

Climate Change Governance Practices of Non-governmental Organisations in Bangladesh

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Manuscript received: 21 March 2024; accepted for publication: 18 September 2024

ABSTRACT: This article examines the climate change governance practices of non-governmental organisations in Bangladesh. Various stakeholders, including government and non-governmental organizations, are working at national, regional and local levels to address climate change issues. NGOs follow climate change governance practices in their works to make better results for the vulnerable people. In this study five criteria namely, accountability, transparency, participation, government effectiveness, and resources were considered to assess the climate change governance practices of NGOs. This paper is based on published documents such as journal articles, reports, books etc. as well as key informant interviews of 34 respondents, to analyse climate change governance practices of the selected seven NGOs of Bangladesh. The surveyed NGOs are now operating to tackle challenges connected to climate change. Moreover, they follow governance protocols while working on climate change-related issues. NGOs, via their efforts in addressing climate change, are significantly improving the lives and quality of life of marginalised individuals. Despite various constraints, the successful contribution of NGOs in enhancing climate governance might strengthen the capacity of vulnerable people to combat climate change-induced disasters.

Keywords: Climate Change Governance; Accountability; Transparency; Participation; NGOs; Bangladesh

INTRODUCTION

Various stakeholders, particularly non-governmental organizations (NGOs), address the climate change-related issues while maintaining high standards of governance in their operations nowadays. NGOs provide significant support for the governance networks to improve climate change-related activities in developing countries (Keskitalo and Kulyasova, 2016). Currently, many NGOs, in association with donors and international NGOs (INGOs) are successfully working on climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) (IPCC, 2012; Rahman and Huang, 2019). Some NGOs also mediate between different actors and provide substantial professional, institutional and financial support to local governance systems (Hayes and Persha, 2010). NGOs collaborate with communities to address the demands of climate policy at the local and national levels (IPCC, 2007). Although they work for the common goal they differ widely in terms of size, sector

focus, religious alignment, functions, relationships with partner organisations, organisational arrangements, and other factors (Gauri and Galef, 2005).

Climate change governance constitutes a wide range of activities of coordination that expedite climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts (Fröhlich and Knieling, 2013). Effective climate governance works at multiple levels; multi-level governance supports complex relations between the actors associated with it (Marquardt, 2017). Since NGOs run initiatives to meet climate change challenges, climate change governance has grown in importance. NGOs have limitations in terms of maintaining accountability and transparency due to their high dependence on donor funds (Allard and Martinez, 2008). Various governance criteria, such as accountability, transparency, participation and funding mechanisms have become complex when NGOs expand their operations from the local to global levels (Young and Dhada, 2013). NGOs work proactively with local government departments at the community level for effective climate change governance practices. Transparency is becoming an essential criterion for public and private climate governance arrangements, and it has a profound effect on enhancing accountability and improving environmental outcomes (Baroi and Panday,

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2018; Gupta and Mason, 2016; Hahn et al., 2015). TIB (2013) reported that the high officials of many NGOs are actively involved in local politics, using their political influence to gain undue favours from GOs. Nevertheless, state laws do not allow NGOs to participate in partisan political activities (Lopa and Ahmad, 2016). Many NGOs have received climate funds either by exerting political influence or violating existing rules (Bhuiyan, 2015).

Climate change governance encompasses a variety of social problems, so the meaningful participation of relevant stakeholders may help to solve some of these (Huitema et al., 2016; Kabiri, 2016). It is important to ensure participation of other stakeholders in NGO decision-making processes, while also recognising the pressure on NGOs that arises from donor policies and international treaties (Lopa and Ahmad, 2016). Most government departments prefer not to work with NGOs, even though some large NGOs could work to reduce the effects of climate change significantly (Stock et al., 2020). Despite the important role played by the NGOs in combatting climate change issues side-by-side with the government agencies the long-term sustainability of their operations is a major challenge (Stock et al., 2020). Many NGOs develop rules and adopt informal standards for their regular operations; in turn, these eventually influence other actors (Allard and Martinez, 2008).

