

# Gender-responsive climate change budgeting in Bangladesh

## Exploring opportunities toward an inclusive climate resilient future

Tanjir Hossain, Anhara Rabbani, and Md. Tariqul Hasan Rifat

April 2021



# Executive Summary

Across the world, gender mainstreaming has become a fundamental tool in government planning and public finance processes to ensure human rights and promote inclusive, equitable and sustainable economies and development. In the face of multiple challenges and crises posed by climate change, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, gendered impacts are evident within the society and further exacerbated by structural inequalities. Even though much progress has been made to promote women's empowerment in social development and politics, the differential impact of climate change on women threatens to undermine advancement. Thus, it is necessary to focus particular attention to the gender dimension of climate change to produce concrete and effective climate action plans that address the risks women face.

The public finance system plays an integral role in addressing the intersecting issues of gender inequality and climate change. It has become increasingly critical for countries to adopt a gender-responsive climate change budgetary approach to support gender equity while mitigating the adverse effects of global warming and building the resilience of communities in protecting their environment, resources and livelihoods. For many decades, gender-responsive budgeting has been used widely by countries for building awareness, managing resources and strengthening accountability processes by tracking gender-related spending, enabling impact evaluation and informing implementation plans. This exploratory research study seeks to identify steps the government of Bangladesh (GoB) has taken to integrate gender into its climate-related investments and whether it has begun to undertake gender-responsive climate change budgeting (GR-CCB). The study also investigates opportunities and challenges in mainstreaming GR-CCB across all climate action plans.

The GoB has made significant progress in addressing impacts of climate change through various national action plans that focus on building climate resilience and women's empowerment. Notable plans include the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP), Climate Change and Gender Action Plan (CCGAP), 7th Five-Year Plan, and the Delta Plan 2100. The government has taken the initiative to produce and publish both climate budgets and gender budgets every year since 2018 and 2009, respectively. In addition, 25 ministries are required to allocate budget to climate change adaptation and mitigation actions, including those actions that aim to increase gender equality.

The Bangladesh climate budget is prepared by the Ministry of Finance every year alongside the national budget. The report presents data on both the allocations and actual prior year climate-related spending of the 25 key relevant ministries/divisions. The climate-related budget allocation is made based on BCCSAP's six priority thematic areas, which include: (1) food security and social protection, (2) comprehensive disaster management, (3) infrastructure, (4) research and knowledge management, (5) low-carbon development, and (6) capacity development and institutional strengthening. The government's climate-responsive annual budgeting is supported

by the Bangladesh Climate Fiscal Framework, which guides climate-relevant allocation and a climate expenditure tagging system that indicates the level of an expenditure's climate relevance. The tagging system is based on the Rio Markers for mitigation (1998) and for adaptation (2010). Ministries/Divisions also follow five key steps, using set criteria, to determine their climate budget.

The GoB has been employing gender budgeting approaches for over a decade through which all 43 government ministries and departments are required to prepare their gender budget using a set of 14 standards. To ensure gender mainstreaming in development projects, the GoB adopted several indicators under its Development Project Proposal (DPP) format to guide relevant ministries or agencies in designing and executing gender actions.

The study analyzed and identified a number of opportunities and challenges for mainstreaming gender into the climate budget and identifying the share of the climate budget that is gender relevant. One significant challenge is that government ministries, departments and agencies have much less conceptual understanding of the climate budget than of the more established gender budget—and gender-responsive climate budgeting is relatively a new arena for exploration. There is a significant knowledge gap among policymakers in terms of linking gender and climate action. For instance, several ministries consider climate budget allocations to be a disaster response, which falls under the social protection programs and so is not relevant to them. However, there are some foundational pieces in place that provide opportunities to support a gender-responsive climate change planning and budgeting approach. For instance, each ministry has both a gender focal point and climate focal point who could collaborate on methods for identifying gender and climate intersections in sector programs and activities. There are also well-established tools and processes for preparing the separate gender and climate budgets that could form the basis for a gender-responsive climate budgeting approach.

The study finds that the GoB sets a target of 30% of the national budget allocation for gender action and has consistently met this target over the past several years. In contrast, there is no climate change budget goal and only 7.8% of the total 2019-20 national budget was allocated for climate-related expenditure. Furthermore, because it was not possible to access detailed program-level data from the ministries analyzed, it was difficult to estimate to what extent the climate budget is gender-responsive. Further complicating efforts to integrate gender and climate budgets is that the criteria used to determine the climate relevancy of a project or program are based on weights determined through a substantive mathematical/statistical analysis, whereas the measures for gender responsiveness are more qualitative. In a broader sense, there is limited public participation in planning and budgeting processes, which undermines both policy choices and implementation. Compounding this gap in the policy and oversight process is the lack of consistent impact assessment of public investments. One of the key entry points for engaging those inside and outside of government to advance the integration of gender and climate could be in setting gender-responsive indicators within the existing climate budget process.

Based on the analysis of progress made and existing policies, the study has identified a set of actions as a way forward, which includes:

- Revising and implementing the CCGAP with clear parameters and indicators to measure gender-responsive climate investment, improve existing budget report processes, strengthen audit processes to evaluate program effectiveness and ensure transparency and accountability,
- Establishing a joint government-civil society taskforce that will ensure the engagement of a wider range of stakeholders in planning and budgeting to strengthen gender-responsive climate budget preparation, implementation and assessment,
- Producing and publishing more detailed disaggregated budget data to support public engagement, impact assessment and accountability, and
- Enhancing the capacity of government officials and development actors.

