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E-PAPER

# Shaping the Future of Multilateralism

Artificial distinction  
between climate  
change adaptation and  
development restricts  
access to climate finance  
for developing countries

**BY HARJEET SINGH AND INDRAJIT BOSE**

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## **Contents**

<b>Artificial distinction between climate change adaptation and development restricts access to climate finance for developing countries</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Urgent need to scale up adaptation measures and financing</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Overcoming the adaptation-development dichotomy</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Climate-proofing development</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>A climate justice approach to financing adaptation</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>18</b>

# Artificial distinction between climate change adaptation and development restricts access to climate finance for developing countries

**Urgently addressing the growing impact of climate change in developing countries, especially on the most poor and marginalized people and communities, requires a better understanding of what constitutes adaptation, how it applies in local contexts, and how to increase the quantity and quality of financing provided for such measures. Some funders have created an artificial distinction between adaptation and development approaches, ignoring the past injustices and related historical development deficits, that is counterproductive and limits access to adaptation financing for developing countries. Instead, the international community should focus on “climate-proofing” development projects, frameworks, and systems, respect and protect human rights, encourage participation, and account for the disproportionate effects of climate change on women and girls.**

The effects of climate change are increasingly clear the world over, but people in developing countries, especially the poor, are bearing the brunt. The primary focus to date has been on climate change mitigation – the effort to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Yet that has not yielded the desired results: average global temperatures in 2020 were 1.2°C over pre-industrial levels (the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change set out a goal of limiting global warming to below 2°C, preferably 1.5°C). As a result of the failure to more effectively curb this deterioration even a drastic drop in GHG emissions in the near future would not entirely eliminate climate-change impacts.

Developing countries have no option left but to scale up [climate change adaptation](#).<sup>1</sup> Their goal is to build resilience and deal with anticipated future impacts, as well as address severe loss and damage that has already occurred and that exceeds the current ability of people or systems to adapt. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has warned in [numerous reports](#) of the dire consequences for humanity and natural systems if warming is not held in check.

**1** Adaptation refers to adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts. It refers to changes in processes, practices, and structures to moderate potential damage or, in some cases, to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change.

# Urgent need to scale up adaptation measures and financing

Climate change and its impacts have already inflicted severe harm on millions of people, [violating their human rights](#) (such as the right to life, health, food, and an adequate standard of living). That pattern looks set to continue. For many, no less than their immediate and future survival is at stake. Those affected now and in the future must have access to adequate financial support as well as meaningful remedies, including judicial and other mechanisms for redress.

Women and girls are especially impacted by climate change, and this is likely to worsen in the future. The [disproportionate impacts](#) are particularly pervasive because of deeply rooted gender norms, inequalities, and stereotypes that are difficult to overcome quickly. Studies have found that women are more likely to be killed by extreme weather events in countries where their socioeconomic status is below that of men. Women end up with fewer social, material, and environmental options and fewer coping mechanisms to respond to climate impacts. For instance, when crop yields are impacted by droughts and floods, established food hierarchies within families and communities translate into women and girls getting food last, if at all. Women and girls absorb higher burdens of meeting the need for unpaid care in times of climate-related shocks and stressors, sapping the time, energy, and focus they could otherwise devote to pursuing their core human rights, such as health care, education, or political participation. Women's mental and physical health suffer, and they are exposed to heightened risks of gender-based and sexual violence, such as in emergency shelters after extreme weather events.

The year 2020 was one of the warmest on record. More than 50 million people globally were [directly affected](#) by floods, droughts, or storms and thus were hit doubly during the Covid-19 pandemic. There is no question that countries need to make progress on adaptation. According to the IPCC, investment in adaptation is particularly critical in developing countries, where socio-economic conditions and limited infrastructure exacerbate vulnerability to climate change.