NGOs also focus on environmental issues, and have attempted to develop—to a degree—fairness and equality between nations and groups (Raustiala, 2001). NGOs, like other stakeholders, seek to reduce insecurity, as well as protect and support people who may be vulnerable to climate change (Bannerman et al., 2011). Many NGOs are working hard to reduce climate change-induced vulnerabilities of the people (Stock et al., 2020; Chowdhury et al., 2013; Jenkins, 2003). These support to enhance people's lives and livelihoods, and strengthen local organisations considerably (Young and Dhada, 2013). NGOs are working to improve the resilience of local communities in Disaster Management (DM), which ultimately lessens the effects of climate change at the national and local levels. NGOs' accountability, transparency and institutional involvement with GOs are crucial in decision making processes and ensure better outcomes in climate change related activities (Biermann and Gupta, 2011; Rahman and Tasnim, 2023; Sarker et al., 2022). NGOs, however, often face challenges due to a lack of internal and external accountability and proper governance structures while they conduct climate

change related activities (Kim, 2003). Bhuiyan (2015) has noted that several NGOs sought funding for climate change-related projects, but they could not meet the required criteria. NGO fund shortages often limit the quality and quantity of works they can undertake (Viravaidya and Hayssen, 2001).

Bangladesh possesses one of the highest concentrations of NGOs in the world and the government has developed various protocols for their operations. A total of 2,501 NGOs received approval from the Bangladesh government until 2020 (NGOAB, 2023) and nearly 300 NGOs are actively working on DRR and climate change issues (Rahman and Huang, 2019). The activities of Bangladeshi NGOs are considered among the most dynamic in the world (Ullah et al., 2006). NGOs' presence in developing countries such as Bangladesh represents effective civic action, and promotes good governance and effective policy implementation where national-level infrastructures are inadequate (Rahman, 2016). The NGO sector, over the last 30 years, has shifted their operations from social mobilisation to service delivery activities in Bangladesh (Kabeer et al., 2012; Rahman, 2016). NGOs have developed a wide-ranging network of service programs for climate-vulnerable people to improve their lives and livelihoods in Bangladesh (Thomalla et al., 2005). Within two decades, Bangladesh NGOs had created an enormous impact at the global level because of extensive activities in various sectors (Chowdhury et al., 2013).

However, many Bangladeshi NGOs are focusing less on good governance issue in their activities (Lopa and Ahmad, 2016). Many NGOs have their own CCA programs and incorporate climate change-related issues in their operational. NGOs work actively towards overall development for the country (Huda, 2020; Baroi and Panday, 2018). They operate in hard-to-reach areas focusing on underprivileged and climate vulnerable communities (Young and Dhada, 2013). NGOs are also making efforts to organise volunteer groups for disaster responses, and they are disseminating knowledge to make better use of available coastal resources and supporting coastal communities to combat climate change-induced disasters (Ahmad and Rahman, 2011). This paper illustrates the climate change governance practices of NGOs in Bangladesh. In this paper, answers of the following research questions were explored based on the findings from the surveyed NGOs:

- What are the roles of NGOs in planning and

implementing various climate change-related projects and programs? and

- What are the strategies of NGOs in maintaining the climate change governance practices?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the Key Informant Interview (KII). The selected key informants are regarded as highly informed individuals on the research subject, and their contributions are acknowledged at various levels of the country. Furthermore, the secondary data were gathered from various literature sources including journal articles, official reports, books, conference papers, and other

internet materials.

Selection of Criteria

There are five key criteria of climate governance that are frequently used to understand the effectiveness of climate governance. These five criteria are accountability, transparency, participation, government effectiveness and resources (Table 1). Given the context of Bangladesh, these criteria were carefully selected to understand status of climate governance of NGOs. These are considered the major criteria as revealed in the literatures. These criteria also represent contextual issues that can be compared with other criteria more effectively.

Table 1: Principal Components of Climate Change Governance Criteria

Principal components	Criteria	Sources
Accountability	(a) Institutional responsibility (b) Specific roles and responsibility (c) Performances of institutions (d) Decision making process	Mees and Driessen, 2018; Mir and Bala, 2014 ;Bannerman et al., 2011; Kaufmann et al., 2011
Transparency	(a) Access to information (b) Timeliness (c) Comprehensibility (d) Financial transparency (e) Level of effort to reach the vulnerable communities	Baroi and Panday, 2018; Gupta and Mason, 2016; Hahn et al., 2015; Lopa and Ahmad, 2016; Barua et al., 2014
Participation	(a) Application of participatory approaches in decision making (b) Participation level of stakeholders (c) Participation of stakeholders at the local level (d) Participation of stakeholders at the national level	Huitema et al., 2016; Kabiri, 2016; Lopa and Ahmad, 2016; Barua et al., 2014

