



**Evaluation Report for
Review of Bangladesh
Climate and Environment
Programme (BCEP) grant
supported by BHC/ FCDO**

Executive Summary Final

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Acronyms

Acronym	Full text
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFD	Agence Française de Développement (French Development Agency)
AIIB	Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
BCCSAP	Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan
BCEP	Bangladesh Climate and Environment Programme
BFD	Bangladesh Forest Department
BHC	British High Commission
BPATC	Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre
C3ER	Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research
CPRD	Centre for Participatory Research and Development
CTCRP	Chattogram Climate Resilient Infrastructure Improvement Programme
CWASA	Chattogram Water Supply and Sewerage Authority
CWSIP	Chattogram Water Supply Improvement Project
DOF	Department of Fisheries
DPHE	Department of Public Health Engineering
DSK	Dushtha Shasthya Kendra
ERD	Economic Relations Division
EQuALS	Evaluation Quality Assurance and Learning Service
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GCA	Global Center on Adaptation
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GBP	British Pound Sterling
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
ICCCAD	International Centre for Climate Change and Development
IDCOL	Infrastructure Development Company Limited
IDLAs	International Donor and Lending Agencies
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IHS	Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUGIP	Integrated Urban Governance and Infrastructure Project
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGED	Local Government Engineering Department
LIC	Low-Income Community
LLA	Locally-led Adaptation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDBs	Multilateral Development Banks
MoEFCC	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NBS	Nature-based Solutions
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPAC	Non-Project Attributable Costs
PKSF	Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
RFP	Request for Proposals
RHD	Roads and Highways Department
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
VfM	Value for Money
WARPO	Water Resources Planning Organisation
WB	World Bank
WP	Work Package
YPSA	Young Power in Social Action

Executive Summary

This evaluation has assessed the use, performance, and strategic contribution of an Accountable Grant of GBP 10 million¹ provided by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to the [Global Centre on Adaptation](#) (GCA) in support of the [Bangladesh Climate and Environment Programme](#) (BCEP). The Grant, covering the period 2022–2027 (subsequently curtailed to March 2026), financed an initiative entitled *Scaling up Locally Led Adaptation, Nature-based Solutions, and Financing for Adaptation Programme*. This initiative was designed to support specific components of BCEP aligned with GCA’s global mandate to accelerate adaptation action and facilitate climate-resilient development.

The evaluation was commissioned by GCA and has served a dual and complementary purpose. First, it has provided accountability to FCDO as the funding authority, assessing whether resources have been deployed in accordance with the Accountable Grant Arrangement and whether intended results have been achieved. Second, it has generated learning to inform future climate adaptation programming in Bangladesh and comparable contexts, for the Government of Bangladesh (GoB), GCA, FCDO, Development Partners, International Donor and Lending Agencies (IDLAs), Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), and International Finance Institutions (IFIs). The evaluation therefore combines compliance-oriented analysis with forward-looking reflection on design, delivery models, and strategic positioning.

Context and Rationale

Bangladesh remains a country which is extremely vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. The country experiences recurrent flooding, cyclones, storm surges, salinity intrusion in coastal zones, riverbank erosion, prolonged heat stress, erratic rainfall patterns, and increasing climate variability. These hazards are layered upon high population density, socio-economic inequality, and development pressures, resulting in acute risks to livelihoods, food security, infrastructure, and public health.

In this context, BCEP represents a major, multi-partner initiative to strengthen climate resilience across Bangladesh. It combines policy reform, institutional strengthening, technical assistance, and investment mobilization. BCEP is designed not as a stand-alone project but as a platform to embed climate adaptation considerations across national and sub-national planning processes, budgetary systems, and investment frameworks.

The Accountable Grant to GCA was explicitly structured to enable GCA to play a *strategic and catalytic role* within this broader architecture. Rather than financing large-scale infrastructure or direct service delivery, the Grant focused primarily on upstream and systems-level interventions, including:

- Technical assistance to ministries and agencies
- Policy dialogue and reform support
- Institutional capacity development
- Knowledge generation and dissemination

¹ Accountable Grant Arrangement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland acting through the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (“FCDO”) And The Global Center on Adaptation with its Head Office at Antoine Platekade 1006, 3072ME, Rotterdam, the Netherlands and Local Office at Department of Environment, E/16, Paribesh Bhaban, Dhaka -1207, Bangladesh

- Development of tools and analytical frameworks
- Convening stakeholders to mobilise adaptation finance.

The theory underlying this approach was that targeted, high-quality technical support and policy influence could unlock larger flows of adaptation finance, strengthen institutional readiness, and generate sustained improvements in resilience over time.

Scope and Objectives of the Evaluation

The evaluation has covered the full implementation period of the Accountable Grant (2022–2026, following early closure).² It has assessed performance against agreed evaluation criteria and objectives developed during the Inception Phase in consultation with both GCA and FCDO.

