



NORWEGIAN CHURCH AID
actalliance

Country plan 2011-2015

Bangladesh

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1. CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Bangladesh, with more than 160 million people, is one of the most vulnerable countries linked to climate change and natural calamities, situated between two river basins and with most of the country less than 12 meter above sea level. According to the 2009 Global Climate Risk Index Bangladesh was one out of three countries most affected by extreme weather events from 1990 to 2008.

Though Bangladesh has experienced positive developments during recent year in terms of steady economic growth, higher literacy rates, progress towards achieving several MDGs, reduction of deaths tolls caused by frequent cyclones and floods, the proportion of people living beyond the poverty line still is around 50%. Impact of climate change threatens to reverse recent achievements. Financial development is further threatened by a severe energy shortage.

The Bangladeshi democracy still is fragile, and poor governance is a challenge to major reforms. The Awami League(AL) came into power in parliamentary elections in December 2008 and won more than 250 seats in the 300-seat parliament, whereas the biggest opposition party, Bangladesh Nationalist Party(BNP) won only 10% of parliamentary seats. The government`s vast majority in Parliament increases chances for demonstrations and hartals (strikes) over the coming years, frequently applied in Bangladesh to express dissatisfaction.

The law and order situation is of concern. Political extremism takes place to some extent, but not at the same level as in neighboring countries.

Bangladesh is ranked as 144 out of 182 countries according to UNDP`s Human Development Index 2009.

1.1 Analysis of Main Rights Deficits

1.1.1 Protection deficits

Extreme floods and cyclones seem to have increased during the last decades. The following assumed consequences of climate changes in Bangladesh show that this is not only an environmental problem but a substantial development challenge :

- Regular flood-prone areas may increase from 20% to 40% of the country by 2050, implying up to 70 million people can be affected annually by floods (and up to 8 million by drought). Environmental "refugees" from rural areas are likely to move to cities where flood control mechanisms are concentrated with estimates of over 80 million living in urban slums. 20-30 million Bangladeshi "environmental refugees" may seek refuge in neighboring countries with potentials for political conflicts.¹
- Up to 8% of the low-lying lands may become permanently inundated and fresh water sources disappearing and or impacted by increasingly salinization of groundwater.²
- It is expected that drainage congestion and standing water will increase the potential for outbreaks of waterborne and diarrheal diseases. It is estimated that approx 25 million people in Bangladesh do not have access to salt free and arsenic-free, safe water.³

¹ CBA conference in Dhaka 2008, presentation by London School of Economics

² UNICEF State of World's Children 2010.

³ UNDP MDG progress report 2007

Climate change impacts are not gender-neutral. The greater proportion of women victims in cyclones, floods and other climate change related natural disasters, clearly reflects the unequal risk and exposure across genders. Women are more vulnerable both to the short term recurring climatic events and long term induced changes because of gender differences in socially constructed roles that affect mobility, social networks and access to information and local institutions, as well as access to control and ownership of assets.⁴

The people of Bangladesh have lived with a changing environment for centuries. On the positive side should be noted that the rate of deaths in Bangladesh due to extreme weather events have had a steady decline since the 1970 s taking into consideration that cyclones and flooding have increased in strength and frequency. Contributing factors to this development is the awareness raising, early warning- and other disaster preparedness measures being implemented during the past decades by government in cooperation with civil society.

The Bangladesh government has prepared a Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP-2008), and established a national funds with international support to respond to climate challenges. Bangladesh participates in a number of international climate conventions, and prioritises participation in international climate negotiations.

1.1.2 Participation deficits

In terms of people's participation, positive signs may be observed at regional/local level in Bangladesh in terms of marginalized people's involvement in community-based organisations. However, participation by the most disadvantaged and poor is still weak. The extensive gender gap continues to cause vast differences in women's and men's political representation, mainly due to the fact that women are vulnerable to various forms of discrimination, preventing their participation in political processes. In terms of representation, 15% of the representatives in the national parliament are women(reserved quota), whereas women represent approximately 25% at local government level (Union Parishad). In Bangladeshi CSOs female representation may be even lower, especially at leadership level. Though women's participation in public life has improved compared to 20 years ago, partly due to mandated quotas, women still suffer from an acceptability crisis and in many cases have limited ability to actually attend Union Parishad, as women's freedom of movement in local communities is a factor decided by the man of the household.

