

Country Strategy Document Analysis

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COMPLEX EMERGENCIES
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The Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law integrates expertise from across the University of Texas at Austin, as well as from the private and public sectors, in pursuit of practical solutions to emerging international challenges.

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The Strauss Center's program on Complex Emergencies and Political Stability in Asia (CEPSA) explores the causes and dynamics of complex emergencies in Asia and potential strategies for response. In doing so, the program investigates the diverse forces that contribute to climate-related disaster vulnerability and complex emergencies in Asia, the implications of such events for local and regional security, and how investments in preparedness can minimize these impacts and build resilience. CEPSA is a multi-year initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Defense's Minerva Initiative, a university-based, social science research program focused on areas of strategic importance to national security policy.

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Introduction

International agreements and commitments on climate change or disaster risk reduction, like the 2015 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Paris accords¹ or the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 – 2030,² are shaping national priorities and actions. Signatory countries have devised national plans or strategies to operationalize these commitments. These plans were based upon participatory processes that prioritized the most relevant and important actions that these countries could then use to apply for external support. There has also been a push to integrate or ‘mainstream’ concepts of climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) into official socio-economic development or growth plans. In 2011, the UNFCCC established the national adaptation plan (NAP) process that counsels countries to tailor adaptation planning to their needs and explicitly recommends the integration of these concepts into national development planning processes.³ Such integration faces several challenges, including the need to re-think current design, plan implementation processes across multiple sectors⁴, sustain frequent inter-ministerial coordination, and provide adequate financial resources to support such activities in already resource-constrained environments.

While international agreements garner close scrutiny, there is a significant need to more carefully examine how action plans around CCA and DRR are being crafted and implemented at the national level. Specifically, how and by whom are national governments’ and key international actors’ disaster risk reduction and climate change agendas designed? What sectors do they target? What are challenges and gaps in their approaches? Do these national plans in turn have the political will and capacity to implement CCA and DRR programs? Answering these questions helps evaluate current national and international CCA and DRR policy, planning, and implementation processes and highlights where improvements could be beneficial.

This brief serves as the detailed follow-up to our first analysis⁵ on the national CCA and DRR plans and their implementation in Bangladesh and Nepal. While

that study relied heavily on interviews, this brief surveys national and donor strategies and plans for 11 countries in the South and South-East Asian region.⁶ We reviewed the top five donors’ strategies; these include the Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID), the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the World Bank (WB). The review of these documentation reveal a number of obstacles to implementation, including a lack of capacity, financial resources, and political capital. Together, these two briefs provide insight into the region’s relevant policies and plans, their implementation challenges, and ways forward.

Building on our findings in Bangladesh and Nepal, this brief splits the analysis for each country into four parts:

- 1. Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment:** This section introduces the country’s climate-related challenges, highlighting its vulnerabilities and risks. More information on our methodology for assessing vulnerability can be found in an accompanying brief.⁷
- 2. National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction:** This reviews existing CCA and DRR plans, focusing on whether and how these issues are integrated with each other.
- 3. Donor Community Actions:** What are the top five donors’ priorities and activities in these countries? This section provides an overview of our five donors’ strategies and coordination practices.
- 4. Challenges in Coordination and Implementation:** Lastly, we analyze government and donor challenges in implementing these reviewed plans.

We find that countries and donors in the region are highly aware of the climate change and disaster-related risks. All countries have specific strategies that address these issues. However, both donors and governments communicate four main challenges to implementation, including lack of relevant historical data and technical capacity. In addition, unclear ministerial mandates and



responsibilities could possibly contribute to incomplete implementation. These findings support our earlier analysis of Bangladesh and Nepal’s experiences. That brief relied on semi-structured interviews with government, donor, and non-governmental organizational representatives active in the climate change and disaster risk reduction space.

Bangladesh

Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

Situated in the deltaic plains of the Ganges, Brahmaputra, and Meghna, the country is periodically inundated with water. Cited as one of the world’s most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change, the country faces rising global sea levels, cyclones, storm surges, and flood-related disasters. Over the 2000 – 2015 period, the country experienced over 68 climate-related events, including cyclones, droughts, and floods.⁸ In 2007, Cyclone Sidr affected the southwestern part of the country, with over 3,300 deaths and two million people affected.⁹ In 2009, Cyclone Aila affected similar parts of the

country, with over four million people affected.¹⁰ Calculations under the CEPSA program (see Figure 1) indicate that the country’s northeastern and coastal areas are the most vulnerable (within the country). However, when compared to the rest of the region, the whole country is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Further, approximately 60% (i.e., 100 million people) of the country’s population is exposed to above average vulnerability.¹¹

National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

Bangladesh has three national plans for addressing climate change vulnerability, two for CCA and two for DRR. The Bangladesh Climate Change and Strategy Action Plan (BCCSAP), the country’s main CCA strategy document, is currently undergoing review and an update.¹² It supersedes the country’s national adaptation programme of action (NAPA). The country’s Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF)¹³ and its multi-donor trust fund, the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF)¹⁴ directs funds towards fulfilling this strategy. The Standing Order on Disaster (SOD)¹⁵ and National Plan for Disaster Management (2010 – 2015)¹⁶ guide the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief’s (MoDMR) actions. The country’s 7th 5-year plan, its main development strategy document, integrates a chapter specifically on Climate Change and Disaster Management.