Government effectiveness	(a) Institutional capacities for formulation of policy and plans on climate adaptation. (b) Implementation quality of policy and plans (c) The degree of independence from political interventions (d) Addressing technical issues (e) Level of government commitments to climate change policies (f) Management of resources	Weiler et al., 2018; Kaufmann et al., 2011; Hayes and Persha, 2010
Resources	(a) Available sources of financial resources (b) Allocation of financial resources (c) The processes of utilisation of resources (d) The effective utilization of resources	Adenle et al., 2017; Barua, et al., 2014; Viravaidya and Hayssen, 2001

Key Informant Interviews

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with key informants using a semi-structured questionnaire to obtain the views of KIIs (DeJonckheere and Vaughn, 2019). The interviews with key informants were organised to acquire extensive views, experiences for a better understanding of community views on climate governance at local level. In this study, 34 individuals from different agencies and professions were selected and interviewed. These included officials from GOs, NGOs, climate change experts and researchers involved in the policy formulation and implementation, and local knowledgeable persons (Table 2). These KIIs were identified and developed a short list to seek their consent for taking the interviews.

Table 2: List of the Key Informants

No.	Key informants for interview	Numbers
1	Government officials	9
2	Representatives of NGO	8
3	Experts from public universities	4
4	Experts from research organisations	2
5	Experts on climate change issues	5
6	Local knowledgeable persons	6
	Total	34

An interview protocol was followed to interview the key informants. A formal consent from each of the interviewees was taken before the interview. Upon consultation with the key informants the locations

and time for interview were arranged. The average duration of each of the interviews was approximately one hour. The key informants were asked about their roles and responsibilities in climate governance practices of NGOs in addition to their roles in relation to policy development, planning and implementation of programs related to climate change adaptation (Figure 1). The conversations were recorded by digital audio recorder. Note-taking was also conducted to provide a backup source of responses.

The collected data and information from key informant interviews were transcribed into textual form in English. NVivo 12 software was used to analyse the qualitative data (Figure 2). The application of NVivo software was useful to analyse the content and to understand contextual and thematic aspects.

Summary of the Surveyed NGOs

Many NGOs have not developed the expected quality of governance practices in their activities (Kabeer et al., 2012); however, the surveyed NGOs are instituting governance in their climate change-related activities. Further, it is difficult for NGOs to maintain effective climate change governance practices at the grassroots level, because of the long-term processes required to achieve this. The following NGOs in Bangladesh were surveyed to obtain their roles on climate change governance issue in their organisations (Table 3).

