

# ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE INDUCED DISPLACEMENT AND MIGRATION IN BANGLADESH

TAKING HUMAN RIGHTS  
BASED APPROACH



## CREDITS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research report is written by Tanjir Hossain, Anhara Rabbani, Maria Aktar and Md. Tariqul Hasan Rifat of ActionAid Bangladesh based on a field level research conducted by the authors. The authors are part of the larger Resilience and Climate Justice Priority in ActionAid Bangladesh. The report was edited by Qazi Habibul Huq, an Independent Editor. The authors thank the contribution and guidance from Harjeet Singh and Jessica Faleiro of ActionAid International; and Santosh Patnaik and Sanjay Vashist of the Climate Action Network South Asia. Thanks also goes to staff members of AOSED, Songshaptoque, VARD, BDO and NDBUS for their extensive support in field level consultations. We would like to extend special thanks to all the interviewees from the affected communities, civil society members and government officials.

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## PREFACE

With climate change impacts and associated disasters on the rise, a staggering number of people are being displaced or forced to migrate for survival globally. South Asia is one of the most vulnerable and disaster-prone regions and at high risk to climate change and associated impacts. In 2017, climate disasters triggered most of the displacements in South Asia where many of the 2.8 million new displacements took place in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Bangladesh, one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to the impacts of climate change has been dealing with climate change induced disasters, and associated impacts particularly displacement and migration for decades. In recent years, the number of weather-related hazards has increased due to climate change resulting in rise in displacement and migration. The 2019 flood impacted people of 21 districts in Bangladesh affecting an estimated 580,000 people and displacing more than 307,000 people.

While the number of temporary displacements is increasing globally, there is not enough information on migration and the resulting sufferings of the communities who are forced to migrate. This research is an effort towards contributing to deepen understanding of the challenges and identify solutions that can uphold human rights. This research is a part of the South Asia Migration and Climate (SAMAC) project, funded by the European Union through the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) managed project — Improving Migration Management in the Silk Routes Countries — in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan and implemented by ActionAid, in collaboration with Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSA), and its partners.

This report is based on a study undertaken by ActionAid Bangladesh with support from ActionAid International and Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSA) between September 2019 to November 2020 in five districts of Bangladesh to identify people-centred solutions to address displacement and migration associated with climate change impacts in Bangladesh.

A special section is appended to the report to cover the impact of COVID-19 that has led to Reverse Migration by a huge number of people from urban areas back to their village homes.

## **ABOUT ACTIONAID BANGLADESH**

ActionAid is a global justice federation working to achieve social justice, gender equality and poverty eradication with over 15 million people in 45 countries across the globe. ActionAid started its operations in Bangladesh in 1983. As a member of the Federation, AAB works to achieve its mission and vision in four major areas: women's rights and gender equity; resilience and climate justice; democratic governance; and young people.

Furthermore, About ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) responds to humanitarian crises in rural and urban spaces with the aim of protecting lives and building resilience. As a social justice organisation, AAB facilitates people to lead campaigns to claim their rights by challenging inequality and unjust structural causes of poverty.

AAB has been campaigning on the issues of water justice, climate justice, tax justice, the right to food, safe cities for women and girls and gender responsive public services. Over the past decade, AAB has been working from grassroots to global level for a mechanism that ensures climate justice.

For more information and work of ActionAid Bangladesh please visit: <https://www.actionaidbd.org/>.

# LIST OF ACRONYMS

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Description</u>
AAB	ActionAid Bangladesh
AOSED	An Organisation for Socio-Economic Development
BCCSAP	Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
CANSA	Climate Action Network South Asia
CBA	Community Based Adaptation
CIP	Country Investment Plan
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
CPRD	Centre for Participatory Research and Development
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DPHE	Department of Public Health and Engineering
EU	European Union
FFW	Foodfor Work
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBM	Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HDI	Human Development Index
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
L&D	Loss and Damage
LAPA	Local Adaptation Plans of Action
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MODMR	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
MOEFCC	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
MOWCA	Ministry of Women and Children Affairs
NAP	National Action Plan
CEGIS	The Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services
LGED	Local Governments Engineering Department

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The impacts of climate change are causing a rise in displacement and migration globally. This has become one of the key development challenges for countries particularly those vulnerable to climate change impacts. A staggering number of people are displaced or forced to migrate for survival due to climatic events such as drought, river erosion, flood, and cyclones. In 2019, 33.4 million new displacements associated with disasters and conflicts were recorded across 145 countries of which 24.9 million were triggered by climate-induced disasters. Bangladesh, one of the most at-risk countries to negative impacts of climate change, has been dealing with climate-induced disasters and associated impacts – particularly displacement and migration – for decades.

Bangladesh is ranked 7th on the Long-Term Climate Risk Index published by German Watch. With global warming continuing to worsen, Bangladesh will face climate change induced hazards such as floods, cyclones, tidal surges with greater intensity and frequency. Unless these vulnerabilities are managed and addressed comprehensively, Bangladesh faces serious downside risks to its growth momentum and poverty reduction efforts. These climate change factors work through many sectors that add up to substantial losses economy-wide; the agriculture sector is identified as the most vulnerable one while other sectors such as health, livelihoods, infrastructure are at great risk. Approaching climate change from a human rights perspective highlights the principles of universality and non-discrimination, emphasizing that rights are guaranteed for all persons, including vulnerable groups. ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) believes that through a human rights-based approach, displacement, and forced migration can be avoided by building absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacity of people, society, the institution, infrastructure, and environment.

AAB's research team visited five climate hotspots – Khulna, Chattogram, Sunamganj, Naogaon, and Dhaka to deepen understanding on ways to address climate change-induced migration. The research team spoke to communities in the places of origin and the destinations of migration. It is evident in the research that, while climate change might not be the primary factor in many cases, it heavily influences the migration decision taken by the impacted communities. The loss of livelihood – which is heavily impacted by climate change – is the major reason that drives migration decisions. Lack of diversified skills remains a key challenge for women and men to address the impacts of climate change on livelihood.

The field research found that the cities such as Khulna, Sunamganj, and Naogaon are not ready to host mass migration as the cities lack infrastructure or facilities to accommodate them. Challenges related to basic services such as water and sanitation, livelihood opportunities, access to government services and lack of social security are the major areas a migrant family faces in an urban slum. In terms of livelihood, migrants who travel to secondary cities or other rural

areas, face several challenges as there is no guarantee that they will find work at the destination of migration. Most of them take up day labourer jobs where exploitation or extremely low payment are reported by the communities.

Women and children are the most vulnerable to several social challenges during the migration process. As men are commonly the ones who choose to migrate for a livelihood, women are triply burdened with household chores and taking care of their families. In few areas, women reported that they faced both sexual and mental harassment from other men in the community due to the absence of male members of the household. Children equally face trauma during the process of migration. They are forced to leave school in case they must migrate, and due to lack of enough financial support, they join the labour force to survive. The study also made efforts to understand the current policy instruments that can protect the people who are already displaced and forcibly migrated due to climate change and associated impacts. These policies recognise that addressing climate change associated displacement and migration is critical, however, it is unclear what specific actions are taken to address the challenges. This study identified some of the key policy and programme actions that can lead the country to address the challenge taking a human rights perspective.

**Ensure Basic Rights and Services:** adequacy and effectiveness of basic rights and services, immediate responses and early recovery assistance to shocks and stresses, remain the key factors for communities in making decisions on whether to migrate or not. It is critical to ensure government support to the vulnerable communities which includes investment towards strengthening homestead to adapt to climate induced disasters, ensuring peoples' entitlement to receive humanitarian assistance and recovery support regardless of whether they have National ID card or not.

**Establish Community Led Protection System:** Community led protection system, can be an effective solution towards stopping violence against women and children particularly during and post disaster context. Furthermore, people, especially young people, can be capacitated to respond to disaster – such as providing first aid, search, and rescue assistance, support local government to conduct needs assessment especially for people who are displaced – that will contribute to reducing the risk of displacement and migration.

**Effective investment in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation:** Loss and damage to assets and livelihoods increases with the growing number of climate change induced disasters. It is therefore critical to ensure both adequacy and effectiveness of investment to reduce risk of climate induced disasters and supporting communities to adapt to changing climate.

**Establishing Multipurpose Information Centre:** Lack of information, availability, and accessibility, were identified as few root causes that expose displaced and migrated people to further vulnerability and risk of exploitation. This information includes rights of people who are displaced or forced to migrate, which areas can be potential places to migrate, and location-wise availability of

employment within the area and in other places. Setting up a Multipurpose Information Centre will provide support to displaced communities in taking informed decision on whether to migrate and if yes, where to.

**Skill Development and Employment Generation at Local Level:** As noted in many research documents, lack of livelihood in rural areas is the primary reason for migration. Therefore, it is critical to invest further in skill development of the most vulnerable communities, especially young women and men. Furthermore, investment also needs to be increased in creating jobs at local and district level.

**Introduce Universal Social Protection:** Bangladesh continues to invest in social safety net programme (SSNP) which has been playing an integral role in reducing poverty. However, it is critical that the Government of Bangladesh goes beyond SSNP and adopts the Universal Social Protection system that includes livelihood generation, social insurance, and social safety net to address climate-induced loss and damage that will further help reduce displacement and migration. Furthermore, the existing social safety net programmes are inadequate to meet the needs of the people.

**Develop Climate Risk and Resilience Index:** The Delta Plan 2100 recognises that climate induced displacement and migration will further increase. To implement Delta Plan, it is critical to develop a Climate Risk and Resilience Index that will provide baseline information of the country focusing both on macro and micro (village) level. This will include digitalisation of risk and resource map including household vulnerability to different hazards. This will allow the government and other development actors to make decisions for reducing climate risk and build resilience including planned relocation of displaced people.

**Develop a National Displacement and Migration Policy:** This report advocates for further investigation of existing policies and strategies, build on learning generated from the short-term actions and develop a comprehensive National Displacement and Migration Policy. It is to be noted that the policy must be people-centred upholding the principle of human rights.

**Establishing Financial Architecture for Climate Response:** The Government of Bangladesh started reporting its climate budget allocation and expenditure which is a remarkable step forward towards ensuring climate finance accountability. However, effectiveness of climate finance remains a key question. It is therefore critical to establish a financial architecture including a registry system and joint monitoring taskforce to account all climate investment ensuring its effectiveness. This will reduce loss and damage from climate change impacts and thereby reduce the risk of displacement and migration. The strategies and actions, while sectoral approaches remain important, must be able to deliver the needs of the people living in poverty and exclusion ensuring equity, justice, and fairness in addressing climate induced displacement and migration. The actions must be gender responsive. Importantly, the Government of Bangladesh along with the civil society actors must continue to advocate for regional and global actions to reduce the impacts of climate change.





# BANGLADESH

## Key Facts

Located in South Asia, Bangladesh is surrounded on three sides by India and the Bay of Bengal towards the South. It also shares a small portion of its border with Myanmar towards the south eastern corner of the country.

Bangladesh is the largest dynamic delta of the world, consisting of several river systems that pour into the Bay of Bengal. Bangladesh is prone to frequent tidal surge, salinity, flooding, river erosion and cyclones.

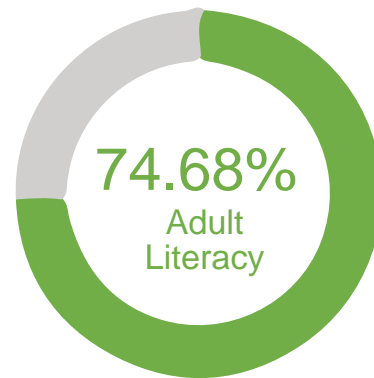
**Capital: Dhaka**

**Currency: Taka (BDT)**

**Total area: 147.6 sq. km**



Figure 1: Map of Bangladesh  
source: Bangladesh Map and Satellite Image, [www.geology.com](http://www.geology.com)



77.44%  
Male



71.94%  
Female

146 / 179 countries  
Corruption Perception Index

133 / 189 countries  
Human Development Index

133 / 188 countries  
Gender Inequality Index

**164.6 million**  
Population (2018)

**223.39 million**  
projected in 2061

**1,240 Persons** Per sq. km  
Population density (2018)

**US\$ 4,964**  
GDP (PPP) per capita (2019)

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# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION



## CONTEXT

“Even if current targets are met, tens of millions will be impoverished, leading to widespread displacement and hunger”.

-UN Special Rapporteur Philip Alston on extreme poverty and human rights

As early as 1990, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) noted that the greatest single impact of climate change might be on human migration – with millions of people displaced by shoreline erosion, coastal flooding, and agricultural disruption . After three decades of research and scientific evidence-gathering climate change is now considered an existential crisis where displacement and forced migration due to climate impacts is one of the key challenges that the governments are facing across the globe. With climate change impacts and associated disasters on the rise a staggering number of people are being displaced or forced to migrate for survival. Globally, in 2019, a total of 33.4 million new displacements associated with disasters and conflicts has been recorded across 145 countries and territories of which 24.9 million were triggered by disasters – 23.9 million were weather- related, and the rest 8.5 million by conflict . Disaster events that triggered new displacements during the year were heavily associated with weather-related hazards. Displacement associated with disasters mainly affected East Asia and Pacific, and South Asia, both regions with high levels of population exposure and vulnerability to hazards<sup>2</sup>.

South Asia is one of the most vulnerable and disaster-prone regions and at high risk to climate change and associated impacts. According to Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), an estimated 7.9 million people were displaced in 2015 due to sudden-onset disasters in South Asia . In 2017, disasters triggered most of the displacement in South Asia with the exception of Afghanistan where conflict triggered 474,000 new displacements. During the same year, many of the 2.8 million new displacements associated with sudden-onset disasters took place in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka during the monsoon season. In 2019, the number went up to a record 9.5 million new displacements associated with disasters, the highest figure since 2012. Floods triggered by the monsoon in India and Bangladesh and cyclones Fani and Bulbul were among the events to force most people to flee their homes both in the region and globally .

Bangladesh, one of the countries that is most at risk to climate change impacts in the world has been dealing with disasters and associated impacts particularly displacement and migration for decades. Between 1980 and 2008, it experienced 219 disasters causing loss and damage over USD16 billion . Cyclone Sidr alone displaced at least 3 million people and between 2008 to 2014, disasters displaced over 4.7 million people . In recent years, the number of weather-related hazards has increased due to climate change impacts causing a rise in displacement and migration. In 2017 more than 436,000 people were displaced in Bangladesh by torrential rains that flooded a third of the country for several weeks . The 2019 flood impacted people of 21 districts in Bangladesh displacing more than 307,000 people who were still trying to recover from 2017 flood.

<sup>1</sup> UN News (2019) World faces ‘climate apartheid’ risk, 120 more million in poverty: UN expert; <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/06/1041261>

<sup>2</sup> Amanda Klekowski von Koppenfels, (2001) The Role of Regional Consultative Processes in Managing, International Migration, IOM, cited Oli Brown (2008) in Migration and Climate Change, IOM.

<sup>3</sup> IDMC and NRC (2020) Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020

<sup>4</sup> IOM (2016) Assessing the Climate Change Environmental Degradation and Migration Nexus in South Asia.

