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The critical roles played by the women climate champions

Despite all the adversarial policy context, and battered by climate change, women at the grassroots level have been continuing to work in climate adaptation in order to adapt with the fast-changing climatic realities to survive.

Diruba Haider and Priodarshine Auvi

“I can do the work of 10 men alone, people say I have no fear. During cyclone Bulbul, I was the only woman volunteer with the all men CPP volunteer group in the middle of the disaster working; I even carried disabled children on my shoulder to cyclone shelter,” said Masura Parvin, Unit Leader of Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP) in Satkhira at a webinar titled, ‘Untold Tales of Women Champions of Climate

Change’ jointly organized by UN Women and International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) at the annual Gobeshona Global Conference on January 23. Masura represents innumerable women working at the grass roots level in Bangladesh braving the adversities of nature worsened by climate change, as an everyday battle.

Unfortunately, in the climate change arena, women’s leadership has been downplayed for a long time. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the climate change treaty, signed by 197 states and

nations came into force on March 21, 1994. It took UNFCCC 20 years to come up with the Lima Work Program on Gender (LWPG) in 2014 to advance gender balance and integrate gender considerations into climate change policies and actions.

Finally at COP 25, Parties agreed a five-year Enhanced Lima work programme on gender, and its Gender Action Plan. Also, in terms of participation in UNFCCC processes women’s participation has not been very encouraging. UNFCCC has been publishing gender composition reports annually since

2013 to support Parties to track progress on gender balance to promote a gender-sensitive climate policy.

The 2019 report showed that 5 out of 15 constituted bodies of UNFCCC had female representation exceeding 38%, while in 2018 it was 8 out of 13 constituted bodies reaching that threshold. In 2020 the ratio came down further to 35%. Thus, instead of progression there has been a regression in female representation on constituted bodies that formulate climate change policies in UNFCCC.

The hardest hit group, ie women and



Finally at COP 25, Parties agreed a five-year Enhanced Lima work programme on gender, and its Gender Action Plan

girls have been marginalized in climate change policies, strategies and actions. According to an ASEAN Gender Outlook, women depend largely on natural resources which are highly affected by climate change.

Women in South East Asia are engaged in agriculture: 64% in Lao PDR, 39% in Viet Nam and 34% in Cambodia; others simply rely on natural resources when they cannot access assets; however, over 85% of agricultural land holders are men; Land degradation has prompted urban migration on the part of men and a feminization of agriculture; 28% of women live in households that primarily use wood as cooking fuel.

Climate change, including aridity and flooding, is intensifying women’s vulnerability, and increasing their water and firewood collection times. The scenario is no different in the South Asian region, and in Bangladesh we see the unfolding of the crisis very vividly. In the South West coast women and girls spend on average more than an hour each day for water collection; according to a 2016 FAO report more than 50% of agri-labour are women; most of the women in rural households especially in rural areas depend on fuel-wood. All these aspects, drinking water, wood-fuel, nature-based agriculture where women’s engagement is the highest, are hugely affected by climate change.

Despite all the adversarial policy context, and battered by climate change, women at the grassroots level have been continuing to work in climate adaptation in order to adapt with the fast-changing climatic realities to survive. In the process women have been achieving wonderful feats in climate change adaptation.

Many organizations including government, national and international non-government organizations, private sectors, and the United Nations are implementing different programs and initiatives to reduce the inequalities as well as to ensure gender equality through a transformative feminist approach both at local and national level to benefit women from climate actions. Considering the concept “Leaving No One Behind”, UN Women is working with the most marginalized groups of women from the most climate vulnerable districts in Bangladesh to achieve an inclusive and sustainable development that creates a synergy between the Sustainable Development Goal 5: Gender Equality and Goal 13: Climate Actions.

Accordingly, UN Women has been developing leadership capacity of grassroots women’s organizations and the women leaders by enhancing their knowledge base about the developments in the climate change field as well as promoting their local knowledge and skills. UN Women believes that it’s crucial to put women in the driving seat of adaptation to climate change for which enabling policies and strategies are critical.

There are so many stories of courage, strength, sacrifice, and dedication of innumerable women, that have made differences to the lives of so many women and their communities to survive disaster and climatic shocks. They include: Lipika Rani Boiragi, from Association for Social Development and Distressed Welfare at Dacope, Khulna; Jannatul Mawa, of BINDU Nari Unnayan Shongothon, from Kaligonj Upazila of Satkhira; Afroza Begum Alpona, the Vice Chairman of Union Parishad and member of Disaster Management Committee from Kurigram; Masura Parvin, the Unit Leader of Cyclone Preparedness Program (CPP) volunteers from Poddopukur of Satkhira.

Organized jointly by UN Women and ICCCAD at the Gobeshona conference this year, the session titled, ‘Untold tales of Women Champions in Climate Change’ celebrated the stories of real-life climate champions. A total of six stories of grassroots women, one national level and two international level climate leaders shared their stories. The objective of the event was to bring the women climate champions in one platform to share their experience, and learn from their challenges, to fight against the climate change crisis, and disasters from local, national, and global levels.

The webinar was chaired by Saima Wazed, Founder of Shuchana Foundation and Thematic Ambassador of

Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF). She congratulated the women climate champions for their inspiring and brilliant work to bring about positive change in their society despite having so many challenges. She said, “It is necessary to inspire our young girls, provide them opportunities to learn from real life experiences, its tools and techniques, as the fire is there, they just need something to push them forward to go beyond their own fears, social barriers which will give them more strength to succeed.”

Lipika Rani Boiragi from Association for Social Development and Distressed Welfare (ASDDW), Dacope, Khulna has been working for the women and girls of Dacope for more than 20 years. She has introduced two pilot projects with her own little fund and small private donation: (1) Mobile stove (eco-friendly stove), which she distributed amongst her community women to popularise, (2) rain water harvesting in the ground-well for use in dry season for irrigation. Without any scientific knowledge, or

model for her family and community.

The youth CSO leader from BINDU Nari Unnayan Shongothon (Satkhira) Jannatul Mawa said, “I wanted to create a space only for women, where women would have a space for leadership, and they would play a crucial role as a decision maker. We have to work hard to create everything the way we want to, nothing is ready for us at the initial stage. One thing to keep in mind is, I am not a woman, I am a human being. If everyone else in society can do it, so can I”.

All the speakers at the event emphasised the importance of bringing a paradigm shift into the narratives portraying women leaders as mere victims, instead highlighting the strength and achievements of women in combating climate change. Women and girls who suffer the most from climatic impacts and yet who adapt with those impacts on the daily basis and those women who show the way with their leadership need to be acknowledged. We need to learn from and celebrate all the women climate leaders



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related education, and necessary funding, she went on and undertook such locally led adaptation initiative for her community.

Afroza Begum Alpona, the vice chairman of Union Parishad and a member of Disaster Management Committee, Kurigram Sadar was also a Municipal Commissioner and Panel Mayor in her locality. She has had an indomitable passion since her childhood to engage in voluntary community work; thus she received training from Red Crescent, Fire Service and Civil Defense. Now she looks after nine unions which consist of eighty-one wards. She is now a role

and activists and take pride in them to go forward in our journey towards a world where climate change policies and actions are gender responsive that benefit women and men and gender diverse people equally. ●

Diruba Haider is working in UN Women as Programme Specialist, DRR, Climate Change and Humanitarian Actions, her expertise is in Climate Change and Gender Equality. Can be reached at diruba.haider@unwomen.org. Priodarshine Auvi is working in UN Women as Programme Analyst, in Climate Change and Gender Equality. Can be reached at priodarshine.auvi@unwomen.org

Celebrating women climate champions of the global south

Women would be able to do more to combat the effects of climate change if they were often included in the decision-making process

Farah Kabir

Ever since countries have recognized and came into agreement about the importance of women's participation in climate action at the 2015 United Na-

tions Climate Change Conference, significant progress has been made by women across the globe. From leading the global negotiation process to taking action at community level, or be it scientific research or activist voice, women have demonstrated their leadership and continue to do so in the fight against climate change. Women, especially from the global south, are making remarkable differences in their community which includes participation in the decision making process and mobilizing themselves in taking initiatives to address the ongoing climate crisis. They set out as an example to be the finest climate leaders during trying times in building resilience to protect their family and communities.

Climate justice to me means understanding how climate change affects different categories of people based on their sex, location in the world, nature of employment or income status, and how the same group of people mobilize themselves in building resilience to pro-

tect their lives. It is also about having women's voices in climate debates and conversations, especially in the global south where women work daily to sustain their families. As a feminist and someone who believes in climate and ecological justice, it is all about building trustworthy relations, threading common strategies, and amplifying the lived realities of people on the frontline of climate change. It is also about having solidarity as the foundation of how we work,

and organize working together, to end climate inequalities. The climate crisis offers a lens to understand intersecting forms of inherent injustices on this planet. Therefore, it is important to have gender equality—which is more than just equality between men and women—and human rights at the center of how we work to achieve climate justice.

Since the ambitious goal of 1.5°C was set under the Paris Agreement to limit warming below 2°C, women participation and leadership has been crucial and instrumental in achieving climate justice. If we investigate the climate impacts on women, they reveal and reinforce deep existing inequality within the society. Women are known to be disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change. When climate induced disasters take place

in poor communities, it is the women and young people who are most affected due to not having enough support and burdened with societal pressure. Social norms demand that women, especially mothers, act as the primary providers of food for their families, which can be harder to manage under conditions like floods and droughts. Additionally, violence against women, found in numerous researches, increases after a natural disaster because of in-

creased traumatic stress, scarcity of basic supplies, and destruction of authoritative systems.

Nevertheless, things started moving towards a positive direction that too under women's leadership. Since 2014, women have been the public face of the climate movement. They led the first People's Climate March, which attracted over 400,000 people worldwide, where most of them were women. Female participation in climate protests has increased over the past five years as more young people are getting involved for demanding justice. Activism is an important part of bringing awareness to the effects of climate change, but women would be



Since 2014, women have been the public face of the climate movement

able to do more to combat them if they were often included in the decision-making process. According to reports women only made up less than 23% of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) national climate delegation heads in 2018, suggesting that if not addressed, gender parity in the negotiations will not be reached until 2042 according to Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO).

When it comes to ground action, I feel proud and obliged to see how women are empowered to take up responsibilities and action in various capacities be it leading emergency response and adaptation actions or organizing campaign initiatives to voice their rights in both national and global level. This year two Bangladeshi climate women champions were awarded for their outstanding leadership on climate action at the Annual Global Gobeshona Conference.

Lake Begum, a farmer from Gaibandha is taking leadership in climate action and she is an inspiration for many women farmers who are involved in agricultural activities. With the support of ActionAid Bangladesh, she learned about agroecology practices (more popularly known as climate resilient sustainable agriculture approach) which helped increase her preparedness to withstand the impacts of climate change. Growing vegetables at homestead, producing organic fertilizers, and selling them at the local market are some of the initiatives she has undertaken after her training. For her ongoing hard work, she was recognized by local government and assigned a role at community level under a number of climate relevant committees. Lake is working as a facilitator at ActionAid's agroecology school in Lalmonirhat where she trains and shares knowledge with other local farmers in adopting sustainable agriculture practice. She is also working with other women farmers to enhance women's market access and advocating for farmer's right to fair price.