# CONTENTS

- Executive Summary.....1**
- Background on the research .....5**
- 1. Introduction.....7**
- 2. Methodology .....8**
- 3. Research findings .....9**
  - 3.1 Climate budget reporting and implementation.....9
  - 3.2 Gender budget development.....11
- 4. Analysis based on the key informant Interviews.....12**
- 5. Quantitative analysis against objective of the study .....13**
- 6. Recommendations .....19**
- Annex 1 Standards for assessing impact of ministry’s strategic objectives on women’s advancement22**
- Annex 2 Interviews .....24**

## Background on the research

For over three decades, governments, international institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs) and others have been working on several fronts to reduce gender inequality by identifying and starting to address the structural, policy and cultural factors that lead to gender-based discrimination, oppression and violence. Gender mainstreaming in government planning and public finance processes and the targeted empowerment of women and girls have been strategies particularly focused on improving the rights and opportunities of women and girls, including their physical and socioeconomic well-being. The promotion of gender equality is to ensure the fundamental human rights of all genders, but it is also seen as essential to countries' economic growth and social development. The latter has never been more important as countries around the world face multiple intersecting challenges and crises, including growing inequality and repression, climate and biodiversity emergencies and now the challenges posed by a post-COVID-19 recovery.

Gender equality is enshrined in global commitments ranging from the Beijing Platform for Action that came out of the fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 to the Sustainable Development Goals that embed gender across the goals but also include an explicit goal (Goal 5) on gender equality, as well as in environmental agreements and decisions, including in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. While there has been progress on several fronts, including legal reforms in support of gender equality, educational enrollment of girls, maternal health, female entrepreneurship and women's representation in legislatures and leadership positions, there is still a long way to go.

The climate crisis exacerbates existing inequalities, including gender inequalities, and thus highlights the need to pay particular attention to the gender dimension of climate change for effective approaches to mitigation and adaptation. Women and girls, due to persisting discriminations and exclusions, are often more severely impacted by climate-related weather hazards.<sup>1</sup> For example, women, particularly women living in poverty, are more susceptible to weather events and slow onset climatic changes than men, because they are more likely to live in inadequately constructed homes in high-risk areas; often rely heavily on natural resources for food, fuel and income; and have limited economic options. Women also have little capacity to respond to climate hazards because of existing structural inequalities: discrimination; unequal access to financial services like credit and insurance; insufficient provision of public services like education, health care and disaster recovery support; and little or no opportunities to participate in decision-making processes that might allow them to challenge these structural issues.

---

<sup>1</sup> Schalatek, Liane, "Climate Finance Fundamentals 10: Gender and Climate Finance", Heinrich Böll Stiftung Washington, DC, November 2019. Downloaded on August 24, 2020 from <https://us.boell.org/en/2019/11/30/climate-finance-fundamentals-10-gender-and-climate-finance>

Both gender inequality and climate change are extremely complex and intersecting challenges and addressing them requires significant government intervention. As separate issues, neither fits neatly into one or two key sectors or are clearly defined and commonly understood. Efforts to address them also are frequently a component of a larger program or project. Thus, efforts to engage with climate or gender in these larger programs often involves what is known as “mainstreaming.” In their responses to each of these cross-cutting issues, governments must identify the diverse factors driving them and their various impacts to devise and execute effective policy solutions. Clearly, the definitional and operational challenges are huge.

Complicating the task of addressing gender inequality and climate change is the need to recognize and respond to the dynamic relationship *between* them. Arguably, an effective response requires no less than a double mainstreaming approach that integrates both gender equality and climate change actions into all facets of governments’ policy and decision making, as well as into the financing structure supporting implementation. Failure to do so threatens progress toward resilient, equitable and sustainable societies within a safeguarded environment. A final layer of complexity is that, while gender and climate intersect, there is not a complete overlap between them, posing significant challenges to planning, public finance and accountability systems/practices.

Public finance management sits at the center of any integrated government response to gender inequality and climate change. Government plans and promises, regardless of the issues, are meaningless without investments in the implementation through public budgets and expenditures which also provide incentives and regulatory frameworks for private investment. For over 25 years, governments and civil society organizations around the world have been using gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) approaches as a tool to promote gender equality. GRB has been used for awareness raising, management and accountability purposes, including identifying and tracking gender-related spending, evaluating impact and using resulting evidence to improve planning and implementation.

As governments in climate-vulnerable countries, and those international actors that support them, have sought to improve their public finance systems and practices to respond to climate change, there have been early efforts to learn from GRB experiences. Several countries have used lessons from GRB to develop and implement climate change-responsive budget reforms to better manage public funds to mitigate the causes of global warming and protect and build the resilience of people and communities and safeguard the environment on which they depend. However, while governments increasingly recognize the need to acknowledge the gender-differentiated impact of climate hazards and climate change action plans, this is rarely included in budget allocations. Governments also need to take the next step of making their climate-responsive budgets also gender-responsive and vice versa. The extent to which they do this could determine whether climate change further entrenches or deepens gender discrimination and inequality, poverty and exclusion.

ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB), with support from the International Budget Partnership (IBP), the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the Heinrich-Böll Stiftung Washington, DC, undertook this exploratory research looking at existing practices and approaches, as well as opportunities and possible core guiding principles for gender-responsive climate change budgeting (GR-CCB) with the aim to accelerate progress toward more effective approaches to integrating (“double mainstreaming”) gender and climate in public financial management. The research is a first step in testing the hypothesis that GR-CCB is useful in terms of better planning and more effective, efficient and equitable use of public financial resources—and that it leads to stronger outcomes in terms of addressing the causes of climate change, building resilience to and adapting to gender-differentiated climate change risks and impacts, as well as to improving gender equality.

## 1. Introduction

Bangladesh has made significant progress over the years in terms of achieving gender equality and improving the lives of women and girls. Similarly, in response to the extreme risks that the country faces from climate breakdown, the government of Bangladesh (GoB) has made much progress in taking climate action to save lives and livelihoods of the people living in climate hotspots. Both gender actions and climate actions are integrated into the planning process and the GoB has established guidelines and institutional arrangements for resourcing the plans. In addition to requiring ministries to identify expenditures in their annual budgets that contribute to gender equality and climate mitigation and adaptation, it has also produced and published this information in annual gender budgets and climate change budgets. The gender budgeting has been reported since 2009, whereas the government began producing and publishing the climate budget in 2018. There are a number of policy frameworks and plans that form the basis of both of the budgets. However, the climate budget does not include gender-responsive indicators or *vice versa*. Given that women, especially women in poverty, face greater risks to the negative impacts of climate hazards, failure to address their differential needs in the government’s climate responses threaten to undermine progress on gender equality. Gender-responsive climate actions demand gender-responsive climate change budgeting (GR-CCB), and so this study seeks to identify the extent to which the GoB is progressing toward integrating gender into climate change policies, programs and expenditures.