## SOUTH ASIA

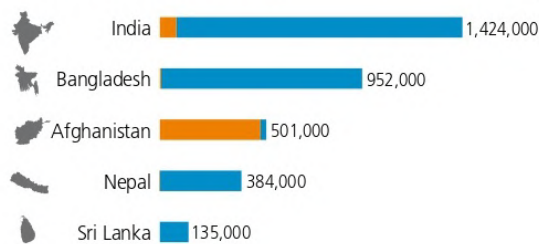


DISASTERS 15.1%  
CONFLICT 5.4%  
OF THE GLOBAL  
TOTAL



Conflict 498,000  
Disasters 9,529,000  
30% of the global total

### 5 COUNTRIES WITH MOST NEW DISPLACEMENT (conflict and disasters)



### 5 COUNTRIES WITH MOST NEW DISPLACEMENTS



Figure 1: Five Most Displacement Countries in South Asia  
Source: Internal Displacement Global Report 2018, 2020

While the number of temporary displacements is increasing globally, which includes Bangladesh, there is not enough information on migration, seasonal or permanent, including the suffering of the communities who are forced to migrate from their homes due to disasters and climate change impacts. The numbers also do not guide a country to identify practical solutions unless people's voices are taken into account during policy and programme formulation and implementation. Therefore, policies and programmes are created by governments reacting to the problem which provides only temporary solutions or no solutions at all. In 2012, ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) and Center for Participatory Research and Development (CPRD) jointly published a study to understand the causes and consequences of climate change induced displacement and migration in Bangladesh. Over the years, AAB has been working in over 17 districts in Bangladesh on climate change and disaster related issues and have done a series of internal studies to design its programme. This study is an effort to understand the future scenario of climate change

<sup>5</sup> IDMC and NRC (2020) Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020

<sup>6</sup> UNDP; Bangladesh: Disaster Risk Reduction as Development; [https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/supporting\\_transformationalchange/Bangladesh-drr-casestudy-transformational-change](https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/poverty-reduction/supporting_transformationalchange/Bangladesh-drr-casestudy-transformational-change).

<sup>7</sup> Mi Zhou and Dorien Braam (2015) COMMUNITY RESILIENCE AND DISASTER-RELATED DISPLACEMENT IN SOUTH ASIA, Norwegian Refugee Council.

<sup>8</sup> IDMC and NRC (2018) Global Report on Internal Displacement.

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induced displacement and migration and identify steps and actions required at programme and policy level for people-centred solutions building on past, current and future climate scenario.

This research is part of the South Asia Migration and Climate (SAMAC) project, funded by the European Union through the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) managed project — Improving Migration Management in the Silk Routes Countries — in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan, implemented by ActionAid, in collaboration with Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSA), and its partners.

The report is based on a participatory research study undertaken by ActionAid Bangladesh with support from ActionAid International and Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSA) between September 2019 to February 2020 in five districts of Bangladesh to identify people-centred solutions to address displacement and migration associated with climate change impacts in Bangladesh. The study was done in two segments:

- a) a participatory assessment with disaster impacted and migrant families, and
- b) reviewing few key policies that has been and have the potential to dealing with disaster and climate induced displacement and migration.

Annexe 1 provides the details of the study methodology and locations the study was conducted. Based on the policy analysis and ground evidence, the study draws a way forward in the short and the long term, both policy and programme implementation, to address climate change induced displacement and migration while taking a human rights-based approach.

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<sup>9</sup> Concern Worldwide US (2019) FLOODS IN BANGLADESH CAUSE DEVASTATION

<https://www.concernusa.org/story/floods-bangladesh/>

<sup>10</sup> Samsuddoha, MD et.al (2012) Displacement and Migration from Climate Hot-spots in Bangladesh: Causes and Consequences; ActionAid Bangladesh

## BANGLADESH IN BRIEF

Bangladesh is situated in South Asia, surrounded on three sides by India and the Bay of Bengal in the South. It also shares a small portion of its border with Myanmar at the south eastern corner of the country.

The Bangladesh Delta, the largest dynamic delta of the world, consists of several river systems that empties itself into the Bay of Bengal. Despite a large and growing population base, Bangladesh has demonstrated impressive development gains in the area of climate resilience led by its own people and policy makers. Yet, the same delta and high population density presents many development challenges.

### Key Facts

<b>Capital City</b>	Dhaka
<b>Currency</b>	Taka
<b>Area</b>	1,47,570 square km.
<b>Population (2018 est.)<sup>1</sup></b>	164.6 million
<b>Projected population (2061)<sup>2</sup></b>	223.39 million
<b>Population density (2018)<sup>3</sup></b>	1,240 persons per square km.
<b>GDP (PPP) per capita (2019)<sup>4</sup></b>	USD 4,964
<b>Adult literacy (2019)<sup>5</sup></b>	74.68%
<b>Male</b>	77.44%
<b>Female</b>	71.94%
<b>Human Development Index (2020)<sup>6</sup></b>	133 out of 189 countries
<b>Corruption Perception Index (2020)<sup>7</sup></b>	146 out of 179 countries
<b>Gender Inequality Index (2020)<sup>8</sup></b>	133 out of 188 countries

With a population of over 164 million crammed into 1,47,570 km<sup>2</sup> including rivers, Bangladesh, with over 1,200 people per square kilometre, is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Tidal surge, salinity, flooding, river erosion and cyclones

<sup>11</sup> Bangladesh Statistics (2019) Bangladesh Bureau of Statistic; <https://bbs.portal.gov.bd/>

<sup>12</sup> Population projection of Bangladesh, Dynamics and Trends, 2011-2061, BBS (<http://203.112.218.65:8008/WebTestApplication/userfiles/Image/PopMonographs/PopulationProjection.pdf>)

<sup>13</sup> The World Bank Data ([https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.POP.DNST?locations=BD&name\\_desc=true](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.POP.DNST?locations=BD&name_desc=true))

<sup>14</sup> The World Bank Data ([https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD?locations=BD&name\\_desc=true](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD?locations=BD&name_desc=true))

<sup>15</sup> The world Bank Data (<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?contextual=aggregate&locations=BD>)

<sup>16</sup> Human Development Report 2020, UNDP, (<http://www.hdr.undp.org/en/2020-report>)

<sup>17</sup> Corruption Perception Index, Transparency International, (<https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2020/index/nzl>)

<sup>18</sup> Gender Inequality Index (GII), UNDP, (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>)

are regular features of the country. These features pose a continuous challenge to food security for the country and livelihood for a large part of the rural population. Furthermore, Bangladesh faces many other challenges from urbanization, declining land availability, infrastructure shortages, energy supply constraints and dearth in labour skills.

The interface of these multiple challenges, with limited public resources and a constrained public sector capacity, influences the policy and institutional challenges of lower middle-income Bangladesh. Even so, past track record gives confidence that with strong determination and effort, the country has the capability to overcome these challenges .

## CLIMATE CHANGE CONTEXT IN BANGLADESH

Bangladesh is ranked 7th on the Long-Term Climate Risk Index published by German Watch because its geography makes it physically exposed to climatic hazards and the socio-economic factors make people vulnerable. Hotspots of climate change vulnerability, where both biophysical and socio-economic vulnerability are high, are located in the central and western coastal area, the north- western highlands, and along the main rivers. Bangladesh has a unique geography, situated on the Bay of Bengal and forming one of the largest deltas in the world with a dense network of tributaries of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna (GBM) Rivers. Almost two-thirds of the country is less than 5 metres above sea level . Figure 2 shows the vulnerability of Bangladesh to various natural hazards.

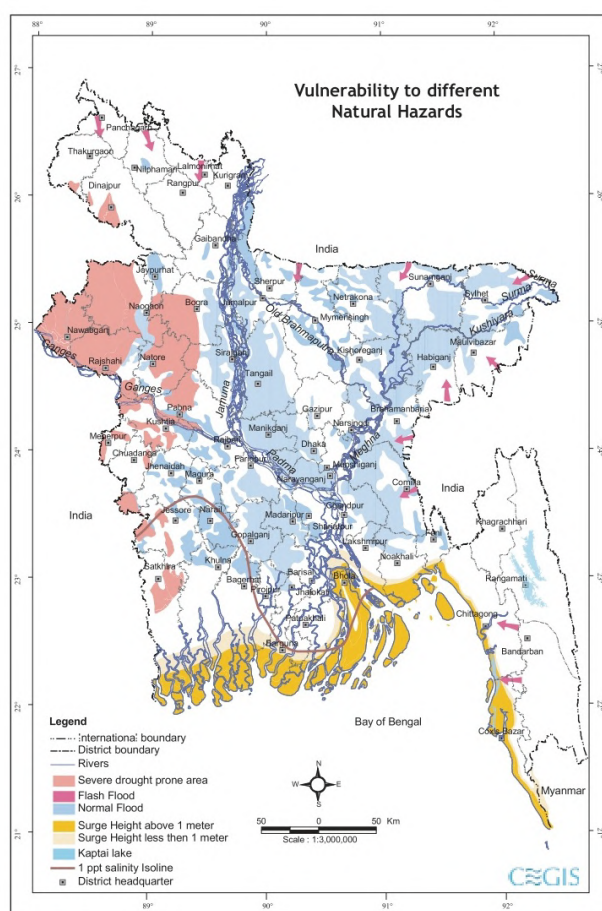


Figure 2: Vulnerability of Bangladesh to Various Natural Hazards  
Source: CEGIS

<sup>19</sup> Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, Abridged Version, by the General Economic Division of Ministry of Planning, the Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh; published in 2018.

<sup>20</sup> David Eckstein, Vera Künzel, Laura Schäfer, Maik Wings (2020)

GLOBAL CLIMATE RISK INDEX 2020, Germanwatch.

<sup>21</sup> Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, Abridged Version, by the General Economic Division of Ministry of Planning, the Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh; published in 2018.



With global warming continuing to get worse, Bangladesh will face these hazards with greater intensity and frequency. The evidence from global experience as well as the experience from Bangladesh suggest that climate change is a real threat to global and national level prosperity. These risks have been growing over time. Unless these vulnerabilities are managed and addressed comprehensively, Bangladesh faces serious downside risks to food security, the growth momentum and poverty reduction efforts. These climate change factors has been and will continue to impact many sectors that add up to substantial losses economy wide. The most vulnerable sector is agriculture. Climate change, especially in areas of temperature, humidity, and radiation, increases the incidence of insect pests, diseases, and microorganisms.

Rising temperature also reduces yields of high-yielding varieties of rice. Farm productivity will fall due to increase in soil salinity caused by sea level rise (SLR). Agriculture will suffer additionally from the higher incidence of flooding caused by climate change, including from inundation caused by SLR. The other highly vulnerable sectors are forestry and ecosystems. Many of the anticipated adverse effects of climate change, such as SLR, higher temperatures, and an increase in cyclone intensity, will damage the forest resources of the country, put pressure on many climate-sensitive species, and cause increased erosion and deterioration of soil quality in many upland forested areas. The world's largest mangrove forest, the Sundarbans, is extremely vulnerable to climate change. SLR will increase saltwater intrusion and negatively affect the forest.

Additional adverse effects will happen due to loss of land and physical assets from inundation. At 1-meter SLR a significant part of dryland in Bangladesh will be permanently inundated; the subsequent fall in production in all sectors of the economy would lead to a substantial fall in real GDP. Climate change and the resultant floods and cyclones will have a significant negative impact on capital stock in construction and infrastructure in Bangladesh. Health hazards will also intensify. Water-borne diseases, such as diarrhoea and dysentery, and vector-borne diseases, such as malaria and dengue, are also climate sensitive .

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<sup>20</sup> Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, Abridged Version, by the General Economic Division of Ministry of Planning, the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; published in 2018; Strategy; page xvi; Government of Bangladesh.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.



## CHAPTER TWO: HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH AND CLIMATE MIGRATION

“Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person.”  
- Article 2, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948.

*Photo Credit: Mohammadur Rahman (Mahmud)*

## HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Over the year, institutions adopted the human rights-based approach as one of the means to materialise human rights principles on the ground. In 1997, after the launch of the UN Reform Programme, a number of UN agencies have adopted a human rights-based approach to their development cooperation and have gained experiences in its operationalization.

ActionAid has been among the pioneers to understand and define development, taking a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA). ActionAid believes that poverty is a violation of human rights and a terrible injustice. Poverty arises because of the marginalization and discrimination associated with human rights violations. ActionAid's HRBA centres on active agency, supporting people living in poverty to become conscious of their rights, organise and claim their rights and hold duty bearers to account. The approach flows from the organisation's values, builds on international human rights law, feminist principles and beyond a legal or technical approach to rights. ActionAid believes and supports people to analyse and confront power imbalances, from local to global level, and takes side with people living in poverty.

ActionAid's decades of experiences of working with people living in poverty and exclusion led the institution to understand that people's vulnerability is dictated by unequal power relation, unjust social attitude, and unjust governance mechanism. Therefore, while hazard can be natural, climate induced or manmade; disasters that we experience are always manmade and can be avoided by addressing vulnerability and risks through ensuring people's access to resources, skills, and lands, that are steered by policies and practices of individuals or groups who are the duty bearer.

ActionAid's Theoretical approach to address people's vulnerability to shocks and stress promotes a systematic approach that is built on the values of feminist principals as well as the principles of equity, justice, and fairness. At all levels of society, the rich and powerful

### HUMAN RIGHTS BASED APPROACH

Taking a human rights-based approach is about making sure that people's rights are put at the very centre of policies and practices. It is about empowering people to know and claim their rights and increasing the ability and accountability of individuals and institutions who are responsible for respecting, protecting, and fulfilling rights. This means giving people greater opportunities to participate in shaping the decisions that impact on their human rights. It also means increasing the ability of those with responsibility for fulfilling rights to recognise and know how to respect those rights, and make sure they can be held to account.

- Based on Scottish Human Rights Commission and article on Developing the over-arching Principles and NCS What is meant by a 'Human Rights Based Approach'.

<sup>22</sup> Many organisations practices Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA). However, approaches can vary between organisations depending on the values, mission and vision of the organisations.

often deny the rights of excluded groups and individuals to keep control over productive resources and build individual wealth. It is often in the interests of the rich and powerful to dominate institutions, including state structures, and to use them for their economic, social, or political gain. The ongoing struggle for recognition of human rights has been a key counterbalance to this, opening doors for more fundamental social, economic, and political change.

## HRBA AND CLIMATE MIGRATION

Approaching climate change from a human rights perspective highlights the principles of universality and non-discrimination, emphasizing that rights are guaranteed for all persons, including vulnerable groups. A rights-based approach could serve as a catalyst for accelerated action to achieve a healthy and sustainable future where all energy is provided by zero carbon sources, forests are flourishing, oceans are healthy, and food is sustainably produced.

Hence, climate change and associated impacts are the outcome of global historical injustice that must be dealt with at the global level. However, while global processes are ongoing towards seeking an equitable and just solution, ActionAid understands that displacement and forced migration associated with climate change impacts are taking place at the ground level which has to be dealt with at the national level through national instruments, regional and global policies and instruments as well as adopting people centric-practices where global support is also essential. Analysing climate change induced displacement and migration therefore leads to the understanding that displacement and forced migration can be avoided by building absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacity of people, society, institution, infrastructure and environment .

In addressing displacement and forced migration, it is critical to ensure the following human rights by the government, agencies or development actors / duty bearer while designing and implementing policy and programmes:

- Putting the active agency of people living in poverty first and building their awareness of rights. Women, men, youth, and children living in poverty can only claim and protect their rights when they organise themselves and mobilise as a constituency, aware of their rights, and conscious of why their rights are being violated.
- Community based solutions through building partnership of people, society, institution, and the ecology that we live in that promotes credible alternatives and sustainability taking future climate trajectory into account.
- An accountability mechanism that promotes transparency at all levels.

It is critical to note that in Bangladesh, there are a number of policies, programmes and projects ongoing to address displacement and forced migration as the Government of Bangladesh has been among the 'Climate Champions' in the world. There is political will as well as resource allocation from the government. However, displacement and migration are on the rise along with the increase of climate change induced hazards. The following chapters will look at policy opportunities and analyse field findings to identify gaps and suggest actionable solution from the perspective of human rights.

<sup>23</sup> David R. Boyd (2019) Safe Climate: A Report of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment; United Nations Human Rights

<sup>24</sup> Singh, Harjeet et.al (2016) Through a Different Lens: ActionAid's Resilience Framework Version 1.0; ActionAid International

# CHAPTER THREE: KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS



AAB’s research team visited five climate hotspots considering source and destination of frequent migration. The destinations were selected on the basis of major agro-ecological zones, geographical vulnerability and major cities that receive the most migrants.

