

Government losing chance in setting instance on transparency and innovation in NGO funding from Climate Change Trust Fund

CSOs' demand to ensure transparency and accountability in NGO funding from Climate Change Trust Fund

1. Accumulated allocation in BCCTF

Bangladesh is ranked as highest vulnerable country in the world under the phenomenon of existing climate change impact. Climate change has fall down in enormous challenge for our country to achieve goal on desired socio-economic development and poverty reduction strategies in recent and perspective long term future. Facing the challenges, government had prepared NAPA (national Adaptation Program of Action) as an adaptation plan in 2005. This plan was prepared with a few projects sum in fact having foreign finance and didn't elaborate appropriate policy strategies to face the climate change impact. That's why the plan didn't come into action lacking of appropriate implementation technique and with required financial assistance from domestic and out sources.

Observing this uncertainty and inadequacy of finance from different mechanisms, as well as complexity of accessing funds from the bilateral and multilateral sources, provoked the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) to finance to climate change adaptation initiatives from its own revenue income and has formed the BCCTF (Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund) in 2008 providing an initial allocation of 300 corer in 2008-09 fiscal year. In 2009, GoB also made a reviewed in the BCCSAP (Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan) and keep continuation of this allocation from national budget for BCCSAP implementation in each financial year. In current fiscal year 2012-13 government also made an allocation tk. 400 corer and thus 2500 core (312.5 million US\$) in total is accumulated in BCCTF since the inception. There need to mention that the Trustee Act allowed maximum 66% fund of BCCTF to use for projects implementation on climate change adaptation and mitigation purposes, which is identified in the BCCSAP.

2. Status of fund utilization from BCCTF

According to the latest information, government has disbursed total 1020.48 corer (127.56 million US\$) to 82 no of development projects those have submitted by different ministries. Simultaneously the BCCTF Act permits 10% funding for NGO led projects to implement under

BCCSAP. Targeting this fund, government has scrutinized 53 NGOs in last year 2011, but had to postpone their disbursement due to raise question from CSO and different media about institutional capacity and empirical experience on related issues along with governance & accountability of selected NGOs.

3. Government resume disburse to the NGOs without preparing any policy

There are no specific criteria under BCCTF act on how NGOs will be selected and financed for their submitted projects. That's why some opportunist NGO have submitted their so called development projects using banner of climate change in 2011 and tried to get fund illegally from BCCTF in connivance with corrupted govt. officials. CSO and media has raised question differing the government's process and postponed the disbursement, but now at this moment, this has resume again to release the fund in favor of those NGO who were suspended previously.

This has being criticized at earlier that the process of NGO selection and financing is top-down process and implementing without people participation. That's why CSO proposed to government to initiate a bottom-up technique where people's participation in all level and innovation would be a main diver of implementing climate adaptation activities. In this regard, following strategies could be followed; i.e.

- At first; a policy will have to develop and all NGO will be selected according to the criteria following this policy.
- Secondly; all selected NGO will undergo an orientation or training on the issues of climate change impact and its adaptation strategies. Than these NGOs will go to the field, discuss with people, climate victim and beneficiaries directly on related climate change impact and adaptation strategies and finally design a project.
- Finally; those projects shown appropriate strategies and innovation in facing the climate change impact really will be selected for implementation.

But government has made advertisement and selected NGOs following top-down process ignoring people's demand which resulted to undermine the BCCSAP funding goal and might in coherence with real expectation of climate victim and their adaptation strategies.

On 30th November 2011, government has issued a circular in selecting the NGOs and sent 53 NGO list to PKSF for scrutinizing their institutional capacity. We have tried to collect information about these NGOs from respective ministry, but failed. Nevertheless this is informed that, government has selected 53 NGOs and trying to disburse fund those were suspended previously.

4. Instant demand from the CSO's

Realising the situation and in the context of dire need on climate change adaptation, CSOs' proposed the following demands in case of NGO finance;

- i. Government that means respective ministry is responsible and draft the policy frame work related to NGO selection and finance where the bottom-up exercise especially project designing process, implanting NGO capacity assessment and transparency and accountability mechanism would be reflected.
- ii. Following issues to be actively considered in financing the NGOs
 - Name of the implementing NGO and their submitted projects circulated by selection committee before finalization.
 - Declare thematic areas, under which, the project being considered to finance
 - Approximate cost dividing into the administrative and program implementation along with time line for implementation, direct beneficiaries and

expected result must be declared or circulated.

- All above information will have to disclose or circulate in the public domain (related ministries website, in details) and news media for mass scrutinize.
- iii. The following issues must be addressed for different ministries and NGOs those have already received fund from the BCCTF in case of project implementation;
 - a. Corruption Risk Assessment
 - b. Information Disclosure policy
 - c. Complaint Response Mechanism
 - d. Participation System at all levels

We think that the above mechanism somehow will support and create a culture to ensure transparency and accountability in GoB and NGO's project implementation process under BCCTF finance.

- vi. We demand an autonomous body for climate funds management

This we demanding since earlier that the existing two climate funds BCCTF and BCCRF (Bangladesh Climate Change Resilient Fund) are creating a contradictory situation for government management approach & strategy and priority setting in climate financing. Considering the situation and future perspective of climate fund management, government must not loss the opportunity to set good example in NGO climate finance. So we demand all the climate fund especially both BCCTF and BCCRF should be manage through a single channel which could be a autonomous foundation with democratic ownership, where board will be represented by both government and opposition representatives including civil society and media.

Organizations with solidarity

BAPA, CSRL (Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihood), EquityBD, CFGN (Climate Finance Governance Network), NCCB (Network for Climate Change Bangladesh), BIP Net CCBD (Bangladesh Indigenous People Network for Climate Change and Biodiversity), Online Knowledge Society, Bangladesh Krishak Federation, Arpon, Krishani Shava, DCI, VOICE, Prodip, Bangladesh Bhumihin Somity and United People's Trust

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