In 2013 the GoB developed the Climate Change and Gender Action Plan (CCGAP) that includes four key pillars of Bangladesh’s Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2009 (BCCSAP): 1) Food Security, Social Protection, and Health; 2) Comprehensive Disaster Management; 3) Infrastructure; and 4) Mitigation and Low-Carbon Development. The key objective of developing the CCGAP was to implement climate actions that will specifically benefit women and girls and lay the pathway for gender-responsive climate action. However, since its development, the plan has not been implemented.

The GoB's 7<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) was one of the key documents that guided the government's efforts toward building climate and disaster resiliency, particularly for women and children. Compared to the previous five-year plan, the 7<sup>th</sup> FYP was a significant step forward in identifying environmental and climate change actions as preconditions for achieving sustainable development, as well as reducing gender inequality. Furthermore, the plan recognized the need for gender-differentiated interventions to address inequality and as essential to advancing women's empowerment. In addition to the 7<sup>th</sup> FYP, the groundbreaking Delta Plan 2100, a 100-year vision document to address climate change and associated impacts, recognizes women and children's differentiated vulnerability to climate change. However, translating the plans into meaningful action remains a work in progress, as a number of agencies are working on improving the climate budget and gender budget as separate exercises, as well as exploring whether and how to integrate the two.

This report is based on a secondary literature review and interviews with key people who are working on gender budgeting and/or climate budgeting and aims to understand the challenges and to identify what measures can be taken, if at all, to facilitate a gender-responsive climate budget process in Bangladesh. The analysis made efforts to understand the approaches to preparing the GoB's gender budget and climate budget and answer a set of questions (in the annex) that might inform a way forward. In addition to the qualitative analysis, a quantitative analysis of two critical ministries to both gender equality and climate change—the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief—was undertaken to try to estimate the gender-responsiveness of their climate budgets. Based on qualitative analysis of the documents and findings and the quantitative analysis, the report has made a set of practical and actionable recommendations.

## 2. Methodology

The initiative undertook multiple approaches to conduct the research, but relied primarily on secondary information and key informant interviews:

- **Desk-based analysis:** The document reviews focused on the GoB's climate budget and gender budget documents. The analysis also included a review of UN Women's work on gender budgeting in Bangladesh, as well as policy analysis and engagement on the GoB's climate budget by ActionAid and International Center for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD).
- **Key informant interviews:** The researcher interviewed a number of key informants, especially on the gender budget processes. One factor in the imbalance between gender and climate in the interviews was that climate budgeting is fairly new in Bangladesh, and it is understood by a narrow group of stakeholders who have initially engaged in the climate budget process. Another factor is that the research draws on the work of ActionAid Bangladesh and ICCCAD on climate budget policy over the past three years, which recently included a series of consultations with state and non-state

stakeholders that covered many elements of climate budgeting. The report evaluated those consultation outcomes.

- **Quantitative analysis of the 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20 gender and climate budgets:** The quantitative analysis looks broadly at trends in spending on both gender and climate change over time, as well as a closer look at the budgets of the Ministries of Agriculture and Disaster Management and Relief (DMR). This analysis is limited to the fiscal years that both gender budgets and climate budgets have been published.

## 3. Research findings

### 3.1 Climate budget reporting and implementation

The government of Bangladesh released its national budget for the 2020-21 fiscal year on 11 June 2020. Alongside the national budget, the GoB published its fourth climate budget report titled “Climate Financing for Sustainable Development 2020-2021.” The report presents data on allocations and actual prior year climate-related spending for 25 key relevant ministries/divisions. The report also includes a section explaining how the GoB determines climate relevant allocation.

The GoB’s climate change response is outlined in the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategic Action Plan 2009 that identifies six priority thematic areas as its pillars, including:

- Ensuring access to basic services like food, safe housing and employment to most poor and vulnerable groups
- Comprehensive disaster management
- Maintenance of existing infrastructure, such as river and coastal embankment, cyclone shelters and urban drainage systems, etc.
- Research and knowledge management
- Mitigation and low carbon development
- Capacity building and institutional strengthening

The BCCSAP also includes 44 programs that are identified as having relevant interventions under these pillars. Take, for example, the comprehensive disaster management theme under which the strategy includes as relevant

programs: P1 – Improvement of flood forecasting and early warning, and P2 – Improvement of cyclone and storm surge warning, as well as two others.<sup>2</sup>

The government also has established a Climate Change Fiscal Framework that includes an approach for identifying and tagging climate relevance of expenditures that uses a system based on the Rio Markers for mitigation (1998) and for adaptation (2010).<sup>3</sup> This framework provides the basis for calculating climate budget allocations. More specifically, the key steps that the GoB and individual ministries follow to determine climate budgets are:

**Step 1:** Linking programs and activities to the BCCSAP Themes and Programs with the Climate Relevance Criteria (51 climate-relevance criteria that include the 44 BCCSAP programs, “Targeted Climate Change Projects/Programs” in each thematic area—i.e., those considered to be 100% relevant and programs and activities deemed “non-climate relevant”)

**Step 2:** Assigning the appropriate climate-relevance weight against each of the Climate Relevance Criteria (weights presented below)

**Step 3:** Determining the relevance of projects and programs

**Step 4:** Estimating climate finance for multiple relevance criteria for projects/programs

**Step 5:** Establishing climate finance weight for the “Operating Budget” of the ministries/divisions and associated agencies