Donor Community Activities

All five reviewed donors in Bangladesh integrated elements of climate change and disaster risk management into their portfolios. These issues were featured as a significant priority to address, mirroring what the Government of Bangladesh has outlined. Some activities addressed climate-related capacity building programs, including supporting the development of the government’s technical capacities to design and implement programs. Other activities are primarily integrated into the agriculture or water sectors – highlighting the importance of these sectors to Bangladesh’s continued development.

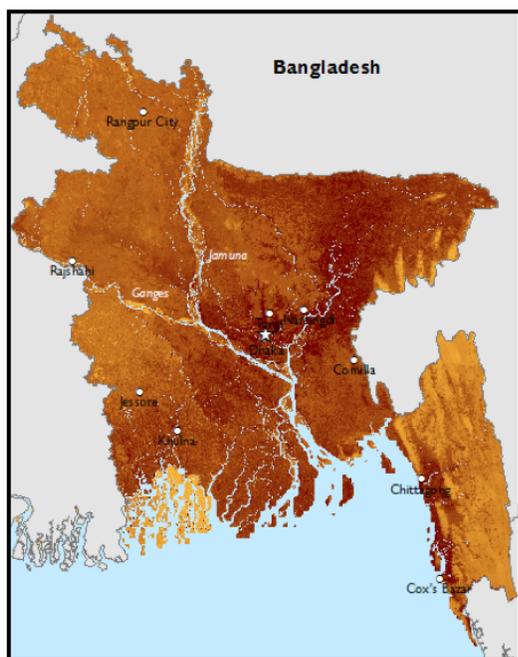


Figure 1: Climate-related Vulnerability of Bangladesh

Challenges in Coordination and Implementation

All documents reviewed (including the Government's) pointed to the lack of technical capacity and knowledge for designing, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating climate change and disaster risk management programs. Donors also pointed to the lack of government accountability and weak institutions as other challenges to continued progress.

While both the BCCSAP and the National Plan for Disaster Management call for coordinated efforts to address climate change and disaster risk reduction, actual collaboration and coordination between the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) and MoDMR are said to be minimal. The ministries are highly protective of their respective portfolios and do not collaborate as it is perceived to cede their authority. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has oversight over the BCCSAP but requires other Ministries and Departments to implement the strategy. The MoEF's legal mandate does not allow it to hold other ministries' accountable (for their obligations). We further highlighted and explored these issues in our first brief, based on key informant interviews in Bangladesh and Nepal.¹⁷

Bhutan

Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

Nestled in the Himalayas, Bhutan is best known for its focus on its citizens' well-being and use of the Gross National Happiness Index. The country is at risk of rising temperatures, changes in precipitation, more extreme hazards such as landslides and earthquakes, and increased glacial melting. Flooding events are a threat to infrastructure and residences while increased temperatures raise concerns of water availability for drinking, sanitation, and agricultural practices. Bhutan has a history of extreme weather events, the most recent of which was a flood in 2009 which caused widespread damage in the country.¹⁸ The country also faces disruptions to water supplies and impacts on its ecosystems. However, when compared to the study

region, Bhutan does not appear to be a particularly vulnerable country (see Figure 2).¹⁹

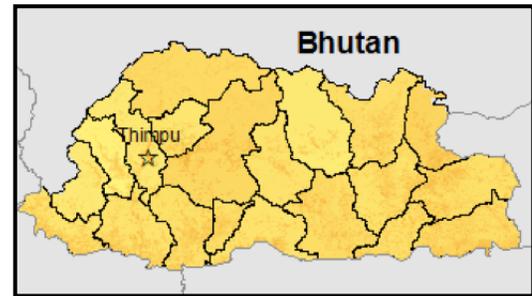


Figure 2: Climate-related Vulnerability of Bhutan

National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

The country's climate change actions are guided by two documents, its 2006 NAPA²⁰ and its 2012 update.²¹ Due to constraints on resources, only elements of the 2006 prioritized programs have been implemented. The country is currently formulating a national adaptation plan of action (NAP), which better integrates climate change and disaster risk reduction activities into the country's national development agenda. The current NAPA is managed by the National Environment Commission and implemented through the cooperation of respective ministries, foundations, and other agencies. The National Disaster Risk Management Framework²² and the 2013 Disaster Management Act²³ establishes and guides the National Disaster Management Authority's priorities and actions. The Ministry of Home and Cultural Affairs acts as the central authority for the Act and the Framework, however, different departments under this Ministry serve as focal points (for these two documents respectively).

Donor Community Actions

The WB, ADB, and JICA are all active in Bhutan. USAID appears to have a presence in the country, but no official strategy documents are available nor are activities specified.²⁴ DFID does not operate in the country. Active donors' strategies include elements



of climate change - particularly, addressing glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) and water resource management. Active donors also converge in their assessment of the key challenges facing the country (and the implementation of their strategies). In particular, donors agree that youth unemployment is a key challenge to the country's continued development. Additionally, its over-reliance on hydropower exports to India and other regional countries concentrates the country's fortunes on one industry.

Challenges in Coordination and Implementation

Major donors cite the lack of administrative capacity (especially at lower levels), widening income and regional disparities, few financial resources to implement programs, and a lack of technical knowledge as major challenges to implementation and coordination. As there are many other development priorities, DRR and CCA projects often have to compete (for attention) with these other development sectors. Such programs are often implemented as sectoral initiatives (e.g., only water is addressed, rather than coordinating across water and its use in agriculture), thus complicating the integration of climate- and disaster risk-related issues into the country's operations.

