



OUTCOME DOCUMENT

South Asia Regional Resilience Dialogue:

Fostering Adaptation and Resilience for a Post-COVID19, 1.5 Degree Future

Date: 17 September, 10:00–12:00 CEST/ 14:00–16:00 Bangladesh

Acknowledgements

This dialogue is part of a series of regional dialogues convened with non-party stakeholders, organized by the [Global Resilience Partnership](#) together with [Climate Resilience Network of the UNFCCC Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action \(MPGCA\)](#) with the support of the Chile and UK High Level Champions (HLCs), Gonzalo Muñoz and Nigel Topping.

The South Asia Regional Resilience Dialogue is co-led by: [International Centre for Climate Change and Development \(ICCCAD\)](#) and [Huairou Commission](#).

Supporting organisations include: [ADB](#), [CANSAs](#), [CGIAR Research Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security \(CGIAR / CCAFS\)](#), [Climate Justice Resilience Fund \(CJRF\)](#), [Food and Agriculture Organization \(FAO\)/A2R](#), [Mercy Corps](#), [Practical Action](#), [Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre](#).

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ICCCAD
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HUAIROU COMMISSION
Women, Homes & Community



RESEARCH PROGRAM ON
Climate Change,
Agriculture and
Food Security



**Practical
ACTION**



**Climate
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**MERCY
CORPS**



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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CJRF | Climate Justice
Resilience Fund



UN Climate Resilience Initiative A2R
Anticipate, Absorb, Reshape

Top key messages for the High-Level Champions from the dialogue to take forward in their work to help advance ambitions in the run up to COP 26

1. Reposition local actors **as agents of change** and allow them to access decision making platforms at national, regional and global levels.
2. **Build capacity of marginal groups** and provide them with access to improved technologies for co-creating climate knowledge and solutions.
3. Ensure **good governance** when it comes to climate action by authorizing local communities to keep track of **transparency and accountability** of all actors involved in the climate action process.
4. **Establish and promote financial architectures** that enable greater agency of local actors, facilitate co-creation of knowledge and support devolved delivery mechanisms for ensuring the effective channeling of funds to the most vulnerable.
5. **Foster regulatory environment for mobilizing multiple, diverse and innovative sources of financing**, including greater private sector investment to ensure long-term finance towards adaptation and resilience in the region

1. What concrete actions and solutions are being taken in the region to build resilience?

There are several cases of groundbreaking initiatives already being undertaken in South Asia by different stakeholder groups, both in terms of catalyzing locally-led action as well as effectively mobilizing finance to support on-the-ground solutions, which have proved successful in contributing to adaptation and resilience in the region. The dialogue highlighted some key examples, as listed below.

- **Community-driven action**

Case of Shack Dwellers Initiative (SDI). One of the key steps taken by SDI is to ensure visibility of the inhabitants of informal settlements through providing each household and individual with identity cards. In addition, SDI also works towards ensuring empowerment and inclusivity of the urban poor through capacitating local community women to design their own preferred housing structures. Through different programs SDI has allowed community members the scope to design and present their needs and preferences to both national and international donor agencies. During the spread of Covid-19, the absence of community priorities in existing urban slum designs was more prominent as lack of sanitation facilities made it difficult to maintain the hygiene and safety measures set by governments. Actions taken by SDI has helped to proactively address these issues.

- **Women as problem solvers**

Case of Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP). Through their work, SSP has empowered grassroots women's networks and communities in both rural and urban climate hotspots across India, helping build their adaptive capacity to various climatic and environmental stressors. As the impacts of climate change multiplied with the outbreak of COVID19, these women were on the frontline, proving themselves as crucial parts of value chains and participating in key decision making

processes, which contributed towards bridging the gap between vulnerable communities and the local government.

Case of Lumanti Support Group for Shelter. The organization has set up 47 credit cooperatives all across the country and there are nearly 38 thousand registered women members till date. Through these cooperatives, women have been borrowing money to invest in on-the-ground actions across different sectors for building resilience to various climatic and non-climatic threats, both at the household and community level. These cooperatives have been playing a crucial role in empowering women through access to financial support and providing them with greater autonomy for catalyzing locally-led action.

- **Youth as community mobilizers**

Case of Jalbayu Parishad. As part of this platform, a group of youth volunteers, closely engage with the local, marginalized people to better understand their adaptation needs and priorities. They then act as intermediaries to effectively communicate these needs to the local government for better implementation of adaptation actions and solutions. This youth group has thereby been playing a vital role in bridging communication between community members, local actors as well as the national government. During the pandemic, they have acted as important agents for raising awareness regarding Covid-19 as well as other social issues arising from the crisis.

