

# Climate induced displaced deserve protection regime both from national and international level

## 1. Forecasting and empirical experiences on climate induced displacement in South Asia and Bangladesh

All IPCC (Inter governmental Panel on Climate Change) reports have recognized that, at least 180-200 million people will be forced to be displaced globally due to climate change impact, but most of the cases will be happened in South Asian countries. The latest investigation, follow up reports have proved the IPCC warning on the displacement and shown that, in an average about 27 million people are being displaced per year due to the result of climate change and its negative impacts like cyclone, storm surge and extreme weather events (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, IDMC-2014). Among these incidents, more than 80% have been observed in South Asian countries.

Bangladesh is the most vulnerable country in case of climate induced forced displacement. Projected sea level rise will displace more than 30 million people in coastal area by 2100 (*Accounting Climate Induced Migration in Bangladesh: An Exploratory GIS Based Study, November 2011*), that means one in every five people will be displaced in Bangladesh.

The evidence shows that, cyclone AILA in 2009 displaced more than 0.15 million people, where around 16,000 people are still unable to return to their home due to lack of opportunities to revive or resume their livelihood. (*Climate Change induced displacement: A case study on cyclone AILA, Hasan Mehedi, 2010*). The affected areas and their protecting infrastructures are yet to be reconstructed or further improved due to lack of necessary resources and government ability. Apart from this, the negative impacts of climate change have been intensifying other environmental degradations in coastal and non-coastal areas in Bangladesh, especially in the form of salinity, water logging and river erosion. Thus every year, more than 30,000-50,000 people have been forced to be displaced from their own land and forcibly migrated to another area (*Climate Change, Loss of Livelihoods and Forced Displacements in Bangladesh, A U Ahmed and S Neelormi, 2008*).

## 2. Managing the climate induced displacement

This is also being observed that, the international processes are insufficient to address the issue of managing the climate induced displacement; and these are ignoring the demand of climate vulnerable countries. This is also rationally predicted that, the vulnerable countries may not be able to manage the climate induced displacement due to lack of appropriate resources and supportive policy instruments. So experiencing the above crisis we, the civil society representatives have placed following demands to protect climate induced displaced people and their rights to live.

## 3. Our Demands

### 3.1 At national Level

#### **a. Include Climate induced displaced in the BCCSAP and national planning process**

The climate induced displacement and their management strategies and action are little addressed and attributed in the BCCSAP (Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan 2009). That's why we noticed almost no particular and practical action in last couple of years except its theoretical projection. As so far we have found our government is serious with the issue of climate forced displacement, it is imperative to review the BCCSAP to address the issue and to develop specific strategies and action plan. Government also starts the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and Sixth Five Year Development Planning (SFYP) process to draw global support; we are expecting that this issue will be integrated in NAP and SFYP.

#### **b. Develop Internal Displacement Policy (IDP)**

High density of population in Bangladesh might make the issue of climate induced displaced unmanageable in future. Presently 964 people are living per square kilometer in Bangladesh, which is one of the highest in the world. By 2050, the average number of population will be 1580 per sq. km in this country, which will be the 3 or 4 time higher comparing global average, (*Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2011*). On the other hand, in

India it is 350-400 and in African continent it is 200-250. Other reasons which also will make the management of climate induced displacement almost impossible to manage are scarcity of resource, managing ecosystem and food security issues. This concern should be established through a systematic exercise and following the particular policy of internal displaced management in country that yet to be in place. Many countries have so far prepared their IDP meantime. For example, Australia has made an amendment to its Refugee Act 2007 in order to facilitate the climate induced displacement. India and Pakistan have their IDP. These policies are in the process of review focusing the management of climate induced displacement. Bangladesh has obviously needed to prepare its IDP. Because the present climate change policy and its implementing tools (e.g. the BCCSAP) is little suited with rights-based framework. That's why we need to develop a policy that will support simultaneously to prevent the displacement and also will ensure support for those who are forcibly displaced due to climate change. So we request and demand to our government to develop our internal displacement management policy, and then we could be able to establish our logical demand internationally in favor of the issue.