The climate relevance categories used for the criteria-based assessment are:

- Strongly Relevant (81 to 100 percent),
- Significantly Relevant (61 to 80 percent),
- Moderately Relevant (41 to 60 percent),
- Somewhat Relevant (21 to 40 percent),
- Implicitly Relevant (6 to 20 percent), and
- Not Relevant (0 to 5 percent)

Applying these steps to identify the climate relevance of projects and programs, particularly those that meet more than one relevance criterion, and applying the weights to calculate the climate-relevant portion of the total costs—

---

<sup>2</sup> MOEF, 2009. “Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan.” Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh. Downloaded on 12 December 2020 at <http://nda.erd.gov.bd/files/1/Publications/CC%20Policy%20Documents/BCCSAP2009.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, “Questions & Answers: Rio Marker Climate and Environment-Related Development Finance Statistics,” February 2016. Downloaded on 24 February 2020 at [https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/FAQ\\_Tracking%20climate%20finance%20and%20Rio%20markers\\_February%202016.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/FAQ_Tracking%20climate%20finance%20and%20Rio%20markers_February%202016.pdf)

which are then aggregated to a ministry's overall climate budget—is very complex. It is a process that employs technical statistical methods and requires line ministries to know how climate relevance is defined and how to apply this knowledge in their program design and budgeting.

In terms of budget formulation, the Ministry of Finance leads the preparation of the climate budget report. It is not very clear how the line ministries are engaged in the process, and what role they play in defining how much is climate relevant, as there are different views shared by the officials of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change. In term of implementation of climate-relevant projects and programs, the line ministries are responsible for project management and expenditure.

## 3.2 Gender budget development

Bangladesh has been undertaking gender budgeting for over a decade. Though formally it is noted to have started in the 2008-09 fiscal year, there is evidence that four ministries prepared gender budgets in the 2005-06 fiscal year. Currently all 43 ministries and departments of the GoB are required to prepare gender budgets against 14 standards. (See Annex 1.) Furthermore, the gender budget is linked with the 7<sup>th</sup> Five-Year plan that aims to establish “a country where men and women will have equal opportunities and rights and women will be recognized as equal contributors in economic, social and political development” under broad strategic objectives to:

- a. Improve women's human capabilities
- b. Increase women's economic benefits
- c. Enhance women's voice and agency
- d. Create an enabling environment for women's advancement

To implement these strategic objectives, seven actions were identified: (1) increase access to human development opportunities, (2) enhance access to and control over productive resources, (3) increase participation and decision making, (4) establish a conducive legal and regulatory environment, (5) improve institutional capacity, accountability and oversight, (6) increase protection and resilience from crisis and shocks, and (7) promote positive social norms.

In order to ensure that development projects contribute to realizing the gender goals, the GoB adopted a number of indicators that can help guide ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) through the stages of project development, which are incorporated into the Development Project Proposal (DPP) format.

**Table 1. Indicators to assess gender responsiveness of DPP**

1. Background: Situation Analysis and Rationale (Item 14 of DPP: Background, Objectives, Priority, Rationale, Linkages, Targets, and Outputs/Outcomes)	Numbers of women/men and girls/boys targeted in the project addressing their problems/situation in which they live, and the nature of their roles, involvement in and the benefit from the project.
	Specific impact of the project issues on both women and men, girls and boys are addressed
	Gender inequalities related to the project situation and barriers faced by women / girls are identified and analyzed.
	Women’s needs and constraints; project intentions to reduce gender gaps, and result in equal benefit for women/men and/or girls/boys are addressed
2. Objectives (Item no.3 of DPP: objective of the project)	Do the objectives indicate what benefits and results will be gained by women and men, girls and boys? (Explicit or implicit?)
	Are objectives focus on women’s advancement and reducing gender gaps?
3. Strategy (Item 24 of DPP)	Do the outcomes and outputs contribute to any of the key five-year plan goals for women’s advancement and rights?
	Do the outcomes and outputs contribute to any of the BC1 Standards of MTBF?
4. Component -wise Annual Phasing and Procurement Plan (Item 12 annexure IV of DPP)	Are there adequate inputs and allocation in the project to implement gender equality activities?
	Is it clear what proportion of the allocation will contribute to benefiting women and reducing gender gaps?
5. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation (Item 23 of DPP)	Have gender-equality performance Indicators (for project outcomes and outputs) been identified?

Source: Report on Gender Review of Development Project Proposal (2019) National Resilience Programme (NRP) Programming Division, Planning Commission, Government of Bangladesh

## 4. Analysis based on the key informant Interviews

Currently, while gender budgeting is a familiar process in Bangladesh, the climate budget is less known, even within government institutions. The concept of either a gender-responsive climate budget or a climate-responsive gender budget is not commonly shared among policy makers or development practitioners. The research identified a set of questions as guideline for discussing with key informants.

- Budget leadership:** Budget formulation and reporting are led by the Ministry of Finance. In terms of budget preparation, the line ministries submit projects, including an estimate of revenue they can generate throughout the year, using the Mid-Term Budget Framework. The role of the Ministry of Finance is fairly straightforward, as the ministry allocates budget as “an envelope” to the line ministries. In turn, the line ministries determine the projects and programs that fit within this envelope. The final budget of each ministry is agreed in a final consultation between the line ministry, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Planning. Once the process is completed, the Ministry of Finance prepares the final proposed budget that is then submitted to parliament for consideration and enactment. However, importantly, the mid-year revision (November/December) is not sent to

parliament for approval—a practice that can undermine the credibility of enacted budgets. From the informant interviews, there is not a clearly defined role of Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change in the development of the climate budget, whether that be to provide technical guidance to other ministries in preparing/assessing their climate-relevant budget allocations or quality assurance on the ministries' budget proposals.