## KHULNA DISTRICT

Khulna is the third largest city in Bangladesh. Mongla Sea Port, the second largest seaport in the country is about 45 km away from Khulna City. However, due to low performance , port and port adjacent businesses are limited, hence there are not many jobs. Khulna is also the gateway to the world’s largest mangrove forest, the Sundarbans. It has a population of 2.38 million people.

**Natural Hazards:** Drought and cyclone, tidal surges, coastal flooding, water logging and salinity intrusion.

### Migration Drivers

- Low education status
- Lack of Skills
- Non-skill-based employment
- Very low paid and transient employment
- Loss of agriculture and fisheries

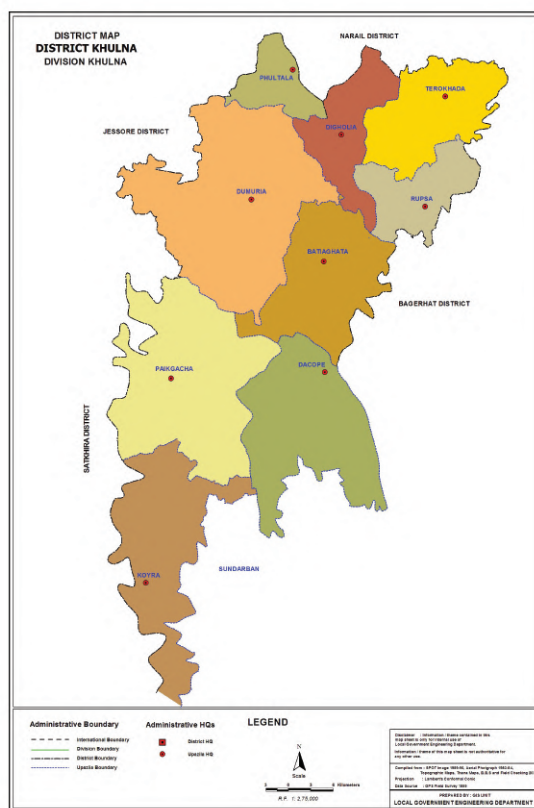


Figure 3: map of Khulna district source: GIS unit, LGED

Despite being a large city, it was found that Khulna city is not a popular destination for the migrants due to lack of infrastructure and businesses. The area is considered as the most vulnerable area of Bangladesh due to climate change impacts. Recurrent cyclones, increased salinity, lack of jobs, river, and sea erosion, flooding due to high tide and other climate induced hazards push people to be displaced and migrate out of Khulna region.

The study team visited two remote areas and discussed with a couple of NGOs who have been working in the area for decades.

## MALOPARA, PAIKGACHA

Paikgacha is an Upazila of Khulna. It is about 65 km south from Khulna town close to the Sundarbans. The research had focused group discussion with the Malo Community, a sub section of the Hindu Community. Living on the bank of a sub river of Kopotakkho River, the families have migrated within the area a number of times due to river erosion. Most of the families are farmers. They used to own farmlands. However, over a period of time, many lost their lands and ended up living within the community on someone else’s land.

There has been no support from the government for the community. Being an ethnic minority even within the Hindu Community, Malo families stay together to protect their own group. With strong social bonding, the community members support each other during the

<sup>27</sup> Islam, Md. Ashraful and Haider, Mohammed Ziaul (2016) Performance Assessment of Mongla Seaport in Bangladesh. International Journal of Transportation Engineering and Technology. Vol. 2, No. 2, 2016, pp. 15-21.

process of displacement and migration. This includes allowing other families to live on their land until they find a better place. Even the few families with better economic condition choose not to migrate to safer places as they are afraid of ending up being alone that might expose them to social exploitation and marginalization. The community arranges their own basic services as they do not receive government support, especially access to social safety net programmes, even where they are eligible.

### **NOLIAN, DACOP**

Nolian, located on the bank of river Shibsra, is one of the most cyclone-prone villages in Bangladesh. Located very close to the Bay of Bengal the village was one of the worst impacted villages hit by super cyclone Sidr in 2007 and cyclone Aila in 2009. Parts of the village and surrounding areas went into the river due to cyclone induced tidal surge. Over the past five years, river erosion increased due to higher water pressure during high tide and in many places due to impact of climate change and associated factors. Embankments are still broken from cyclone Aila. People in the area are still displaced. Being far away from the city and even the Sub District facilities, the village people depend on the social bonding between the neighbours and close relatives living nearby. The local government support is very limited compared to the need. There are a few NGOs working in the area. However, these NGOs mostly provide microfinance that landless families are unable to access as most NGOs require collateral against loan.

The field study team conducted two FGDs and spontaneous discussion took place with day labourers, women and men living on the embankment. It is understood that many people remain “trapped”, being displaced from one place to another, due to continuous river erosion, lack of jobs, and in recent years, displaced by development projects. Many live on other peoples’ land or on the embankment for years as they have no place to go. Many reported that the families, landless to begin with, are affected by the development projects which, while forcing them to displace, provide no rehabilitation support. As there is no guarantee of finding a job in the nearby town in Dacop, men opt to work in the development projects often with a very low daily wage. Travelling up and down to Dacop, which takes about two hours, costs around Taka 200. It is therefore better working for a daily payment of 200 – 250 Taka instead of undertaking the travel to Dacop .

After cyclone Aila, and facing several other weather-related disasters, the number of families from Nolian migrated to the next village. However, in order to purchase land, they had to borrow money with an interest rate as high as 120% per annum from local borrowers. Due to high interest rate and lack of livelihood, the families remain trapped in an endless debt cycle trying to pay the interest only. Scarcity of work forces the young men of the families to migrate to Gopalganj, Tungipara, Cumilla as agricultural day labour. However, they return once the season is over. Families with comparatively better economic conditions (very few) migrate to Khulna City in a slow and gradual process where they first send their children to the city for education and subsequently migrate themselves as well over a period of time.

Landless people living on or nearby the embankment are stuck / trapped, unable to make a choice to migrate as they do not even have the money to do so. There is no social support system in the cities to fall back upon. Some live in the Sundarbans. However, it is reported that to fish or harvest resources from Sundarbans sometimes requires bribing to different people, mostly middleman, to get a licence from relevant government offices.

<sup>28</sup> Calculated based on the cost of field visit by the study team.

## MEETING WITH ACTIVE NGOS

The study team met Executive Directors of Shulilan and AOSED, two major NGOs working in Khulna and its surrounding areas to understand overall migration situation in Khulna. Both confirmed that the impacts of climate change are visible, reversing development gains every day. Fighting poverty remains a key challenge due to climate induced disasters that displace people and cause them to migrate. There is no proper mechanism of managing displacement and migration. Therefore, people affected are often left with no choice but to leave.

While discussing the response mechanism by the government and other development actors, it was strongly noted that post disaster relief are inadequate. Resettlement projects often fail to reach the vast population in need. Social safety net programme of the government is also inadequate. Corruption remains one of the key challenges for government large scale projects to achieve aspired goals. Significant lack of monitoring of the projects is one of the major problems for the projects to address the landless and displaced population.

Khulna, as a city, does not attract migrants. It rather acts as a gateway for people to migrate to Dhaka or Chattogram. Lack of infrastructure, services and being far away from the capital has been a major challenge of economic growth of Khulna. Therefore, there are limited livelihood options that pushes people towards other major cities.

While discussing future climate change and its associated impacts, it was noted that lack of infrastructure and facilities will be the key barrier to cope with a scenario where large displacement and migration takes place due to climate induced disasters; the city cannot accommodate the influx and will collapse. It was also noted that community-based solutions remain largely ineffective in the area mostly due to fast changing scenario where people living in poverty are constantly trying, and failing, to cope with disasters. Government and NGO supports are mostly to help protect people to save lives and provide basic minimum supports. Every year, the number of climate induced hazards are increasing where people and institutions are forced to invest additional resources to protect their assets and businesses. The development actors are facing similar challenges where often the choice is to respond to sudden disasters diverting the resources originally allocated for development interventions.

The study took this opportunity to discuss possible actions to address future climate induced migration. One of the key priorities suggested by these practitioners is to ensure protection from climatic hazards using climate resilient embankment to protect communities – especially those living in rural areas close to the river and sea – from tidal surge, higher water pressure and cyclone. The protection actions must engage communities in decision making as well as facilitate jobs for the most vulnerable women and men. In the rural areas, government must facilitate risk reduction through risk- informed land use planning and allocate Khas Land to the landless people ensuring transparency and accountability. In addition, investment from government through Social Safety Net Programme (SSNP) livelihood projects and private sector is essential.

At the urban spaces, especially in Khulna city, infrastructure must be developed to support public and private investment. This needs to be done considering the Delta Plan of Bangladesh, a long-term strategy document developed by the Government of Bangladesh



to address climate change and associated challenges to ensure development is climate resilient. Urban-rural connectivity needs to be improved so that farmers can access urban market and earn better price for their products. The role of NGOs here will be to support community in monitoring large government projects, skill development of women, men and young people in the communities considering climate change and possible migration scenario and creating knowledge base through piloting and scaling up innovative actions to address impacts of climate change.

## NAOGAON DISTRICT

Naogaon is part of another unique ecosystems in Bangladesh under the Barind Tract, highland with red soil, which differs from the surrounding floodplains. It has a population of 2.39 million.

### Natural Hazards:

Drought, flood, tornado, cyclone.

Migration happens as a response to drought and expectations of drought. People tend to prefer temporary or seasonal migration, typically for 2 – 3 months each year due to non-availability of work during the off- season.

Most people migrate to nearby cities like Rajshahi or Naogaon when cultivation stops. Young adults mostly migrate to Dhaka in search of work. They tend to return in January for harvesting. The study team visited two communities and had Key Informant Interview with elected UP Chairman of Patari Union.

### HAPANIA (SHIALMARI), SHAPAHAR

The village lands are mostly owned by the “Shahus” (Landlords) who do not live in the area and remotely manage their properties. The poor and marginalized farmers cultivate the lands taking lease from the landlords or work under a shared cropping agreement, where the farmers are often exploited by the landlords in different ways throughout the year. Those who do not have access to lands due to resource constrains, live as day labours in agricultural lands or engage in other livelihood activities.

Consultation with a group of women revealed that the extreme heat and extreme cold are two major weather-related challenges the community faces, and the winter season is gradually becoming longer. Up until ten years ago, it used to be from December to January, but now winter stretches from November to mid-February causing loss and damage of seeds and changing agricultural practices. Furthermore, thunderstorms and lightning increasingly affect paddy production and mango cultivation.

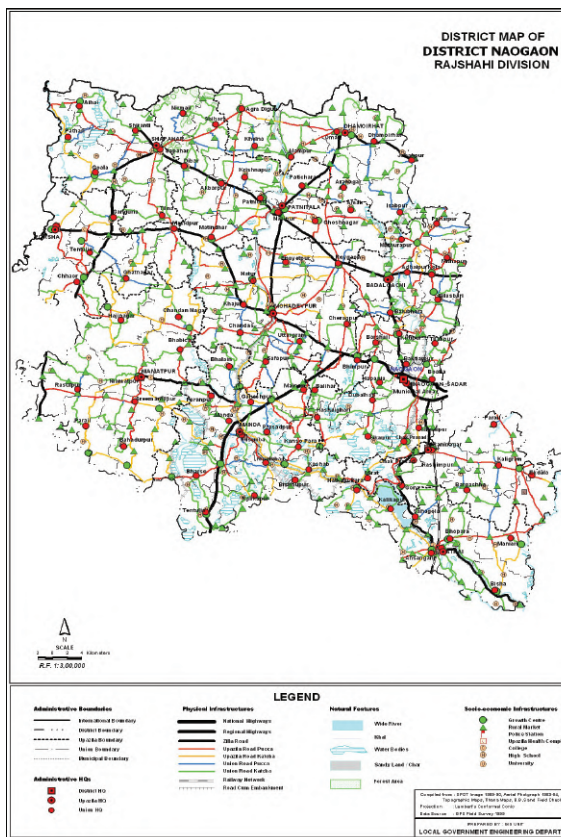


Figure 4: Map of Naogaon District  
Source: GIS unit, LGED

Agriculture is mostly rain-fed and therefore they only have 3-4 months of work in the village. The day labourers and farmers who cannot afford to cultivate during winter season due to lack of irrigation, migrate elsewhere for livelihood. The usual length of the migration is a minimum of six months but can extend up to between one and two years at times, depending on multiple factors including what type of job one finds in other districts. Those migrating for periods longer than six months return from time to time to spend time with the family. Common destinations are Dhaka, Faridpur, Khulna and Chattogram. In recent days, seasonal migration increased due to shift in land use where many landlords have transformed their agricultural lands to mango orchards / gardens. A mango garden requires less maintenance and therefore employs only one or two persons to look after that saves cost while mango is more profitable compared to paddy.

This shift in agricultural practices created unemployment in the community for the farmers and reduced farm dependent livelihoods leading many men and women to migrate. The farmers are increasingly burdened with debt from local money lenders and microfinance institutions where the interest rates are sometimes too high for them and if their crops fail, they are unable to repay. The community reported that some families, due to lack of livelihoods and income erosion from climate induced disasters such as excessive rainfall and fog that damages seedbed or crops, fall into debt and migrate permanently as they fail to pay their instalments. Those who can pay back the debt by earning a living in other parts of the country return. However, some have never returned.

Women are reported to be more vulnerable especially when the male member of the household migrates. The male migration, usually customary, triples the workload of women. Living in a patriarchal society and conservative mindset they are forced to manage both the internal and external affairs of the household and the overall family. The probability of sexual harassment for women and young girls increases during the absence of the male part.

The village is close to the Indian border and faces a lot of drug associated problems. During a one-to-one consultation with a woman whose husband is a seasonal migrant worker it was reported that some drug abusers once attempted to harass her when her husband was away. It was dealt with socially. However, she continues to live in fear when her husband migrates. Furthermore, migration of male member, or the entire family, also increases the number of school dropout. Sometimes, due to poverty and uncertainty that arises as a result of migration, child marriage increases as the parents think that marriage will somewhat bring social security to the girl child.

ActionAid Bangladesh has been working in this area for about seven years supporting women and young people to build resilience to climate change and disasters. The community-led approach implemented some solutions that are currently helping the communities to create livelihood alternatives. For example, as a response to long dry period, the community re-excavated 40 ponds in the area to harvest rainwater. These ponds are used for small scale irrigation during winter, and some are being used for fish cultivation year-round. Over the last three years, the women's self-help group have saved up Taka 200,000 from sale of fish. Women farmers in the community established food bank practicing "Musthi Chal" - the indigenous traditional practice of women to keep aside a fistful of rice daily from one meal they cook. The women collectively store the rice in pots and have accumulated enough rice to feed the village for two months if required. As

keeping the rice for too long can reduce the quality, the women group sell some rice and refill their stock.

### **KOLMUDANGA, SHAPAHAR**

The village is next to the Indian border. Soil texture is mixed where some part is fertile loam soil while some other part is of red clay type soil. According to the community, the village faces floods sometimes due to a dam located across the Indian border. The 2017 and 2018 flood events destroyed their crops. Agriculture in this village is failing because of the way they do farming which is often impacted due to climate change which in turn ends up costing them more than the benefits derived. Mango gardening is increasing in the area. However, the scale is lower compared to other villages. Furthermore, heavy fog especially for the last 2-3 years adversely impacts the seedbed of winter crops. Key reasons of migration include climate change factors such as long winter without any agriculture, and high debt with microfinance institutions and NGOs.

