

CLIMATE ADAPTATION FINANCE

Study in Nepal

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INTRODUCTION

Nepal is one of the countries highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. According to ND-GAIN index, 2017, it is the 51st most vulnerable country to climate change.¹ As impacts of climate change are being felt more rapidly, Nepal needs to act urgently to access and utilize international climate finance to enhance its resilience and achieve sustainable development.

However, climate finance is a new 'genre' for the government, and it is still in the process of understanding and using available tools to access available resources. Lately, Nepal has been accessing adaptation finance from international climate funds such as the Least Developed Countries Fund (DCF), Adaptation Fund (AF), and the Climate Investment Fund (CIF). Nepal is also preparing to access funds from the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

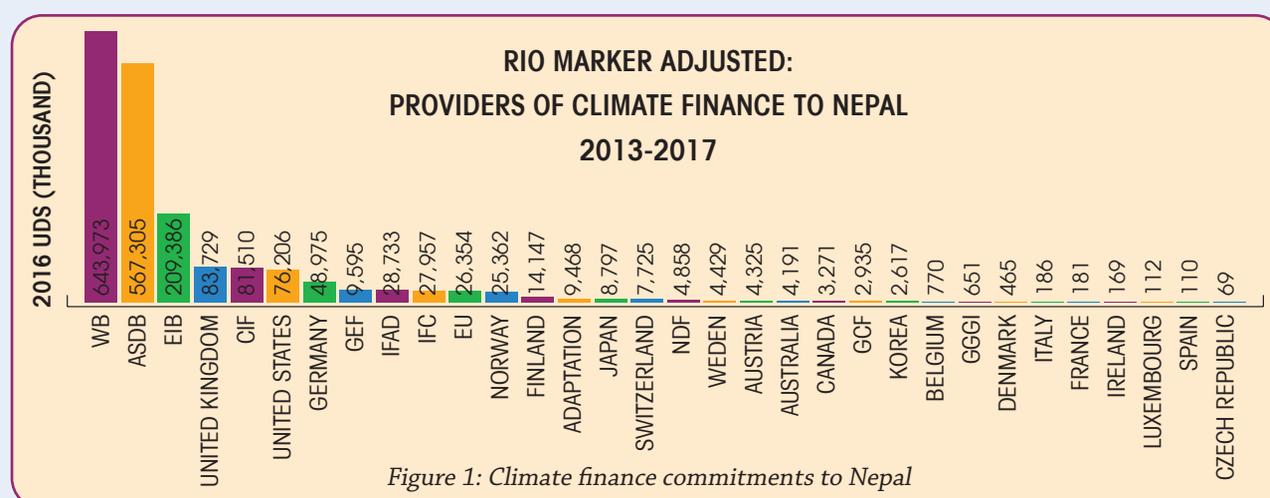
During the fifteenth (2009) and the sixteenth (2010) sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Parties agreed that developed countries would deliver new and additional climate finance to developing countries, and that the money would gradually be increased to US\$ 100 billion per year by 2020.²

Various donors committed \$1.92 billion for 609 climate-related projects in Nepal from 2013-2017, according to annual project-level reports prepared by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC).³

Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) claimed the top three spots in the list of biggest providers of climate finance to Nepal during the period. While the World Bank's share of the total sum was 33 per cent, that of the Asian Development Bank was 29 per cent and the European Investment Bank was 11 per cent.

The study looked at the distribution of climate finance between adaptation and mitigation activities to gauge the level of priority accorded to the poorest and the most vulnerable (Article 9.4)⁴. It also assessed the adaptation projects' gender equality targets.

Of the \$1.92 billion the donors committed to Nepal from 2013-2017, \$640 million (53 per cent) was allocated for adaptation-related activities and \$563 million (47 per cent) for mitigation. Similarly, from 2013-2016 only 39 per cent of adaptation projects were found to have gender equality targets and co-targets.