***c. Educate and skill up the people for migration with dignity in both home and abroad***

Most of the climate induced displaced people are lack of education and skill. This problem is in fact a barrier to face any crisis and to harmonize the livelihood, that's hampered due to disaster. This would be very easy for them to create self adaptation strategy in many cases. We think that, the traditional development strategies can never be suitable in managing the climate induced displacement, rather to ensure sustainable solution we need special and out of the box attention. In that cases government must consider facilitation of the additional, effective and job oriented education strategies (Awareness, vocational, Skill and Employment oriented). Enhanced skills can be helpful for the climate induced people to ensure their uninterrupted livelihood. Therefore, we demand to engage all technical and vocational institutions for their first stage of employment oriented education. Such a technical education should be incorporated for coastal areas especially from junior secondary to higher secondary level where rate of drop out is almost 50%. These technical educations will also be able to meet the growing urban need. Migrated

skilled people will be able to ensure a livelihood option for them with dignity in home and abroad.

**3.2 Exploring Possibilities in Regional Level**

***a. Easier VISA process for climate induced cross border migration***

Cross border migration is evident between neighboring countries worldwide. IPCC has reported the same experience on cross-border migration and its trend of mobility. But this is a big concern since cross-border migration is often treated as threat to national security, and unexpected barriers are being imposed in the name of national security. We think that neighboring countries should reconsider and make the VISA process easier for cross-border migration especially for climate induced forced displaced people. We have an example Between India-Nepal cross-border movement and migration (1965 Friendship Treaty) and could follow this instance under the SAARC mechanism.

***b. Setting common standard to facilitate cross border migration***

Off course we accept and recognize that a common standard is needed for climate induced displaced especially on their identification, definition and inter-state migratory process and modalities that will ensure a well managed and safer migration pathways. In order to build up this common standard, we demand to our neighboring countries to initiate a new work frame.

***c. India-Bangladesh can follow bi-lateral model for climate induced cross border migration***

Further, on a bilateral front, both India and Bangladesh should study the model followed by Australia and New Zealand that supports people from neighboring countries suffering from the consequences of climate change. This could even have an impact on future trade relations between these two countries. Hence, India should look at migration as an opportunity rather than a threat and start working to formulate strategies with all the stakeholders, especially Bangladesh, to deal with the potential threat of climate induced migration in the most proactive manner (*The tenuous of Future climate migrants: Manish Vaid and Tridivesh Singh Maini, India 2014*).

**3.3 To UN and CoP process**

***a. Bangladesh govt. should develop text for submission to UN and CoP process***

Our Prime Minister demands a separate protocol for climate induced displaced in different international forums. She categorically demanded it in the UN general assembly in 2009. There our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, “Copenhagen must consider measures to provide social, cultural and economic support for “climate migrants” who have to flee their homes and sometimes their entire countries because of global warming. She added “make a strong call” for the development of a new legal regime under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Protocol to ensure the “social, cultural and economic rehabilitation of climate-induced displaced migrants” (Ref: UN news center at <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32278#.VRecYpPnyBF>).

In the forum of CVC (Climate Vulnerable Forum) in 2011, our Prime Minister said, “the gravest effect of climate change may be on human migration. Last year, 42 million people were newly displaced by rapid-onset natural disasters. Extreme weather events are already displacing many more people than violent conflict. Slow-onset events like sea-level rise and desertification get even lower global focus. We must work towards correcting this imbalance and we need to commence discussion on the creation of an appropriate framework to address the needs of people displaced due to climate change” (Ref: Inaugural speech from Sheikh Hasina, also see more at <http://daraint.org/2011/11/14/2726/inauguration-of-the-climate-vulnerable-forum-2011/#sthash.YVBVJ51V.dpuf>).

In April 2014 she also demanded the inclusion of migration issue in post-2015 development agenda during the “Global expert meeting on Migration in the post-2015 Development Agenda”. In favor of her demand, our Prime Minister said “the world leaders to include the migration issue in the post-2015 development agenda with due importance and view every migrant as a 'human person' instead of only a factor of production. It's a growing need for social protection for migrants and members of their families in the countries like Bangladesh, exposed to climate change and facing some acute challenges, while safeguarding lives and livelihoods of millions of people” ([Bengalnews24.com](http://Bengalnews24.com), 28 April, 2014).

Following the demand, respective ministries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Ministry of Forest & Environment) are yet to develop any demand and to submit any official proposal to UN and CoP negotiations. We demand to the ministries to give

importance to the Prime Minister’s well wish and to develop a proposal to submit to the next CoP negotiation. This proposal should include clear demand on the rights of climate displaced people and their protection.