During the consultation, strong focus was given with regards to challenges the migrants face during transition and once they arrive at their destination. Often, they borrow money to migrate for jobs. If traveling with family, half of the family members travel by standing without a seat. The migrants do not always get jobs on a regular basis in their destination area. They often go for days in between without any work and have nowhere to stay and sleep other than in the fields, in gardens, on benches and in open areas that causes health hazards, especially in winter. One of the women reported that she has been migrating seasonally to Dhaka for years. However, her life as a migrant is equally difficult as she has to live on only 1400 Taka a month which is around 0.54 USD a day . Farming is no longer a viable option for smallholder farmers as the price of everything has gone up, including field inputs and they cannot recover this via profits from sale of agricultural products.

While discussing community-based solutions, the research team noted that the community has not thought of any solutions to enhance their income. SSNP, like other rural areas of Bangladesh, is inadequate in terms of supporting one person and reaching the most vulnerable families in the community. People wanted factories and such to be built near them so that they could have regular work locally in their own area and did not have to move elsewhere.

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<sup>29</sup> Calculaiton is done based on July 2020 exchange rate noted in <https://www1.oanda.com/currency/converter/>

## SUNAMGANJ DISTRICT

Sunamganj is a Haor District, a unique wetland ecosystem in the north eastern part of Bangladesh. A Haor physically is a bowl or saucer shaped shallow depression, also known as a back-swamp. During monsoon, Haors receive surface runoff water from rivers and canals to become vast stretches of turbulent water body. During the time, the Haors are connected and turn into a vast inland sea within which the villages appear as islands. Occasional high winds during the rainy season (July to September) generate large waves which often cause considerable damage to homesteads. However, they all but dry up in the post-monsoon period and in winter most of the areas become dry and turn into vast stretches of green land.

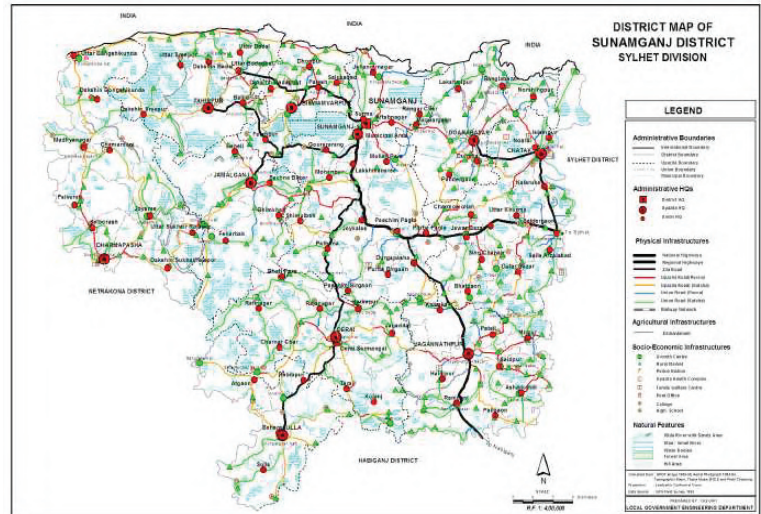


Figure 5: Map of Sunamganj District  
Source: GIS unit, LGED

The district is situated near the border next to Meghalaya in India and is one of the highest rainfall areas on earth that receives huge water from the hills during monsoon. Several recent studies have noted that impacts of climate change are visible in the region. Migration in the district had been taking place for various reasons, but due to impacts of climate change the rate of migration has already increased and predicted to increase further (see Figure 3).

Other than climate change, several push factors of migration were identified during the visit. Sand and stone extraction, one of the major livelihood sectors in the area, are restricted or illegal in these areas resulting in reduced job opportunities.

**Population:** 2.01 million

**Main rivers:** Surma, Kushiya, Dhamalia, Jadukata.

**Average literacy:** Total average 34.4%; male 38.1%, female 30.5%

**Natural Hazards:** flash flood, seasonal flood, cyclone and tidal surge, hailstorm, and draught, river erosion.

The AAB research team visited Bishwamvarpur Upazila of Sunamganj.

### AMBRIA

Ambria, a village under the Badaghat Union, gets flooded almost every year during monsoon due to heavy rainfall and upstream water from Meghalaya in India. Flash flood between April and May and long period of flood between June to September is a regular phenomenon here. This disrupts livelihood of many people who are actively involved with agriculture, stone and sand quarrying work. As a result, they migrate either internally or move to a nearby town for making a living. The community also faces a longer dry season up to five months (which used to be three months from December to February) resulting in crop failure. Seasonal migration, depending on the type of livelihoods that the families are engaged in, is common during the floods and the extreme dry season.

Most people from the village migrate to Dhaka or do seasonal migration to Jajlong (a tourist and stone collection area) in search of livelihood. During these extreme weather periods, the community faces difficulties in finding adequate shelter due to lack of infrastructure, safe water for drinking – as tube wells are inundated, and lack of food and fuel for cooking. Sanitation becomes a major challenge especially for women and girls. Commuting becomes risky as roads go under water. Cooking becomes difficult, and most households survive on dry food items. Children often suffer from health hazards such as diarrhoea and pneumonia. They fail to get medical help due to non-availability of health services nearby and accessibility to such services in other areas is made more difficult due to lack of transportation. Boats are the only means of transportation during the time which is risky due to strong water current.

Mostly, the male members migrate alone leaving behind the female members to take care of their family. Women are particularly vulnerable to climatic events because of their involvement in managing the household tasks and taking care of children. During the FGDs, few female members of the community expressed fear of sexual harassment while taking shelter at neighbour's house during flood events. In recent years, many women are migrating to Dhaka in search of work in housekeeping or garments factory for longer term. As the number of weather-related hazards have increased, so has the intensity and frequency of such migration. For example, lightning has become more frequent during rain. The communities are facing two to three floods in a year which, before 2007 was unheard of. In 2017 and 2019, the community faced flash flood and two floods in a single year with higher water level compared to previous years. According to the community, these were the worst floods they ever faced.

Parveen Akhter (38) and her community didn't get any relief support from government during 2019 flood. "Our village was completely submerged in flood water and three families took shelter at my house. Use of latrine and finding food were a major challenge for all of us", said Parveen. Two of her sons went off to Sylhet to find work as there was no income generating activities in the area at that time. "Flood events bring a lot of disruption to my children's education every year", said Parveen.

This group has been working with ActionAid Bangladesh and VARD (local partner of AAB) to build resilience to shocks and stresses. They have established a social security system to support each other in times of need. They adopted climate resilient sustainable agriculture approach doing homestead gardening in sacks during monsoon seasons and have been trying to diversify their livelihood options. They have also formed a Women Led Response and Recovery Group in 2017 and have been saving money for emergencies. In 2019, the savings, together with support from AAB was the only means of survival they had during the flood.

### **JAMALPUR**

Jamalpur, not to be confused with Jamalpur district under Mymensingh, is another area in Asharkandi Union in Sunamganj. Most of the male members migrate to different cities from here and come back for four months on an annual basis. Like Ambria, flood events are so regular that migration has become a way of life for most of the community people specially the male members. Dhaka, Bhola, Cumilla, Sylhet, Chattogram and Jaflong are among the migration spots for these people where they find work around stone and sand quarries. The female members usually stay back with their children and take care of the family.

Floods usually last for four months and the village gets submerged in flood water for three weeks. During the time, families who are affected by flood either stay in their house building 'macha' (scaffold or raised platform within the house using bamboo) or move to nearby neighbour's house that are not impacted severely. Women here fall into a tricky situation when flood occurs as they are unwilling to leave their homes and assets behind fearing theft. Similar to Ambria, affected households face difficulties as sanitation and water supply become severely disrupted. The tube-wells and toilets become unusable for the community people. They have to travel for miles on a boat and on foot to fetch drinking water. Transportation becomes a challenge.

During the discussion, the group reported that a woman lost her unborn child for not being able to get to the hospital in time during her labour. The community cannot afford three meals a day due to shortage of food supply. While comparing the intensity of flood the community people said the impacts are much worse than before.

Inability to earn a living or not having enough skills leave the female members more vulnerable to the climatic events. They expressed their fear of sexual harassment and were equally concerned about the young girls who seek shelter in a neighbour's place during flood events. Children suffer from health conditions such as diarrhoea during this period. Social security system is limited in this area and not accessible to all.

### **MIARCHAR**

Yearly monsoon and flood events have forced the community people of Miarchar to migrate to different parts of Dhaka and Sylhet. 25 families have migrated to different locations so far in the last seven years. When asked about the decision to choose Dhaka city which is almost 266 km away from Sunamganj, they talked about having more livelihood options in the city. Most of the women from this community are housekeepers or work in garment factories. Others who migrate to nearby towns are involved in sand extraction work and usually come back when the extremities of flood events subside.

Maleka (16) has been working as a household help in Dhaka since the last four years. Being the third of seven siblings, she is earning money to support her family. Maleka has four sisters and two younger brothers. Her elder sister Ripa, aged 18, also migrated to Dhaka five years back and currently works at a garment factory. Her parents and rest of the siblings live in Miarchar. All the sisters have studied till grade six.

Due to flood and heavy monsoon rainfall, Maleka's house got damaged four times in the last eight years. While rebuilding their house, her father had a major leg injury which left him immobile and unable to work. Her mother has stopped working after undergoing medical operation. There was always food shortage, latrines were submerged in water, and the family was in debt. This forced Maleka to leave her school and move to Dhaka to bring income for the family. Both Maleka and Ripa paid off the family loans through their earnings. They first found work through an "agent" who works as a supplier of household help.

"I always wanted to be a teacher. But god had a different plan. My dream doesn't matter anymore," said Maleka with a sad smile on her face. When asked about whether she would like to come back, Maleka said "If there is work opportunities like Dhaka offers, of course I will come back. I miss my family very much."

The community people face a number of challenges as half the village gets submerged in floodwater. Their livestock get washed away or destroyed and agricultural land becomes unsuitable for cultivation for their crops. Education disruption is common in children and many of them migrate to the cities with their parents in search of income source. Food sufficiency is decreasing with the level and intensity of floods, and many people do not have access to three meals a day. Most of the latrines are submerged in water bringing in various health hazards for the community people. During the period of June to September, this region becomes an important source for fish business. However, only the influential fishermen who have taken lease have access to the wetlands.

### **CONSULTATION WITH UP CHAIRMAN**

AAB had a discussion with Mr. Md. Arshad Mia, the Union Parishad (UP) Charman of Badaghat South Union, Bishwamvarpur who provided with an outline of the scenario in the UP.

The UP faces flood every year. People living in poverty face multiple challenges in terms of job security. Agricultural activities take place in winter. However, the UP often faces flash flood due to rainfall in Meghalaya, India.

Every year, men and women migrate to cities such as Sylhet, Chattogram and other places for a certain period of time, especially during monsoon. Recently, there is an increased trend of permanent migration from the area as the livelihood pattern is disrupted due to flash flood, seasonal flood, erratic rainfall etc.

The UP does not keep any track of the migration but nevertheless has some idea about how many families are migrating permanently. The UP Chairman provides support to some

of the families at personal level as there is no provision to support such migration. Those who leave for longer terms (2-3 years) do remain in communication. There is a social security system through which families and neighbour provides assistance to the migrant families.

The alternative solutions are not accessible for the poor and marginalised. There are provisions for taking lease of water bodies (beels) but, the funding requirements can only be met by the well-off families or cooperatives with sufficient funds available. There are not enough investments coming in to create jobs / sustainable livelihoods in the area that can help people stay in the area.

## CHATTOGRAM DISTRICT

Chattogram is a coastal district with the largest port of Bangladesh, a business hub with jobs that attracts people from across the country. The city of Chattogram is the second largest city of Bangladesh. It has a population of 6.61 million.

Environmental drivers behind migration

- Damage of natural resources
- Disaster impacts
- Salinity intrusion
- Riverbank erosion
- Loss of agriculture and fisheries

**Natural Hazards:** River flood, urban flood, costal flood, extreme heat, river erosion, land slide, wildfire, cyclone.

AAB team conducted Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) in Sitakunda sub district, Foy's Lake slum close to Chattogram city and Jelepara to understand major challenges the migrant families are facing.

### SITAKUNDA

Sitakunda, an Upazila (Subdistrict), is located on the Bay of Bengal and Meghna River estuary. Though it used to be considered as an agricultural zone, it also has large ship breaking industry on the bank of Dhaka-Chattogram Highway that influences economic and social activity of the area.

The Upazila has been one of the major gateways of migration into Chattogram for over 30 years especially for the people from Sandwip, a neighbouring island of Chattogram division. Sandwip hosts around 300,000 inhabitants who earn their living through fishery and agriculture. However, rising sea level, river erosion and cyclones impacted the livelihood of people and they opt for seasonal migration to find work. Over time people started losing their homes and crop lands which, according to migrated people, has increased due to

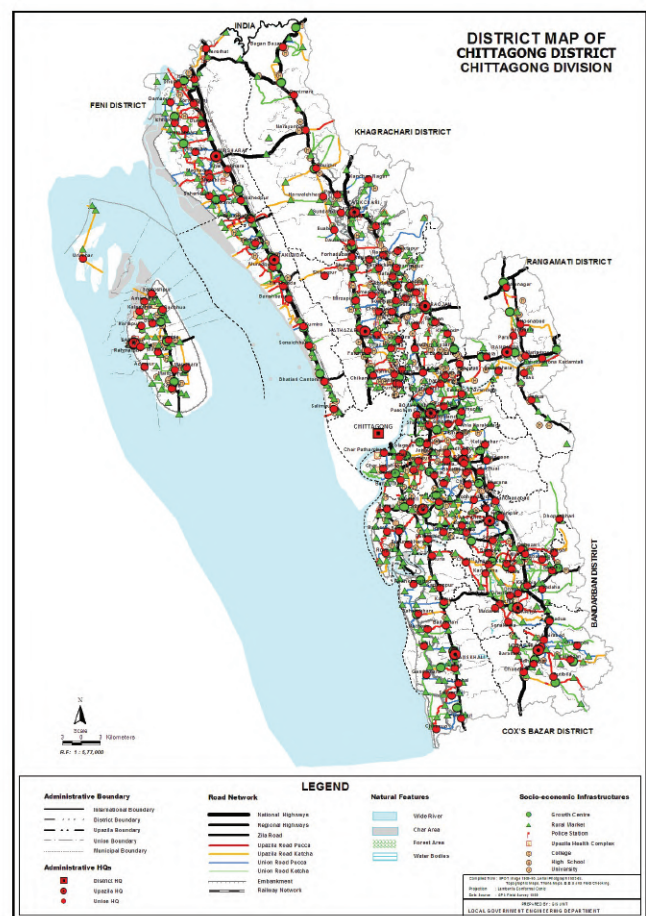


Figure 6: Map of Chattogram District  
source: GIS unit, LGED



increasing river erosion. With no livelihood options and shelters families are forced to move to Sitakunda permanently.

According to the migrant community that mostly live on or near the embankment, an average of 8-10 families used to migrate to Sitakunda in a year about 10-15 years ago. However, during the past 10 years or so migration has doubled every year leading to around 15-20 families permanently migrating annually due to increased river erosion. While many use Sitakunda as an entry point to Chattogram or Dhaka, for many the embankment and surrounding areas become the destination due to lack of opportunities, information and no family members in other locations.

For the individual or family with no other option, there is a community based informal support system to help the migrants. This includes allowing the displaced person / family to live on the embankment and providing short term support with food and essentials. This is not a formal mechanism however, the people do it out of humanity as many of them went through the same process themselves. It is to be noted that the boats / ferries do not take fare from the families who are migrating knowing these are people who became landless and have nothing left to pay the boat fare. During discussion, the women suggested that they did not face any sexual harassment on the way to Sitakunda.