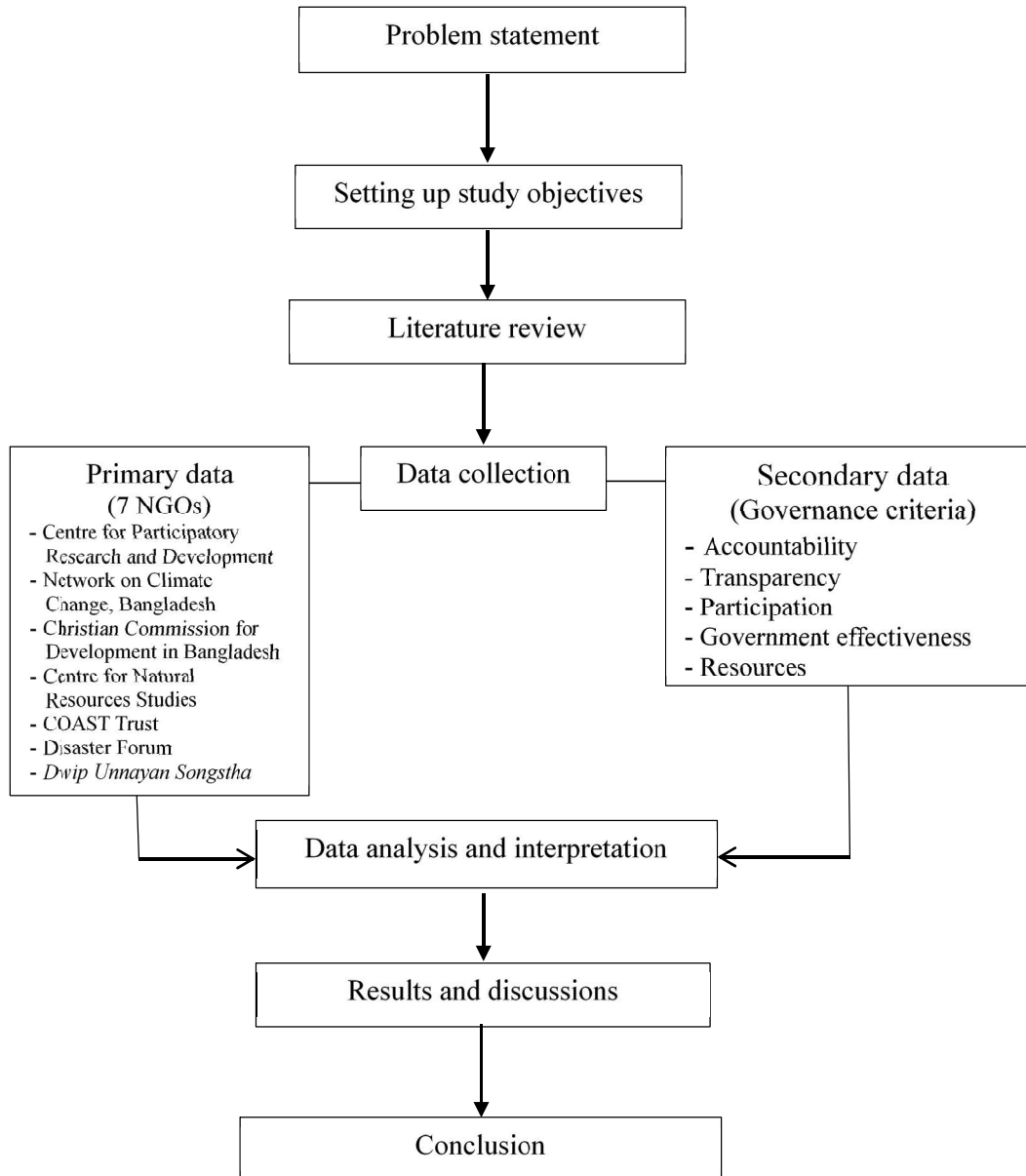


Figure 1: Research Design Flow Chart

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Non-governmental Organisation Accountability in Climate Change Activities

NGO accountability in Bangladesh is linked to the involvement of multiple stakeholders, such as beneficiaries, donors and the state (Mir and Bala, 2014). The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has a constitutional responsibility to protect its people from disaster induced impacts by enhancing community

resilience. Many NGOs, with the support of others such as GOs, donor countries and international organizations, are focusing on advocating for improvements, encouraging and supporting positive initiatives, and enhancing government department accountability (Bannerman et al., 2011).

Table 3: Details of Selected Non-governmental Organisations

Name	Governance level	Category of work	Participation level
Centre for Participatory Research and Development	National-level non-governmental organisation (NGO) (Dhaka-based)	Advocacy and research work	Participated in national level activities
Network on Climate Change, Bangladesh	National-level NGO (Dhaka-based)	Advocacy and ground work	Participated both in national and local level activities
Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh	National-level NGO (Dhaka-based)	Ground work and advocacy	Participated both in national and local level activities
Centre for Natural Resources Studies	National-level NGO (Dhaka-based)	Ground work and advocacy	Participated both in national and local level activities
COAST Trust	National-level NGO (Dhaka-based)	Ground work and advocacy	Participated both in national and local level activities
Disaster Forum	National-level NGO (Dhaka-based)	Advocacy work	Participated in national level activities
Dwip Unnayan Songstha (Island Development Association)	Local-level NGO (Coastal district-based)	Ground work and advocacy	Participated in local level activities

Source: Modified from Lopa and Ahmad (2016)

One such NGO investigated is Centre for Participatory Research and Development (CPRD). It maintains accountability with both government and donors. CPRD, from its inception, worked on developing a national-level plan for climate change. There is another type of accountability in terms of fund use. It spends funds in a proper way in accordance with project terms. It also prepares narrative and financial reports for the government, to certify its fund disbursement, and it can obtain the accountability certificate. Thus, it maintains accountability to different stakeholders, such as development partners and government departments, and it is considered as an accountability certificate. A responsible officer with an NGO explains the limitations relating to accountability:

Actually, I'm not happy with the existing system because I can purchase my accountability certificate alternative way. So, the certificate of accountability isn't the perfect feature of accountability. In fact, accountability is based on my deliverables and the level of my acceptance to the stakeholders.

Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) emphasises more to ensure accountability. It has an independent monitoring unit and a senior official to oversee climate change-related projects. The monitoring officer is entitled to scrutinise programs in different field-level offices (Table 4). The monitoring official is also mandated to look after financial matters. CCDB needs to submit an annual progress report because of the close relationship between project financing and intended deliverables.

A responsible officer with an NGO describes the accountability issue of NGOs in the following:

Accountability of climate projects depends on the project types and project management systems. If we've adequate project management and accountability systems in place then there are reasonable expectations that the project can proceed with due diligence, but if we don't maintain accountability and if the NGOs are selected based on personal choices and other factors, then the accountability can't be guaranteed.

Table 4: CCDB's Climate Change Project Monitoring Systems

Issues	Monitoring processes
Program implementation	Uses of different indicators based on the project proposal
	Submission of project reports to the senior management and donors
	Third-party auditing and evaluation undertaken after three years of the project's completion
	Monitoring of projects regularly at the local level
	Organising a national-level annual program on key achievements, learnings and failures
Financial transaction	A good set of policies on financial issues
	Presence of transparent financial transaction systems
	A well-structured financial department
	Publishing an annual report on financial issues

Source: Field study, 2023

CNRS has embedded accountability systems from field- to district-level officials. This includes the responsible person in the head office, or a project manager in the field. It attempts to maintain accountability system throughout all their activities. Accountability is not based solely on CNRS's systems, but is also linked with relevant partners like INGOs or GOs.

Network on Climate Change, Bangladesh (NCCB) has commenced working in Bangladesh since 2005. It has a clear vision to work towards better governance—especially in the field of climate change—through empowering the most underprivileged groups. A staff member from a surveyed NGO notes:

Many seem that the NGOs don't maintain accountability in their activities. Various organisations are working in Bangladesh, but their accountability isn't well articulated. Our works are monitored by four or five government departments, but how many departments are monitoring the works of others? So, clarity should maintain for all the organisations to make them accountable to get effective outputs.

COAST Trust has faced difficulties in maintaining grassroots communication, especially during project

design phases. In such cases, COAST Trust places an increased emphasis on accountability in their vetting and implementation of projects and programs.

DUS, a local NGO in Hatiya, works on disaster-related education and socioeconomic development for under-represented coastal communities. This NGO maintains accountability in its works. DUS has geographical zone and area divisions, and all relevant staffs are accountable for conducting their assigned projects in accordance with the approved work program.

NGOs formed the Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) to maintain accountability among members in Bangladesh (Kim, 2003). However, the surveyed NGOs each have their own accountability systems; their executive bodies use these to monitor the NGOs. Many NGOs do not maintain effective accountability at all levels. A few NGOs, except the larger ones, do not normally maintain accountability in managing climate funds. However, some of NGOs currently emphasise accountability issue more in meeting their desired goals.

Non-governmental Organisations' Transparency in Climate Change Activities

NGOs are considered important performers in international climate negotiations (Liu et al., 2017). NGOs in Bangladesh are involved in various forms of hidden irregularities to obtain funds from Bangladesh Climate Change Trust (BCCT) that ensures effective fund use for climate change-related programs. The following extract discusses NGO transparency:

Many NGOs have governance problem especially in fund utilisation. Unfortunately, overtime, a number of instances of discrepancies were brought to light by journalists and others. But hardly any measures were undertaken by the concerned authority.

Centre for Participatory Research and Development (CPRD) tries to maintain transparency through sharing reports with national-level stakeholders, such as GOs, NGOs and CSO representatives. It is transparent in another sense: it also shares reports with global stakeholders by participating in international conferences and seminars, and using these avenues to convey its study findings.

With Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB), two issues were investigated in this current study to determine its transparency in climate change activities: program implementation and financial review. It maintains transparency in its financial transactions and has integrated audit systems, as well as other operational policies. It publishes an annual financial report, with nothing hidden from the public. Thus, this NGO maintains transparency in its climate change-related activities.

The CCDB internal project review system is engaged directly from a project's proposal to its finalisation. Once a project is finished, a program monitoring team assesses the project outcomes using indicators specified in the original project proposal. CCDB submits project progress reports and findings to senior management and donors regularly, based on the work's indicators and objectives. In addition to internal reviews, CCDB conducts third-party auditing and evaluation to meet its own standards, as well as donor terms and conditions.

CNRS has a central monitoring system called a 'monthly learning sharing meeting', where the responsible project staff member presents a quarterly work plan and a monthly progress report while highlighting any related challenges. At the field level, CNRS project staff attends monthly meetings to share issues, plans, achievements and ways to solve problems.

Network on Climate Change, Bangladesh (NCCB) plays an important role in global negotiations and policy-making. This NGO works with the support of the government or donors to implement various climate projects.

COAST Trust has established procedures to maintain transparency. It takes support from stakeholders at the grassroots level, conducts inception meetings and shares its programs. It also clarifies the protocols for financial control in a project inception meeting with civil society organizations (CSOs). It works to raise voices from different social sectors and involves a wide spectrum of participants from local communities. A responsible officer with an NGO illustrates the climate finance transparency of NGOs in the following way:

Actually, we don't maintain our own climate finance transparency and control mechanisms, but rather we reinforce the capacity of CSOs so that they monitor each the climate project effectively and efficiently. We, therefore, openly

share all information and accounts relating to our budget, plans programs, implementation of various projects etc.

DUS has a unit that conducts routine monitoring. A monitoring chief publishes quarterly reports for every project. These reports cover various challenges so that the relevant authorities can solve the issues. DUS also maintains transparency regarding its financial activities through a monitoring cell and an audit cell formed by them.

The surveyed NGOs are emphasizing more to ensure transparency in their various activities nowadays. Transparency helps the NGOs to maximize the outputs from the projects. Owing to a lack of basic democratic principles and practices, this dependency on government support and cooperation is becoming a problem for both GOs and NGOs. However, their levels of transparency differ due to their coverage areas and types of programs delivered.

Stakeholder Participation in Non-governmental Organisations' Activities

The surveyed NGOs used various ways to ensure participation of various stakeholders in climate change-related activities.

Centre for Participatory Research and Development (CPRD) ensures the participation of relevant stakeholders in the design phase of its projects. Currently, it is implementing a project relating to loss and damage from climate change in some hot spots, documenting the effects that have arisen, and discussing the research with the local community. It is also communicating its findings on loss and damage with national and global stakeholders. It shares project planning and outcomes with other stakeholders.

From 1972, CCDB has been concerned about the participation of stakeholders in its projects and programs. When it drafts a project proposal, it selects stakeholders at the community level. To do this, CCDB conducts a number of yard meetings and FGDs in the planning stages. It obtains feedback from international experts during the proposal writing stage, and shares project drafts with national-level experts.

According to NCCB, the measure of NGO participation does not just relate to 'head counting', but rather

to how many appropriate and competent NGOs are involved. Invited NGOs must have relevant experience to be actively involved in climate change issues. This is dependent on the type of NGO and their previous record or experience in this field. The following extract illustrates the participation of relevant stakeholders in climate projects by NGOs:

In order to meet consultation criteria, the successful NGO usually invites some acquainted participants focusing on head counting only. An appropriate checklist would help in vetting the quality of potential participating NGOs.

CNRS selects local stakeholders associated with climate change related projects. It also selects marginal farmers to participate in agricultural projects, including many farmers with small and excavated ponds that can obtain water all year for cultivation and fish farming. A high-level CNRS officer describes this approach:

We know how to select the project beneficiaries and how to organise them into groups. We follow standard procedures such as identifying the vulnerable people by contacting with the local level government departments, and we categorised people, based on the information, as the underprivileged and the really needy groups.

COAST Trust seeks to campaign and form networks at the national and international level, to ensure appropriate participation. In 2008, it campaigned to ensure proper participation in BCCTF. It works to achieve public participation in different GO and NGO projects.

