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18th July 2011/ United Nations Development Programme/ Highly placed official at Climate Change, Environment & Disaster Management Department

I found the following quote and I would like you to elaborate: "UNDP will strive to enhance the carrying capacity of the environment and natural resource base in line with UNDAF Outcome 2: survival and development rights of vulnerable groups are ensured within an environmentally sustainable framework. UNDP will promote a holistic approach to sustainable environmental governance with a pro-poor focus in Bangladesh". Are you familiar with it?

Yes off course.

I am sorry off course you are.

Actually, the United Nations development assistance framework for next five years, from 2012 to 2016 we have formulated this assistance framework and approved by the government and is developed by all UN agencies together. And this is actually, there are particularly, ehm, environment disaster matter and these kind of change issues, there are 11 un agencies working together so we have formulated our next five year plan, we call it the UNDAF plan and there are 7 pillars in the UNDAF. The number 5 pillar is dedicated for climate change environment and disaster management and (...). So within this framework you have mentioned just one outcome of this pillar 5; there are two outcomes. One is related to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, how the population will be supported. The most vulnerable people will be supported to reduce their risk from the disaster and climate change induced disaster and also this climate change adaptation, this is 1 area. Other area is environmental sustainability and also climate mitigation like renewable energy issues and other environmental government issues. Two outcomes: one better resource management, environment and renewable energy related, another disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Two broad areas, so UNDP act leading this pillar and in this issues and currently UNDP is supporting 15 projects to the government of Bangladesh. So already we have strong base work available to support the job in environment disaster management and climate change adaptation. So we have huge program and also we are looking forward to come up with bigger program in areas of climate change adaptation mitigation, renewable energy, green development as well as disaster risk reduction and disaster management and all these are planned for the next 5 years.

And at whom are these policies targeted? The poor, or the..?

Yes UNDP always works for the poor, the ultimate target people is the poorest of the poor and the most vulnerable. We have in our pillar 5, it is actually, the UN development assistance framework has defined area where all un aid will work. These are the old eh, initially there are 20 districts most vulnerable. But UNDP is going beyond that: 40 most vulnerable districts. UNDAF has identified 20 districts but UNDP is going beyond another total 40 districts. Our target area of risk reduction disaster management particularly, is supporting 2000 unions.

So this is, the target area is 2000 most vulnerable unions. Unions is the lowest part, tier of the administration unit of Bangladesh more than 4000 unions in Bangladesh we target almost half of the unions. This is our target area. But beyond that we have programs on the national level because we

support policy formulation, policy advocacy these are at level changes that we want to bring particularly energy policy, environmental policy, land use policy, coastal management policy, and climate change adaptation policy. We always support the government to make it more sustainable.

I'd like to come back to your government and UNDP relation. But I'll come to that. Ehm well the very obvious question: does your organization deal with climate change refugees? Even if you wouldn't call them?

We don't have actually directly specific to the displacement issues but our program area covers those areas in particular you'll find that UNDP has program on community risk management. We actually have programs in 2000 unions these are covered in the areas where displacement is made. So what UNDP is doing first in those vulnerable areas we do some community risk assessment, we call it CRA. In disaster risk areas we do CRA, community risk assessments, and then we have all these people act come up with their own participatory approach of action plan they prep their own action plan, how to overcome this, how to address disaster issues in these areas. Then we have local Disaster Risk Reduction fund. We support initiated of those plans of those communities, those communities actually include displaced persons also maybe we didn't accommodate them. Clearly you'll find that in cyclone Sidr and cyclone Aila a lot of people were displaced lost their home lost their assets. After Sidr UNDP has build 16000 cyclone resilient homes in those areas where cyclone Sidr displaced I mean.

As replacement for their homes?

They would bring the people back to their home. So this is where we is our areas. Also in our cyclone Aila affected area. Recently in 2007 cyclone Aila also was a devastating you see water actually flooded all the villages and the water was not going back to the sea so people were displaced. So we were actually building three disaster resilient habitats. So this disaster resilient habitat are the pilot for future eh settlement program for the coastal vulnerable (...) how the people can live with these situation. To address this issue. So we are building these villages, disaster resilient habitats because those areas are subject to frequent cyclone and also tidal surge when 5-10 ft seawater comes in. So we are build cluster village the village encircled with embankments eh it is not sea side embankments it is secondary embankments. If the sea side big embankment breaches or broken, in that case, how to save the settlement? So secondary embankments encircled with the forest on the embankment, outside the palm trees for windbreaker and inside the fruit trees and the fish and other livelihood opportunities to be created inside the (..) homes in these cases specific in those areas who are subject tidal surge we have 2 stories homes where the 1st floor is free if water goes under the home. So we are piloting this kind of home so it is owner /community driven homes.

So these communities come to you and these communities risks assessment and will address their needs to you. What are at the time of their displacement their most urgent needs would you say?

When they are displaced the treating of their basic needs. When people displaced, lost their homes, they take shelter on embankments or raise land. They need first the food first, and safe drinking water. There's a crisis of, you know silt water. Cause everywhere saline water. Then they need shelter and also these water sanitation issues. These are the basic needs they need. For the shelter and the water.

And these people are displaced, you call them displaced. Ehm what was I going to ask. These are, you mean people displaced by cyclone Aila and Sidr?

Cyclone Aila and Sidr. And these cyclones are actually very high speed wind as well as the tidal surge this water sea like 10-20 ft high. They just crush the settlements and everything.

You have also I think in the North of people who have become displaced because of drought and river erosion would you count them to be displaced?

Yes off course river erosion is another problem in Bangladesh. Particularly in Jamuna river and (...) all this river have high impact on eroding these banks. Here you'll find 1000 of people displaced due to riverbank erosion. What the UNDP has taken one program, that we are predicting along the river which bank will be broken in eroded within 6 meter within 1 year within 3 years. So we keep signal to the people we hoist flag, red flag those will go immediately in the river, the settlement will vanish, those which will go under in 1 year time, We identify those areas certain technical agencies are given those jobs, trying to find these and alerting the people in the settlement so they move from these places in advance. Otherwise they might face in one night, I mean, devastating situations. Then we are planning to have a safety net program for these people, social, economic safety net program. So we trying to explore the opportunities. How along the riverbank, where we are alerting the people to move from the place, but where will they go? There is no land, there is nothing, they lose everything, their home, their property assets. So we try to mobilize with the government, NGOs together and the civil society and the community together on how to solve those problems. We are doing some research work on this actually. So to develop a framework for safety net riverbank erosion victims and the potential and already displaced. So this is one of the activity, we did one initial research work, and we have the report, and now we want to initiate that with government and the civil society to get into consensus how we can move on these issues. Because there is billions of dollars invested for the riverbank protection at least 1 percent of those resource would allow for the safety net program of the people those who are victim, could save a lot of people's lives and their livelihoods. But there is no such program for the displaced people.

Why not?

Only government give some relief support after disaster. They give a lot of like rice or food or cash for work or food for work but there is not a comprehensive better program because the childrens are not getting education or support, women are not getting their freedom of choice, what to do? They want to live better. This is missing part. They only get food or cash for work.

Why do you think that is. Because, if I understood right, the UNDP only acts upon government request. So does the government not request this kind of assistance?

No. the government never requested for this kind of issues.

Why not you think that is?

Government has their own resources, it doesn't have to request the UNDP. But the government needs some new kind of ideas, new knowledge: how to resolve this problem. There the UNDP is trying to develop some kind of mechanism as we are showing how we can identify the riverbank erosion prediction and then follow up safety net programs to early arrangements of educational

programs for the childrens, vocation training programs for adults who can earn by skill development particular subarea which has market demand. So this kind of things we can introduce in those areas with assistance of NGOs and government safety net resource. Government spend every year huge resources but it is kind of relief work. But we UNDP supporting paradigm shifting from relief to risk reduction issues. So peoples risk how you can reduce? So let it be in advance as well as early preparedness. So that peoples know where to go and what to do in advance. So they need not working for relief. It is distressful and you make people cripple when your offering relief. Let people (...) they also want a job for yourself they have dignity. They want work, they want their childrens to be educated. UNDP is trying to support the people's choice and what they want in participatory approach.

So you said paradigm shift from...?

Paradigm from relief culture to risk reduction culture. This is our main objective. We are supporting with the comprehensive disaster management program, 1 project. You have probably...

So you respond, try to respond to the needs of these people. Ehm So would you say... is that already.. You described some programs before that cover the needs of these people. Your initiating research, but do you think it is... do you think enough is being done? By you or other organizations?

No. It is a huge problem, were just supporting a peanut. Demand of the whole, this is so much, huge problem. Everyday you'll find 1000 of people displaced. The riverbank continuously eroding. UNDP offers grant money, little money, it needs kind of whole national program by government also donors res needs to be also together compiled, I mean, pool resource required to address this issue.

Which donors are you talking about?

All donors who are interested to contribute to this area.

National, international, local..?

Right right, national international. Altogether, It makes attention for looking at displacement issues their development programs for those people. Rather than relief, you should come up either development program. People can stand on their own.

Ehm... the UDP is bound by mandate. Every assistance program has to be conducted according to certain resolutions and UN organs. Do you think you.. Is this mandate restrictive in this area? Does it pose any problems for you to help displaced persons. Or does your developmental approach allow you to help these peoples anyways.

Eh... you know.. ehm..some mandate..each un agencies has its own mandate. As for UNDP is much more, ehm I mean confined their job in governance area, crisis prevention is one area, then environment and sustainable development also one area, poverty is another area. We have 5 areas of focus actually: government, poverty, and crisis prevention, disaster and environment. So these are the areas were we work. But until and unless government requests or government approves, some you cannot move on your own.

So you need the request?

Its mutual understanding. Government should ask at the same time when we do our plan, 5 year plan, UNDAF plan, it needs endorsement of the government. They reflect their own plan. UNDP is much more on the development area, development assistance they provide, but the considering the resources, what we have, it limits our actually the ambition we have to do something for the people, considering the requirements of the resources. But however, the bilateral donors are supporting our programs. So this is how we are moving in a better position with resource mobilization. UN itself has little resources (..) you know but other donors are there and bilateral.

Bilateral you mean, DFID

DFID, EU, The Netherlands. SIDA, Sweden, AUSAID

These donors do agree with your policies?

Yes they are supporting our programs. Otherwise we cannot move with these people oriented programs. Particular the comprehensive disaster management program. It is supported by DFIS, EU, AUSAID, SIDA, ehm NORAD, Norway Government. So there is 6 donors in the programs. So it is particularly, this program is for the most vulnerable people in the most remote areas. So they are benefitted by this program the CDMP. This program is so nicely designed. People decides how they can survive in case of disaster, at the same time the government, local level government institutions are involve in the process. So the plan when they prepare under the supervision of the local disaster management committees, so there is integration with government programs. It is only, the CDMP resource is not enough to support implement all their plans. So local government also contributes the government resources in those plans. So we are trying to integrate. Also the mainstreaming of this risk reduction concept. CDMP has a agreement with 12 development ministries so that development investments are basically disaster proof. So this is how CDMP has 12 ministries (...) to work, and the CDMP is contributing this resource to all these ministries for their development program plans and actions

So ehm so if I understand you, your resources limit the ambitions you are...

Resources constrained ya.

I asked earlier you mandate doesn't restrict you, but eh you said bilateral donor want to give money but there are still restrictions...

Still restrictions are there because these donors have their own priority areas. UNDP actually plans not necessarily always in line with the donors requests. So there is the constraint of course. So in those cases we try to convince the government to come up with their own government resources through changes in their policies and take up in their national plans. So we always work with little resources for policy changes with the government, this is the main task what the UNDP is doing. For example the next 5 year plan, or the perspective plan, or the national climate change action plan, all the plans, is always the UNDP giving technical assistance to support government. So the government can implement their own resources since we have limitations. Sometimes the government ask a lot of request, but we cannot entertain all of these as we don't have that much resources. As for example the Prime Minister's offices, they, and the planning minister, they requested UNDP to support river dressing. I mean it is not our mandate, we cannot do this, it is Netherlands come and there is (...) water board exactly. So we convey the message: we can mobilize, we can contact people

we can do this job, but we are not specialized in this area. We cannot do this. But we can help you find the right people to do this.

Ehm... what if the Government of Bangladesh turns around and says, UNDP yes we understand we have a problem we would like you to help us with environmentally displaced persons. You just said you are restricted by your donors I guess. If this situation would happen, the Government of Bangladesh would come to you, to UNDP and say we have a request to make: we would like you to design a program specifically designed for environmentally displaced persons or climate change refugees. How do you see problems, do you think UNDP would be able to help and if not why not?

In that case the UNDP is quite capable of responding to this request. Because displacement issue is one of our priority areas and it is in our plan also, we want to support this kind of program, so this is where we need more resources but we are exploring how to manage this and because UNDP is an organization who has a lot of partners we have network of civil society organizations, NGOs and governmental organization, UNDP is the only UN agency who has working relations with many many ministries, development sectors, more than 15-16 development ministries we are working with. Almost all the ministries are engaged somehow. We are engaged with the parliamentarians who stand in parliament. We are engaged in training of local government system in the country. We are engaged with work of the environmental mainstreaming. We are engaged in the poverty field. So this is how even has a wide range of opportunities and options to mobilize and come up with the right program and with the technical assistance we can support.

So the capability, but do you also have the eh the do you have the mandate or do you, because again I'm kind of trying to figure out. The UNHCR for example doesn't want to term these people climate change refugees while climate change is obviously happening in Bangladesh so what if the government will ask you we want to program for climate change refugees. You think this would be a problem if you have to justify this towards the UN org you have to answer to? Do you see any problems there?

Here there two ways to explain this situation. There is one, there are UN agencies, like IOM, they also handling displacement issues, UNHCR also has refugee issues. Here the term even the Bangladesh government they doesn't want to use the refugee concept because it has some legal context refugees are someone who are pushed out of other countries because of war. But here the natural cause of inside the here, this natural cause, they are trying that this country is not responsible for global warming. But somehow the global warming or the climate change the frequency and the intensity of these cyclones has increased, peoples coping mechanisms fails, that's why people are affected, there losing their lands, their losing, they are displaced and migrate to the cities. So this is the sixth pillar actually. In that case eh the mandate issue if comes, IOM takes care of the refugees they are building camps they give shelter. The UNHCR can also come up with their own considering there displaced people there in terms of bases they don't have homes. So in UN system there are cluster concept, such as the disaster management. Each UN agency has some mandate in the cluster concept actually as for example the World Food Program, they are taking care of nutrition and logistic issues, and UNICEF water sanity and children education issue, IFO on agricultural also. UNDP takes care off early recovery. IF something damaged: how to bring better back. Back to home. Again with their lost things could be revived with the livelihood opportunity agriculture systems again revived. So from the very beginning we start from the emergency to early recovery response. In the

early recovery actually we are UNDP are focusing more on the livelihood issue and also same time we take care of comprehensive development issues of displaced people. So this is where the UNDP has a bigger mandate, cross cutting issues to take care. So this is where it provides us with the opportunity to handle the displacement issues. Since we have the mandate of early recovery. So since the early recovery concept actually, if you cannot bring back in the old place, you should think of new solution for these people to be settled. Government issues, livelihood issues, there are shelter issues, together, they are not piecemeal, that is the thing. In that way the UNDP has the comparative advantage for contributing to this displacement which is to be addressed.

Because you have development approach and livelihood approach. Would you say because of this development approach and I think you also have human rights based approach. Do you think terming your program development and human rights issues gives you some space to maneuver for this topic, for environmentally displaced people for environmental

Yes. UNDP always work for the right based approach. Development issues we take care, we follow the rights based approach. It's the people's right actually, they have to have their own basic rights for foods, shelter, education, and health all these are basic things. But this rights based approach. When someone lost everything, being citizen of this country, the citizen charter is there, to address the remands. So UNDP actually through the governance programs, they work for ensuring the rights of the people what should be there people citizens rights to live better life with dignity. So how you can ensure this. So this is where the UN and other agencies what can we do that UNDP has through their governance programs can advocate this.

So then you kind of come back to the Government of Bangladesh.

We also have access to justice program. UNDP supporting the access to justice. That is here also the case for justice, those people who have lost nearly everything, displaced people have their own demand as a citizen of their country.

So we come back to the Government again the government should want this assistance. Earlier, you said, and I would like to get into that a little bit more, the government doesn't ask you for this kind of assistance, then you referred to education of children and vocational training of adults. Do you think people have the means at their disposal to make their needs known to the government or to you or..

It's actually there is a lot of research work there about these people. It comes in the newspaper we always have some scanning of information before a project. We consult the people, we go to the field, we have a link with the researchers who do the particular subject matter we study. There are some organizations who conduct survey on those peoples life and their livelihoods. You contact those people when we develop a program. So this is nothing hidden, it is open that is not where it is lacking. The question now is to the focus and to address the issues. We are looking at the problem but we are not responding to the situation. That is the unfortunate part. In that case as an UN agency we cannot sit, if government sits silently, we are trying to alert the government. This is one area of the job and the responsibility. We release these issues to the government, we look at those development issues, there are better solutions. Since it is politically also it is eh kind of acceptable issues. If you give proper solution then government will accept this. But clearly in the riverbank erosion victim areas, we have identified, there are existing 7 ministers who (come) from those areas, the riverbank erosion is happening. Including the planning minister, the agricultural minister, land

minister, all this even the home minister, they (come) from the riverbank erosion victim area. They are coming from the villages. They are native, with the vote from the who lives in the riverbank erosion areas. So the displaced people vote for this people, to become minister. The most powerful place they ever occupied. So they don't have the technical idea for the solution of this problem. They are thinking only in terms of riverbank embankment and the protection. They don't think of the peoples other way of solution. That's the thing.

Why not?

Because the existing programs what they have, the relief concept. They are not thinking of the risk reduction concept. We are trying to sensitize these people. This is our job now, UNDP, to sensitize this people, the ministers, the MPs, the parliament, so that they come up with policy to support these people in a different way. Business as usual does not work in this country. So since the erosion is much more prominent now, it is increasing more people are displacing. So that's why government should be changing its program, it should be aligned with the need responsive. It is there that UNDP is actually trying to sensitize these people, (..), the politicians, the MPs, you see this problem it will go for a different way to solve these issues.

We need, were trying to bring to that to ensure the government as well as to the donor community, that we need actually better settlement planning in the coastal areas. Because you know of the sea level rise, future cyclones, the current dispersed settlement should not be allowed. There should be land (...) ok this is the danger area nobody should build any home there. It should be restricted and there should be settlement planning with safer broad center areas in the coastal area where it is a better place. There should be some kind of settlement planning, make the people come together, living in a better place with the high rise area and the strong home. So this is one area, another area we are thinking is risk reduction approach would be by preparedness. More investment should go into risk reduction, government should shift their relief money to the preparedness or risk reduction investment. Building more disaster resilient habitats so more climate resilient programs. So this kind of things and let the problem I mean the salinity intrusion in the coastal site, let it be taken as an opportunity for creating more resources, because saline based resources would be the best option now. Since the nature is changing there are also opportunities there. But you have to take the technology to the people. How to adapt to saline based economy. Let there be more tidal wave based economic activities. Agricultural activity should be changed to fit the current situation to address in the face of climate change. Also in the area of riverbank erosion we know that those areas will go so let the alternative solution be there for the childrens education. And school building should also be build in such a design that it can shift. Now the concrete buildings are build on the riverbank and it goes as it cannot move, it's a waste of resources. Also people should build in such homes, which are make-shift. And also we are advocating for creating access to the natural resources to poor people who are displaced and poor asset less people and how you can create this. This is where we are trying to advocate common property resource development. Creating more space for CPR and common food resources. Common Poor Resources. It is called CPR. So it is kind of you create some kind of grazing land, anybody can put their cow, or common forest, or common garden, or common fisheries, or wetland, let the poor people organized, and have managed and share equally and share the risk. Because the competition for scarce resource, the highest population density in this country. So you don't have enough resources. So how to manage this resources. That the common resources

would allow the people to share. Otherwise the individual property if you give everybody equal share everybody will become poor.

Everyone has an equal share of poorness.

That is why we are advocating for common property resources.

UNDP get funds for donors and you want to make this risk reduction program also...

Yes we have this program and we get support from the donors. Yes. So we need bigger program, more resources.

Do you think you can sell it to the donors?

Yes I think the donors will be attracted to this. And we are just piloting this.

Up to now this risk reduction

Donors like risk reduction, they put their resources in. Our CDMP is a 70 million dollar program. The first phase it was 25 million dollar program. Its completed now 2nd phase of the CDMP for the next five years with 70 million because of the success with achieved in the first phase. With the community, how they saved their lives, how the death threat decreased in the disaster. So this is the result of risk reduction initiatives. That's right.

I was wondering some technical things about the UNDP and being connected to the people. How does it work? How does the chain look like, from people who are in need, to, to say their needs, to UNDP. How many people are between them and before they can reach help.

It's kind of a two way communication. UNDP actually learns from the field we have pilot project in the most vulnerable areas, we do research in piloting of all those lessons learned when we design a project document based on a country context, we bring (mission) the UNDP regional knowledge base advisory officer there. So we bring reliable experts from the regional offices. They help us to give more ideas more international experiences. How other countries are solving these kind of problems because UNDP has a network of knowledge network, by each thematic area in 160 countries. So like (...) disaster environmental issues, there are in 160 countries are people sitting so our network on environment, network on disaster, network on poverty. So anything we develop that this is my concept were trying to develop a program here in Bangladesh, everybody can contribute here if they have any new ideas. So from headquarters to other (vision) you'll find communications. This is how we work. Sometimes when the program is really interesting then my country director they initiate dialogue with the donors to create the support of this program. From the regional adviser and the expert together with the government and the consultation process you develop, field level, a logical framework, analysis, stakeholder analysis. For every project document we develop it is always to be executed by the government agencies and there are some partners NGOs as (...) it depends on the project, they'll go for the field level implementation. Local government institutions are also engaged, the NGO partners are engaged and altogether we probably UNDP just assurance when the approach is signed, and the implementation arrangement where there is specifically mentioned who will do what and how the resources will flow.

So do you know people or organizations I should talk to?

- Bangladesh Environment Lawyers Association (displacement). I can give you his email address

UNDP meeting? Seminar? Conference?

- Film will be shown , prepared for discovery channel.

Is it okay if I call for some check up questions?

Sure.

18 July 2011/ International Organization for Migration/ Ms. Anita Wadud/ Project development and program coordinator

IOM is head of the camp management cluster, what people is these programs targeted at mostly in Bangladesh?

Eh I mean, the camp management cluster is, we do emergency relief work, all the agencies are heads of different clusters so UNHCR is the head cluster for the protection, sanitation, water, things like that, so we all have different clusters that were heads of. So in cases of emergencies and because it is always so chaotic and hectic ehm each agency knows exactly what their roles are and so they automatically go into that. Which makes things easier because it is very hard to coordinate between agencies given kind of the headquarter involvement, field involvement, so we all kind of go into our different areas of involvement. And IOM is the camp cluster management head and what falls under ehm is kind of (...) we look at shelter, ehm so kind of setting up physical camps ehm and UNHCR usually does it with them together providing support for that. But children is also a big thing for us. Eh UNHCR camp does a little bit more on the protection side and in terms of camp management we do through provisions of non food items (NFI's) so during the Aila cyclone IOM provided NFI's to the displaced people so through that plastic sheeting or temporary shelter or homes ehm with water purification tablets, blankets, ehm mosquito nets anything, *[first needs]* first needs kind of thing yeah. And what also falls under the camp management thing is kind of the registration of the displaced people. So during the Aila we had something called the DTM, the displaced tracking matrix, so we, what we do is we register people, I mean as many as we can, ehm we register them, we try and take as much information as possible which includes things like, I mean, like member of family members, where you used to live, can they go back, what their situation is at the moment, what their needs are, or what they feel that their need are. Ehm occupation, whether their livelihood was destroyed, ehm, things like that. For us, for this mission in particular, for the Bangladesh mission, the emergency response to Aila was one of the first, for into this field. IOM globally has vary extensive programs for emergency relief as well as environment degradation, and climate change but for us that kind of was the first major program that was done. Off course it was an emergency but it wasn't a declared an emergency which made things difficult and you don't really go into the cluster system and UN agencies can't do that. Ehm So it was a bit hectic but we kind of did that and we developed the displacement tracking matrix which ehm, the numbers are a bit hazy, I can't remember exactly how many families we have registered with us, but I think you can find the information on the website somewhere. Ehm so things like that and ehm usually it is for us to track the progress during the emergency relief, and what is going on, ehm if we see that ok so many families have been (unable) to turn back, that is also important for us to know. Ehm and also, I mean what that helps is that in the future if we have programs with other agencies, or programs, we kind of have that information, yes. What kind of skills they have, what livelihoods they had before, if they are able to go back, if they're not, those are the things we are looking for. Off course for us the major focus is the displaced families, the displaced people, ehm and what kind of movement they undertake so I mean

Caus I read something on the monitor, which said: [DTM is generally conducted just after the disaster and represents a reliable and first hand set of information about IDPs populations, location, size and

settlement. In the first DTM it was revealed that 54% of the total population of both upazilas are at the IDPs settlements but in this DTM the number has reduced by half, about 50% people of the total IDPs left the settlements]. So I was wondering, you only monitor the people within these settlements, which are grouped?