¹ND-GAIN Country Index, 2017 <https://gain-new.crc.nd.edu/country/nepal>

²1/CP.16, The Cancun Agreements, UNFCCC

³Data is found at OECD's webpage on climate finance: <http://www.oecd.org/development/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-topics/climate-change.htm>

⁴Article 9.4 of Paris Agreement is found at UNFCCC's website: https://unfccc.int/files/meetings/paris_nov_2015/application/pdf/paris_agreement_english_.pdf

METHODOLOGY

The study sought to assess the accuracy and quality of the donors' reporting on their own aid to the OECD-DAC, which provides the most comprehensive and detailed project-level datasets on climate-related development aid.

⁵Rio markers form the basis for the calculation of international climate finance flow. The marker is utilized by all donors, except the US, the UK and the MDBs. Under the scheme, a project is assigned '0', '1' or '2' to indicate the relationship between the objectives of a development finance activity and the objectives set by various conventions such as the UNFCCC, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. While development activities that contribute to the conventions', (UNFCCC, in the case of climate change) principal objectives get a score of '2', those which are in line with the conventions' significant objectives score '1'. Activities that do not contribute to the objectives of the conventions are marked '0'.

The study assessed 15 projects—ten of them the largest adaptation-related projects in terms of budget size, while the other five were complementary projects with comparatively smaller budgets. It followed the three-step assessment criteria developed by the MDBs: (i) The climate vulnerability context outlined by a project (ii) The project's consideration to the identified risks, vulnerabilities and impacts, and (iii) A direct link between climate vulnerability and the financed activities.⁶

A rating scale of 0-10 was applied to assess how strongly the project performed against each of the three criteria, with 0 indicating that the project does not address the

guiding questions at all, and 10 indicating that the project in question fully addresses all the guiding questions.

Project activities were rated based on: the project document (PD) and observation assessment (OA) retrieved from various sources. The objective was to compare planned and implemented initiatives to assess the quality of adaptation activities.

Four sets of criteria were prepared to assess the projects' orientation on poverty and gender. For consistency, the performance of a project under each criterion was measured on a 10-point scale applied to the three-step adaptation assessment. The scores for each assessment variable were summed, with the highest possible score being 40.

The criteria to assess a project's orientation on poverty were: (i) Does the project address issues related to poverty? (ii) Are poor communities, regions, or ethnic groups prioritized? (iii) Are rights-based approaches applied? And (iv) Is there evidence of the project's orientation on poverty?

On the question of gender the criteria were: (i) Are gender differences analysed? (ii) Were both the sex and age disaggregated data analyzed? (iii) Were there the distinct needs for different genders (iv) Was there a meaningful participation of different genders?

Donor transparency was an important aspect of this report. Out of the 18 projects initially identified for the assessment, two had not made their project documents public and one did not publish its details. Hence 15 projects were covered by this study.

Table 1: List of assessed projects

S.N	Names of Projects	Abbreviation	Climate-related budget commitment (OECD)
1	World Bank: Earthquake Housing Reconstruction Project	WB: EHRP	427,802,122
2	United Kingdom: Rural Access Programme 3	UK:RAP3	48,792,977
3	European Union: EU Contribution to Agriculture and Rural development (CARD) in Nepal	EU: EU-CARD	43,768,000
4	World Bank: Nepal Livestock Sector Innovation Project	WB: Nepal Livestock	32,129,210
5	United States: Hariyo Ban	US: Hariyo Ban	31,478,000
6	World Bank: Additional Finance to Road Sector Development Project	WB: AFRSD	30,800,000
7	Asian Development Bank: Third Small Town's Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project	ADB: TST	23,540,101
8	International Fund for Agricultural Development: Adaptation for Smallholders in Hilly Areas Project	IFAD: ASHA	22,439,620

⁵Details about the Annex 18- Rio marker is found at OECD's webpage: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/environment-development/Annex%2018.%20Rio%20markers.pdf>

