

5th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
COMMUNITY BASED ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE



Organized by Supported by



Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies



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Ministry of Environment and Forests
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Community Based Adaptation: The story so far

As adaptation to climate change has become more and more accepted as a necessary response to the adverse impacts of climate change around the world and it was realized that some of the most vulnerable communities will be poor communities in both the developing as well as the developed countries. Some groups of people who had been working at community level with poor communities began to start thinking about community based adaptation (CBA).

Initiation of CBA

Considering the community needs for effective CBA practices and growing interests of the actors, stakeholders and policy makers, BCAS and IIED have organized three international CBA conferences in Bangladesh. The aims of the conferences were to facilitate sharing of latest knowledge and experiences about CBA from various parts of the world, promote collaborative and action research by involving scientists and community people to explore and demonstrate innovative and effective approaches of CBA and widen partnership among actors for mainstreaming CBA into development, poverty alleviation, livelihood promotion and disaster risk reduction and thus contribute to advancing sustainable development at local, national and regional scales.

The First CBA Conference in 2005 (CBA-1), Dhaka, Bangladesh

In CBA-1 around 50 people, mainly from Asia but also from other continents. They shared the experiences of working with poor and vulnerable communities and how to incorporate adaptation to climate change on top of efforts at poverty reduction and development.

CBA-1 focused mainly on conceptualization of CBA and its scientific basis. It facilitated interaction between IPCC authors and the community practitioners. The key themes discussed included: understanding adaptation to climate change, partnership in adaptation, adaptation in practice, community responses, confronting vulnerabilities, mainstreaming adaptation, knowledge management, and responding to climate change.

The Second CBA Conference in 2007 (CBA-2), Dhaka, Bangladesh

In CBA-2 with around 80 participants from around the world including practitioners working at community level a number of researchers and policy makers also joined the workshop.

CBA-2 was structured around four major themes: climate change science, CBA approaches, mainstreaming adaptation into development and building partnership. Issues discussed included: agriculture, drought and food security; extreme events; and health and climate change, tools and methods; extreme events; communication and knowledge.

**COMMUNITY BASED ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE
FIFTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE (CBA5)**

24-31 March 2011, Sheraton Hotel, Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Main Characteristics of CBA5

- **The largest gathering** of scientists, experts, policy makers and practitioners of CBA
- **Over 350 participants** from 60 countries and all continents meet in Dhaka
- **3 Phases of Activities** over 8 days (24-31 March 2011)

a) High Level Segment: Inaugurations by the Chief Guest on 28 March 2011 by **Sheikh Hasina, Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh**

b) Field Visits: Three days of field visits to eight sites, each demonstrating different climate changes impacts and communities adaptation responses and practices.

c) Scientific and Technical Sessions: There will be over 23 technical sessions held as Plenary or parallel sessions addressing community based adaptation practices, disaster risk reductions, water governance, health, agriculture, urban issues, measuring adaptation actions, policies institutions and financing.

Chief Guest for the concluding session is **Rajendra Pachauri, Chair, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**, and it will be participated by many world leaders in Climate Change science, government policy, actions and financing of adaptation.

The expected outcomes are:

1. **Clear guidance** on how to take up this issue of upscaling and move from the case study

oriented approach to a more structured way of providing support for CBA.

2. To **build bridges** between the different communities.
3. **Experts learning** from communities' actions.
4. **Synthesizing knowledge** for up scaling and replication.
5. **Affecting policies and decisions** of governments, negotiators, NGOs and practioners in favour of the local communities and the poor.
6. **Establishing an informed community** of practioners, scientists and policy makers on CBA.

Scaling up Community Based Adaptation: The theme for CBA5

CBA5 is the biggest CBA conference held so far with over 350 international delegates coming from over 60 countries from all continents of the world (there were 180 delegates at CBA4 in Tanzania last year). The theme of CBA5 is "Scaling-up: Beyond pilots". This is in response to the rapid expansion of CBA activities around the world from a few dozen when the first CBA conferences were held to several hundred by the time of CBA4. Hence it was decided that at CBA5 we would go beyond the simple sharing of examples of CBA practices, which was the main focus of previous conferences, and try to distil, learn and share lessons from those pilots towards scaling up.

The term Scaling up is being used here in two senses. Firstly there is the notion of replication or multiplication from few hundreds (now) to thousands and even hundreds of thousands that will be needed in future. Then there is the the notion of scaling up the policy chain from the very local or community level to higher levels of decision making within each country as well as globally. The focus of CBA5 will be to try to draw lessons from examples of both senses of the term scaling up. This will be done in a series of separate thematic sessions (each looking at lesson learning with respect to scaling up) and then all of these outputs will be brought together in a book form after the conference is over.

