

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON

CLIMATE AND DEVELOPMENT

- Climate Justice
- Resilient Development

CLIMATE AND DEVELOPMENT DIALOGUE
27th November, Kathmandu, 2023



MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS:

The Climate and Development Dialogue (C&D Dialogue) achieves a harmonious blend of deep expertise, practical insights, and diverse educational backgrounds in the fields of climate change, environment, women's rights, and sustainable development. This collaborative synergy is nurtured by a diverse and dedicated membership of non-governmental and non-profit organizations, collectively enriching the understanding of these pivotal issues with a multifaceted perspective. The Dialogue members include:



Foreword

In a world grappling with the profound challenges posed by climate change, the significance of collaborative efforts and informed dialogues cannot be overstated. This report encapsulates the outcomes of the 'National Conference on Climate and Development: Climate Justice Resilient Development,' organized by the Climate and Development Dialogue (C&D Dialogue) on November 27, 2023, in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Nepal stands as a poignant example of a nation vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. Despite being a signatory to global initiatives, the country faces the pressing need to align its national development plans with the imperative of climate resilience. The conference, a pivotal initiative by the C&D Dialogue, sought to address this imperative by advocating for the integration of climate agendas into Nepal's 16th Plan.

This report captures the essence of the conference, offering a comprehensive overview of key sessions, engaging thematic discussions, and the invaluable insights shared by distinguished speakers and participants. From the opening session that emphasized the need for climate integration to thematic discussions focusing on climate justice, disaster risk reduction, 'Just Energy Transition,' and accessing climate finance, each segment underscores the urgency of addressing climate change in the developmental landscape.

The diverse range of participants, including representatives from government bodies, non-governmental organizations, academia, and civil society, reflects the inclusive nature of the dialogue. The call for a paradigm shift in development, prioritizing climate-resilient strategies, and ensuring inclusivity reverberates throughout these pages.

On behalf of C&D Dialogue, Prakriti Resources Centre extend its sincere appreciation to the Climate and Development Dialogue's member organisations for their foresight in convening this crucial dialogue. PRC also commend the participants for their active engagement and commitment to shaping a sustainable and climate-resilient future for Nepal.

Table of Content

FOREWORD	3
1. BACKGROUND	5
2. PARTICIPATION	6
3. OPENING SESSION	7
3.1 Welcome Address	7
3.2. Key Note Presentation	8
4. GUEST REMARKS	9
4.1. Saloni Pradhan Singh, Former Member, National Planning Commission	9
4.2. Min Bahadur Shahi, Former Member, National Planning Commission	10
4.3. Raju Sapkota, Under-Secretary, Ministry of Forests and Environment	11
4.4. Arjun Bhattarai, General Secretary, NGO Federation of Nepal	12
4.5. Dr. Nirmala KC, Chairperson, ActionAid Nepal	13
5. THEMATIC SESSIONS	14
5.1. Thematic Session-I	14
5.2. Thematic Session-II	17
5.3. Thematic Session-III	20
5.4. Thematic Session-IV	22
6. CLOSING SESSION	25
6.1. Closing Remarks	25
6.2. Vote of Thanks	25



Background

Nepal stands out as one of the countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, facing a series of devastating climate-related disasters in recent years. Notable incidents include torrential rain and subsequent floods in the far-western province (2019), Melamchi and Manang (2021), and flood Kagkhola of Kagbeni, Mustang (2023), all of which have posed significant threats to people's lives and livelihoods.

Committed to global initiatives, Nepal is a signatory to key international agreements such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Paris Agreement, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The country has outlined its dedication to addressing the climate crisis through the preparation of a National Adaptation Plan, the integration of Sustainable Development Goals into Nepal's developmental frameworks, and the submission of documents like the Nationally Determined Contributions to the UNFCCC.

Despite these commitments, the recently released 16th Plan Concept Paper by the National Planning Commission (NPC) fails to adequately prioritize the urgency of addressing the climate crisis. This omission is critical, as integrating climate agendas into the 16th Plan is essential for fulfilling both global commitments and national priorities. Such integration becomes imperative for the sustainability of development interventions, the enhancement of the nation's resilience capacity, and the protection of the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable communities.

Recognizing the need for urgent action, the Climate and Development Dialogue (C&D Dialogue) organized the 'National Conference on Climate and Development: Climate Justice Resilient Development' on November 27, 2023, in Kathmandu, Nepal. The primary objective of the conference was to collaboratively articulate the demand for the integration of climate agendas into the 16th Plan.