⁶Common Principles for Climate Change Adaptation Finance Tracking, 2015

S.N	Names of Projects	Abbreviation	Climate-related budget commitment (OECD)
9	European Union: Water, Energy, Agriculture: Village Livelihoods Enhancement in Mid Far West	EU: WAVE	22,116,550
10	Climate Investment Funds: Building Climate Resilience of Watersheds in Mountain Eco-regions	CIF: BCRWME	22,023,570
11	Finland: Rural Village Water Resources Management Project (III PHASE)	Finland: RVWRMP	17,078,510
12	Asian Development Bank: Bagmati River Basin Improvement Project- Additional Financing	ADB: BRBIP	14,954,360
13	United Kingdom: Nepal Climate Change Support Programme - Implementation through Government	UK: NCCSP	15,372,640
14	Adaptation Fund: Adapting to Climate-induced Threats to Food Production and Food Security in the Karnali Region of Nepal	AF: Adapting to CIT	9,485,654
15	Global Environment Facility: Ecosystem-based Adaptation for Climate- resilient Development in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal	GEF: EbA for CRD	6,884,000
Assessed climate-related commitments (USD):			768,665,314
Total climate-related commitments 2013-2017 (USD):			1,918,577,987
Percentage of assessed finance of national climate-related commitments:			40%

ANALYSIS OF ADAPTATION RELEVANCE OF THE PROJECTS

Adaptation relevance of the projects was analyzed based on the three-step assessment developed by the MDBs: (i) the climate vulnerability context (ii) the statement of purpose or intent and (iii) linkage between climate vulnerability and project activities. An analysis of all the above criteria was then integrated into a final step known as the ‘consolidated three-step analysis’ to demonstrate the adaptation relevance coefficient of the projects based on their project documents (PD) and observation assessments (OA).

Step 1 - Climate Vulnerability Context

This step was undertaken to check if the selected projects performed vulnerability analyses and whether they addressed adaptation needs of the communities they worked for. Figure 2 below presents a list of 15 projects and their assessment scores based on their PDs and OAs (See Methodology above for details). A scoring scheme of 0-10 was applied to each project to rate its climate vulnerability analysis.

The analysis showed that there was not much difference between the climate vulnerability context analysis in the PDs and the OAs. Therefore the projects scoring high for their PDs received similar ratings based on the OA indicating that climate vulnerability context of the project area was analysed well by the projects. Similarly, a low assessment rating indicates weaknesses in climate vulnerability context analysis.

Step-1 Assessment: Climate Vulnerability Context

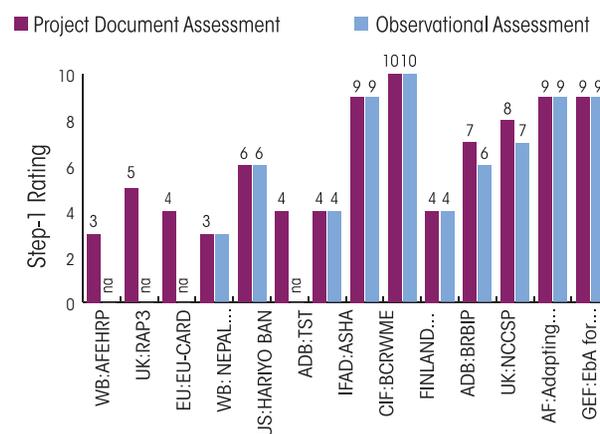


Figure 2: Analysis of climate vulnerability context- summary of project ratings

Step 2 - Statement of Purpose or Intent

This second step of the analysis checked whether the project objectives were informed by the identified vulnerabilities. This step followed the same scoring as in step 1.

The results showed that of the 15 projects—two big (IFAD: ASHA and CIF: BCRWME) and three complementary (UK: NCCSP, AF: Adapting to CIT and GEF: EbA for CRD) ones received a rating of 9 for both their PDs and OAs indicating that adaptation was the fundamental driver of the projects’