When Greta Thunberg started her movement for demanding climate justice, we witnessed a surge of young people joining the movement from every part of the globe. Jannatul Mouwa, a young emerging climate activist

from Satkhira has also joined the global movement and demonstrated her leadership in mobilizing hundreds of grassroots people, especially women and young people, in demanding urgent climate action. With the support of ActionAid Bangladesh, she organizes weekly climate movements, environmental actions, and awareness building sessions with young people in her community and provides support in responding to climate induced disasters. Jannatul's ongoing climate movement has captured global media attention and continues to campaign for both climate and gender justice.

While we celebrate our women leader's achievement, it is now more crucial for us to work for scaling up the efforts to bring transformational change in the society that facilitates women's leadership. Climate change itself and related policies are likely to have wide-ranging effects on gender relations, especially in developing countries. Poor women face a number of gender-specific barriers that limit their ability to cope with and adapt to a changing climate; these must be removed in the interests of both gender equity and adaptation efficiency. At the same time, gender analysis should be integral to the appraisal of public policies designed to reduce carbon emissions.

In all these years of being a climate justice activist and working with ActionAid it has become entrenched in my understanding and actions that local and indigenous communities should be at the center of conversations around climate change. Women and the youth have a key role to play in seeking solutions. Their voices must be heard, and the solutions they propose should be considered and implemented. Women are far more likely to be affected by the impacts of climate change compared to men. We must recognize that investing in women led solutions is the pathway to achieve climate and gender justice. Therefore, policy formulation and programme implementation cannot be done without women's participation specially to address the impacts of climate change. We must recognize that there will be no climate justice without gender justice. ●

Farah Kabir is the Country Director of ActionAid Bangladesh. She has been the Chair of the Global Board of the Global Network of Disaster Risk Reduction (GNDR) since 2015 and is currently an elected Board Member of Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSAs). She focuses on climate justice for women on the frontline of climate change.



Growing vegetables at homestead, producing organic fertilizers, and selling them at the local market are some of the initiatives she has undertaken after her training



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Making LLA workable for the urban poor and cities

Bridging the gap between adaptation and development

Celine d'Cruz

The First Gobeshona Global Conference held in January 2021, led by the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), marks the beginning of a ten-year journey to bring together local voices, women and youth living in vulnerable communities to participate more deliberately in taking the LLA agenda forward. The concept of LLA refers to a set of actions planned, designed and led by a set of local actors, researchers, practitioners and policy-makers under one platform, to measure and track initiatives and collaborations, and to address direct and indirect impacts of climate change. This article firstly seeks to examine some myths around the concept of LLA and aspires to bridge the gap between LLA and development. Secondly, it aims to ensure that LLA stays workable to the poorest of the poor, especially women.

My early lessons in resilience and adaptation came from “Mahila Milan”,

an organization of women pavement dwellers in Mumbai. These migrant women and their families, the poorest of the poor in the city, lived in makeshift homes on the street and faced regular demolitions. My university education did not prepare me with the knowledge or skills needed to support these women, and we both had to learn by walking the path together. Every demolition created havoc in their lives and livelihoods. Their migration from rural to urban poverty forced them to adapt to human-made and natural disasters. They realized the power of their collective resilience by supporting women in similar situations in Mumbai and other cities. Here are some major lessons from Mahila Milans experiences, which enabled hundreds of women leaders in cities across Africa and Asia to become more resilient but there is a lot more work needed:

1. The greater the risks and vulnerabilities faced, human and natural, the greater the survival skills and the capacity to adapt.

2. Women are natural organizers; they are very motivated to better the future for their children; hence the best change agents.
3. Organizing within and among communities locally, strengthens collective capability to engage with other local actors.
4. Organizing around land or geography makes it easier to break down the enormity of the problem and find solutions workable for women, their communities and the city.
5. Money and Information is power. Collecting savings, information and people builds the collective capability to engage with local authorities and other local actors.
6. By designing and implementing pilot projects, organized communities are able to “do and show” and prove that they have capacity to implement and deliver projects on time.

To examine some myths and confusion around what determines “locally led adaptation” the following points are important to have clarity on:

“The process of finding solutions that are workable for women opens up the space for women to influence their agenda”

LLA is only about community “engagement” and community “participation”

This comes from a development paradigm influenced by the state’s non-engagement with local voices from poorer communities. However, while engagement with vulnerable groups is necessary, it is not a sufficient ingredient for bringing deeper change. Within LLA, there is the aspiration for a set of local actors to work together and redefine the present dysfunctional relationships between vulnerable communities, especially women and local authority. The process of finding solutions that are workable for women opens up the space for women to influence their agenda. Devolving decision-making to the lowest level means going beyond traditional leadership patterns, building the capability of women and young people to become influential local actors, capable of participating in designing solutions and implementing projects that influence their climate-related and overall development needs. The LLA process hence has the scope to create a safe learning environment for vulnerable communities, especially women to participate and lead along with other local actors.

LLA is about “strengthening” and “building capacity” of the local authority in decision-making processes

Local government-led is not conclusive of a democratic and inclusive process. While local government has authority, it does not have the capability of working with non-state actors like very poor communities, especially women and youth. In addition, engagement with local NGOs is often confrontational or project-driven. Local bids continue to come from the official list of contractors in spite of a poor track record. In the cities of Mumbai and Pune, Mahila Milan (women together) was able to change the procurement rules so as to bid for contracts for the construction of community toilets. This gave greater agency to women to build their voice and identity and lead. LLA makes the case for a new set of actors like local universities who are important knowledge brokers and other professionals and private entities who are locally respected and can be allies to vulnerable groups, influencing their participation in local action.

LLA is all about creating “Impact” on the ecosystem and climate change

For LLA to be transformative, it has to be defined within the “vulnerability” framework and address existing relationships that do not work for the poorest of the poor. One of the major impacts

of the Covid 19 pandemic has been on the livelihoods of informal workers who form the bulk of 50-60% of the cities population in the global south. By treating LLA as merely wanting to create “Impact” misses out on acknowledging the tug of power relationships between the different actors who are not on the same level playing field. Top-down planning often fails to capture the reality on the ground and the very reason for the inability for vulnerable communities and cities to adapt. Development work done correctly includes adaptation. Development work gone wrong increases climate risks and vulnerability; for example, large and small infrastructure projects like building walls, dykes etc. can create more “maladaptation”.

More “finances” will lead to better LLA

Finances are essential. The history of development efforts demonstrates that without adequate and sustained levels of investment (in all forms) development simply does not occur. While finance is a necessary condition it is far from sufficient. External financing can be maximized when it has the capacity to engage with robust internal/ local financial systems (formal and informal). Financial resources on their own are of little help in the absence of strong local institutions, good governance, sensible policies and the capacity to generate and utilize knowledge. A singular focus on external finance without considering and investing in building capacity and quality of the local organizations to manage and mobilize domestic resources will not produce the necessary long term adaptation response. The question we must ask is, are the current structures and mechanisms to provide LLA finance appropriate to the local needs in countries?

There is a growing request among funders and practitioners to understand the link between locally-led adaptation, development and vulnerability. While there is a rush to take action on LLA, we risk the fear of approaching it with different conceptual frameworks. This has the consequence that it can mean anything or nothing. With growing resources going into adaptation, different actors are trying to obtain a stake for their organizations, and donor agencies’ interpretation of LLA is different from that of NGOs or of community organizations. Given the pressure to act quickly, projects can be executed with unclear objectives which can further increase risks and exposure to vulnerability. It is therefore important to ask the right questions, most importantly: LLA by whom? for whom? The idea is to open up the space to explore the con-



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ceptual framework of LLA through the lens of the different actors, especially the poorest of the poor and women.

Looking at adaptation only from the perspective of measuring “Impact” to climate change is very limiting and does not address the long term inequalities which have created climate vulnerability in the first place. The “vulnerability” approach is more holistic and acknowledges other processes that affect local adaptation, such as food security, unequal wealth distribution, gender discrimination, etc, which are historically development issues. ●

Celine d'Cruz started her career working with migrant women and their families living on the streets of Mumbai, through her NGO, SPARC. She is a founder member of Slum Dwellers International(SDI) and supported urban poor federations in cities of Africa and Asia. In 2003, Celine was chosen for the Yale World Fellows Program. Thereafter, she was seconded to Cities Alliance at the World Bank. Presently, Celine is a visiting researcher at ICCCAD and works on the Climate Bridge Fund and a fellow with the Global Center on adaptation.

WASH and gender: The human rights perspective

Gender equality and access to water are basic human rights

Rifat Saifee and Shaila Shahid

Safe access to water and sanitation is basic human rights and strongly related with dignity. The right to safe water is defined as the right of everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use. Sanitation in human rights terms is equally understood as a basic survival needs that is associated with dignity and proper hygiene behavior. Maintaining safely managed sanitation is the system that requires a well-managed value chain related to the collection, transportation, treatment and disposal or reuse of human excreta to ensure environmental sustainability.

Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) are deeply relevant to women's and girls' empowerment, affecting their education, health, income and safety. The 1992 Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development stated: "Women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water' and policies should 'address women's specific needs' and 'empower women to participate at all levels in water resources programs, including decision-making and implementation, in ways defined by them."

Global commitment on WASH: The SDG perspective

The year 2020 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Beijing Declaration, and the ten-year anniversary of the General Assembly resolution 64/292, recognizing the human right to water and sanitation. As we approach these milestones, it seems apparent to take stock of the progress (or lack thereof) made on SDG 5 - gender equality and women and girls' empowerment, and SDG 6 - access to water and sanitation for all. While gender equality and the right to water and sanitation are intrinsically linked, we are far from achieving either of these goals.

Goal 6 of SDG shows that world leaders understand the importance of making these essentials normal for the world's most marginalized people. We know that women and girls - especially those living in poverty - are disproportionately affected by a lack of water and

sanitation services, making SDG 5 and 6 fundamentally interdependent. Despite progress after MDGs, 785 million people still don't have clean water close to home and 2 billion don't have a decent toilet of their own. This crisis is a denial of people's human rights to water and sanitation.

Gender dimensions of WASH and climate change: Adverse effect on women and marginalized

Bangladesh is the seventh-most climate-affected country in the world, according to the Global Climate Risk Index 2020. Floods and riverbank erosions affect some one million people annually in Bangladesh. Once every three to five years, up to two-thirds of the country is inundated by floods. Climate change-induced salinity poses an extreme risk/threat to freshwater resources.

Climate change is not gender-neutral, the climatic hazards have gender-specific effects. Women are generally more vulnerable and are dependent for their livelihood on natural resources that are threatened by climate change. Due to social institutions, behavioural norms and the physiological attributes leave women more vulnerable to the effects of climate change than men. During flooding, many women fear social retribution for leaving their homes or taking shelter with other men, so seek refuge too late. For instance, during the cyclone in 1991 in Bangladesh, 90% of fatalities were among women and children. Death rates among people aged 20-44 were 71 per 1000 people for women, compared to 15 per 1000 people for men (WHO, 2011a). The aftermath of natural disasters also disproportionately affects women due to the nature of their livelihoods and role in production. The pregnant, breastfeeding and menstruating women are at a great risk of compromising their health after disasters and they also face a lot of problems with toilet facilities.

Women are the managers of water and sanitation at household level - collecting safe water from a safe space are major activities of women. They are left with little to no time for work, school or to care for family and importantly time for their own leisure. Walking to collect water and carrying heavy vessels of water can be dangerous for a pregnant

woman. Women and girls (and transgender people, people with disabilities, and children) are at greater risk than men of sexual violence, harassment and physical violence when forced to defecate in the open or use unsafe, dark or badly located toilets.