Cambodia

Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

Cambodia's major climate vulnerabilities include changing water levels of the Mekong River Delta, periods of severe drought in the Greater Mekong region, and wildfires throughout its densely forested regions.²⁵ The increasing frequency of droughts and floods have had negative consequences for food security and livelihoods, given that the nation is one of the poorest in the world and reliant on subsistence agriculture. Floods in 2011 turned large areas of land into lakes and the United Nations reported that approximately 1.2 million people were affected, out of a total population of about 15 million.²⁶ According to CEPISA calculations, the country is relatively

vulnerable (compared to the rest of the study region), with at least 86% of the country's population exposed to above average vulnerability (see Figure 3).²⁷

National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

Cambodia has nine government authored documents relevant for climate change and disaster risk reduction – the most of all the countries examined. Cambodia's 2006 NAPA contained 20 prioritized actions that were under the authority of the Ministry of Environment but were to be executed by various related ministries.²⁸ In 2014, the Cambodian government published a comprehensive ten-year Climate Change Strategic Plan (CCSP).²⁹ The CCSP lacks details on a timeline and resource commitments and serves more as a strategic document for national entities to prepare for climate change than as an implementation guide.

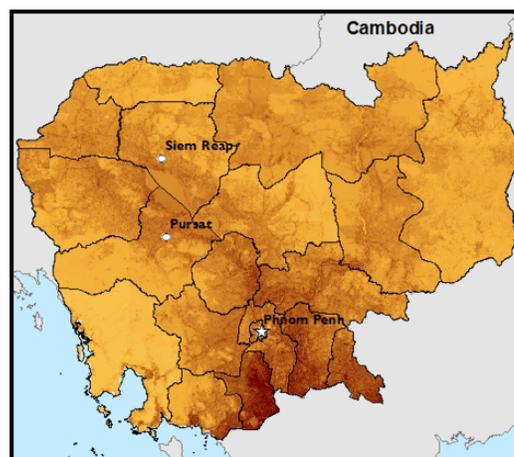


Figure 3: Climate-related Vulnerability of Cambodia

With regard to disaster risk reduction plans, the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (2014 – 2018)³⁰ builds on the Strategic National Action Plan for DRR (2008 – 2013); both of these have a more prominent economic/financial focus as a means of reducing vulnerability.³¹ The Law on Disaster Management (2015)³² establishes a legal framework for disaster management, including: disaster prevention, adaptation and mitigation, emergency responses, and recovery.

It also assigns the National Committee for Disaster Management as the disaster management coordinator, but other executing agencies are not explicitly stated.

Interestingly, Cambodia is the only country to have a Climate Change Strategic Plan for Disaster Management Sector (2013).³³ This outlines how CCA could be supported by actions in the disaster management sector. It more concretely addresses the inter-linkages, mandating the integration of DRR and CCA principles into different ministerial activities. In addition, two National Strategic Development Plans (2009 – 2013³⁴; 2014 – 2018³⁵) have integrated CCA and DRR activities into their plans of action, providing more mandates to implementing ministries. These development plans explicitly refer back to the National Action Plan for DRR and the Climate Change Strategic Plan preventing duplication of efforts.

Donor Community Actions

Donor strategy documents do not explicitly address climate change adaptation or disaster risk reduction. ADB has the highest number of CCA and DRR related activities while JICA activities focus on disaster rehabilitation and mitigation and providing technical assistance. USAID concentrates on climate-related agricultural impacts and food security. The WB addresses developing standards and plans for further institutionalizing DRR and CCA into the country's operations. DFID has two operational activities but no formal operational plan.³⁶

Challenges in Coordination and Implementation

The Cambodian government and donors agree that a lack of technical knowledge (particularly in designing and implementing relevant activities), low capacity (financial and human), and a general lack of climate change awareness hinders the country's ability to design, implement, and evaluate climate change and DRR-related activities. Cambodia, like other countries in the region, also face other economic and social development issues, like low levels of education. Thus, limited government resources are already stretched in

trying to address these existing challenges. Further, climate and disaster-related activities are constrained by a lack of historical relevant data (making it difficult to understand change) and appropriate technical resources. Donors are trying to address these challenges through their assistance.

India

Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

As a geographically diverse country, India faces an array of climate related risks, including floods in low-elevation coastal areas and in riverine basins (like that of the Ganges). The country's south and eastern coastal areas are at risk of cyclones. Further, changing monsoon patterns and related water scarcity affects food security, particularly in western swaths of the country. Compared to the region, India does not appear to be highly vulnerable, primarily because of its governance and household and community resilience.³⁷ In addition, yearly increases in extreme temperatures have resulted in hundreds or sometimes even thousands of deaths. The average frequency of severe heat waves has doubled from 50 days a year across India until 2000, to about 100 in the 2001-2010 decade.³⁸ Calculations under the CEPSA program indicate that approximately 20% of the country's population (247 million people) is exposed to above average vulnerability.