Step-2 Assessment: Statement Of Purpose Or Intent

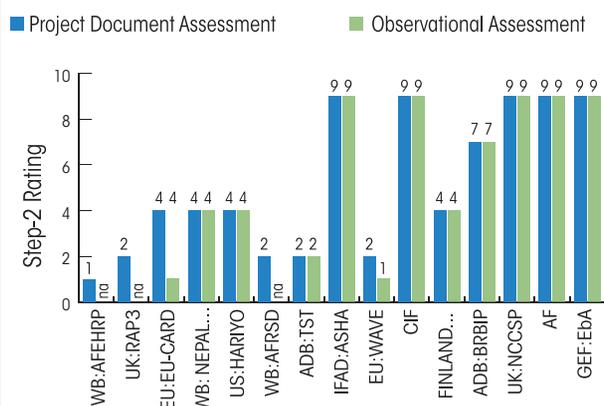


Figure 3: Analysis of statement of purpose or intent- summary of project ratings

objective as indicated in their PD. It also showed that the projects were dedicated to addressing the impacts of climate change with their principal objectives focusing explicitly on addressing such issues. Projects that have identified adaptation as their significant objectives make only indirect contributions.

Step 3 - Linkage between Climate Vulnerability and Project Activities

This third step of the analysis was carried out to see if there was a clear and direct link between climate vulnerability, identified risks and the project’s activities.

Step-3 Assessment: Linkage between Climate Vulnerability and Project Activities

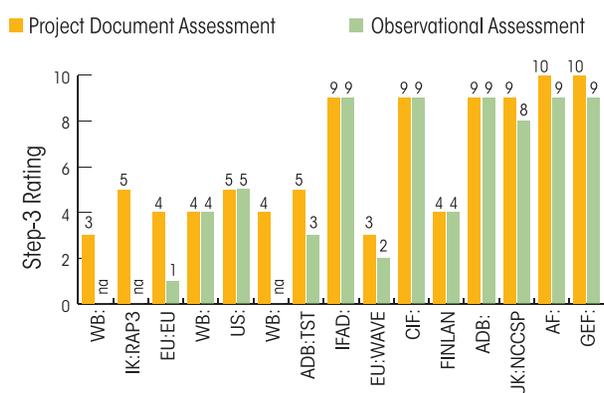


Figure 4: Analysis of the linkage between climate vulnerability and project activities: summary of project ratings.

This step also followed the same rating scheme as employed in steps 1 and 2. The result showed that of the 15 projects two large (IFAD: ASHA and CIF: BCRWME) and four complementary (ADB: BRBIP, UK: NCCSP, AF: Adapting to CIT and GEF: EbA for CRD) ones—received scores ranging from 8-10, indicating that these projects demonstrate a clear and direct link between the implemented projects’ activities and vulnerability and adaptation needs of the communities.

A major conclusion that can be drawn from this step is that projects with addressing climate vulnerability as their principle objective have activities that directly address the communities’ adaptation needs, while those, which do not have similar activities, indirectly address the adaptation needs of the people, and they consider climate change cross-cutting issue.

Consolidated Three-step Analysis

A consolidated three-step analysis of the 15 projects was conducted to look into the overall adaptation relevance of the projects based on their PDs and OAs. The result showed that of the 15 projects two large (IFAD: ASHA and CIF: BCRWME) and four complementary (ADB: BRBIP, UK: NCCSP, AF: Adapting to CIT and GEF: EbA for CRD) ones have high adaptation relevance indicating that these projects were largely dedicated to adaptation finance as indicated in their PDs and OAs. The adaptation relevance of these projects range from 77 per cent to 93 per cent in their PDs and 77 per cent to 93 per cent in their OAs.

It is interesting to note that out of these six projects only two—IFAD: ASHA (90%) and CIF: BCRWME (93%)—scored the same adaptation relevance per centage for their PDs and OAs, indicating that there was no difference between the planned and the implemented initiatives. The project with climate change as a cross-cutting issue (US: Hariyo Ban) scored 50 per cent for its PD and OA, implying that the project has an equal adaptation and mitigation relevance.