The conference focused on key themes, including addressing climate justice and inequality in development plans; mainstreaming disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation; promoting a 'Just Energy Transition' as a pathway to achieving Nepal's development vision; and accessing climate finance to resource development plans. The conference aimed to underscore the critical importance of aligning climate and development agendas for the sustainable progress of Nepal.



PARTICIPATION

A total of **88 participants**, including **48 women** and **40 men**, engaged in the conference. Key stakeholders, such as the National Planning Commission, Ministry of Forests and Environment, Non-Governmental Organization Federation of Nepal, British Embassy, an elected representative from Banepa Municipality, women's organizations, youth networks, media, and civil society organizations, actively participated.

OPENING SESSION

Welcome Address



PRAGYA SHERCHAN

Climate and Development Dialogue Coordinator, Prakriti Resources Centre

Ms. Pragya Sherchan, Climate and Development Dialogue Coordinator at Prakriti Resources Centre, opened the conference by welcoming the participants. She highlighted the significance of the conference in supporting Nepal's 16th five-year plan and its role in incorporating climate change concerns from civil societies. The diverse panel of experts was expected to generate valuable insights during thematic sessions, contributing to the conference's outcomes for presentation to the National Planning Commission.



DR. DILI RAJ KHANAL

Former Member of Parliament and Founder Chairman of the Institute for Policy Research and Development

Dr. Dili Raj Khanal, Former Member of Parliament and Founder Chairman of the Institute for Policy Research and Development, emphasized the triple planetary crisis exacerbated by climate change. He discussed the drawbacks of the current development paradigm, urged a shift towards sustainable development, and stressed the need for climate-resilient development. Mr. Khanal outlined key focuses such as sustainable agriculture, forestry transition, rapid energy transition, and climate-resilient infrastructure, calling for the integration of climate justice into COP28 discussions.



SALONI PRADHAN SINGH

Former Member, National Planning Commission

Ms. Singh highlighted the conference's objective to critically review the 15th five-year plan and contribute to the 16th five-year plan formulation. She advocated for a paradigm shift, emphasizing climate change as integral to human civilization's fate. Ms. Singh stressed the importance of evidence-based presentations, equitable funding mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund, and transformative actions.



MIN BAHADUR SHAHI

Former Member, National Planning Commission

Mr. Shahi lauded the Climate and Development Dialogue's efforts and emphasized the need for the 16th plan to address climate change, including considerations of climate justice. He urged arrangements for accessing the Green Climate Fund and prioritizing inclusive development. Mr. Shahi highlighted the importance of creative suggestions and research data for these initiatives.



RAJU SAPKOTA

Under-Secretary, Ministry of Forests and Environment

Mr. Sapkota emphasized effective implementation of Nepal's climate policies and plans. He acknowledged updates to the climate change policy and LAPA framework, along with achievements in hydroelectricity transition. Mr. Sapkota expressed expectations for the 16th plan to encompass short-term, mid-term, and long-term adaptation priorities, contributing to NDC targets by 2030.



ARJUN BHATTARAI

General Secretary, NGO Federation of Nepal

Mr. Bhattarai called for a comprehensive review of previous COPs, emphasizing policy implementation. He highlighted Nepal's challenges in meeting obligations and stressed the need for a National Climate Change Fund, reducing loan dependence, and implementing an integrated data-based system for effective resource utilization.



DR. NIRMALA KC

Program Chair, ActionAid Nepal

Dr. KC emphasized Nepal's alignment with international agreements and called for decisive action against climate change. She detailed ongoing efforts for the Green Climate Fund, Loss and Damage Fund, and initiatives at both international and national levels. Dr. KC expressed optimism in adhering to commitments, adopting an inclusive approach, and fostering effective communication for improved scenarios.

NETRA PRASAD TIMILSINA, PhD

South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE)

Netra Prasad Timilsina, a natural resource management expert, emphasized the vital link between climate justice, sustainable development, and agriculture. He called for urgent action on climate change, advocating for the integration of climate finance with development aids. Mr. Timilsina acknowledged policy efforts in Nepal but flagged implementation challenges, especially for marginalized communities. Prioritizing agriculture amid climate challenges, he called for empowering vulnerable groups and a comprehensive disaster-resilience framework. Highlighting the FAO's recent report in relation to COP28, he stressed the importance of climate-resilient development in the food and agriculture sector. Mr. Timilsina also called for a global campaign for feminist food systems emphasizing support to women food producers, small-scale farmers, indigenous women, and youth entrepreneurship in Agri-ecology. He concluded by underscoring the critical need for immediate and long-term actions to address climate challenges both in Nepal and globally.