Yes, I mean so, what happens is that usually, because, we can't actually, I mean it's very difficult to kind of monitor everyone who has left so what obviously (happens that kind) of settlements or camps or whatever. And we kind of monitor the people we are giving the aid to like the NFI's or whatever, we off course we register them and that's why we give it to them and that's how kind of the measurements are done, so this is your family fortune so this is how many water purification tablets you get, things like that. So its done through that and then kind of just the settlements because I mean for us we don't really I mean otherwise it kind of gets difficult and hazy to see ok who is displaced for what reason, (...) not all cases are also accessible then. So ehm we do monitor the settlements sand then what happens is then if 50% of the population has left, I mean sometimes what weve had have is people, people go out to see if people have actually returned to their original homes. And so people who leave early are usually the ones who are returning to their homes. Ehm others who are unable to return actually stay at the settlements for quite a while. Ehm and.

Do you think that, you provide, you have provided, a lot of help, early recovery after Aila, and one of the conclusions I think of the policy report was that further fiancial commitment are required. So do you think there is need for long term support for these people. And is the IOM in any way able and capable to do that.

Ehm a couple of problems, specifically with the Aila as it was not declared an emergency by the government, ehm so that put severe constraints in terms of funds. For agencies like IOM, all UN agencies in general, the funds are off course a big constraint. The IOM for example is a completely project based organization so ehm with agencies, like non specialized agencies like UNDP, they have a lot of core funding, that they can kind of use in kind of an ad-hoc manner. Specialized agencies like IOM, UNICEF, things like, they are more or less, very projectized and other UN agencies have a bit of core funding, IOM doesn't really. So in term of that, even after the Aila we immediately have to get involved with the donors. Eh it was DFID who decided to fund it and then that is what happened. But the thing is, if lets say, (that) scenario if we were unable to get a donor, I mean our hand are tied, because it is a projectized organization. Sometimes what we can do is like we within projects we try to work things in, but when its such a large scale disaster and you need such a large scale involvement to bring staff and all these materials, that kind of is not possible without the donor response, and donors are also not always able to respond unless the government makes an appeal as an emergency situation so that is a problem. That being said IOM does, and all the specialized agencies UNICEF, UNHCR, etcetera...

So, sorry, the IOM is a specialized agency of the UN?

We kind of we don't we part of the UN country team in almost all of the countries where there is a UN presence. And we do kind of, we get all the same facilities, all the same kind of security, the (...) plan. It's not a member of the UN formally so, not yet. And that is kind of, that is up to the member governments and the Council. But the thing is we enjoy all the privileges, the same as the UN and we also part of all the joint funding programs. So a lot of the UN joint programs, like currently we have one on violence against women: that is a joint fund. And then the other kind of the disaster fund and

things like that we are part of that. So I mean, we kind of say that we are under the bigger UN umbrella, we do function like here even we are part of the UN Country team and the UNDAF, like the development framework.

But you do not have the official status.

No.

OK, so I'm sorry, so the IOM is a projectized organization...

Yes, so completely kind of this is (...) part of the money is for the UN, it is very specific. So off course different donors have different levels of specificity ehm they do a lot of (...) but in most cases with completely different projects, and emergency projects are very specific. I mean if you have let's say funding for cyclone Aila and an earthquake happens you can't really channel the same money unless you come to some sort of an agreement. So our hands are tied there but all the, most, all of the UN organizations and the IOM, those who are heads of clusters, that is all for emergency relief and what we do is we do emergency relief and once emergency relief is over, our regular development programs kick in. So same with UNICEF, same with UN, the moment emergency relief finishes we transit into our regular development programs. So be it, if it's kind of education for UNICEF or women, whatever empowerment for UNIFEM or counter trafficking we slip into that. For us there is really not kind early recovery ehm that is a relatively new concept also and UNDP kind of does that, they see there is a need between kind of forced emergency relief and before other kinds of things kick in, ehm I think most specialized UN agencies feel like, their, I mean, that early recovery doesn't need to be a separate thing, that the emergency relief [*It's more of a process*] Yeah. But I mean UNDP does that these days, I mean even in Haiti they go in and they do the early recovery. Ehm I mean from an IOM point of view we feel like in cases of emergencies like natural disasters we feel that early recovery would be for us, if we were to call it early recovery, would be livelihood. Doing something in livelihood because following natural disasters that is the main kind of concern after you've kind of dealt with the more immediate kind of health, shelter and water issues, that is the big concern that they are able to kind of carry on with their livelihoods. So but that being said again I mean a lot of agencies do kind of, it seems, (...) emergency relief, and sometimes emergency relief is not able to go on as long as it should because of fund constraints, which is what we kind of had for Aila, when funds were very limited to begin with and then they kind of petered out.

So where do you seek for funds, which funds. I mean it is the member states right who need to fund you?

Ehm no, sometimes member states can fund but what we do is kind of we have to name a few big donors, here, would be, DFID, ehm USAID, the Norwegians, the eh I think, the Australians, so there is also kind of, EC things like that. And then there are also a lot of the joint UN funds also, that are kind of set aside for these kind of programs and all the UN agencies they apply for the fund (...) and that fund is kind of channeled between the whatever five, ten agencies

So the UN went from emergency relief to development programs

Yeah. So I mean what we did was, because once our emergency relief work kind of finished we did at lasted quite a while for us, we did a lot of follow up, kind of to update our DTM as well, to see what is going on, to get a picture of the movement of the population after ehm, and to go back to do

assessments, and do assessments as a whole with the other organizations who were involved. Eh, so we did that and then following that, because here in Bangladesh we don't really have any kind of livelihood programs as of yet, not post emergency, what we did our counter-trafficking program kicked in a little. So we went into these areas to do kind of awareness raising on counter-trafficking, because when you have such vulnerable populations and children traveling longer distances to go to school and people so kind of starved for cash, for food, for resources that they kind of, if someone offers them some kind of solution they take it. So ehm trafficking, we found that kind of rates of missing children or people, just leaving (...) so our trafficking program kicked in. So we did it through, we had these partner NGOs, (UBANTOR) and, kind remember the other ones, but local NGOs who do kind of awareness raising through various kind of cultural shows, so we did that. We also do a bit of awareness raising on disaster preparedness, and kind of

So would you say these programs are targeted at people who are displaced due to climate change or..?

Ehm this was more of a disaster preparedness, like you know, through song, or whatever, you should always prepare, you should kind of keep your ears open for the warnings that come in, the early warning system, raise the height of your house or whatever it is, protect ehm your lifestyle livelihood, you know you should always take those measures if there are warnings to come and eh also the aspect that women and children are usually more vulnerable to be victims of such natural disasters so kind of awareness raising on that, that in terms of natural disasters, do make sure that the women are kind of looking after the children and the elderly and trying to salvage whatever is left in their home. So kind of make sure that they also get the news because what happens is that if there is some sort of a warning, maybe the men who are working in the village center or the city center they get to hear the news, but the women who are kind of at home or further away they don't know. So to make sure that they spread the news. Just a bit more general awareness raising on general natural disaster preparedness.

Not specifically for the displaced.

No.

Do you think there should be? That IOM should...

Ehm, In terms of awareness raising to the displaced population, we do...

Not just awareness but programs specifically designed for displaced persons.

Ehm yeah. So globally we have a lot of programs designed for displaced people ehm, and they can, ehm I mean they start with NFI's or whatever, then they go into livelihood eh opportunities. So they are done through grants, ehm training, job placements...

OK, so that's more general programs covering this area but not programs specifically targeted at environmentally migrants?

Well they are targeted at environmental migrants. We don't have any in Bangladesh at the moment, we do like in Colombia we have a circular migration program, and that's kind of targeted at environmentally vulnerable areas.

But why not in Bangladesh?

Ehm Bangladesh I mean its kind of fairly, recent, recently people have started to recognize that environmentally or climate induced displacement is a problem. Before even for us when we kind of started looking into it, and when we discussing it with our partners and the government and our partners elsewhere it was a fairly new concept and no one was really willing, or no one was really sure if it was actually necessary. Slowly now, as we go on, there is more and more proof, there is more and more evidence, that it is off course necessary. A lot of people do lose their livelihoods and the displaced people who are unable to return to their homes for months or years, a lot of the Aila people are still living on the embankments, they do need a livelihood kind of opportunity. The reality is at the moment that there is very little kind of, the donor strategy or the donor priorities don't really align with some of these needs.

Why do you think that is?

I mean they do, lets the Norwegians, the Dutch, they do kind of have their own focus on climate change or environmental areas. Let's say, the Norwegians for example are more geared towards the technical kind of green energy, green development, kind of that area. So they don't really go into the kind human dimension of that. And that is, I think, it will change, and it is slowly changing. There are more and more programs kind of opening up. But I think even with the donors it has been kind of a slow response, in terms of reprioritizing themselves that needs to be done.

So does the IOM respond to the priorities of donors or does it formulate their own priorities?

So IOM has its own kind of strategy, and what happens is because there is a very, pretty big, diverse donor network, ehm what happens is our strategies kind of in areas where they overlap with the donors' that's where the donors fund. So for example counter trafficking programs are primarily funded by the Norwegians and the Dutch. So they kind of have a huge focus on counter trafficking and we have a huge 3-4 year program which was, we kind of prevention and protection of human trafficking victims in Bangladesh. That was a huge program. Then there is the Australians, they kind of have their focus in Bangladesh on immigration and border control so all our programs in those areas are funded, well not all, but...

So whatever matches?

Yes whatever matches kind of. Donors do step out of their priorities every now and then if they have spare funds or whatever they want to use, they do do that. Ehm, but in terms of climate change in Bangladesh I think globally the, one of the main challenges is that the evidence or the research, there is not enough of it. So when you go to a donor and you say: the displaced populations need this and this and this but there's very few assessments or research done to say: ok this is actually the case. You can (...) generalize from other experience or other countries, or you assume that this is actually how it would work but you actually need the research, the evidence to back it up, which is one of the problems. So I mean, but I think, it is slowly, I mean the government is slowly accepting that it is a problem and also it has to come from the government.

What is the role of the government towards IOM?

We have a very good relation with the government. We work primarily with the ministry of Expatriates, Welfare and overseas employment, they are the ones who, first of all, all our labor migration programs are with them because they always see labor, all the manpower export. Then for counter trafficking we work very closely with the Women and Children ministry and ministry of Home affairs, and for border management

So you work together...

We work together, so for the most part, because we are an intergovernmental organization, so most of our activities are to supplement or complement government activities. So be it capacity building of government officials, or to supplement their programs. Or if they come to us and say: we feel that there is a need to do this, then we say ok yes that also goes with our strategies and we get the funds and we do that.

Did the government ever come to you and say we need a program on environmentally displaced persons?

Not yet. It is, I mean within the government, even if they are starting to say that they recognize it, and the PM at the UN general council, general assembly, she says displacement is a problem, the government has two papers, the NAPA and the BSCC 2009, the thing is neither of them mentioned displacement or I think, in the strategy paper there is like one mention on it. So I mean the thing is, and a lot of the programs, the funding (...) to implement these programs, and they do have the livelihood programs and the kind of alternative livelihood so that you don't deteriorate the environment, things like that. But displacement does not really factor into those documents. And, even from the perspective of the donor I would think it would have to be a strategy or a government priority as well for them to fund it. Donors work on their own agenda but I mean they want to feed into the government's agenda ultimately.

So why do you think it is not an issue for the government or not an priority?

I think it is a priority but these documents have been published in, I think the NAPA is 2005, the Strategy in 2009, so the strategy is more recent, it actually even mentioned displacement while the NAPA doesn't at all, that kind of shows you that even within those 4 years, they have kind of incorporated at least that little bit. And now its more and more of an issue and even the environment minister, the foreign minister, the PM, all of them have brought it up at international level that displacement in South Asia and in Bangladesh specifically is a big issue, specially for the coastal regions. So I think it is coming up, at that level, at the higher level. I think it has to trickle down to come to the policy level, the working level which hasn't yet. I mean that would kind of mean revising the NAPA, or amending, having some sort of addendum build into it, and the same goes for the strategy. I think for that, what would be necessary, for both the documents, a lot of research and evidence gathering has gone into it, so there also needs to be evidence to back this up, there needs to be extensive research to say: yes every year X number of people are displaced due to, lets say, riverbank erosion, cyclone, salinity intrusion. Whatever it is we know these things are happening, we know that people are being displaced, but the thing is there's no numbers, it could be 10 it could be 10.000, we don't know. NGOs do a lot of work. They go in, they have a little program, they will help about 50 families, find some other sort of livelihood (and then they come back to where they were displaced). So in terms of numbers or trends, nobody really knows and I think that's important first

step to any coherent policy. So I think that's really lacking. So the first step would be exhaustive research. Even if it is concentrated on one area or one type of kind of event, could be a natural disaster, could be a kind of slow onset like riverbank erosion, or salinity intrusion. There needs to be research to that effect. This is what happens, this is the trend and this is how these peoples are moving away, moving into the cities.

But you do believe that something more should be done?

Yes definitely.

By whom? The government or...

Ehm, the research, it could be done by anyone. We have done, our first research was, we did this, immediately after cyclone Aila, we still had a presence in Khulna, still had an office there, working. And, what we realized was, that we had also wanted to do programs in that area and kind of continue our presence and then we realize that we had no evidence to back it up. I mean we did have our little DTM off 10.000 families or 10.000 people or whatever it is, but ehm, even then, that's only a years work of data which was following a very specific event, one cyclone, so we felt that wasn't enough so then we got, through the same project actually, through the DFID, we talked to them and said: what do you think of working this into this project, and they said: that's a good idea, and so we ended up doing the study which was in essence collecting all the evidence out there. And I'm sure, you've seen that we collect the evidence and then there was a little bit of an analysis section ehm to say what can be done. The thing is the existing evidence, a lot of it is very old. One 1997, 2003, 1999, 1990. I mean a lot of the research is quite old. So in the terms of the population has increased, the trends have changed, even for us the next big step is to trying to some sort of a research but I think in terms of all, the scale of the research would have to be quite big, There would have to be a huge survey where, actually we've been talking about it for a while, we've done household survey on labor migration and remittances where we interviewed 10.000 households and that was kind of one of our biggest surveys and research works. And even for IOM and other agencies to have such a comprehensive picture. Having done that, we realized that even with 10.000 households in migrant prone areas, that has given us a very, a pretty detailed picture of what happens of how remittances are generated and things like that. I mean, for climate change or environmental degradational movement due to these reasons I think a similar, a very similar survey would have to be carried out. Even if its 10.000 or even if it starts with a smaller number of people or more.

So you say that research can be done by any kind of actor. Do you think that the IOM would be capable to act upon it? Because as you said it is a projectized organization, it is very dependent on donors. As you probably know there is often, and I am going to generalize now a little bit, a divide between developed and developing countries, with developed countries not very willing to commit to any kind of obligation in that area. So you being dependent on funding, do you see any difficulties for the IOM...

I mean no, we are used to function like this and we always do manage to kind of we, the office goes on with the same capacity. We get projects closed, new projects come in and this kind of goes on consequently. And not just IOM, with the other UN organizations while we do have a little bit of core funding, most of the programs are always kind of projectized. So all the big projects are always

funded by one donor or a few donors putting their funds into it. So I mean I don't think that's ever an issue, I mean you do have the little hick-ups off the donor strategies that don't match. I think, as displacement becomes a more widely accepted and a more researched area the donor strategies are also changing (to fund that).

We're talking about climate change and how developed countries have a historical burden. They seem very reluctant to go into an area linked with responsibility.

Exactly. So that's always the case at all the international conferences you see, at COP 15, COP 16, everybody is always saying they should take responsibility for what is being done, and kind of for burden sharing, but eh, I mean we kind of. Our status at these meetings is that we, our priority is the displaced populations, our priority is forced migration, and also sensitize the governments that migration is not necessarily a bad thing, that migration has been one of the oldest coping strategies for people for centuries, that should be also an option for people. If their house is under water, they should have the ability and the opportunity to move somewhere else and to kind of facilitate that institutions where that person, or that family, or that household, is completely unable to undertake the moves themselves. So we, right now, we at IOM Bangladesh, we continue to, a lot of our work is with the government of Bangladesh and kind of policy advocacy so we try and...one of our main goals is to mainstream displacement and migration into all climate change policies.

You have a very positive towards displacement, its not a failure of adaptation it should be a proactive policy to maximize the benefits of migration. How do you see that? Because in my view, I see people very much in want of a house but you see a different picture.

In terms of positive we mean that, there was a program I think that IOM or some other agency had in Cote d'Ivoire where they had a (...) environmentally vulnerable region and there was kind of movement towards the city centers to support themselves because there was environmental degradation and loss of livelihoods, the program was that these people from the vulnerable environmental areas and the households they were allowed, they were facilitated to migrate: from Burkina Faso they went to Cote d'Ivoire to work on the cotton plantations I believe. So it was a very environmentally vulnerable region and they facilitated the migration to Cote d'Ivoire to work on the cotton plantation on a temporary or cyclical basis, then the remittances were sent back to kind of reverse, to tackle the effects of environmental degradation: they set up a sewage management plant, they set up a hospital, a shelter, I think, some sort of shelter, a school, some things like that. So that was, instead of kind of taking the displacement, it was facilitating the migration, it was facilitating the movement not only for their own livelihoods, but also kind of ensure for the area: the degradation was reduced, kind of tackled and things like that. We do promoting of sustainable livelihoods hm and what happens with kind of seasonal migration is that is also eases pressure on the environmentally vulnerable areas. Areas that are overpopulated, that are (overworked), if there is a little bit of movement of people, it eases the pressure a bit it allows it to recover slowly. And then the remittances are used as a community or 5 households and then those people (...). In Bangladesh the government had a similar kind of program, I'm not sure if it actually ever took off, it was from the Northern regions of the North, where pksf, the government microcredit agency, what they were going to do, they would finance people to go to work: labor migration. So the (...) reasons are highly susceptible and there are a lot very poor and vulnerable people living in those areas. So the idea was that they would facilitate circular migration from those areas not only to help remittances build up

areas and build up their capacities to kind of face the challenges, the environmental challenges, but also kind of to ease the pressure a bit. So that's how we see in terms of the positive aspects of migration.

Do you think it is possible in Bangladesh to have these. Because I think, off course there is a lack of evidence, but I think there is going to be a large amount of people going to be displaced so do you, does the IOM have any ideas on that?

We do mean in our, we are trying to see if we can somehow can do circular migration what we are doing in Colombia already, to replicate something here. We are also very interested into kind of trying to see what alternative livelihoods could be, not only for those displaced populations but also for the people of vulnerable areas, the environment vulnerable areas, who would be vulnerable to forced displacement or migration and to kind of see that to not have that kind of displacement to begin with. Preventative measures: if their livelihoods are sustainable and viable and they can withstand the disasters the degradation, then they also won't move. Because people don't want to move most of the time, they are very reluctant to move, so kind of to stop that. And these are all kinds of different programs that the IOM offices are implementing, vulnerable (arts) skills, in other parts of the world. Bangladesh is very unique in kind of geographical and environmental conditions which make also things a bit difficult to begin with and a bit different but, also I think because we work so closely with the government. All our projects are as I said kind of supplementing and complementing government programs, and strategies or action plans so for now, our work is very much focused on trying to mainstream migration and displacement to all kind of policies. We don't think it should be a completely separate thing that deals only with migration or environmental migration or environmental migrants. We believe that all climate change adaptation policies need to have this worked in because, for us its such an integrated part in any kind of climate change policy, be it livelihood or green energy or environmental sustainability, for us it is important that the migration or the displacement is kind of factored into it and that is more mainstreamed.

So not as a separate group of people.

No.

Meeting?

No.

Other people?

- ActionAid
- BCAS (Rahman)
- EACH-FOR
- UK department for science (cc displacement)

Follow-up questions?

Off course. Could you please check with us at the end or something? If you have any questions over email or if you want to come by that's ok.

19th July 2011/ Practical Action/ Mr. Haseeb Irfanullah/ Teamleader Reducing Vulnerability and Natural Resource Management

Well I will just jump right at it, do you think that at this moment in time in Bangladesh there is policy made by your organization or others which directly or indirectly targeted at people displaced due to climate change?

Displaced?

Yes.

Reading your email I was kind of wondering how do you define displacement, because that's kind of controversy about it?

Yes well that's actually what I wanted to ask you, what your point of view is about it?

Have you been to yesterday's program at the BRAC Centre? On climate change? One of the issues was displacement. Have you met Dr. Ainun Nishad yet? Or Dr. Saleem Huq? These two are the key people who can help you, give you some... Interestingly when I was watching television yesterday, Ainun Nishad who is the vice president of BRAC university, one of the leading private universities of Bangladesh, he wanted to talk about displacement. I don't know if it has appeared in any newspaper. I can check for you. He said, that over the next 50 years, I can't remember the figure, he gave a figure, that many people will be displaced because of climate change. I mean not only climate change but the natural hazards the natural disasters that cause the displacement. I'm not sure if everybody agrees on this particular statement.

Why not?

Because how to define displacement and how to correlate it with climate change as we understand it? Because national climate change in Bangladesh is happening for thousands of years. Yes the intensity might increase, but I'm not sure if it has increased or not. For the last three years we did have significant flood. We experience it frequently, the last big one we experienced in 2007. (...) So the intensity and frequency supposed to increase. So what is going on? We are expecting quite a big flood this year around. If it doesn't, so it's kind of a prediction. So it will be actually, kind of a debate going on about that, whether displacement is due to climate change or natural calamities, whether they are natural or man-made, these kind of things. So, I would differ. Because the salinity intrusion in the Southern area, not necessarily only because of natural calamities. There are certain structures/ infrastructures that actually aggravated the whole problem. So it is very difficult to separate the natural one and man-made one. So this is quite a complex situation, definitely because of the people will migrate, but I would be cautious using the word climate change is displacing people. You know what I mean? The whole situation is displacing people, I can't give one reason only on climate change.

So how would you, because you have a lot of programs for...

Yes we working there (...) I mentioned (Shyamnagar)? (Shyamnagar) is an upizilla, a coastal upizilla, in Khulna. Down South of the district called Sathkhira. And there is a upizilla, you know about the Bangladeshi structure? There is an upizilla called (Shyamnagar), and we are working in (Shyamnagar). After listening to the television yesterday I am very much interested to ask my colleagues who are there, and to find out how many people exactly are migrating due to climate change. Just to have some evidence. So that's my main point: whether we can pin-point climate change to people migrating. Because people, you know, are migrating for a very long time. And rural, urban migration dynamics in Bangladesh is ehm very complex. It's very complex. For example how long are you staying in Dacca? If you will start counting the number of Rickshaw pullers, their number will definitely increase significantly in the next three weeks, because of Eid, our biggest Muslim festival, which will be taking place at the end of next month. So many people from different districts will come to Dacca, they will pull Rickshaw, and will earn a substantial amount of money. So, they are migrating maybe there for (...) A Bangladeshi man might have a house near the river, but he is migrating just to earn more money, not because the river has eroded his land. They are temporary migrants.

So there are more reasons for people to migrate? So the people you work with, would you say they endure problems because of climate change, environmental hazards, man-made hazards, what would you say?

It is debatably, there are so many things going on. I think you know we experienced two big cyclones in the last 4 years, the first one in 2007 and the other one in mid-2009. And (Shyamnagar) where we are working, we started two projects very recently, those areas are Aila affected, that was the 2nd Aila. And the water that entered didn't go out, that was the reason. You know the infrastructure? So when the water entered due to natural disaster, the water didn't go out, the natural disaster wasn't the main reason, it was because of the man-made structures. Because we destroyed the forest; the Sundarbans in the South of Bangladesh used to be very thick up to 100 years ago. But it has been reduced significantly in the past 30 years. In the 80s men has started shrimp cultivation. They intentionally, deliberately entered saline water to cultivate shrimp. So the salinity intrusion over the last two decades, either man-made or human (...) people's attention to enter saline water leads to a mix-up at the moment, how can you separate? Definitely men made interventions are aggravating the whole situation, no doubt. But if you ask the Water Development Board, how many centimeters or millimeters has decreased the sea-level over the last 30 years, you should ask this question, they can give you a specific height, they are getting all the models they use, is developed by the Western countries, they try to integrate them in the Bangladeshi context. But in Bangladesh the situation is a bit different because of the deltaic topography and geographical structure.

So would you say, the Stern report or the IPCC evaluation, they are all written by Westerners right?