#### ***b. Rich countries should facilitate climate induced displaced following Cancun Adaptation Framework***

The Cancun Adaptation Framework has emphasized to take into the account of Common But Different Responsibilities (CBDR) principle. CBDR principles have been recognized by all country parties especially by developed countries for enhancing their action thorough enhancing understanding, coordination and cooperation regarding climate induced displacement and migration. It is believed that, it will support planned relocation **where appropriate at national regional and international level (Cancun Agreement: Article 14.f)**. The exercise of CBDR principle is absent in the onward global negotiations, hereby the issue is being undermined. We express our concern in this regard and we would like to demand to the developed countries to recognize their responsibility and to create facilitation process for climate induced displaced people through developing their own national procedures (Legal and Institutional) and also to ensure financial, technical and others necessities.

#### ***c. Develop new international protocol under UN process***

The Cancun Adaptation framework is also leveraging us and demanding to develop a new international protocol through UN process. As UN has mandate to protect human rights, so it has responsibility to initiate the new international protocol and its process that will be legally binding and obligatory measure for all countries protecting rights of climate induced displaced and their effective relocation, rehabilitation and in case of reintegration.

#### ***d. Developed countries should include and mention the actions and support strategies in their INDC for climate displaced people***

The Lima outcome has attributed the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) that will be a foundation for climate action in post 2020 new agreement. But attribution is only for mitigation commitment and dictates by the developed countries, which is not logical and ethical considering the crisis of vulnerable countries. So we demand that all country parties

especially developed countries will have to mention their effort and support in INDCs for vulnerable countries to achieve a sustainable solution with climate induced displaced people.

**e. UN should raise the climate displaced issue as separate agenda in CoP negotiation process**

The climate induced displaced is a not a local crisis, rather IPCC recognizes it as a global and human rights crisis. The effective and sustainable solution of this crisis is obviously related with ensuring rights of the affected people. As a facilitator of CoP process, UN should address this issue to formulate a separate and acceptable international framework that is needed, where all country parties will act accordingly. In that case we demand separate agenda in the CoP negotiation process.

Regarding the issue we also demand for unmerging the climate induced displaced issue from the discourse of Loss & Damage (L & D). Because the L & D and its negotiation process and techniques are a bit of market and finance based solution which is hardly appropriate mechanism for sustainable solution for climate induced displaced. So we demand to look the climate induced displaced in both finance and human rights perspective and find a unique solution accordingly through a global process.

**f. Bangladesh govt. needs to mobilize their interest in CVF, LDC and MVCs**

Our own interests, especially climate displaced management are not getting proper emphasis and attention due to lack of appropriate advocacy and lobby in the above mentioned forums. We expect

that, our government will take this issue as a national emergency and will set appropriate strategies to mobilize the agenda through these forums. Government should try to take leading role in these forums also to achieve the target.

**3.4 In international level**

**a. Climate induced displaced should be included in all global discourses as separate agenda**

This is being observed that the agenda on climate induced displaced is not included in many important global development discourses like, Post 2015 SDG, RIO+20 etc. We are hardly encouraged seeing the dual policy where UN and other international discourses have been talking about future sustainable development, but without including real problem like climate induced displacement which is clear gap and threat to any sustainable development. So we demand to the UN to include the issue in all global development discourses.

**b. International policies will have to be reviewed and updated**

We demand all international policies to bring under a global review process, because these policies have developed during the Second World War and in order to create peace and to establish the human rights among the war-torn countries. But over the time, situation has been changed in human rights perspective and considering future development requirement. So it's rational demand of present time to review all international policies and to update.

30<sup>th</sup> March 2015, Dhaka

**Organizations:**

Bangladesh Poribesh Angolan (BAPA), Bangladesh Indigenous People Network for Climate Change and Bio Diversity (BIPNet-CCBD), Bangladesh Climate Change Journalist Forum (BCJF), Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihood (CSRL), Climate Change Development Forum (CCDF) Coastal Development Partnership (CDP), Counter Photo, Coastal Livelihood and Environmental Action Network (CLEAN), Equity and Justice Working Group Bangladesh (EquityBD), Forum for Environmental Journalist in Bangladesh (FEJB), Ruapntor-Khulna, Participatory Research & Development Initiative (PRDI) and Udayan Bangladesh

Supported by: **Oxfam**



**Secretariat:** EquityBD, House # 13, Road # 2, Shyamoli, Dhaka-1207

**For More Information:**

Syed Aminul Hoque, mobile +8801713328815, Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, mobile: 01711529792

[www.equitybd.org](http://www.equitybd.org)