Being unable to manage menstruation hygienically affects women's and girls' health, mobility and dignity. Women need a private and accessible toilet to change their menstrual products; water and soap to wash their hands, bodies and any reusable products; and somewhere to dispose of menstrual products in a safe, culturally appropriate and dignified way. But it is not available in Bangladesh for rural and slum dwellers. There is high risk for girls to drop out from school or suffer psychological stress because of the lack of adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities in their communities.

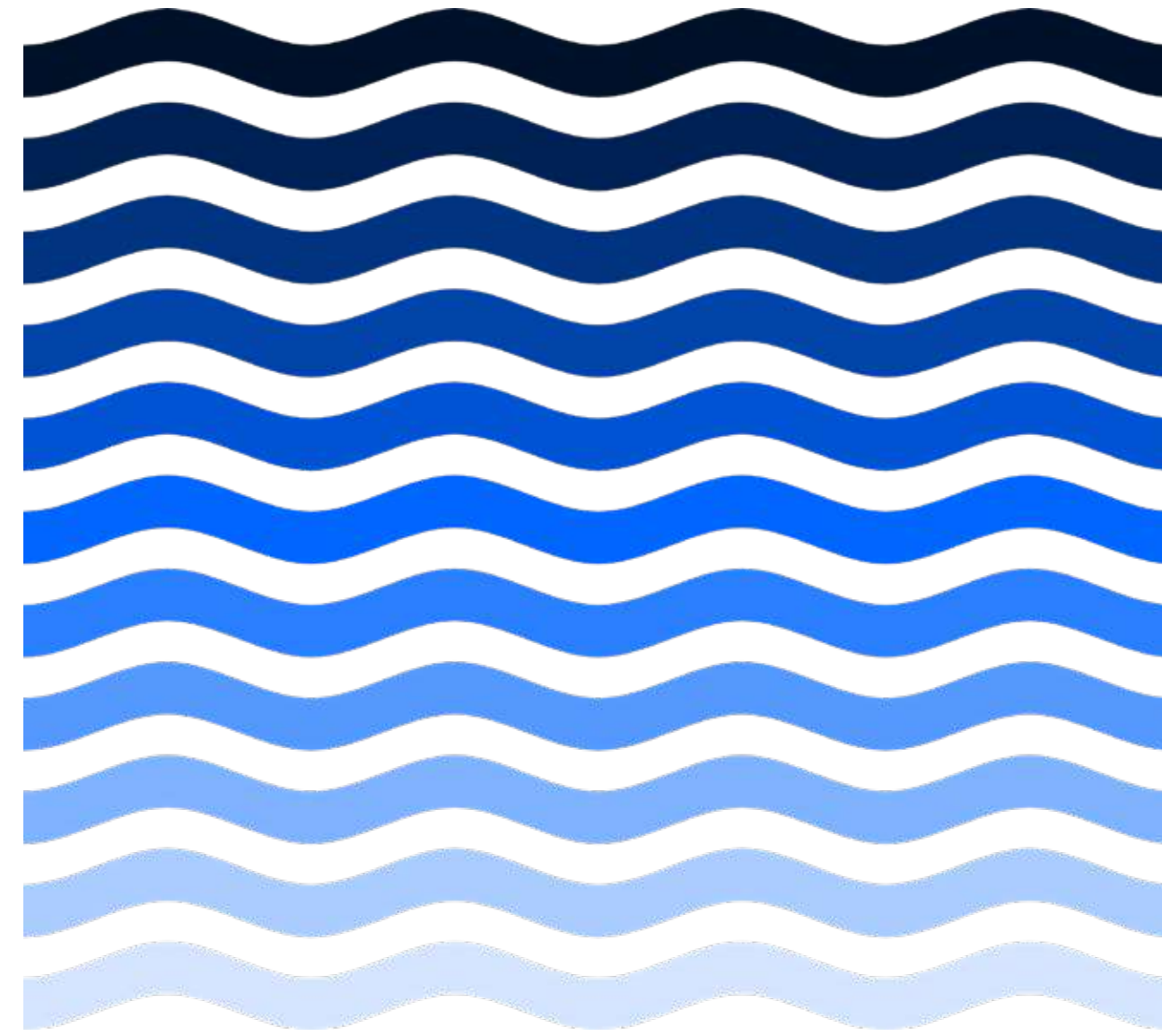
Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) are deeply relevant to women's and girls' empowerment, affecting their education, health, income and safety

Addressing the WASH needs of women in the changing climate scenario at the national level

The Government of Bangladesh has formulated a number of policies and programs to address the climate-induced water vulnerabilities. The major relevant policies are - National Water Policy, Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, National Strategy for Water Sanitation and Hygiene, The National Sustainable Development Strategy, National Adaptation program of Action and the National Adaptation Plan process is moving. Importantly, the

Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 (BDP 2100) is also focusing on improving climate resilience through a holistic, cross-sector approach for delta management. As mentioned in the summary published for the Eighth 5 Year Plan (2021-2025) - "In compliance to Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, funds will be mobilized to undertake more programs in climate change adaptation and mitigation." While the government must provide a regulatory framework, the private sector will be forced to comply with the regulations. Bangladesh also initiated for two national climate change trust funds - one is the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF), created in the fiscal year 2009-2010; and the other one is the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF), a multi donor trust fund, established in 2010.

The government approved the National Strategy for Water Supply and



PIXABAY

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cluded a section on women and children in disaster. Bangladesh Climate Change Strategies and Action Plan, also states that every effort shall be made to ensure that vulnerable groups will be protected. The Gender Action Plan (ccGAP) in its capacity building initiatives of GoB and other organizations gave more emphasis on gender issues in general and relevant organizations on gender and WASH and Climate Change in particular. The review of the ccGAP process has recently started and hopefully there would be a comprehensive outcome to build the strong linkages on women and WASH needs in the climatic conditions.

Way forward

Gender equality and access to water are basic human rights and are thus foundational for achieving the other SDGs. If we are to achieve these ambitious goals by 2030, leaving no one behind, we must promote more gender-transformative water and sanitation programs. In particular, we must address the hidden causes of gender inequality, transforming power dynamics. Below are way forward issues we should consider im-

mediately:

- Ensure women's meaningful participation and leadership in WASH governance, climate governance, disaster management and integrated water resources management (IWRM) at all levels (household, community, national, and trans-boundary).
- Since, low levels of awareness and poor understanding of climate change risks, combined with significant knowledge gaps about climate change processes, have hindered effective societal decision making, there is a need to initiate massive campaign to challenge the social norms around unpaid care work, women's leadership, and gender based violence, with special focus on WASH sector and sanitation value chain.
- Creation of women change agents nationally (at both rural and urban) to actively support ORR-sensitive inclusive WASH services in schools and communities, and emphasize on community led total WASH programs remembering the preparedness for climate vulnerability. We must create

equitable access and use of DRR and climate sensitive inclusive WASH facilities and services in schools and communities.

- Increase national budget and social-safety net allocation for poor women and children needs as an adaptation strategy with climate change vulnerability, and ensure proper distribution of the safety-net schemes.
- Increase advanced research in identifying the impacts of climate change on gender roles and relations at the household level to determine where women's and men's priorities conflict and how policies and programmatic responses to climate change can best respond to the differing vulnerabilities, needs and priorities of women and men.

Rifat Binte Jia is a Gender Expert in the Disaster Climate Change Support Unit (CWIS-FSM Support Cell) under the Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE). Shaila Shahid is the Chief Operating Officer of the Disaster Climate Change Support Unit under CWIS-FSM Support Cell, Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE).

It is possible to achieve climate stability as long as community voices, experience, and engagement are recognized

My experience at Gobeshona conference

Ineza Umuhoza Grace

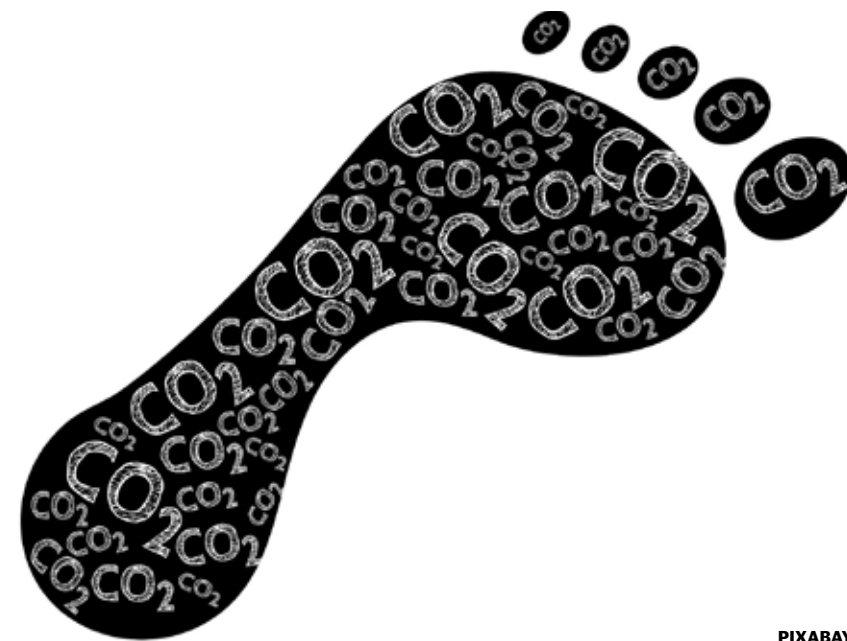
Since March 1994, when the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change entered into force, the world would protect the climate from human-made challenges. In December 1997, the Kyoto Protocol was adopted and entered into force in 2005; its purpose was to work together between developed and developing countries to reduce greenhouse gas emission according to parties' targets. In 2015 the world came together to produce the Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse emission and limit the global temperature to at 2-degree Celsius while aiming at 1.5 degrees.

My name is Ineza Umuhoza Grace, an eco-feminist impact-driven actor in

actors to encourage collaboration while inspiring and permitting a share of expertise worldwide. I participated intending to learn, listen and get informed about current and future ambitions that include women and youth in achieving global climate ambition.

I carefully chose the sessions that I want to attend not only depending on my time zone since it was a virtual event, but also based on what will enhance my understanding on how to contribute better to drive action on the ground for the vulnerable community. Here is the summary of my take away points in some of the sessions I participated in:

- There is a need to increase the climate risk information in development planning especially for developing countries, not only because it



PIXABAY

to adapt to climate change impacts; this is a success story that can inform countries and partners to integrate natural-based solutions for the new normal.

- There is an untapped opportunity in the Green Climate Fund for locally-led climate action though the new program seeks to increase the direct access of local actors' funds. The UN-CDF is financing the locally-led adaptation action through a country-driven mechanism in the NDC and NAP process. ICLEI is working in Bangladesh to support the development and integration of urban resilience in the planning process; developing countries can learn from this.

- Adaptation in the agricultural sector is the main pathway for building a climate-resilient community in Africa. Africa Development Bank is already undertaking so local action in the agricultural value chain.
- Youth are present in building the country's resilience to climate change through the UNFCCC approaches. This is done through the UN climate change initiative to create partnerships with universities to encourage young professionals to build meaningful innovation for climate resilience on the national level. The Least Developed countries consortium on climate change is an excellent demonstration of this engagement.

The LUCCC/ICCCAD shared their collective voice of case studies from least developed countries to highlight the need to include "loss and damage" at the next conference of parties under the UNFCCC.