Yes they are, aren't they? For example, in this book, [the BCCSAP] this has to have international (...), vulnerability to natural hazards. It is developed by CEGIS, which is kind of a, not government institution, but a research body. (...) Centre for Environment and Geographical Information Sciences. I want to talk about this one [showing some pages in BCCSAP]: obviously the data, the salinity data, is kind of a model that we just have superimposed on the data. So obviously, if sea level rises, rises by one meter, nothing is going to happen in Sathkira what we don't already know. It's already so shallow, so low. But the main point is (...) it will definitely will be inundated, quite severe. It's the

salinity one, not the sea level rise, but the salt intrusion [model]. But before this group, we used to have so many interesting models, that saline water would come up to here, what part of Bangladesh would go under water? You know, that kind of fantastic figures. So people, some of the people not everyone, everybody believes that something will happen but the extent is questionable. Because we believe in some concrete areas. Bangladesh we can't, we don't look ahead to 30 or 50 years as you do. Most of the developed countries, have significant power against sea level rise, water management is fantastic, you are the leading of the world, and the government system was developed through the water management system, isn't it? It's an amazing system. But in Bangladesh given the economic and social you can't imagine, you can't ask people to plan for thirty years ahead of time. You know what I mean? Because we live at the moment, we live at the moment. Most of the people wonder how do we manage, when we live by the river like Meghna or Padma, which are huge. When you live by it, you don't know whether you will be able to escape the next monsoon. Because during monsoon the river can be very licit. Very hard to keep the riverbank intact. Riverbank erosion is a big problem. Can you link that to climate change, I'm not sure. Because there are so many things: decreasing of riverbed, something is happening in the upper area in Nepal or India which you can't control, some people are bound to be on the embankment, they are living a distant life, can't get forward, so they are exposed to the river. But can you always relate everything to climate change? So although we are talking about national disaster, TRL, or climate change adaptation, we are trying to be very cautious how we interpret and we always admit that things are quite complicated. So we do not wish to tag everything as a consequence of climate change. And whatever we do as a measure of climate change adaptation, we have to be also very cautious that we are not overrating climate change, and climate change adaptation, these kinds of terms.

Your program are very specifically directed at people living at riverbanks, vulnerable people, displaced by riverbank erosion, vulnerable char households. Also there was also a joint position paper: you like to improve the social and political human rights of these vulnerable people. It got me wondering why PA wouldn't use one word to term this people?

What do you mean 'one word'?

We were just talking about displaced people and I was wondering why you wouldn't label these people to strengthen their case. But you want to be context-specific I guess, and you do not want everything to be linked to climate change.

If I understood you correctly, the case you were talking about was Northern Bangladesh, where we have been working with people who were displaced due to riverbank erosion. We have been working in four districts, particularly in one district Gaibandha, since 2004, so over the last 7-8 years. Our idea was if you visit that place and you find people due to riverbank erosion, people have been displaced repeatedly, they don't go to Dacca, everybody doesn't go to Dacca or the nearest town. Their house is washed away due to riverbank erosion, they move a little bit inward. Again they lost their house, they move a little bit. (...) Maybe the situation is worsened due to many reasons: because the riverbed is now quite filled up, therefore swollen water flow can cause huge damage. You know what I mean. So if you define those people under a specific (...), they are not migrating from the area, maybe they are, because they are used to live next to the river, they are going away from the river bank, the river is also moving, changing direction, different chars have been created due to Aila. And we have been working with those people because they don't have any land, they have to live on

other peoples land and pay a fee in exchange for a very small amount of land or they live on government land such as the embankments. They are not allowed to, but they're living there, and government is not evacuation these embankments because of humanitarian reasons. So what to do with them? They used to have huge, large areas of land, they were really rich, some people, they were at least the middle class now they are extremely poor. So for the last 7 years we have been targeting those people, those people who have been suffering from riverbank erosion. The reason was (...). Because Practical Action's program size, project area, it happened over the past 10 years or so. And you see Practical Action is an organization not as big as Action Aid or Oxfam, which has been working in 80 countries all over the world. We are working in 43 countries from 7 country offices and since we are technology-based organization we try to focus on a specific problem, on specific people, and specific ideas and try to do something with that. So, although sometimes in our project proposals in our activities we try to address the human rights issue, trying to link people with the local services but we do not do it as Action Aid does. Because they do have a number of things on human rights. Again we are not a humanitarian organization, so we will not fund a (participant response) in our projects as you might find in Oxfam. So that's why we are trying to do something if it's possible in this land, if it's possible with this group of people.

Sometimes we don't, instead of working with an entire community, we work with only a fraction of a community. You may argue: How can you target a fraction of a community? Because in a community you can find middle class people and poor or extreme poor, so some projects are targeted only at the extreme poor within the community. Other organizations argue your approach is wrong, they think our programs should be focused on the whole community if you want to make real change. But we have some other understanding of the situation. And again as I mentioned, in the North of Bangladesh we did work on displaced people or people who are migrated. Once they left the project area, we didn't follow them up, up to Dacca, because we can't go beyond our project area, we are committed to the donor. We restrict ourselves to that particular area, so that's the reason.

First, in some reports of PA, I read you would like a societal and political rights to be defended of these people and also a mainstreaming of these people's needs in the NAPA and the BCCSAP, these are quite large...

Which one? Can you remember the project? Have you checked the website recently? In the last two days or so? Is it under the climate change heading? Is it the very new project. I believe the project is being funded by UNDP, and the longer goal or objective was: integrating it with the BCCSAP and the NAPA. The reason is, obviously you can get the full project description on the website. But that particular project is a part of 10 different projects and it's called "Climate change adaptation project". It is being implemented in 10 different countries, (...) it is being implemented in Bolivia as well as in Samoa I think, India, Bangladesh, many different countries. So we personally believe that whatever climate change adaptation we do, whatever the intervention would be, it should comply with this one. And in the big program document we have specifically mentioned which of these activities we are trying to contribute to. That's how. So once we invented a project our findings (...) We are trying to identify for example T1, P2, A3. It's not the responsibility of the government only to implement this document; it's everybody's responsibility. So that's the reason we are saying we are contributing to NAPA and BCCSAP. Because in NAPA, project number 13 I believe, it's about shrimp culture, how to make agriculture more climate resilient. In that particular project we are targeting aqua agriculture, we are actually contributing to implementation of that particular project of NAPA. I

am talking about NAPA 2005, they have revised NAPA in 2009 but it is not widely distributed. Because in 2009 we have also developed this [BCCSAP] document, so it has actually superseded the revised NAPA. Because this is Bangladesh government's core document. EU urged government to use its own resources, but NAPA is being funded by DFIDGF, that comes to the other problem, which is part of your thesis, how the policy is actually supporting to address the problem of displaced people. This is another problem of Bangladesh that we are preparing actual plans, programs, strategies, but very poor to...many people will differ but we are very poor to implement those plans.

That leads us to my second question, you said you have to apply to the wishes of donors, ehm I am saying it wrong but, does Practical Action respond to requests of donors or...

Yes we certainly respond to requests, sometimes we do it pro-actively, sometimes we are quite active, responsive and you know active and pro-active. Most of the cases we are very active. When we see there is a call of proposal and it matches our objectives, our own objectives, so we apply for that, for those calls, which can be from within Bangladesh, a donor from

Is it from the government as well or NGOs or

In most of the cases government eh, because we are an international NGO, we are not eligible for applying for government funds. So we go for UN funds or Banks funds like EDB or World Bank. This is in general we are talking about. Our biggest donors are DFID, and European Union. But we haven't received a program on climate change adaptation yet from these donors.

Why not?

I think they haven't, you know, they haven't offered that kind of projects yet. All the projects we have been working on to date on climate change and DRR, climate change particularly, is a trust fund from the UK or EDB. UNDP is kind of...

Why do you think DFID and the EU won't make a request for climate change adaptation?

I think they are planning to do so, they are going to contribute their fund to the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund. So they are not going for individual cause, they are piling up their funds and giving it to the government fund which is being set up. One is the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund, which is Bangladesh government's own money, and the other is the Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund. Trust Fund is Bangladeshi money. And Practical Action as an international organization, we are not eligible to directly apply for that fund because these are all NGOs and Government institutions. The funding mechanism for the Trust Fund hasn't been finalized yet.

So you might be able to...

Might be, I don't know.

But the government of Bangladesh, you just said that implementation is a problem, what is the role of the government in climate change adaptation and maybe climate change displacement programs, do you think they are focused on this or that they are willing and able to do something about his or...if you have any ideas?

If you, ask senior people, who have been forming Bangladesh' position in international climate change negotiations over the last 15 years or so, if you ask them what major changes have you seen over the last 15 years, in terms of government seriousness, of governments interest in climate change, they will tell you that over the last 5 years or so, it has changed abruptly, all of a sudden. Particularly just before Copenhagen. Even not only the government but also the NGOs, everybody was, every NGO, well not every NGO, many NGOs, numerous NGOs were trying to prove themselves as being experts on climate change because they got a feeling that, keeping Copenhagen before them, huge amount of fund would be flowing to Bangladesh. So there would be lots of work to do, also projects could be offered. So there was kind of a jump everybody was trying to do something.

You might wonder how do you know that, well I used to work with IUCN and Dr. Ainun Nishad used to be my boss for the last 10 years or so. When he moved from IUCN, I moved to Practical Action. And while we were in IUCN we used to have a project, it was funded by CARIDA, Danish, and by the UK government. They were trying to prepare the government, for the Copenhagen summit. And I used to work with this project. Then I realized, what is going on? How people are becoming so fanatic about climate change? And that year 2008, it was a very interesting year. We had a – I am telling this because I want you to understand how policy formulation works in Bangladesh- in 2010 there was no political government in power, in 2007 to 2008. And in 2008, the then non political government they prepared this document. Dr. Nishad and 6 other top leaders in climate change negotiations, they were involved in formatting this document. Because (almost the same) but only 2008. And one of two activities were not (complete). In 2009 the current, political government came and in the very first year they changed the document. The document which was actually prepared in 2008 was changed because it was developed by a non political government. To exert or to express political commitment the present government has changed the publishing, they have changed the names and included one or two activities. So it's almost the same document, I can't say it percentage wise, but it is almost the same. But now the current government is saying that you have to implement this document. And over the last three years, in three different budgets, to express the governments political promise, they have created the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund and it has got 2100 *croh*, you know how much a *croh* is? It is 10 million. 2100 *croh* a lot of money, from its own resources. So every year 700 *croh* or 7000 million, or 7 billion, 7 billion taka, every year, so 21 billion taka (...) government. And I'm not sure, maybe 20% has been distributed to government agencies, but not to NGOs. And many activities are being done by the government since we were study climate change. You might find it difficult to understand, why they're investing money in that particular project and calling it a project of the climate change trust fund? In theory a river can't be a climate change issue, cleaning it up, because it is strictly polluted, but you can say, from a very long shot isn't: to maintain the river flow to make it a natural flow, or invert the flow making it natural thus to maintain the river so it will contribute to the flow in the downstream so it will contribute to the climate change... wow that's a long shot, but it is happening.

So why do they do it like that.

Because it is their money.

But they do not necessarily want to spend it on climate change?

Eh...for example (dressing) the rivers, you can say we are trying to contribute to climate change adaptation, because it will improve the flow and if the flow is improved, the salinity intrusion will be

lower, freshwater will be more available, and the salinity problem will be decreased. But it's a huge task because we are talking about rivers which you can't even see! You know you can't see the other side of the river. Unlike many of the biggest rivers in Europe. Especially during the monsoon it's huge, you might think it's part of the sea. You won't believe how much money is required if you want to make a proper change (...) Off course you can always dress the distributaries and the tributaries, instead of dressing the main rivers. (...) just try and make money: it's useless. So these are the political decisions made by the policymakers (...) And there are lots of debates and politics going on, on who will manage the Climate Change Trust Fund: Is it the World Bank? Because they charged 20%, or whatever, which would be a huge amount of money. And definitely Bangladesh is one of the, as you consider, Bangladesh is one of the important countries in terms of climate change. But sometimes I find it a bit difficult whether our problem is overrated.

Do you think so?

Well I don't know, some of our actions such as that, we are actually overrating the problem. Because people are not waiting for some awareness program on climate change. They don't know about climate change, or the Bangla word for it, but they are trying to adapt to the situation, change their situation. Because in Bangladesh people have been (dreaming) for many many years.

So with regard to your work, in your opinion, in Practical Actions opinion, do you think these people, these affected people – let's keep it general- are more helped by to the point, specific programs that Practical Action offers and not so much by the general programs as explained in the BCCSAP? Because there are a lot of programs on awareness on mitigation: do you think it is better to keep it to-the-point, low scale, adaptation or...?

That is a good point you mentioned. For the reason we are implementing very small projects, because there is no large projects. So we had to take the small projects, just for information. The two projects that we have started over the past 6 months, but before that, we used our own money to continue working over there, because we did not get any money from any donors. Because Practical Action is run by one or two types of funding, one is restricted fund, which is donors, and one is a fund of charity in the UK. Because we have lots of members and supporters, we are charity. We have many people in Britain who are members, who are members of Practical Action, who donated money. So all that money was used, for almost two years, to run a very small pilot project, so we can keep our foot there, try to understand what is going on, what is the problem. There are so many problems, we could actually solve those problems, because we did have that fund. When we got the fund, obviously there were some points we wanted to address, there were certain issues the donor wanted to address. So we had to make some compromise. In the effect that everything that we, if we were given the choice, we would do the same project in the same manner, but we have had to compromise. So our projects have been small, very short duration. But what we're trying to do, is to take a small fund, to spend it on a very specific program or a very small area and then we can use that experience to convince bigger donors so they can put money in that area in a big way. So that was our objective. It's not like, we won't say: no we don't want the small money, we don't want to take only 5 or 6 villages, we will wait up to the big money comes: that's not good, it's not right. So the reason you are talking with me is because you found something on climate change or DRR on our Website, otherwise you wouldn't bother. So this is our philosophy and, at least in my opinion, we do not ask for funds everywhere. Everybody is offering fund, we do not ask for it. Because we are trying

to develop our climate change TRL component within my program. So whatever projects we have applied for, over the last 1 year or so, either on disaster risk reduction or climate change adaptation. Because certain donors, they don't take projects on climate change adaptation, they give it for disaster risk reduction, like DIEECHO. It's kind of a TRL fund of the EU, it's a new fund. But you can hardly find climate change adaptation. Because it is a very short term project 16 to 18 months long, so you can't call it long term planning. Same goes for the (DFIDs) (...) plan, this is another kind of disaster (resilience fund). But what we are trying to do, we are trying to include long term issues in those projects. Because, since we can't apply for climate change, we apply for TRL and under that we treat climate change, say climatic forecasting, how to improve climate forecasting, as well as how to help the farmers grow their food, grow their crops. So it is starting out as TRL but it is (...) adaptation.

I talked to the IOM, something along the same lines, a lot of people are making a division between relief and disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. But it's a process, it's a flow and IOM said we start with our relief programs and as soon as that's finished our development programs kick in. Would you say that, regarding displaced persons, or affected persons do you think NGOs till now, who are focused on disaster risk reduction and focused on development, together might be able to contribute to this problem, together might be able to...

Where do you like to get at?

Well, there are numerous organizations, climate change is a big issue, not necessarily together but will they be able to carry the burden so to say. Or do you think that there is a need for a separate program, or a separate concept for climate migration?

Certain NGOs have certain objectives, whatever you say. They can't actually move away from that objective, from that vision. If you take away from that vision their existence will be questioned. For example, in the case of Practical Action, we have to show that, we are using technology to solve some problems. If we go for some awareness program we would lose our credibility. So I am sure, although displacement is not a main focus or primary issue that Practical Action deals with, there are certain issues. For example gender, it is there but not as strong as for example with some local NGOs or some national NGOs. It does not mean we do not work on gender, but it is somewhere there, but it is not on the top of our list. Similarly some NGOs might work on displacement, maybe as a part of human rights, they might be a rights-based organization who try to focus on a specific issue. For example, just today, I got a report, a study which was conducted (...) in Bangladesh by Plan International. And it was about climate change and adolescent girls, young girls (...) Plan works on small children, young people, so they put adolescent girls and climate change. We wouldn't do that. You see because it is their agenda. Similarly I am sure there are certain NGOs who are working migration, immigration, displacement, these kind of things. Since climate change is a hot topic, so if they want to work on climate change they have to upgrade that specific issue. So they have to take lead, other NGOs which support that cause they will come along. Maybe Practical Action will not be a forerunner but we will be there if they're working in our project area, definitely we will join. Because we have always believed, that we should not replicate what other peoples are doing. And there are certain mechanisms in Bangladesh district organizational meeting which is headed by the government official, head of the district, he actually asks every NGO: what you are doing? So they don't overlap. But sometimes it doesn't work. Practical Action we believe, if we target a household, which has for example been supported by Oxfam, with water sanitation, we should not give them

water sanitation again because they already got it. You can give them some livelihood technology options. In this way, overlapping will be avoided. So I think (...) some type of coordination is required, someone or some organization has to take lead. Some organization has to take lead in terms of the displacement issue in the climate change setting.

Do you think more should be done to help displaced people?

Yes but again the first question: how do you define it? If you can define it there may be... I am not sure whether displacement is a big issue here.

Well even if you don't give it a name -you have a program targeted at riverbank erosion problems- so even if you do not give them the label, do you think that their cause should be more on the forefront? In national politics in International politics? Or do you think not?

I think eh, the protection that should be given or not, I am not in a position to say. Because some organizations, I can't remember which one, they do not recognize riverbank erosion as a disaster. Flood is a disaster but not riverbank erosion. So there are certain perspectives. It depends ultimately on the government, (whether all the donor) whether... For example one of our understandings is if you really want to make a difference in the lives of riverbank eroded people, you have to resettle them. And Practical Action in three different projects, we created 10 separate villages, we call it cluster village. And we have (around one thousand families or so. But it is very difficult to convince other donors to replicate it. Because they don't think it's a feasible option.

Why not?

Maybe (they worry about) the investment. Because per household the investment is too high. But that's why we are still working on a project called CLP, char livelihood program, it is being funded by DFID, it's a very big program, they have started the 2nd fase last year. (...) they are not relocating people in a safer area, they are just raising their plinth, and giving them livelihood support to those people living in *char* area. Lots of raising (plinths) over there. The infrastructure there is to raise their plinth so they will not be inundated or they will not suffer from flooding. Give them cow so they will have a livelihood option; linking the milk production with the market system, so the market system is there; providing the basic health services for those, so this is their model; and obviously it is working, otherwise the donor wouldn't give them another fund for another 5-years or so. So maybe that has some implications, but still it works otherwise how did they convince the donor for funding for another 5 years. So it is a mechanism. Maybe it is less possible to relocate 100 families, that is quite a lot of people, to a separate land. You'd have to purchase the land, raise the land, build the house. (...) We are preparing it, that model. Whatever we manage to do. As I said there are six, ten, no there are eight at the moment and we are building another in the Northern Bangladesh.

So again, to answer your question, how do you define it, I just skimmed through it [the BCCSAP] and I can't find displacement as an important issue. Early warning is there, hydrologic maintenance is there, food security is there. So I think definitely it will come. But frankly speaking, they say, almost one million people are displaced every year due to riverbank erosion, in Bangladesh it is said. I am not sure whether it is a correct number or not. Because one million every year, so over the last ten years it should be 1 *croh*. That is a huge number. I doubt. Maybe we have to count: one person can be migrated ten times in his or her life, so multiple counting is there. And we have been talking about

the riverbank people being migrating to the urban areas and creating all sorts of problems. But what is going on? Are we trying to do something to relocate those people who are migrating to the urban areas and once again relocate them to the rural area? I can't say. Rather we have new projects, how to improve the slums.

So it is not a specific program?

So long it is, (...) there is a lot of investments to improve the slums. Because they (constantly) look at these people. There are other programs to relocate, but I am not sure about the success. People will take money, go over there, and I am sure they will come back. Because they are (a lot), they live in a horrible condition (...) So we have to consider that fact.

I can give you one example, one of the adaptation issues is floating garden. While I was working at IUCN in 2008, I and my colleagues we did a study, because floating gardening has been practiced for quite a few centuries in South of Bangladesh. We went over there and interviewed lots of people: What is happening with floating gardening over the last decade or so? Because we are advocating for floating gardening as an adaptive measure. Our research question was: whether climate change is affecting floating gardening itself? Because if the floating gardening is the medicine, and if the medicine is sick it can't help you. And we found that people were saying floating gardening is not as productive as it once was, and the main reason is not climate change or the weather but the main reason was that the production costs has gone up but the selling price has (remained the same). So its economics not climate change. That's why my conclusion was: we shouldn't correlate everything with climate change, all of sudden. We should look into the reasons. So I always question those things. Because I was in charge of a project where we introduced floating gardening in a (... region) not in the Eastern Bangladesh. And we never said it would help people to adapt to climate change, no. It wasn't there an issue. The issue was that that area goes under water for 6 to 7 months per year, so it's kind of a regular event. So we are just helping them cope with that regularity. We shouldn't connect everything to climate change. That will backlash, that will cause more problems, that will cause (...). Yes we should consider climate variability, things are changing, fine. But don't try to put everything, put the seal of climate change on everything. There is so many factors.

Final question then: did Practical Action ever encounter any difficulties implementing their programs? Because I read on the Website that the economic crisis has hampered what you want to do. So has your organization ever encountered difficulties in its programming? I want to get a view of your organization. Do you have problems finding donors or not?

In general or in climate change. If you want to, if you have a target of, if your budget is 5 million and your target is 10 million next year, it would be very difficult to make that jump. But if t you're going very steadily it shouldn't be a problem. And I would say Practical Action is going quite steadily. Over the last three years or so, some would say we have a steep (plot) in getting funds, but I would say it is not that steep (on myself). If you look into our project size, it was two, three, hundred thousand ten years back; 7 years back it was millions; 3 years back it was a couple of millions. But I think it is OK. But some of my colleagues may say, yes it is quite difficult to get donors for various reasons but I would say that, what was your target that you would achieve? I think that Practical Action given its specific area of work, of technology, and definitely we have broadened the definition of technology very widely. Technology starts from knowledge (...) as well as organization, software, hardware, all. So we are defining Practical Action's technology in a very broad way in the last 5 years or so. Because

we used to call ourselves “Intermediate Technology Development Group” before 2005, since 2005 we calling ourselves Practical Action, making it more strong or very specific. I wouldn’t say we are struggling to get donors, that is not my point of view. Whatever we are planning to achieve, we are getting there. Our budget is not multiplied by two or ten each year but we’ll be fine.

That is always good to hear. So are there any other people you know who I should contact?

Dr. Iun Nishad, vice chancellor BRAC

Dr. Saleem Huq, IIED, international institute environmental development

Dr. Atiqu Rahmann, BCAS

And I have another request to make, whatever you write or publish, could you send it to me and I can go over it and correct any misinterpretations.

Sure, I could send you the transcript?

That would be great.

20 July 2011/Sushilan/ Mr. Mostafa Nuruzzaman/ Director/ Attended by Mr. Md. Abdul Baten

What follows is a resume of the interview with Mr. Nuruzzaman instead of a transcript, as the recording was very unclear. When a word or phrase remained unclear it is placed between (brackets). Some of the information he referred to in the interview has been looked up and processed in the resume.

The target group of Shushilan consists of people living in the coastal zone area where Shushilan is primarily working. According to Mr. Nuruzzaman people are poor for more reasons than just climate change related reasons. Particularly two factors are of importance. First, before partition from India in 1947, the working area of Shushilan consisted of 55% Hindu community and for 5% of Muslim community. It was under the rule of an Indian king called (Rajaputamini) who was eventually defeated by General (Argoar). The General's men would roam around the area, catch people and take their resources which caused people to leave the area. At the same time, after partition from India around 1million Urdu-speaking, Muslim people known as Bihar came across the border to escape the possibility of living under a Hindu majority in India. However, they were disappointed to find a society with a different culture and language in East Pakistan and therefore came to affiliate more with West Pakistan, which dominance over the entire state in turn gave them greater benefits of the central government. So after the partition there was a major shift in land-ownership as Hindu were leaving and Muslims came in. Now around the coastal areas there are only 10% Hindu's. Another significant event was the cyclone of 1988 which hit the Sundarban hardest and devastated much of the rice fields. As their mode of livelihood was devastated people massively turned to shrimp cultivation instead, changing the land-use system within three years from rice cultivation to shrimp cultivation [which requires salt water intrusion?]. These two changes in land-ownership and in land-use has enhanced the differences between rich and poor people. So before cyclone Aila/after 2007 [both mentioned], Shushilan would explain poverty of people as a consequence of social conflict over land, not as a consequence of climate. After Aila the consequences became visible for everyone to see, previous predictions became an everyday reality; 10 unions were affected, the frequency of occurrence also increased (6 cyclones from 2007-2009), and changes in weather and rainfall patterns. This is when it became a topic of interest to scientist as well.

Shushilan provides programs related to climate change: they served 200.000 families after Aila, who had become displaced because of Aila. Due to the tidal surge the whole area submerged and they started living in the embankments and then Sushillan started to serve 200.000 families for more than one month to two months. Within two years they served more than 200.000 families, due to internally displaced, due to cyclone Aila. This is both short term and long term help: First we give them food, temporary shelter, many things and then we give them house, cash for work.

However, they did not design a program specifically for displaced persons. It is a hard topic to tackle, because: Who is displaced and who stays in the embankment? Who are they? Who do you count as being displaced? Only the displaced who stay in the area? But who are displaced, who are in Dhaka, who are in another country?

According to Mr. Nuruzzaman not enough is being done by the government due to a faulty government process. Because the government is very temporarily minded. Although Sheikh Hasina takes many personal initiatives the government machine I'm not so keen on. Also there is a lack of linkage: basically in Bangladesh the Ministry of Environment and Forest, work with the climate change but we have another ministry, the Ministry of Disaster and Food. For Aila Ministry of Food and Disaster Ministry took some initiatives, but as a leading Ministry, ministry of environment then take many initiatives. So there is a mismatch.

Policy advocacy is also quite hard for local NGO like Shushilan. It is interesting to work with national organizations like UO to make this link and developing yourself as an organization is very important in this respect as well.