SHARU JOSHI SHRESTHA

GESI and Development Expert

Sharu Joshi Shrestha, a GESI and Development Expert from the Inter-Generational Feminist Forum, highlighted the need for a shift in perspective. She urged a consideration of individual contributions to achieving zero emissions rather than solely focusing on what the nation has not done. Ms. Shrestha criticized programs aimed at local communities, that often use complex language that the residents cannot comprehend.

She provided insights into community safety net initiatives, detailing TEWA's assistance to victims of the recent Jajarkot earthquake and other activities. Shrestha emphasized the centrality of gender equality and inclusion in addressing climate change. She stressed the need for evidence-based planning and synergies between existing policies and tailoring policies to diverse circumstances of women in different regions.

She also called for the integration of a stand-alone and mainstreaming approach, intersectionality, analysis of past activities, plans to alleviate the workload of women, and considerations for climate change financing in Nepal's 16th periodic plan.

Audience and Panel Interaction- Key Points

- It is crucial to initiate climate discussions at local levels.
- It is essential to prioritize resources for climate actions at local level.
- Carbon-neutral development is essential for sustainable development.
- Encourage youth participation in development planning and policy engagement.

Session Summary

- The undeniable correlation between the climate crisis and food security underscores the importance of advocating for solutions that specifically address and ensure food security. This strategic prioritization is vital for effectively meeting the needs of small-scale farmers.
- In the realm of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), addressing climate change becomes a non-negotiable imperative. The targets and indicators of SDGs should undergo a climate-sensitive revision during the mid-term review, reflecting the urgency of climate considerations.
- Addressing both the climate crisis and gender equality in development calls for substantial scaling up of gender-just climate solutions. This approach acknowledges and tackles the dual challenges posed by these interconnected issues.
- It is crucial to safeguard indigenous knowledge and foster effective practices that address the impacts of climate change. These efforts not only protect valuable knowledge but also contribute to mitigating the adverse effects of climate change.
- In the financial domain, prioritizing grant-based instruments over loans is essential. This shift ensures a more sustainable and supportive approach to addressing climate-related challenges and promoting resilience.



THEMATIC SESSION-II

Mainstreaming Disaster Risk
Reduction and Climate Adaptation
in Development Plans.

Moderator

KRITY SHRESTHA

DCA Nepal

Krity Shrestha, Climate Action Advisor at DCA, moderated the second panel discussion, emphasizing minimization of destructive hindrances to development and addressing climate change. Ms. Shrestha highlighted the diverse impacts of climate change in Nepal, underscoring the limitations of small-scale studies. She framed the discussion around identifying shortcomings and exploring potential solutions.

SUDHA KHADKA

Mercy Corps Nepal

Sudha Khadka, Program Manager at Mercy Corps, emphasized integration of climate change into the disaster sector. She highlighted the successful localization of policies at various local levels, establishing guidelines for effective disaster and climate change policies. Ms. Khadka emphasized the creation of key platforms like the national, provincial, district, and local emergency operation centers, in line with the local self-governance act. She underscored the active involvement of the Local Disaster Management Committee in thematic discussions for local government sectoral policies.

She also noted that the federal government's planning process across seven provinces results in mainstreamed contributions, effectively integrating climate change and disaster-resilient activities into sectoral plans. To ensure inclusiveness, Vulnerability and Risk Assessments (VRA) and Participatory Climate Vulnerability Assessments (PCVA) target vulnerable households and communities. Other activities include promoting climate-resilient crops, adopting electric vehicles, and using resilient equipment. However, she expressed uncertainty about whether grants from the central government undergo scrutiny with a climate and disaster lens.

BIMAL GHIMIRE

DCA Nepal

Bimal Ghimire, Program Head of DCA, stressed the importance of raising public awareness on climate change and its impacts. He highlighted the lack of understanding regarding mainstreaming and emphasized that pursuing development without factoring in climate change would be counterproductive. He used the example of a sudden flood in Mustang to illustrate that effective policies could have mitigated the impact. He advocated for integrating climate change into development efforts through a holistic approach, particularly at local and provincial levels. Mr. Ghimire underscored the necessity of implementing policies, frameworks, and plans effectively, considering both capacity and resources. He also stressed the importance of widespread dissemination of successful climate change and disaster risk reduction practices and concluded by emphasizing the need for continuous monitoring and evaluation of ongoing initiatives.

