges and make significant progress.

Emphasis should be given to the importance of impact monitoring and measurement, which is often overlooked. To effectively implement climate change budget reforms, it is essential to strengthen the capacity of the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED) and the Department of Environment. We need to provide them with the necessary resources and training to enable them to monitor the effectiveness of climate change-related expenditures and projects. Additionally, we have been actively collaborating with parliamentary committees and members to advance these efforts. Their involvement and support are crucial in driving meaningful change in climate-related initiatives.

One of the important questions is tracking climate budget allocations at the union level. In response, UNDP has collaborated with the LGD to develop a climate vulnerability index. Initially covering 36 areas, we are actively working on expanding its coverage. This index has been formulated with support from Sweden and the EU through the LoGIC project. Its purpose is to allocate resources based on the vulnerabilities of specific areas, instead of the traditional approach. This approach enables us to monitor the impact of resource allocation in these locations, creating bottom-up linkages.

Furthermore, we are in the process of scaling up local climate financing frameworks, in conjunction with the national climate fiscal framework. UNDP has already piloted climate financing frameworks in two or three Upazilas, and through the LoGIC project, we aim to expand this effort. This integration serves as a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches. In the next phase of the climate fiscal

framework, we aspire to observe the linkages between national and local budgetary allocations, further enhancing our understanding and co-ordination in this regard.

Looking ahead, especially with the LDC graduation, it is crucial to explore ways to leverage our national climate budget and mobilise additional financing from the private sector. UNDP is actively involved in

developing innovative climate financing mechanisms to address this challenge. If the aim is to secure the substantial financing required to achieve our climate change commitments and goals, this approach should be considered as the way forward. By fostering partnerships with the private sector and exploring innovative financing strategies, we can unlock new opportunities and resources to support our climate initiatives.



“ It is essential for every ministry to comprehend their role and contribution to climate policies ——— ”

Mr Partha Hefaz Shaikh

There lies a challenge in synchronising the plans and policy elements in the budgeting system. Currently, the BCCSAP is under review. It comprises of six pillars. Additionally, Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 identifies six hotspots, while the NAP outlines six goals, 23 broad strategies, 28 outcomes, and eight sectors. Furthermore, it encompasses 113 interventions across eleven climate stress areas. Despite these comprehensive frameworks, the iBAS++ only focuses on the BCCSAP’s six pillars. Thus, the challenge lies in effectively incorporating all these elements. As the government strives to implement the NAP, it becomes essential to explore how various stakeholders, including INGOs and NGOs, can contribute to its success.

It is crucial to gain a comprehensive understanding of PFM, including the specific level and type of expenditures. For instance, if we want to examine the expenditure in areas like Sathkhira Shyamnagar, Rangpur, Kurigram, or Lalmonirhat, we need to determine if it is feasible to access this information. Can we effectively utilise iBAS++ to retrieve data on the financial allocations in these specific hotspots and climate stress areas? Is it possible to identify the budgets dedicated to these activities that contribute to the goals outlined in NAP and its focus on the 11 stress areas?

These issues are of utmost importance to us, particularly when analysing the climate budget related to Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). Drawing from our experience with WaterAid Bangladesh over the past 10 years, we have strived to assess the WASH budget within the national budget and its distribution. However, we consistently observe minimal investments in the most challenging and hard-to-reach areas, such as the coastal regions, hills, and haors. In these areas, the allocated funding remains consistently low, often comprising less than 1 to 2 per cent of the overall WASH budget.

Therefore, we strongly advocate for a solution that allows us to comprehend the specific budget allocations within iBAS++ for activities targeting climate stress areas. This information is crucial for ensuring our efforts align with the intended goals. I propose presenting this matter to the esteemed body and working together to address this concern.

While the finance ministry can take the lead, it is essential for every ministry to comprehend their role and contribution to climate policies. This understanding necessitates addressing capacity development needs within each ministry. Moreover, it is crucial to establish mechanisms that allow CSOs, INGOs, and NGOs to actively participate in this process.

Ensuring the involvement of CSOs, INGOs, and NGOs is vital as they bring valuable expertise, diverse perspectives, and on-ground experiences to the table. Their participation can significantly enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of climate policy implementation. Therefore, it is imperative to create avenues for meaningful collaboration and engagement between these organisations and the relevant ministries. By fostering partnerships, we can collectively work towards achieving our climate goals and addressing the challenges at hand.

Another crucial point relates to the exclusive emphasis on public funds in the present context. However, it is worth considering the potential for incorporating and tracking private sector financing as well. Additionally, it would be beneficial to engage with the NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB) to understand the contributions of NGOs towards the NAPs and related initiatives. This collaboration can provide valuable insights into the financial resources invested by NGOs in addressing climate challenges in Bangladesh.

When developing methodologies to track climate finance and formulate climate budgets, it is crucial to include these perspectives and data sources. By incorporating information on private sector financing and the contributions of NGOs, a more comprehensive understanding of the financial landscape can be achieved. This inclusive approach will strengthen the process of tracking climate finance and enable effective budget formulation.

A concerning trend in Bangladesh is the gap between allocated expenditures and actual spending, both in development and non-development sectors. Each year, we observe that the allocated budget is not fully utilised, with spending ranging around 90–93 per cent instead of the intended 100 per cent. This highlights the missed opportunities resulting from

the inability to effectively utilise the allocated funds. To address this issue, it is crucial to prioritise increasing our capacity for implementation. Enhancing capacity across various sectors is necessary to ensure efficient utilisation of the allocated budget and prevent wastage. By improving our capacity, we can bridge the gap between budget allocation and actual spending, effectively utilising the resources for the intended development and non-development purposes.

Addressing the long-standing issue of implementation is of utmost importance. It is imperative that we tackle this challenge head-on and strive to find effective solutions.

Regarding the focus on BCCSAP in the government's 25 ministries, it is essential to adapt and accommodate changes. This should include considering NAP, the climate change indices, and the forthcoming revised BCCSAP. These updated documents will provide valuable guidance and should be incorporated into the ministries' focus areas.

Furthermore, it is crucial to delve into ministry-specific climate finance to gain insights into how funds are allocated within each ministry. For instance, in the realm of WASH, it is essential to examine the expenditure on climate-resilient WASH initiatives across various government sectors. This level of analysis helps identify specific areas where climate finance is directed and allows us to assess the effectiveness and alignment of spending.

Taking these measures will benefit not only the country as a whole but also the CSOs and NGOs that are actively engaged in contributing to policy objectives. By understanding the financial landscape and focusing efforts accordingly, we can collectively contribute to advancing climate-related policies and make meaningful contributions toward achieving our climate goals.

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