Shishillan is also restricted in its scope of work by the wishes and demands of donors. Both Shushilan and the donor have an agenda, but Shushilan's agenda is not always recognized because the donor has different demands.

21st of July 2011/ International Union for Conservation Nature/ Highly placed official

IUCN quotes IPCC. But there are also Bangladesh reports, Bangladesh scientist making other comments on the report of the IPCC. So what I was going to ask was, what is your perception of climate change in Bangladesh. Is the IPCC accurate. Or should it be more detailed or do you think there may be a Western bias in the report?

Well let me say first that I am not an expert on the subject on a personal level. I run an important office in the country and we have to work very closely with the government. And we have got a kind of an intergovernment organization character. And we also work with the community level organization including NGOs. So whether I personally know this subject or not, because I have to run this office I have to be within this climate change environment (...). Now all IPCC, I don't want to make a dire comment on the validity of this report. Now I do have some comments on the general climate change induced impacts as reported in various forums, in newspaper reports in government, in the meetings with the government we do where it comes up and off course the Bangladesh civil society dialogues on climate change you'll see definitely the causes and effects of climate change. Whenever we talk of climate change there is some form of direct or indirect reference to the IPCC report. Now the first problem as I see in Bangladesh is a problem of documentation. Documentation of whatever information we have. Because even at the basic level, some basic facts or figures that we request to do any meaningful intervention we simply do not have accurate, reliable, world known data. That is the first problem we have now, one agency might have some reliable data but if you ask at a national level do we have, for example, you do research on displacement, do we have figures which are broadly accepted by various communities, various stakeholders, on the subject, about what is the number of climate induced displaced persons, you'll hear a range of 186.000 to 313.000. That's the kind of, level of fluctuation. Government would often tell you that if you take displacement, displaced number of people, and displacement as a process of changes, they'll tell you about 3.5 ehm or 30 million, Bangla we call 3 *crohs*, about 30 million number they could (...) Some here will say it is in fact more than that. But if you ask what is the basis of this statistics? They wouldn't know. Now, one researcher may have one very sound study somewhere done but these findings are not brought together to form a national, reliable, statistical database, that is the point I'm trying to make. So you might have sporadic information here and there but if you ask some basic information from any agency, from IUCN or the government, if you ask for example the IUCN country director, do you know the exact number of displacement, I would have to say I don't know, I can only give you some meaningless ranges. This level of variation doesn't make any sense. So that's the first problem we have, to answer any question about climate change we simply do not have reliable data set and the way of coordination the information, that's the first problem.

Secondly, climate change has become everybody's business, everybody is onto climate change. And therefore the seriousness of the subject, I think, has been diluted. Everybody talks about climate change nowadays and nobody is relating to the other person. Climate change health professional, climate change agricultural professional, climate change social scientist but they don't come together and everybody is working in their isolated niches. IUCN works for example with adaptation related projects ehm we don't for example necessarily know what other agencies are doing in our area, in

adaptation, just to give an example. So because climate change attracts money now, that's the main (prize/problem), everybody is onto climate change, and the *whole* discourse has become incredibly complex, for any, to build in any form of coordination. And you have created a situation of constant (...), constant competition, mainly for money but also for reputation and expertise. This person is the biggest climate change expert in the country, everybody is (...) along that line. But this should not be a subject off, you know we are not movie stars. We don't have to compete on this very crude basic, how many know me on their television or their radio, how many interviews do I have to give in a week, that should not be the indicator of a climate change professional. Because of this kind of, rather cheap approach to handling climate change, where we are claiming, counter-claiming, this area is loaded with money, we have got now a kind of clique within that climate change group, this group doesn't talk to that group etcetera. And then you know all sort of divisions and compartmentalizations, the whole process has become somewhat to be crude, cheap, complex and this has made the coordination work extremely difficult. The moment you, for example, Syta wants to create some sort of (...) network on climate change, the first question you will face in this country is: who are you to call us together? What interest do you have? Because everybody is competing. Everyone is competing the other. Now having said that I must say that, we do have fairly knowledgeable people in the practice level, that's for sure. It's not that we don't have the expertise I think we do have the expertise [its fragmented?], It is fragmented. The more knowledgeable people have dived down because they cannot compete with the big mouths anymore, yes. People like me tend to dominate. So the real people who are working there knows the topic, and not getting the opportunity for example to talk to you, that is the point I am trying to make. The government is also going, if you like, on a kind of, following the mainstream if you like. So in the government committees, for example you only see a very selective group of people and these people are everywhere in the committee, in the seminar, in the symposia, in the documentaries, so they have kind of occupied the public space and therefore the real people are not coming up. I'm not saying the people who occupy they don't know, (...) but they only represent a particular class, and a clique. There are other views which you'll never hear, if you don't take the trouble of really go out, find people ehm somewhere in Chittagong university maybe one professor is doing some serious business. But unless somebody really points to that person, he won't be able to surface, if you like, to our level. That is the problem we are facing now. Anyway so that is my first problem.

Climate change has become extremely political. The science behind climate change has kind of, if you like, taken a secondary road. Climate change is about money, politics, power, talk shows, television, interviews, yes? But the real science of climate change. And this is precisely the reason why I cannot quickly answer to you is climate change a reality in Bl. Ill say: ya, ya I mean everybody say so. But I cannot give you a definite answer.

The salinity intrusion are among the manifestations that are presented as examples of cc, are not necessarily induced a one to one cause and effect relationship with that (...). Salinity intrusion can happen because we haven't done the required dressing for rivers for literally more than 50 years. So I can give you another example, another explanation of salinity intrusion: the other factor you commonly hear as an example of cc, the (...) effect on some of the specific species of trees in the Sundarbans. Now I can give you at least three alternative explanations as to why this is happening, as distinct from cc. Now I don't really know whether cc is the reason. Because you are coming from a research background and I am not talking here in capacity of my role as IUCN leader (...) I'm talking about, mainly from an research and academic background, so I am being frank with you, from a

university background if you like. Now there are limits to what I can say when I sit in this chair. Now I will be quite frank on this, so I can, the common causes that (...) as manifestations of cc: salinity intrusion, effects on some specific species, the problem of sea level rise, the frequency in disasters, these are the things people commonly say when talking about climate change. Now I don't say they are not related to climate change but my problem is, with, identifying these manifestations as an exclusive result of cc and nothing else. That link to me has not been established yet. I'm not saying that, I'm being, ehm, I'm not being fully convinced about climate change, eh well I'm not, but the point is I have regards and respects for the people who are presenting these arguments, I have respect for them, I am simply saying I need to know more and I am not gaining that information quickly.

So you just said, you are more in the upper, in the public discourse, and the real scientist are more down under the surface, may that also be why you also maybe have a lack of information? Because there is a missing link between...

Yeah, even in my office for example there are serious researchers, even in my office. But you are not talking to them, you are talking to me and that is the problem. Unless I guide you to Mr. Y and Mr. X who really knows the work, at that level of (...) scene, because it is a very strong interest group that has taken place, to steer the course of climate change discourse in this country. This is the point I am trying to make and the government is directly linked to this group.

Do you think this is problematic that the people who are actually leading the public discourse, if I may say so, are not the real experts in the field? Well I mean they are experts but...

I simply saying there are other people whose views are as important or maybe even more important, the people who are leading the show have to work within such a strong political environment, that their, even if they are experts, with all due regards to them, their expertise, their role as scientist, I think is being overshadowed by their political and diplomatic roles, that's the point I am trying to make. Now if you have too much of diplomacy around, too much politics around, too much power around, too much of institutional task matter around then obviously it is hard for you to dig down to the solid, hardcore science. And the example I am giving you now this should be very clearly answered, these are not very difficult questions, I don't think we even sorted out the basics.

But what are our strengths. First we have very good policy documents. Very good. I mean you can always critique a document, that's not the point. The point is whether we have the basics of a policy legal framework in place to provide the broad, overarching guideline for climate change related work. The answer is Yes we have. For example the NAPA, the BCCCS, National self assessment of capacity. So we got a series of fairly good quality, I mean there are some tribulations in polity, but we do have fairly, reasonable standard, even at international level, we can compete, this documentation in terms of policy level, national documents are in place it is there. The problem, the problems basically are twofold. First, we have the policy regime now in place but we don't have the implementation. Mainly because the link between policy and the implementation, we haven't been able to establish the institutional link between the policy and the actual implementation

Why not?

There are many reasons. I think we have always been one step ahead with producing high quality documents, without necessarily doing the capacity enhancement at the institutional level who really implement the policy. Now if you ask for example the range officer of the forest department, who has actually been in the field, implementing one of the 64 pillars mentioned in the BCCAP, I wouldn't be surprised if he doesn't even know what the Action Plan is in the field. So that's the level of disconnect between Dhaka and the field. That's the point I'm trying to make. Now if you ask for example a supervisor or an assistant director of the department of environment: what role do you need to play, and how does it fit in to this, for example the national biodiversity action plan or the climate change strategy action plan, in most cases you'll see the level of understanding is very low. And the institutions capacity is low, we don't have the manpower, we don't have, we've got very strong motivations, but the level of understanding, the level of logistics, and human resource available in the field, all these are grossly inadequate to implement even realistically 50% of what were saying in the policy and their legal documents. That's the point.

So these are the two broad issues, and then there is of course all countries wrapped up in unhealthy politics. Therefore political influences is always there. If you really want to take some serious action in terms of for example pollution control, much of these actions would go against powerful elites who can be directly linked to the political party heads, or the bureaucratic heads. So they have got control of politics and bureaucratic at the central level. So the moment for example, a local forest ranger wants to close down an illegal (...) or an assistant in the department of Environment trying to for example take action against polluting industries, he'll receive phone calls from Dhaka from his bosses, either in parliament or in headquarters: "hold on now, until you hear from me". That would be the (...) He's just a kind of, you know, concept of duty, how does it affect his day to day work. It is an absolute frustration for him that the more honest type officers, they got this big things said about powers and control in the legal acts and documents and they are not able to use any of them.

Do you see any way of changing that in the near future. I read the policy reform document which was of 2008 I believe.

I'm not really pessimistic you know, even after I have said everything, we are making progress its just very slow, very painfully, slow and protracted but we are making some progress. As I said we are being (...) in terms of policy level documentation. I think that the kind of general understanding at least the upper echelon of issues of climate change, that is there. I see a clear difference for example, let me just give me few examples, the friction I see around civil society now against for example illegal encroachment onto rivers or forest is quite strong and sharp now related to thirty years back. So things are improving. The use for paddy coating for example has been fairly professional type, still a long way to go but they cover the broad base of the topic, that's there. I think we now have a group of experts that know the subject. The problem is they are not coordinated, they are working in their holes and somebody needs to bring them out and bring them under some sort of broad platform, this hasn't happened. Unfortunately even at the government level, the government is also part of the clique that has been the problem. So the neutral, broad-based, open type of mediating role that you would expect from the government: I don't think we are still there. It's not that there are ehm no well-meaning, understanding persons in the government, there are, there are, but even within the government there are various pockets of cliques. So I think this should require direct attention from the (...). And in Bangladesh most work needs attention from the prime minister. That's how the country works, you know, unless I say something nothing will happen in IUCN. It is within the

character of Bangladesh society that unless the boss say something, that it works, even if it's just a petty thing. So I think still, if the prime minister or her office or a person who is acting on her behalf takes this responsibility, to really take the trouble to find out the good people around, and there are good people around, to bring them under a common (forum). I think for national service people are willing to work. It's not a question of money. If you give them the recognition they'll come and talk to you.

So is there the willingness with the heads of...

Ehm, I don't think that they don't, there are well meaning people, but I don't think this problem has been adequately brought to their attention, that we have a serious problem of lack of coordination, grossly inadequate coordination. We have a serious problem with power politics, involving the discourse of climate change because it involves money and (resources). What we did in the 70s in the name of (krimdevelation) climate change is the new dogma now. So you know I feel bad from an academic perspective because so much to learn from climate change related actions and perceptions at the community level, especially at the community level in Bangladesh. I mean it is a treasure house: every day you go to the field you learn, when I go there I don't go there as a professor I go there as a manager, to me managing the projects is my main focus. Even when I go to the field and I talk to them and spend maybe an evening or a night or maybe half a day, when I come back to Dacca I feel like at least jotting down a quick field note for a possible article in a journal. I mean that much you can learn even in a day, so it is there. Things are happening, things are there. I think we have created a kind of an intermediary crew, who's really taking the credit out of the community, that's the problem I think. There is too much of internationalization. Why do you have to talk about climate change every time outside the country, why do you have to send one hundred people in the Bangladesh delegation. What's the logic? (Haven't they heard) we are a poor country. And there are far more better use of this one hundred people. You need at best five people to represent a country like Bangladesh.

So would you say that at these big international negotiations, since the IUCN has observer status, how much influence can you yield, how does it work, do you feel the IUCN has ever contributed...

IUCN has influence, I must say this from the Bangladesh experience. Did you know that Bangladeshi government has entrusted us with this responsibility to sending out the Bangladeshi delegation. The government Bangladesh delegation is submitted by the IUCN, that's what we do. Now much of this you can record, I'm not saying this in capacity of IUCN I am saying this as a person, ehm... IUCN because we work so closely with the government and we have access to some of the key facilities of the environment (...) sector in the country, therefore we do have some influence. (...) most of the policy level work we played a key role. In some cases they were running this whole exercise, in some cases they contributed a significant part of this policy population and documentation process. So yes we do have influence but with limitations. First, as a large international agency ehm we have limits to, from a diplomatic angle, limits to how much direct pressure we can exert on the government, being part of the government. So that's the first problem. I come from the public sector for example I represent the largest public university in this country, and I remain a public sector staff (...) IUCN. So if you would look at my personal credential I am still a university professor in the first place and then, secondary, I am also the country director of IUCN. So there are limits to how much I can maneuver within my public sector box so to say. That's one point.

The second point of course is, IUCN, one clear advantage that we have is we can also relate directly to NGOs, we've got 18 NGO members and government is also a member. So we have the flexibility to work with both the government and the civil society. And we can also directly execute projects in the field. So we have the diversity to learn that's for sure. I mean in IUCN, if you talk to my colleagues they will be able to give you information on programs but also some very interesting ideas about adaptation that they see in the field. Now are we bringing all this learning together and packaging it in a way which we can then feed to the government? The answer is partially, not fully. We are getting there as I said. At the end of the day we are project managers we are not educators. So if we see that there is a conflict between my educative role and my project manager role then I would go for the project managers (...). That's our limits (...) put it this way. So I don't want to explain it in all this detail but just to give you a sense of limits that I have and at the same time the strengths that I have also, and of course it also depends on the individual kind of leadership style. As I said Bangladesh is, every institution you visit in this country will be, you'll see a reflection of its leaders. It's not whether you have a good leader or a bad leader, the point is, as I said, it is in the culture of our society that we look onto the heads of offices as the role model: that's the general tendency. Ehm so it also depends on the individuals leaders working style. In my time, my motto is to maintain modesty. And I want to, I don't want to surface too much. I want to remain under the radar because not everybody needs to know me. I only have a very limited target group, IUCN has a very limited target group. You know (...) for example. And as a researcher as somebody working in the field of climate change, you have, on your own, identified IUCN as one of the stakeholders to interview, just to give an example. So you know not everybody needs to know me and I don't need to spread out to wide and too thick. I want to maintain a very clear focus and I want to work with about 50 to 60 organizations, that's it. If I put up a modest, professional image that IUCN, (...) more or less frank as they can, and they can deliver at the end of the day: we are managers that's it, that's our main identity. We manage yet we raise money, we run projects...

So have you ever, has IUCN ever been limited by the fact that... As you mentioned before, the IUCN has numerous members, amongst which the government, and they all together decide on the projects: Have you ever been limited by that fact?

Well there are good and bad sides to this. Because we are a membership organization it's like a big ship you have to put together small vessels or boats and it will slow you down and off course you will need to accommodate them. When I get a project I have to give share to my men, which is expected. Because, you know, they are (key) paying members so they expect something in return. So yes I also have to be quite sensitive to their values, something that I believe I can't come out with a public statement until I get it cleared by this, the majority, the more influential members, that you know when IUCN is thinking about taking a stance on something and do you agree etcetera so you have a formal kind of understanding in negotiation and then we go out in the public. So yes, it is a limit but then again it is also a strength because IUCN is not alone. So if for example anyone decides to take me out, you know when IUCN has does something bad so close this offices or there is some kind of decision against me etcetera, I get at least 15 or 20 organizations standing behind me. So it is also a strength. But democracy is always problematic. But having the government on your side is good in the sense of, in a country as Bangladesh, it gives you additional power, to access exclusive type of information and domain. That's advantageous. Disadvantage I've already mentioned: you have to be far more diplomatically correct because you are working with the government. So it's a difficult

situation: you are part of the government but you are also expected to maintain a distance. It's a kind of a (paradox).

So I have talked now about the government's influence on IUCN and the IUCN's influence on the government, one thing I was curious about is whether the IUCN has been able to influence the international negotiations through their observer status?

And the second question would be, do you believe that international discussions on the climate debate, you maybe know that there is a division you may say between developed and developing countries on the climate change issue, would you say that the broad international debate is, first influences, can be influenced by IUCN in any kind of way and second, if it's the other way around if the international debate is also influencing policymaking on a more local level? Do you have any ideas on that?

The first one is, I think international politics, I call them just the politics, the international politics of climate change is so complex that it is difficult for any one particular organization, even if they are working in 163 countries and they are big and they are large and they're the first (conservation) type of organization, whatever you brand us as, the point is we are just one organization. With this level of complexity in international politics there are limits to what you can actually do in terms of influence. Now if you say whether the key people listen to us, the answer is yes. Mostly we've got some indication that they do listen to us. But ultimately they do is their prerogative, we can't control. IUCN has also helped the preparation of very user friendly, summary documents as proceedings of some these negotiations as we go. So picking out the science from the politics, that has been one of IUCN's major roles and I really like that. It's not like IUCN just talking with other member (AID) etcetera, so it's that.

Now coming to Bangladesh whether Bangladesh national policies are being influenced by what's going on at the international negotiation and political level. Ehm I think, to some extent yes it is being influenced by the international broad (ETO's). Bangladesh is a regular participant. Bangladesh hasn't missed a single major event on international climate politics. In relatively insignificant events to Bangladesh was prominently participant. Well I will not comment on whether it was good or bad or whether I like it or my personal point. Bangladesh has been a regular participant in nearly all climate change related international forums. Now if, just by shared participation, you create a space for you: that Bangladesh has done. Bangladesh has also, there is a mixed result on this, Bangladesh has also, because of the high quality documents we have at the policy level, we have shown in most cases these are some of the pioneering ones. So Bangladesh has created if you like an impression if you like, in the international arena you know: look this poor country producing fairly quality, intellectual materials. So it has come as kind of if you like, as a good example of what a relatively poor ehm less important, in terms of international politics, country can produce. And be an example to others to see and follow. That I think Bangladesh has done well. In terms of our actual negotiation and what we have been able to carve out in international diplomacy, I think the result is mixed, I think the result is mixed. We cannot say we have done really well, neither we can say we have done it consistently ehm... achieve something consistently, achieve something but we also won't be able to say we haven't done anything. In some occasions we have done well, on others we haven't, but because we have a general problem of institutional memory loss I don't think we have been able to make the incremental benefit.

What do you mean by institutional memory loss?

You now we, let me just give you an example: if you ask, what we have done in the CBD, the Convention on Biodiversity yes, ehm dialogues over the years and as a nation, whether we have maintained a consistent focus and whether we have incrementally, from one conference to the other to the next, whether we have been able to incrementally maintain our position, our stands our focus, ehm our views, in most cases we haven't got the correct level of documentation for somebody else now to look back and see: what has been Bangladeshi's incremental or progressive contribution to these events. Because in most cases you were sending out different people. So I go this time the next time somebody else goes, without really talking to me. Therefore in many of these occasions we try to reinvent the wheel, rather than basing on the earlier work and maintaining an incremental progression. This I think is a serious problem.

So even though on an international level there is a sort of space carved out for Bangladesh, there's a lack of continuing progress, then at the national level there is a lack of coherence, so I was wondering if on a international level Bangladesh has painted this picture and is constantly there and advocating their cause but there is no institutional framework to implement it do you think that maybe on an international level the picture Bangladesh maybe a bit distorted? Do you know what I mean?

Yeah, I understand the point but maybe others are doing even worse. And I am being straight and frank with you because it is an academic discussion. If I was taking this particular issue up with a counterpart from for example the UN, and if obviously taking up a completely different way of approaching this interview, just to give an example, ehm, I feel that Bangladesh still has eh the prospect of coming out quite strongly, I wouldn't use the word leader, but as one of the prominent players in international politics, We have the potential. But it's just that, you know, there are elements kind of scattered all over. It's just a matter of bringing them and clicking them into a productive mix. Now that hasn't happened yet. I think mainly because, I think I gave you the example before, I think we still lack the broad based institutional leadership. I think that's the problem. And I don't think the way Bangladesh culture works, it can't come anywhere below the Prime Minister or her entrusted entourage level. It has to be somewhere at that level. I don't think this problem has been brought to their attention yet because it is a country of problems. There are too many other things, from a political leaders perspective, which deserve more attention than I know would drown or would be flooded in a way two years or would ultimately lose 7% of the area. I mean they still do not see the gravity of the problem.

So ehm, and and I think because we have developed these power groups, the clique, the money groups etcetera surrounding the climate change discourse. They are also creating some smoke screen for the leaders to really see the big picture. And I'm part of that screen. See even at my level I'm playing a dual role now. When I talk to you for this interview I am acting in my individual capacity as an academic helping out another academic. Eh and this being said, being a part of that clique, when I seek for an official interview I won't ever say these things. You know there is, it is a very perplexing, complex kind of mix, dynamics, a set of dynamics that you need to unfold (gradually) to get to what and who you want. I think the (limits are) there. You ask of every interesting thing that you can research on the broad areas of climate change. Bangladesh is the best laboratory you can think of. So we do have the limits and more importantly we can also give you some answers to some of these researchable problems. In the field when I see answers kind of scattered, but they are there,

somebody just needs to pick them up. I was thinking of, how do you monitor ehm health related, community level, health related (regular) diseases, frequent, common diseases, and related indicators which you can then relate to climate change. That these diseases have 20%, 30%, 60%, 70% to do with climate change. How do you bring out some sort of more concrete form of measuring in the field. During my last visit to I found that one local union level health facility, just one, not even an NGO, it's just a small organization, and one of the relatives of, the head of this organization is a doctor. So they are (doing) this kind of personal research involving about 20 households to see the pattern of diseases over the last 2 year – I can't remember if it was the last 2 years or three years. And they have done a marvelous work of trying to relate the for example (...) climate change sector like saline intrusion, skin diseases, ehm the problem of contamination, ehm and some arsenic related contamination on breast milk for lactating mothers. Interesting idea, this will go, if you can do it kind of large scale, this could be an excellent mechanism for monitoring climate change related impact right at the household level, on health, on selected dimensions of health. And you know, this should be the best, tested, reliable set of indicators you can think of and coming right from the field. Somebody needs to put a strong theoretical framework for it, methodology to sharpen here and there, you know for greater reliability and credibility. And you know I just saw there an element of a very interesting action research. Somebody needs to pick that up, that's the whole point.

But who's to be responsible?

Well I can do it and (I get money). It's as simple as that. I'm just a manager. It was interesting me because you know I was thinking from a professors perspective. (...) There are elements there, that's the point I am trying to make: we do have answers in the field, we do have avenues to explore so it's think it's just a question of putting the right spark.

And who should...

And it will come, it will come. I don't know the answer frankly. I don't really know who will do it but I'm simply saying that because we are making this... against all these odds were still making some progress, slow but were still making some progress. I think it is going to happen. I don't know exactly where it will come from but I know it has to come from the top. I know that ehm the bottom is prepared to share their ideas. So if we just have the institutional umbrella, and a bit of attention that it is a national priority that you can go and try out, I think people will immediately take the bait.

So a spark from top to bottom?

Yeah, top to bottom because things in many ways are happening in the bottom. So they are kind of doing it on their own, kind of sporadic, isolated, bits and pieces, that's there, they are not sitting idle. But if it comes from the top it gives you in Bangladesh the legitimacy, for example the IUCN can the say: in following the Prime Ministers example in directive 113 ehm can we propose to take up an action research project with ICBDRB to try out development and definement of health level, health, community level health indicators for climate change?

Because the IUCN is dependent on government policies to pick up programs and money?

No ehm, not necessarily but yes, it does help that you can relate to the government, it does help. So I mean I can also do it now, but my point is that unless there is a national priority fixed for this, then the smoke screen will always be there. Because it will not let go otherwise. Because why should I let

go of my opportunity to be interviewed on every occasion? Otherwise you go to the field and talk to the real people. That's the point I am trying to make. When you talk about climate change in this country you know who to talk to. And what to talk about and of course the institutions. And you cannot find more than 25 institutions in the country, in a country of 16 *croh* people. But that's not why this is a very deceptive picture. When we say climate change related institutions are 25, it is a very deceptive picture, that's the point I am trying to make. We don't want to expand anymore we want to maintain our [*power?*] power or power to the limits.