- Women representation in the decision-making process is still minimal, but now more than ever, there is a need to recognise and address it sustainably. The UNWomen shared the untold tales of wonder women who are addressing climate change in their context. ActionAid shared their gender-responsive climate budget in their country approaches in Bangladesh and Mexico.

In conclusion, the conference gave me hope. It is possible to achieve climate stability as long as community voices, experience, and engagement are recognised. There is a need to recognize that climate justice for developing and developed countries is not a political agenda; it is a global call for everyone to get engaged; we all share one planet.

Let us listen to each other and take collective climate action! ●

Ineza Umuhoza Grace is an impact-driven eco-feminist working in The Green Fighter as the executive director. Her interest lies in climate justice and giving voice to the community demonstrated by her involvement in the Loss and Damage Youth Coalition. She can be reached at ineza@thegreenfighter.org



There is a need to recognize that climate justice for developing and developed countries is not a political agenda

the climate change sector. In 2018 when I was in my third year of university in Rwanda, I gained information about the international climate policies and global ambition. My engagement was way after the decisions on all-important global driving decisions were available.

It was for no surprise that gender, youth and climate finance are the first gaps that struck me, and later I linked them with the climate change impacts referred to as "Loss and Damage". My Gobeshona conference experience permitted me to understand, especially from the least developed and developing country perspectives.

This year the Gobeshona conference was a seven-day virtual event that brought together researchers, practitioners, youth, women, leaders and

is the only way to save many people but also it is the only way to ensure sustainable economic development. IUCN shared their model for disaster management through modelling and initiative diverse settings

- Natural based solution is the new normal that can sustainably address the impact of climate change by strengthening the community's knowledge and enhancing their adaptive capacity. USAID shared the lesson learned in Bangladesh to drive resilience while increasing natural safeguards and security. IIED shared innovative approaches in the global south cities that permit innovative strategies for disruptive resilience. Brac is conducting an adaptation project in Bangladesh by supporting local lead actions

Three collaboration avenues to ensure climate services are actually locally-led and gender-responsive

The story of the climate information provider who provides the best information available, the practitioner who does not know about it or how to use it, and the policymaker who struggles to reconcile the two is far too common

Mélody Braun, Ashley Curtis, Carmen Gonzalez Romero, and Amanda Grossi

Adaptation means equipping decision-makers with the best possible information in the face of a changing climate. This includes decision-makers at the highest levels – policymakers or government officials, all the way down to those at the most grassroots levels – male and female farmers, pastoralists, and stakeholders who support them.

Across the scale, their decisions are impacted by both long-term climate change trends (such as increasing global temperatures) and shorter-term manifestations of climate variability (such as droughts, floods, and other extreme events).

The ability to access and understand the full range of information available, at multiple timescales, is critical for addressing the different layers of risk. Focusing singularly on long-term climate change is like preparing to climb a mountain looking only through binoculars: it may keep the top of the moun-

tain in sight, but won't help prepare for the hills and valleys along the way.

Nonetheless, climate information is too often not available or actionable at the most local levels, leaving with the least adaptive capacity with little recourse to actualize adaptive measures.

How do we ensure that the full range of climate services is available and usable at the local level and can support locally-led adaptation?

To answer this question, we need to first acknowledge the deep disconnect that persists amongst adaptation practitioners, climate information providers, and policy makers. The story of the climate information provider who provides the best information available, the practitioner who does not know about it or how to use it, and the policymaker who struggles to reconcile the two is far too common. Climate services, which move beyond the generation of climate information to collaboratively tailor, communicate, and build capacity around its use, have increasingly emerged as the means through which all of these actors can coalesce in their respective roles to

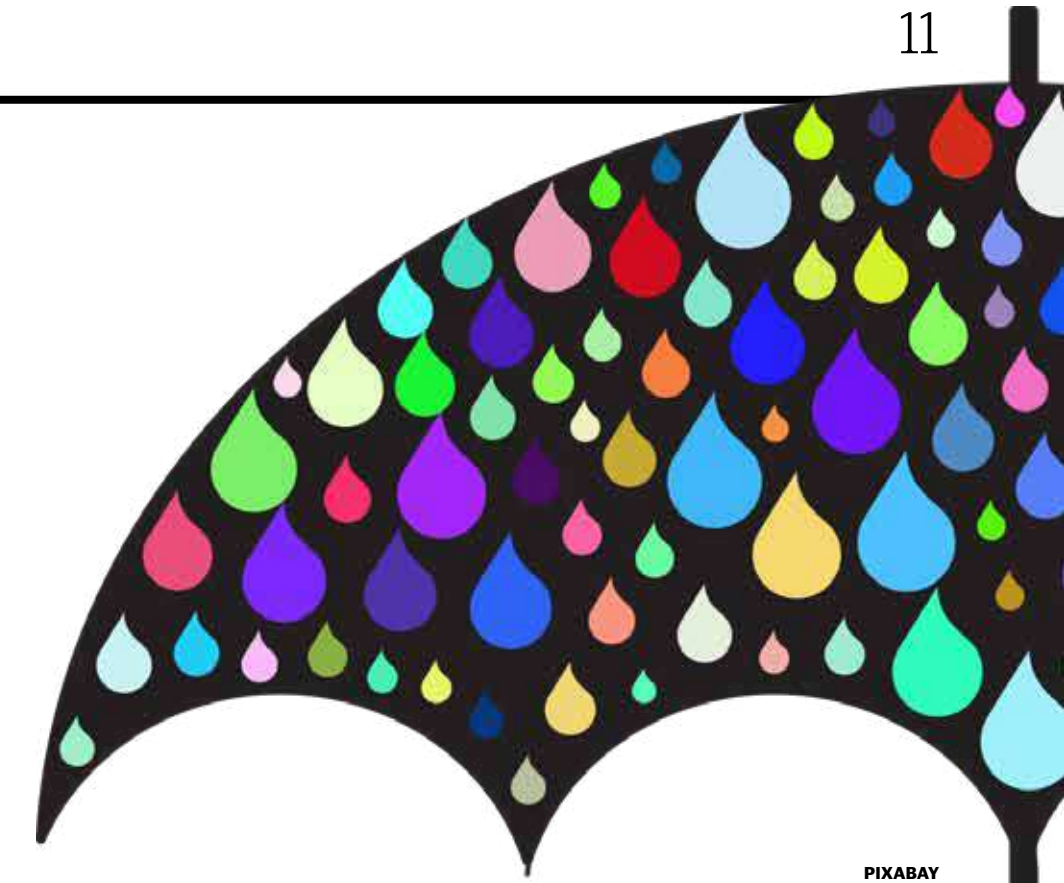


While there are numerous examples of climate services supporting adaptation at different levels, such services often still struggle to reach the last mile and integrate the voices of local communities

ensure climate information is actually accessible, usable, ultimately meaningful to decision-makers.

However, while there are numerous examples of climate services supporting adaptation at different levels, such services often still struggle to reach the last mile and integrate the voices of local communities, especially those of women and underrepresented groups, into the tools and products intended to serve them. Despite a growing focus

on co-production, products and services still tend to be developed in consultation with, rather than led by, local stakeholders. The stakeholders targeted by international projects are often intermediaries mandated to work with communities, such as agriculture extension officers that belong to an official government channel, rather than communities themselves. Efforts towards locally-led adaptation tend to center around inclusion rather than leadership. Moreover,



PIXABAY

these efforts still tend to disproportionately reach men, leading to an imbalance in the recognition of gender-differentiated needs.

Shifting not just the narrative but most importantly the practice to ensure climate services directly or indirectly targeting local communities are truly co-produced with them will require overcoming three main types of challenges: 1) Technical challenges, driven by the lack of awareness and capacity around existing data and data needs; 2) Institutional challenges, evidenced by a lack of transdisciplinary convening mechanisms to foster exchanges and collaboration across diverse categories of actors; and 3) Funding challenges, that often prevent full recognition and participation of those directly impacted by the services being designed.

Technical challenges

The lack of awareness of existing data is reflected in the general perception from the user community that “data is missing”, despite constant improvements in the range and the quality of data products developed by national meteorological agencies, such as the quality-controlled ENACTS dataset (launched by BMD and IRI in Bangladesh in 2019) merging station and satellite data to address the challenges associated with the limited number of station data points.

In this virtual age of information where a plethora of data from multiple (often unverified) sources can be found online and where digital tools are booming, too much information can lead to information not being understood or used, if it is not accompanied with capacity building and appropriate translation of data into useful products.

Focusing more efforts and resources on capacity building of local actors on the basics of climate and climate services to improve awareness of existing data, robust understanding of climate risk and uncertainty, ability to identify and communicate information needs, and capacity to access and integrate data into decisions is a critical first step to address technical challenges.

Institutional challenges

Another common challenge is that climate services providers and users do not always understand each others’ needs, because it falls outside of their defined mandate and area of expertise. Decision-makers may struggle to identify or voice the type of information they need because they lack understanding of existing climate data and its characteristics, while climate scientists may not be able to communicate information in a way that is useable by decision makers

because of a limited understanding of the daily decisions made on the ground, and particularly the diversity of decisions across gender, groups and sectors.

While the climate services framework emphasizes co-production and seeks to address this information asymmetry between producers and users of climate information, it cannot be assumed that such co-productive interactions will naturally occur. The climate adaptation community therefore needs to be intentional about developing institutional mechanisms setting up the spaces, resources, and enabling environments that allow these groups to interact, exchange and collaborate at different levels, as the local relevance of climate services depends on it. Furthermore, it must ensure representativity reflecting important differences within targeted user groups, including and especially gender, and acknowledge how such differences come to bear on the exploitation and use of climate information.

In an exponentially more virtual



The climate adaptation community therefore needs to be intentional about developing institutional mechanisms setting up the spaces, resources, and enabling environments that allow these groups to interact, exchange and collaborate

world, digital tools help improve the dissemination of information from providers to users, making climate services more widely available. However, the relevance of the information distributed still remains dependent on the level of understanding of the needs of the end-users, who are still often not truly part of the design, development or implementation processes.

Funding challenges

The value of co-production has increasingly gained recognition, including by donors, unfortunately the architecture of many competitive grants and some of the financial requirements of international organizations often limit the potential for true co-production or locally-led adaptation at its most local level. A funding model covering an international organization to offer fully funded services to solve a local problem, without funding available for local actors, as imposed by many grants, implies that their involvement in the development

of those solutions will either be unfunded, or absent.

Without a recognition of (i) the necessary involvement of local partners in all phases of the design of a solution intended to them, and (ii) the necessary funding of that involvement, the project may strive at collecting generous inputs, but the level of local leadership is bound to be limited. Similarly, consortiums including local partners often rely on international organizations to lead a grant application to increase chances of success. It is not uncommon that financial requirements impose on the leading organization to request the largest portion of the funds, leaving the smallest portion to be spent in the country and split between local partners.

Such funding structures need to evolve to equally recognize and fund the climate expertise and information production mandate of local meteorological agencies, the field expertise of intended users of the services (communities themselves and organizations or

intermediaries working with them), the policy and operationalization expertise of relevant government representatives, and the technical and capacity building expertise of international organizations.

Conclusion

The importance of climate services to support adaptation and take full advantage of the range of existing climate information has been demonstrated around the world, including in several sessions of the last Gobeshona conference illustrating examples in Bangladesh, East Africa and Latin America. To be sustainable, climate services must be embedded in official government channels and co-produced with the relevant mandated country organizations. As a result, efforts to include local partners in the development of climate services tend to focus on national level partners and intermediaries working with communities, and projects rely on those intermediaries to convey local needs to the project team and communicate in-

formation to farmers.