The Bangladesh constitution states the equality of rights for all citizens, make special reference to women in Article 9-11, and has signed all relevant Human Rights declarations, including ICCPR and CEDAW.

Main challenges to increase especially female representation is linked to discriminatory socio cultural norms and practices where "traditional justice" mechanisms and leadership roles tend to be dominated by men and contribute to limit women's participation in decision making processes. Further on, Bangladeshi authorities have weak implementing capacity to enforce constitutional rights, and knowledge of basic rights among common people still is weak.

⁴ BCAS, Gender and Climate Change, 2010.

1.1.3 Equity deficits

Presently, Bangladesh faces serious challenges in meeting the MDG targets in eradicating extreme hunger and poverty (nearly 50% of the population still live below the poverty line), reducing income inequalities and in improving maternal health⁵. On the other hand, Bangladesh has undergone positive developments in terms of steady economic growth, decline in population growth rate, improved access for girls and boys to primary and secondary education, and a literacy rate at around 55%.⁶

However, according to The World Bank the adverse impacts due to global warming and climate change could reverse the recent economic and social gains in Bangladesh, including agricultural production. The progress towards achieving the MDGs, such as eradicating poverty, combating communicable diseases and ensuring environmental sustainability could be in jeopardy. (WB London Conference, September 2009)

Women and young girls are more disadvantaged than men in their access to education, health care and financial assets. Women are the poorest of the rural poor, especially when they are the single heads of households, such as widows or wives of men who have migrated in search of employment.

The Bangladeshi constitution guarantees services for to the poor in a number of articles (in particular 14,15,16 and 20), and the government has signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social Rights (ICESR) convention and the UN Declaration on MDGs.

According to several observers, poor governance and weak public institutions are among Bangladesh`s most significant obstacles to growth. The lack of decentralization, limited transparency and accountability, weak distribution mechanisms for scarce public funds intended for the local level, are barriers to poor peoples` access to basic services. Negative impacts of climate change, as referred to above, adds to these challenges.

1.1.4 Sustainability deficits

There is a Sustainability deficit in terms of the implementation at the community level of Bangladesh reform policies and legal frameworks due to:

- A lack of state agent accountability that has fostered institutionalized, authoritarian power relations that are often exploitive and corrupt.
- A lack of awareness of and knowledge about laws and policies by both rights holders and duty bears.
- A lack of resources, commitment and capacity amongst local authorities for the effective implementation of laws and policies.
- Poor linkages and coordination between stakeholders and service providers including both state and civil-society organizations.

1.2 Role of local civil society and FBOs

Bangladesh has comparatively more registered local NGOs that are involved in social work than any other country in Asia. The rise of Bangladesh NGOs` role from the 1980s onward has been directly linked to limitations of the "State" and "Market forces" to address poverty alleviation, combined with government and donor recognition of NGOs as important contributors to social development. During the -90s NGOs in Bangladesh expanded their activities to include advocacy for grassroots legal reform that would benefit the poor. NGOs have gradually taken on an increasingly broader role in addressing legal and political issues beyond their traditional focus.

⁵ GoB/UNDP Bangladesh MDG Mid term Progress Report of February 2008

⁶ UNDP report, 2009

Nevertheless, several studies conclude that civil society in Bangladesh play a less significant role in terms of democratic development and political advocacy than in terms of social development and service delivery⁷. This is partly due to the fact that parts of civil society has been politicized and polarized. Organisations may not be directly involved with a political party, but need to maintain indirect links with one of the main parties to be in a position to carry out their programs in the respective districts.