You've painted a very bright picture for me

Well it may sound a bit pessimistic to you

No it's not, I think every country has it's, you can't just look at climate change in any country so its

I think we are getting there, it's just taking a long time because of these obstacles, these obstacles are created by this powerful niche, clique that people like me have found.

You don't feel responsible for this, for lifting the smoke...

I do feel responsible. Well, at the end of the day I am a project manager, ehm so I don't want to be the next Che Guevarra, you know, making a revolution or so, that you can do within the luxury of a professorship. But when you're managing a project you don't really want to take that risk but I think the elements are there. Things are happening in the field, we've got a very strong policy element, we've got – even within this what I call smoke-screen, big talkers- we do have fairly knowledgeable people even within that group but it doesn't, kind of take them out and say: ok we respect your knowledge, we regard you truly as an expert but please relate to this particular problem happening in the field and just go out there and just link. And for a moment ehm you know don't let your ego or your chair or your position or your project or your money kind of divert you. So they still have a role to play so the elements are there...

They just need to be clicked?

And that come just by a bit of an organized focus, focused, organized platform, created by the Prime Minister's office.

It's not going be the IUCN?

Its not coming from IUCN specially. Its not, even if I try my influence will be limited and that will isolate me. At least I can now give you the insiders perspective of this clique, this smoke-screen you know whatever you want to call it and I can share this with you. If I you know take this role of changing the society, then I will be isolated. And there is simply you know, it would just take me out of this whole game, so I lose out. And my organization loses ultimately. And I would be very careful with (IUCN). Just for my conscious the reason that I am frank with you, because (...) we know there are limits to what we are doing. And I have no problem sharing this with at least the academic and research community.

I noticed this in other interviews that everyone is quite open. So I've got some short questions left.

Do you know any people I might talk to?

What, do you have any kind of, are you going to ask this type of questions. Have you talked to people of the media. They are a very influential group and recently they have become an official member of the Bangladeshi delegation. Bring in media people to represent Bangladesh Government. I could set an interview with you with Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, FEJB. I can see if he is available or you can just send him an email referring to me. He's in at least at three or four important forums.

24 July 2011/ INGO#3/ Saroj Dash/ Technical Program Coordinator Climate Change

At first I wanted to talk a little bit about how your organization works. [name organization] is dependent on its donors I think and on the requests of its donors?

[name organization] is basically, we have many different [name organization] so you may get confused sometimes, but it's basically [name organization] is an Irish agency which was founded a long time ago but it has started operations in Bangladesh since 1971 just after the revolution war. And the climate that time was basically (inundated) in addition to being affected by the war and so on, but since then on it has been responding to major emergencies even including (...) and of late I can mention some peculiars also, [name organization] has been a major player in disaster risk reduction. Only recently because of the perception of climate change and the link to Bangladesh, this is when the (programs) on climate change have been launched. And this is all related to the disaster risk reduction work we do, that's why you will find a lot of learning (originated) from the disaster risk reduction we have incorporated into the climate change work. So it's a very recent initiative but it comes of funding support. [name organization] has its own fund base which is emergent out of Ireland mostly, now we have also a branch in the US so we do have a fundraising (person). A part from that, officially comes from Irish Aid kind of (...) That is that of for instance let's say the British context they have the DFID as official... so that's the similar part of Ireland which is called Irish Aid. So being the largest donation of this nation, in Ireland, [name organization] gets also maximum support of Irish Aid. Apart from that we do have several donor organisations such as EU or some other major donors that we (link up) and mobilise resources from them. So that's basically the resource part. So we do have something I would say, more than 60% come from Ireland and Irish Aid support and the rest comes from other donors and so on.

So the programs you implement, I think, are in line with the wishes of donors?

Well not necessarily because [name organization] is also an independent body. It has its own management (strategy) and its own management processes. So primarily the issues that it covers are now on climate is based on a 5 year strategy (...) which is written by [name organization] and then these strategies are then put to different (...) institution or to locate the possibility of support. So it is the current scenario that we have. The major chunk of our work is related to asset building, addressing the issues of inequality and addressing the risk which is primarily about risk and vulnerability. You can put it as disaster risk also, and if you would get more formal disaster risk reduction, and the current scenario we have also identified the issues of climate change (and adaptation). So we do address the issues of asset building, which is (... ..) responsible for that (...) which is more of a foreign process. At the same time we address the policy issues of inequality, primarily of the most vulnerable ones. The focus of [name organization]'s work is on the most vulnerable ones. Which results in different and various groups such as people's disability or hazard, and other forms of disabilities. And then the risk factor comes in with climate hazard, or disaster risk and in terms of disaster risk (reduction). So those are the basic three elements. So if that fits into a donors agenda where we are interested to partner, then we go for that fund. This donor strategy or the scope of the strategy we would perhaps (deflect) from that.

So you start from you own strategy and you find donors second...

Another question, I read the Annual report of 2007, so I had some remarks I was wondering about, one phrase caught my attention: "In recent years and with the coming of a new generation of NGOs in Bangladesh, we have moved away from directly implementing projects to build alliances with local development partners that bring wider and deeper benefits for poor people." Do you care to explain why it would be better to do so?

Certainly (...) it's not a decision I mean coming in one year, at once. Because as I told [name organization] has been working in Bangladesh since 1971. It has been there for quite a long period of time. We have been a very active part of the Bangladesh development process. Working closely with the government system as well as with the civil society. At a point of time where there was no civil society like soon after the independence war of Bangladesh, there was hardly any civil society at that point of time. So there it was quite feasible and quite necessary to (...) which is a very (fun) thing that I would say. But at the same time, after having invested in community groups, mobilizing their preparation, mobilizing the local organizations to come out and bring their capacity, and establishing institution for those who are delivering a pro-poor agenda as part of their mandate or their mission in terms of poverty eradication or disaster response and so on. So over time, not only [name organization] but I think many other agencies have invested a lot in civil society capacity building in Bangladesh context. So afraid it was then realized that it is now I tell you that we should locate the (distinct) capacity, which has already been nurtured and mobilized by various actors altogether, we should then target that how do we best build their sustainability. by enhancing their capacity and depending on them to make an in-house capacity for Bangladesh and give them more institutional strength and support. So that is where it was a necessity that we should move away from direct implementation to depending on partners with whom we have been working directly or indirectly anyways. So in that context, the next strategy paper, the current one, which was valid in 2010, and the new one is also coming but I think the one you were reading is just the previous one. The new one is now, come up with a strong partnership element where there is a very strong component, what we call the P4 policy. It is basically for the program participants policy that we call it which has certain basic principles on how to do (mutual respect), how to develop mutual capacity, how to work together in terms of accountable and deliverable programs, that is what has been done so far. So at this point in time I would say yes our direct implementation program have been reduced to almost 30%. and rest the majority chunk of our program resources are delivered through partners. At the same time you will find at several times there are gaps where you intent to work in a, you know, multiple recipient context or in a multiple issues in terms of population building their network sort of thing, there you will find certain gaps because every individual organization has their own agenda. Coming together and working on a singular issue, that (...) becomes a challenge. Instead of I would say in the form of climate change, when they started this program perhaps you will see that in the same location in the same areas many other NGOs are involved but then at the same time they are getting funding from various other resources not necessarily from [name organization] so somebody is receiving some resources from another donor, from some another agencies so how do you build that (mandate) in a coordinated manner? We won't duplicate things rather than comprehensibly do something better. That is exactly what we are doing. So in that form, certain times, we do depend on the partners and deliver programs through the partners, and we find the program quality is also equally good whether it is delivered directly or delivered through the partner. There has been quite a lot of evaluation, review and assessment which results in: yes there are quite positive program and we should (emphasize) it more. But then collective actions, we try to bring together many agencies,

breaking the (identities) in between, there we find there is a need for (mobilization) as well. And those (mobilizations) are still in process so sometimes we try to facilitate a network, facilitate an institutional framework, bringing them altogether to address one single issues and also to engage with policy advocacy issues. So those are the image we are still building.

So you would say that you would stimulate collective action? [yes] And would you say that there are a lot of NGOs in the field right now who work on the same things, amongst others climate change. Would you say that they are overlapping or is that a too broad a statement to make?

I would not say they are overlapping, but I would say there is a need for mutual collaboration, cooperation, coordination to deliver something of a comprehensive kind. I would just give you certain examples, let say there are agencies which are also working on climate change but their focus is more on children so they work on disaster risk reduction in schools and have a climate change curriculum. For example Plan International and ActionAid, Save the Children many agencies are engaged with that process. At the same time there are agencies who are working with people with disabilities and so on, there are agencies who are purely focusing on livelihood, there are organizations who are working more on the cultivation of Sundarban - protection of the natural resources. So what we find in form of the [name organization] support is that as a community their crisis is much bigger than our resources, what we find always as a niche. Within the totality of our resources that we are putting into (truthest) projects or certain programs on climate change that we are trying to implement, we still find a lot of gaps, we cannot fulfill all of them with equal means. and that is with the agenda to always advocate for policy advocacy where government has to take that responsibility. But for the time being let's say in terms of addressing the whole climate change adaptation issue with the community, the total resource requirement is quite huge, which is about hundred, but we might be able to bring in only ten, another agency may be able to bring in 20, another agency maybe bring in 5. So that (...) entire requirement of the community. At the same time we (regulate) participatory assessment, local level action plan, developing certain kind of alternative livelihood mechanism, and organizing, mobilizing and advocating for issues at the national level. Similarly you will find other organizations bringing in a different set of expertise which is more linked to children and schools and developing those areas. Another form of organization may come up with fisheries and agriculture kind of programs. So it is always better to have this collective work. So the community has multiple stakeholders, the community should come up with their own plan, what they need. And they should discuss it with multiple agencies to meet their different kind of requirement that they have. And that is where the climate change action plan that is emerging from the community -which we are currently trying to facilitate, what we call it as a CRVA, community risk vulnerability analysis- and that is the process we facilitate to develop the community level action plan, and then beyond that, what we can do as part of that (plan/club) we could facilitate that, whatever (depends) as a gap from our resources or our level of expertise we would definitely request the community and the other agencies to collaborate on those areas. So that's when, whenever we have an issue with regard to the same area being visited by various agencies and everybody is working in the same area we try to facilitate a coordination based in Dhaka among various agencies and at a local level try to help coordination along with the union authority and local level governance so that we can address those issues directly.

And then of course there is a kind of larger (...) is primarily with regard to some of the examples I can set for you, with regard to disaster risk reduction, there was a consortium which was formed very recently last two years. A consortium which is a (unity) of many organizations, which is called (Naurium). And this is a consortium which represents about 6 to 7 INGOs those who are working collectively on. So even if they have a multiple priority in terms of the local area issues, the way they coordinate among themselves and deliver the program in a collaborative manner which ultimately was the best program for the community in terms of expertise in terms of needs and in terms of expectation from various agencies. And lastly it also helps us coordinate and address the governance related issues with regard to policy advocacy and so on. that we can jointly represent what we want to advocate for. other than each one of the agencies (...) we think the government (...). If we do a collective voice, the voice is also stronger and more sharper in terms of the policy asks, what we are asking from policy advocacy work. And then it also presents a more stronger approach, because then there is a collective understanding and a collective strategy that emerges from those processes. And this is where, even in climate change work, that we are collectively engaging in, they say why interaction with Unnayan Onneshan agency but we see them as a major player in terms of engaging into policy debate and they are including a lot of dialogue and debate that is happening in terms of the biodiversity convention at the global level as well. So it is always good to be connected with the community and set time we are also looking at other forms of engagement, which is something we call (Archive). It is basically a new form of network that is coming up with climate change actions. Which is primarily called Action Research on Baseline in Bangladesh. so it's a long-term, longitudinal, (process) they are trying to develop. And this is when we also try to share our knowledge and resources that we have. But we have also conducted our own baseline for our own program, which we call Paribartan. Our own program that we are implementing is a multi country program, which is directed at, Paribartan means change. But this is basically a multi country climate resilient program which is (covering) both India and Bangladesh, its covering basically the coastal areas of Bangladesh and the coastal area of India. So that is a program I have basically (...). And this program also means sharing and exchange of learning across the border, it is not necessarily that it will on the other side of the border will be better. (...) So how do we build that cross learning and cross (...) of IVS adaptation strategies, community knowledge, and bringing in the exchange of scientific knowledge as well. How do you bring the (people) science technology into action? While simplifying the scientific analysis or the models or this assessment on climate impact in a simple language for the community so they understand it more comprehensibly. In order to do that e have used something like a very local, folk form of media which they called it as (porsom). Porsom is basically, there is a picture, and there will be some kind of place and they will be reciting meanings of those pictures, what it means to the community. And they role it up so the next picture can come in and they will continue that recitation. It is a very interesting, I mean if we were in my office, I could show you some of the videos and some of the documents but... so that's where we find that a lot of interesting things can be done when we do things in a more coordinated and more collaborative approach. In terms of knowledge I also see that there is a need of exchanging knowledge and sharing of experiences so that we do not repeat the same stories or the same experiences that others have. We do not need to reinvent the wheel. Other people have already done good work in terms of crop diversification or crop adaptivity or sustainable agriculture kind of processes. There are agencies which have done more of saline resistant writings, and more adaptive adaptation program, salinity that is affecting the people. So there is, so many work has already been done, we do not need to go and reinvent that just by interacting, exchanging experiences and opening up.

So my next question would be, we just discussed all these different NGOs who have different target groups and different programs, do you think that at this time there exists any policy or program designed for people displaced or who have migrated due to climate change?

Yes, well that's the core of your questions which I understood you were interested in to ask and I am also very keen on that particular issue. Well as of now, I would say, the destination of Paribartan is very very new. And we are just in the initial stage of setting up the program. But one thing I can say for sure is that we have just completed our baseline story, which is the first step or activity of our program to set an indicator for all the activities proposed for the next 5 years. It's a 5 year long program. So in that there is a very specific and certain kind of change in our budget, what we see both in a temporal manner as well as in our longitudinal impact. So for a temporal manner you can always attribute to disaster risk. People lose their crop, they got affected by Aila or Sidr kind of disaster, so they have migrated temporarily but then they tend to come back, that's more of a seasonal migrant it could be called. In our baseline study which we conducted in about something like 20 locations as a sample across Bangladesh and India it is very clearly (...) that people actually migrated permanently. And families, we tried to develop an indicator in terms of how we call it as a migration in form of climate refugees? So if we say that: ok, there are 40 million climate refugees predicted in Bangladesh to be emerging, how do we put those estimations of 40 million into real figures where we identify them, who are these people. So it's a very thin line to establish that (hard). The people behind it they go for (bane or for boon) as well in terms of poverty (... ..)???

So suppose someone is going for prosperity, is going for some better prospects in life, they are better educated or there are better prospects to go to a different city to get a job and to get settled, that's a different form of migration. How do you differentiate it from the people who are actually affected by losing all their productive resources, productive assets, in disasters and so on which can be long termed as (...) climate variability impact and then there is no future prospects available in the community to survive a better livelihood or to survive a basic day to day life: in that context it is distress migration. So when we say there is a distress migration, and that is the migration we are looking at, those are the ones that we target as, even those who are being affected, as climate change refugees. But as of now we have just conducted the baseline we have set the indicators for how to define them as this refugee category. We have not done (...) an assessment of how many, when, where, how it happens and all those things. But we are definitely looking at the possibility that we would undertake a research around this issue, very certain. But the initial baseline, was an indication of a synthetic figure as how much it is affecting people. To what extent, how frequent, and how many members of the family are actually migrating, or the whole family migrating? There are instances of whole families migrating as well. Bu the best thing for [name organization] is that apart from our initiative on climate change we also have program with the urban homeless people which we call Amrao. So this project primarily targets those form of migrant people those who come into the city and who have no form of identity or any kind of security to survive. So then basically, unless you can find them everywhere around, they are not visible during the day at all, but when you go in the evening and at night as well, they are everywhere in the city.

Why not at the daytime?

They go for their different livelihood. But it is not a (permanent) settlement. So if they stay at the pavement during the day police and everybody will target them to be removed. So they have their temporary arrangements they just come there at night, wake up and get freshened up and go for their work. So their basically an invisible mass, which constitutes a major part of the city's economic activity or the political economy of a city. You'll find them for example selling a newspaper to somebody working in somebody's house working as a maid or work as porter in the different harbors areas. So this project in particular has been initiated for the last two or three years now. And has started before my joining so I will not be able to give you the complete picture to you, but I can share and send some documents with you. We have basically now this idea contemplating between the climate change initiative and the Amrao initiative to track those people when do they come to the city, what happens, what do we do and what form of livelihood they adopt and whether they live with better security in the city or whether they become more vulnerable. And we do have temporary settlement or (...) camps for them where we provide some education facility for their children, some health facility for pregnant women or even those who need support from (the nature). It's like a camp so we go and open camp in different locations and particular day and they know it and then they attend those programs very regularly, and then there is some toilet facility, some lockers facilities to put their personal belongings. Because their personal belongings, they have nowhere to keep it safe. So they come to those centers, leave their belongings when they go to work and then when they come back they pick up their children from the classes pick up their stuff and leave for the places where they camp. But that's just addressing the issue from a very basic level. But then the larger issues are yet to be addressed, in terms of how to recognize them, how to give them identity, how to address the dignity issue, they are very much harder than (...) they are the ones who are also contributing a lot. And this is where our focus would be off course coming up to this issue that we are trying to highlight. But as soon as the baseline report comes up, I think we are almost in the last stage now, (...) well be holding the final draft let's say by the end of the month, the first week of august, but perhaps share with you some of the (trainings). I can call it as a training initiative even if not you'll find out how many people where, how and when and other things, but definitely there is an indication of those form of people emerging from different areas because of this long term impact. So whenever there is a short term impact, which is what I was telling as a temporary migration or seasonal migration, you can call it as a (incident), but when it becomes more of a permanent and frequent nature, that is when we need to address this issue with the perspective of climate change. These nature of impact are going to multiply the impact is going to be more and more severe, [compared] with the kind of impact people are facing. So in that context what would be the solution, how do we address this issue, how do we (rip them out) of their livelihood, what form of adaptation would be appropriate for them to be able to go back and settle in there, or if some countries are interested, or if they are happy to learn about a skill which would help them to fetch a good prosperity outside which is another form or option. And looking at some form of technical solutions as well. How do you treat the salinity intrusion, (...), and other forms of (...) and alternative options. Including solutions in development terms of education, and other infrastructure in those areas. So those are the things we are still contemplating. I wouldn't say that we've done it...

Do you mean [name organization] or all Bangladeshi organizations in general?

I would say, yes, from our side we are trying to highlight this issue as [name organization] 's initiative, but at last we see that everybody is a (taker), everybody is a prospective (taker) and this is prominent and massive. You need multiple stakeholders to come and take responsibility including that of the government.

Are stakeholders taking responsibility as of now?

I would say yes and to a certain extent no as well. Because those issues who are political in nature has to be addressed by the government. And what we try to do is, we work closely with the policymakers, we work with the parliamentarians, we work with various concerns you know departments that exist for these kind of issues, and also we work with the UN bodies, the European Union, and everybody else so we can mobilize the donors (...) and prioritize this certain issue in terms of climate change impact. And that is where I think, unless and until there is very evident form of information, generated from research and various primary kinds of analysis, it will be absolutely difficult to engage in those issues. You cannot just go and say now these are the issues we want to highlight, there has to be some sort of evidence-based, advocacy mechanism. So that is why we were prioritizing this research that we would perhaps undertake in the future, targeted at both cause and effect kind of resources, which we call the pull and push factor of migration. So if we look at both angle, when we track them in urban centers like, Dhaka, Khulna, Chittagong, Sathkira, that sort of areas, but also to address the issue of (...) migration at the source level, that people are moving from. But at this point in time, yes that is the major issue that we would like the government and the other agencies to also take responsibility for. Resource wise it requires much more coordinated and much more collective effort in terms of addressing the issues.

So this baseline research, you conducted it in several regions, could you name the regions?

We have as a program covered India and Bangladesh. So in India we have covered two districts which is called, (Kendrapurna) and (Jakasipur), you may get confused with the names, I will give you a brochure to spell the names correctly so don't worry about that. And then in Bangladesh we have taken four regions which is basically: Satkhira, Khulna, Patuakali and Borguna. So those are the four locations In Bangladesh where we did the sampling of, covering (...) about 10% of the (...). And this baseline that I am talking about is not just done as a one-off research that we do the design and go of, and implement the program. We have done the design as such that it will be a longitudinal research, which will continue for five years. So we have established those areas which we covered in the first year as a first baseline (improvisation) of course and it would serve for the project purpose. But then these are the areas which we call as hotspots and these hotspots will be reviewed every year in a similar interval at the same location to see what the impact has been. And then in 5 years time you can generate an exact picture of what climate change impact is taking place. Although the scientific predictions are there, the projections are there, the climate model is there, but when you talk about very practical community based evidence, there is very little. So through this baseline we try to establish as a baseline information system and a climate change information system. So it will be dynamic to capture the changes over a period of time. And we also try to establish that these types of processes can be monitored by the community. So that's the initiative which we have just completed, and as soon as the report is out I think I can share some of it. But the basic thing that we are doing is not quite saying like ok such impacts have taken place. It will always be put (within) certain empirical evidence from the community level and use scientific knowledge from various

experts on agriculture or saline resistance or even tidal surges and so on to give an early warning to say: ok this is what's going to happen, if it is not controlled now. So we can alert the government, alert the policymakers, alert the major (sponsor) (...) makers to be careful about certain aspects before it is impacting the lives of people.

But is the government not aware right now?

Well, I would not say it is not aware of it, because the projections/predictions are so broad and general that it is very difficult to say that what strategy has to be adopted. Now I will give you certain examples like, in form of climate change, there is a number of initiatives that are going on. If you look at the broad projection of climate change which is primarily the mandate and the fourth report of the IPCC under the UNFCCC Framework. We have projections on what will happen if, two centimeter sea level rise will happen, what will happen if X amount of temperature increases. So there are projections about measuring up the Himalaya's, kind of glaciers and flooding of the rivers those are affecting Bangladesh' (...) But then, you'll see there are already a number of rivers which are already dried out and there are 8 rivers. So where do you see this combination of both where if you look at the saline intrusion that is happening in the coastal area: on the one hand you have this man-made, environmental disaster, which is caused by various bigger projects, which is restricting the inflow of sweet water. When the inflow of sweet water is stopped or restricted, the natural (trained hag) to keep the saline water away because of the heavy inflow, that cycle got affected so the nine months of heavy flow of river kept the seawater away from the coast. When the inflow of water got reduced in the river, the saline water came in, this is what we call the tidal tendency or the tidal nature, which got affected because of man-made as well as natural phenomena. Its causing another form of disaster so it is a very different (trait) to analyze, where do you draw the line. Should we say: ok we work with the people from this area because the sea level is rising or should we also have to treat people who have been affected by salinity. So how do we analyze it, it has to be an informed kind of decision because if you do something hurriedly without being informed about what is actually the impact and how it would be, if you ask the best of the expert in Bangladesh now (...) what is climate change and what is it going to be? Everybody would very bluntly say: [laughing] I don't know! That's the common theme. But I would say lets understand it better instead of jumping into action. Yes, climate change is affecting us, that is evident, it is scientifically proven, and it is visible to the naked eyes when communities are being affected, there is no doubt about it. But then the fact is that, what adaptation mechanism has to be taken, what mitigation has to be done, all these debates, the debates that are taking place globally, and the blame-game that goes on, you are (believed) in more than us and you should become Annex I or you should become the beneficiary of it, of the whole climate change fund debate. I certainly believe that there is a lot to learn from the communities who have been resilient in those environment, instead of posing climate change as a big threat to the whole humanity. There is a lot of scope to bring in without changing the whole sector of let's say, the society at large, in terms of the economic viability of the natural resources that we have, how do we tap those resources, how do we potentially mobilize it so we don't damage but rather make more of (...) protective forests, So take this as an opportunity to do all that what we have been talking about since the (Ghandi's...?) "The world has enough to meet everybody's needs, but not everybody's greed". So what we are getting into we are tapping the resources with a greedy approach. With various forms of industrialization and other things we have been (procreating) or forms of development that have been taken place. But if you try to use this framework, this climate change adaptation framework, to mobilize that (shade) of change mechanism in the society, in the process

of running the economy, than perhaps we would be better off than the industrialized system. To make the natural resources your base of the economy, which will be more sustainable and more protective for the people of kind of (old world).

So that's a general message I could say, but at the same time let's not go so broad in terms of perspective: we are all intellectuals with our own academic research background. Everybody who comes to the community, the community already has a lot of knowledge on this, how do you protect the Sundarban, how do you manage the Sundarban, micro protection and living in those difficult conditions. Tap those resources: nurture them with a little bit more of scientific information, create a people science fora, where there is no communication gap between the scientists who are projecting climate change and the people those who are living with climate change.

Do you think (there is a gap)?