- **Opportunities:** There are several factors in place that could support a gender-responsive climate change budgeting approach. Each ministry has a gender focal point and climate focal point, as well as a team that works with the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Finance on planning and budgeting, so there exist some institutional arrangements for GR-CCB. Furthermore, existing tools and processes for preparing a gender budget and a climate budget are opportunities to build on.
- **Challenges:** While gender budgeting is well known and more deeply embedded in the GoB's public finance processes, climate budgeting is not yet there. In many ministries, such as the Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs (MoWCA), the climate budget is considered to be limited to the budget for responding to disasters or projects that are related to the social safety net. It clearly shows a lack of understanding of the range of programs, projects and activities within the ministry that can contribute to climate goals and how investments in climate actions may contribute to the goals of a gender budget. Though the DPP format includes both climate sensitivity and gender responsiveness elements to be considered in the making of a project, those are rather qualitative and yes/no questions that do not support the principles of gender budget or climate budget.
- **Measuring effectiveness:** At the end of the day, it is the impact of public expenditure that matters. Assessing and reporting impact against expenditure contributes to public accountability for the effective use of public finances to meet public goals and priorities, including those related to gender and climate change resilience. It is also essential information for future policymaking and budgeting. While expenditure analysis can be done through the Ministry of Finance's automated information system, the effectiveness of the expenditure is most often measured by third party consultants (and mostly for select projects). This is especially true for the gender budget impact analysis. Thus, while there is some impact reporting in the gender budgets of ministries, which is to be praised, it is still too limited. The climate budget process has yet to disclose whether the government has done any analysis on effectiveness against expenditure. It is one of the key recommendations made by civil society over the past several years.

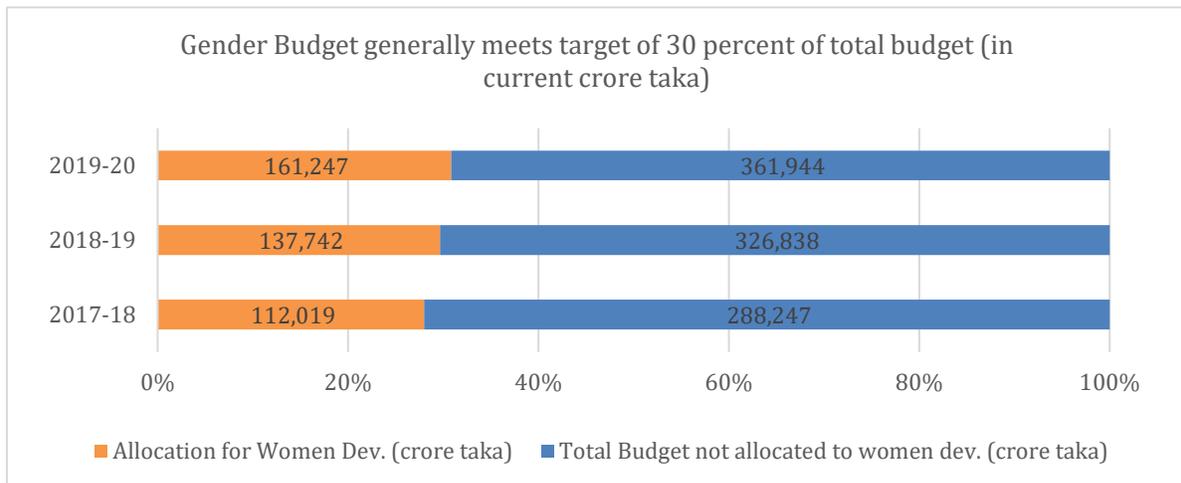
## 5. Quantitative analysis against objective of the study

Women face differentiated climate change impacts compared to men. The BCCSAP 2009 recognized that a separate work program is required to understand and address the differentiated impact. In 2012, at the Doha Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP), the government of

Bangladesh fully supported the agenda of women’s advancement and participation from policymaking through program implementation. Following up on this decision, the GoB, with support from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and in consultation with a range of stakeholders, developed the Climate Change and Gender Action Plan (CCGAP) in 2013.<sup>4</sup> The document is one of the major stepping stones to mainstreaming gender-responsive climate action at the national level. Unfortunately, the integration envisioned in the CCGAP has yet to be implemented.

The GoB sets a target for the gender budget to represent 30% of the total national budget, which has largely been met over time, as shown in Figure 1. In contrast, Figure 2 shows that the share of climate-relevant allocation has been around 7.8% of total allocation (for the number of ministries included in the annual climate change budget, which was 25 in the 2020-21 climate budget).

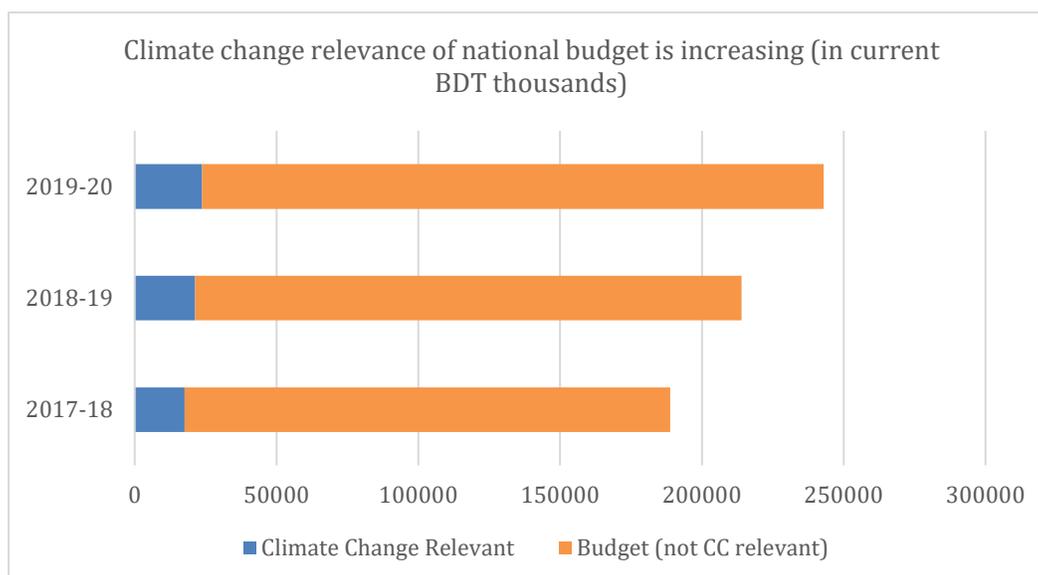
**Figure 1. Gender budget as a share of the national budget over time**



Source: Author calculations of data from Finance Division, Ministry of Finance Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, 2019-20 Gender Budget

<sup>4</sup> MoEF, (2013). “Bangladesh Climate Change and Gender Action Plan,” Ministry of Environment of Forest, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, Dhaka, Bangladesh, pp. xvi+122.