The local government, especially the Union Parishad (UP) Members of the area are aware of the matter. However, there is no support mechanism from the local government. The role of the member is also limited at a personal level to facilitating the migrants to have livelihood (mostly short-term day labour) or arranging temporary makeshift housing on the embankment using resource from nearby forest. The Union Parishad's or other social safety net programmes (SSNP) are for the local residents possessing national identification (NID) card. Migrants either do not have an NID card, and those having NID cards that states them to be residents of Sandwip are not allowed SSNP support since it is meant for the local residents only. This is mostly due to inadequate number and amount of SSNPs from the government which is insufficient to cater to the needs of the local people and therefore bringing the migrants within the scheme is not possible.

The migrants are mostly unskilled to fit for the urban / peri urban jobs in factories. They also have no capital to start any small-scale business. There is not enough agricultural work in the area due to increased salinity. The young people among the migrants move elsewhere for working as day labourers or household work or try to get a job in garment factories. However, lack of information with regards to job availability in other areas or even in the surrounding areas remains a key challenge for the migrants.

### **FOY'S LAKE SLUM**

Foy's Lake is a tourist area and close to Chattogram Town. The slum, an informal settlement with limited basic services, is located next to the Foy's Lake and adjacent zoo. Situated in a hilltop area the settlement has sprouted gradually by encroaching land in an unplanned way. Often hills are cut to create additional space making people vulnerable to landslide and fire.

The migrants in this slum are from different districts of Bangladesh such as Noakhali, Bhola, Barisal, Faridpur, Chandpur and Gaibandha. The reasons for the migrants from

such far-off places are multiple. Historically, Chattogram city has been a destination for people from all over the country looking for jobs as it is a port city with many different types of factories within and in the periphery of Chattogram. Having more livelihood options compared to flood prone areas, people initially came temporarily. However, over the period families, extended families and neighbours moved in as well in the hope of finding jobs and better living condition.

The research team spoke to a group of women from different locations. One of the key challenges faced during the consultation was time availability of women as most of them were homemaker / engaged in household services in nearby places. The consultation revealed that coming to the slum was the last choice they had to make. With change of location, the struggle transformed from fear of flood and river erosion to fear of landslide, fire, exploitation and many unknown social and economic hazards. Migrants here live in unsafe settlements and an unliveable environment that lack basic water and sanitation facility and electricity. Other services such as health support or access to social safety net programme is absent in the area.

The slum area rent is high – both male and female members of the household need to work to earn for their survival. However, in the process, their children are often left home alone. They always live in fear of eviction by landlords, or local government of the Foy's lake authority. They are not sure who exactly is the landlord of the area, however. There are middlemen / self-claimed landlords who collect rent from them. Social cohesion in the area is found to be much less. Everyone is for themselves. In addition to the challenge of accessing basic services, the migrant workers are often found to be trapped in the cycle of money borrowing from local money lenders with interest rate as high as 120% per annum depending upon where it is taken from. The situation gets worse when men and / or women are unable to get a job due to a number of factors such as taking care of babies, aged people or sick husband, non-availability of jobs for new people, lack of skill etc. This leads to a further reduction of income and deepens poverty.

Except for some seasonal migrants from Gaibandha (during flood season), most of the slum dwellers moved here permanently with no return option. During the process of migration, sexual harassment on the transportation, especially on the bus was reported as not a common issue. It is to be noted that verbal abuse or abusive behaviour is something common during the process; however, women see that as an inevitability and therefore do not count those as abuse or harassment.

Alia Begum (30), mother of three used to live in Matin Char, Chandpur. She lost her house to flood and river erosion in 2017 and again in 2019. She did not have the financial capacity to rebuild the house, so she moved to Chattogram where her husband works as a rickshaw puller since 2015. Having five members in the family, they had to rent a small room in one of the slums in Beltoli Gona, Lal Hill in Foy's Lake area of Chattogram.

Once in Chattogram, living in the slum led to increased health hazards for the family, especially the young ones. Living out in the open during rain, one of Alia's sons caught pneumonia and had to suffer in the hospital that cost them a lot of money for which they had to borrow.

The slum, adding to the suffering, was on government land next to the zoo and so the zoo authority forcibly evicted them. Alia and others like her moved deeper into the hills where landslide risks are higher. Their income is very low, and the family cannot afford renting house with higher price. In addition to this, they live in constant fear of being evicted again and feel that they are trapped in the situation.

The women or family moved to the Foy's Lake slum area because their husband or family members had come here earlier for jobs and later brought them here. They had information that there were jobs, and they would not face floods and river erosion: a hope to restart life. However, Chattogram did not meet their expectations. Nevertheless, there was no choice as few had already shifted their house back home due to river erosion and had no support from the government or any other development actors. The women and their families were forced to migrate to Chattogram.

### **JELEPARA**

In Jelepara, Beribadh (Embankment) area, the scenario is different compared to the other two areas. The fishing community and people live in the area, outside of embankment on Khas Land (government owned land) next to the sea. These families migrated to Chattogram about 20 years back mostly from Noakhali, Faridpur, Hatiya due to river erosion that gobbled all their land and properties. They used to live in more secured place in slums or on Khas Land close to the town. However, they were forced to move to Beribadh area about 10 years back. The community lived in the area for about 5 years. But since then, they had to move 3 times and finally, they are now located very close to the sea outside the embankment area. As they are forced to stay very close to the sea, they face floods every now and then due to high tides during the monsoon period. Though these people moved initially due to river erosion, they remain on the move due to development initiatives that do not consider landless people or people living in slums.

People living on the embankments are facing several challenges and threats living near the sea. In 2017, three people died due to rough sea induced flooding. They do not have access to electricity or drinking water facilities. They buy drinking water from inside the embankment areas. There is no school or any other basic services, no cemetery and if someone dies, they leave the dead body in the sea during low tide which is later washed away into deep sea.

Most of the people are fishermen or fish day labourers working on someone else's boat. They suffer exploitation at every step of the way. Some women or girls go to nearby garment factories. Political leaders / local city corporation promised the community during last eviction to this current place that they will be rehabilitated, or some arrangements will be done; however, no support or arrangement is made so far.

These families do not receive any social safety net programme support. During monsoon they get flooded twice a day due to high tide. Most of the families are in deep debt borrowing money from local money lender with high interest rate. If they can catch enough fish, sometimes they manage to pay off the loan; however, they fall back into loan again during the lean period. As there is currently a mega project going on reconstructing the embankment, these families will have to evacuate the place sooner or later and move somewhere else. Where they would move to is not known to them. These people are trapped and living a life of exclusion and uncertainty.

## DHAKA CITY

Dhaka is the capital and the largest city of Bangladesh. The population of the inner or the main city is around 10 million while Dhaka metro area, which includes the periphery of the city, has a population of over 20 million.

As a capital city, governments over the decades undertook several measures to make Dhaka city flood free. However, in the process, it created a scenario where every year the city gets waterlogged for days during the monsoon. Dhaka water logging is both due to poor drainage infrastructure that is unable to drain large amounts of rainfall in the short period of time – a new phenomenon due to climate change – and high solid waste pollution blocking the rivers and canals. There is no agreed number in terms of how many people migrate to Dhaka every year. According to several reports the number is between 400,000 to half a million every year from all over Bangladesh. Finding employment is the most common reason for people to migrate here. Most of those arriving in Dhaka end up in the urban slums around the periphery of the city, with rudimentary housing conditions, very high population density and poor sanitation. The research team of AAB conducted FGDs and interviewed women migrants in Kallyanpur, one of the largest slums in Dhaka city which is comprised of many small slums within.

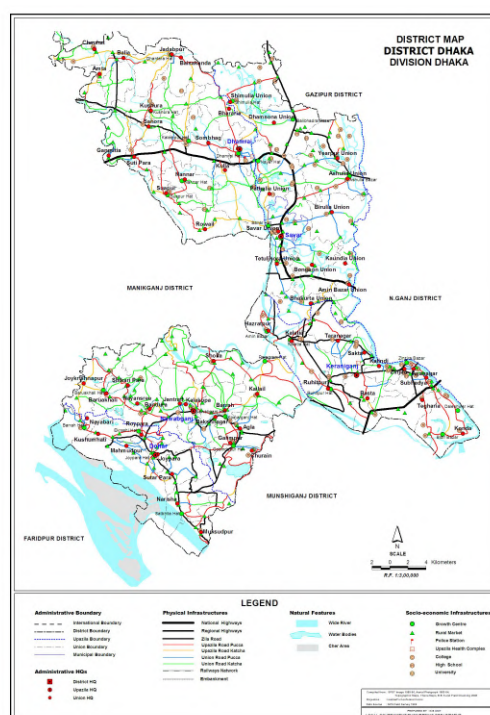


Figure 7: Map of Dhaka District  
Source: GIS unit, LGED

<sup>32</sup> Macrotrends (2020) Dhaka, Bangladesh Metro Area Population 1950-2021

<https://www.macrotrends.net/cities/20119/dhaka/population#:~:text=The%20current%20metro%20area%20population,a%203.62%25%20increase%20from%202017.>

<sup>33</sup> PopulationStat (2020) Dhaka, Bangladesh Population; <https://populationstat.com/bangladesh/dhaka.>

## KALLYANPUR

Kallyanpur slum, with population of around 40 thousand people, is one of the most densely populated slums in Dhaka city. Most of these families are migrants from different districts of Bangladesh. The slum has communities named after their districts from where they moved.

Among the migrants, majority are from the coastal districts and they migrated because of river erosion losing their land and homestead belongings caused by frequent river erosion. Most of the migrants, especially women, work in nearby ready-made garment factories. Those who moved to this slum earlier, established small businesses like tailoring or garment waste sorting and selling (locally known as Jhut). Others are rickshaw or van pullers, day labourers or domestic helpers.

Jannatul Ferdous (37) is from Bhola, one of the most vulnerable island districts located on the Bay of Bengal estuary. Jannatul, before river Meghna eroded their house and land, used to live there with her parents and two sisters. As far as she can remember, her family moved 13 times due to river erosion. After losing everything, Jannatul moved to Dhaka with her elder sister in 2014 permanently. Jannatul, a single mother of three, completed her Secondary School Certificate (class 10) education in Bhola. Soon after she arrived in Dhaka, she was among the volunteers who received government training on firefighting as fire is one of the most common and deadliest disasters in the slum. She was among the 2015 fire incident responder where she rescued people. Her bravery, skills and education helped her to get a job in local police station. However, she lost her job in mid-2016 after a change in the police station management. She then moved to an NGO-run shelter home for women like herself with children. Her children were studying at BRAC school. She moved back to the slum after the NGO shelter closed down due to shortage of funding. Currently she works as a domestic help in nearby houses and supports her children with the hope to continue her children's education that may change her and her children's future.

Kallyanpur Slum is considerably cleaner than most slums in Dhaka, due to joint efforts of the community, NGOs and local administration working in the slums. The slum has electricity supply and sanitation facilities with minimum standard. Despite the effort, the slum still faces regular fire incidents due to a number of reasons including improper use of electric equipment. In the slum, a number of NGOs working with children established day care centres where working women can keep their children in the day care facilities during daytime.

During the consultation, women noted that drug addiction is a major issue in the slum. There are some basic facilities from the city council which, however, is insufficient compared to the need of 40,000 people. In terms of social safety net programme, there are some allowances from the city corporation for the elderly and for persons with disability provided they hold a valid NID. However, these supports are insignificant and inadequate.

Rehana Aktar (48) came to Kallyanpur Slum from Barishal seven years ago. She suffered due to river erosion like Jannatul multiple times. Her husband used to be a farmer. They lost farmlands and household in Sandhya River. With no alternative, they moved to Dhaka. One of the key reasons was that Rehana’s mother in law has been living in the slum for years which helped them to settle here.

Rehana, mother of four children, used to work as domestic help. However, due to her illness she currently is unemployed. Her husband works at a catering service and her elder son (24) works as bus-helper. Recently, her elder daughter (14) dropped out of the school and took a job in a garment factory to support the family. Her 17-year old son is a drug addict and the youngest daughter (8) is the only one going to school.

She faces domestic violence regularly from her husband and younger son. The community people do not help her. When trying to get help form local police, she got refused as it was considered as ‘family matter’. She does not see much hope as she fears eviction or another fire incident constantly. For her it is a trapped life.

The NGOs working in the slum are mostly focused on facilitating jobs in different places through skill development, providing education, basic health services and supporting communities to access services from local government. In terms of community-based solution, the slum has some women and young groups, facilitated by NGOs, volunteering to improve environment and social matters such as waste management and gender-based violence. However, the support from NGOs and other actors are limited and therefore many families fail to survive resulting in further migration either to another slum or back to their respective villages.

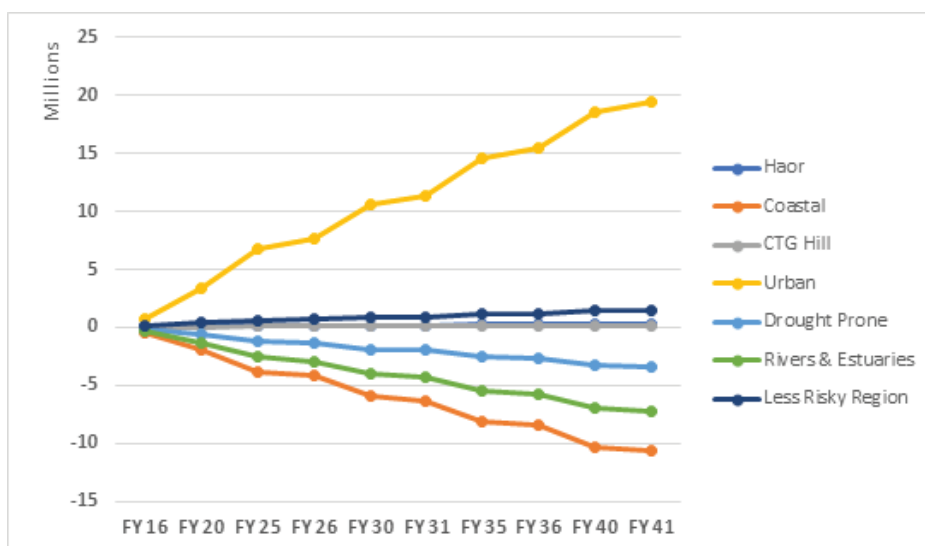
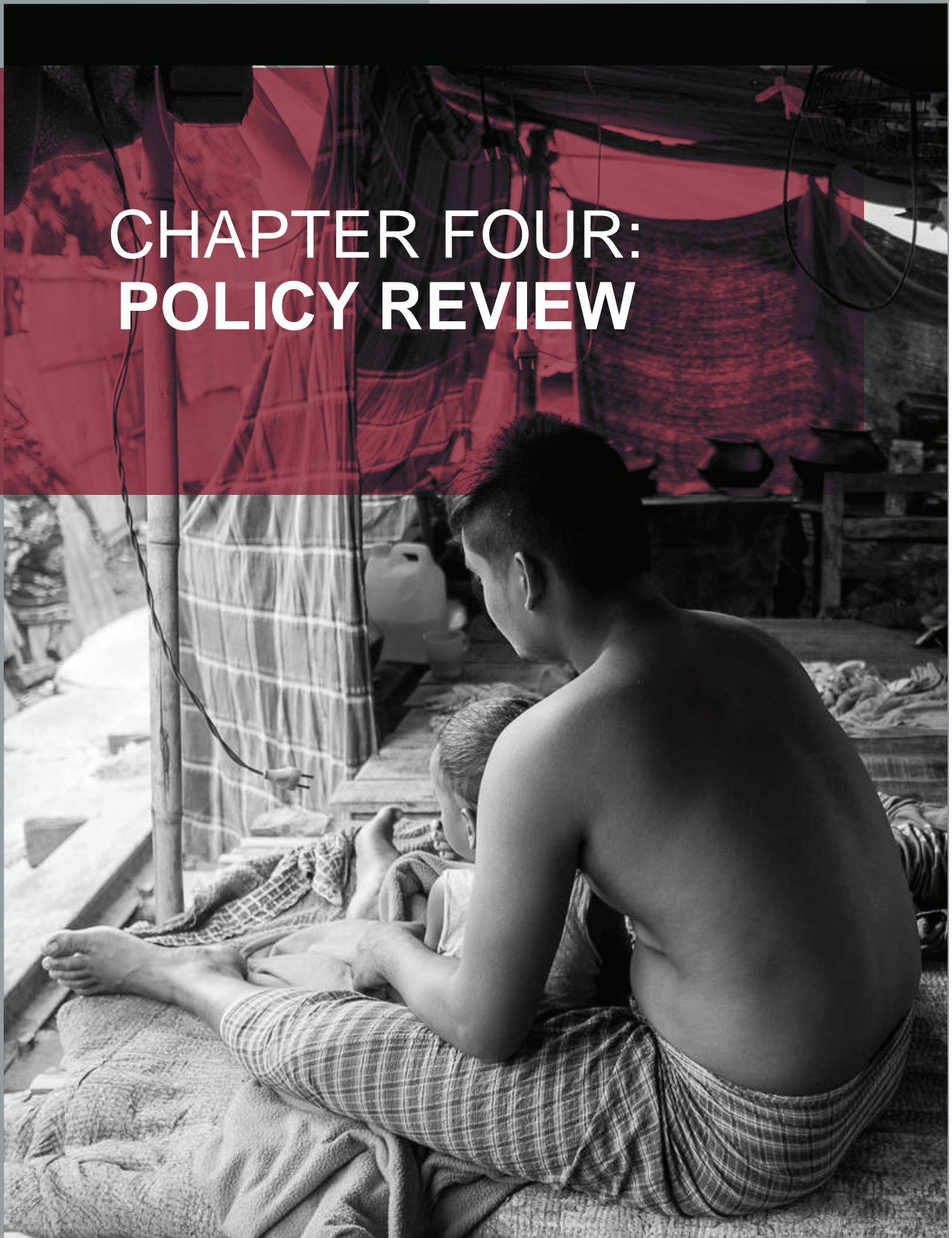


Figure 3: Migration prediction under business-as-usual policy options in Bangladesh

Negative figures denote exodus of migrants from the area and positive figures show increase of migrants in the area.