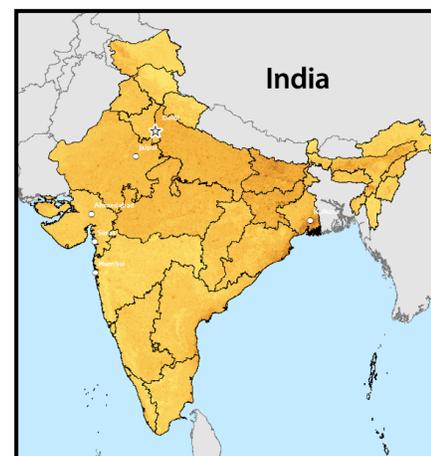


Figure 4: Climate-related Vulnerability of India



National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

India has only three national documents that specifically relate to disaster risk reduction and climate change: the 2008 National Action Plan on Climate Change,³⁹ the 2009 National Policy on Disaster Management,⁴⁰ and the 2016 National Disaster Management Plan.⁴¹ In our review of these national documents, we found that climate change issues were not considered nor integrated into any of the disaster-related documents. For example, in the two documents on disaster management, there was no consideration of how climate change impacts could heighten disaster risks. This indicates a lack of integration of DRM and CCA in India's national policies. Around 28 Indian states have created their own state-specific climate action plans. These have not been reviewed under this exercise, as this brief primarily focuses on national approaches.

Donor Community Actions

As India has relatively more financial, technical, and human capacity than others in the region; donors employ slightly different strategies here – including focusing on fostering public private partnerships and bolstering the causes of vulnerable groups. DFID's program of work addresses mitigation activities, rather than adaptation or disaster risk reduction. USAID addresses the need for more research and development, supporting farmers' education on rainfall variability, crop diversification, and water management. Similarly, ADB concentrates on these issues. Only the WB explicitly addresses DRR and has specific activities that consider coastal and cyclones disaster risks and improving government capacity to conduct risk assessments. There is not a general alignment of donor strategies but these differences could be products of negotiations with the government of India.

Challenges in Coordination and Implementation

Donors and the government largely agree on the challenges facing progress in CCA and DRR. Adequate human resources to address DRR and CCA, especially at local levels, are still lacking and there

is weak voice and accountability in service delivery. This particularly speaks to the inabilities of minority groups to demand and receive government services. Further, the DRM agenda falls under the relatively better resourced Ministry of Home Affairs whereas the CCA agenda falls under the purview of the somewhat weaker Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change. This imbalance of power in ministries can lead to different success rates for the implementation of policies. The government also highlights the lack of inter-ministerial coordination in addressing the CCA and DRR challenges – indicating that implementation of these projects could be spotty despite the existence of guidelines and strategies.

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Laos People's Democratic Republic (Laos)

Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

Laos is a landlocked country in Southeast Asia and one of the last remaining communist states. The country's economy has struggled due to a lack of infrastructure

and human capacity and it remains one of the poorest countries in the region. Despite economic reforms, the country is still heavily dependent on foreign aid,⁴² receiving US\$ 6.8 billion over 2000 – 2013.⁴³ The country is affected by droughts, floods, and increasing temperatures. Uncertain and changing rainfall patterns have already impacted the country's predominantly rain-fed agricultural production. In addition, in a series of major storm events in 2013, flooded 12 out of the country's 17 provinces.⁴⁴



Figure 5: Climate-related Vulnerability of Laos

National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

The country submitted its NAPA⁴⁵ in 2009 and has since developed a Strategy on Climate Change (2010)⁴⁶ that outlines how climate change issues would be mainstreamed into their National Socio-economic Development Plans (NSEDP). The 7th⁴⁷ and 8th⁴⁸ NSEDPs integrate CC and DRR activities into their agendas, primarily under social welfare, environmental protection, and food security. Both plans cite lack of relevant data, information, and technical capacities as the primary challenges to designing and implementing appropriate activities. For DRR, two documents guide

the country's actions: the Plan of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management in Agriculture (2014 – 2016) (PADRRMA)⁴⁹ and the Draft National Disaster Management Plan (2012 – 2015) (DNDMP).⁵⁰ The PADRRMA focuses on improving knowledge management, technical capacities, and establishing early warning systems; these objectives are similar to those in the country's climate change strategies.

Donor Community Actions

The donors' and government's portfolios appear to target different priorities, even though all three active donors cite environmental and climate change issues as challenges to continued development and progress. The ADB, WB, and JICA are more active in Laos. While DFID and USAID have ongoing projects in the country, no official strategies are available. The WB's portfolio does not directly support CCA or DRR activities. Some support is provided to continue the country's participation in the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility and Forest Information Project. ADB supports developing climate friendly value chains for agricultural products and water resource management. However, no DRR activities are mentioned. JICA, on the other hand, focuses primarily on DRR, and looks at disaster management in rural areas and food security management.

Challenges in Coordination and Implementation

The DNDMP is managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, but requires the participation of the Ministries of Environment and Natural Resources, Public Works and Transportation, and Planning and Investment, among others. However, none of the activities mentioned in the strategy document appear to be mandated by law - which could affect inter-ministerial coordination and implementation. Donors mentioned a variety of challenges for the implementation of projects in Laos. ADB and the WB cited a relatively uneducated workforce, inefficient and underdeveloped financial sector, inadequate connectivity, and weak governance as major development challenges. In addition, the WB mentions the unregulated exploitation of natural

Nepal

Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

Nepal, like Bhutan, is nestled in the Himalayan range. Flash floods, landslides, and in some areas, drought, are causes for concern. The people of Nepal, particularly the rural poor, are directly dependent on natural resources for survival, and a significant portion of Nepal's economy comes from climate-sensitive industries such as agriculture, forestry, and ecotourism. The 2015 earthquake in the Kathmandu Valley heightened the country's need to integrate DRR considerations more stringently into its development processes. In 2016, floods and landslides left 64 people dead after heavy and steady monsoon rains hit Nepal. These floods exacerbated existing vulnerabilities, particularly as millions were still in temporary shelter after the devastating earthquakes in 2015.⁵⁵ The country's low household resilience and capacities and poor governance contribute to the country's continued vulnerability.