South Asia was among the regions most affected by extreme weather disasters between 1999 and 2018, according to the [Global Climate Risk Index 2021](#). More fierce and more frequent cyclones, changing patterns of monsoons and other weather phenomenon such as heat waves and sea-level rise affect almost every aspect of life in the region. The case of India highlights that stark reality. An Indian report titled "[Assessment of Climate Change over the Indian Region](#)" revealed that, since the middle of the 20th century, the subcontinent has experienced decreases in overall monsoon rainfall amounts; rises in extreme temperatures, more extreme rainfall patterns, droughts, and sea level rise; and increased intensity of severe cyclones. The study projects that the average temperature in India may rise by 4.4°C, and the intensity of heat waves is likely to increase by a factor of three or four by the end of the century. [The World Bank](#) estimates that climate change will reduce

living standards in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, driving 62 million people in South Asia into extreme poverty by 2030.

Meanwhile, adaptation costs are rising. According to [reports](#), adaptation in developing countries costs US\$ 70 billion annually and is likely to reach US\$ 300 billion in 2030 and US\$ 500 billion in 2050. This increasing financing need stands in stark contrast to the reality of adaptation finance mobilized for developing countries. A recent [Oxfam report](#) assessed progress toward a 2009 commitment by developed countries to provide US\$100 billion per year in climate finance to developing countries. It found that, from 2017 to 2018, only US\$59.5 billion per year was provided in public climate finance, of which about 25 percent was for adaptation and 66 percent was for mitigation.

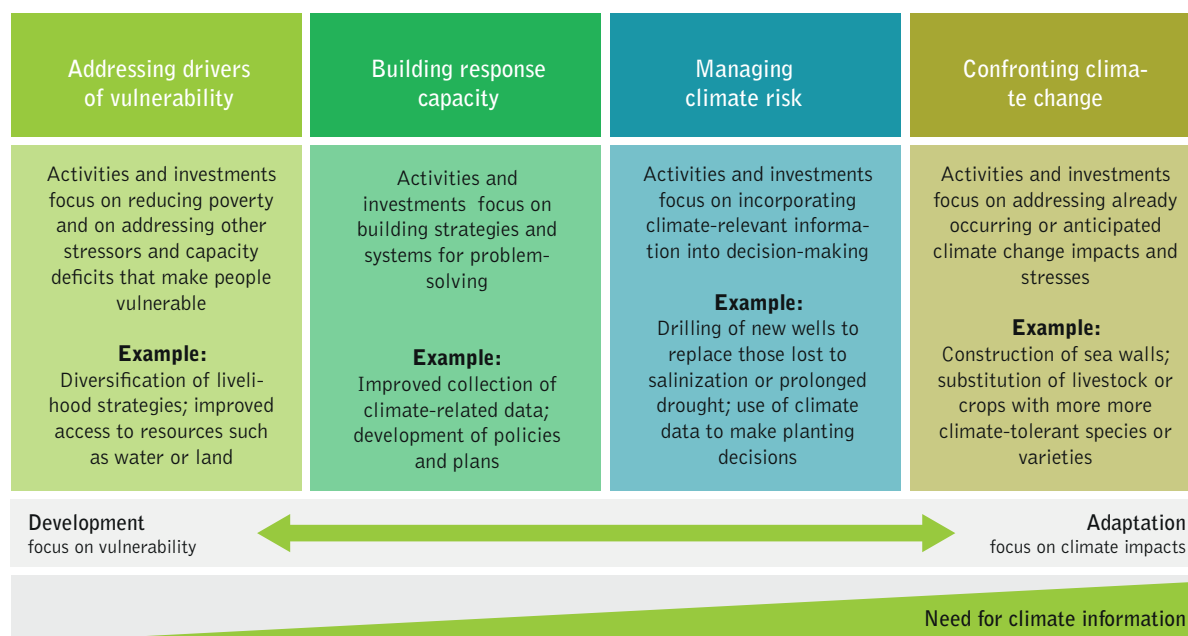
The devastation of the Covid-19 pandemic has further raised the stakes for adaptation finance, which dropped as a funding priority in favor of reallocating resources to combat the effects of the coronavirus. The pandemic-induced economic recession in most developing countries compounds the problem, with lasting implications for adaptation. All told, the decreased capacity of countries and communities to adapt to climate change leaves key sectors at risk of losing the development gains they had registered in previous years, including in agriculture and food production, water- and natural-resource management, and disaster-risk prevention and reduction. Many developing countries are already challenged by glaring capacity limitations to adequately plan for adaptation in the first place.