Source: GED Projections noted in Delta Plan 2100.

# CHAPTER FOUR: POLICY REVIEW



The study made efforts to understand the current policy instruments that can protect the people who are already displaced and have forcibly migrated due to climate change and its associated impacts.

## 7<sup>TH</sup> FIVE-YEAR PLAN (2016-2020)

The 7th five-year plan (2016-2020) implemented by Bangladesh government aims to develop policies, strategies and institutions as a response to poverty reduction, acceleration of job creation and meeting the SDG goal targets. The plan recognizes climate change, environment and social protection as key priority areas focusing on several issues such as disaster management, environmental sustainability, climate change adaptation, climate resilience, mitigation, green growth, safety net programmes, gender and social inclusion. The government aims to strengthen its effort to address climate change issue, to protect the population from the adverse effects of climate change and build resilience.

As much as the 7th FYP emphasizes the importance of migration from an economic expansion perspective, it also recognizes the risk and challenges carried by irregular migration and displacement, that affect the poor and marginalized living in climate fragile hotspots / areas. Migration into densely populated region poses a significant risk in terms of a migrant worker's health and wellbeing. There is a significant lack of financial gain due to high living costs. High recruitment costs, human rights violation, labour rights, limited or zero access to information and basic services, limited socio-economic participation, gender discrimination are identified as barriers to the migration-development nexus which is further exacerbated by the impacts of climate change.

The 7th FYP recognizes that curbing internal migration and displacement requires an appropriate system to river management. It noted that adaptation actions will require an Integrated River Management Plan coupled with land development projects along the major rivers. The 7th FYP also noted "protection measures for the displaced people need to be framed in keeping with the relevant national and international policies / initiatives". The government is trying to mainstream this issue in all its policies. With regards to building resilience the plan targeted construction of 97,000 resilient houses between 2015-2020.

The issue of internal migration was focused from remittance earning where the plan promoted the idea of establishing Technical and Vocational Training (TVT) institutions in the lagging districts and facilitated people to be semi-skilled and get employment after migrating to industrial districts of Bangladesh. The 7th FYP highlights the improvement of TVT system through the National Education policy-2010 and the National Skills Development Policy-2011 which aims to elevate the socio-economic condition of the people of Bangladesh where migrants and internally displaced people are identified as one of the key target groups. The plan focuses on financial mechanisms such as rehabilitation loans provided by the Probashi Kallayan Bank – a state owned bank that primarily provides collateral free loan to workers going abroad for employment, and to the returnees to help them out in finding employment within the country – to support the returned migrants who are destitute, marooned or victims of unexpected events . The 7th FYP identifies policies



to be formulated to reduce child domestic workers, migrants and other vulnerable groups. The activities for climate change adaptation in the context of migration and displacement under the 7th FYP includes the need of protection measures, social and economic, within relevant national, regional and international policies for people displaced due to extreme and slow onset of climate events, aiming for transformative adaptation – like Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPA) and Community Based Adaptation (CBA), which involve empowerment of vulnerable communities to become more adaptive to climatic events – and linkage of climate change resilience planning with urban development process accompanied with social protection mechanism.

## **NON-AGRICULTURAL KHAS LAND MANAGEMENT AND SETTLEMENT POLICY (1995)**

Khas land means the land which is in khas possession i.e. the land which is owned by the government and where nobody has property rights to transfer or allocate it and only the government can use this land for allocation according to government policies. “Khas Land” or “Land in khas possession”, in relation to any person, includes any land let out together with any building standing thereon and necessary adjuncts thereto, otherwise than in perpetuity.

In section 3.0 (d), it is stated – “The long-term settlement (30 years) of khas lands can be made to the people who are affected by natural calamities and rehabilitated in some khas lands which the government does not need, and it can amount to the highest 5 decimals per family with the exception in the area of metropolitans like Dhaka and Chattogram, the municipality of Narayangonj”.

Proper implementation of section 3.0 (d) can solve the housing problems that will contribute to reduce rural to urban migration for climate vulnerable. But the problem, however, is the huge corrupt practices that exist related to this issue. Most of the lands are not yet identified as such depriving the actual demander (affected by natural calamities). Further, Khas land is not available in every place where the people are under threat of being displaced due to climate change. The NGOs and civil societies are concerned with the land issue and have been demanding allocation of Khas Lands to the landless and displaced people. However, irregularities and corruption remain a key challenge for the government to implement the policy.

<sup>34</sup> [https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/sites/unicef.org.bangladesh/files/2018-10/7th\\_FYP\\_18\\_02\\_2016.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/sites/unicef.org.bangladesh/files/2018-10/7th_FYP_18_02_2016.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> Section 2(15) State Acquisition and Tenancy Act, 1950. The Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh

## THE 2005 NATIONAL ADAPTATION PROGRAMME OF ACTION

In 2005, Bangladesh completed and published its National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), prepared by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. The 2005 NAPA recognizes that Bangladesh will be one of the most adversely affected countries due to climate change especially because of Bangladesh's "low economic strength, inadequate infrastructure, low level of social development, lack of institutional capacity and a higher dependency on the natural resource base". The 2005 NAPA also identified some adverse climatic impacts which are linked to climate displacement:

- a. Scarcity of fresh water due to less rain and higher evapo-transpiration in the dry season.
- b. Drainage congestion due to higher water levels in the confluence with the rise of sea level.
- c. Riverbank erosion;
- d. Frequent floods and prolonged and widespread drought.
- e. Wider salinity in the surface, ground, and soil in the coastal zone .

The NAPA proposed fifteen priority projects and expected the implementation would begin soon . Among the fifteen projects there were two projects that directly address the issue of migration:

- i) Promoting Adaptation of Coastal Crop Agriculture to Combat Salinization, and
- ii) Adaptation to agriculture systems in areas prone to enhanced flash flooding – North East and Central Region. Projected long-term outcome for both the projects is to protect jobs and livelihoods of the community, inhibit social consequences of mass scale migration to urban areas, introduce diversified livelihoods to improve overall adaptive capacity of the community as a means to prevent migration.

However, due to several reasons including lack of financial allocation from global sources, the NAPA failed to materialise into action. It is to be noted here that the GoB is working on developing the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) which is expected to be finalized in 2021. Civil Society Organisations (CSO) and other actors including the government noted climate change induced displacement and migration as one of the priorities to be addressed. However, details are not known as NAP is still under formulation.

<sup>36</sup> The Bangladesh National Adaptation Programme of Action (2005), Executive summary;

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, Forward.

## BANGLADESH CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2009

The Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy Action Plan (BCCSAP) 2009 is a revised pro-poor climate change management strategy that prioritizes issues around adaptation and disaster risk reduction, and addresses low carbon development and mitigation, technology transfer, and mobilization of climate finance. It provides a ten-year programme to build capacity and resilience to climate change impacts in Bangladesh to meet the challenge for 20-25 years. The BCCSAP 2009 is built on six pillars and comprises of immediate, short term, medium term and long-term programmes:

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

BCCSAP recognizes climate induced migration and displacement as a threat to human lives and wellbeing which as a result will cause disruption both in economic and development gains. BCCSAP refers these vulnerable group of people specially from the coastal regions as “environmental refugees” and identifies several risks such as sea level rise, saline water intrusion and riverbank erosion as the main enablers / contributors to displacement of hundreds and thousands of people.

Several actions / sub programmes related to climate induced migration has been established under the BCCSAP thematic programmes focusing on development of monitoring mechanism of internal and external migration, development of a protocol to provide adequate support for re-settlement and rehabilitation and capacity building through education and training to facilitate the re-settlement in the new environment.

## OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT AND MIGRANTS ACT 2013

This act does not mention anything about the climate induced migration and any special priority. It clearly states that “The principle of equality is to be applied at all times for overseas employment and return of migrant workers and while providing services or performing any other action under this Act, and no one shall be discriminated on one or more grounds, including, gender, language, birth, colour, age, ethnicity or national origin, political views, religion, ideology, familial, marital or social identity, or regional affiliation, or any other reasons”. The Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment also does not have any specific program for climate induced migrants.

<sup>39</sup> Overseas Employment and Migrants Act 2013, Chapter II, clause- 6;  
The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

## THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SAFETY NET PROGRAMMES

Social protection, as defined by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, is concerned with preventing, managing, and overcoming situations that adversely affect people's wellbeing. Social protection consists of policies and programs designed to reduce poverty and vulnerability by promoting efficient labour markets, diminishing people's exposure to risks, and enhancing their capacity to manage economic and social risks, such as unemployment, exclusion, sickness, disability, and old age.

The most common types of social protection are:

**Labour market** interventions that include policies and programs designed to promote employment, the efficient operation of labour markets and the protection of workers.

**Social insurance** mitigates risks associated with unemployment, ill health, disability, work-related injury, and old age, such as health insurance or unemployment insurance.

**Social assistance** is when resources, either cash or in-kind, are transferred to vulnerable individuals or households with no other means of adequate support, including single parents, the homeless, or the physically or mentally challenged.

The social safety net programme (SSNP) is a major policy instrument in Bangladesh in reducing poverty and vulnerabilities of rural people. They are historically clustered around food ration, post disaster relief and informal safety nets where they play a pivotal role in addressing immediate impacts of climate change. As much as social safety net programmes have proven to be an effective mechanism in mitigating / lessening shocks for the rural poor, their sustainability has often been questioned because of failure in contribution to long term resilience of community and households. Several studies reveal that no linkage was found between the social safety net programs and disaster management framework. The existing government policies in Bangladesh show that social safety net programmes, climate change adaptation measures and disaster risk management lack coordination and fail to address climate change impacts in an integrated approach.

The portfolio of social safety net programmes includes allowances for population groups with special needs, food security and disaster assistance programmes, public works / employment programmes, and programmes focused on human development and empowerment. The national social security strategy in Bangladesh is comprised of many social safety net programmes managed by 25 ministries. There are currently 130 programmes financed through the national budget of FY 2018-19 and categorized into two broad categories – social protection and social empowerment. The highest allocation is for Food Security and Disaster Assistance programmes accounting to 44.3%. In FY 2019, a budget of approximately BDT 642 billion, or equivalent to 2.5 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), has been allocated for this purpose. Among these, about BDT 372 billion is being used to implement safety net programs as per the globally recognized classification.

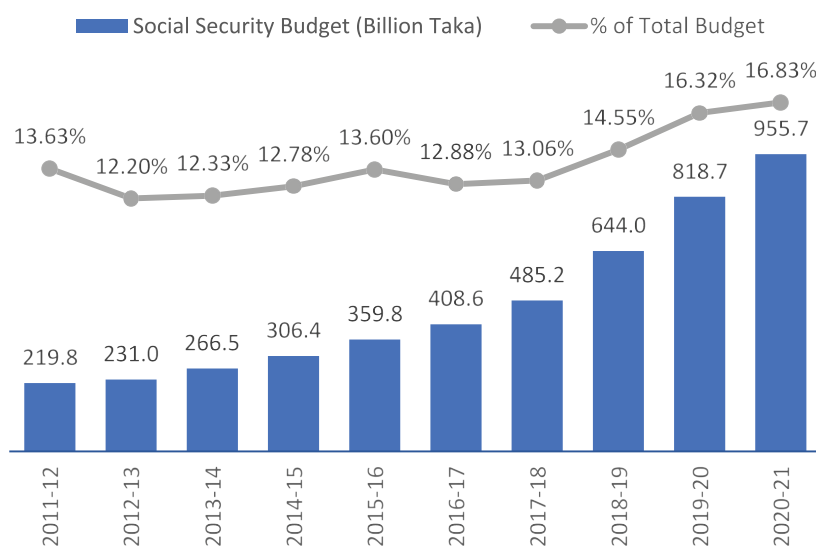
<sup>40</sup> Browne, E. (2015). Social protection: Topic guide. Birmingham, UK: GSDRC, University of Birmingham

<sup>41</sup> Rahman, Hossain Jillur and Chowdhury, Liaquat Ali (2012) Social Safety Nets in Bangladesh: Ground Realities and Policy Challenge; Power and Participatory Research Center and United Nations Development Programm;

<sup>42</sup> The World Bank (2019) Social Safety Nets in Bangladesh Help Reduce Poverty and Improve Human Capital <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2019/04/29/social-safety-nets-in-bangladesh-help-reduce-poverty-and-improve-human-capital>

The figure shows the budget allocation for social security programmes in Bangladesh over the period of 2011-2021. The graph shows constant growth in terms of allocation of budget for social security programme between 2011-12 to 2017-18. In 2018-19, there is a sudden

*Figure 1 Social Security Budget Allocation*



Source: *Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme: an initiative of the Cabinet Division and the General Economics Division (GED), Planning Commission, Government of Bangladesh*

spike in budget allocation and the trend continued till date. Several reports suggest that among the components of the safety net programs, budget allocation for social protection is significantly higher than the allocation for social empowerment. This also indicates that programmes under social empowerment have a smaller number of target beneficiaries and mostly fall under broader development programmes of the government.

### **Social safety nets addressing climate impacts in Bangladesh:**

In order to respond to the impacts of cyclone Sidr (2007) and Aila (2009) followed by a major food, fuel and financial crisis in 2007-08, the government of Bangladesh launched the largest public workfare programme known as the 100 Day Employment Program in 2009 for the jobless and poorest poor. It had an estimated outreach of two million households with the objective of generating 200-million-person days of employment per year. The Government of Bangladesh allocated US\$ 800 million in FY09 to mitigate the crisis. It is in line with the main policy frameworks dealing with poverty and food security such as the National Food Policy (2006) and the National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction (2008). The program was welcomed by poor individuals especially those who were not able to mitigate the shocks in the labour market. Among those were many poor women who appreciated the temporary work opportunities in local areas as their mobility was limited.