DUS follows a bottom-up approach for decision-making in projects relating to climate change and disaster management. Rural communities, being involved in their programs, are included as active participants in decision-making. Every program is shared with senior village leaders. At the union level, DUS seeks support from Union Disaster Management Committees about disaster management (DM) and climate change issue.

According to DF, community participation is linked to local knowledge, and this link enhances the resilience of people to fight against climate change. So, participation is the key to staying in affected areas, achieving an in-depth knowledge of climate change issues, and making the most effective effort towards achieving suitable outcomes for vulnerable communities.

The surveyed NGOs are creating different paths to ensure the participation of relevant stakeholders, but not all are making satisfactory progress towards effective levels of participation in their programs. However, a few are trying to ensure stakeholder participation.

Non-governmental Organisations' Effectiveness in Climate Change Activities

NGOs' effectiveness is linked with the capacity, coordination and participation of relevant stakeholders relating to climate change activities (Hayes and Persha, 2010). NGOs play significant role by making the best use of available resources and developing relationships between communities and GOs. They try to bring innovation and improvements to people within the shortest possible time. NGOs, in many cases with donor funding and through government projects, work mainly on climate change issues. Despite the general lack of comprehensive assessments to judge their effectiveness, NGO programs clearly benefit people in many ways. A public university professor explains the effectiveness of NGO activities on climate change:

Actually, NGOs work on different aspects such as agriculture, disaster, poverty, forestry, education, health, micro finance etc. So, the NGOs which are working on climate change issue, their tasks are considered as business in sometimes whether it is research, implementation or in other development sectors.

A few NGOs, such as CCDB and CNRS, are looking to partnership with other organisations. CCDB designs their programs with consideration for the priorities of local communities. It also assesses the risk to potential victims of climate change over the project's proposed lifetime. It introduces community governance systems to help with the smooth operation of projects.

CPRD projects contribute to government programs and planning because they focus on loss and damage due to climate change. CPRD also tries to establish national mechanisms that address loss and damage with the government. CPRD has established an institutional protocol to avoid overlap among stakeholders.

NCCB promotes a national climate policy that will achieve climate justice, with adaptation actions that address the needs of the most vulnerable groups, such

as the aged, women and children. In addition to this, it emphasizes on transparent and effective use of climate funds. It works for promoting better climate governance by incorporating climate-vulnerable communities.

COAST Trust has undertaken several disaster preparedness and post-disaster rehabilitation programs in coastal areas. The majority of profits from COAST Trust's microfinance programs are used for their campaigns. This is termed a 'rights-based approach'. From 2007, it has successfully campaigned for a national climate budget. It has also addressed on various climate-related issues such as climate funding, construction of embankments, institutional reformation, fisheries, forestry and climate-adaptive technologies.

DUS works at the local level to implement plans and programs focusing on climate change issues. When any major disaster occurs, it follows the procedures in its contingency plan. DUS has directed. The effectiveness of NGO activities around climate change issues varies because of their diversified programs. The surveyed NGOs operate a variety of programs based on guidelines to ensure effective outcomes for beneficiaries, but the limited coverage of programs in terms of funding availability has become an impediment.

Non-governmental Organisations' Resource Dependency and Fund Mobilisation Strategies

Resources are an inevitable requirement for the existence and activity base of NGOs. Most NGOs operate through donor-driven programs. NGOs usually receive funds for their routine work from three sources such as grants and donations, government funding and earned income (Mir and Bala, 2014). Obtaining adequate funding is always a challenging task for NGOs. To obtain operational funding, NGOs are frequently contracted to conduct government projects, often acting in partnership with INGOs. Sometimes international funding sources, whether public or private, cannot support NGOs because of global economic downturns; NGOs can then experience difficulties in maintaining their operations (Khieng, 2013). NGOs also receive funds from GOs to plan and implement climate change-related projects.

In Bangladesh, national-level NGOs seldom receive direct funding. NGOs have received funds through Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF): they received USD 15.57 million until 2013, with USD 3.07 million of this from Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund

(BCCTF) and USD 12.5 million from Bangladesh Climate Change Resilient Fund (BCCRF) (TIB, 2013). BCCRF is not in operation now but BCCTF works to ensure effective fund use for climate change-related projects.