There is an opportunity for the climate services community and the locally-led adaptation community to join forces to improve the inclusion of local institutions and communities into climate services design and implementation decisions, with a particular focus on improving women participation, recognizing that whether and how women are included has direct implications on the reach of the services and the perpetuation of inequities that limit adaptation.

Funding mechanisms exist in all shapes and forms, yet some have proven more challenging to support LLA and adequately fund local partners than others, and the experience gained from those may support joint advocacy efforts to reshape funding for LLA. Engaging locally at scale is beyond the scope of many development projects due to resources needed, but initial pilots demonstrating proof of concept along the value chain and across the 4 pillars of climate services can then be scaled up in partnership with national entities with the capacity and mandate to implement activities broadly at the local-scale nationally.

Initiatives such as those of the Bangladesh Academy for Climate Services, the Mesas Técnicas Agroclimáticas in Latin America, the Groupes Techniques de Travail in West Africa or the National Framework for Climate services already aim at bringing together users and providers of climate information. A collective effort to assess and share the lessons learned from those initiatives and the challenges and opportunities they faced to reach and include local institutions and communities would provide useful ground to explore the improvement and scaling of institutional mechanisms that can effectively support sustainable climate services that truly support locally led adaptation. ●

Mélody Braun is a Senior Staff Associate at the International Research Institute (IRI) for Climate and Society. She is the Bangladesh country lead for the Columbia University/IRI Adapting Agriculture to Climate Today for Tomorrow (ACToday). Ashley Curtis is the training focal point for IRI and Bangladesh country manager for the Adapting Agriculture to Climate Today for Tomorrow (ACToday) project. Carmen González Romero is the country manager for the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) team in the Columbia World Project ACToday. Amanda Grossi works as ACToday Country Manager for Ethiopia and Senegal. She also contributes to the management and scale-up of the Enhancing National Climate Services (ENACTS) initiative led by IRI.



Anita Das (40) now has a hygienic toilet

COURTESY

Anita's face-off with climate change

Story of a true climate champion

Arusa Iqbal Rahim

Although women should be felicitated every day of the year, International Women's Day (IWD) gives an extra opportunity for the world to reflect and at the same time take charge of the driving seat and steer the wheels to finding more ways towards gender equality.

This year the theme of International Women's Day circles around the word challenge. As per IWD's statement, a challenged world is an alert world – consequently, individuals can choose

to call out these challenges which are in the form of gender biases, unfair acts towards women in both professional and domestic settings, different forms of inequalities present around them and so on. They can choose to call out and face these challenges for a better tomorrow. Hence, it can be asserted that from challenges comes change and this year IWD is asking the world to choose and change.

When discussing these challenges that need to be addressed, the world, especially developing countries like us must not forget to highlight one of the

growing problems that is impacting millions of women and girls in both rural and urban settings of the country. A challenge that often goes unobserved and undiscussed is climate change. A changing climate affects everyone, everywhere; but, it is in fact the poorest, the most marginalized and those in vulnerable situations, (especially women and girls), who bear the impact of it environmentally, economically, and socially.

For example, women living in rural settings (including coastal-belts and hilly areas) shoulder key responsibili-

ties that involve managing household water supply. They are accountable for the more time-consuming and labour-intensive tasks, such as walking long distances to carry heavy gallons of water for household use. This ultimately leaves less time for these women and girls to access training and education, develop skills or even earn an income. Which results in them having less knowledge to participate in any decision-making process. Lack of education and skill further makes them negligible and less involved in the distribution of natural goods. Consequently, due to

these shortages added with the absence of leadership abilities women in these areas of the country are less able to confront climate change.

Combined with the fact that climate change has a greater impact on people who are heavily dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods, these women in the rural and/or hard-to-reach areas of our country also have the least capacity to respond to the increasingly severe natural disasters such as droughts, landslides, floods, and cyclones, particularly in the coastal belts of the country. The story of those living on the frontline of a harsher climate is simply not being accounted for or heard and this is another challenge that needs to change.

According to the United Nations, in spite of their vulnerability, women in general are viewed as survivors of climate change. Such is the story of Anita Das, 40, a homemaker in Trimohoni village of Dacope's Koilashganj union in Khulna. Anita's story is of a dynamic and successful woman who became a specialist and advocate of adaptation and mitigation through her fight with climate change impact.

Anita along with her husband and four children (two daughters and two sons) lives in one of Bangladesh's remote areas that is prone to climate disasters. Being in a constant battle with climate change the village of Trimohoni suffers from increased water salinity and limited access to clean water sources. With a population size of 16,089, the area has only one lake which is heavily utilised by the community people. However, with only 2,899 toilets in total many people do not have access to decent toilets as out of this only 1,279 have hygiene facilities and therefore they often use the lake for defecation and urination. Moreover, due to climate disasters, the remaining toilets have become completely unusable.

Due to these issues, Anita and her family have suffered in terms of no access to good hygiene or decent toilets and at the same time consumption of extreme saline water had caused severe stomach diseases including diarrhoea and abdominal pains for the entire family. Anita's younger son suffers from a physical impairment which made it even harder for him and the entire family in aiding him with proper WASH amenities. The women in the household faced greater health risk as managing their periods hygienically and with dignity became extremely difficult. Both Anita and her two daughters suffered from lack of privacy to clean their menstrual products and at the same time, the use of dirty water resulted in

regular infections.

In light of all these issues, Anita wanted to make a lasting difference in and for her community. Therefore, with the help from WaterAid Bangladesh along with their partner Rupantor Anita built a decent toilet for her family. At the same time Anita voluntarily took different tips and tricks from the two organizations to learn about adaptation in climate vulnerable areas. She realized that even if entities like WaterAid and Rupantor helped them now, she would be responsible to sustain these facilities for the future. Therefore, she trained herself on the issues relating to WASH and climate change impacts and learned how to maintain the newly built toilets and also proper hygiene as now she had access to proper WASH amenities. With her newly gained knowledge, skill and resources, Anita advocated her knowledge on the importance of maintaining proper hygiene in extreme climate vulnerable areas to her family, friends, and neighbors.

And, as a number of the women are now trained with the essential skills to be able to maintain proper hygiene around the community, Trimohoni is now sustainable and resilient to future climate and WASH pressures.

How does Anita feel about this new change? She states in one of her interviews:

"When we started using the toilet built by WaterAid and Rupantar, I noticed a significant change in my health and my family's as well. We used to suffer from diarrhea and stomach upsets almost every month but after the toilet was built, stomach upsets have become a rare case for my family. I did not know stomach upsets were caused by the unhygienic toilet we used to use. Now I try to keep the toilet clean for our health. I try to maintain menstrual hygiene and keep menstrual products clean as much as possible."

The case of Anita was a good example for the discussion that went on in Gobeshona Global Conference on Day 6 under the session titled, "Untold Tales of Women Champions in Climate Change". The panel stressed numerous times on the very importance of women taking leadership roles in climate vulnerable areas, as in most cases these women are the ones who take the burden of its effect.

Farida Easmin, Executive Director Nari Association for Revival, and Initiative, Kurigram stated, "Development of women is about the development of a family, of a nation." This is exactly what happened in Anita's story. She encouraged change among her peers.

Saima Wazed, Chairperson of Sucho-

na Foundation and Thematic Ambassador of Climate Vulnerable Forum later expressed, "We are inspired by the challenges we are facing. Because we want to make a difference, in our life, in our community and inspire others." Wazed along with IWD 2021 asked the world to be like Anita, where she chooses to challenge and then change.

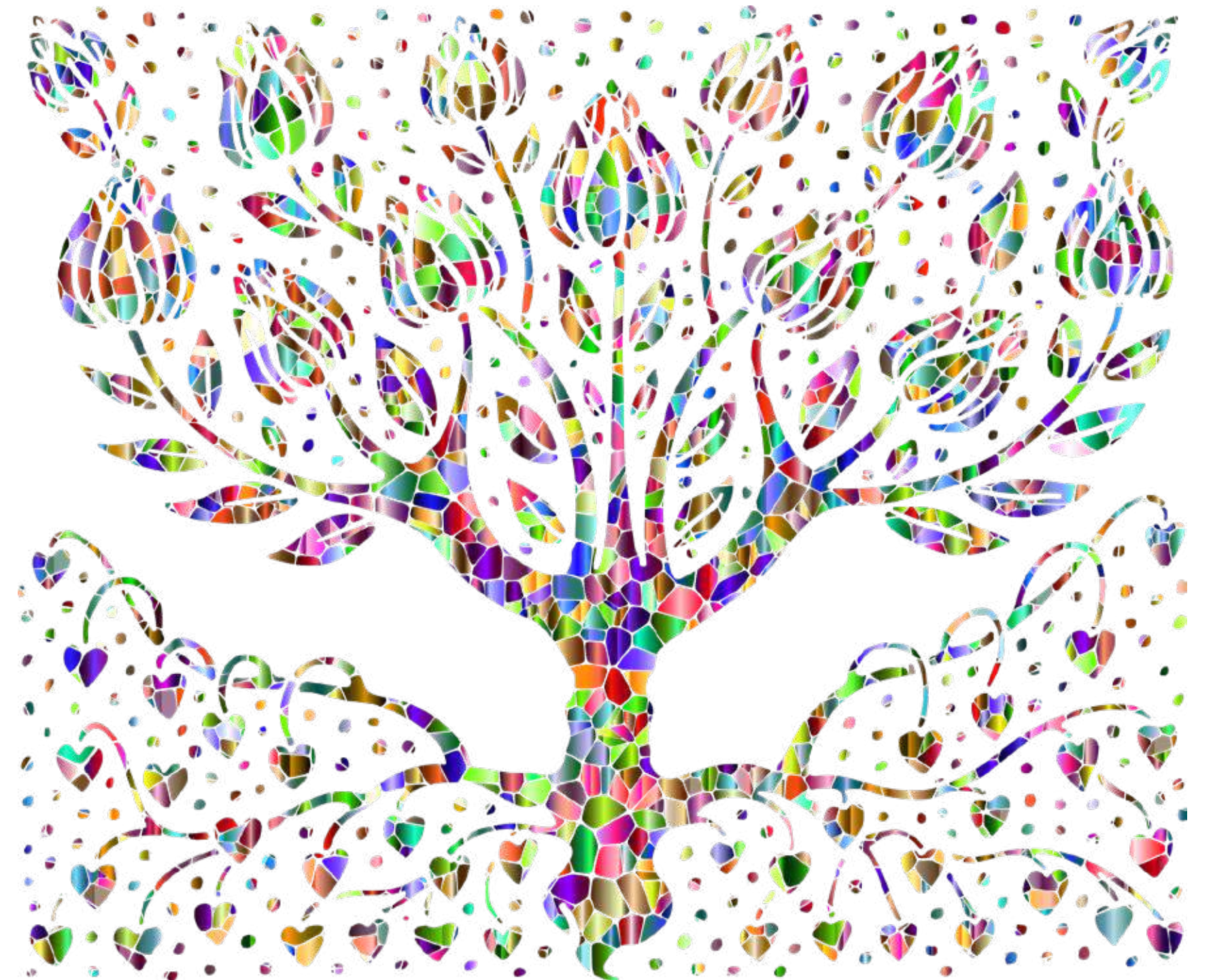
People may think that what Anita did was in no way grand or revolutionary, she simply took knowledge and built her skills to be more climate adaptable. However, through this small gesture Anita not only improved her family's health but also improved the lifestyle of those around them. By gaining knowledge she made herself and her community aware of the very importance of climate change and WASH through which they became an adaptable community.