How then does a country protect its people? Development planning needs to take into account climate change and its impact as it threatens the reversal of development gains. Failure to do this will leave countries and communities more vulnerable to future shocks. However, debates continue around whether and how to draw a dividing line between a development activity and an adaptation activity. This discourse, which has been [going on for more than a decade](#), has significant implications for the provision of adaptation finance to developing countries, especially through multilateral climate funds tasked with helping developing countries address climate change as part of their obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 2015 Paris Agreement.

## Overcoming the adaptation-development dichotomy

Many development and adaptation experts have argued for years that trying to draw a sharp distinction between “adaptation” and “development” is not reflective of the interventions needed on the ground to help people and communities. Instead, they have proposed a [continuum of approaches](#), which might differ in the degree to which interventions address vulnerability versus climate change impacts. But all contribute to adaptation, which is fundamentally connected with issues relating to poverty reduction and social support, institutional strengthening, and planning and risk management.

## Graphic: Illustrating the development-adaptation continuum



Source: Adapted from McGray et. al. (2007)

Nevertheless, the development-versus-adaptation dichotomy persists in the funding approaches of several existing multilateral climate funds operating under the UNFCCC and supporting the implementation of the Paris Agreement. For example, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) provides financing for developing countries for climate change projects only for agreed incremental costs<sup>2</sup> necessary to achieve global climate benefits. This assumes that those costs are over and above costs for the measures' contributions to local development (set as the baseline), which are to be borne through co-financing from other institutions. This is despite an [independent evaluation](#) that found already in 2007 that such an approach does little to increase the quality of funded projects.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) likewise applies an incremental-cost approach in most cases, when considering whether and how much to support funding proposals, including for adaptation measures. The GCF, which like the GEF receives guidance from the UNFCCC, is meant to be the most important multilateral fund to make a significant and ambitious contribution to combating climate change. When it was established, the idea was that a significant share of the "new and additional" multilateral funding for adaptation (over and above Official Development Assistance) would flow through the fund. As the largest multilateral climate fund, with close to US\$20 billion in pledges, the GCF is meant to balance the allocation of its resources equally between adaptation and mitigation activities. It has now become the [most important multilateral fund supporting adaptation](#). It provides financing to increase resilience in the areas of health, food and

- 2 The principle of incremental cost funding (in the GEF and other funds) was originally envisaged to ensure that climate finance does not substitute for existing development finance but provides new and additional funding to produce global climate benefits.

water security; livelihoods of people and communities; ecosystems and ecosystem services; and infrastructure and the built environment.

The Board of the GCF, which comprises 24 members from developing and developed countries with equal representation and decision-making powers, received a number of proposals during the past several years that led to heated discussions within the board on whether the projects supported development or climate-change adaptation. Such disagreement has plagued the GCF from the beginning of its funding support, often with board members from developed countries criticizing proposed projects as too development-focused, while developing-nation board members argue that their support is consistent with the GCF's mandate as a climate fund.

This divide came very publicly to the fore in the case of a project [proposed in 2017 for Ethiopia](#), entitled "Responding to the increasing risk of drought: building gender-responsive resilience of the most vulnerable communities." The project failed to gain approval because the board, mired among other issues in a definitional debate about the project-specific extent of adaptation, could not reach consensus. Even before that, at a meeting of the board in 2016, [a project in Bangladesh](#) on "Enhancing Women and Girls' Adaptive Capacity to Climate Change," was withdrawn before it came to a board decision, as it was apparent there was no consensus among board members, also due to disagreements over whether the project was too development-focused. In both cases, revised versions of the funding proposals were approved at later board meetings, but with substantially reduced amounts. Furthermore, [the Bangladesh project](#) gained approval only after it eliminated proposed social-support payments for women and girls (which developed-country board members had judged to be development, and not adaptation expenditures).