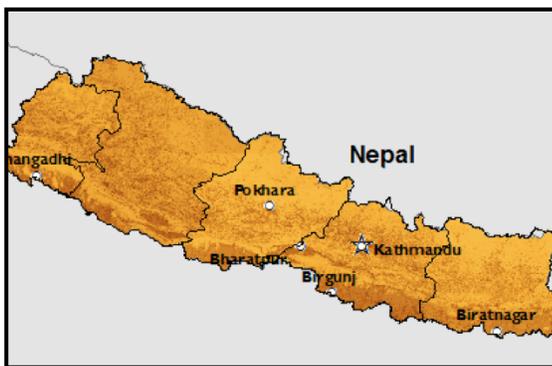


Figure 7: Climate-related Vulnerability of Nepal

National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

Much of the climate change programming is based upon the 2010 National Adaptation Plan of Action.⁵⁶ The National Climate Change Support Program, a donor-funded initiative under the Ministry of Population and

Environment oversees its implementation.⁵⁷ In addition, Nepal is a pioneer of the Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPAs), where communities have developed specific plans of action.⁵⁸ The NAPA identifies nine priority projects that focus on agriculture, water, data and information collection and processing, capacity building, and infrastructure protection.

Similarly, the 2009 Draft National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management aims to guide prevention, preparedness, and response and recovery action.⁵⁹ However, this draft has not been approved yet, primarily because of national government related political instability, including frequent changes in ruling coalitions, Cabinet composition, and disagreements within parties. The Natural Calamities Act of 1982 remains the main guiding document, though it only focuses on emergency response (immediately post-disasters) and rehabilitation (i.e., short term reconstruction). The Ministry of Home Affairs is the implementing authority for the document. It should be noted that the strategies reviewed were authored prior to the 2015 earthquake and so activities may have shifted (without a corresponding update of their online documentation).

Donor Community Actions

All reviewed donors are actively operating in Nepal. JICA does not currently have any climate related projects but supports integration of DRR considerations into any transportation infrastructure constructed (by the organization) and seismic risk into schools in the Kathmandu Valley. Interestingly, USAID has a separate document, the 2011 U.S. Disaster Risk Reduction Strategic Framework – Nepal, that outlines a whole of U.S. Government approach to addressing DRR issues in the country. This strategy is separate from USAID's program of work, which does not integrate CCA or DRR. DFID, on the other hand, emphasizes climate change adaptation and disaster management. Their activities include implementing the NAPA, supporting national systems and capacity for DRM, and integrating disaster resilience into local and national systems. The ADB focuses on the institutional aspects of CCA and DRR – helping the government build capacity,



knowledge bases, and institutionalizing the use of risk-screening tools. The WB strategy only mentions the Pilot Program on Climate Resilience (PPCR), which is based upon four components ranging from building climate resilience in mountain eco-regions to mainstreaming climate risk management. The PPCR is implemented in conjunction with the ADB and the International Finance Corporation.

Challenges in Coordination and Implementation

In general, the Government and donors appear to agree on the main challenges in Nepal: lack of relevant data and information, lack of skills and technical knowledge, and constrained financial resources. Political instability, lack of accountability, and absence of locally elected officials were also noted as challenges that hinder preparedness and response capabilities. A report from JICA focuses on inadequate infrastructure and lack of access to water and electricity as major implementation challenges. On the ministerial level, DRR and CCA efforts are being integrated into the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Division as they have direct control over local development officers (LDOs), who are primarily responsible for local development efforts. This is meant to lead to smoother and more integrated implementation (with regular development agendas). This institutional set-up has caused frictions and is said to be one of the reasons for the delay in passing the 2009 Strategy. These challenges are further explored in the first part of this two-brief series.

Pakistan

Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

The country is exposed to multiple climate-related hazards, including intermittent floods, extreme temperatures, and droughts. As the majority of the country's population is agriculture-dependent, its population is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change: the Himalayan mountain range supplies water for over 90% of the country's arable land. Between

2010 – 2012, intense monsoon seasons resulted in widespread floods, with thousands killed and millions displaced.⁶⁰ In 2015, extreme temperatures in Karachi resulted in a severe heat wave that claimed about 1,200 lives.⁶¹ Approximately 163 million people (or 85% of the country) is exposed to above average vulnerability. The country's poor governance and security situation and low household capabilities contribute to the country's vulnerability to climate change.

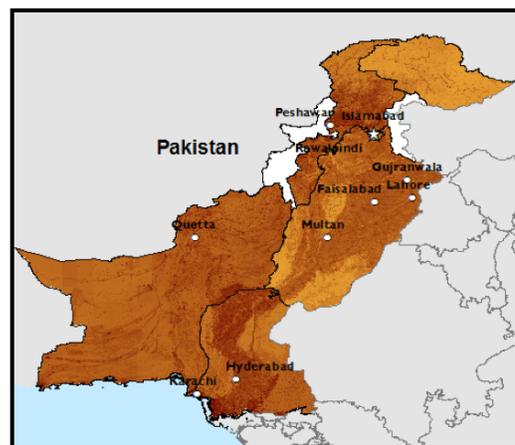


Figure 8: Climate-related Vulnerability of Pakistan

National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

The country's 2012 National Climate Change Policy focuses primarily on CCA activities, given the country's minimal contributions to GHG emissions.⁶² Actions outlined in the Policy range from capacity building and institutional strengthening to finance and fostering international and regional cooperation. The policy also contains guidance for DRR and preparedness. Pakistan 2025: One Nation – One Vision,⁶³ the country's general planning document, also briefly addresses climate related challenges under its energy, food, and water security pillar. In particular, the document stipulates the integration of climate change-related risks and costs into the country's development agenda.