Whereas civil society in India and Philippines organize in broad networks to exert joint advocacy, it is more common in Bangladesh that organisations take direct, individual contact with political parties. Intra civil society relations and networks among the CSOs in general have been found to be weak by most observers of Bangladeshi civil society.

Civil society s limited political influence is also explained by the fact that Bangladesh fails to provide the necessary conditions for civil society to carry out broad advocacy functions, as there is an absence of a strong responsive state, an independent judiciary and widely represented issue based political parties. Further, there is limited scope for NGO influence within the administrative system. In general the state is very sensitive to "political" advocacy, it be linked to human rights or issues related to democratic development.

When it comes to implementing Government policies on climate change, a cohesive implementation program at the local level is missing, mostly due to lack of funds and the fragmented nature of government organizational mechanisms at local levels. Bangladeshi NGOs have taken a leading role attempting to link the grassroots with higher-level processes addressing issues that will be impacted by climate change. As climate change challenges are less political controversial, there is more scope for civil society to exert advocacy influence in this respect.

Bangladesh enjoys a fairly independent national press, and the media is being liberalized, an important premise for a functioning civil society.

Whereas the majority of NGOs in Bangladesh are secular, faith based organisations (FBOs) traditionally have played an important role when it comes to social initiatives. A recent study on FBOs in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh concludes that Christian missionary and Hindu organisations seem to have been most all-encompassing: they are involved education, health, the environment etc. Among Muslims, on the other hand, madrasas remain the main type of FBOs in all three countries⁸. Non-Islamic NGOs have developed firm roots in Bangladesh –also anchored in rural communities that are demographically Muslim. The key to acceptance is linked to the FBOs non discriminatory approaches and long-term commitments in contributing to improve the lives of the poor.

Muslims constitutes 83% of the population in Bangladesh, and a moderate form of islam dominates. However, there have occasionally during recent years been expressed concerns regarding growth of possible religious extremism also in Bangladesh.

⁷ "Civil Society in Bangladesh: Vibrant but not Vigilant" Farhat Tasnim, 2007.

⁸ Bano and Nair: Faith- based organisations in South Asia. UoOxford, 2007

1.3 NCA's comparative advantages in country

Core Partners: Founded on its 30 year long term commitment to faith based core partners which has resulted in a high credibility with key stakeholders, both local communities and government authorities. Likewise, NCA partners during the last 5-10 years have pioneered mechanisms to increase participation from right holders at local level, including increased advocacy towards local government authorities.

ACT Alliance network: NCA as part of the ACT alliance can access a comprehensive network of national and international organizations in Bangladesh, with scope for coordination and division of work. To maximize coordination, increase impacts and utilization of funds, NCA will where feasible continue to link to joint programs with European ACT Alliance sister organizations.

Climate Change – joint advocacy: With reference to global causes and impacts of climate change – NCA is positioned to apply Bangladeshi partner experiences as basis for joint climate justice advocacy initiatives with European sister organizations and link Bangladeshi field based experiences to research sharing mechanisms regionally and globally.

Emergency preparedness: NCA has a comparative advantage in emergency preparedness and response, and can call upon NCA Emergency Division resources and expertise in emergency situations, strengthening Bangladesh ACT Forum coordination, special expertise in water, sanitation and hygiene, integrating protection and emergency standards and linking emergency actions into long term development mechanisms. Likewise NCA has access to the new ACT Alliance emergency roster and to the resource base.

1.4 Relevance in relation to development priorities

1.4.1 Relevance to national policies, plans and priorities

NCA Climate Adaptation programs in Bangladesh reflect intervention strategies as outlined in the Bangladesh National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA). Likewise, NCA supports "Pro poor" economic growth -Poverty Reduction programs which integrate climate change concerns as outlined in the Government of Bangladesh Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Efforts to increase women participation is further in line with intentions of government policies. The President has suggested to increase the quota for women in parliament from 15% to 25%.