Figure 2. Climate budget as a share of total budget allocations over time



Source: Author calculations of data from Finance Division, Ministry of Finance Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Under current frameworks for the gender budget, a gender-responsive climate change budget may well represent 30% or more of the total climate allocation. According to desk research and information based on the interviews and consultations, the detailed program budget data that would allow for an analysis of the extent to which the Climate Budget is gender-responsive is produced by line ministries, but this information does not seem to be publicly available. It might be possible to request such data from each of the 25 ministries that are included in the climate budget, though it would strengthen public accountability for the GoB to make this information more easily accessible.

In addition to the data access challenges, the different methods used to determine the gender and climate relevance of expenditure may make integrating the two budgets more complicated. The criteria used to determine the climate relevancy of a project or program are based on weights determined through a substantial mathematical/statistical analysis, whereas the measures for gender responsiveness are more qualitative. Given that there appears to be limited guidance to ministries on how to determine the climate or gender aspects of programs or activities, it is likely that there will be variations in precision and accuracy of their budgets that is independent of the different approaches. While the government publishes actual expenditure against climate budget allocations (using the same methodology for calculating the climate-relevance of the expenditure), the research did not come across any evidence of measuring gender budget. For both budget processes, measuring and reporting on the effectiveness or impact of spending is lacking. There is some effort to do so in the gender budget, but to date, there has been no impact reporting in the climate budget.

Over the years, there have been several attempts by various internal and external stakeholders to identify ways to make climate action, and budget supporting such action, gender responsive. It has been widely recognized for decades that women and children are among those most at risk of the negative impacts of climate change, and this is reflected somewhat in policies. Climate action plans, such as the National Adaptation Plan of Action (2005), refer to differentiated gender impacts. However, analysis using a sectoral approach (i.e., Intensity of Impacts on Different Sectors due to Climate Change) were limited to examining the gender differentiated impacts on only livelihoods.<sup>5</sup>

Given the efforts made by different actors, including UN Women and the UNDP, among others, to create an institutional mechanism for developing, reporting and implementing a gender-responsive climate budget, one of the key entry points would be to introduce into the climate budget approach a set of gender parameters/indicators for each climate issue or action (i.e., adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage) and develop weights for calculating the gender responsiveness of the climate budget. While taking these steps can identify the amount the GoB spends on gender-responsive climate change actions, measuring the effectiveness of such spending will remain a challenge. Addressing this issue will require a longer-term approach that includes defining gender-climate goals, identifying potential actions and policies against these goals, defining key performance indicators and collecting, analyzing and reporting on performance data. This foundational work should be a part of revising and implementing the CCGAP.

In the absence of such gender-responsive indicators or detailed program or activity gender and climate budget data, the UNDP has developed a methodology to calculate a range of the potential gender-responsiveness of ministry climate budgets.

---

<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Environment and Forest, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, "National Adaptation Programme of Action, Final Report," November 2005, pg. 17. Accessed on 24 February 2021 at: [https://www.adaptation-undp.org/sites/default/files/downloads/bangladesh\\_napa.pdf](https://www.adaptation-undp.org/sites/default/files/downloads/bangladesh_napa.pdf).

## Box 1. Climate relevant expenditures with poverty and gender co-benefits: Calculating the overlap range

### **Minimum climate relevant expenditures with gender-co benefits**

- Calculate the percentage of expenditures in a ministry that are not climate relevant.
- Calculate the difference between the percentage of gender relevant expenditures and non-climate relevant expenditures.
- If the difference is negative, gender weight is smaller than non-climate weight, we assume that all gender relevant expenditures overlap with non-climate expenditures (worst case scenario).
- Therefore, the minimum percentage of climate change expenditures that overlaps with gender is zero.
- If the difference is positive, gender weight is bigger than non-climate weight, then even if all the non-climate expenditures are gender positive, a minimum of climate relevant expenditures must have some gender significance and it will be calculated as the difference between the percentage of gender relevant expenditures and non-climate relevant expenditures.