NGOs receive 10 percent of the total fund allocated by BCCTF, and this is disbursed and coordinated by PKSF (Rai et al., 2014). PKSF is responsible for oversight of community-level climate change projects for selected NGOs. A responsible staff member with an NGO describes fund availability for NGOs relating to climate change:

Funds aren't the problem for the climate change-related projects, but we need a well-organised management authority to start. When climate change-related actions become lucrative for gaining money then it appears with huge problems.

DUS has 40 years of experience in gaining financial support to conduct programs focusing on climate change issues. It receives funds from government departments such as Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Education, Forest and PKSF, along with INGOs such as OXFAM, Canadian Aid, USAID, DANIDA and JICA. DUS has also received funds from the Forest Department (FD) for afforestation programs on a newly built embankment along a Hatiya Island coastal belt. COAST Trust, a local NGO, was working on climate change issues and obtaining funds from donors, but it needed to go through GOs {e.g. NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB)} to receive those funds. Although climate funds for NGOs have become competitive, and they are highly dependent on donors, INGOs and GOs.

Table 5: *Dwip Unnayan Songstha's* Activities Relating to Climate Change Adaptation

Issues	Number of beneficiaries
Raising the plinth above the flood level	800
Introducing saline-resilient crop species	3,000
Managing cyclone shelters	20,000
Developing social afforestation programs	1,500
Warning fishers during disasters	1000,000
Improving lives and livelihoods through various programs	20,000

Source: Field study, 2023

DUS operates a community radio station called ‘*Radio Sagar Dwip*’, which draws the attention of islanders to issues arising from natural disasters through broadcasting news and programs (Table 5). The station also delivers feedback to disaster-vulnerable fisher communities on coping strategies of Hatiya Island. The station also serves the people of the island with information and programs focusing on entertainment, disaster, agriculture, health, news and local weather forecasts. Through its various disaster preparedness programs, DUS brings hope to the islanders.

Funding is always a major challenge and is not easy for NGOs to obtain funds by simply writing a project

proposal. Five out of seven surveyed NGOs revealed their concerns about funding. When an NGO receives funds from donors, they must obtain proper approvals from GOs. This is always a challenging task as it takes considerable time, effort and money. NGOs are committed to maintaining transparency and accountability in using government and donor funds but they often could not maintain this at field-level implementation. After all, many NGOs are working hard to reduce climate change-induced vulnerabilities for the people by undertaking measures relating to effective climate change governance practices (Table 6).

Table 6: NGOs’ Performance in Climate Change Governance Practices

Governance Criteria Name of NGOs	Accountability	Transparency	Participation	Government effectiveness	Resources
Centre for Participatory Research and Development	Determines the local requirements	Communicates feedback from grassroot to government level	Supports government bodies in developing plans and policies	Identifies the policy gaps	Encourages GOs to implement climate projects
Network on Climate Change, Bangladesh	Emphasizes the need for climate change advocacy programs	Works on climate change issues from local to global level	Ensures the participation of locals in climate change projects	Helps locals to enhance their resilience to climate change impacts	Focuses on best use of climate funds
Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh	Works to build capacity of climate-vulnerable people	Contributes to global climate change negotiations	Arranges training programs for the young	Maintains an alliance to promote NGO activities	Monitors the financial matters properly
Centre for Natural Resources Studies	Improves the lives and livelihoods of climate-vulnerable people	Conducts activities from national to field level	Works on participatory climate vulnerability assessment	Introduces climate-smart agriculture	Focuses on fund mobilization strategies
COAST Trust	Campaigns for proper use of climate funds	Reinforces the capacity of CSOs	Develops adaptation strategies at the household and community level	Puts an inclusive voice on climate-integrated budget	Maintains transparency and effectiveness of budget
Disaster Forum	Ensures accountability of different agencies working for the people	Addresses the rights of different vulnerable groups	Makes collaboration with others to work on disaster management	Works as a catalyst to influence GOs and donors’ policies	Ensures accountability in fund management
Dwip Unnayan Songstha (Island Development Association)	Conducts social afforestation program in 1990s	Operates a community radio called ‘Radio Sagar Dwip’ to warn coastal communities	Follows a contingency plan to manage disaster events	Works to promote saline-resilient crops	Receives and uses funds based on policy and agreement

University of Newcastle, Australia. This research was conducted under the University of Newcastle's UNIPRS and UNRSC scholarships programme.

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