<sup>43</sup> Social Security in Bangladesh: A Statistical Summary; Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme <http://socialprotection.gov.bd/en/social-safety-nets-in-bangladesh-a-statistical-summary/> (accessed on 15 March 2021)

<sup>44</sup> Employment Generation Program for the Poorest in Bangladesh by the World Bank Group and the Korea-World Bank Partnership Facility; <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/976511552537992494/pdf/135278-BRI-PUBLIC-13-3-2019-9-16-56-ProgrambriefonEGPPF.pdf>

<sup>45</sup> Technical Report on the First Phase of 100-Day Employment Generation Programme (2009) by BRAC Development Institute, BRAC and The National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme (NFPCSP) [http://fpmu.gov.bd/agridrupal/sites/default/files/100\\_day\\_final.pdf](http://fpmu.gov.bd/agridrupal/sites/default/files/100_day_final.pdf).

Among the vast number of social safety net programmes, Test Relief (TR), Vulnerable-Group Development (VGD) and Food for Work (FFW) are the three main programmes run by the Government of Bangladesh to respond to the impacts of climate disasters. FFW & TR are related to employment creation in public works, where FFW is concerned with developing roads and infrastructure, while TR projects are mainly focused on maintaining and developing local educational and religious institutions. The objectives of these safety net programmes are to generate employment for the rural poor during agriculture lean period, help build, repair or strengthen rural infrastructure to improve the performance of agriculture, while reducing the disaster and climate change related risk and food insecurity of the rural poor. Eligibility criteria for a household to participate in Work for Money (WFM) / FFW and TR are: landless due to climate induced disaster and ownership of less than 0.5 acre of land.

The destitute, widowed or divorced women with undernourished children and women with handicapped husbands are the target groups of the Vulnerable-Group Development (VGD) programme. The objective of this programme is to enhance the income-generating capabilities of beneficiaries by providing them with training. Most VGD beneficiaries receive inputs in the form of skills training, health and nutrition training, and social awareness building through membership of women's groups. NGOs complement government and donor inputs, particularly through the provision of training and extension services and by organising groups. The Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief are responsible for running this programme. Beneficiaries receive 30 kg of wheat per month and 150 hours of training.

There remain critical issues in both the context and implementation of social protection programmes. The benefits are insufficient to mitigate losses from shocks and increase resilience. Safety-net programmes play an important role in disaster management by helping to co-ordinate recovery efforts, but they have many shortcomings. These include the fact that resource allocation for disaster management is not based on vulnerability. Protecting communities from impact of climate change requires mass awareness, education, and engagement of community in planning and implementation.

### **Some Challenges in accessing social protection:**

There is a lack of information mechanism for the migrants. The displaced people do not know their rights and ways to seek assistance. Nor do they have clear understanding of which institutions are able to provide social, financial and resettlement assistance and which institutions are entrusted with enforcing, respecting, and protecting housing, land and property rights.

Often their communication with local representatives (for example at the Union level) is lost or delayed by the time it is relayed to the Upazila, then District then National levels. Besides this, there does not exist any specific monitoring body to monitor the migration.

- Findings during a research visit to Sunamganj showed no assistance in the case of low-severity shocks, such as minor floods.

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- Miscommunication presents another major hurdle to achieving full coverage. For example, hearing from others about the scarcity of resources available, some disaster impacted person may simply not show up at the shelter because they believe there is no chance for them to receive support.
  - Not every region has a shelter centre close by and some families do not have an able-bodied person with the strength to collect the programme benefits.
  - Women, disabled, and elderly individuals face difficulties in accessing aid measures and benefits for both geographical and cultural reasons. The needs of women, the elderly and disabled, and their priorities, are rarely addressed in resettlement accommodation, such as problems faced by female-headed households and widows including issues such as privacy for bathing and latrines.
  - The political affiliation of the household, the relationship with local government officials and bribery are the most common forms of corruption in the system.
  - SSNP programmes in Bangladesh are often criticised for poorly timed distribution. For example, report suggests that Food for Work programme failed to distribute aid during monga (affordability crisis of food) season during FY 2016-17, 2018-19.
  - Targeting criteria and guidelines are homogeneous across the country and hence partly fail to reach the true targets.

## BANGLADESH 8<sup>TH</sup> FIVE YEAR PLAN

The government of Bangladesh published its 8th five-year plan (2020-2025) amidst the COVID-19 crisis setting out its pro-poor strategy for sustainable growth for the next five years. As the country is known to be one of the most vulnerable countries in the world, the 8th FYP clearly indicates its plan on integrating climate and environmental factors into its growth strategy and development processes. The existing vulnerabilities i.e. land degradation, soil erosion, frequent weather events, and other climate change-related risks and hazards have brought a significant shift to the GoB planning process as they are focusing on green growth investment, enhanced institutional capacity, and environmental conservation actions. Building on progress made in the preceding five-year plans, the government under the 8th FYP will continue its work on adaptation and mitigation actions which shall be guided by existing climate policies and action plans. Several objectives and activities from previous FYPs will be carried forward in the 8th FYP which was not implemented adequately or failed to materialize.

The 8th FYP has been framed according to the long-term goals and strategies of GoB's Perspective Plan 2041, and strongly aligned with Delta Plan 2100 and the SDGs. Significant number of actions have been proposed in the 8th FYP to address climate change where one of the action plans is to address climate change-induced migration. The following text states how the government plans to address climate change-induced migration under the 8th FYP:

“Erosion of land and the loss of rural livelihood can trigger urban migration from rural communities. As a result, under the 8FYP, the Government will remain committed to design cities that make them more accommodative by installing efficient systems for facilitating migrant integration into the city, adequate housing for new populations, and job opportunities for those who are looking to work. The Government will closely work with the urban planners to ensure that the needs of the community are being met and that all who seek to migrate from the regions vulnerable to the impacts of climate change are able to do so.”

According to the 8th FYP, the action point mostly focuses on the post- migration scenario. However, a comprehensive plan, which too guided by adequate policies, is required to address both pre-migration and post- migration challenges faced by vulnerable communities of the country. Nevertheless, it is also possible that 8th FYP will contribute to addressing the challenges of displacement and migration through other means of action.



# SPECIAL SECTION: COVID-19, FLOOD AND MIGRATION NEXUS

This section, though not part of the original study, is added here to flag the issue of COVID-19 induced reverse migration that the country never experienced before. In addition, multiple floods in 2020 further complicated the migration trends while the country was under movement and travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Realising the complexity of the issue, the SAMAC project team conducted a telephonic survey in December 2020 at the five hot spot locations covered in the original study. Before this, AAB had also conducted a survey in its 17 locations where AAB has long term programme. The note therefore is a narration to flag the changes with the note that further research is needed to address the complexity in order to make concrete recommendations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact worldwide. Bangladesh is no exception. Soon after the emergence of the pandemic in March 2020, the government was forced to impose a lockdown throughout the country in an attempt to restrict the spread of the virus.

The lockdown had a drastic impact on the whole economy. Economic activities decreased substantially leading to a significant drop in income of lower and middle-income class. Many people became unemployed, particularly those in the private and informal sector. Consequently, disposable income of the people declined.

This triggered a new wave of migration – Reverse Migration. While previously people affected by climate induced disasters – and those unable to sustain themselves due to limited earning opportunities in the rural areas – would move to the cities in search of livelihood, they were now forced to migrate back to their villages due to lack of jobs in the wake of the imposed lockdown in the cities.

Day labourers, rickshaw and van pullers, bus and auto-rickshaw drivers, small tea stall operators, garment workers and domestic help who had previously migrated to the urban areas (Dhaka and Chattogram), most of them permanently, faced a sharp decline in their daily income with no available alternative income options. Some of them lost their jobs altogether. Many people changed their profession due to non-availability of jobs. A cook, for example, was forced to work as a day labour. Many had to reduce their food intake from 3 to 2 square meals a day. A lot of people, who could not manage to survive, eventually returned to their village again. 40 – 45% of the families from Maitta colony, Foy's Lake, Chattogram and about 10% of the families of Kallyanpur slum, Dhaka left the city to return home. From April to July 2020 there was a steady exodus of migrants returning to their villages of origin.

This reverse migration will undoubtedly lead to a crisis in the rural area. Already unable to provide job opportunities to the inhabitants in the past, the rural areas would be under enormous strain in the face of such large-scale reverse migration. Loans from the informal sector at high interest rates have increased as these families struggle to meet their increased expenses due to the return of members where they were also economically affected due to COVID-19 impact.

On the other hand, both the agricultural and non-agricultural day labourers of the rural area who used to migrate to nearby cities or areas (Faridpur, Cumilla and Gopalganj for harvesting work and Sylhet, Khulna and other nearby areas for non-agricultural work) for a few days or a few months, were trapped – stuck in their respective places as transport services were disrupted due to the pandemic. They lost their jobs but could not return to their village either, causing their families to suffer from anxiety and insecurity. Furthermore, the people who were about to migrate from the rural areas in search of jobs were unable to move anywhere and as a result were left totally without income.

As the restrictions on transport gradually eased over time, some male members ventured back to the urban areas in search of jobs but were often not successful in earning enough to support their families.

## Floods in the year 2020

The monsoon floods in 2020 affected 30 districts of Bangladesh overall with 15 districts suffering from moderate to severe impact. According to National Disaster Response Coordination Center (NDRCC) 5.4 million people have been affected and more than a million households inundated. More than 92 thousand tube wells and over a hundred thousand latrines were damaged according to the Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE). In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) reported that 83 thousand hectares of paddy fields, over 125 thousand hectares of agriculture land and US\$ 42 million worth of crops are affected. Besides, the floods also caused moderate to severe damage on livestock and fisheries. Initial report from the Department of Livestock Service (DLS) indicated that the sector lost US\$ 74.5 million worth of livestock including 16,537 hectares of grass land.

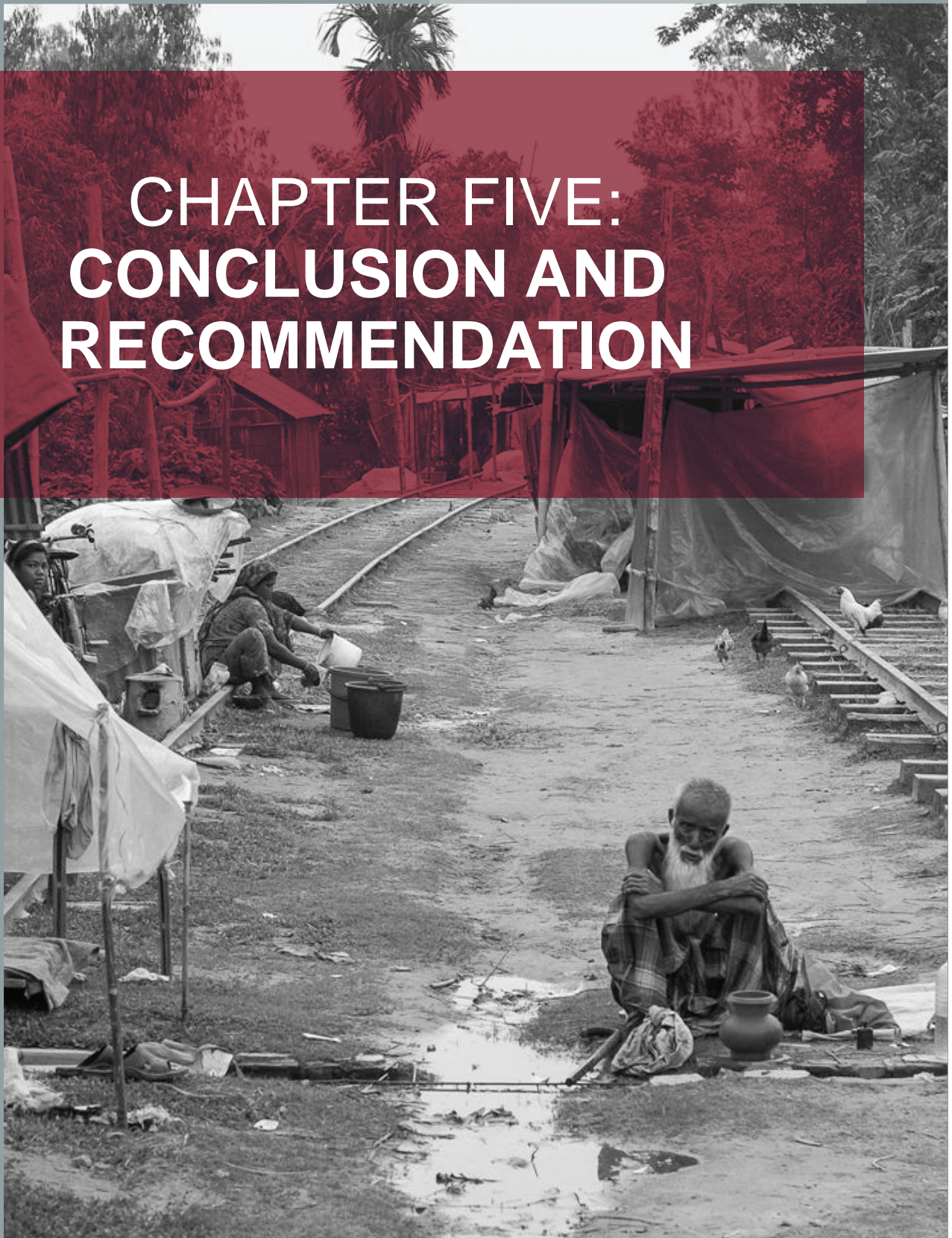
The research area of Sunamganj faced flood twice in June and then in July 2020. AAB conducted Rapid need assessment in that area. According to the study a total of 11 Upazilas and district towns were flooded, more than 44 thousand families affected by heavy rain and flash flood. According to Bishwamvarpur Upazila administration, about 80% of the area was flooded and 50% shelters and households inundated and partially damaged. Most of the core shelters are made of muddy plinth and corrugated galvanised iron (CGI) sheet. About 100 families were reported as displaced due to the inundation. In the second phase of the flood in July 2020 more than a hundred thousand people were affected in Sunamganj. According to Bishwamvarpur Upazila administration around 11,535 families of 5 Unions were affected.

The number of displacement and the loss of livelihood are the drivers of migration which were very high in this year. According to telephonic information received from Mr. Shahin, community leader of Mitta colony, Foy's Lake area in Chattogram, about 40 – 45% of the fifteen hundred families living there left due to COVID-19 between April and June 2020. However, from the end of June onwards, some 30 – 35% new families entered the area who, according to Mr. Shahin, were mostly flood affected people.

The monsoon floods coupled with prolonged inundation and the COVID-19 pandemic had an exacerbating effect on the flood affected people. Due to the pandemic the effect was much more complex since the social distancing and handwashing requirements were impossible to maintain in the congested shelters. WASH facilities also were often compromised.

Disasters have always had a negative impact on human life and livelihood forcing people to move to urban centres in search of work. Now with a large-scale reverse migration many people, who migrated earlier from rural to urban areas following economic, environmental, and climate-related challenges, find themselves exactly where they were earlier — at risk.

# CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION



How would Bangladesh look like in the year 2030 or in 2050? While uncertainty is one of the key characteristics of climate change impacts, it is almost certain from the analysis that climate change impacts will continue to worsen with global temperature rising. Considering different scenarios, Bangladesh can have between 195 million to 200 million people in 2031 and 207 million to 234 million people in 2051. With business-as-usual scenario 11.8 million people will face internal migration due to climate change and associated impacts and by 2041 it can go up 21.3 million.