Combined with the fact that climate change has a greater impact on people who are heavily dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods, these women in the rural and/or hard-to-reach areas of our country also have the least capacity to respond to the increasingly severe natural disasters

Let us therefore praise and applaud women like Anita who seek to find solutions to their problems, who take control of their rights and take on new challenges and risks in their uncertain lives. Through their incredible drive and ambition, they can bring about lasting change to secure the future of their family and community in the face of climate disasters. The world needs more climate champions who change lives in the simplest manners, who chooses to challenge. ●

Arusa Iqbal Rahim is working at WaterAid Bangladesh as a Communications Officer. Her research interest lies in development economics with a special concentration in women's rights. She advocates profoundly for equal opportunities for both men and women. Through her role in WaterAid Bangladesh, she wants to ensure increased WASH amenities for the marginalized, especially women and children. Can be reached at arusarahim@wateraid.org



PIXABAY

Transformation is required from 'below'

Understanding the bottom-up approaches in locally-led adaptation

Mahmuda Akter and Tasfia Tasnim

The uneven impacts due to climate change are considered to be major threats to the environment and people's wellbeing around the world, thereby exacerbating the vulnerabilities of marginalized communities. While there is increasing certainty over the seriousness of climate change, there are still a

number of uncertainties in how these changes will manifest themselves at local levels, and the effects they will have on lives and livelihoods. There is still a gap between how such uncertainties are defined by experts and policymakers and how they are experienced on the ground, with local perspectives and knowledge often overlooked. Hence, to ensure the meaningful participation of local people in adaptation actions, the global community is focusing on popu-

larizing the term 'locally-led adaptation (LLA)' - which involve multi-level local stakeholders in adaptation, beyond simply 'based' in communities, and wholly 'led' by local people and local institutions and it should build on traditional knowledge and coping mechanisms.

The concept is more re-framing around how the adaptation needs to be directed to move forward. In this regard, the TAPESTRY project (Transformation as Praxis: Exploring Socially Just and

Transdisciplinary Pathways to Sustainability in Marginal Environments) led by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), UK focuses on alternative pathways which may arise from the 'below' understand in marginal environments through hybrid alliances between communities, NGOs, scientists and state agencies to co-produce new knowledge and ideas for more robust livelihoods.

The TAPESTRY project is financially supported by the Belmont Forum and



We used to have hot days in summer and rains in the rainy season, but now the scenario has changed, and we cannot predict the weather. We are unable to grow paddy or any kind of cultivation in this changing climate scenario and due to increased salinity

NORFACE Joint Research Programme on Transformations to Sustainability, which is co-funded by ESRC, RCN, JST, ISC, and the European Commission through Horizon 2020. Insight into how local people deal with uncertainty is helped by knowing how it affects their sense of place, identity and wellbeing.

Actually, TAPESTRY is more concentrated on how we can be more transformative. Countries that are at one of the highest risks of climate change, India and Bangladesh, are focusing on three transformation patches which especially focus on bottom-up transformation in marginal environments characterized by climate uncertainty. Among these three patches, one is the vulnerable coastal areas of Mumbai, another is the drought-prone drylands of Kutch, and the last one is the deltaic Sundarbans in India and Bangladesh. TAPESTRY relates to two aspects of transformation - first, how the transformation takes place in these patches; and second, how these initiatives can be scaled up and out.

The International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), one of the research partners of the TAPESTRY project, organized the Gobeshona (Bengali term for 'Research') Global Conference - 1 in January 2021 where two sessions focusing on the Mumbai-Kutch intervention and Sundarbans without boundary interventions were designed and presented under the locally-led adaptation theme from this TAPESTRY project.

In Mumbai, research mainly highlights resource-based livelihood recovery, especially how Koli fisherfolk communities are transforming through analysing the cultural and geographical history of Mumbai mangrove and Koli area, and facilitating collaboration among locals, experts and authorities.

Fishing communities in the city are adapting with their tools and techniques to respond to the pollution and environmental change, and are cultivating new alliances based on mangrove restoration, sustainable water and

waste management.

In Kutch, research focuses on co-production to facilitate bottom-up adaptation with camel herders who have been marginalized. Their livelihoods are under threat and climate change has made their livelihoods more uncertain. Here, camel herders are working to recognize local breeds, including the unique swimming camels who gazes on mangrove. They are working to open up the market for food products that use camel milk and to challenge negative perceptions of pastoralism. In Sundarbans, people living on islands are vulnerable to cyclones, storms and salinity from seawater floods. To cope up with this situation, the local people are exploring new farming methods, using dykes for fish farming and growing vegetables in specialized nets.

ICCCAD only works for the Bangladesh part of the Sundarbans where the research highlights how climate change-related uncertainties are affecting the wellbeing and identity of people living in the Bangladesh Sundarbans, and what emerging initiatives, alliances and practices are addressing climate change-related threats and challenges. The research also focuses on the formation of co-production that can lead to transformations.

The Bangladesh part of the Sundarbans is located in the southwestern region of the country. Due to its geography and socio-economic factors, the local people are highly vulnerable to a variety of hazards and climatic shocks, which are cyclones, rainfall, coastal flooding, salinity, droughts and heatwaves. In addition to this uncertainty, riverbank erosion is also a common phenomenon in this area. The series of cyclones over past decades have caused damage to the embankments allowing saline water to enter the agricultural and fisheries land, and destroy everything. As a result, it is the local people who face the consequences which make them vulnerable, especially those who depend on agriculture, riverine and marine fishing, and resources collection from

Sundarbans such as honey and Nipa leaf (Golpata).

Shibani from Purbo Jelekhali, a village of the Munshiganj union, Shyamnagar Upazilla, Satkhira said, "We used to have hot days in summer and rains in rainy season, but now scenario has changed, and we cannot predict the weather. We are unable to grow paddy or any kind of cultivation in this changing climate scenario and due to increased salinity."

The vulnerabilities have led local people to prioritise survival over their indigenous identity. To reduce the vulnerability, recent livelihood shifting pattern is being noticed, like agriculture to shrimp farming and then towards crab farming, chicken to turkey farming.

Shita Rani Mondal from Durgavati village which is located in Burigoalini union in Shyamnagar Upazilla mentioned, "Earlier we used to cultivate paddy in this area, but since Cyclone Aila, we cannot cultivate paddy here due to increased soil and water salinity. So, we were all forced to start shrimp farming, and also later we see this shrimp farming business is profitable. But now the salinity has increased so much that all the shrimp are dying with virus attack. So, many people are now starting crab farming instead of shrimp farming."

Adaptation initiatives such as hydro-aqua geonics are also practised in the area, where people grow crops, vegetables and fishes in the same system. Also, a large number of people, especially male members of the area, are migrating both seasonally and permanently due to lack of working opportunities and capacity in the Sundarbans area. At that time the women of the house have to earn money and work within the household as well. They grow vegetables and continue making handicrafts to earn money. Many work as a day la-



Adaptation initiatives such as hydro-aqua geonics are also practised in the area, where people grow crops, vegetables and fishes in the same system

bourer in their area.

However, they earn less than a man. Ruma Rani Mondal from Jelekhali village said, "We women work more than the men, but all the people say that we have less capacity and strength which is why we cannot work more. For that reason, we get less money as day labourers."

Being in the hot spot of climate change along with its long-term experience for working in adaptation, Bangladesh has scope to pursue transformational adaptation options to build the overall resilience of the marginalized communities living in coastal and vulnerable parts of the country.

For transformational adaptation, it is vital to look into the system, analyse the attributes to respond to actual or future climate change impacts to have impact on a bigger scale, and due to starting work on adaptation prior to India, Bangladesh has experience in adaptation and has a vast scope on transformative adaptation. Training on alternative livelihood options and education would reduce the vulnerabilities of the local people of this region. If any training is given by different NGOs, it is given to women more, because men are out of the area for work. Moreover, now the work of farming on their own land is done by the female as most of the male members go abroad for work, so, any training on agriculture is given to the women rather than a man. Training on agriculture, livestock, fisheries are helping the local women to enhance their knowledge to adapt to adverse climatic impacts. The local people believe that livelihood security for the future generation will be once again created by adopting the indigenous practices along with training and education.

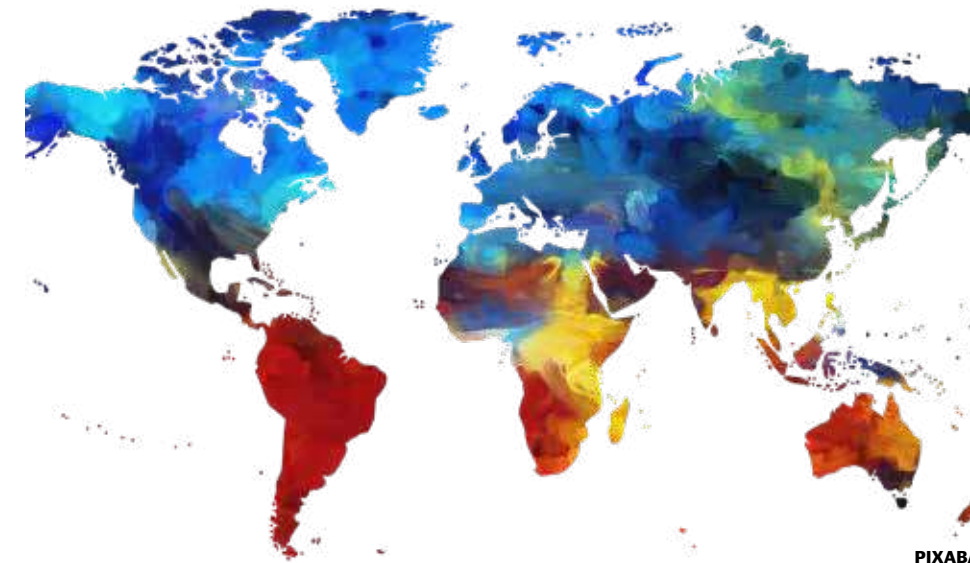
Adaptation-based learning is lacking in both Bangladesh and India. For this, it is important to better understand the bottom-up approaches in locally-led adaptation to better understand the relationship between climate change and transformational adaptation. In this regard, both research communities and NGOs need to join hand in hand to explore the importance of the ecological condition of the region, biodiversity and support actual adaptation interventions for the local communities.

Mahmuda Akter is currently working as a Research Officer at the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD). Can be reached out at mahmuda.mity@icccad.org

Tasfia Tasnim is a Senior Research Associate at ICCCAD, working on nature-based solutions, livelihood resilience and climate finance. Can be reached out at tasfia.tasnim@icccad.org

Establishing Southern-based collaborations to enhance locally-led adaptation and resilience

Years of work on climate change adaptation and resilience has generated a vibrant community of academics and non-academics in the global South



PIXABAY

Shahrin Mannan

The impacts of global climate change threaten societies, economies and ecosystems differently with varied magnitude, intensity and interact with other risks. In the era of climate emergency, deep-rooted poverty and rapid biodiversity destruction, the poorest and the most marginalized communities suffer the most, thanks to the historical injustice and marginalization. In order to compensate for the historical injustices and exclusion in the face of a changing climate, the local actors must be brought at the front seat to take part in locally-led adaptation with utmost power to decide on their own adaptation measures.