The millions of communities across the world that are vulernbale to climate change impacts will have to deal with them whether they like it or not, and whether they know about climate change or not. The objective of the CBA conferences is to share as rapidly as possible and as widely as possible the learning that communities are making around the world. To this end there is now a cba website (www.cba-x) and a cba layer on GoogleEarth is in development as a well as a CBA site on YouTube for sharing videos of CBA activities around the world. The CBA5 conference is also being live webcast for the first time in response to the overwhelming demand for participation from all over the world which could not be accomodated by bringing everyone.

The Third CBA Conference in 2009 (CBA-3), Dhaka, Bangladesh

In CBA-3 over 150 participants, from a much wider array of organizations, both government and non-government participated. In CBA-3 it was decided to make the event into an annual International Conference on CBA and that Bangladesh would host it every two years, with the venue changing every other year. It was also decided to develop a website (www.cba-x) to bring together information on CBA activities around the world and also to form a loose coalition called the Global Coalition on CBA (GICBA).

CBA-3 emphasized on latest knowledge and practices of community adaptation, sectoral approaches and potentials of up-scaling CBA across the world. It also focused on fund mobilization.

The Fourth CBA Conference in 2010 (CBA-4) in Dar-es-Salam, Tanzania

The CBA-4 had over 180 participants and it followed the tradition of sending participants (in batches) to spend two nights in villages with local communities to see what they were doing to combat climate and other risk factors. The presentations made at that conference were published and are available at (www.iied.org)

Why Community Based Adaptation?

Climate change is set to significantly impact people and the environment. Rising temperatures will change crop growing seasons and impact food security. Changing rainfall patterns will cause water shortages or flooding in some areas. And rising sea levels means a greater risk of storm surges, flooding and wave damage for coastal regions across the world. Extreme weather events - such as droughts and cyclones - are also likely to become more frequent and more intense in the face of climate change.

Poor communities in the developing world are often the hardest-hit. Many live in vulnerable areas - at the foot of unstable hillsides or on the banks of volatile rivers. And many have limited resources or to deal with climate-related disasters. Key adaptation will be mainly by communities, ecosystems and institutions across the world.

How can these communities cope and better adapt to climate change? Researchers, practitioners and policymakers are gathering in Dhaka, Bangladesh for the 5th International Conference on Community Based Adaptation (CBA5) to Climate Change, where they will share knowledge and experience in planning and practicing adaptation at different levels.

Climate Change Impacts in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change. This is due its location. Bangladesh is sandwiched between the Bay of Bengal in the south and the Himalayas on the North and crisscrossed by three major river systems. They are the Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the Meghna. Further, Bangladesh is one of the largest and a very dynamic delta. Water from the Himalayan region including China, India, Nepal and Bhutan passes through Bangladesh. Only eight percent of the water that passes through Bangladeshi rivers originate as rainfall over the territory of Bangladesh, other 92% coming from outside the country. Its sediment loading is also one of the highest in the world. Further, it is a country with a large population of more than 140 million in 2011, compared to over seventy million in 1971.

Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries with many development, environment and governance challenges. Climate change impacts come as an additional risk on top of the existing development problems. Nonetheless, Bangladesh has been having over five percent annual GDP growth rate over last two decades. It also has made progress in other areas including the MDG indicators. Several studies have been undertaken on the vulnerability of Bangladesh and impacts of Climate Change. A summary of such studies is given below:

There are seven major region based impacts while there are four generic impacts. Considering from south to north the impacts can be identified as follows:

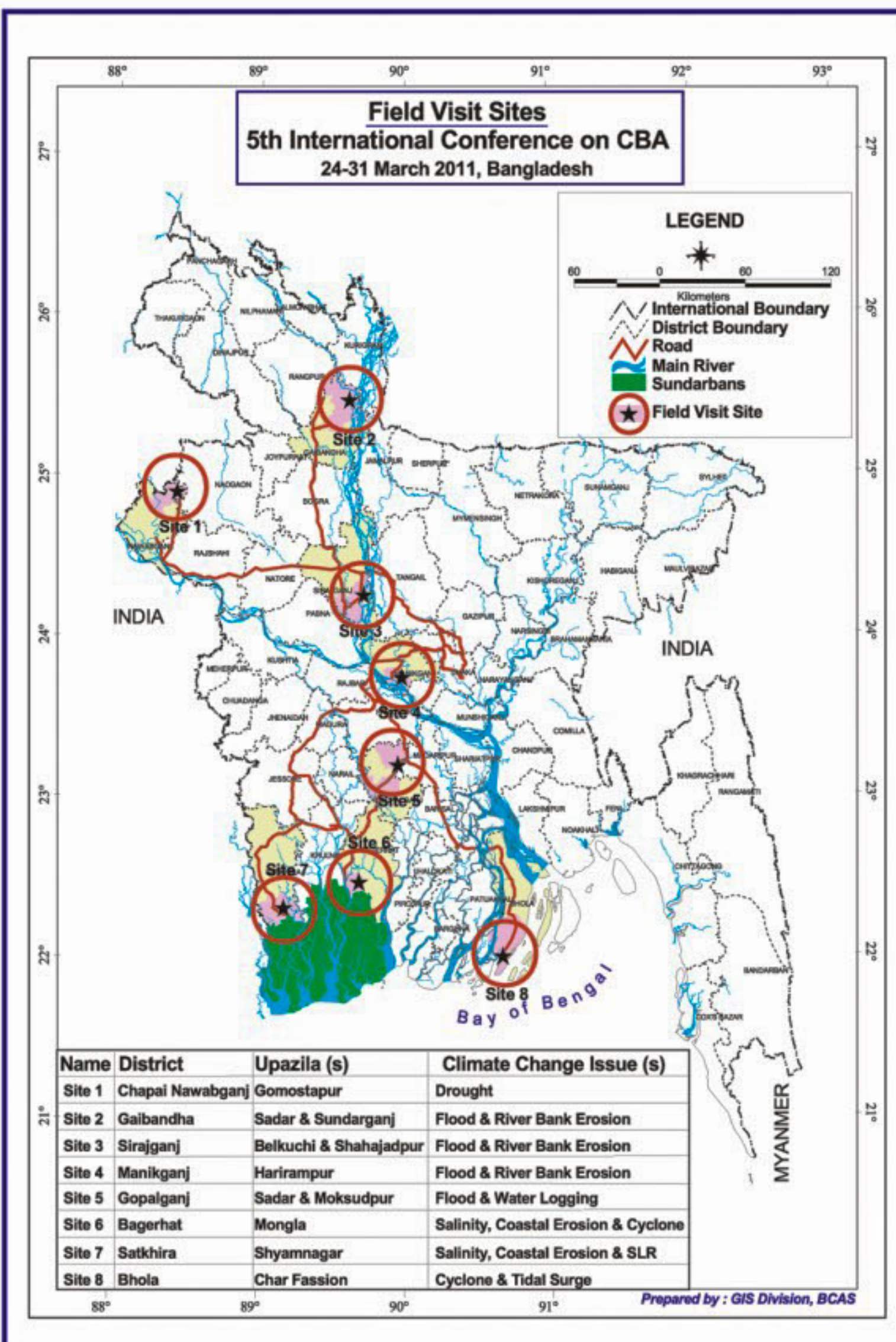
1. Sea level rise
2. Increase of cyclones
3. Enhanced intrusion of salt water
4. Increased floods
5. Drought
6. River bank erosion
7. Erratic rainfall

All these regional impacts combined to create a number of generic impacts across the country, which are:

8. Food security
9. Water security
10. Health impacts
11. Displacement and Migration

These above impacts conspire together to make Bangladesh one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of Climate Change and probably the most vulnerable country in the world.

* Details in BCAS Website : www.bcas.net



Bangladesh Government Initiatives

The vulnerability of Bangladesh to adverse effects of climate change is well recognized by the international scientific and negotiating communities. The Government has rightly identified that climate change is not only an environmental issue but has strong and direct linkages with also development of the country. The most impacted sectors are

- Water resource
- Human settlement
- Biodiversity particularly Sundarbans
- Agriculture
- Health
- Infrastructure and industries

Recognizing this, the Government has taken several steps as a response to the UNFCCC as well as in country initiatives to address both adaptation to climate change and mitigation. The following are some selected national level programme, strategy and action plans.

A) Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) has been prepared. The plan is built on six pillars, five are related to impact management and one to low carbon development. These six pillars are:

- Food Security, Social protection and health
- Comprehensive disaster management
- Infrastructure
- Research and knowledge management
- Mitigation and low carbon development
- Capacity building and institutional strengthening

The strategy has identified 44 programmes and 145 projects under the above six pillars.

B) National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA) was initially formulated in 2005 in a participatory method and has been updated in 2009. There are 45 projects identified in the NAPA. Already one project under NAPA "Community based Adaptation to climate change through Coastal Afforestation" funded by GEF/UNDP is being implemented.

C) Establishment of Designated National Authority (DNA): In order to promote projects under Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

D) The Initial National Communication (INC) and the Second National Communication (SNC): The INC was prepared in 2002 which included National Circumstance, GHG inventory, vulnerability and adaptation, mitigation to climate change response strategies. The SNC have been undertaken and is expected to be completed within June 2011.

E) Climate Change Unit: The Government has established a Climate Change Unit under the MOEF to give technical support to the Government in implementing climate change related activities. Focal points on climate change have been established in some of the Ministries.

F) Accessing and Leveraging Climate Finance: A climate change resilience fund to the tune of US\$ 110 million has already been pledged by various donors. Separately the Government has allocated another US\$ 200 million from its own resources to be used for climate change activities. "Climate Change Trust Fund Policy" has also been developed.

G) In order to mobilize the people the Government is working closely with NGOs and the civil societies on climate change related issues.

Sponsors and contributing organizations