Paradoxically, the same development-adaptation divide within the GCF also clouded its approach in a [technical expert workshop on climate-adaptation finance](#) convened by the GCF Secretariat in 2018 to bridge those very divisions and find a way forward. The discussion was informed by [a World Resources Institute study commissioned by the GCF](#), which reviewed GCF adaptation projects and found that "activities funded for climate adaptation often resemble activities funded by traditional development institutions."

[The report stated:](#)

"Climate change puts stress on economic activity, infrastructure, ecosystems, and human health and livelihoods, all of which have been the focus of traditional development finance for decades. With a few exceptions that are highly climate-specific, such as climate data collection and climate risk modeling, enabling communities to adapt means supporting development activities, but doing so in a way that is informed by an understanding of climate change, its effects, and how to cope with its likely consequences. As a result, because the 'toolbox' of adaptation activities is similar to the traditional development toolbox, looking at activities in isolation and attempting to draw clear distinctions between adaptation and development is unlikely to be a useful guide to what the GCF should or should not fund. A more practical approach would be to establish and define, on the basis of robust analysis



and data, the causal connection between the proposed activities and context-specific climate risks, impacts, and vulnerabilities over various time horizons (e.g., short- and long term).”

The [GCF workshop report](#) noted that, while the GCF intends to promote low-carbon and climate-resilient development, its “goal is not to differentiate adaptation from development, but to engage in development to enable it to become low-carbon and resilient.” The report also noted the need for an integrated approach, while acknowledging that “differentiating between development and adaptation while relevant to some extent at the international, national and sub-national levels, becomes irrelevant at the local level.” For this, however, strengthening the “climate rationale” is important, the report stated, while noting that “although climate change data exists to better understand the climate rationale, linking the same data to projects is found to be difficult.”

The “[climate rationale](#)”<sup>3</sup> of a project is the demonstration, based on scientific data, that proposed activities to be funded by the GCF address risks from climate change rather than just business-as-usual development priorities. Project proponents are supposed to provide proof in their proposals through detailed data and in-depth scientific studies showing the clear link of intended measures to addressing climate-change impacts. Developing countries are critical of the use of the “climate rationale” justification for project funding in the GCF, especially for adaptation approaches. They insist that, more often than not, the requirement acts as a barrier to accessing finance for developing countries, since they usually lack adequate data to establish the “climate rationale,” the required scientific proof of a project’s connection to climate change.

Notwithstanding criticism of an overly technical and burdensome approach to establishing the climate rationale for adaptation measures and related issues (such as, in many project cases, inadequate climate data), efforts should be made to factor in climate change risks in both policy and project or program design, whether it is the construction of a road or growing a crop to ensure climate-resilient outcomes. Most developing countries already develop and deploy adaptation-planning instruments – in the form of a plan or a strategy or a policy approach. The least-developed countries (LDCs), acknowledging their increased vulnerability to climate change, have [National Adaptation Programmes of Action \(NAPAs\)](#),<sup>4</sup> which are meant to urgently address some of the most pressing im-

- 3** A climate rationale provides the scientific underpinning for evidence-based climate decision making. It ensures that the linkages between climate impacts, climate action and societal benefits are fully grounded in the best available climate data and science. Articulation of ‘climate rationale’ for a climate projects usually means broadly incorporating three main phases: 1) establishing credible climate science and evidence, robust assessment of exposure, impacts, vulnerability and disaster risks in the context of adaptation; 2) developing of a set of optimal interventions that collectively and comprehensively addresses underlying climate risks and maximizes sustainable development benefits, and 3) integrating interventions into the broader national and international policy and decision-making processes for long-term low-emission climate resilient development.

diate climate change impacts. Many developing countries are in the process of developing [National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#)<sup>5</sup>, a key UNFCCC mechanism for countries to focus on medium- to long-term adaptation.