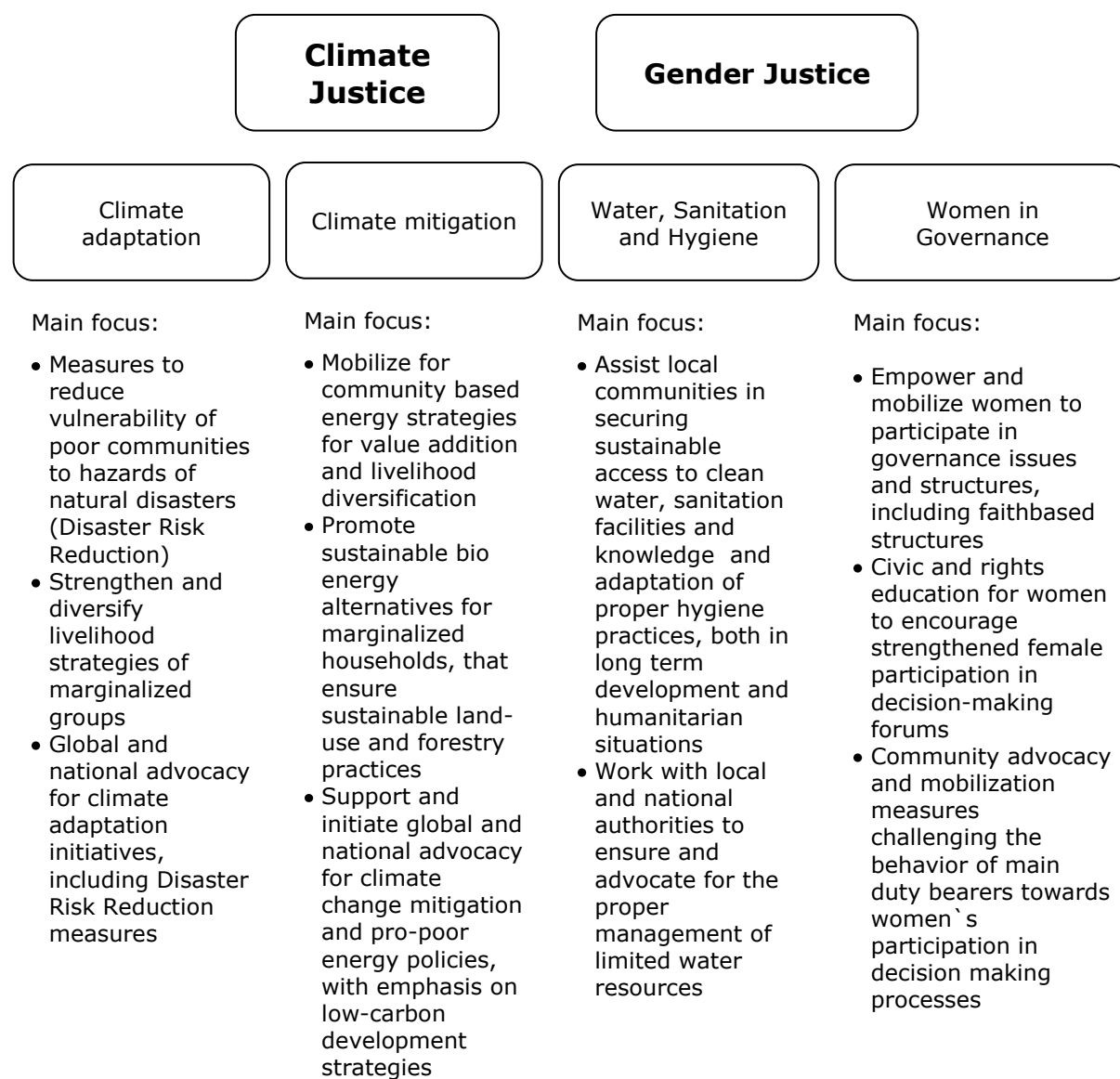
1.4.2 Relevance to Norwegian development objectives

Norwegian priorities in Bangladesh-Norwegian cooperation are environment, climate change, good governance, human rights and gender issues. There is increased focus on commercial cooperation, and more institutional cooperation between relevant institutions in Norway and Bangladesh is encouraged. Hence NCAs programs are in line with Norwegian priorities in Bangladesh.