Assessment of the other five projects (EU: EU-CARD, WB: Nepal Livestock, ADB: TST, EU: WAVE and Finland: RVWRMP) shows their low adaptation relevance indicating that these projects were not focused on adaptation in principle. One of the most significant differences in adaptation relevance in terms of PD and OA was observed in the case of the EU: EU-CARD project. Although it was not a ‘climate change project’, its PD scored 40 per cent on adaptation finance, while its OA scored only 7 per cent when assessed in terms of adaptation finance. This reveals a huge difference between the planned and the actual initiatives for adaptation. This means the project contributed minimally towards adaptation to climate change.

Consolidated 3-step Assessment Results: Adaptation-relevance of Projects

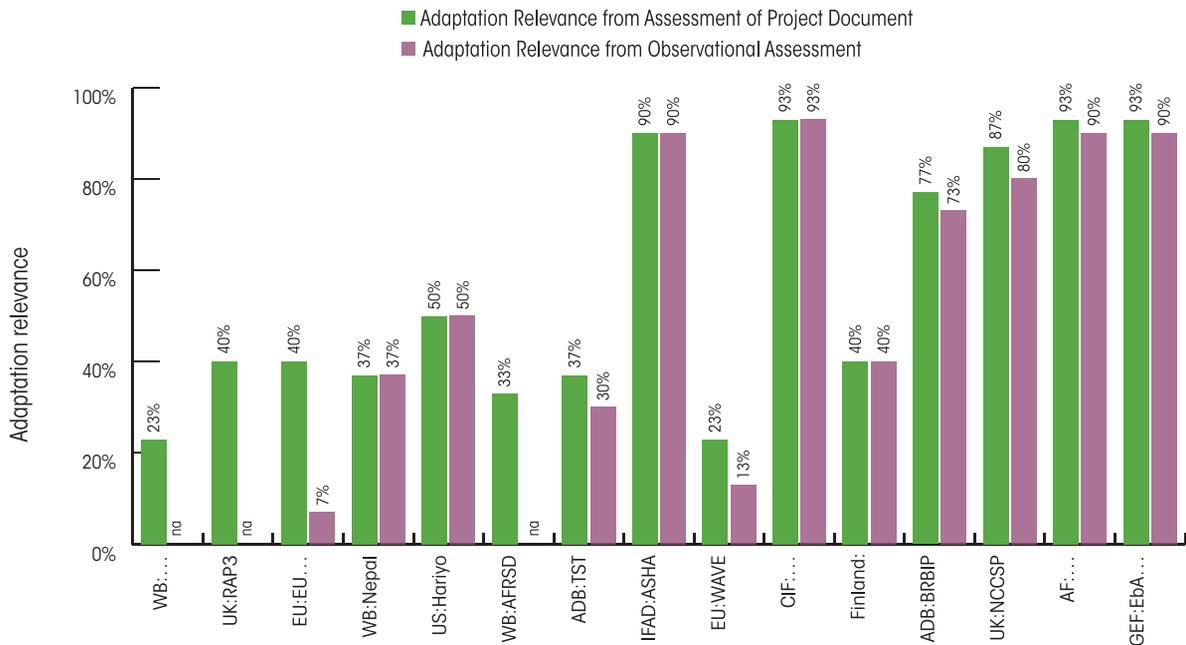


Figure 5: Assessed adaptation-relevance of the projects-consolidated summary of project ratings

COMPARISON OF ASSESSED AND REPORTED ADAPTATION FINANCE

Table 2 below lists 15 projects assessed by the study and their climate commitments as reported by the donor to the OECD, including the climate-related and subsequent adaptation-related finance figures. It also indicates each project's adaptation-relevance coefficient derived from the analysis of their PDs and OAs.

Of the 15 projects, 10 (WB: EHRP, UK: RAP3, EU: EU-CARD, WB: Nepal Livestock, US: Hariyo Ban, WB: AFRSD, ADB: TST, IFAD: ASHA, EU: WAVE and CIF: BCRWME) were categorized as the largest ones based on their budgetary allocations during the assessment period. The other five (Finland: RVWRMP, ADB: BRBIP, UK: NCCSP, AF: Adapting to CIT and GEF: EbA for CRD) were considered complementary (selected based on the criteria set in the methodological paper) in terms of their smaller budget sizes compared to 10 big projects. The adaptation finance purportedly committed by the 15 projects, as reported by the donors, was \$617,887,802, of which \$363,109,020 (59 per cent of the total assessed adaptation finance in this report), was estimated to be over-reported. These over-reported figures amount to about 19 per cent of the total climate finance received by Nepal over the last five years. It

can be safely presumed that this percentage would become higher than this had the study covered all the 609 'climate-related projects' instead of only 15.