### **Maximum potential climate relevant expenditures with gender-co benefits:**

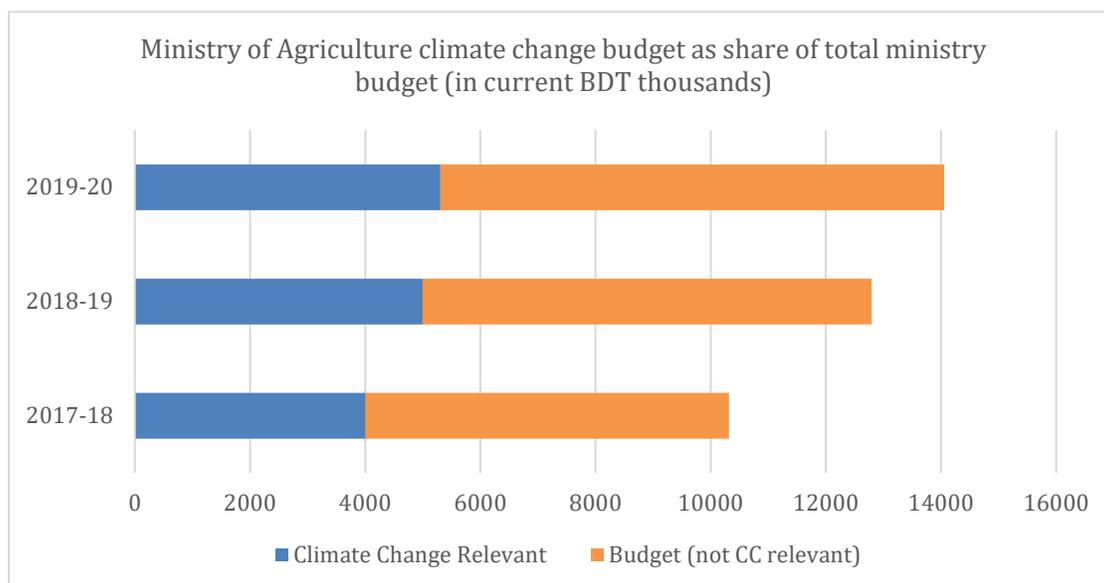
- If the climate relevant weight is higher than the gender weight, we then assume as a best-case scenario that all the gender expenditures are within climate expenditures, then the maximum estimate for gender responsive climate expenditures could be derived using simply the gender weight.
- If the climate relevant weight is lower than the gender weight, we then assume as a best-case scenario that all the climate expenditures are within gender expenditures, then the maximum estimate for gender responsive climate expenditures could be derived using simply the climate weight.

The same method could be used for poverty

Source: A. N. Mukherjee, "Incorporating Gender and Poverty Analysis in the Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Review: A Methodological Note Draft October 29, 2014." UNDP, Bangkok, Thailand.

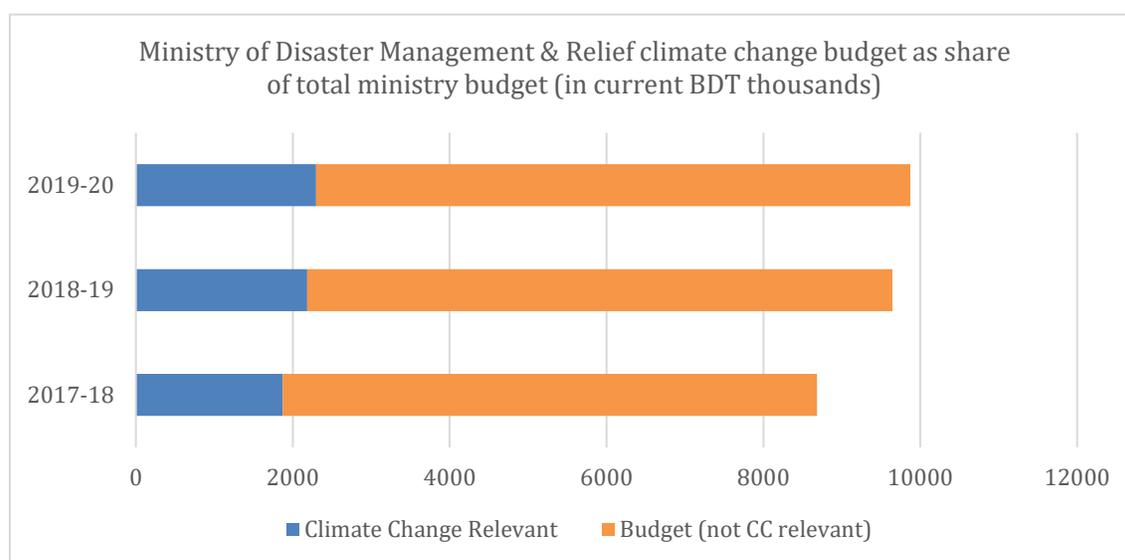
In an effort to determine the level to which public investments in climate actions are gender responsive, the UNDP methodology was applied to the budgets of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief.

**Figure 3. Climate change budget share of the Ministry of Agriculture**



Source: Author calculations of data from Finance Division, Ministry of Finance Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh

**Figure 4. Climate change budget share of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief**



Source: Author calculations of data from Finance Division, Ministry of Finance Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh

For the Ministry of Agriculture, applying the UNDP methodology finds that between zero and 39.1% of the 2018-19 budget allocations are gender-responsive climate allocations. The range in 2019-20 would be between zero and 37.8%. For both years analyzed, the maximum indicates that 100 percent of the ministry’s climate-relevant

expenditures are gender responsive; while the minimum would mean that none of the gender budget is climate-relevant. The actual share of gender-responsive climate change allocations is likely somewhere in between, but without clear definitions and access to detailed program data, a more precise calculation is not possible.

**Table 2. Ministry of Agriculture**

Fiscal Year	Total ministry budget (in crore taka)	Climate and Gender	
		Minimum %	Maximum %
2018-19	12,795	0	39.05%
2019-20	14,053	0	37.78%

Source: Author calculations of 2019-20 Gender Budget

**Table 3. Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief**

Fiscal Year	Total ministry budget (in crore taka)	Climate and Gender	
		Minimum %	Maximum %
2018-19	9,718	0	22.46%
2019-20	9,872	0	23.27%

Source: Author calculations of 2019-20 Gender Budget

For the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, the UNDP method of analysis finds that between zero and 22.5% of the 2018-19 budget allocations are gender-responsive climate allocations. The range in 2019-20 would be between zero and 23.3%. For both years analyzed, as with the Ministry for Agriculture, the maximum indicates that all of the ministry's climate relevant expenditures are gender-responsive; while the minimum would mean that none of the gender budget is climate relevant.

With access to only highly aggregated ministry budget data, this analysis provides an indicative range of the gender-responsive climate change budget for each ministry. However, it is of limited practical use, and there is no way to identify the actual gender-responsive climate relevant budget without detailed program-level data.