I think its quite possible, I would say that perhaps (climate change has been happening for ages) farmers are among the best scientist you will see in terms of our (...) science mechanism. So you will see more of the (...) that has happened over the years. (...) They are not scientist in that matter but if you look at what to do with this condition what to do with this kind of institution of humidity, or heavy rain constitution, they will do it. But in this context I would say there is a lot of things to be said and done. I should not be simplifying it and don't quote me for that, its tricky: there is a lot more to be undertaken by various agencies, those who are working on climate change, but I think there is a lot more to learn before jumping into what we call as a (politician) mechanism. What we do as of today as a specific adaptation mechanism, perhaps is adequate enough for addressing evidently of the centre of agriculture practice or particular theme, but maybe in the long term it doesn't really affect (...) so there is no harm to be open and learn from the system. That's where I would say, the initiative that we are undertaking we always have this mode of praxis: do some action, do some reflection around it. So that's why we call it a priority. Not try to scale it up at once, try out certain mechanisms, that have already emerged from recent practices, experiment with it, do it with a community who is willing to undertake such kind of planning, because they have already run out of options, so its always better to give them certain options that they can try out: if it works then it helps them to overcome. Then you can try and replicate it. But replication is again an issue of conscience. So we would not be adequate in terms of our effort to address the whole spectrum of things. And that is where this networking, cross-learning, exchange, sharing and policy-advocacy. So we do have our community action, we do have a level of analysis, let the community do planning, and we bring in the scientific community to do some bit of, you know, we call it as a forum. Justifying more from a scientific background. So not only bringing in community perception but also bringing in a scientific perspective. So when it goes together, then it is a very well-informed choice: yes, this is where the best option could be, then we could have it. So that's perhaps I would say as a approach one should form.

Do you think there is enough time to learn?

Learning I would say is a very, let's say, how did the world learn about climate change? It's an everyday process, everyday you learn something more. Similarly the whole community, the whole society is (working) on these climate change issues. It has been there for ages, it is not that we decided right now climate change is affecting us; it has been affecting us for ages. Now only when it became up to a threat level, which we perceived as: this is going to be the end of humanity, that's

when we give that alert and we acted on it. When I started working on these issues it was basically treated as an environmental issue or a environment and developmental issue, it was (...) 20 years back. Now when we talk about climate change we do see that we are addressing the same set of, you know carbon emission, the same set of issues that we have been talking about but this has become very alerting, an alert situation now. Unless we learn and adapt to this condition now it is basically as it was predicted we will perish with everyone in society. So this is where learning, I would not say there is any time which is delayed or anything, I think that as of now there is enough time to learn as well. And not only that, but whatever you learn, you start practising. You'll learn the best when you do something practically. So don't do it for the learning to take place but what we would do is like every day we say: tomorrow we are going to do certain form of vulnerability mapping and vulnerability analysis in the field. We learn from that and we come up with certain solutions and recommendations on the communities, and again learn something new and then go back. So its an action, reflection process. That's why we call it as, we talk about those praxis, in terms of climate change adaptation rather than just doing one set of new technology being implemented across so everybody should implement that. Again with the philosophy that one size doesn't fit everybody. It should not be a driver for (greed) economy again. Greed economy is like, well what is being the major market opportunity for climate change. Because all those industries who have done research in development for ages, they are sitting ready with their technologies to be marketed. So as soon as this climate change fund comes in, this whole fund will be, you know, (used) to procure those technologies from those markets so again it would concern economic driver, it's not a climate change right. So how do you make these communities to come up with a sustainable mechanism and approach? We welcome all the prospective technologies that is going to benefit the community. We welcome the solar technology, we welcome the saline resistance technology, we welcome research and development around crop diversification and adaptation of crop. Let's use those technologies, bring in science there, but not in a form of patent gain, which has again created this form of global market syndrome which is the root cause of the industrialisation and destroying the whole process of CO2 emission and everything it has impacted. So don't I would not say, again I think, I am still making a big conclusion here. But the fact is that the model has to be different than what we have been practising. If we talk about climate change as of today, it cannot be the same approach as we have been following with the World bank, with the (...) pumping in resources into developing countries and depending on the same form of kind of development. That has to be debated, discussed and resolved to bring in a new perspective of development, a new enough development where the world is not divided between developed and developing; people should be treated as equals you know, it's not two different worlds. Off course somebody has caused it, somebody is victim of it, we're definitely asking for compensation, we demand () such kind of regulation for the losses that have happened. And the point is, the technology, it has to be relevant in every context. But at the same time the people to people that is existing across the world since centuries, that should be the basis where we don't see each other as a competitor or () how you can call it. So I see that debate constantly warming up and that's why the last 4 or 5 COPs have been really a disaster and you're not hearing any of it.

Do you think there is room for change?

There is enough room for change and I sure that as soon as you stop this blame-game, you will actually come across diluted possibilities, solutions and approach which are workable for both sides. It is possible, I would not say it is not possible, the only thing is the voices of these victims have to be heard by those policymakers and how do you make them hear this mechanism, if something all of a sudden is trying to build up and that's why we're calling it a evidence-based advocacy. What we do, we arguing as a baseline. Yes, everybody has discussed about, in terms of the Kyoto framework, how much emission to be controlled, what has to be happening: everybody knows it. But do they know that people are already losing their livelihood and leaving their villages and going out? So if you can hear that evidence, do they know that we went out and have stillbirth and malnutrition is increasing in the region: do they know about it? If they don't know then let's do very scientific-based research and start informing them. And that I think, lot of (platforms) are in there already, I'm not saying we're doing it the first time, it's just the fact that I am in the responsibility of [name organization] to take up this task, so I'm undertaking this role. Before that I was working with Action Aid for a long 14 years, so I've already done Action Aid's perspective, so lastly what I would say is, it's the responsibility of the civil society which it should (claim), we are accountable and responsible to do that. And we are doing that kind of thing.

So civil society holds the key?

Civil society actually brings in the people's perspective which is not often been heard by many fora's because there is not enough space for them to be heard. Now in climate change debate I would say, yes, at least the civil society have gotten a little more mobilized, little more collective. But then there are debates and discussions around let's say the... can you put the fan on...

So there is actually one question left, but I think you have answered it throughout the interview: do you think it is feasible for climate change policy to come into being any time soon? Well my main question actually is, do you think climate change refugees, after research, after community (base), do you think that in the end, just make a prediction, that there is such a thing as climate change refugees? Or do you think you can make enough distinctions, you can find enough evidence to make a plight for these people?

I would say, yes there are evidences but not (yet everybody is realizing) the fact that people are being (recognized), are being affected because of this consequent (...) impact of disasters and impact of climate change scenarios. But whether there have been adequate measures to address those, in term of (...) to adapt... Because the policy framework that you were asking for, there are governments which are already taking a lot initiatives to do that first initiative towards climate change, it's a new generation (sometimes). So far, the entire constitution and the governance mechanisms, where the government body, they even had the human rights processes which every constitution wanted to guarantee. But at this point in time there is something new emerging which is called "the rights of the next generation". Where you will find it being discussed as a "next generation's rights" is the environmental and climate change rights. So to address those issues I think countries are falling short of the (interpretations) and the provisions within the existing constitutions, and many are actually starting to review and reflect those analysis into the... Bangladesh has definitely taken the lead in that, to bring some of the literatures which has been very recently published as well as the parliament has already started debating about (...) incorporate it into the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy Paper. So that is where I think Bangladesh could be one of the

first. I know of the discussions around the Maldives, around Vietnam, Indonesia, various other islands, they are basically starting to realise it. Whether it would happen or not at least (on) time, because of multiple interest that each government has in its own economic growth, everybody in every country has to recognize, at a certain point in time, that there is a limit to the growth mechanism that has to (...). You cannot grow all the time, but at the same time it is even more important to be sustainable and grow in a more (transient) manner. And this is where I think gradually countries are coming up with more of research, more understanding the scenarios, more of developing alternative framework, adapting to climate friendly mechanism, lot of this is on protecting their natural resources, and various forms of mechanisms on adaptation and mitigation have been worked out. But then I would say, whether they are willingly doing it or unwillingly do it, there is no (trial) but they have to do something with the (...). I am not too sure which countries are in what status right now, (...) looked at those policy analysis at work, but I am certainly sure that they have to take up this situation and constitutions and provisions and governance, everything else to be tuned according to this. Then at the same time I would just say one more thing, there is this larger debate still emerging, that those people who have been very long time active on policy issues, they are sometimes feeling that this debate on climate change is high jacking their debate on poverty. I think that is where the broad consensus has to emerge, with people like us and other players as well active on both poverty and climate change. And [name organization] always has a comprehensive mechanism, where we are equally active, and we address issues of poverty along with other vulnerabilities and risks that we are predicting. But at the same time there has to be a larger consensus that these two issues are quite intrinsic to each other. So poverty may be addressed as a symptom or a cause but it has to be addressed as a priority. And climate change should not be crippling up on everything else rather how we build that synergy between addressing the issues of poverty, vulnerability risk and hazard, and addressing the long term climate change (impact). That's why everybody has to look at it more from a holistic perspective rather than from a singular approach.

Yes, I think you have a cross-contextual approach, don't you?

Yes that would be the most relevant I think. So everybody has a role to contribute. Even those who are active on children's issue have a role to contribute to the educate the children, to prepare the next generation, people who are working on women's issue particularly like ours, we primarily focus on women and the effect of climate change on women. So that is like our priority. Similarly other agencies will be working on alternate technologies, or alternate adaptive strategies and so on. So basically what we are trying to do is looking at these multiple adaptation choices, which are emerging from this needs assessment and base-line assessment, and come up with this multiple form of learning and lessons that we have from our (...) practices as well as from others. So we can build something which perhaps could be a better pilot model which you can then present back to the government and other stakeholders: This is a model we have done with our own experiment and whether it works or it doesn't work, the positive side of it, the negative side of it, what more could be done and present it back to the larger fora as well. So that's where you find there is a need to engage more often.

I also wanted to ask you about your engagement, how are you kind of engaged in this? What is the background of your studies, because then I can refer back to our government issues?

Well my master is conflict studies and human rights. And I think you've touched upon a few very interesting topics, because at the moment the entire concept of 'climate change refugee' is very problematic [] because of a couple of things you mentioned such as should you name them migrants or refugees, is it temporary or permanent and is it just the only reason or are there economic reasons as well. And off course I read about the Kyoto Protocol and about developed and developing countries, and at a sudden point I thought: this is a big discussion about a topic which is so vague just yet [yes I agree with you]. And on an international level or in academics they come up with solutions such as we should make a separate framework for these people, we should include them in the Geneva Convention for Refugees, and at a sudden point I thought: there must be another approach by people who actually deal with these people, whatever you may call them, and then I got to read up on Bangladesh, I haven't really gotten into the governance just yet because of my delay, but I won't bother you with that. So at a sudden point I came up with two statements: one, international politics is influencing maybe policymaking on the local level, and at the local level NGOs and organizations maybe more pragmatic in their approach, these are hypotheses, I don't know if its... So that's why I came here to research. I don't want to sound like a wise person but there is this quote the Thomas theorem that goes ehm: If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences. [absolutely, that's very true]. So that's pretty much what I came to do here, I wanted to get the view of a lot of organizations, international organizations, local organizations, and see whether they have a different view on things, a different approach. Well, I think I'm going to leave it at that, just map out the differences because the situation is too vague to point out: this is the issue you should work at. I don't think I'm authorized to make such a statement.

But is it like a, you have a term paper or something, you have to submit a thesis?

Yes it is my master's thesis and I am doing an internship at Unnayan Onneshan and they expect me to write a report as well so I think it will be a shorter version of my thesis.

So how did you get in touch with Unnayan?

I Googled: "climate change", "Bangladesh" and "organisation" and then Unnayan came out.

Those are the agencies which are very active in Bangladesh, so whenever we work on climate change issues primarily, first keep the local agencies coordinated and that's where we try to balance between... and also provide some financial support sometimes and even knowledge support. Let's say they're doing some research, they're interested in doing some research, that we could support or we are taking a research they could put in their expertise, and hire them and we could do that. So that's why we constantly keep engaging in something. We don't necessarily work as a donor and recipient sort of a thing, we work more like a partner where we usually understand everybody's need and like that. So what I would suggest is like a, well because we are also from an institution – if it wasn't for time constraint we would be able to meet in the office and I would have been able to introduce you to my team and everything- but I do have a team here and a team near which basically works in a coordinated manner. Whenever there is a request like this, because you are already placed with Unnayan Onneshan, I think it is a personal interview thing with me is fine, but in case of any formal engagement with regard to [name organization] and so on then there is a process that

we engage in with HR and so on. So I have already informed because I don't have to inform anyone here, but in the Dublin office. So whenever you have a report or something do share a copy with me so at least we can kind of acknowledge your contribution to the work and everything that is happening and at the same time vice versa. And if you have any further difficulties with the references that I have mentioned, do write back to us, we would be happy to provide some of it, and as soon as the baseline and other documents are ready we could share it with you. Another thing we also need to, how long is your program here?

I am only here for another two weeks

You're just finishing?

Yes.

As long as your purpose is made, then that is ok. So what I am going to do is I am going to give you some brochure so you can get some names and references and see what is the background of this program and so on. But apart from that also keep in touch for this (...) necessary documentation and everything. And ehm thanks for your time.

Thank you for your time!

25 July 2011/ Semi interviews with possible climate change refugees/ Karwan bazaar, railway slum, Dhaka

- Person #1 Male, 40. Moved here 30 years ago. Migrated due to riverbank erosion.
- Person #2 Male, 30. Moved here 13 years ago? Used to be a farmer. Lost his land due to riverbank erosion of the (Brahmaputra). Now he pulls the rickshaw. No government support or whatever other kind of support from organizations. Moved also because of economic reasons. Is to stay permanently.
- Person #3 Female, 35. Moved here 40 years ago? Used to have land due to riverbank erosion of the (Brahmaputra). Now no land. No way to go back. Husband owns a business nearby. No government support or organizations whatsoever.
- Persons #4 Three female of different ages (25, 30, 60). Shy. Another female (40) joins. Migrated also due to riverbank erosion long time ago. No government support or other organizations whatsoever.
- Person #5 Another men joins (45). If you would need one thing what would it be? If he had the option he would want land to sustain himself. But basic needs, food, water, are most urgent.

25 July 2011/ DFID/ Adviser Climate change and environment

I read the report, which was sort of an assessment of DFID ehm the House of Commons, International Development Committee, DFID's Program in Bangladesh, Third report of session 2009-2010. First of all, there was a remark that most of the recommendations have been followed except for one to develop a multi donor approach to stimulate dialogue on mass migration, so I was wondering why this recommendation had not been followed just yet or... If you have any idea on it? Ehm, as a consequence of climate change.

Yes as a consequence of climate change. I mean migration in and of itself is a very important topic and Bangladesh really at the cutting edge of it actually and it's a very pertinent topic for Bangladesh but I think one of the reasons why we haven't developed a project or program in the DFID is primarily capacity. And also because we've gone through quite an extensive process of designing our operational plan and spade on the staff that we have, and the technical skills they poses and also based on what we feel through a variety of dialogue with the government, what are the priorities of the government. And unfortunately we feel that the government migration well engagement in migration is more difficult and it's not a massive priority. There is an acknowledgement that there is a lot of rural to urban migration, that its seasonal and there is also the bulk of GDP comes from remittances so internal migration. But to design a program DFID requires more of a demand from the government to engage in the topic and we didn't have that much. We dealing currently, our programs and our operational plan covers education, health, basic service delivery, some work on governance, a lot of work on private sector and a lot of work on extreme poverty and poverty alleviation, lots of livelihood programs and social protection. So we felt that for us that's our niche, so it wasn't as much that we didn't think migration is not an important topic, but its one of a myriad of topics that we could cover, this one was not one of the main priorities.

So do you think that with the other programs, you and other organizations are doing on development and livelihood programs, that maybe you are reaching those people who are displaced due to climate change?

Absolutely, absolutely. (...) I think we have a material program that has been supporting the displaced populations from Aila. We've been working with them through the UN to supply shelter, nutrition, pack food, and water and sanitation. So you also get a spin-off form that, on policy dialogue and talk to the government about what do we do with the population that has been living on the embankments for a year or for 2 years. So there is some discussion about the migratory issues as a result of disasters and climate change. We also have a huge 60 million dollar program, 60 million pound program, that is working with urban populations, urban slums ehm settlements, and in that the issues of urban to rural migration and you know are quite, they are highlighted in that and there is lots of dialogue about land tenure, tenure security in those programs. So yes we do kind of deal with those kind of issues but more from a programmatic development lens: looking at longer term responses, access to basic kind of services, that kind of things. In a nutshell yes.

I just skipped off course a very important question. Do you, does the DFID recognize there is a link between climate change and migration?

Absolutely. Yes. Our core narrative is on climate change and is one of the big issues we all are going to have to address. And certainly not only internally, within the country, but also internationally, intra regional. So it's a big issue and for Bangladesh in particular: a lot of Bangladeshis migrate out to work in the region and work more widely. And it's part of, it's tied in with UK foreign policy and the discussion that we have back in the UK about migrants as well, and the climate migrants are likely to increase. So yes we acknowledge, and we understand it to be an important stream of work, where we will keep an eye on, definitely. And in particular in relation to climate change for example, Bangladesh has already started to look at leasing land in Africa and places like that for food production and these are the sort of the discussions everybody is sort of thinking about. It's much more difficult to structure programs around it because it goes into the arena of international, global relations and that's a much harder area to work at. Especially in a country like Bangladesh where the internal issues are just so huge. Where poverty is extremely high, where malnutrition is extremely high, access to basic education and health is extremely low. So it's a balancing act between dealing with this bigger thing which is still to come and dealing with what we are faced with now.

So do you think that, you just named two things which I think are really important: the international debate on climate change, and you have the government and the country and the culture of Bangladesh: in what ways do you think does the international debate influences policymaking on a national level. Do you think at all it is hard or...?

I would say, I think it is probably the other way around. Not entirely but, national level dialogue is (...) more likely to influence international because once the governments starts to grapple with this a bit more clearly they will then be able to have things on the table at international negotiations for example, in relation to the type of framework and the structures that they would like for their people. So its kind of eh, I suppose probably a chicken and an egg thing you know. But for Bangladesh definitely I mean migration is going to be a key issue and we've already heard the Prime Minister stating that you may have to think about it as an adaptation mechanism for Bangladesh. You know, ship more Bangladeshis out cause there is not enough space, there is not enough and so on. So I think it is definitely on the governments radar ehm but then what does it mean, it makes measurement difficult. I think politically it is hard as hell, I think.

It's not a priority in one or...

Well it's not so much that it's not a priority it's more about how do you package it so that it becomes a positive thing for countries receiving large volumes of Bangladeshis. So that's where the difficulty lies. If you're talking about using migration as a coping mechanism than I can see why Bangladeshis would see that as a positive thing and as an opportunity to go but as a receiving country there is resistance, there are questions about what does this mean for their own domestic politics so it becomes a bit more difficult.

So you just mentioned that its intertwined with UK foreign policy. Do you think this issue is intertwined with migration debate or not?

I think it is, it must be at some point. Because if you're talking about climate refugees in the near future well you can (...) already: what's our position, what's our...

And what's your position?

[laughing] I am not in a position to say, I think we'll just leave it at that.

Still on the report, there were two things that were being said: there is an interrelated nature of adapting to climate change and tackling poverty; while at the same time it is crucial that funds on adaptation and mitigation should be in addition to existing aid budgets. So do you see, do you see this intermingling of climate change programs and poverty programs, do you think it's a vice or a virtue this intermingling.

I would say it's a virtue. I think it's essential that all development be climate smart, be climate proofed, otherwise there is no point, it's not going to be sustainable. So we'd as DFID, we certainly see it, climate change, as a cross-cutting theme and mainstreamed across all our programs and start thinking about how do you make sure whatever way its (...), whatever we're funding ehm is climate smart. So that's now a big push within the organization to go in that direction. And this issue of funding being additional to our normal development financing, I think as DFID and as the UK government actually we're quite serious about that and we agree with that position. And as you know the UK government has ring-fenced 2.8 billion dollars of its aid budget for climate change and it is additional to what we would normally have had, I would say.

It s additional ? Because that was kind of a vague point...

It's a difficult one to actually... You know money in a pot is difficult to kind of, separate out. Some of it additional, I would think the bulk of it is, and some of it is not really but then... [sighs] Maybe the additionality is around the focus you know because, a lot of the response to climate change adaptation is going to be just good development. So you would not call that additional, you would just say well we would have done development well anyway. But then there is need to think a little bit more clearly about, when you say "doing development well", then what is that "well" part, how much more would that cost us and that's the whole additional part. But it's all part of the development DFID. So it's difficult to kind of split them out. In terms of the UK's government's aid budget we do intent to increase our aid budget and with that increase, whether you would then term as the additional or not... it's difficult to kind of say.

So would you say that a specific program for climate change, environmental induced displaced, migrants, refugees is desired, is needed, or would a lot of good, well-done development programs cover their needs as well?

I think in every situation you do it context specific. I would say that it would be, it's almost as if you would ask that about gender a few years ago, when gender became the big topic, I could look at it from an angle of lets mainstream equality of the sexes, it should be part of development and making sure everyone has equal opportunity, equal empowerment and so on. But at some point there is a need to have a separate sort of focused programming that looks at gender in particular over a variety of issues. I think the same applies for climate change. So my answer to your question would be yes and no. I think its very context specific. Some programs it's easy to tweak and add a climate consideration, climate perspective on it. Other programs are harder so it might be better to have a kind of separate thing to complement what you're doing.

Do you think its feasible to, wait... You work a lot of with the government of Bangladesh, you tune your programs to their priorities, so do you think it poses difficulties for what you aim to do and what you actually achieve.

That's a tough one. I think we mustn't forget that this is Bangladesh and its the jurisdiction of the government to manage its own country. So it's important for donors when they come into a country to work with the government so I wouldn't say well they therefore impede us or make it easier, that's what we've got. I don't think it would be viable for us to work entirely outside the government. So you want to be able to do that. It poses challenges, but that's everywhere, even in Europe you have challenges working with the government [laughing]. So I think that's, that's the baseline..

So do you think that ehm, just getting back to the international debate, lot of the times there is talk between developing and developed countries, sort of a divide. Do you think that if there was ever to be a program specifically designed for climate change refugees, that the UK government would want to sponsor it, or donate money to it.

That's an interesting question, in theory or in practice? I don't know, the way we select our programs and projects, is depended on the value or the quality. And the DFID and the UK government's perspective is that e want pro-poor initiatives and things that result in economic growth and a developmental outcome. So if the program met those kind of criteria, I mean it is certainly worth looking at , I can't sort of, such as... And I think we do, we do actually fund some projects and programs on migration so we do do that and we see it as a core developmental issue and I know we fund through not just DFID centrally, but also through the foreign offices on what would be its global labor markets or things like that: we do fund things like that. So yes, I would suspect we would be meaning to, but I think it is important to go back to the why we fund. If it meets those criteria then yeah it would consider it.

So in a way if its development or pro poverty then funding is ok. I came upon this thing and I was just: DFID Climate Change programming is subject to the strategy and allocations of the UK's cross-government International Climate Change Fund (ICF). ICF priorities are to be agreed by summer 2011. And I was wondering, so what kind of difficulties does this pose for the climate change program or not?

It doesn't mean, it doesn't pose any difficulties at all. What is means is, what've done is, because I mentioned that we've ring-fenced this 2.8 billion which is what the international climate change fund is, that's the fund. And its managed by DFID, the Department for Energy and Climate Change, DEFRA which is the Department of Environment and Forestry of the UK, those are the three main organizations and the foreign Office sits on it as well. And it merely means that we are trying to integrate our work on climate change, as an integrated approach. And it looks at both the developmental and the poverty reduction angle of it but also its got low carbon development. So its they've set out three key programming areas, so they've got work on climate change adaptation which is about 50% or 40% of the fund I think, and then low carbon development and mitigation, then forestry. So that's the three core pillars of it and that's what we're funding through this fund.

OK. So you are just waiting for those programs to be concretized or...

No its not so much it needs to be concretized, each country office designs projects under those themes and submits them to the ICF for funding. That's sort of the governing part with the money and then each country office bids for money.

Ok now I understand. I've been going back and forth to all sorts of questions, but I'll just cut to the last one: DFID has a pretty strong focus on governance in Bangladesh, trying to improve their communication on international level, trying to improve parliamentary things, at the same time I read in the report that its difficult that they are trying to strengthen community-led initiatives and civil society in practice, as more funding is channeled through multilaterals. Do you think there is maybe eh DFID is maybe focusing on the big mainstream NGOs and not on the lower level, local level NGOs and is that a problem do you think?

Not entirely. We've been dealing with this query for civil society for ages especially in Bangladesh where there is a particular worry that DFID money goes through the World Banks big multilaterals, the World Bank, the EDB, so nobody gets to see the money at the grassroots. But you need to try to understand that DFID is had to expand its coverage and expenditure types of projects and problems it's done, while at the same time having to take down on its administration budget so there is quite less staff. So try to run DFID as we did in the 80s when it was a lot of little projects with lot of different NGOs, is just a lot harder with less staff. So we have to think in like bog pots of money that can be administered and managed by others and we have to be a bit smarter about how we channel our funds and how close to government systems we try to make them so there isn't too much duplication and not enough coordination that kind of thing. So it does look at the face of things that we are kind of moving backwards, working with just the big players and that it is unfair an all the rest of it. But you'll find a lot of the times these big players are the ones who work with NGOs on the ground so it does get there eventually. And it gets there in a sort of more coordinated, structured fashion so it's a tough one to answer. I don't think we've lost touch with the grassroots level at all. And I think that in many cases we have encouraged a lot of multilaterals that we are funding to work quite closely at the grassroots level with local government as well as the local NGOs and the large faith based organizations that you'll find in these cases where you work at. And one of the things that has actually come out of our humanitarian and emergency relief review is that you know we need to keep an understanding if these grassroots organizations: we're usually the first ones on the scene anyway so you need to have an understanding of, not just how they operate, how they function, but their capacity their financial management as well. And so trying to come up with some innovating ways to build that. So I think, it's a tough one, it's a tough one because you can't really balance it that easily. If we went back to DFID in the 80s and the 90s where it was all small little projects, loads and loads of little projects on the ground but you got nothing to show for it at policy level. So it's a difficult one to balance. And if we try to push more at the policy level and we start to (get a little cross with all the organizations like: we don't see where the money goes...): It's just a hard balance! And I think it's just a cycle that we are at in the present moment. At some point I am sure we will be able to do a bit more, more balanced, but it's kind of where we are right now.

