



Organized by- Center For Participatory  
Research and Development (CPRD)

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## REPORT ON

# National Workshop on GCF Environmental and Social Readiness Approach in Bangladesh

Readiness Project: Strengthening Bangladesh's  
NDA Secretariat, Enhancing Pipeline  
Implementation and Private Sector Engagement  
in Effective Climate Action



## Purpose of the Training

On the 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2022 at LGED Bhaban, a national workshop on GCF Environmental and Social Readiness approach in Bangladesh was organized by CPRD to facilitate the GCF Readiness project “Strengthening Bangladesh’s NDA Secretariat, Enhancing Pipeline Implementation and Private Sector Engagement in Effective Climate Action”, which will be implemented by ERD with technical support from FAO. Robust Environmental and Social safeguards (ESS) plays a significant role in supporting management process and procedures in order to identify, analyse, avoid, minimize and mitigate potential environmental and social impacts of project activities of GCF accredited entities. Focus is given in order to achieve improved social and environmental outcomes while addressing unintended adverse impact of GCF funded projects. The Goal of the ESS workshop was to promote Knowledge sharing and learning on GCF Environmental and Social safeguards within Bangladesh institutional policies, actions and circumstances. The major objectives of this workshop were-

1. To develop understanding, Knowledge and capacity of the workshop participants in the requirements, objectives and benefits from ESS accreditation process for access to the GCF resources.
2. To share relevant experiences, challenges and opportunities for mainstreaming ESS within institutional policies and structures.
3. To develop recommendations for improving organizational ESS policies and local practices towards GCF related procedures.

## Participants

Delegates from LGED, Water Aid, BRAC, BCCT, Manusher Jonno Foundation and other organizations were present. Also representatives of National Implementation (NI) expected entities of different organizations who are seeking the GCF accreditation were present at the workshop along with PKSF which is a present NI. NI entities can access directly from Green Climate Fund through NDA which is Ministry of Finance. When ministry of Finance approves or endures NI can access finance for their project. The organizations that are in a progress situation of accessing fund from Green Climate Fund are LGED, DOE, BRAC, Climate change trust and Bangladesh Bank. The previous training focused on these organizations; their environmental issues and how they can align with the Green Climate Fund. The Gaps and ways to resolve and improve the gaps and prepare ESS so that they can access Green Climate Fund has be discussed in the workshop.



The Chief Guest was Mr. Gopal Krishna Debnath, Additional chief Engineer of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED). Mr. S M Mahbub Alam, Deputy Secretary (UN-V), Economics Relation Division was also present. Mr. S M Mahbub Alam coordinates and communicates with the Green Climate Funds National implementing entity under the Ministry of Finance. There was also Dr.

Crispus Njeru, International climate change specialist in FAO. Dr. Crispus Njeru is leading GCF readiness project supported by FAO under which the workshop has been conducted which promotes understanding of environmental and social safeguards within Bangladesh.

### Key Points of Discussion, Outcomes and Recommendations

The workshop focused to promote building of capacity in terms of knowledge of environmental standards. **Dr. Crispus Njeru**, Focused on the theoretical and technical perspective. He gave a thorough presentation on ESS and ways improve our ESS standards of different projects of different institutions. He commenced with a brief discussion about the project and its six components in order to support the readiness project and its preparatory work among one of them is Review and development of robust Environmental and Social Performance Framework which was the main focus of the workshop. He deliberated Definitions, Approach, standards and procedures. Project component of environmental and social safeguard has specific outputs which include Updated policies, processes, and procedures on environmental and social safeguards which will be approved and mainstreamed through training. He mentioned different tasks and local level consultation with CPRD as a service provider in preparation for readiness approach. After reviewing GCF accreditation assessment materials a Safeguards readiness assessment approach was

developed. The main approach included comparative analysis and preparing a GAP assessment report. He discussed about Environmental and Social Safeguards Readiness Approach, the standards and procedures that GCF uses. GCF gives funds according to project sizes. Different categories (high, medium, low risk) of projects have different environmental and social risks. He talked about the benefits of getting



accreditation from GCF. Key requirements to ESS Accreditation process involves, having a legal status along with staff and expert capacity which are able to implement ESS Policy and ESMS along with gender equity must be ensured . He rigorously described the Environmental and Social Safeguards framework and its importance. To get some tangible results organizations need to have proper environmental and social safeguards that are acceptable to community and acceptable to donors. The issues that are happening in the community need to be recognized in projects. The projects must have community engagement along with confidentiality and a transparent complaint and feedback mechanism must be ensured. The GCF's Environmental and Social Safeguards (2017) are based on the Performance Standards (PS1-8) of the International Finance Corporation (IFC), 2012 which are divided into Institutional, ESMS, Policy Level and Project implementation level. He focused on the relevant performance standards for Bangladesh. While submitting a proposal, standards need to be chosen. He intended to know about the

environmental and social policy of LGED. He ended his presentation with a List with the minimum package of ESS supporting documentation for GCF accreditation and the issues that need to be considered.

**Md. Akib Jabed**, Senior Research Officer of CPRD, spoke about the four organizations Institutional Gap Assessment Results of the Seeking Accreditation Entities (SAEs) in Bangladesh. Criteria based Structured process was followed to see which organizations have Environmental and Social Safeguards according to GCF criteria standard through accessing relevant documents of the institutions. He shared Environmental and Social Safeguards findings based on checklist assessment that was done in the last training program jointly organized by FAO, ERD and CPRD. To identify the areas for further inputs for developing a robust ESS as per GCF standards. Four organizations Seeking Accreditation Entities; Department of Environment (DoE), Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), BRAC Climate Bridge Fund (CBF), BRAC Climate



Change Program (CCP) participated in the previous training. Pre-Assessment focused on basic information such as legal status, experience of the organizations. The detailed assessment focused in Environmental and Social Safeguards framework, the organizations basic information, their working year and experience, the reason to work with GCF fund, how much they comply with GCF Standards. Focus was also given on GCF's Performance Standards and how they align with the organizations. A Total ESS Assessment Score was given to each organization according to the assessment done by the representatives.