Audience and Panel Interaction- Key Points

- Increasing local awareness of disaster risk reduction management and adaptation is crucial for informed preparedness, resilience, and mitigating the impact of unforeseen events, fostering safer and more resilient communities.
- Developing a location-specific disaster risk reduction plans taking into account the unique characteristics and vulnerabilities is essential for effective mitigation and preparedness.
- Ensuring the inclusion of disabled individuals in mainstream disaster risk reduction initiatives is crucial for promoting inclusivity and enhancing overall effectiveness.
- Proficiently communicating the concepts of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Action (CA) to the youth is essential for fostering understanding and engagement.

Session Summary

- Develop an Accountability Framework: Consolidate dispersed data, identify new data needs, and advance monitoring and evaluation for past and ongoing projects. Harmonize lessons learned to enhance questioning and negotiation skills at COPs, ensuring effective and straightforward communication.
- Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA): The 16th periodic plan must address the challenge of minimizing the existing divide between DRR and CCA, effectively bridging the gap through financial integration.
- Scaling Up Success: Transforming small wins into significant achievements requires improvement and scalability, such as the success in multi-hazard early warnings' systems that has saved numerous lives.
- Scaling Up Early Warning Systems: UN Secretary Antonio Guterres committed to extending early warning systems to every population in each country within the next five years. This provides an opportunity for Nepal to enhance its early warning system, a task that should be addressed in the 16th periodic plan.



THEMATIC SESSION-III

Just Energy Transition' as a Gateway to
Achieve Nepal's Climate Vision.

Moderator

RAJU JATI

SAHAS Nepal

Raju Jati, Climate Change and DRR coordinator at SAHAS Nepal, moderated the third panel discussion, emphasising on energy transformation as a crucial avenue to realize Nepal's Climate Vision. The session delved into the need for a tailored approach to energy transformation in a country like Nepal, aligning with sustainable development goals. Discussions on government initiatives, emphasizing the vulnerabilities of women and marginalized communities, as well as their limited awareness of new technologies also figured in the discussion.

ASHMA VAIDYA, PhD

Environmental and Energy Policy

Dr. Ashma Vaidya, a PhD holder in environmental and energy policy highlighted the significant role of energy in climate change. She emphasized the need for precise positioning and contextualization, addressing regional disparities in energy access, especially concerning women's vulnerabilities in financial matters, contributing to household imbalances.

Dr. Vaidya urged a holistic approach to Just Energy Transition, emphasizing constitutional provisions for alternative energy and the importance of local involvement. Advocating for empowering local governments under central leadership, she stressed the need for sectoral coordination to achieve sustainable development. She concluded by addressing energy inaccessibility issues for vital purposes like irrigation, food storage, and education.

DIBYA ACHARYA

MinErgy Nepal

Dibya Acharya, a senior architect at MinErgy Nepal, simplified the concept of energy transition as saving energy without compromising living standards. Ms. Acharya spoke about the need to adopt low carbon technologies in industries for climate change mitigation, setting targets for induction stoves and fuel efficiency. She underscores Nepal's high energy intensity globally, particularly in households, with limited adoption of low carbon technologies in most industries. Ms. Acharya highlights concerns over fossil fuel management, pointing out the short supply of petrol and diesel, emphasizing the need for coordination between the central and local government to promote energy efficiency.

Audience and Panel Interaction- Key Points

- Simplify challenges in regards to energy transition for better understanding and local-level solutions.
- Pay special attention to tax issues related to electric vehicles.
- Emphasize behavioral, social-cultural aspects, and provide subsidies to targeted groups.
- Prioritize the empowerment of vulnerable and marginalized communities, with a focus on alternative technologies.

Session Summary

- Tailor just energy transition to the specific needs of communities in Nepal. Enhance local capacity in both technology and budget focusing on demand-based energy production systems.
- Promote clean and renewable energy at the community level, upgrading and diversifying electricity capacity and technologies.
- Introduce energy efficiency measures in the 16th periodic plan for energy-efficient homes and buildings, setting specific targets.
- Prioritize fossil fuel subsidies based on actual requirements for efficient resource use.
- Establish fixed tax rates for electrical vehicles over a specified period to provide stability and encourage adoption.
- Encourage behavioral change activities and the adoption of automated technologies to enhance energy efficiency at the community level.