2. MAIN INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

2.1 Strategic Priorities and Programs

In line with NCAs revised Global Strategy (2011-2015), NCA put increased emphasis on Climate Justice as a strategic priority in Bangladesh, with programmatic priority to climate change adaptation measures. Mitigation measures are intended to be gradually will phased in during the planning period. The link between scarce clean water and climate change, combined with NCA special competencies, has contributed to give priority to a program on Water, sanitation and hygiene. When it comes to Women and Governance, NCA will identify and strengthen possible links between this program and the other two programs. NCA will, at least during the first half of the planning period, continue to support multi-sector programs of core partners, with main emphasis on mainstreaming climate-response approaches to make the programs most relevant from a climate response point of view.



Right holders	Duty bearers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor households and communities • Indigenous peoples ⁹ • Women and girls 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government authorities at District and village levels 2. Relevant Ministries and agencies on national level 3. Religious leaders and Faith-Based Organizations 4. Other non-governmental and international organizations

2.2 Strategies for strengthening local civil society from a rights based approach

Mobilizing communities for social change

NCA will continue to support partners initiatives that strengthen and develops community based organizations to access resources from local government authorities and facilitate increased participate in decisions making processes.

NCA strategic approach is to continue to work through Bangladesh core partners that have deep roots in communities and are committed to support independent community based organizations NCA gives priority to measures that strengthen the capacity-building of rights holders so they are more empowered to engage in advocacy towards local authorities.

A strategic use of relevant resource organizations to strengthen NCA partners will be aimed at. These organizations have specialized competencies in climate change adaptation and advocacy, gender empowerment and gender equality.

NCA Bangladesh Partners:

- NCA will expand partnerships to 1 – 3 new organizations to the extent deemed feasible, and funding allows. Present partners (2010) are as follows:
- Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service Bangladesh (RDRS), working in 8 North-western districts employing integrated rights based approach to reduce the vulnerability of rural poor, women and excluded peoples.
- Christian Commission for Development Bangladesh (CCDB), working in Southern districts and also employing an integrated rights based approach to reduce the vulnerability of rural poor, women and excluded peoples. CCDB is the Bangladesh ACT Forum Emergency Lead Agency.
- STEPS Towards Development focus gender based interventions, including advocacy at government level, and basically works in southern districts.
- Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) has provided technical assistance and research based studies linked to CCDB and RDRS (and a number of other NGOs), and is a key resource institution in Bangladesh on issues related to climate change.

Building vertical and horizontal alliances and networks

NCA will contribute to strengthen a cohesive Bangladesh ACT Forum giving special priority to putting into practice a unified Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan.

⁹ Though indigenous people are not in majority among relevant right holders, both RDRS and CCDB work among indigenous people in their project areas.

NCA's Bangladesh core partners have long term solid relations with state authorities at both the local and national level. NCA will continue to support strengthening of both horizontal and vertical alliances between partners and authorities that can increase advocacy within areas of focus like climate change, gender and safe water and related health issues.

NCA will encourage and support development of inter partner cooperation mechanisms and linkages to resource organizations such as Climate Action Network and the ACT Alliance.

With reference to NCAs added value as a faithbased organisation and NCAs facilitation of and support to interfaith networks in India and Pakistan, NCA will aim facilitate linkages between relevant religious leaders in Bangladesh, as identified by NCA partners, and interfaith networks NCA supports in the region.

Mutual Capacity Development

Capacity development of NCA and partners will be based on a mapping assessment of partner organizational requirements. A division of role with NCA sister organisations within the ACT-Alliance will be aimed at.

NCA Bangladesh will place particular focus on the emergency preparedness and response capacity of the Bangladesh ACT Forum, especially linked to increased proficiency of the ACT Forum partners to integrate protection principles and HAP standards in emergency actions. For capacity building of new NCA staff in Bangladesh, see para 3.2.3 below.