Different project are done by LGED, But there is an absence of essential guiding documents. At the moment LGED is following World Bank standards as the projects are supported by World Bank. But for GCF an institutional Environmental and Social Safeguards policy needs to be prepared. One of the representatives of LGED stated that LGED has a lot of environmental safeguards policy document but social safeguards policy documents needs to be prepared properly. He added that, the information is scattered and needs to be organized. **Md Shamsuddoha**, Chief Executive of CPRD, stated that along policy and projects, field level work needs more attention. He focused on Community Knowledge and Understanding on ESS. Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) and Safeguards of the GCF refers to assessment of environmental and social risks and impacts and mitigating and addressing (management) the risks and impacts with required policies, plans and measures. Along with risks, impacts must be ensured so that human rights are safeguarded. The coverage of Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) and Safeguards is huge covering both risks and impacts. Labor and working conditions must be safe, sound and healthy ensuring Human rights of all and preservation of Cultural Heritage. He focused to avoid or at least minimise adverse social and economic impacts from land acquisition or restrictions on land use and

discouraged forced displacement. GCF has a civil society committee (CSOs of Green Climate Fund). GCF shares the project documents and CSOs review them and give their opinions and complaints ensuring a robust Environmental and Social Safeguards. Safeguards can be ensured through policies. Displaced people are given compensation according to policy. But safeguards discuss what has been done at a whole to these displaced persons. Environmental and Social Safeguards is not only about identifying problems, risks or impacts. Organizations need efforts that are required for these risks and impacts. Indigenous and human rights cannot be violated otherwise GCF fund will not be provided. It is benefitted to have projects that have both adaptation and mitigation and Bangladesh has that scope. He also talked about a recent consultation done by CPRD at Godagari in Rajshahi and Paikgacha and Shyamnagar in Khulna in order to understand recent ESS practice in Bangladesh. The local level engagement was not found in projects and they were not informed on the ES risk and



impacts of the project. Due to lack of Knowledge of grievance mechanism, people don't complain out of the fear of being harassed afterward. He ended his speech with some recommendations. A formal Institutional framework can be developed and it will be followed when a project is designed. It will ensure capacity cum awareness building through awareness building programs along with ensuring local people's participation. This framework will work as a guidance. Not only developing ESS but also a framework in order to achieve ESS. In order to ensure capacity cum awareness building through awareness building programs along with ensuring local people's participation in the project formulation, implementation, and evaluation through a formal framework. He also stated the importance of local stakeholders in designing the checklist for assessing environmental and social risks and impacts. ESS is not only about policies but also about the practice at field level. The measures for displacement, and other human rights must be included in project design. ESS is a process. It should be done until project implementation.

Fazle Rabbi Sadeque Ahmed, Deputy Managing Director (Environment and Climate Change) Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF). He shared his experience as an accredited entity, challenges and opportunities to strengthen their capacity within National GCF projects. To get accredited there are 3 categories the project is which are A, B and C. Category A has the most risk whereas C category are projects with Minimum or no environmental impact. He shared his experience on how PKSF got GCF fund. An organization might not have all projects following ESS guidelines. The organizations have to mention the projects following ESS guidelines. For funding there are 2 steps, Concept and funding proposals. Concept which include ESS standards and implementation plan is relatively relaxed but it will surely carry some weight. For Funding proposal an individual document must be given in annex with detailed description of

all based on the category of the project. Project implementation should be based on the nature of the project. PKSF has created individual checklist for Environmental, social and also grievance mechanism. Based on the information in the field a detailed report must be prepared. To go to B category from C category a lot of detailed work had to be done. He influenced to practice on creating documents by your own organization and not requesting for help from GCF as if GCF help is required they may give lots of restrictions, guidelines and comments that will make it even more difficult. This can be a good practice. PKSF when developing Environmental Framework followed Performance standards 1 to 8 as per PKSF standard. The Environmental and Social Standards including Environmental and Social Safeguard Standard 1-8 together with their Annexes, which set out the requirements that apply to the projects under PKSF. In the past only economic development was considered, then came environmental and now also social rights are considered. Now sustainable development is considered according to SDG. GCF develops its own Environmental and Social Safeguard Standards in March, 2022. He described some points from there. When they got accreditation a condition was given to prepare a stakeholder engagement and disclosure policy. He included that there are some flexibility as GCF sometimes offer accreditation while providing some conditions. Organizations need to be determined. For Risk based approach, risk must be identified. Organizational Policy need to be adjusted with national and international policy. Continuous improvement must be ensured. He talked about PKSF Environmental and Social Safeguard framework which was developed through 5-6 comments from GCF and took around 1.5 years. They are applying only on GCF projects at the moment but do consider to apply on all projects in the future. He also talked about the annual performance report, risks and Impacts need to be identified along with mitigation measures. It must be a detailed report. PS1-8 all has to be included.

The workshop ended with the closing remarks by Mr. Kabir Ahmed (TBC). He addressed the importance of detailed assessment for donor projects. New ideas and concepts are included day by day. They need to be recognized and prepared. We need to expand knowledge in order to get projects. We need to connect globally and observe what is happening internationally. He thanked all and closed the function.