So do you think you are in a position to advocate the position of the most poverty-stricken...

I think we do try to keep our fingers there at the grassroots as well, we have a large research department that also does a lot of work at the grassroots level and kind of keeps... the new government for example is very very keen on, we keep talking about having staff at the frontlines

and having as sort of in the grassroots making sure that we understand what we're doing at policy level is trickling down and equally that we are giving voice to the people at grassroots level. So absolutely. I think We're kind of in the position where we, you know, almost getting a balance, but it's a hard balance to make. It all depends on how strong and robust civil society is in your country. Sometimes you get a very vocal society like in Bangladesh where they are always knocking on our door and complaining and saying we need more of this, and yes we do try to respond but you know.. it's a balance.

Ok. Thank you very much.

The first question is kind of an open door but, currently there is a lot of difficulties around recognizing people as being climate change refugees, environmentally displaced persons, or whatever you would call them. First of all because there is difficulty finding evidence for the relation between climate change and migration. Do you believe there to be such a relationship in Bangladesh, such a causal relationship between climate change and displacement or migration?

Well this is basically a very basic and very important question at the moment. Because there are complaints and there are there also reports that the migrations, I mean the migrations, I mean the rural to urban migrations, is happening indeed due to some extreme events for example cyclone and storm-surge, especially the one cyclone Sidr, that hit in 2007 and the second one is Aila. So these two recent events basically boost many people to from their local residence or the affected areas to some urban areas. And many people came to Dhaka, many people went to Khulna, and some other associated or nearby urban areas. The problem is this migration is not new actually. This is happening for many reasons. Because if you really categorize this migration, there are type of temporarily migration and livelihood migration and then related migration and then opportunity migration. Let me just give you a sense of how it is related to livelihood migration. Many people don't have probably better job opportunity in the rural areas so they are used to, you know, they have friends and by culture we have this strong social network, so if someone lives in Dhaka and earns a good amount of money, the rural people get immediately good information to rapidly come to Dhaka to work hard and get some more and more so that kind of, for that reason come to Dhaka so there is another type of migration here. And the related migration is, this is the country where you will get some people and a part of the family leave in the rural areas, some in the urban areas even in Dhaka, some live outside the country. So when they're big well set-up in Dhaka, they bring their relatives and family members to Dhaka, maybe in Chittagong, maybe in Khulna, maybe in (Daschain), so they're big, well set-up, so that's how another migration goes on. So this is why people leave their own place to urban areas. So these are the other reasons as well. At the moment it is not easy to say: all migrations are happening due to climate change. But there are some reports and they are indicating that due to this climate induced hazards there are some migrations happening.

Which reports?

There is a report produced by Leaders. Local environment, development and agricultural institute some kind of organization, this is base in Shatkira. So I did not get the full report but I have a partial one of three pages report because I was asking the, some kind of evidences that you can show that some migration has happened due to climate induced hazards, and he showed me the report that these people are living in this place and now they left due to cyclone Aila and Sidr and now they are living in some other places. But this is also true by evidence when you used to go to the village, or to do fieldwork, we use to ask questions to the people: what are the problems at the moment, how do you adapt to it, and if the intensity of the problems increases then how are you going to adapt in the future? And I remember that five to ten years back they are answering: "well this is what we're doing and this is what, if you get some kind of assistance from some institutions from government, from civil society, from NGOs, then we might adapt in a better way". But now if we go to particular areas, Paikesha in Khulna, Shamnogo in Shatkira, they will say: "we don't have any option, you better tell

us what we can do". Because when you go to the field we see the water is saline intruded. When you go to another field you see there is no water there. When you go to another area you see the drought affects the fields. When you go to another field, I see irrigation facilities are not there. The we go to the poorest famers and they say: we cannot afford farming anymore. Why? Because the irrigation expenses has increased a lot, and the production costs has increased all together: water, irrigation facilities, farming practices, prices of seeds; we can't do it anymore.

So the situation has become worse?

The next question is, why? Because you produce it, and you invest more and you get more, that is their point. No we don't do that anymore. Now we invest more. Ten years back we invested like 500 taka, or 500 dollars per acre and we used to get like 700 dollars, and then we used to make profit with two hundred dollars. But now, we invest 500 dollars and we get 300 dollars. So how do you go for that? So why is it happening? Because of lack of water in a particular season, because of saline intrusion in the water, because of drought effect in the particular season, temperature rises in the particular season. And another class of farmers used to depend on the rain, the rainfall. Because there is a particular period, like from this month or this day to that month or that day we used to get the rainfall. But now, we get rainfall maybe after one week or two weeks. [interruption]

The first thing is, the problems were less before, but now problems are more. So maybe like 10, 15 or 20 years back there is only flood, and there is definitely cyclone or a storm-surge, but that happened maybe once in every 5, 6, 7 years. But nowadays, the tidal surge and the cyclone is coming almost every year and after 2007 almost once, more than once. So there is trouble and they live in fear because they invest 500 dollars if that is affected by cyclone then they don't have anything. And you can probably absorb once in a year, but you cannot absorb once every year. Once in every 5 years, that you can absorb. And from the poor families if it affects once in 5 years then they can recover, maybe for, when it happens in 2005, then you can (grow up) until 2010, then 5 years again you can become resilient. But if you are affected in 2006, 2007, 2008 then what do you do? You don't have anything.

So do you think there is any, at this moment, any policy or program designed by your organization or by anyone else which is targeted, directly or indirectly at people who are becoming displaced due to climate change?

Yes, we are basically working, let me give you a very strong example. We are currently planning a project because water is the main issue at the moment. And I would tell you that people migrate from rural affected areas to urban areas or any areas than the first reason would be water, water supplies, sanitation, that sort of thing. Because people cannot (ploy) this you know, people cannot stay without being clean. So lack of water, safe water supply would be the first reason of leaving the place. If agricultural is affected, yes definitely, if the ability to farm any crops then they may go to another areas to work. My home district is 200 km away, I work here, I live here, then I am here, that's not the problem. My (stream), my house is here. I told you there are part of every family almost: 60 – 70% families, part of the, at least one or two members live out of the family in Bangladesh. So many people live in rural area but their member of the family maybe husband, maybe brother, maybe sister, they live outside. So that's not a problem. But nowadays if a family, do not get the safe water, do not get the water for sanitation practices, then they cannot stay there. They can't live there, they have to migrate. So our example is, we are trying to initiate a three years plus three

years, six years water sanitation projects in hard to reach areas. The areas where the access to safe water sanitation, hygiene practices are lowest in the country...

Where is that?

The lowest areas for example, some areas in the coastal zone, hilly areas, (howl) areas, low-lying areas, char land, these are very vulnerable areas to climate change. These are also hard to reach. Maybe in some areas you can get the train from here, you can get the bus from here, then you can go there. But in those places you can't easily go. It takes you know, if its 300 km. south of Dhaka it may take 12 hours to go there. This should not happen, it should take six hours. But because you know you have to take rickshaw somewhere, you have to take bus somewhere, you have to take boat somewhere so it is very hard to reach those areas. And those areas are really affected by climate change. So we (...) the place and we assess the impacts, the potential impacts and what are their immediate needs so they can get at least get some support from this sub-sector. So this is what we are doing. There are some other NGOs or civil society organizations who are trying to work on this particular issues, especially the agricultural sector. Because these are the two sectors if you can really provide the support from these two sectors people will not leave. People will not leave their home, that I can assure you (...). When a family don't have the livelihood or earning opportunity in their locality then they have a first option or a second option to leave the place. And water-sanitation becomes another one. So there are two reasons, and if they don't have access to this, health becomes another sector but, you know there are many places where they don't have proper access or you know wide access to health services but they don't have any problem. I would say it is not a serious problem for those poor people, but for those who work in agriculture is the main problem. Nowadays there are examples that people are saying: we cannot practice our farming, we cannot cultivate, this is one reason and we don't have safe water, (what to do?) They can't go to work, if they cannot go for farming practices, if they don't have water then what they'll do? They cannot go everyday for 3 km to collect water and for home, for domestic purposes, for bathing, for drinking, for everything.

So if I understand right, there is clearly effects of climate change and people do migrate because of these effects but it is one of the reasons and not the only one? And then water and agriculture are the most important ones?

These are the most important I would say, for my opinion these are the major reasons, with my experience, these are the major reasons that they mention. If you don't have access to these sectors you cannot really stay

So do you think enough is being done at the moment to assist these people? That there are enough programs, policies that are aimed at well, agriculture and water...?

Well if you say policy, I would say yes. There are policies, there are plans but the problem is the kind of policies and programs do really not reflect the needs of the people. It is a matter of implementation how you are really addressing the issues of these people. Because if you kind of have a project or program, to address one million people, with some support, like eh you know this one million people will get this water, one million people will get this seeds or fertilizer or irrigation facilities, one million people will get this support protection for their water resources, if that program

really worked for those people, then follow the plan and implement it accordingly, then it is good. But it is not happening.

Why not?

The plan is there, money is there. The plan is there, efficient people is not there. The plan is there, but the real implementation, transparency, accountability are not there.

Why do you think that is? That there is no money, no people in place to do the job...

Well I mean there is nobody because...

And are we talking about government policies or..?

Government policies, yes. Because government doesn't always (have) money to implement all these programs. We have the plan, the BCCSAP I could show you, it's a (good) development plan. But where is the money to implement this plan. It says that 50% people have the improved standard of water supply. How do you define a good standard of water supply? At least 50 people should have one water point. So in this country only 50% of the people have it and 50% of the people don't have it. And if you consider basic standard on water supply then the definition is, meeting basic standard is: 100 people should have one water point. And 71% people of this country has it, should have it. So there are plans, good plans, and give you recommendations of where you should work and what you should do and how you can implement these and how do you reach 100% by 2050, all are there. But resources are not there, the efficient people are not there, dedicated people are not there, political commitment is not there. To work in the local government, you must a local political commitment. We have a chair, chairman of the lowest administrative unit: union chairman. Union chairman, if you ask them: how much do you know about the access to water supply and sanitation? He don't understand anything. I don't mean like you know, (many) of the chairmen know about this issue, but there are many people, many local community leaders don't have this information, are probably not engaged enough to make sure that their people are getting this safe water supply access.

So I had another interview with another NGO and at a sudden point he mentioned something about there being sort of a clique of experts, organizations, I think he meant here in Dhaka, you see at every seminar, every TV presentation, so he said this same group, these people kind of dominated the discourse and the government kind of tagged along in this discourse. Would you agree to this statement or do you not see such a thing?

Sorry, what did you say? What do you want?

Do you think that is true. That there is such a clique of experts that is the same group of people that dominate the public discourse or do you think that a lot of people are involved and it's not dominated by just a few.

To some extent yes. There are some people who are dominating the particular issues. There are, again I mean this domination is happening in line with the political agenda so to some extent yes. But it does not mean that these people will be the carrier for continuing the development in line with the plan. There are factors and many actors, many people who want to get engaged with this, they have the opportunity but there are some problems in relation to what you say.

What kind of problems?

Problems is, is a matter of, there might be like 30 organizations who are working on for example, again I will give you the example of water supply and sanitation, so 30 organization are working on this. There might be like 1 or 2 organizations there, they have their political engagement or support or connection eh to the political system so they are dominating. And another aspect which is much more important than what we discussed is the local governments and the local institutions, civil society organizations: they know their problems. There are many national level organizations, they're sitting in Dhaka, they plan it, they provide input to the plan, and they develop the plan, but the involvement of the local level institutions are much less. So the planning process is basically I would say is a bit weaker. We have plan but the engagement of the community people or the local government institute is not very, you know, satisfactory.

There is not a good link?

There is no good link yes. Still there is no good link.

Why do you think that is?

I think it is a centralized system you know, it is not decentralized. The governments and the governors system for any work, for any activity, if you decentralize, if you have a decentralized mechanism, then it is fine. But sometimes its again it's not bad even, its worse in some cases. Because (we are stuck): we decentralize, we give this, we delegate this and then officially it doesn't happen. I am saying this: well they will do it, this will do it, but actually all (...) goes back to me. There are some cases like this and that's why there are many reasons, there are many problems that actually kind of our development pathways. So it's a matter of... It's not like we don't have a plan or policy, we have fantastic policy and plan, the government has those plans but the question is whether we are following the implementation, the right implementation mechanism of this plans and policies. That is the question. And then if you ask the government: why are you not implementing? Then the issues are, you know, the resources available to them.

I have two more questions I think. I read that the BCAS participates in the dialogue between North and South on an international level: Do you think this dialogue between North and South has any kind of influence on the policymaking on a national level, and if so how? What are your ideas on that?

Off course they are. Because you see the donor countries, especially the developed countries and the World Bank and the EDB and the development assistance all this comes from, well if not all than the majority comes from the North and we need the support in our development process. So if not like, it doesn't happen in reality... If you come as a donor to me, you should ask me: what is your agenda to contribute to the development system in your country? But you don't come with that question if you come with your own agenda, then what should I do? So in most of the cases you see the World Bank, EDB, developed countries, in most of the assistance you will see they come with their own agenda. Well that is a good one if you can really make it. Because the mechanism of the government, you don't have that access, what do you want to do? You want to be assured that your contribution directly goes to the development process. You want to be ensured that the governance remains to be ok, you know transparency, accountability, this and this, involvement of the local people... You have all this in your own agenda, is fine, there is no problem. But you need to assess which agenda

should be the first in my list. So when you develop your agenda you're not involving me in developing the agenda. You ask me who is development bank, or who is developed country, who is donor partners, development partners involved communities, or civil society or government in developing their agenda?

So that's a big influence?

That's a big influence. So, but it happens it continues. Maybe they have (points). Let me give you one more example: I was talking to, because I am part of the government delegation in climate negotiation, so in a climate negotiation I was talking to the European Union. And then one of the senior member from the European Union, she was asking about the methodology of NAPA. Because there was an issue that the developed country had a commitment that by 2005 or by 2006 for all this countries have to submit their NAPA's and we did it. And the commitment was from 2001, this is 2011 but still we did not get sufficient support to implement this NAPA projects. All the countries have identified 50 projects. So there might be for 49 countries the total amount to be implemented will be 2 million, and none of the countries got more than one project implemented in the last ten years. So I raised this issue with the European Union: then why did you make this commitment? You committed that you will support it and you are not supporting it? So they were asking about the methodology of the NAPA. Then I said: well what is the kind of methodology that you wanted? You have given me an outline and the people have followed the guideline and that guideline is fine and NAPA development process was also fine, so what methodology are you talking about? Then they were saying well it is not participatory, this and this... Then I raised another issue, the process that we followed during the development of NAPA, the same process was followed in developing many of the national action plans. And based on those national action plans, we changed our country in several ways. They asks: what ways? I said: thirty years back, we had 60% poverty and now we have less than 40% poverty. Who did it? It is the government of Bangladesh? How we did it? Following the plan and policy. Definitely we had support, it's a good support but how much? 4%? 5%? Maximum 10%. 90% comes from the government. So you made it. Our (resignation) was 20% now it is more than 50%. So you made it. Based on what? The same methodology, almost same time. So if you want us to develop ourselves then you come to the point. Then they kept silent. [Laughing].

So this is the examples. But of course, definitely, developed they have also agenda. They must have reasons. We, the South, we show the maps, and they show their incapacibilities or their problems or sometimes they hide it. At the same time being a citizen of a (...) country, this is also not, it should also not be (the practice) that when I ask for something and you should provide it. This should not be (the practice). Then I become greedy (...). So what do you do? You develop your framework, you develop your agenda involving us. So then we are fine. It's a coordinated development pathway.

So this leads me to my final question then: If you talk about climate change, off course I would like to talk about climate change displaced persons, who would you say is the main actor or organization or institution, the main responsible to address the needs of these people? Because we talked local communities, we talked about the government, we talked about the international actors, so who would you say is the main responsible? Where is the main responsibility? For managing and addressing the issue.

Well, it's a very complicated issue at the moment I would say because in this country, I don't know, which ministry or which department should manage this problems. It's a very difficult question at the

moment. Because there are particular ministries, sectoral ministries up there so they will do sectoral things and there are planning ministries who do the planning issues. So if I think logically then it must go to the planning ministries. So how do you manage your population? Who manages the population? So again (ILSJA) becomes another important ministry because local government issue, local government ministry. So why you people, how your people are migrated? So it's not just one ministry or one department it's a compound kind of management that should happen but at the moment it's very difficult to respond to your question, who should manage it. It should be a combined way because ministry of water resources should ensure the water points, ministry of agriculture should ensure the farming, (...) should ensure their infrastructure issue. So all this ministries work together in a coordinated way to manage this migration then it would be fine. So you cannot really blame one ministry or one single department: and you should manage it. That didn't happen yet so we might have another institution to manage this migration.

2nd August 2011/ Association Climate Refugees/ Mr. Musa/ Director

Mr. Musa had invited me to visit his organization. On the first day of my visit I received an elaborate introduction into his organizations vision and mission following a hand-out sheet (that I lost and should retrieve per email) and this is a reflection of his story. The first part of the conversation is written according to my personal notes, the second part was transcribed as it was recorded.

1ST PART WITHOUT RECORD

As an organization ACR makes a distinction between environmental migrants, environmental displaced people, environmental refugees, climate migrants, climate displaced people and climate refugees. Important in this respect is the path of migration of a person. Some depart straight from their place of origin to their point of destination. Others remain at a point of transit for a while before migrating further to their ultimate point of destination. A place is an ultimate destination when a person stays for 5 years or longer. Next, the reasons for migration are important. Especially the coastal areas are vulnerable and the land along the rivers especially the (Jahmaputra). However, there is a need for categories of climate change refugees etcetera, with climate refugees having the first priority. For example, according to the climate refugee definition of ACR of the 6.5 million refugees as estimated by (...), only 25% of them is a climate refugee. For there is a difference between people who have lost their home estate and their land but could return eventually and between those who cannot go back. If the land is still there then there is no problem, people could return. Unfortunately though there is a knowledge gap. There are experts talking about the subject but not acting upon it. There is no help from NGOs for this people, no help from the government and INGOs don't recognize the problem. The government want to relocate them to Western countries but it is not that big a problem yet. The government has a responsibility to relocate within the country first.

2ND PART WITH RECORDING

So that is the gap. So far what has happened, people have been talking about this, a lot of people by 2050, 3 million will be displaced in Bangladesh. Lot of (...) and confusion. Lot of debate is going on. Lot of debate, so no help was there. So I want you to write it very specifically, why do we do research, why do we do workshops, seminars, speeches at the same time we should really do something at the ground level that actually will help those climate refugees, or climate migrants or climate displaced people so that they can come out of the problem.

Next point is, displacement monitoring. I think you have heard of the Norwegian Refugee Council. Have you heard of it? They have been publishing reports for the last four years, I think you have seen this? They have been saying there are this much climate displaced people by climate displaced people they also refer to climate refugees and migrants and every... So what happens? After the cyclone Aila they counted how many people have been displaced. They said that for Bangladesh it was 8.25 million. No sorry, 825.000. And for the Indian part it was 2.5 million. You know cyclone Aila hit both Bangladesh and India but in India it was a larger area compared to Bangladesh area. So according to their findings. Actually they did not collect any studies, they collect the figures from UN

and (Reuters Alter Net), it's a news publication. They do it very efficient. Reuter (Inter Net) they have said that in the Indian part there were 2.5 million and in Bangladesh there were 825.000, less than a million. But we have been monitoring and according to our definition, instead of 825.000 it is 200.000. Because of that definition. You see some people (...) during the cyclone in the cyclone shelters or somewhere else, they counted them as displaced persons but we did not. So that way the figure varies. So that's why, I have said, wanting to count the number of climate refugees, if we want to monitor climate displacement, then we want to count the number then we have to look at the definition. See according to that definition how much is there. (...)some people maybe for one day, they took shelter somewhere else and came back so we do not count them as displaced person. So that's why we have developed our own definitions and theories. (Migrants) and displacements that's it. There is (...) climate refugees, migrants and displaced people. These people, today if they are here after one year they might not be here. So what we have been, we have been registering all the climate refugees so far we have registered 1000 families, in the last one month but we hope to register 40.000 climate refugees. (...) And here also by climate refugees, we mean the climate migrant, climate displaced, climate refugees. Because those who are climate migrants today, maybe in two years they will also become climate refugees.

But you make the distinction when you count them?

Right, right. So we would register all of them but will we provide support. Now we will provide housing support but only to the climate refugees. Not to the migrants, not to the displaced persons, but we will have a (key) track report of those so maybe next year some of the displaced people they will turn to be refugees because they will permanently lose their land and house so that is going on. And probably the discussion also, I think it would be a very nice database for researchers. From these villages how many were migrants, what is the percentage, what is the reason. What is the major reason, how do people solve it, so these sort of things. But when you go back there, we will keep in contact. We will give you any information you need. So that register will go on and in the next two years we will register all the 6 million people and they will be in the database. If someone works, you know the diversity (...) that will also be in the database. I have that generated, I have their now at the moment we can tell it about 1000 families. That way when you do research: how much travel, after how many kilometers, how many families travel 200km, how many families travel up to 700km? That person have travelled up to 700km and have gone up to the hills because they have experienced that the coastal area is going down. It is getting inundated and the area is becoming totally submerged, and that remains submerged throughout the year it never dries up. So that sort of thing I think we will keep in the database and it will be used. Then, in-country settlement versus resettlement in third countries. Take a look in NAPA 40. What we have suggesting is what we are negotiating with our donor in Australia, so far there are out of 6.5 there are 1.5 million climate refugees in Bangladesh. What we have been negotiating is that we will resettle 99% of the refugees in Bangladesh but you Australian people, you only take 1% of people from Bangladesh. [laughingly] So we are negotiating it, I don't know what the result will be but at least we have been trying. They were saying you take all of them, we said well we will accommodate 99%, you take 1% maybe. Similarly, we want to say in the USA we have been doing it. Every year USA getting a lot of people on the diversity research. So if they say when from the climate refugees we take 200 family per year. So that sort of thing, like that, you know the pacific access category, new Zealand takes some people from the pacific island nations, so that sort of thing. We are trying to negotiate it. We have begun it with Australia, I have been there, I have told that. And also we have a plan to travel around 15 countries in January next. So that

is in the list. That way, we are saying that: well, most of the problem we want to solve within the countries, but also the international community has got some responsibility to share. Just as a token. Well, we are also with you, we don't say you created this problem or so, this is your gift to the community, no. So that is our idea that we will do the in-country resettlement, and also we will push for resettlement in foreign countries.

And then host family approach versus government approach. You know we have learned from the refugee families, that when they want to move they move in the host family approach. Whenever they want to move across, and they find family there, either relatives or from the same village, they make contact with them, we cannot stay here anymore, we want to come there, (...), what will we do here, no place to live, nothing to do, saying well: we cannot stay here, we have to... so all of a sudden they just come and say ok, you just stay there (...) for two, three, there is kind of no room for them. So that way one family helps another and we call that host family approach. The other if there is something done by the government, what they do, they accommodate all the people in one place. They don't have any relatives. The government finds a new piece of land. They have been doing it not in the name of resettling climate refugees but in the name of resettling landless people, they have been doing that. But it is almost the same, the climate refugees are also the landless people. But the government approach is concentrating all the people in one place. But the refugees they are just scattered, maybe one after 2 kilometers maybe one there, so that is also something we should consider. Then you see (at a single piece) housing, land and property rights are (at the center) for a sustainable solution on climate displacement. Some NGOs think: well, if we give them food for three months, if we give them some cloths, if we give them some house building material then that will solve the problem. But we think that these kind of refugees three things must be given: one is house, number two is land, and then they should be given some assets that can give them some income. You know the rickshaw puller, if he can earn the money to purchase the rickshaw that gives him a good income otherwise everyday he has to pay one third of his income to the owner of the rickshaw. So we say that we want to give them house, land and property for income.

This is not kindness or anything, it is their right. The constitution of Bangladesh guarantees it, (...) rehabilitation not in Bangladesh that guarantees it, and you know also the (...) Framework of Action, you know an international instrument that guarantees some support for the victims of disaster. So you cannot differentiate between the victims of disaster and the victims of climate change because climate change is... you know disaster has become more frequent and more severe so that way there also the existing laws apply to the rise of the displacement of climate refugees. Many people argue there are no laws, I think they are just (in that place). So also, if we talk about poverty reduction, they are the poorest of the poor. So, well we can fight for refugee laws but we also take advantage of the existing laws and existing laws are more than enough to support these people. So we want to you know emphasize that. (...) rights, and this should be seen as a right, (not enough), not really for something, they are very kind and they are giving, those people have got this right.