2.3 NCA Integrated Approach

Long Term Development

The main entry point for the integrated approach is through partner community based long term development programs anchored in community based organizations that have empowered marginalized community rights holders to take charge of their own development and address issues of concern to duty bearers.

Primary approaches are:

- Local community mobilization will be based on building partners' understanding of: Bangladesh legal and policy frameworks and their relevance in particular to vulnerable groups' rights and obligations and; 2) Right-holders needs and capacity to solve own issues. The latter will include capacity-building and developing assessment tools. 3) Linking of problem solving –solution development to local authorities so that both rights holders and duty bearers have a joint ownership of process and solutions.

Advocacy

In the next planning period advocacy mechanisms will be strengthened in a two pronged approach:

- Expand the local CBO advocacy horizontal links union and district regional CBO network so as to increase impact
- Expand community horizontal advocacy endeavors to vertical links at Regional and National levels.

Emergency

A focus on:

- Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in the context of broader disaster/emergency preparedness and developing linkages to long term sustainable development
- Supporting capacity building measures to strengthen Bangladesh ACT Forum Emergency preparedness response, including finalizing an emergency preparedness plan.

Though NCA intends to continue support Core Partners integrated, multi-sector programs, NCA will critically assess feasibility and level of support to such program contra thematically focused bilateral programs. NCA will prioritize to strengthen present partners multi-sector programs in terms of climate justice relevance.

2.4 NCA Accountability Commitments

NCA will during this planning period focus on further development and quality assurance of our accountability to right-holders, host communities, partners and other stakeholder based on the HAP accountability and quality managements standards¹⁰. Focus will be on provision of information, securing participation and developing systems for feedback and complaints focusing on right-holders and host communities during all phases of project and program implementation.

2.5 NCA Commitments to mainstreaming development principles

2.5.1 Gender equality

A cross cutting issue in all sub components of the integrated approach is addressing gender concerns : gender mainstreaming, issues of gender based violence , increased female participation, and involvement and strong advocacy among policy makers and religious leaders for gender equity and equality. NCA support a gender balanced composition of its own staff and will support gender parity representation in partner meetings, workshops and staff representations.

2.5.2 Conflict sensitivity

NCA will link training of conflict sensitivity and do no harm mechanisms to relevant partner supported programs. This is viewed as a fundamental component of the integrated approach as it aims to incorporate conflict sensitive awareness and perspectives in the developmental program and the entire management cycle.

2.5.3 Environmental sustainability

Taking into consideration the extremely vulnerable status of the bio-eco systems in Bangladesh NCA will introduce environmental sustainability "proofing" to Bangladesh partner supported programs. This will be a cross cutting issue and be integrated in program designs –noting the two pillars of "sustainable" development; improving the quality of life while conserving the Earth's vitality and diversity. NCA applies the guiding principles on Climate Change for ACT Alliance programs.

3. FUNDING STRATEGY

3.1 Resource Frames 2011-2015

From late 2010, NCA plan to have a representation office in Dhaka in shared office facilities with DCA. To manage the projected increased level of cooperation and volume of funds and up scaling of professional support to partners, it is recommended to have 3-4 Bangladesh national staff and one expat based in Dhaka. NCA Bangladesh national staff will have targeted responsibilities:

¹⁰ HAP: Humanitarian Accountability Partnership. The HAP Accountability and Quality management standards: [http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/hap-2007-standard\(1\).pdf](http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/hap-2007-standard(1).pdf)

- Program officer (s): Partner Program follow up , guidance of program development and coordination/implementation of NCA partner specific added value program
- Funding officer: Coordination of funding mechanisms with Regional and/or Bangladesh based donor organizations – mechanisms.

NCA Head Office will coordinate and provide Oslo based professional support resources:

- NCA international funding staff: training of local staff , coordinate with Norway – non South Asia based donors
- NCA Thematic advisors: climate , emergency preparedness/WASH, , gender

The 2011-2015 strategic plan have ambitions for a gradual but significant scaling up by the end of the 5 year period to per annum NOK 11,000,000. Within the expected financial frame, funds will be available for the representation office, and the NCA added value component.