Three documents inform the DRR agenda: the 2007 National Disaster Risk Management Framework,⁶⁴ the

National Disaster Management Act of 2010,⁶⁵ and the National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy (2013).⁶⁶ The 2010 Act sets the stage for a larger framework and designates the National Disaster Management Authority as the key actor. The 2013 Policy sets out an implementation framework that prescribes actions to be undertaken in development planning, financial structures, knowledge management, research and development, community based disaster risk management, mainstreaming into the education system, monitoring and evaluation, and harmonizing these initiatives.

Donor Community Actions

Donor portfolios, in general, address DRR activities more than CCA. Proposed activities appear to overlap – for example, JICA and the WB both focus on building capacity for disaster risk management at the national level. Assistance is targeted mostly at enhancing capacity and knowledge building. DFID does not appear to have any direct programming on these issues and instead refers to regionally focused programming on resilience. USAID did not have a specific strategy document for the country; instead, an overview of previous and intended activities was available. From this (more promotional) document, CEPSA researchers came to the conclusion that USAID was mostly focused on recovery efforts.

Challenges in Coordination and Implementation

All donors cited political and physical insecurity as a major challenge to continued growth. Inadequate energy infrastructure and safe water and low irrigation efficiency hinder continued social and economic development. A lack of capacity, financial and technical resources, and weak institutions are cited as other barriers. Donors, in particular, cited that poor governance and the government's continued attention on physical and political insecurity issues hinders any other progress. Even with these CCA and DRR documents, the government does not prioritize these actions.

Sri Lanka

Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

As a low-lying island nation, Sri Lanka is particularly vulnerable to cycles of floods and droughts. CEPSA's calculations show that approximately 76% of the Sri Lanka's population is exposed to above average vulnerability.⁶⁷ In May 2016, Cyclone Roanu battered the country, with the hardest rains in a quarter century leading to mudslides, floods, and displaced 300,000 people and caused 200 deaths.⁶⁸ In 2001, 2012, 2014, and 2017, severe droughts affected various parts of the country and has particularly impacted growing seasons. These recurrent cycles of floods and droughts will continue to negatively affect the country's agricultural industry.

The country is still grappling with the effects of a decades long internal conflict. Donors, like USAID, WB, and ADB are focused on more inclusive approaches to growth and governance and are specifically interested in supporting traditionally ignored groups. Thus, while

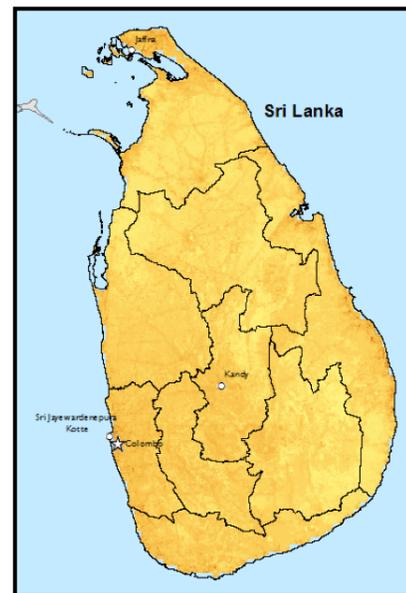


Figure 9: Climate-related Vulnerability of Sri Lanka



climate change and disasters becomes more pressing, these are not yet a top priority.

National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

The 2016 - 2025 National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change Impacts (NAPCCI) guides the country's current climate change-related actions. This builds on two previous plans, the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2011 – 2016)⁷⁰ and the 2012 National Climate Change Policy.⁷¹ In particular, the 2016 – 2025 NAPCCI outlines prioritized actions across nine pillars and addresses cross-cutting issues like climate's impact on the country's economic growth.⁷² Three DRR strategies guide the country's actions. The 2014 - 2018 Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme expands the 2013 National Policy on Disaster Management (which sets the framework)⁷³ and details steps necessary to integrate DRR considerations into the country's development process and relevant sectors.⁷⁴ The Program highlights the remaining gaps in the legal environment, the lack of preparedness and technical knowledge, and the inadequate reach of existing early warning systems as challenges to preparedness and response in Sri Lanka.

Donor Community Actions

The WB and ADB are supporting the government's efforts to mainstream CCA and DRR considerations by assessing the vulnerability of key infrastructure, providing technical and investment support for further infrastructure construction (while integrating a risk-based approach), and supporting the technical capacity of the government. JICA, also, is helping protect roads from landslide risk and supporting the forecasting capabilities of the Department of Meteorology. USAID's strategy is outdated (last updated in 2011) and does not address climate change adaptation or disaster risk reduction. DFID does not have operations in Sri Lanka. Donors, like USAID, WB, and ADB are focused on more inclusive approaches to growth and governance and are specifically interested in supporting traditionally ignored groups, due to the recent conflict and continuing tension.

Challenges in Coordination and Implementation

Donors noted that the primary challenge for Sri Lanka implementing its climate change programs is lack of social integration between ethnic groups. The country's past conflict has made implementation difficult but also overshadowed other non-conflict related issues. According to the WB, weak governance and implementation of laws, poor financial management, inadequate infrastructure, and weak national economic growth also present obstacles to development. . However, both the 2011 and 2015 Plans highlight the Climate Change Secretariat's limited capacities and the need to bolster its technical knowledge. Further, the documents also suggest that suitable and supportive national stakeholders (in other agencies and ministries) have yet to be identified, perhaps complicating the implementation process.