THEMATIC SESSION-IV

Accessing Climate Finance for Resourcing
the Development Plans.

Moderator

SUJEENA SHAKYA

CARE Nepal

Sujeena Shakya, Knowledge Management Specialist at CARE Nepal, moderated the fourth panel discussion, presenting insights into two critical aspects of climate finance: private sector financing and international climate finance, setting the tone for the upcoming discussion.

UGAN MANANDHAR

FCDO, British Embassy

Ugan Manandhar, Climate and Environment Advisor at FCDO, underscored the constrained nature of private sector climate financing, constituting a mere 16%. While delving into the challenges, he emphasized the importance of comprehensive government support for private financing.

He emphasized that endeavors aimed at addressing climate change on a local scale heavily rely on donor funds, with their sustainability often waning when the funding ceases. Hence, it is imperative to harness resources from local levels, especially given the reduced likelihood of securing funds as Nepal transitions from a least developed country to a developing one. Manandhar highlighted challenges in directly funding local governments, citing the absence of provisions for bank account creation. In light of this, he underscored the importance of intermediary agencies like ADB and World Bank. Additionally, he recommended that local governments enhance their accountability to donors, thus facilitating the acquisition of direct funding.

PRABIN MAN SINGH

Prakriti Resources Centre

Prabin Man Singh, the Program Director of PRC, delved into the current challenges of international climate finance in countries like Nepal. Highlighting the allocation of \$46 billion USD for adaptation and \$571 billion USD for mitigation, he underscored the predominant investment in energy and transport sectors in 2019 and 2020, with other areas receiving minimal funding. Singh noted a substantial portion of funds being disbursed through debt-based mechanisms rather than grants, and emphasized the imperceptible disbursement based on gender. Stressing the importance of raising awareness about these issues on various platforms, he proposed solutions including the need for additional funds, a preference for grants over loans, ensuring commitment fulfilment, directing funds to the local level, and promoting inclusive benefits while holding the government accountable for its duties.

Audience and Panel Interaction- Key Points

- Lack of accountability for climate finance at the local level.
- Implementation of progressive taxation for climate action, reducing the reliance on foreign loans.
- In view of the unequal allocation of climate finance between mid-developed countries and least developed countries (LDCs), there is a pressing need to advocate for equal treatment and distribution, particularly addressing the disparities faced by LDCs.
- Assessing the accessibility of climate finance for marginalized communities and devising strategies to facilitate their access.
- Prioritization of grants over other funding mechanisms.
- Advocacy and active expression are essential for achieving climate justice.
- Introducing new investment models.
- Advocating for accounting-based advocacy and increasing absorption capacity.
- Building trust with local governments.

Session Summary

- Prioritize the Green Climate Fund for resource generation in the 16th plan, focusing on enhancing local capacity and directing additional resources for local and provincial growth.
- Address the imbalance in current climate finance allocation between mitigation and adaptation, prioritizing grants over loans, with a focus on improving access for vulnerable communities.
- Ensure climate finance is gender-responsive.
- Improve private sector financing systematically, encompassing local financial management, accounting, auditing systems, and financial modalities.
- Systematically integrate local adaptation plans for continuity, moving beyond mere projection.

CLOSING SESSION

Closing Remarks



DR. PRABHU BUDHATHOKI

Member, National Planning Commission

Dr. Prabhu Budhathoki, Member of the National Planning Commission, acknowledged the complexity of climate change, requiring collective efforts for solutions. He recognized limited global, national, and sub-level initiatives, urging a deeper understanding of the intricacies of climate change problems.

Dr. Budhathoki affirmed that climate change would be mainstreamed in the upcoming plan, acknowledging challenges and opportunities in this integration, particularly in the finance sector. He also stressed the imperative for comprehensive approaches to tackle this critical issue.



MUNA POKHREL

TEWA

Muna Pokhrel from TEWA extended heartfelt gratitude to the esteemed dignitaries and participant representing various organizations expressing optimism that the outcomes related to the climate change agenda would find integration into the 16th periodic plan. She thanked them for contributing to the success of the C&D Dialogue's 5th flagship event despite their demanding schedules. In her concluding remarks, Ms. Pokhrel expressed appreciation for the collective effort and announced that the conference proceedings would be shared with the National Planning Commission.



For more information:

107/22 Aruna Lama Marg, Ganesh Basti,
Narayan Gopal Chowk, Kathmandu, Nepal

Phone: +977-01-4528602

E-mail: info@prc.org.np

Web: www.prc.org.np