## Climate-proofing development

While a false dichotomy between adaptation and development is detrimental for climate financing approaches, trying to separate adaptation and development priorities in development financing is likewise a misguided approach. This is increasingly recognized by multilateral development banks. The World Bank, for example, [claims](#) “climate co-benefits” (meaning additional beneficial impacts to address climate change) of financing for projects and programs that are meant to primarily support development objectives. As climate change impacts threaten to reverse development gains, the discussion on climate-proofing development policies, programs, and projects becomes more important. (Simply put, the term climate-proofing means incorporating issues of climate change into development planning.)

Climate-proofing of development projects must happen across multiple levels, from policies to programs and projects to safeguard people and avoid irreversible losses and damage from climate change. Many development policies, plans, and projects currently do not necessarily take climate change into account, due to a lack of awareness and clarity on how to effectively develop and integrate adaptation options. Methodologies exist on how to climate-proof development projects: assessing current and future climate risks; understanding baselines, vulnerability assessments, and impact analysis; mainstreaming climate risks through response strategies; and empowering and resourcing local communities, particularly women, in participatory multi-stakeholder processes. But these methodologies must be examined in context, since adaptation is local in nature and adaptation options and needs may vary within countries, regions, and sometimes even between two neighboring villages.

Often, climate-proofing of development is considered easier and therefore prioritized for infrastructure projects if undertaken at the design stage. Consider road or dike projects,

- 4 NAPAs provide a process for the LDCs to identify priority activities that respond to their urgent and immediate needs for adaptation to climate change for which further delay could increase vulnerability or lead to increased costs at a later stage. In the NAPA process, community-level input as an important source of information is high on the agenda, recognizing that grassroots communities are often those at the frontline of climate change.
- 5 The national adaptation plan (NAP) process enables member countries of the UNFCCC to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs) as a means of identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs. It is a continuous, progressive and iterative process which follows a country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and fully transparent approach.

for example. Investing in roads that can withstand extreme heat as well as extreme rainfall or flooding would be climate-proofing a development project. Similarly, an agricultural field in a coastal area might be saved from salinization by building dikes out of natural materials and ensuring they are built in a way that accounts for high tide and projected sea-level rise.

From a programming point of view, the incremental costs – the costs of the “climate” component added to a regular development project – could be calculated more easily in cases like infrastructure investment than in the case of non-structural measures. In funding measures related to streamlining or setting policies and laws, public awareness raising, education, and capacity building, it is much harder to make the distinction between climate change adaptation and development, and such an artificial differentiation at the financing level might even be counter-productive.

However, such narrow thinking about incremental costs prevents recognition of much broader applications for climate-proofing policies. Some of the most interesting – yet least recognized and therefore underutilized – opportunities in developing countries is to climate-proof social protection schemes to help poor and vulnerable households become more resilient to the impacts of climate change and to ensure they are protected in cases of climate-related extreme-weather events even when they have lost everything. [Social protection schemes have a crucial role to play](#) in protecting women, communities, and economies from catastrophic climate impacts, and in avoiding a mutually reinforcing spiral of climate vulnerability and poverty by strengthening resilience, and advancing development goals and human rights.

Examples of such schemes and programs from India that could be climate-proofed include the [Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme \(MGNREGS\)](#) and [Targeted Public Distribution System \(TPDS\)](#). The MGNREGS aims to enhance the security of livelihoods for people in rural areas by guaranteeing 100 days of wage-employment per financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. Known as [the largest cash-for-work \(or “workfare”\) program in the world](#), it also adds 50 days to the standard 100 days of guaranteed-wage labor during droughts, floods, and cyclones. The long-term goal is to enhance rural livelihood security through public works that generate agricultural and environmental benefits, such as soil and water conservation and irrigation works. India also recognizes MGNREGS as one of the 24 key initiatives to address the problem of climate change, while simultaneously improving the livelihoods of the poor. Planning and design of works under MGNREGS should take into account impacts of climate change to ensure resilience of vulnerable rural communities and make the benefits sustainable in the long run.