Of the 15 projects WB: EHRP was found to have done the highest over-reporting. This assessment indicated that \$327,981,627 (77 per cent of the adaptation finance for this project) was over-reported and was not deemed adaptation-relevant. US: Hariyo Ban project, which treated climate change as cross-cutting theme, described \$ 15,739,000 as its total adaptation finance in its report to the OECD. The rio marker is allocated "2" for both adaptation and mitigation in US: Hariyo Ban project (indicating that the project fund was equally allocated for adaptation and mitigation). This assessment concurred with figures reported in the PD. In contrast, projects such as EU: WAVE and UK: NCCSP show an under-reporting of adaptation finance by \$ 6,300,132.

The PD analyses show that of the 15 projects assessed, only three--UK: RAP3, EU: EU-CARD and Finland: RVWRMP--report adaptation finance figures in their documentation that match with those reported by them to the OECD. All these projects scored 1 on the Rio Marker as they have found to have allocated 40 per cent of the total budget for adaptation. Hence, the analysis of the adaptation finance of the 15 assessed projects showed significant discrepancies between the figures reported to OECD and the actual investments at the project-level.

Table 2: Implications of adaptation finance- comparing reported and assessed adaptation finance figures. *Adaptation-related finance sourced figures from the OECD have been adjusted for each donor-specific Rio marker 1 coefficient, where possible. When not possible, it has been calculated using a 40% coefficient. For MDB projects that do not apply Rio markers, the stated amount is the “adaptation-related development finance” figure as reported by the donor to the OECD, with the exception of the 2015 WB: EHRP commitment of \$162.3 million, which was considered adaptation finance even though it was reported without a breakdown as was so referred to as in the World Bank’s documentation.

Project Name	Rio markers		Financial commitments reported to OECD (USD)		Assessed adaptation-related commitments (USD)		
	Adaptation	Mitigation	Climate-related finance	Adaptation-related finance	From project document assessment	From observational assessment	
WB:EHRP	n/a (MDB)	n/a (MDB)	427,802,122	427,802,122	99,820,495	not assessed	
UK:RAP3	1	0	48,792,977	19,517,191	19,517,191	not assessed	
EU: EU (CARD)	1	0	43,768,000	17,507,200	17,507,200	3,063,760	
WB: Nepal Livestock	n/a (MDB)	n/a (MDB)	32,129,210	19,053,950	7,049,962	7,049,962	
US: Hariyo Ban	2	2	31,478,000	15,739,000	15,739,000	15,739,000	
WB: AFRSD	n/a (MDB)	n/a (MDB)	30,800,000	not provided	10,266,667	not assessed	
ADB:TST	n/a (MDB)	n/a (MDB)	23,540,101	23,540,101	8,709,837	7,062,030	
IFAD: ASHA	2	0	22,439,620	22,439,620	20,195,658	20,195,658	
EU: WAVE	1	1	22,116,550	4,423,310	5,086,807	2,875,152	
CIF: BCRWME	2	0	22,023,570	22,023,570	20,555,332	20,555,332	
Finland: RVWRMP	1	0	17,078,510	6,831,404	6,831,404	6,831,404	
ADB:BRBIP	n/a (MDB)	n/a (MDB)	14,954,360	14,954,360	11,464,733	10,966,267	
UK: NCCSP	2	2	15,372,640	7,686,320	13,322,955	12,298,112	
AF: Adapting to CIT	2	0	9,485,654	9,485,654	8,853,273	8,537,085	
GEF: EbA for CRD	2	0	6,884,000	6,884,000	6,425,067	6,195,600	
Totals			768,655,314	617,887,802	271,345,581	121,369,362	
					Over-reporting	363,109,020	39,367,480
					Under-reporting	6,300,132	4,611,792