Local actors are the people, communities and institutions at the frontline dealing, facilitating and implementing climate change adaptation measures. Locally-led adaptation goes beyond delivering adaptation benefits at the local level or getting local people to participate in a project. It is rather about them having individual and collective agency over selecting, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating adaptation measures. It calls for ensuring indigenous knowledge and cultural practice making the adaptation meas-

ures an integral part of their regular life. Therefore, an effective locally-led adaptation measure requires a whole-of-society approach having public, private, civil society and community stakeholders working together for a collective gain despite having varying interests, vulnerabilities and capacities.

The onset of the global pandemic has once again revealed the capabilities of local actors in building resilience against all odds and thereby paved the way for a radical shift in local voice and agency. It has particularly highlighted the role of women in building community resilience during an unprecedented crisis. To recover from the adversities posed by COVID-19 and to achieve resilience against climate change, actions must move away from business as usual.

To cater to the global need for promoting locally-led adaptation resilience, in this year's Annual Gobeshona Global Conference 2020, held from January 18-24, ICCCAD adopted locally-led adaptation and resilience as the main theme of the conference. It realizes that despite making important contributions in adaptation and generating useful experiential climate knowledge, locally driven data and information are still not widely used in decision making due to concerns about usability and legitimacy. Closing the usability gap be-

tween knowledge generators and users requires a systematic knowledge exchange and collaboration among stakeholders. Once such a way to exchange knowledge effectively across a wide range of users is through "peer-to-peer learning". Peer-to-peer learning is a powerful tool to exchange experience and learning on climate change adaptation and resilience and foster collaboration at all levels.

Years of work on climate change adaptation and resilience has generated a vibrant community of academics and non-academics in the global south. This community has an annual cycle of key touch points that include the Community Based Adaptation (CBA) Conference, the Gobeshona Conference and the Development and Climate (DandC) Days. These events allow this community of practice to come together with tremendous energy at regular intervals, build new relationships, and work together on new ideas. For example, the annual Community-Based Adaptation (CBA) Conference held in a different country each year has been very successful at bringing several hundred people from around the world. Similarly, the annual Gobeshona Conference, each year held in Bangladesh, creates a platform for researchers, practitioners and policymakers to share research, knowledge and experiences on climate change issues across Bangladesh.

From 2021, Gobeshona has gone global and now it hosts a wide range of academics and practitioners around the world. The annual Development and Climate (DandC) Days are held each year in the middle weekend of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and bring together practitioners, negotiators, scientists and policymakers to explore key issues related to adaptation to climate change in developing countries. However, establishing continuity within projects, ideas or relationships established during such events has proven to be difficult.

In order to foster continuity between

relevant conferences, and mobilize collaborative and trans-disciplinary teams of academics and non-academics from the global south, ICCCAD together with Global Resilience Partnership (GRP) and Climate Justice Resilience Fund (CJRF) initiated the Small Grants Program from the Gobeshona Global Conference 2021. The program aims at creating greater sustained collaboration among southern-based groups through targeted grants to promote locally-led adaptation and resilience. Total five grants each worth \$5000 will be given to the top five groups through this program.

The process started with a selection of interested candidates through an open call. With an overwhelming number of responses, a preconference networking session was held which helped facilitate the group formation. Based on the concepts notes submitted, top 5 groups were selected through a two-step process. In step one, the organizing team selected top 10 groups based on predetermined criteria such as diversity, gender balance, youth inclusion and inclusion of LDC based members. In the final step, an online voting took place to select the top five winning teams. Within less than 24 hours, a whopping 1600 votes were received highlighting the amount of interest grown among the audience.

The selected groups are currently working on their project and will continue to do so by the end of this year. They will report back in the 15th Community Based Adaptation Conference (CBA15) and Development and Climate Day in COP26 on November 2021. The final results will be shared during the 2nd Gobeshona Global Conference in 2022. The organizing team seeks to hold the same programme in 2022 as well to continue creating greater sustained south-south knowledge exchange and collaboration. ●

Shahrin Mannan is working in ICCCAD as a Senior Research Officer. Her research interest lies in locally-led adaptation, gender and climate change, and sustainable development.

Importance of equity and social inclusion as means of achieving an equal future

Why we need gender-responsive adaptation technologies



PIXABAY

Rukhsar Sultana and Shahrin Mannan

In an “ideal world” gender equity, diversity and social inclusion should be intrinsically embedded in our norms. Yet on the contrary, women and men are shaped by the societies (political, economic and social sphere) and expectations, in such a way that they are invariably different in terms of their access to resources, information, and experience with disasters.

While women face unique and disproportionate burdens as a result of climate change and natural disaster, they should not be merely considered as victims. Women are very important agents of change as they represent a primary resource for adaptation through their lived experience, responsibility, maternal instincts and strength. Therefore, sustainable adaptation must focus on gender parity and the role of women if it is to become successful for societies to thrive.

This year's International Women's Day 2021 celebrated with the theme ‘Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a COVID-19 world’ by propagating #ChoosetoChallenge. The day reminded us how women are mostly underrepresented in the decision making process, and that it is of utmost importance that they step up, and contribute to build back better. Simultaneously it is very important to realize that gender parity is important for communities to thrive. With existing social constructs and poverty dynamics leav-

ing women ill-equipped to respond to impacts of climate change, how important are equity and social inclusion to achieve gender-responsive adaptation technology?

At the annual gobeshona global conference held from January 18-24th, 2021, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) and the University of Manitoba jointly hosted a session titled- ‘Adaptation Technologies, Gender Equity and Social Inclusion.’ The session primarily focused on an ongoing three-year-long study called ‘Scaling climate change Adaptation Knowledge and Technologies for Empowering women, and to Enhancing social equity and disaster resilience (SAKTEE) in Bangladesh.’ The general purpose of the project is to come up with scale-appropriate, socially-transformative climate change adaptation technologies, enhance development planning capacity and policy-sensitivity at different institutional levels while supporting the empowerment of women and other disadvantaged segments of the population in Bangladesh. The session focused on the challenges of promoting gender responsive adaptation technologies in agriculture and water in coastal and haor regions of Bangladesh. It also highlighted the on-farm and agricultural sector innovations in times of climate adaptation and resilience-building together with the concepts of gender equity and new masculinities from a Colombian rural cooperative's perspective.

The overarching messages from the session reiterated that climate change adaptation technologies need to involve knowledge and skills of vulnerable groups and people. Furthermore, it is important to identify the needs, priorities, and challenges in implementing women-friendly technologies. An effective sharing and recognition of distinct women roles like household and caring works can also help women participate in other productive activities. A ‘new masculinity’ approach can assure women a safer environment, gain confidence, become more productive and solve problems like gender inequality. By ensuring women's access to resources and economic opportunity, we can ensure empowerment by cre-

ating solutions. Additionally, it should be acknowledged that the extra burden of unpaid care work, collecting drinking water, and household responsibilities are important things to consider to promote women empowerment and address the gendered effect of climate change adaptation. However, it is crucial to understand that to ensure women empowerment and to promote leaders, interventions need to be taken at the grass-root level. Prof. It was highlighted that due to the lack of formal institutions to scale

up climate innovation, at the local level and global level, with time, most localized interventions may disappear. While there is quite a good number of climate change adaptation innovations at local level already, knowledge generation and technological advancement is crucial. With most of the existing adaptation technologies following a top-down approach, lack of institution to manage or scale-up makes them highly susceptible to fall apart. In developing countries, intersectoral coordination, multi-scale understanding, communication and mainstreaming institutional framework can help empower women and increase the reach of adaptation technology to the grass-root level.



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access to adaptation technologies should be at the core to promote equity, and help the poor and the vulnerable. Therefore it is crucial to invest more on women-friendly adaptive technologies at the grassroot level. Lastly, the gender dimension should be acknowledged, centralized and integrated at the strategic level to empower women and bring them to the forefront. ●

Rukhsar Sultana is working at ICCCAD as Research Officer. Shahrin Mannan is working in ICCCAD as Senior Research Officer.

Celebrating women as changemakers in water and migration issues

Why gender matters

Faizah Jaheen Ahmed

Often times in our society, the contributions of women are neglected. As harsh as the reality is, women are treated as the invisible half, working hard all day and still not getting their proper dues, simply because of the gender roles imposed upon them and men by society. This results in a power imbalance. Most women cannot make their own decisions or have proper access to resources that they work so hard to manage. In the context of climate change, this gap in gender and power imbalance is widened. Even still, women are now steadily taking the lead to fight against climate adversities, leading to successful results.

Women as changemakers in water issues

Gendered division of labour is a major factor that results in various issues related to water, particularly in rural Bangladesh. Since the men are busy earning and providing for the family, the women are expected to fetch water for drinking and other household purposes.

The challenges women face regarding water are not uncommon. These situations have been made worse in the last three decades in coastal Bangladesh, where because of the constant flood, storm surges and salinity intrusion, freshwater and groundwater have become unsuitable for use. Women have to spend extra time traveling long distances to get water when they already spend long hours collecting water from community water pumps. The case is worse in Satkhira in particular, where some women cannot afford to travel long distances in search of clean water, so they end up simply using the saline water. The sanitation facilities have worsened for women and young girls since they do not have access to proper latrines or other facilities during menstruation or pregnancy, and on the other hand, men often wrongfully block their access to these facilities.

What is interesting is that women at present are not just standing by doing nothing in the face of these adversities.

With their resource management skills on-point, they are now slowly leading the way towards proper use of water and sanitation facilities. One such example is in Dacope, Khulna, a highly climate-vulnerable region. The unsuitable water from the ponds and canals here have led to various diseases among the people, and some women here decided to do something about it. They started a project through the “Khona Khatail Mahila Samity” to raise funds for a reverse osmosis plant that would purify the water (Farr & Mallik, 2019). This initiative helped to achieve two goals: it helped to purify the water, thus protecting people from diseases while also saving women from the time-consuming task of fetching water, and it created opportunities for women to earn livelihood as they could now sell the purified water as a commodity. This motivated women in Dacope to become more independent and make decisions themselves.

In terms of sanitation facilities, various women-led organizations have emerged in Bangladesh. One noteworthy organization is the Ashroy Foundation, a non-government organization that provides support to women in the southwest coastal belt in terms of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction that includes providing sanitation facilities (Oxfam, 2020). It is clear from these instances that women in Bangladesh are doing their bit for proper water and sanitation to bring positive changes.

Women as changemakers in migration issues

In the recent Gobeshona Global Conference held in January 2021, women's migration as an adaptation strategy was discussed. A recent study conducted in 480 households in Khulna and Bagerhat districts was presented in the conference which mentioned that 10% of women migrate with their husbands and only 4% migrate with their families which has a critical impact on them. Climate-induced migration in the southwest coastal belt occurs because irregular rainfall patterns, salinity intrusion and riverbank erosion impact people's livelihood and quality of life in their place of origin which compel them to move from rural to urban areas or from

village to village.

When women's migration in Bangladesh is discussed, their vulnerabilities are mostly highlighted, including gender-based violence and harassment in their workplace, wage disparity and alienation because of cultural differences. It has also been mentioned that women migrate because it has been decided by their husbands or other members of their family. Contrary to the results obtained from Khulna and Bagerhat, a large number of women migrate from other regions and there are many women who make this decision themselves.