Specifically, the evaluation has:

- Assessed Value for Money (VfM) using FCDO’s “4Es” framework - Economy, Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Equity, alongside the increasingly emphasised fifth dimension of cost-effectiveness
- Examined the short-term and emerging long-term effects of GCA-supported interventions, in relation to GCA’s Theory of Change (ToC) and its plausibility in sustaining improved climate resilience of people, communities, and economies in climate-vulnerable zones of Bangladesh
- Reviewed the operational model of sub-project delivery, identifying strengths, innovation areas, constraints, and risks
- Analysed cross-cutting issues, including gender equality and social inclusion (GESI), climate adaptation rationale, safeguarding, and risk management
- Generated actionable recommendations to strengthen impact and durability of results in future programming

The evaluation methodology, as captured in the agreed Evaluation Matrix (Annex 1 of the full Report), recognises that GCA’s work within BCEP has primarily been one of contribution rather than attribution. Outcomes have been delivered through complex pathways involving multiple actors, policy processes, and financing mechanisms. As such, the evaluation has relied on document review, stakeholder interviews, analysis and triangulation of sub-project evidence, and examination of intermediate outcome indicators.

Relevance

Evidence indicates that GCA’s support to the Bangladesh Climate and Environment Programme (BCEP) has been relevant to both national climate adaptation priorities and the strategic objectives of BCEP. Documentation and consulted stakeholders suggest that GCA’s engagement has been grounded in an understanding of Bangladesh’s climate vulnerability context and policy landscape. This includes alignment with key national frameworks such as the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), the Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan, and sectoral resilience strategies.

Some Government counterparts, for example, have reported that GCA’s role is perceived as supportive of nationally led priorities rather than externally driven. This alignment has enhanced the legitimacy of BCEP and facilitated government ownership of programme activities.

² It should be borne in mind that the Grant was scheduled to run to March 2027 but that this was cut by FCDO by a year with the completion date now being March 2026

“GCA did not come with a pre-packaged model. Their support was framed around what Bangladesh was already trying to do on adaptation, which made it much easier for us as the World Bank to engage.”

Anonymized World Bank Staff Member

Further, qualitative interviews suggest that GCA demonstrated responsiveness as BCEP evolved from design into implementation. Stakeholders involved in early programme development describe GCA as playing a constructive role in refining BCEP’s theory of change, particularly in clarifying the pathways between technical assistance, institutional strengthening, and adaptation outcomes.

As implementation progressed, GCA reportedly adjusted its focus to respond to emerging demands, including requests for more targeted sectoral support and greater emphasis on translating policy commitments into implementable actions.

“The type of support needed in 2022 was not the same as that needed in 2024. GCA was able to adjust without losing sight of the bigger objectives.”

Anonymized GOB MoEFCC Staff Member

Effectiveness

In terms of effectiveness, the evaluation finds that GCA has delivered the majority of its planned outputs within the constraints of time and funding adjustments. These outputs include technical studies, capacity-building workshops, policy briefs, analytical tools, and advisory services to government entities.

More significantly, the evaluation identifies meaningful contributions to intermediate outcomes, including:

- Enhanced institutional capacity to analyse climate risks and integrate adaptation into planning processes
- Improved policy coherence between national climate frameworks and sectoral strategies
- Increased visibility of adaptation financing needs and options
- Strengthened dialogue between government, development partners, and financing institutions

By way of evidence, documentation and some Stakeholder feedback describe the technical assistance provided by GCA as credible, high quality, and contextually appropriate. Qualitative data indicates that GCA’s effectiveness has stemmed not only from technical expertise, but also from its ability to tailor global adaptation knowledge to Bangladesh’s institutional and policy realities.

Respondents in KIIs and Focus Group discussions have noted that GCA’s analytical products and advisory inputs have been most effective when they were closely linked to specific decision-

making processes and specific plans, for example the People's Adaptation Plans, accompanied by sustained engagement rather than delivered as one-off outputs.

“The GCA support to ERD, especially the training on Climate Finance has been excellent. I have never seen such effective training in my life. The trainers/ facilitators used many different innovative methods to make the topic clear understanding for all. Group works were organized forming WhatsApp groups for interactive discussion and presentation that ensured active participation of all. Now, inspired by GCA, ERD has started a wider staff capacity building initiative using the GCA module and training approach within the ministry and with our own funding.”

Anonymized GOB ERD Staff Member

However, the translation of outputs into demonstrable adaptation outcomes at community level is uneven. This reflects both the upstream focus of GCA's mandate and the time lag inherent in policy and institutional reform processes. Structural constraints – staff turnover, fiscal limitations, and coordination challenges across ministries, have also influenced outcome realization.

The evaluation concludes, however, that GCA's interventions have been effective within their defined sphere of influence, though the articulation of outcome-level indicators and systematic tracking of behavioural or institutional change could have been strengthened.