COMPARISON BETWEEN ASSESSED AND REPORTED RIO MARKERS

An assessment of the Rio markers and the gender equality markers were carried out to compare the selected projects that were reported—to the OECD by the donors’ with ‘the observation assessment made by the assessment team’. Setting themselves apart from the MDB’s own practice of reporting climate finance, other multilateral funds and institutions do use the Rio Marker and calculate climate finance totals using the Rio marker methodology.

Some multilateral projects with Rio markers 2, 0 (2 for adaptation and 0 for mitigation) are IFAD: ASHA, CIF: BCRWME, AF: Adapting to CIT and GEF: EbA for CRD. As a result, these projects report their total climate-related

budget as 100 per cent adaptation finance. However, assessment of PDs and OAs shows discrepancies in adaptation finance figures assessed during the study. Over-reporting of adaptation finance was found in all cases.

Bilateral projects that have Rio markers 2, 2 (implying that adaptation and mitigation received 50 per cent each of the budget) are US: Hariyo Ban and UK: NCCSP. An assessment of the PDs of these projects found that the UK’s NCCSP project significantly under-reported its adaptation finance.

This was attributed to the fact that the project’s climate-related budget primarily targeted adaptation activities. The project scored 87 per cent as its adaptation-relevance coefficient, suggesting that only 13 per cent of the project’s total climate finance was allocated for mitigation. This appeared to be a result of inaccurate allocations of Rio Markers by the UK project.

Although the project included certain activities that generated mitigation co-benefits, there was no evidence that mitigation was a fundamental driver of this project. Given that the project had limited potential for mitigation co-benefits, the assessment team reduced the project's Rio Marker for mitigation to 1—altering its final Rio Markers to 2,1.

It can be argued that the original donor-allocated Rio Markers over-estimated the mitigation share of the project's budget, which thereby led to under-estimation of the budget targeting adaptation. It also may be the case that the project treated climate change as a cross-cutting issue hence did not focus just on adaptation. MDB projects such as WB: EHRP, WB: Nepal Livestock, WB: AFRSDP, ADB: TST and ADB: BRBIP were found to have adaptation relevance coefficients of 23 per cent to 37 per cent, based on which the assessment team assigned the Rio Marker 1 for adaptation.

As for gender marking, the assessment team analysed how these projects addressed gender equality and suggested gender-markers for the projects. Some of the projects such as WB: EHRP, UK: RAP3, WB: AFRSDP, EU: EU-CARD, WB: Nepal livestock, ADB: TST, ADB: BRBIP, IFAD: ASHA, CIF: BCRWME, AF: Adapting to CIT and GEF: EbA for CRD were found to have made gender considerations, and were hence allotted a gender equality policy marker '1' by the assessment team.

ANALYSIS OF POVERTY ORIENTATION, GENDER AND THE JOINT PRINCIPLES OF ADAPTATION

Poverty orientation

All of the 15 projects reviewed intended to address poverty, either explicitly or implicitly. Some of the projects analysed poverty from various perspectives, including social, economic and political (in relation to policies), while others seemed to have linked poverty to specific areas of their prime focus without an in-depth analysis.

The assessed projects demonstrated a varied orientation on poverty with their rating ranging from 17 to 31. While ADB: BRBIP scored the lowest (17), three others (Finland: RVWRMP, IFAD: ASHA and, CIF: BCRWME) scored the highest (31). Although most of the projects' poverty analyses imply that they have prioritized diversity, they did not appear to have addressed the specific needs of marginalized groups, including ethnic minorities. The project review indicated that the majority of them used (existing) data from secondary sources; only a few of them mentioned that they used poverty mapping tools. Only a handful of projects mentioned imbalances in power relations and their intention to support or advocate for policy change in the interest of the poor and vulnerable.