## 6. Recommendations

The government of Bangladesh has demonstrated its political will to address both gender inequality and the climate crisis and its achievements over the years are significant. Development partners and NGOs also have made significant contributions toward achieving gender- and climate-responsive budgeting processes. With regard to taking the next crucial step, increasingly there are efforts underway to facilitate gender-responsive climate

budgeting. Based on the analysis of progress made so far and existing policy instruments, this report recommends the following actions as steps forward.

**Revise and implement CCGAP:** One of the first steps to set up the institutional framework for GR-CCB is to revise the Climate Change and Gender Action Plan, including costing the plan and establishing parameters and indicators for measuring gender-responsive climate investment. This can be initiated through a two-year pilot program led jointly by Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, along with the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Finance. Clear guidance and technical assistance to line ministries can be developed from the pilot experience to ensure consistency and accuracy in GR-CCB across government.

**Improve existing budget reporting processes:** The current reporting of gender budget and climate budget must include:

- a) Expenditure against planned allocation,
- b) Explanations for changes made to budget allocations during the mid-year revision to enhance credibility and predictability, and
- c) Evidence of the effectiveness of projects and programs.

Furthermore, it will be important to have Upazila (subunits of districts)-wise analysis of budget allocation and expenditure to ensure equitable allocation of resources and support impact/effectiveness measurement.

**Strengthen audit process:** Investment must be made in strengthening the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED), especially with regard to evaluating program effectiveness. While third-party evaluation of projects can improve program quality, strengthening IMED remains a critical step to ensure continuous monitoring and learning.

For increased transparency and accountability, as well as measuring effectiveness, social audit can become a key tool that government/IMED can facilitate, especially at Upazila level, and which can also be performed annually. This recommendation is made mostly to monitor the execution of adaptation projects, whereas mitigation projects may require different approaches. Furthermore, larger mitigation projects, such as energy projects, require the development of a rigorous methodology to measure gender responsiveness.

**Establish joint monitoring taskforce:** A Joint Monitoring Taskforce (JMTF) has already been proposed by CSOs for strengthening climate budget preparation, implementation and assessment. This can be a strong step forward toward setting up institutional processes to make the climate budget gender-responsive. Furthermore, the JMTF

can also play a role in measuring the effectiveness of programs and projects, including those taken under the Green Climate Fund and to implement Delta Plan 2100.

**Capacity enhancement:** Those interviewed for this study clearly identified the need for capacity enhancement of both government officials, especially MoWCA and MoEFCC, and development actors. There is a strong need to deepen the understanding of line ministries on the roles and purpose of both the climate budget process and the gender budget process and the application of the methods for calculating both. While setting gender indicators for climate budgeting can support GR-CCB and reporting on expenditures can be improved to increase transparency, ensuring that funds are used to effectively respond to gender and climate goals requires deeper understanding and capacity.

# Annex 1. Standards for assessing impact of ministry's strategic objectives on women's advancement

**1. Access to health care and improved nutrition:** Whether specific actions are being taken to effectively address women's reproductive and general health needs? Also, whether activities will improve nutritional status of women, particularly pregnant and lactating women? If so how?

**2. Access to public properties and services:** Whether access to public properties (e.g., khas land, wetland, social afforestation etc.) and services (e.g., education, health, electricity, pure water, etc.) are being expanded? If so how?

**3. Access to education and training:** Have opportunities to access education and training been created or expanded for girls/women? If so how?

**4. Reduce daily working hours of women:** Have any steps/programs been undertaken to reduce daily working hours of women? If so, what are those or how can those reduce working hours?

**5. Women's participation in labor market and income generating activities:** Have necessary steps been undertaken to increase access and to make it easier for women to enter into the labor market and undertake income generating activities? How those have been undertaken?

**6. Enhance social safety for women and reduce probable vulnerability and risk:** Have necessary steps been undertaken to increase social safety and to reduce probable risk and vulnerability or what necessary steps will help to increase social safety for women and/or reduce probable vulnerability and risks of women particularly because of natural calamities?

**7. Women's empowerment:** Whether steps have been undertaken to develop/encourage women's empowerment process through ensuring participation in decision making in the family, society and workplace and through increased participation in political framework? How have those steps have been undertaken?

**8. Women's participation in various forums:** Have necessary steps/programs been undertaken in order to bring/include gender related issues at national and international forums or how those issues have been undertaken?

**9. Ensure safety and free movement for women:** Have necessary steps been undertaken to ensure free movement for women at public places and to ensure safety in family, at public places as well as in the society? If so, how have those steps been undertaken?

**10. Monitoring and evaluation:** Have necessary measures/steps been undertaken in order to strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems pertaining to gender equality issues? If so, how/in what process?

**11. Increase social status of women:** Have necessary measures/steps been undertaken in order to raise the social status of women (for example reduction in childhood/early marriage and dowry etc.)? If so, how?

**12. Access to law and justice for women:** Have measures/steps been undertaken to create/expand opportunities in favor of women to access law and justice? How those steps have been undertaken?

**13. Information technology for women:** Whether necessary opportunities have been created for women to access and utilize training on information technology or how access and utilization of these trainings will be ensured?

**14. Reduce violence and oppression:** What steps/measures have been undertaken to reduce violence and oppression against women or how violence/oppression against women can be reduced within the family and in the public space?

Source: Report on Gender Review of Development Project Proposal (2019) National Resilience Programme (NRP) Programming Division, Planning Commission, Government of Bangladesh

## Annex 2. Interviews

List of experts Interviewed:

- Dr. Kaniz Siddique, Public Finance Management Expert
- Dr. Sharmind Nilormee, Professor, University of Jahangirnagar
- Most. Ferdousi Begum, Deputy Secretary, Budget and Audit, MOWCA

Note: The report has also taken feedback/comments by the following experts into account from a recent consultation hosted by ActionAid Bangladesh on Climate Budget Accountability that took place on 2 September 2020:

- a) Dr. Saleemul Huq
- b) Dr. Mizan R Khan
- c) Farah Kabir, Country Director, ActionAid Bangladesh
- d) Abu Sumon
- e) Rahima Sultana Kazal