Efficiency and Value for Money

The evaluation finds that the Accountable Grant has generally been used efficiently. GCA has maintained a relatively lean operational model, relying on partnerships, co-financing arrangements, and targeted technical expertise. The ratio of strategic reach to financial input compares favourably with more capital-intensive adaptation interventions.

Economy has been demonstrated through prudent procurement practices and use of local expertise where feasible. Efficiency gains have been achieved by aligning sub-projects with ongoing BCEP processes and leveraging existing government structures rather than establishing parallel systems.

Effectiveness, in VfM terms, is evidenced by the achievement of planned outputs and meaningful contribution to intermediate outcomes. Equity considerations, however, have been variably integrated; while adaptation rationale is strong, explicit targeting of marginalised or vulnerable groups through GESI-sensitive design has not always been systematically embedded.

Cost-effectiveness remains plausible but not fully quantified. The evaluation notes that results-based management systems could have been strengthened to allow more robust articulation of VfM beyond narrative accounts. Improved outcome tracking, clearer baselines, and systematic documentation of leveraged finance would enhance future VfM analysis.

Impact

Direct, attributable impact at the level of improved resilience outcomes cannot yet be robustly demonstrated, given the scale, upstream focus, and shortened timeframe of the Grant. Nonetheless, the evaluation finds credible evidence that GCA's support has contributed to longer-term impact pathways.

These include:

- Strengthened institutional readiness for climate adaptation
- Improved integration of climate risk analysis into planning frameworks
- Enhanced access to adaptation knowledge and tools
- Increased awareness among policymakers of financing mechanisms and investment prioritisation approaches

Such contributions are foundational to durable resilience outcomes, even if community-level impacts remain emergent. The evaluation concludes that the Grant has played a catalytic role in shaping adaptation discourse and institutional practice within BCEP.

Sustainability

Prospects for sustainability are mixed but generally positive at the institutional and policy level. Policy reforms and planning tools introduced with GCA support show potential for durability, provided that government ownership remains strong and that capacity is institutionalised rather than concentrated in individuals.

Individual-level capacity gains are more vulnerable to staff turnover and political change. Continued reinforcement through training-of-trainers models, integration into civil service curricula, and embedding tools within formal systems would enhance sustainability.

Financial sustainability is contingent on continued mobilisation of domestic and international climate finance. GCA's efforts to strengthen investment readiness and financing dialogue represent important steps toward sustaining adaptation momentum beyond the Grant period.

Cross-Cutting Themes

Climate adaptation rationale has been consistently strong across GCA-supported interventions, grounded in evidence and aligned with national and international frameworks.

GESI integration has been more limited. While vulnerability considerations are often implicit in adaptation programming, systematic gender and social inclusion analysis has not always been explicit in design or monitoring frameworks.

Safeguarding and risk management systems have relied significantly on partner frameworks. While this is appropriate within a partnership model, clearer articulation of GCA-specific oversight mechanisms would strengthen accountability and coherence.

Conclusions including What Worked Well, What Can Be Learned and Forward-Looking Recommendations

Overall, the evaluation concludes that the Accountable Grant has enabled GCA to make a relevant, strategically positioned, and largely effective contribution to BCEP. Its comparative advantage has lain in upstream policy engagement, institutional strengthening, and knowledge mobilisation rather than direct delivery of adaptation infrastructure.

What has worked particularly well is as follows:

- Strategic Alignment and Relevance
- GCA's Convening Role Backed with Technical Excellence
- Contribution To Policy and Institutional Processes
- Leveraging Partnerships and Resources
- Strong Climate Adaptation Rationale

There are some extremely specific lessons here:

- Upstream, systems-focused interventions are highly relevant but require explicit expectation management
- Influence requires deliberate strategies, not just technical excellence
- Theories of change need to be operational tools, not just conceptual frameworks
- Outcome-oriented monitoring is essential for learning in complex programmes
- Partnership management requires active resourcing
- Institutional capacity gains must be embedded to be durable
- Alignment with government planning and budget cycles strengthens uptake
- GESI requires intentional integration in upstream work
- Catalytic grants can deliver high strategic value when well targeted

To enhance future impact, the Report recommends:

- Consideration is given to returning to both the original timeframe complete with funding, and a two year extension to maximise sustainability prospects
- Sharpening and operationalising the Theory of Change with clearer causal pathways and measurable intermediate outcomes
- Strengthening results-based management and VfM documentation
- Strengthening outcome-oriented monitoring and learning systems
- Embedding learning more systematically in programme management
- Strengthening institutional embedding of capacity development
- Enhancing integration of GESI in upstream work
- Contextualising safeguarding and risk management for upstream interventions

In short, the experience of this Grant then offers important lessons for climate adaptation programming in complex, multi-actor environments. It demonstrates the value of catalytic, technically focused interventions within broader investment platforms, while highlighting the necessity of rigorous outcome tracking and sustained institutional engagement to translate upstream influence into lasting resilience gains.

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