Table 3: Poverty and gender orientation- summary of project ratings

Project Name	Poverty orientation assessment rating (0-40)	Gender integration assessment rating (0-40)
WB: EHRP	20	25
UK: RAP3	30	21
EU: EU-CARD	21	17
WB: Nepal Livestock	18	22
US: Hariyo Ban	28	24
WB: AFRSD	20	20
ADB: TST	23	33
IFAD: ASHA	31	34
EU: WAVE	25	24
CIF: BCRWME	31	30
Finland: RVWRMP	31	16
ADB: BRBIP	17	33
UK: NCCSP	29	25
AF: Adapting to CIT	22	16
GEF: EbA for CRD	18	13

Gender orientation

The projects employed a wide variety of approaches to deal with the issue of gender. The minimum gender rating (13) was assigned to GEF: EbA for CRD, while the highest (34) was given to IFAD: ASHA. Most of the projects analysed gender issues in the community, but they fell short of adequately covering climate vulnerability from a gender lens and acknowledge that women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change. This therefore led to most of the projects responding insufficiently to gender issues from climate vulnerability stand point. However, some of the projects intended to empower women to advocate for change, influence adaptation and mitigation processes and demand accountability, giving rise to hope for women's meaningful participation.

Joint principles of adaptation (JPA)

The JPA assessment aimed to summarise the adherence to best practice standards for adaptation as outlined by the Joint Principles for Adaptation. As field-level validation was out of this assignment's scope, and access to adequate documents for review and information from responsible personnel was also limited, the assessment team rated the projects based on available documents and information. Overall, the majority of the projects, when reviewed across all principles, were rated 'moderate' followed by 'good' and 'not good'. Projects rated 'good' are: WB: NCCSP, AF: Adapting to CIT, IFAD: ASHA, CIF: BCRWME, US: Hariyo Ban and GEF: EbA for CRD. Projects that received 'moderate' rating are: Finland: RVWRMP, ADB: BRBIP and UK: RAP3 and those that received 'not good' are WB: EHRP, WB: AFRSDP, EU: EU-(CARD), ADB: TST, EU: WAVE and WB: Nepal Livestock.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found that there is still scope for improvement when it comes to transparency, disclosure of information and reporting adaptation finance accurately for the benefit of the poor and climate-vulnerable communities. Some of the specific recommendations are as follows:

For the government:

- ➔ The government needs to develop a definition of climate finance in the context of Nepal. This would clearly help assess donor-supported climate finance as well as the contributions made by the government towards addressing challenges posed by climate change.
- ➔ It is important that the government develop a system to track climate finance right from the planning to the actual implementation phase for all donor-funded projects.
- ➔ Projects for which donors provide Rio Marking are not necessarily understood as climate projects by the national stakeholders as there is a lack of a national system to verify them. Hence, the setting up of a national database (e.g. an aid management platform) has become necessary.

For donors:

- ➔ For many of the projects, accessing the right documents was extremely difficult. The level of transparency on the part of bilateral donors was found to be low. Although in the case of some donors, such as the multilateral development banks, project documents were made available online, while in several other cases they were not. It is important that these documents be made available.

- ➔ Donors should make project documents as detailed as possible when it comes to budget and objectives. In the case of some of the projects with multiple development objectives, including those related to climate change, it was found that there were discrepancies in funding figures mentioned in the project document and those reported to the OECD. It is difficult to ascertain and evaluate the accuracy of these allocations of climate finance if decision-making processes and methodologies adopted are not made clear.

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- ➔ *Climate Adaptation Finance: Study Report, 2020*
- ➔ *Common Principles for Climate Change Adaptation Finance Tracking, 2015*
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Disclaimer:

This briefing paper is a concise version of a research report prepared as part of an international pilot project on adaptation finance tracking. The project entitled 'Climate Adaptation Finance Study in Nepal' looked into the accuracy of multilateral and bilateral donors' reporting on adaptation finance and the focus of their adaptation activities on the poorest and the most climate-vulnerable sections of the country' population. The study was conducted with the financial support from CARE. The printing of this publication is supported by BothEnds and GAGGA.

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