The TPDS aims to provide subsidized food and fuel to the poor through a network of ration shops. It is administered across the country by the Department of Food and Public Distribution, while the central government and states share the responsibilities of identifying the poor, procuring food grains, and delivering it to recipients. The public distribution has encountered challenges such as grain leakage during transportation, spoiling of food grains in warehouses or corruption that diverts food grains for illegal sale at market

price). But the program has clear potential to address food insecurity in India. With climate change expected to further increase food insecurity in India, the ability of TPDS's to address climate-change impacts through climate-proofing must be strengthened by improving its approach, framework, and procedures.

These examples from India are but a few among hundreds of programs in many developing countries that have potential for being climate-proofed. Still, climate-proofing such programs comes with its own set of challenges, ranging from inadequate compliance, limited outreach, multiplicity of agencies, and lack of coordination to duplication of effort, exclusion of workers in the unorganized or informal sectors, and, above all, the sheer lack of resources to tackle poverty as well as climate challenges.

Certainly, nobody would argue that all development projects can be turned into climate-change adaptation projects. But there is a clear need to explore and implement synergies, and to develop a guiding international framework to better understand the relationship between development and adaptation implementation. It would do a disservice, as discussed earlier, to separate adaptation from development outcomes at the local level, where projects and programs are being implemented.

Nevertheless, while development and adaptation shouldn't be differentiated at the local implementation level, the provision of development and adaptation finance at the international level is different. This is due to funding commitments by developed countries in support of climate action in developing countries, including for adaptation, and the need to track the fulfillment of these – a matter not of semantics but of politics. The fact that there is no agreed definition of climate finance under the UNFCCC runs the risk of considering “everything,” including development finance, as climate finance. Another challenge is that information about adaptation finance is scattered across different levels of donor and recipient governments, across different databases, and is often difficult to obtain and collate, as a number of different accounting methodologies are used.

## **A climate justice approach to financing adaptation**

Climate justice requires that those who have contributed the least to climate change and who are unjustly and disproportionately impacted by it must have access to adequate financial resources and effective remedies to address those impacts, and they must be meaningful participants in and primary beneficiaries of climate measures such as adaptation projects.

A climate-justice approach is grounded in an understanding of historical inequities and oppression affecting people and communities in developing countries.

A [study](#) published in 2018 by Indian economist Utsa Patnaik found that Britain drained

nearly US\$ 45 trillion (a conservative estimate) from India via tax and trade during the period 1765 to 1938. India [share](#) of the world economy fell from 23 percent to below 4 percent by the time the British left. Historians have recorded that around 1700, India produced 25 percent of world gross domestic product (GDP) while Britain only contributed just over 2 percent. By the time India gained independence in 1947, the country was reduced to barely 3 percent of world GDP and Britain's share had increased to 10 percent. According to a paper titled "[Racism and Climate \(In\)Justice](#)," the history of "how climate change started seldom mentions the colonization, genocide, racism and slavery that paved the way towards industrialization and massive land use changes." The paper traces how colonization permitted the unfolding of the climate crisis by facilitating over-exploitation of natural resources so that Europe and the United States could industrialize. The result was a corresponding rise in GHG emissions. [Industrialization](#), one of the main drivers of anthropogenic climate change, increased the global temperature by more than 1°C between 1880 and 2020.

Recognition of the increasing threat of climate change led to the UNFCCC being established in 1992 with the objective of stabilizing GHG emissions to levels that would prevent dangerous "anthropogenic interference with the climate system," so that ecosystems would be able to adapt naturally, food production would not be threatened, and economic development could proceed sustainably. In recognizing their responsibility, developed countries also committed to supporting developing countries in adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Nearly three decades later, developing countries still lack the promised enhanced access to massively scaled-up finance, technology, and capacity-building support. These are the "means of implementation," as identified under the UNFCCC, that are vital to put developing countries on a path to transition to an environmentally sustainable, climate resilient, low-carbon economy and a more just society. Developed countries have long delayed fulfilling their climate-finance obligations and commitments under the Convention and the Paris Agreement. That includes the goal of providing US\$100 billion in climate financing per year by 2020. Although levels of climate finance have increased (though not enough) in the past few years, there has been a disturbing decline in public climate finance for both mitigation and adaptation and especially in the provision of grant financing. At the same time, loans and other non-grant instruments have become the main climate-finance instruments, and many of the lenders no longer offer below-market rates or other concessions.