In Bhola, Barisal, for example, riverbank erosion has been destroying the lives and livelihood of many, but most families prefer to stay instead of migrating. Under these circumstances, women and even young girls from this region decided to migrate with their families either with consent from family or by themselves against their families' wishes (Evertsen, 2015). They have been working in the garments sector and as domestic help in Dhaka while living in Dhaka's Bhola slum. Despite their vulnerability and the fact that men earn more than them for the same job, women send more of their earnings to their families back home than men do. Their courage inspired other women to migrate as well while the money they sent back home helped their families to adapt to climate change impacts, not to mention that their families became more supportive of their actions. This shows that women have only emerged stronger after every setback and are making changes in their ways by breaking gender stereotypes.

Current actions and way forward

The recent Gobeshona Global Conference reflected on taking the momentum of women climate champions in terms of water and migration as it featured various noteworthy steps being taken to be more gender-sensitive. The Climate Change and Gender Action Plan (CCGAP) prepared in 2013 is now being revised to build women's leadership in the case of water and sanitation while taking necessary steps for maintaining their privacy and dignity in their daily life and also during extreme weather events. The CCGAP is also making

strategies to help migrant women adapt to their destination after migration through social inclusion and access to resources, though these are still in the works. Building the relationship of women's leadership to climate change and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) is also in progress. The Disaster Climate Change Support Unit, an initiative of the Bangladesh Government and Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE), is taking inclusive city-wide sanitation approaches.

The people from the southwest coastal belt have their own coping mechanisms to adapt to climate change impacts like pond conservation at individual and community levels, rainwater harvesting at the community level and providing filters and deep tubewells at the institutional level, with freshwater being sold to make women's lives a bit easier.

To be more inclusive, the Government policies about migration, water and sanitation should be more gender-sensitive. Cooperation of men in these issues is needed through proper understanding of gender roles and needs. Women should be evaluated and given jobs and wages based on their skills, with more opportunities to work in various sectors suitable to them after migration. Proper financing is needed to build the relationship of women to climate change and WASH intersections. The national coordination committee under WASH is to be engaged with different levels of the Government.

Finally, collaboration and communication among the Government agencies, local people, non-government agencies and the local government is important. This is possible through a bottom-up approach, where both men and women will get the chance to share their experiences about water and migration issues, and voice their specific needs for a better understanding of gender issues and how to be inclusive. ●

Faizah Jaheen Ahmed is working in International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) as Intern, her research interest lies in Loss and Damage, Gender Issues and Waste Management. Can be reached at faizah.ahmed@northsouth.edu

The untold struggles of women in Dhaka's Bihari camp

A case study of women empowerment in the Geneva camp in Mohammadpur



MAHMUD HOSSAIN OPU

Fatema Akter

Bangladesh in recent years has shown much interest in the Rohingya refugee crisis. But the struggles of another set of refugees, the communities living in the Bihari camps since 1947, has been overlooked. This community is struggling since that time and their struggles have proved never-ending. Life within the Bihari camps is unimaginable for the mainstream population. The Bihari community is living in various camps all over the country and the Geneva camp in Mohammadpur is the largest of all the camps.

The Geneva camp consists of more than 25,000 people with up to 10 family members living in a single room. In a confined space like the camps, women are living in the worst condition. They do not have privacy; sanitation con-

ditions are poor and lack of nutrition among the women is visible. The Bihari camps have the worst living conditions one can imagine; with one drinking water source for the 25,000 people and another water source from WASA for household purposes, this water reeks with bad odour and dirt. Also, the houses are so congested that even during the daytime the alleys are dark and air hardly passes through the houses.

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To write this article on the Mohammadpur Bihari camp, I met some strong women who fought against all odds. Here, I would like to portray a regular scenario of the women's life within the camps, that is yet unknown to the rest of the population. The story of Hamida Begum collected with the help of a local youth Latifuzzaman Faisal, a University student living in the same camp, sheds the light on life in these camps.

Hamida Begum, a 50 years old lady

was cooking for the family when I entered her home. She does embroidery works along with managing her house. Losing her father when she was 6 months old, this family started to adapt to everyday struggles. Her mother remarried and four of her siblings could not have any academic education. She got married at the age of 14. At such a young age, she started to take up the responsibilities of a new family. She further described that the camp is like a small pond with lots of fishes crowded within a confined space and nowhere to go to support themselves.

From a very young age, she was introduced to hardship and struggles. Her husband Kamruzzaman used to work as a barber and she complained about him not being attentive to work and was always taking leave. Observing such a condition, she decided to contribute to the family as the money earned by her

to walk in the alleys. Even 10 years ago, the summer heat was bearable, she explained. But nowadays, it seems that the heat is rising every year and they cannot even stand outside for fresh air. The camps are now congested more than ever and there is hardly any space for airflow. Even though she is not aware of global warming, she certainly feels its effects. She further added that there was hardly any assistance from any NGO or government to get them out of this situation.

Giving up was not in Hamida's dictionary, she started to work by embroidering clothes. Her children also contributed to her work and with her savings and loan from a bank, she was able to expand their house from one single room to a three-storey building. She also educated her children that she was deprived of. Her eldest daughter is now married and completed her master's degree. One son is also studying for a bachelors and the youngest son is currently a college student. Hamida Begum is currently the breadwinner of the family and she is continuously working hard to pay off the loan she took earlier for repaying the house.

To sum up my experience from this interview, I found that life in the camp is full of hardship and you can expect little help from the outsiders when you need them. It is because of the detachment of the Bihari community from the rest of the population.

However, the women of the community are more hardworking than men. Despite that, their contributions are unrecognized. I believe more can be done to provide employment to the women and give them financial stability. As they lead a separate lifestyle from the mainstream community and there is a difference between the two, women are the ones facing more challenges if anything happens to the male member of the family.

To add to the woes, women seldom get formal education and their network with the people outside the camps is always difficult. So, they fall in a helpless position whenever their male earning member is no longer able to support them. Therefore, it is necessary to train these women to develop their skills, education so that they become resilient to adversities. Stories like Hamida's, however, do tell us that women's perseverance and leadership can go a long way to hold a family together through extremely harsh situations. •

Fatema Akter is Intern at the International Centre for Climate Change and Development. Can be reached at fatema.priya95@gmail.com.



Even though she is not aware of global warming, she certainly feels its effects

husband was not enough to support a family of five members.

When asked about the issue of flooding and extreme heat stress within the camp, she went back to her past days. One could see through her eyes how hard it must have been for her to get through those days. She started to explain that now she is living in a three storied concrete house. But it was not the same 10 years ago. She had one room and five members to live in the same room. The alleys were not more than one meter wide and they remain like that to this day.

During those days, the alleys were flooded every time it rained. She continued saying that it was common to be submerged by water and that they used to bring all the household utensils above the bed. Above all, the house used to leak from the ceiling. To add to their plight the camp lacks space even

Marginalization or empowerment?

As climate change exacerbates the uncertainties of livelihood opportunities, local NGOs are coming forward to help cope with climate risks by empowering local women in coastal areas

Sumaiya Binte Anwar and Mahmuda Akter

In rural Bangladesh, women have historically been responsible for vital tasks such as securing potable water, firewood and food. Since these responsibilities are almost entirely dependent on the natural environment, southern coastal women are believed to be disproportionately affected by the adverse effects of climate change. In fact, the region is one of the most vulnerable to climate change as well as disaster which includes cyclones, irregular rainfall, excessive temperature, and so on. Among them salinity intrusion being a pressing issue due to the occurrence of frequent cyclones and saline waterlogging. Although the salinity in the area has been steadily rising for the last 20 years due to shrimp farming in agricultural lands and sea-level rise, the condition has worsened after cyclone Aila.

Cyclone Aila hit the southern coast-

ties in the coastal districts.

The freshwater sources were damaged and all 'ready to export' (grade) shrimp was washed away. To combat the crisis, families came forward to work in order to manage a living, with men and women working together. A woman from Vamia, a village of Buri-goalini union, Shyamnagar Upazilla, Satkhira said, "I was not used to working in the field, but Aila broke the social taboo. I and many other women in our village started working to earn money for our family and to survive after Aila, which has not stopped yet."

They started to contribute to agricultural and other income-generating works to add to the household income. Men migrated to nearby cities to find work and alternative livelihood sources. The men of many families went to work as labourers to brickfields for six months and the women then took over the responsibility of looking after their households - raising children, taking care of the agriculture and farming ac-

bear the majority of workload in the family. They did not receive recognition for their role in managing the household as well as outside work. Despite working seasonally as day labourers, being actively involved in fishing and agriculture, helping their husbands in gher, they keep considering themselves as housewives not wholly realizing that they are turning their home, their courtyard and adjacent areas into income-generating opportunities.

As climate change exacerbates the uncertainties of livelihood opportunities, local NGOs are coming forward to help cope with climate risks by empowering local women in coastal areas by training them on diversified livelihood activities, health and sanitation needs and agricultural production.

Through these trainings they have adapted to more efficient homestead vegetation techniques, livestock rearing techniques and fish farming techniques. They have learnt various cultivation processes like tower and bed gardening, tree plantation on embankment (suitable saline tolerant variety), and preparation of organic compost for agricultural works as well as fish farming.

Technical and practical knowledge on several sectors of diverse livelihood have expanded economic opportunities. Moreover, these training opportunities to cope with local challenges have activated them to work in groups and also share the information learned with their neighbours.

Currently, they are accessing YouTube to learn various methods of cultivation and plantation. They are using the homestead vegetables to fulfil the nutritional needs of the family and selling the remaining to the local vendors. They also use the smartphone technology to know the market price of their sellable products as well as the information regarding weather updates.

Such training empowered the previously marginalized women by giving them access and control over agricultural products which increased their bargaining capacity and negotiating power and thus becoming a major driver of advocacy, thereby leading to the struggle to build more resilient self-sufficient communities.

A woman from Kultoli, a village of Munshiganj union, Shyamnagar Upazil-

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Satkhira said, "We were not allowed to give any opinion in front of our family members, but now we have learned a lot from training and we are earning more money from our husbands so everyone gives importance to our words."

la, Satkhira said, "We were not allowed to give any opinion in front of our family members, but now we have learned a lot from training and we are earning more money from our husbands so everyone gives importance to our words."

Although formal employment is an important modality to address women empowerment, it functions beyond the domestic periphery. However, such small initiatives that are contributing to food security in small localities through empowering women is an example showing how regional efforts can fit into even larger structures to enhance the overall resilience power of the society. ●

Sumaiya Binte Anwar (Sumaiya Binte Anwar is a Research Officer at ICCCAD working in the Urban Resilience Programme. She is a Civil Engineer and a Climate enthusiast. She can be reached at sumaiya.anwar@icccad.net Mahmuda Akter is currently working as a Research Officer at the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD). Can be reached out at mahmuda.mity@icccad.org

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The society or family rarely take note of women's contribution though they bear the majority of workload in the family

line of Bangladesh hard on May 25, 2009. It was really a unique event as a storm like this had not hit the Sundarbans in the last three decades. As an aftermath of this, the Satkhira and Khulna districts of Bangladesh suffered the heaviest damage. Furthermore, acute scarcity of drinking water and food worsened the sufferings of thousands. While tragic, the recovery from the disaster proved to be an opportunity to build back stronger, safer and more resilient communi-

ties. This triple workload makes women's daily responsibilities much greater than before.

This gender-based shift in economic opportunities gave women communities the mobility outside home, and with this their income patterns have been slowly changing. However, their income opportunities were still mostly restricted to the domestic periphery. The society or family rarely take note of women's contribution though they



A female resident of Kultoli progressing towards self-sufficiency through her homestead gardening

COURTESY