Funding source	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
NORAD	3,000,000	4,500,000	4,900,000	5,000,000	5,000,000
NCA	1,900,000	2,000,000	2,700,000	3,600,000	3,800,000
Other	600,000	1,000,000	1,300,000	1,900,000	2,700,000
Total NOK	5,500,000	7,500,000	8,700,000	10,500,000	11,500,000

Program Area	Funding Source	Tentative funding for the planned years 2011-2015 (million NOK) ¹¹					
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
Climate Change Adaptation	NORAD	1,100,000	1,700,000	1,900,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	
	NCA	200,000	600,000	900,000	1800,000	1800,000	
	Other	300,000	400,000	600,000	900,000	1500,000	
	Sub Total	1,600,000	2,300,000	2,400,000	3,200,000	3.800,000	
Climate Change Mitigation							
	Sub total	300,000	400,000	1,000,000	1,500,000	1,500,000	
Water , sanitation and hygiene	NORAD	500,000	700,000	700,000	700,000	700,000	
	NCA	300,000	400,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	
	Other	0	0	0	0	0	
	Sub-total	800,000	1,100,000	1,300,000	1,300,000	1.300,000	
Women in Governance	NORAD	700,000	1,400,000	1,600,000	1,600,000	1,600,000	
	NCA	200,000	150,000	200,000	700,000	900,000	
	Other	100,000	300,000	400,000	700,000	900,000	
	Sub-Total	1,000,000	1,700,000	2,000,000	2,500,000	2.900,000	
Office and capacitybuilding	NORAD	600,000	700,000	700,000	700,000	700,000	
	NCA	900,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	
	Other	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000	
	Sub-total	1,800,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	
Grand Total	5,500,000	7,500,000	8,700,000	10,500,000	11,500,000		

¹¹ This table is very tentative. Does not sufficiently reflect support to integrated/multisector programs and initiatives to strengthen civil society. Estimated Women in Governance support 2011-12 too high?

3.2 Proposed funding strategy

3.2.1 Main funding sources – tentative distribution

- 50% NORAD funding, partly through phasing out NORAD-funding from India and Nepal to be applied for Bangladesh, and partly through increased funds from NORAD-frame agreement.
- 30% NCA's own funds - NCA own funds defined here by NCA own non-earmarked and Bangladesh targeted funds raised in close cooperation with fundraising resources in NCA Oslo .
- 20% NCA Bangladesh raised alone and/or together with the NCA Oslo office.

Additional sources that will be approached for funding are EU – funding components linked to for Climate Change Adaptation , Global Fund for Women and projects related to women empowerment , explore possibilities for funding from UN organizations - UNDP, UNICEF, UNIFEM , USAID, NCA-Bangladesh aims to make joint fundraising proposal with other ACT Bangladesh ACT Forum members.

3.2.2 Diversification strategy

A two pronged approach to fundraising – Oslo based and Bangladesh based:

- NCA- HO will develop and reach strategic fund raising goals contacting private donors in Norway – Scandinavia.
- NCA Bangladesh will link to funding mechanisms in Bangladesh and/ or international and or UN agencies.
- NCA-HO and Bangladesh will work together to access relevant funds from MFA.

3.2.3 Capacity assessment

- NCA staff capacity building

Systematically strengthen and professionally empower the NCA Bangladeshi staff on: fund raising, project management and including using rights based approach and logical framework, monitoring systems and reporting. In addition the Bangladesh staff have to have specific thematic capacities in; climate, gender, in addition to emergency and protection and international standards.

3.2.4 ACT Alliance coordination

It is projected that NCA will play a facilitator role in the Bangladesh ACT Forum focusing on emergency preparedness. As such, NCA will support ACT Forum capacity development plan linked to emergency preparedness and including humanitarian standards, integrating protection and gender principles/issues, monitoring and HAP.