So if existing laws are sufficient and there are programs targeted at the landless and the extreme poor, don't you think that covers some of your area?

No actually, it is not covering at the moment, that I say to you. Only 10% of Bangladesh generates this kind of refugees. So their government program has not emphasized on the rights of these people. So for example, say there is a program, so if they target 100 landless people, within that 100

there might be 5 landless people who are climate refugees others are only very poor. But climate refugees are among the poorest of the poor. They are not given that preference. We want to emphasize that. There are huge program, huge allocation, huge budget in the government budget but the idea has not been accepted as of yet. So that is the problem.

So next minimum standard for housing, protection from rain, sun, cold (weather) and storms. Because these climate refugee families are living in (...) huts, I will show you one of those. That cannot protect them from rain, that cannot protect them from sun, that cannot protect them from cold winds. During the winter – it is very hot now- but during the winter there can also be cold winds and lot of people die. So I think every house should have this quality at least (...) so it can protect them from the sun, rain and cold winds. We will be working on that and we have already started that. I will show you some of the huts, it's a 5 minute walk.

Next is, accessible land. Bangladesh is densely populated. The population is growing but the land is not growing. Yet, in Bangladesh there are a lot of government land, and only the landless people or the poor people are invited to get those. But practically what happens, the political leaders and the rich people they get all of those lands. But there are examples where the climate refugees and the poor people have been able to establish their rights on government lands. (I can give an approximation), there is a study, it is also there, it is railway land. And there they stay again, (...) property, give them assets, (...) maybe. We are an organization for and by the climate refugees. What we are trying to do is, wherever we go, at first we organize the climate refugees and (call their organization). And any support we give, we give straight to them instead to some other NGO. That NGO only gives them only the support , the technical support. How to write the vouchers, how to make the list, that's sort of things. The reason is, in Bangladesh, Bangladesh is well-known for its corruption. So that's why we want to do it.

And number 21 is, the NGOs and the government, we want them, they should give them the technical and financial assistance. So these are the preliminary things we should know, now let us go to the... what we will be doing. See at first now we will go to these ten families, there lives ten families who came here as climate migrants but eventually they became refugees as their points of origin became unlivable. The ten families who we will be visiting they came to this city as climate migrants, but that area has become completely submerged, they cannot go back there. That's why they have become climate refugees. They cannot go there, they have to stay here forever. So they have established their rights on the railway, government land. They have to fight for that. And there is a lady, maybe you can take her picture and write a case study, this lady got and established her and also other families rights on the government land. We will be going there in ten minutes. They have also (asked) host family to facilitate relocation and resettlement of climate refugees. As they came here earlier, lot of people from that area contacted them: we cannot live here anymore so you help us. Ant they help, around 30 to 50 families they came and they found some house for them, found income for them and now all the refugee families are helping each other. So now we will go there. So now we will be talking to this ten families, who came here as climate migrant but now they are climate refugees because they cannot go back there, according to our definition. And also they have established their right on government land, no one can evict them now. And also they are working as host family for other climate refugees to come from the coastal area and resettle in this city. So these things we will find there and I would be very happy if you could write a case study on this.

2 August 2011/ Fieldtrip with Association for Climate Refugee team/ Interviews with climate refugees

Location 1: Daulatpu Bazar railway (recording C4)

1. Man and wife. Have been here since 1971. It was the first place they came to. But they used to live on the other side of the railway. But this land belongs to the government.

Location 2 : Ambita Bazar

1. Man. 40. He left three years ago because he lost land and home due to floods in the area that put his land under water, making it impossible for him to return. Back then he was a daily laborer in the rice fields now he is a part time day laborer. With his earnings he knew how to get the land he now lives on, it is government property though. He did not receive any help in the time he has been here, he is a selfmade man. If he could get any help he would like financial help from government or NGOs to start a small business
2. Female. 60. Asia Khatun. Has stayed here for 4 years and came from (Golkhali, Koira). Back then she and her husband were fishermen and they sold their fish. Due to cyclone Aila their land became flooded . Both their sons left one after the other for their current location called (...) to make a living, then she and her husband followed. Besides a loan from their family they made a living for themselves. They need and would want money to buy land and start a business.
3. Female. 25. Nazma Begun. Has come here three months ago, without family help, from Koira and left due to Aila which flooded their land and house. Now she is guest at someone's house who is not related.. She didn't receive any Government or NGO help back then or now. Back then her husband was a day laborer and so is he now. If he could receive any kind of help now he would like financial help to start his own small farming business.
4. Male. 70. Samsur Rahman. Has come from South Bikashi 2 years and three months ago due to Aila which flooded their land which can't be recovered. 2 of their sons went to Dhaka to work in the garment factory and they maintained their family. Before that they were small scale farmers. Back then they didn't receive any government or NGO support and nor do they now. However: a local NGO called MOHONA borrows them money but they have to pay back every week with interest. If they could ask for something they would want financial support to build small farms for fishing and or poultry.

2 August 2011/ Interview with ACR partner NGO Amvita Adarsha Club/ Joy, Paritoss and Adito.

- *The conversation was translated by a 20 something boy, who would sometimes answer the questions I wanted him to ask the people of Amita Adosha Club. I don't know whether he was related to the organization, so the interview might be biased.*

What kind of programs do you have for climate change refugees?

Actually on this day, they haven't done anything.

What kind of programs do they do?

There a lots of programs. But there are lots of problems actually. Monetary problem, good volunteers, and because of these programs they can't even start.

So what is their idea what do they want to do?

Building houses, creating working, sanitation program, roads, education.

Do you believe the government or other organizations are already helping climate change refugees?

There are. But they didn't get the money so they can't support it so the programs stopped.

Do you think the government is willing able to help climate refugees?

[Translator] Yes definitely. Government can but there is a problem ... the way the people migrate here they made action,

Do they think more should be done climate refugees?

They are ok with the existing programs, road construction, housing building, education course, so far it is ok but they can't extend this program actually. They will finish the existing program and they want to extent but it is uncertain if they can due to spending problem, if they get a new allocation. So they didn't start yet.

Who do they think is most responsible for improving the situation of climate refugees?

[translator] Local organization, this organization named: Amita Adosha Club.

But they can't do it on their own can they? So who would they go to for money? For technical support?

[translator] Most of all government, local government, everyone who wants to support Bangladesh.

What do they think is better: local organizations, or national organizations in Dhaka for example or international negotiations to...

Actually the better option is local organizations with the help from government. Jointly. Shared program with government.

CCR here do they need help or can they cope on their own?

Definitely, they need help.

3 August 2011/ ACR partner Satkhira Unnayan Sangsta/Sk. Ekman Ali/ Director

SUS decided to join the Association for Climate Refugees (ACR) as they saw how cyclone Sidr and Aila affected the people from the Sundarban and coastal areas, leaving them suffering from a lack of fresh water, salinity intrusion and water logging and without a job or any means to survive. Therefore we decided we needed to help them, the hardcore poor, jointly with ACR. We lobbied with the government to release their land; we provide housing and income generating activities (IGA) suitable for the Aila flooded area; we have programs on rural poverty alleviation; micro finance; and trainings. Then we talked to Mr. Musa [ACR founder, director] for donor support. Other NGOs work on health (Mesorior) and on capacity building and education (Stromme Foundation Norway).

Livelihood support programs are funded by the government but it has changed. 2 years ago we provided soft loans but now the talks between the government of Bangladesh and the World Bank have shut down, there is a funding crisis.

Is there a difference do you think between bigger (I)NGOs working from Dhaka and smaller NGOs working from Khulna?

After Aila there was salinity intrusion which made cultivation impossible. That's what we wanted to help with. After Aila people migrate to the cities and family is left behind. We call them climate change refugees but due to the funding crisis we cannot help them.

Do you think enough is being done to help climate change refugees?

No not sufficient. There was a lot of damage after Aila which is not repaired.

Who is the main person, institution or organization responsible for climate change refugees do you think?

The government. The government's initiative is not bad but the government is very poor and has not available good manpower; therefore NGOs are doing a better job.

Who are your main donors?

The BL Government, our annual budget is 1 million which is also donated by Germany and Stromme Foundation of Norway.

5 August 2011/ Ministry of Forest and Environment/ Member of Parliament

- I was not allowed to record the conversation. I would ask (critical) questions but sometimes the MP would start a story not related to it. I will try to reflect the conversation as faithfully as possible, sometimes with and sometimes without mentioning the posed questions.

MP: when Sidr occurred a lot of people were displaced from their locality because their crops were damaged and there was no fresh drinking water. The government helped in many many ways, and some NGOs were there. But despite all the help people became displaced in the nearest towns. These people need more help from other displaced countries. Because it happened not only in Bangladesh but also in the coast of India.

What kind of help was given by the government?

In 2009 cyclone Aila struck Koiria upazilla was under water, roads were damaged, shortage of drinking water. The government was very quick to respond with food, drinking water, medical aid, building houses, sanitation and building embankments. People have to be rehabilitated to their own area and we are trying to build homes.

Is enough being done for climate displaced people?

The government apprehends that by 2050 the coastal zone will be under water due to sea level rise. The government is trying to make a big boundary embankment by coastal area, so big that the sea level cannot enter the country anymore, because the coastal area is 1/5 of the total landmass of Bangladesh. The government has planned to do it.

With which means?

Our own money, money of donor countries.

Who would you say, which organization, institution or person, is most responsible for helping people displaced by climate change?

The government takes the initiative under leading of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

So in the BCCSAP...

The BCCSAP is a rare example of a climate change plan that Bangladesh has done. Especially the Ministry of Environment and Forest is taking an interest to meet the consequences, any bad consequences of climate change, namely adaptation. The government has adopted many policies on climate change so it cannot harm the people of Bangladesh anymore.

Has any progress been made since BCCSAP 2009 and NAPA 2005?

Yes, embankments are being made, that is the job of the Ministry of Water Resources and the Disaster Ministry is engaged with the sufferings of people. There are also many NGOs working in the field, working on sanitation, health, housing, and food. I, being MP, I coordinate all these works which can be difficult it takes time, passion and good listening to all these people.

Some people find it hard to recognize climate refugees as such because the climate change is not the only reason for them to migrate. Some other reasons can be economical gain and such. What do you think? Is climate change the main reason?

Bangladesh is a very poor country; so many problems are there, climate change is only one. But although we are a poor country we have to work hard to go ahead. We have suitable lands, we just need more technical support, we need more money. The developed world is helping us with that. Also, it has taken some time for Bangladesh to become a democracy. Now we are a democracy, we are going ahead even though there is a strong opposition party, the BNP. I think this country is gradually going ahead.

You mentioned you need more money and more technical support: what do you need it for exactly?

We need money for development of institutions. We are trying to make it good. We need improvement in our mind. For example in India you have a good democracy, you have an opposition who check and watch the ruling party and it works. They do not demonstrate, they do not cause hartal, they do not try to bring down the country. Here, if you would need to travel and there is hartal you would not be able to go. It is bad for business. In our country Khled Zia calls hartal. We need to change that. Motivation is a must.

You also mentioned the donor countries helping you. Do you feel you need their help?

Yes we need international money for teaching motivation. The developed countries, the rich countries should give money.

July 2011/ Local Environment Development and Agricultural Research Society/ Mohun Kunan Montal/ Executive director

- The following interview was sent to the recipient by email-

Currently there is a lot of disagreement on whether or not you can recognize people as being climate change refugees/ environmentally displaced persons/ climate change migrants/ environmental migrants/ etc. The first reason for this disagreement is because some believe a direct link between climate change and migration is hard to prove. What is your opinion of the issue? Is there a relation between climate change and migration/displacement in Bangladesh?

Yes.

In what districts and what causes?

In Satkhira, Khulna district. Because before AILA people of the south of both district started migration. Because they were facing salinity increase day by day in their land and they could not produce agriculture. The river embankment were broken frequently. Raising sea creates pressure to the embankment and the full moon it often break.

What is your opinion based on?

Local knowledge and secondary data.

Another problem is whether climate change was the main factor that influenced the decision to migrate. Or as one NGO has stated: migration has been part of Bengali history for years now, and reasons for migration are too complex to give these people a label related to only one of those reasons. Do you agree?

No.

Why (not)?

The historic migration stopped after establish Pakistan and India. After create of this two countries, a lot of religious people migrated. After establish some religious people migrated to India. But after 1990s there have no major migration in our mentioned district. Climate change is 70% responsible for recent migration of south of the Satkhira and Khulna district.

How would you name these people?

Climate Migrants (but it should be Climate Refugee).

Do you know if there currently exists policy or programs, executed by the LEDARS or another organization, which are indirectly or directly aimed at meeting the needs of people displaced by climate change?

Yes: LEDARS has specific four project to reduce tendency of migration due to livelihood crisis.

Of whom?

Marginal people who are in the risk of migration.

Do you know what resources are used for that policy?

(not clear).

Do you know if it is effective?

Yes.

Do you think something more should be done by the LEDARS or others to help meeting the needs of people displaced by climate change?

Yes: Because the problems are increasing and more people are being affected by climate change.

What should be done?

Program which meet livelihood crisis, drinking water,

By whom?

NGOs

With what resources?

Donation form developed countries which are responsible for climate change.

Who would you say is mainly responsible for extending help to people displaced by climate change?

Is this an international, national, regional, or a local actor?

With the help of international organization regional and local actor extend help people displaced by climate change.

Why is this person/organization/institution responsible?

The local organization is well aware about the culture, trends, tendency, views of local people. They could better serve for the community and it do not need huge resources.

Do you think it is feasible, for the LEDARS or others, to extend this kind of help to meet the needs of these people? Why (not)?

Yes. LEDARS already implementing this kind of program. Historically LEDARS is serving this kind of people.

- The following interview was sent to the recipients by email. As preparation for the interview I read the "Annual Report 2009" of GKS. I used this to make some remarks with the questions. These remarks are written in brackets [].

How many projects or activities your organization is carrying out related to climate change and natural resource management?

Currently GKS is implementing 2 projects in subject to climate change and natural resource management.

Do those projects deal with Environmental Displacement (climate refugee), If yes how?

Yes these projects deal with environmental displacement. VCA (Vulnerability Capacity Assessment) findings in the project locations of GKS indicate that 70% of the people were settled in low land (inundated by moderate flood) and that 60% of these families came from other location where they had previously been made homeless by river bank erosion. Baseline survey data shows that while 71% of households have their own homestead land, the remaining 29% of households are residing on the embankment of the river or *khas* land (government land). Only 23% of all households have their own cultivable land in the area. The homeless people are the poorest of the poor; living in sub-human conditions and existing in irregular jobs such as day laboring or share cropping. Their poverty and lack of shelter, a basic human rights, is a matter of great concern.

With a view to rehabilitate the shelter less/displacement households, Union Parishad (local government unit, the community people/citizen committee and GKS jointly identified most vulnerable families mostly women headed households living on the embankment. Under these project GKS constructed two cluster villages for the 65 highly vulnerable families. Cluster village is raised two feet higher than previous highest level of flood (1988), houses are flood and storm resilience, all of the families have access to safe drinking water and hygienic sanitation facilities. The inhabitants especially the women of the cluster villages are involved in income generation activities like poultry rearing, goat/sheep rearing, homestead gardening etc.

Could you describe the people your policy is targeted at? What are the causes of their situation?

The most vulnerable families living on the embankment(flood protection dam) or in the overcrowded homes of neighbors or relations due to displacement by river bank erosion. Mostly women headed households, Households with disable person, households with old aged people etc. whose livelihood depend on labor selling, have no access to the government resources, Migrate elsewhere for work, do not take food 3 times daily, totally depend on others, no earning male member, child as principal earning source and selling labor for surviving, does not go to school, have no earning male/Female member.

Does your organization deal with people who decided to move due to unfavorable circumstances related to climate change?

- Yes: Continue to question 5
- No: Why not? Continue to question 7

How would you describe these people? What are core characteristics?

- What are the main causes of their decision to migrate?

The chars and the chalon beel areas are most vulnerable and underprivileged due to frequent flood, river erosion, drought, sandy soil, and poor communication, education, health and sanitation. This is completely neglected and detached from development flow. People especially hardcore poor live in very miserable life without meeting their basic needs like food, clothes, medicine, shelter and other

needs. They have no any other source of income, depend on either day laboring or begging. The physical, social, economic and political vulnerabilities suffered by the char dwellers cause chronic and persistent poverty. The char people live in isolation, communities are excluded from mainland services and infrastructure and do not represent a priority for many local government officials. Poor members of communities frequently lose of their control to their resources and have little access to Government resources and social justice.

During rainy season/after flood earning male members go elsewhere in search of jobs leaving their wife and children in home for long time due to lack of income sources or employment opportunities. They sometimes do not communicate with the family and marriages another lady in the town. The family members in the char become beggar in absent of earning member. Generally male governs family and women are regarded as nothing more than just child bearers and domestic servant as well as are not respected at family level and have no access to decision-making process and ownership. The overall nutritional status is very poor and due to inadequate micronutrient rich foods most of women and children are suffering from malnutrition.

How does your organization refer to them? Name?

GKS takes initiatives to reduce the migration during and after flood through creating employment opportunities by Cash For Work, Food for Work, distribution of relief goods for food security with limited resources. Migrated/ Refugee people.

Are these people the same people as GKS target groups? ["hardcore poor and disadvantaged, Adibashi, people living in the Chars and Chalonbeel area"] Why (not)?

Yes all these peoples are target groups of GKS. Hardcore poor people must be targeted first by GKS for any project/program/activities.

What are the most important needs these people (from now on: climate change refugees) have?

Secure Shelter/residence with safe water and sanitation facilities, food security, alternative livelihoods options/income earning activities are the most important needs of

Do you know if there currently exists policy or programs, executed by your organization or another, which is indirectly or directly aimed at meeting the needs of climate change refugees?

So far there is no any policy for Climate refugee.

Is it impossible to see climate change refugees as a distinct group?

Yes .

Do you think something (more) should be done to help climate refugees?

Yes: As because shelter less people/floating people are most vulnerable in terms of social security, food security and living a miserable life without meeting their basic rights.

What should be done?

Advocacy workshop with policy makers and displacement people to settle them in a secure and safe places. Creating pressure to formulate new law for displacement people.

By whom? Internationally, nationally, locally? Why by them?

- No answer.

With what resources? Internationally, nationally, locally? Why those resources?

With Local and national or international resources. Government *khas* land distribution to those people.

Do you think it is feasible to treat climate change refugees as a distinct group? Why (not)?
Yes.

Has GKS up to now have had difficulties to reach their objectives? Why (not)?

Geographically GKS working area is disaster prone area due to flood, river bank erosion, drought, cold wave etc. Climatic disaster hampers the organizational activities that create difficulties to reach the objectives.

Finally: Could you provide me with some up to date documents on your organization's policy?

It would be even better if you were mentioned what type of policy you want (specific name/title). Other hand most of policy is in Bengali version, currently we have started to make these policies bi-lingual.

Are there any important GKS meetings coming up (in Dhaka) I might be able to attend?

Not yet. If fix up I will inform you as soon as possible.

Do you know other important NGOs/ministries/organizations/people in the field of climate change refugee aid I might contact?

- No answer.

- The following interview was sent to the recipients by email-

Currently there is a lot of disagreement on whether or not you can recognize people as being climate change refugees/ environmentally displaced persons/ climate change migrants/ environmental migrants/ etc. The first reason for this disagreement is because some believe a direct link between climate change and migration is hard to prove. What is your opinion of the issue? Is there a relation between climate change and migration/displacement in Bangladesh?

Yes, there is a relation between climate change and migration/displacement in Bangladesh. Bangladesh is recognized as one of the countries suffering from the adverse impact of climate change. The frequency and ferocity of floods and cyclones have increased and there is evidence of rising sea levels that could inundate large areas in future. Other related effects which threaten food and drinking water security are salinity intrusion, prolonged spells of drought, water logging etc. Drought, soil degradation, increasing food crisis, storms, river erosion and floods, combined with poverty are the driving forces compelling more and more people to migrate to urban areas.

In what districts and what causes?

Total southwest coastal region especially Satkhira, Bagerhat, Pirojpur, Patuakhali, Barguna, Jessore, Khulna Sowndip. Poor countries and poor people also depend heavily on climate-sensitive sectors and natural resources. These include agriculture, fishing, water provision, grazing, timber and non-timber forest products such as food, medicine, tools, fuel, fodder and construction materials. In the Satkhira district people has migrated their occupation from farmers to the fisherman (shrimp culture) due to the water logging and salinity increase. In the coastal area like Sowndip people leaving the places in search of work in the Dhaka and other working areas due to the threat of sea level rise. Increasing salinity is also a common problem in the Sowndip , Potuakhali and Bagerhat area. The flood in the Satkhira has destroyed the total livelihood pattern, Following the worst floods the farmers in the Satkhira district could not plant Aman paddy due to fact that by the time the water had receded from the marooned croplands it was all too late for Aman cultivation and in the Bagerhat where Sidr struck violently people changes their occupation from farmer to day laborer and migrating in the city in the search of work. The riverbank erosion, flood, salinity increase, cyclone etc the climatic impact has intervened in the livelihood pattern of these areas specially. Erratic behavior of rainfall and temperature (irregular rainfall or heavy rain in short duration) are hampering crops production and livelihood activities in the area. Many villagers are already facing water logging and flood-water inundation, which affect their livelihoods, crop cultivation, employment opportunities, income, food, malnutrition and ill-health. Erratic behavior of weather and extreme climatic events affect agriculture, homestead vegetable cultivation, fish culture, and human health adversely. Poor women and marginal sections of the people are the worst suffers.

What is your opinion based on?

People living in vulnerable coastal areas will be displaced as sea levels rise and saline water moves inland. Bangladesh has 62 million people(46 percent of the total population) living in low "Elevation Coastal Zones" which have been identified as being particularly vulnerable(McGranahan 2007). Moreover changes in river regimes due to melting of Himalayan snowcaps and more frequent extreme weather events will place pressure on still more people to move/migrate.

The south west coastal areas of Bangladesh already suffer from destruction and degradation of land, salinity intrusion and water logging, as well as natural disasters such as cyclones, storm surges and floods. These effects are likely to be exacerbated by climate change. Potential impacts (summarized in WB, 2000, Agrwal et. AL. 2003).

- Changes in water levels leading to increased flooding and water logging;

- Increased salinity in ground and surface water and corresponding impacts on soil salinity
- Increased coastal morphological dynamics (erosion and accretion); and
- Increases incidents and intensity of extreme weather events

People in the south west coastal region are highly depended on the natural resource base in sustaining their livelihoods. Agriculture and fisheries are important economic sectors, employing a large proportion of the population, and aquaculture is increasingly being pursued as an alternative livelihood option for rural households.

Another problem is whether climate change was the main factor that influenced the decision to migrate. Or as one NGO has stated: migration has been part of Bengali history for years now, and reasons for migration are too complex to give these people a label related to only one of those reasons. Do you agree?

Not. Because there are many political, social, economical or historical perspective of that migration. But nowadays regarding the root cause of such migration are many. The causes include such push factors as river-bank erosion, floods, eviction, insufficient income, and pull factors as more income earning opportunities, living with the known people, looking at the future of children and other.

How would you name these people?

Climate change displaced people

Do you know if there currently exists policy or programs, executed by the IRVBD or another organization, which are indirectly or directly aimed at meeting the needs of people displaced by climate change?

Yes: we have been organizing climate justice campaign for the right of the displaced people including policy advocacy.

Which policies or programs?

The name of IRV program is climate justice campaign. We are demanding khas land for rehabilitating the displaced people.

Of whom?

- No answer

Do you know what resources are used for that policy?

Khas land

Do you know if it is effective? Why (not)?

Yes: Because Government has lot of Khas land in this areas.

Why do you think there isn't any policy being implemented?

Because the problem is increasing day by day but government does not development any policy regarding the displaced people. There are some international campaigns for specific policy for them. Bangladesh has no specific position regarding them.

Why doesn't IRVDB provide policy?

IRV is a right based research and advocacy organization. we have been working with Action Aid Bangladesh in this regard.

Do you think something more should be done by the IRVBD or others to help meeting the needs of people displaced by climate change?

Yes: Why? What should be done?

Assets transfer: Transfer of productive assets (Physical, social, economical) to the extreme poor people through identifying them in a proper way.

Physical infrastructures: It includes housing and shelters, roads, water and sanitation, educational institutions, community centers clinic.

Livelihoods: Appropriate livelihood option (IGAs) will need to be introduced as per local and geographical conditions.

Policy advocacy: This is very important to consider in order to see the number of policies influenced/developed as a part of addressing the issues of climate change adaptive options for the benefits of extreme poorer people within the stipulated time period.

By whom?

First all it is the responsibilities of Annex A countries, then the government and last the nongovernmental organization

With what resources?

- No answer

Who would you say is mainly responsible for extending help to people displaced by climate change?

Is this an international, national, regional, or a local actor?

Yes.

Why is this person/organization/institution responsible?

Industrial and rich developed countries and Transnational Corporations are responsible. Because in the name of industrialization and producing bio-fuels, emitting green house gases they are polluting the global environment.

Do you think it is feasible, for the IRVBD or for others, to extend this kind of help to meet the needs of these people? Why (not)?

Yes.