This deterioration in the quality of public climate financing provided comes at the same time as the debt levels of developing countries skyrocket. At the end of 2018, the total [debt stocks](#) of developing countries stood at almost double their combined GDP, the highest level on record. With the Covid-19 pandemic and the corresponding increase in indebtedness of developing countries, the adaptation finance gap is likely to widen, and loans for adaptation will only further burden developing countries already strained by the effects of climate change.

Several reports highlight the low share of financing that goes to adaptation, compared with mitigation, and the decrease in adaptation financing provided as grants. A recently released [report by the OECD](#) revealed that the total public climate finance provided and mobilized by developed countries reached US\$78.9 billion in 2018. Financing for mitigation represented more than two-thirds (70 percent) of the 2018 total, while adaptation projects received only 21 percent of the funding. The remainder was used for financing cross-cutting measures that combine mitigation and adaptation objectives. In relation to the financial instruments used, between 2013 and 2018, the share of loans in total public finance provided grew from 52 percent to 74 percent, while the share of grants decreased from 27 percent to 20 percent, according to the report. The OECD report also revealed that private climate finance mobilized by developed countries from 2016 to 2018 focused almost entirely on climate mitigation (93 percent).

A 2019 [joint report](#) covered climate-related expenditures by the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), the Inter-American Development Bank Group (IDBG), the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and the World Bank Group (WBG). It showed that the MDBs collectively committed US\$61 billion for climate finance in 2019, of which 76 percent was for climate change mitigation. The report revealed that 73 percent of their climate financing was in the form of investment loans. That included 63 percent of all adaptation finance. Such loans, the report stated, “can be used for any development activity that has the overall objective of promoting sustainable social and/or economic development, in line with the MDBs’ mandates. Proceeds used for activities included in the joint MDB methodology for tracking climate finance count as climate finance.”

In addition to overall insufficient funding for adaptation and the increased provision of public adaptation finance as loans, access to adequate multilateral adaptation finance for developing countries, such as in the Green Climate Fund (GCF), is often further complicated by additional hurdles. These include requirements to engage the private sector and create enabling policy and regulatory environments to increase businesses’ willingness to invest, or demands to provide the “climate rationale” for adaptation measures and provide co-financing, as noted earlier.

Developed countries are focused on bringing in the private sector for adaptation investment despite their limited engagement on adaptation to date, as private investors are more interested in mitigation. According to researchers at the [Stockholm Environment Institute](#), private-sector investment in adaptation often happens autonomously and without a clear intention to address climate change, even though the private sector itself faces various climate-related risks.

Likewise developing countries resent demands by developed countries to create enabling environments for private-sector investments in climate actions as the price for receiving funding. The developing countries view this as interference with their internal policies and regulations and an infringement of their sovereignty. Such demands serve as stumbling blocks that prevent a quick disbursement of adaptation funding to developing countries

and contradict the climate-justice understanding of adaptation finance as having the objective of facilitating and enhancing access, rather than blocking it.

## Recommendations

Adaptation is a local challenge created by global actions. It is fundamental to protect the basic rights of people, especially the poor in developing countries, and improve their resilience to and ability to address the effects of climate change. In a world that is moving towards a 3°C average increase in global temperature due to the failure of developed countries to ambitiously and quickly cut their GHG emission, adaptation must be a priority. Unless we focus on adaptation, we cannot keep people safe.