- **Decentralized adaptation planning**

Case of Local Adaptation Plans for Action (LAPA) in Nepal. The LAPA Framework provides opportunities for immediate and effective delivery of adaptation services through the implementation of NAPA priorities. LAPA ensures local level participation and ownership, and envisions the engagement of local level stakeholders for adaptation planning, implementation and monitoring processes. This is aligned with vision set by climate change policy in Nepal, requiring 80% of the funds to be disbursed at the local level.

- **Needs Driven Financing Mechanisms**

Case of Urban Poor Support Fund (UPSF). UPSF mobilizes finances at the local level with local governments allocating standalone budgetary resources finances for community development. The UPSF fund allows local communities to access funds for community driven agendas, including supporting the implementation of local climate adaptation plans (LAPAs).

Case of Climate Bridge Fund. Climate Bridge Fund is a trust fund established by BRAC in Bangladesh with support from the Government of Germany through KfW. The fund employs a bottom-up, participatory approach to ensure needs-driven and sustainable provision of services and infrastructure for climate-induced migrants, an issue that has become increasingly prominent in recent years. As such, the fund exemplifies a needs-based funding approach which aims to support intervention which effectively and appropriately addresses local priorities and needs.

Case of Urban Climate Change Resilience Trust Fund (UCCRTF). UCCRTF is administered by the Asian Development Bank and it takes a systems- centric approach that ensures that urban planning is built around climate change impacts. The approach employed by UCCRTF is combination of financial support with capacity building facilities, which helps foster long-term adaptive capacity and enables co-creation of community solutions for building resilience. Financial instruments applied by UCCRTF include de-risking investment by providing the first loss cover, providing longer tenure for microcredit enterprises and clients, as well as mobilizing a revolving fund which allows for flexible capital financing. The fund also provides technical advisory services through different organizations, to build skills and capacity of local people.

2. What were some of the boundaries/challenges related to building resilience in South Asia identified (including any knowledge gaps)?

- **Uncoordinated top-down interventions with little focus on local needs.** Despite having ambitious commitments in place, interventions at the national level are also largely top- down oriented with little to no focus on local priorities, and are often implemented to serve bureaucratic interests. Such top down policies, programs and plans have been developed without proper consultation with local communities, and as such fail to effectively respond to and address local needs for adaptation and resilience.
- **Limited recognition of women-led efforts.** Prevalent socio-cultural beliefs and practices continue to limit their agency and decision making power at both the household and community level, and the essential services they provide are unrecognized in most settings. Poor access to resources, education and technology play a crucial role for the subordination.
- **Increased marginalization of the urban poor.** The vulnerabilities and risks faced by the urban poor, especially those residing in slums and informal settlements, have received limited emphasis till date when it comes to mobilizing adaptation actions and solutions by implementing entities. A large number of projects have been taken in the name of slum development, but most of them were not undertaken considering the needs of the poor.
- **Limited knowledge and understanding of complex climate change processes.** Local communities in the region have historically learned to cope with various climatic shocks and stressors using indigenous knowledge and local resources. However, with the growing complexity of climate change impacts and to ensure community-driven adaptation responses are effective, there is a pressing need to equip local communities with up-to-date scientific information as well as climate and weather-related data.
- **Limited access to modern technologies.** Mobilization of women and youth groups have proved quite successful in spearheading innovative and effective solutions for building resilience at the community level. However, poor access to and unaffordability of improved technologies for them, continue to act as a barrier towards ensuring long term resilience, widening the digital divide.
- **Financial support failing to effectively reach and support those most in need.** Factors behind such poor allocation include inflexible architectures for mobilizing finance to the local level as well as poor capacity of local government and other actors in the region to manage and utilize these funds efficiently and successfully. Existing national resources are also managed centrally without considering local priorities.

3. What more is needed to increase ambition, transform and take actions to scale?

- **Enhanced political will and informed policies that connect local and global agendas.** This means the need of institutional arrangements that ensure that community priorities are routinely fed into national plans and programmes.
- **Need for more inclusive spaces for open dialogue and participatory planning processes.** This means solving the pre-existing inequalities and structural deficiencies that contribute towards vulnerability.

- **Empowerment and capacity building of marginalized groups for facilitating local action.** Considering the growing contributions of women towards community level resilience building, it is imperative that concerted actions are undertaken to develop their knowledge and skills, including access to flexible financing, to empower them with agency. South Asia is also characterized by a substantial size of youth population. Training young boys and girls with necessary climate change knowledge, equipping them with skills and technologies, and pivoting them as intermediaries between community members and implementing agencies.
- **Equipping local communities with digital facilities and technological innovations.** This means providing the poor and the vulnerable with technical and financial support to available of those innovations.
- **Good governance across scales.** Transparency and accountability are key in good governance. Formation of local level finance monitoring committees have proved successful in South Asia to hold government bodies as well as donors accountable to meet their commitments. Providing grassroots groups with proper knowledge and training can also enable them to monitor the accountability of all actors.
- **Adequate, appropriate and effective delivery of finance.** Global funds must actively deliberate on long-term financial commitments, develop simpler access modalities, ensure fund allocation reflects context-specific needs and priorities and explore ways for channeling funds to the local level. Concurrently, recipients must also demonstrate enhanced transparency and accountability in order to attract more funding support.