Thailand

Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

As a relatively advanced country in the region, Thailand receives limited development assistance. Despite the country's economic progress, governance is still an issue given recent coup attempts and military takeovers. In May 2014, the country's prime minister was removed from office by the country's constitutional court; subsequently, the country's army staged a coup against the caretaker government. Elections are tentatively set for mid-2017. The country faces multiple climate-related hazards, including floods, wildfires, and drought. The country's monsoon rains and low lying topography puts the country's economy and people at risk for floods, particularly the large population and economic center of Bangkok which is located in the Chao Phraya river basin. For example, in 2011, heavy monsoon rains affected over 8.2 million people in two-thirds of the country's provinces. Economic losses were estimated to top US\$2 billion.⁷⁵ Frequent droughts and heatwaves also contribute to Thailand's above average climate vulnerability score.

National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

The country has three main documents that guide its climate change action. Unfortunately, despite repeated attempts, CEPASA researchers were not able to retrieve these documents for independent analyses. These include the National Strategy on Climate Change 2008 – 2012,⁷⁶ the National Strategy on Climate Change 2012 – 2017,⁷⁷ and the National Master Plan on Climate Change 2012 – 2050.⁷⁸ The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is the primary author (and authority) of these documents.

The Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation administers the Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Act (2007)⁷⁹ and the National Disaster Risk Management Plan (2015).⁸⁰ While the Act provides the legal framework and mandates for the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, the Plan operationalizes it. The focus of the Plan is primarily on conducting risk assessments, strengthening guidelines and preparedness, building back better,⁸¹ and improving cooperation. Climate change considerations are not integrated into these documents.

Donor Community Actions

Only JICA and the ADB continue to actively operate in Thailand. USAID provides some support to technical capacity building and regional programs based out of Bangkok. JICA supports Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) wide programs on food security, building capacity to address mitigation and adaptation, and is also supporting the development and implementation of Bangkok's Master Plan on Climate Change (2013 – 2023). In addition, JICA supports capacity development for disaster management in the country. ADB concentrates on strengthening community based integrated water and flood risk management programs and provides technical support for Thailand to access international climate finance.



Figure 10: Climate-related Vulnerability of Thailand

Challenges in Coordination and Implementation

The government still has no established standard operating procedure for disaster management and response. Further, economic disparities between regions, gender, and urban and rural area are pronounced, complicating design and implementation of proposed activities. ADB was the only donor that states some of the implementation challenges for Thailand, which were: insufficient infrastructure, high rates of underemployment, low female participation in labor markets and government, and a rapidly aging population were all listed as implementation. On the whole, donor activities support government priorities for greater regional economic integration, protection of important supply chains, and need for expertise and technical assistance. No donors stated any coordination conflicts between ministries in their documents.

Vietnam

Country Overview and Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment

Since the economic reforms of the late 1980s, Vietnam has undergone a massive economic transformation. Its recent growth has been particularly strong because of its young population and lack of reliance on China and commodity exports.⁸² The country is the second-largest exporter of rice, but this is increasingly at risk because of climate change impacts. Vietnam is exposed to strong and frequent floods, storms, and sea-level rise. Vietnam's long coastline is vulnerable to typhoons which strike six to eight times a year and have increased in frequency and intensity due to climate change. Between 2000 – 2013, Vietnam experienced 45 different disasters, including storms, floods, and droughts.⁸³ Approximately 70% of the country's population faces above average vulnerability.⁸⁴

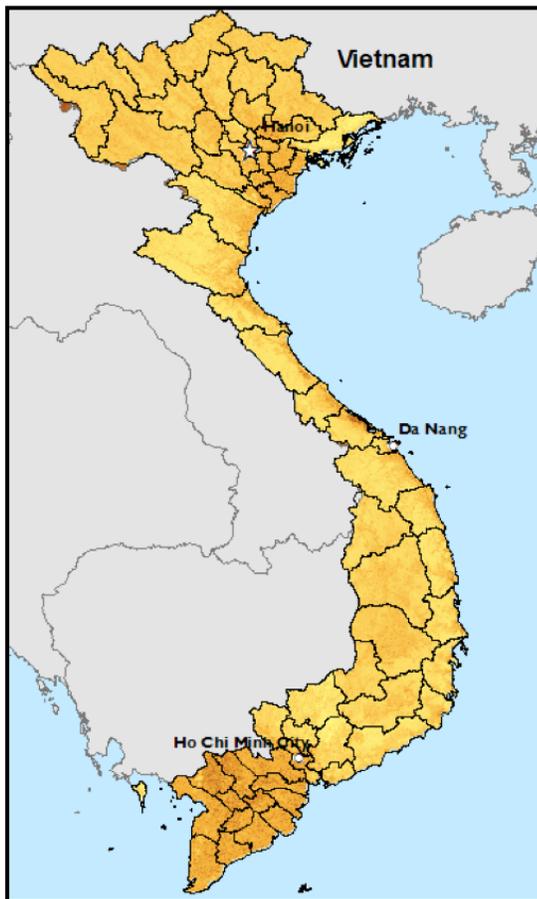


Figure 11: Climate-related Vulnerability of Vietnam

National Plans Addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

The country's climate related actions are guided by the National Strategy on Climate Change 2011 – 2020.⁸⁵ It addresses the need for mitigation of GHG emissions, forest and water sustainability, and climate change adaptation. It also mandates the creation of a National Goal Program on Climate Change (not yet launched). Specific recommended activities from the strategy included reviewing and revising existing sectoral strategies on climate change, increasing the capacity to efficiently forecast, monitor, supervise, and respond to disasters, and create a socioeconomic development plan that integrates these considerations into its program of action. The National Strategy on Environment Protection to 2020, with Visions to 2030⁸⁶ emphasizes climate change as one of the key challenges to continued growth. Actions mentioned under this strategy include gathering data on adaptation best practices, designing methods to mainstream CCA considerations, and creating a scientific knowledge base. However, no implementing ministries are specified in these documents.