A high priority for the near term is to strengthen the knowledge base about the linkages and synergies between development and adaptation and about the best adaptation approaches. This will need to be done through more observations, more and better data and modelling at local levels to refine understanding of current impacts and projections of future impacts, and with early insights from the field on the most effective responses. Until then, the best way to support adaptation locally is through inclusive, participatory, and sustainable development practices that heed the large-scale effects of climate change in the region.

The entire global community must come together to find solutions. Developed countries also will see impacts, but the difference is they have more financial resources and technology to tackle the effects of climate change and therefore higher adaptive capacity. Solutions should be developed jointly. Knowledge-sharing and the spirit of collaboration will provide effective solutions for all. Going forward, we recommend the following to enhance adaptation support for developing countries:

1. **Scale up resources:** Adequate financing must be provided in a sustained and predictable manner to help developing countries adapt to climate change. Developed countries should accept a transparent, principle-based allocation of responsibility for adaptation funding, resulting in adequate, new and additional public money to support adaptation programs in developing countries. Moreover, funding providers must understand that adaptation has its limits, and **additional financial efforts** should be directed to address irreversible loss and damage.
2. **Stop the counterproductive separation of development and adaptation at the local level:** The goal is not to differentiate adaptation from development, but to climate-proof local development interventions to enable them to become low-carbon and climate-resilient to current and projected climate impacts.

3. **Facilitate access to adaptation finance:** Undue focus or reliance on private-sector investment, requirements for enabling policy and regulatory environments, or expecting complex scientific-data calculations to prove the “climate rationale” of a proposed intervention create additional barriers for developing countries. Efforts must be made to further facilitate access to adaptation finance by removing or reducing burdensome requirements.
4. **Establish a Green Climate Fund framework for adaptation financing:** Based on its experiences of funding adaptation projects in developing countries, the GCF should develop a framework for adaptation financing that does away with an artificial distinction between adaptation and development in proposal development and implementation, including by reducing incremental-cost financing approaches for adaptation measures.
5. **Increase the focus of capacity building efforts on mainstreaming adaptation and climate-proofing development:** These approaches, where feasible, can address both long-term and urgent short-term adaptation measures. However, challenges to such mainstreaming must be recognized and barriers removed. These challenges include lack of awareness and knowledge of adaptation, particularly in relevant ministries, leading to the issue being considered in the periphery of other development issues; involving and coordinating stakeholders across various levels of governance and sectors; and linking local impacts with national-level responses. Other capacity challenges include applying information analysis, transferring skills to the national level, generating local data, integrating climate information to existing plans and finally, putting all these into high-quality proposals.
6. **Ensure adaptation measures respect, protect and promote human rights:** Governments must build adaptive capacities in vulnerable communities, including by recognizing the manner in which factors such as discrimination, exclusion, and disparities in education and health exacerbate climate vulnerability, and by devoting adequate resources to the realization of the economic, social, and cultural rights of all persons, particularly those facing the greatest risks.
7. **Support the voice and agency of women and girls in adaptation actions:** Paying greater attention to women’s and girls’ voices and agency is critical to understanding opportunities for transformative and gender-responsive policy and programming for adaptation. This means moving away from a view of women and girls as passive “vulnerable victims” of climate change toward understanding the specific barriers and needs for their involvement as active agents of transformative change. Women and girls are already making massive, though often unrecognized, contributions to disaster-risk reduction, post-disaster management, and climate-change mitigation and adaptation strategies. Policymakers and donors should invest in greater understanding of the gendered



impacts and opportunities associated with climate change and migration. Social protection schemes that are gender-responsive are a critical tool that governments can use to support people most affected by climate change impacts.

8. **Increase accountability in climate finance:** Accountability of all participants in the climate-finance architecture should be increased to ensure that climate finance reaches and benefits the people most impacted by climate change and supports their contributions to address climate change. Developed countries must report on the new and additional climate finance support in addition to their longstanding development-finance commitments. They should avoid re-labeling development expenditures as climate finance. At the same time developing countries must ensure that climate finance provided is utilized effectively and equitably and reaches the right target group.

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