4. How can community or grassroots led efforts be better connected to and resourced by national and international efforts and how to ensure that the poor and the vulnerable have voice in decision making?

- **Repositioning local actors as agents of change.** Grassroots communities and organizations particularly in South Asia have proved themselves as drivers of change in terms of managing crisis and building community resilience. In order to build a future that is more resilient to shocks and uncertainties, it is now time to change the narrative of victimhood and rethink and reposition grassroots groups and local actors as agents of change.
- **Provision of formal space, recognition and legitimacy to local actors especially women and youth.** To ensure an inclusive pathway towards achieving adaptation and resilience, it would be important to provide formal spaces as well as recognition and agency to grassroots groups particularly women and youth.
- **Capacity building and better access to improved technologies.** Capacity building of local communities should be given highest priority focusing on available knowledge and resources, as well as access to new technologies and latest science.
- **Promoting scope and opportunities for co-creating knowledge and solutions.** To make sure local needs, priorities and aspirations are accurately reflected in policies, plans and actions, co-creation of knowledge and solutions will need to be promoted. With nature based solutions (NbS) emerging as a major agenda, especially in light of the Covid-19 crisis, national governments as well as global donors should further invest in collaborating with local actors for implementing NbS-focused interventions.

5. What are the different financing modes and instruments appropriate for effectively achieving adaptation and climate resilience in the region?

- **Fund mobilization should adequately reflect context-specific needs and priorities.** To ensure financial support is being effective in addressing adaptation and resilience needs in the region, it is vital that fund mobilization is informed by robust risk assessment tools and approaches.
- **Devolved mechanisms for finance delivery.** To ensure financial flows reach the local level and are effectively addressing the needs of the most vulnerable, there needs to be mechanisms in place for decentralized finance delivery. This would entail institutionalizing of climate finance within planning and budgeting processes of local and sub-national governments.
- **Greater engagement of the private sector.** There is substantial untapped potential of the private sector to support adaptation and resilience solutions in the region. To do so, it would be important to create an enabling regulatory environment through establishing plans and policies, as well as different incentive mechanisms for mobilizing private sector finance towards adaptation and resilience actions.
- **Multiple and diverse sources of financing.** This could entail setting up and mobilizing peer-to-peer funding platforms such as cooperatives and local community enterprises. Innovative instruments such as social investment loans, viability gap funds, guarantees etc. will also have to be employed. Microfinance has also been playing an instrumental role towards poverty alleviation in the region and microfinance institutions (MFIs) are already supporting adaptation and resilience actions to varying degrees.
- **Robust fund governance structures and enhanced transparency and accountability mechanisms.** Financial support should be extended towards establishing good governance mechanisms both within national and local government systems, as well as among other project implementing agencies. This would also help promote enhanced transparency and accountability (T&A) among fund managers and recipients.
- **Institutional capacity building on fund access and utilization.** To promote the process of decentralized finance delivery, additional capacity building support on fund management, monitoring and disbursement will have to be extended to local government. Both national and local governments need to be equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to undertake comprehensive community risk assessments, so that funding allocations reflect local priorities and needs.

Annex I : Agenda

5 min	Welcome and Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saleemul Huq, Director, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD)
5 min	Setting out the regional priorities around adaptation and resilience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanjay Vashist, Director, Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSA)
5 min	Remarks by High Level Champion (HLC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nigel Topping, UK COP26 High Level Champion
30 min	Panel 1 How can locally-led adaptation and resilience actions be scaled up to bring transformative change? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prema Gopalan, Founder and Executive Director, Swayam Shikshan Prayog (SSP) • Lajana Manandhar, Executive Director, Lumanti Support Group for Shelter • Ziaul Haque, General Secretary, Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods (CSRL) • Sheela Patel, Director, Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centers (SPARC) Moderated by Saleemul Huq, Director, ICCCAD
10 min	Q&A <i>Follow up questions from HLC and/or audience</i>
30 min	Panel 2 What are the financing needs and approaches required for achieving adaptation and resilience goals in the region? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golam Rabbani, Head of Climate Bridge Fund Secretariat, BRAC • Afsari Begum, Senior Specialist, Disaster Risk Reduction, Practical Action Bangladesh • Manjeet Dhakal, Head of LDC Support Team, Climate Analytics • Virinder Sharma, Senior Urban Development Specialist, Asian Development Bank Moderated by Saleemul Huq, Director, ICCCAD
10 min	Q&A and comments from the HLC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nigel Topping, UK COP26 High Level Champion
10 min	Closing remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ken O'Flaherty, UK Regional Ambassador for Asia-Pacific and South Asia