This research identified that the existing policies and plans of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) have clauses that showcase strong understanding of the government on climate change, possible scenario of migration and ways that can be addressed. However, field findings suggest that there are significant gaps in terms of implementation of the policies and plans, especially the country's infrastructure, institutions, economic activities, social construction, and environmental features lack readiness in terms of accommodating such huge population let alone migration of its 10% population in 2040-2050.

Despite strong political will of the government to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) and Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the implementation plan lacks the approach to address climate change induced displacement and forced migration from human rights-based approach. This study, therefore, recommends the following in short term and long term mostly focusing on programmes and implementation of existing policies and adopt new plans. It is to be noted here the recommendations are made with the understanding that livelihood related migration is voluntary where displacement and climate induced migration is always forced. The following are based on research and field findings with the aim to give people a choice whether to make the decision to migrate or not.

## SHORT TERM ACTIONS

The short term here refers to immediate to 5-year period considering the size of the problem and current capacity of the GoB. The study finds it imperative that the GoB adopts the principles of Human Rights Based Approach and builds on its commitment of "leaving no one behind".

Building on the existing policies and interventions (and those in the making) GoB and its development partners need to consider the following action plans which are drawn based on community consultations and field findings:

**Ensure Basic Rights and Services:** adequacy and effectiveness of immediate responses and early recovery assistances to shocks and stresses remain the key choosing factors for communities in making decisions on whether to migrate or not. Investment in strengthening homestead to withstand / adapt to climate induced disasters, ensuring

<sup>46</sup> Population Projection of Bangladesh: Dynamics and Trend 2011 – 2061 (2015) Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

<sup>47</sup> There are other scenarios noted in the report considering multiple factors that may vary from this number. However, this can give an idea for the policy makers to take necessary measures on different front especially considering climate change and migration.

<sup>48</sup> Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 by the General Economic Division of Ministry of Planning, the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh; published in 2018; Strategy; page xvi; Government of Bangladesh

people are entitled to receive humanitarian assistance and recovery support regardless of whether they have National ID card or not. Furthermore, it is also suggested that a separate ID can be issued by local government institutions for people who are displaced due to climate induced disaster with the provision for the families to receive special services such as access to social safety net programme and medical facilities.

**Community Led Protection System:** Community led protection system, especially led by young women and men, can be an effective solution towards stopping violence against women and children especially during and post disaster context. Furthermore, these young people can also be capacitated to respond to disaster that will contribute to reducing the risk of displacement and migration – such as providing first aid, search and rescue assistance, support local government to conduct needs assessment especially for people who are displaced.

**Effective investment in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation:** The Government of Bangladesh has been allocating its own resources to address negative impacts of climate change and investment in reducing risk of disasters contributing to lessen the loss of life (compared to previous years). However, loss and damage to assets and livelihoods increased. Therefore, it remains critical to ensure both adequacy and effectiveness while investing in reducing risk of climate induced disasters and supporting communities to adapt to changing climate. “Building Back Better” and “build better” both principles need to be adopted in designing and implementation of infrastructures where institutions working at local to national level must make use of technology and innovation to ensure effective use of investment.

**Establishing Multipurpose Information Centre:** Lack of information, availability and accessibility, was identified as one of the root causes that exposes displaced and migrated people to further vulnerability and risk of exploitation. This information includes rights of people who are displaced or forced to migrate, which areas can be potential places to migrate, and location-wise availability of employment within the area and in other places. This will provide some level of ‘choices’ to those who are forced to be displaced or migrated due to climate change impacts.

**Skill Development and Employment Generation at Local Level:** As noted in many research documents, lack of livelihood in rural areas is the primary reason for migration; it is true for climate induced migration as well. Therefore, it is critical to further increase investment in skill development of the most vulnerable communities, especially young women and men. Furthermore, investment also needs to be increased in creating jobs at local and district level. It is to be noted here that the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) has been one of the most successful programmes of the Government of Bangladesh. Building on the success, the programme can be localised further expanding its reach preparing the youth population for future employment market.

**Introduce Universal Social Protection :** Bangladesh continues to invest in social safety net programme (SSNP) which contributed to reducing poverty and protecting the people living in vulnerable context. However, it is critical that the Government of Bangladesh goes beyond SSNP and adopts the Universal Social Protection system that includes livelihood

generation, social insurance, and social safety net in order to address climate-induced loss and damage that will help reducing displacement and migration. Furthermore, as it is, the existing social safety net programmes are inadequate to meet the needs of the people. The situation is compounded in the case of migrants and the displaced when they are not considered eligible for the support from the programmes in places other than their own place of origin as specified in the national identification card.

Since displacement means that they are in fact forced to be away from their place of origin, due to some natural calamity that they cannot control, the eligibility criteria should be relaxed in their case and they should be allowed support from SSNP regardless of where they are from.

## LONG TERM STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

The long-term strategies are to build on current and future lessons. Strategies need to be transformative – meaning, those need to have the element to evolve with changing circumstances.

**Develop Climate Risk and Resilience Index:** The Delta Plan 2100 recognises that climate induced displacement and migration will further increase. In order to implement Delta Plan, it is critical to develop a Climate Risk and Resilience Index of the country focusing both on macro and micro (village) level. This will include digitalisation of risk and resource map including household vulnerability to different hazards and its scale. This will allow the government and other development actors to make decisions on micro and macro level interventions for reducing climate risk and build resilience including planned relocation for displaced people.

**Develop a National Displacement and Migration Policy:** In 2015, National Strategy on the Management of Disaster and Climate Induced Internal Displacement was prepared by Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme under the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MODMR). While the effort is acknowledged, this report, however, found that the proposed strategy (it is unclear whether it was adopted by the government of Bangladesh) focused mostly on a set of generic recommendations. This report advocates for further investigation of the displacement strategy, build on learning generated from the shorter-term actions and develop longer term strategies based on scientific models. It is to be noted that the strategy must be people-centred upholding the principle of human rights.

**Policy Review and Alignment:** These Acts, policies and plans need to be reviewed and aligned with strategic plans such as Delta Plan 2100 and Perspective Plan 2021-2041. These strategic plans are overarching vision documents with the intent to set the pathway through which Bangladesh can become a developed country. While reviewing the existing policies and setting implementation plans to achieve broader visions, it will be critical to

<sup>49</sup> Teresa Anderson (2021) AVOIDING THE CLIMATE POVERTY SPIRAL: Social protection to address climate-induced loss and damage; ActionAid International.

take climate trajectory in to account. The review process must ensure that policies and action plans are transformative in nature to ensure the need to the most vulnerable and excluded segment of the population is prioritised.

**Establishing Financial Architecture for Climate Response:** There are several financial channels through which government and non-government entities finance climate actions. In recent years, the Government of Bangladesh started reporting its climate budget allocation and expenditure which is a remarkable step forward towards ensuring climate finance accountability. However, effectiveness of climate finance remains a question. Therefore, despite billions of dollars investment, loss and damage associated with climate change is increasing hence increased displacement and migration. Furthermore, private, and non-government entity investment taking climate actions (positive and negative) remains unaccounted. It is therefore critical to establish a financial architecture including a registry system and joint monitoring taskforce to account all climate investment ensuring its effectiveness.

The strategies and actions, while sectoral approaches remain important, must be able to focus on the need of the people living in poverty and exclusion in order to ensure equity, justice and fairness in addressing climate induced displacement and migration. The actions must be gender responsive through adopting safeguarding of women and children. Importantly, the Government of Bangladesh along with the civil society actors must continue to advocate for regional and global actions to reduce the impacts of climate change.

## ANNEXURES

### ANNEXE 1: STUDY METHODOLOGY

This report is developed based on both secondary literature review including policy analysis as well as field study. For field level research the team undertook participatory approach using number of tools and techniques. The report considered both white and brown papers as well as reports by newspapers.

#### Limitations

This study intended to identify solutions to address climate change induced migration from taking a human rights-based approach. The focus of the study is on local action and national policy suggestion.

The study focuses on internal displacement and migration. Therefore, cross border migration associated with impacts of climate change are not covered under this study.

There are multiple policy instruments as well as programmes by government agencies, private sector entities and non-government organisations. However, the study reviews only major government policies which are not enough to provide a comprehensive solution towards addressing climate induced migration.



The study also did not consider geopolitics and cross border policies such as water and forest sharing between Bangladesh and neighbouring countries which also contributes to migration.

### Primary Information Collection

The project selected five areas to conduct the study, considering geographical diversity, climate vulnerability, sources of displacement and migration and destination. The project identified the following five areas for the study:

- a. **Khulna**: coastal district and 3rd largest city in Bangladesh. Khulna and surrounding areas are one of the major climate hotspots in Bangladesh.
- b. **Naogaon**: drought prone area with high agricultural concentration. Previously it was a source of migration. However, under the study, a mixed impression was formed.
- c. **Sunamganj**: a unique ecosystem of Bangladesh, that turns into a vast inland sea during monsoon but dries up in the post-monsoon period and in winter turns into vast stretches of green land. A low-lying area, it is a source of displacement and migration.
- d. **Chattogram**: one of the coastal districts of Bangladesh vulnerable to sea level rise, storm surges and salinity. This is the 2nd largest city in Bangladesh and one of the major destinations for migration.
- e. **Dhaka**: Capital city of the Bangladesh and the major destination of migration.

### Community Consultation

The study team conducted Focused Group Discussion (FGD) sessions with women, men, young people in different locations in each district. Furthermore, consultation with local Union Parishad Chairman, NGO representatives and academicians were done in different places.

During the FGDs, the study facilitated several participatory tools i.e. social map, problem tree analysis, mobility mapping to initiate the discussion and do in depth analysis on certain findings based on the location and migration pattern. The key areas of focus group discussions covered:

- causes of migration,
- The process to displacement and migration, previous situation, after displacement / migration situation, water and sanitation, livelihoods, government support and gender-based violence.

### Literature Review

The study, during its field visit tried to understand ways to address displacement and migration associated with climate change and disasters. The responses indicated that there is serious lack of information system as well as social protection. The study therefore had a focus on policies that can enable social protection as a mechanism to support the process of migration.

## ANNEXE 2 KEY TERMINOLOGIES

### Who is a migrant?

The UN Migration Agency (IOM) defines a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of:

- the person's legal status.
- whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary.
- what the causes for the movement are; or
- what the length of the stay is.

### Who is a Displaced person?

In the context of emergencies, displaced people are people who have had to leave their homes as a result of a natural, technological or deliberate event.

The term “disaster displacement” refers to situations where people are forced or obliged to leave their homes or places of habitual residence as a result of a disaster or in order to avoid the impact of an immediate and foreseeable natural hazard. Such displacement results from the fact that affected persons are (i) exposed to a natural hazard in a situation where (ii) they are not able to withstand the impacts of a hazard.

It is the effects of natural hazards, including the adverse impacts of climate change, that may overwhelm the resilience or adaptive capacity of an affected community or society, thus leading to a disaster that potentially results in displacement.

### Environmental Migration

Quantifying environmental migration is challenging given the multiple drivers of such movement, related methodological challenges, and the lack of data collection standards. Some quantitative data exist on population displacement within a country, and to a lesser degree across borders, due to natural hazards. However, for migration due to slow-onset environmental processes, such as drought or sea-level rise, most existing data are qualitative based on case studies, with few comparative studies. While data gaps persist, research methodologies are steadily being improved.

Environmental migrants are defined as “persons or groups of persons who, predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move within their country or abroad.” (IOM, 2011: 33 in IOM, 2014:13).

Environmentally displaced person refers to “persons who are displaced within their country of habitual residence or who have crossed an international border or who have been displaced across an international border for a major cause of displacement, displacement, addressed in the following (IOM, 2014:13) (IOM, 2014:13).

The term disaster displacement “refers to situations, where people are forced or obliged to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of disasters triggered by natural hazards. Such displacement may take the form of spontaneous flight or an evacuation ordered or enforced by authorities. Such displacement can occur within a country, or across international borders”. (The Nansen Protection Agenda, 2015).

Planned relocation refers to persons whose livelihoods have been re-built in another place (IOM, 2014a). Others have defined planned relocation as referring solely to the collective movement of a community, the “permanent (or long-term) movement of a community (or a significant part of it) from one location to another, in which important characteristics of the original community, including its social structures, legal and political systems, cultural characteristics and worldviews are retained: the community stays together at the destination in a social form that is similar to the community of origin” (Campbell, 2010:58–59).

Although the term “climate refugees” is often used in relation to forced migration in the context of climate and environmental change, this is not a legally valid term as the 1951 Refugee Convention does not recognize environmental factors as criteria to define a refugee .

### **Climate Change Induced Migrants**

While scientist often argue that “climate migration” cannot be an agreed term as migration attributing to climate change is yet to be established, civil society organisations, UN bodies and even many governments are currently using the term “climate migrants” or “climate refugees” with the understanding that the climate migration refers to “the movement of a person or groups of persons who, predominantly for reasons of sudden or progressive change in the environment due to climate change, are obliged to leave their habitual place of residence, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, within a State or across an international border” .

### **Social Map**

Social mapping is an option to identify households based on predefined indicators relating to socio-economic conditions (e.g. status, skills, property, education, income, etc.). The population’s wellbeing is then ranked (by those living there) according to which household is better or worse off in terms of the selected indicators .

### **Problem Tree Analysis**

Problem tree analysis (also called Situational analysis or just Problem analysis) helps to find solutions by mapping out the anatomy of cause and effect around an issue in a similar way to a Mind map, but with more structure .

<sup>50</sup> Migration Data Portal; [https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/environmental\\_migration](https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/environmental_migration)

<sup>51</sup> International Organization for Migration (2019) Glossary on Migration

<sup>52</sup> Social Map by Better Evaluation; <https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/socialmapping>.

<sup>53</sup> Planning tool: Problem Tree Analysis (2019) ODI; <https://odi.org/en/>

## Mobility Analysis

Mobility mapping is a participatory tool that helps identifying different types of mobilities that people living in a particular area undertake. These include social, economic and cultural mobility. The mobility mapping also takes timeline of people's movement in to account while analysing. Furthermore, the tool can be used for an individual, a group of people or multiple groups in a community indicating both inwards and outwards mobility.

## Khas Land

Surplus land that violates the land ceiling law, other land owned historically by the state throughout colonial and Pakistani rule, Alluvial land, land without owner, surplus/unused land of acquired land for public interest, auctioned land, etc. that has been distributed to landless families for 99-year use rights. The Ministry of Land is responsible for allocating khas land to the landless; however, corruption and bad motives have limited land allocations to the poor or landless. Land acquisition law/policy, shrimp policy, and other economic motives have deprived the landless of this land .

## Trapped population:

When people feel the need and the desire to migrate but do not have the possibility to do so, they can become “trapped” in hazardous circumstances.

When individuals or communities face acute environmental stress (sudden-onset events) – or slow-onset processes such as natural resource depletion, sea-level rise, land degradation, desertification, drought, reduced water availability and groundwater salinization and decreased crop yield, among others, which affect their livelihoods – migration can be one of the most efficient strategies to limit exposure to hazards and to reduce vulnerability and poverty by securing alternative livelihoods in safer and more economically viable areas.

Yet, many people, particularly those already vulnerable due to existing economic, political or demographic factors, may be unable to migrate due to insufficient means, health or physical disabilities, absence of networks of support, social exclusion, limited political rights, conflict, or geographic isolation.

In the absence of appropriate supportive policies and measures, these "trapped" communities (Black et al., 2011) become increasingly vulnerable with time, as the adverse impacts of environmental change continue to undermine their livelihoods.

<sup>54</sup> Land Governance for Equitable and Sustainable Development; Food Security and Land Governance Factsheet on Bangladesh; <http://waterbeyondborders.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Bangladesh-Land-Use-Policy.pdf>

<sup>55</sup> Trapped Populations (2015) IOM Environmental Migration Portal  
<https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/trapped-populations>



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