Three documents guide the country's DRR actions, namely the Implementation Plan of the National Strategy for Natural Disaster Prevention, Response, and Mitigation to 2020⁸⁷ and the Law on Natural Disaster Prevention and Control (No. 33/2013/QH13).⁸⁸ The third, the National Strategy for Natural Disaster Prevention, Response, and Mitigation to 2020, originally issued in 2007, was unavailable for analysis. The 2013 Law stipulates the rights and obligations of various agencies, outlines activities, and mandates the development of a national strategy for every 10 years (and updated every 5 years). For example, it mandates DRR planning at the various levels of administration in Vietnam and mandates the mainstreaming of DRR design principles into construction of public buildings. In addition, it tasks agencies like the Ministry of Planning and Investment to identify, assess, and zone (climate) risky areas.



Donor Community Actions

All five donors studied are actively operating in Vietnam. Donor activities are closely aligned with stated government priorities. DFID helped establish a trilateral partnership with the WB and the Government of Vietnam, focused on mainstreaming climate change resilience into projects. USAID focuses on helping the country transition to a low-carbon economy, improve analytical capabilities, and increase flood and storm mitigation abilities. The ADB and the WB are both helping improve DRM capabilities in the water resource sector and at the community level. For example, In 2013, the World Bank led a US\$450 million community-based disaster risk management project in 12 provinces across Vietnam to build 11 flood and storm mitigation infrastructure projects, including river dikes, evacuation routes, and drainage systems. In addition, both WB and JICA are helping improve capacities for hydro-meteorological services, weather forecasting, flood risk monitoring, and other early warning systems.

Challenges in Coordination and Implementation

The donors in Vietnam all stated that implementation issues in the government are due to high levels of corruption, low accountability, and poor regulation which results in poor service delivery to the vulnerable populations that are most likely to be affected by climate change. These factors are compounded by a lack of information and proper infrastructure in Vietnam.

Conclusion

All the countries in our region have climate change and disaster risk reduction related laws, policies, and sometimes, implementable agendas. These countries' challenges vary significantly: some face multiple climate risks while still trying improve socio-economic conditions and other more advanced countries are trying to protect existing economic gains. Many of these countries' populations are natural resource dependent which magnifies potential impacts of climate change as livelihoods are at stake. The five

reviewed donors are active in almost every country in the region, regardless of the country's development stage. In almost countries, save Bhutan, donors have active programs on either CCA or DRR or both.

This review indicates that donors and governments, for the most part, are actively trying to address climate change and disaster-related challenges. Our review supports the findings from our first brief that focused specifically on Bangladesh and Nepal's experiences. That brief found that implementation is hindered by lack of coordination between relevant ministries, low technical capacities, and inadequate resources.⁸⁹ These reviewed documents highlight similar challenges. First, inadequate historical and relevant data and information hinders the development of appropriate programs and policies. Lack of monitoring stations (e.g., for rainfall, temperature) contribute to the dearth of necessary data. These data and information are integral to understanding trends. Second, technical capacities and know-how are required to translate these data and information into actions. Governments and their relevant ministries require such capacities to be embedded within their bureaucracies to continually address climate-related challenges. Concerted and long-term capacity building efforts are (desperately) needed to improve existing capacities. Third, unclear implementing authorities hinders the strategies' adoption. For example, we found that clear ministerial/agency mandates are necessary in order to ensure that the necessary ministries carry out their tasks. For example, while environment or climate change ministries are often the leading agency, they rely upon other ministries, like those for planning or roads to implement programs. If other agencies' participation is not mandated, then implementation can be hindered. Our interviews in Bangladesh and Nepal underscored this point. Lastly, we find that existing development or political challenges often supersede considerations of and actions to address climate-related challenges. By this, we mean that issues like poverty reduction, providing basic education or health, or even ensuring political stability, often are more important than implementing climate-related programming. Donors, in particular, are aware of these priorities of their partner recipients.



The presence of these strategies and documents does not necessarily convey climate change action. Our efforts to review these documents are a first step towards understanding these countries' priorities, strategies, and challenges. Further research is required to understand how these strategies are being translated into practice. As a first step, we would interview relevant country and donor representatives, using a similar methodology as in our Bangladesh and Nepal case study. This would help highlight country-specific experiences and perhaps methods to address their challenges. It would also help in further illuminating the gaps between planning and implementation. Eventually, the plans' outcomes will also have to be evaluated.

We have been as exhaustive as possible in our review and analysis of these documents. Together with our case studies of Bangladesh and Nepal and the annotated bibliography that analyzes these documents in more detail, we present a detailed review of current policies and strategies in South and South-East Asia. These documents are attestments to countries' and donors' commitments to climate change and disaster-related considerations. Future research and time will tell whether these approaches are effective.

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