

## **Bridging the Gap: Climate Change and Humanitarian Action – Reflections from the Regional Workshop**

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Climate change, an enigma vast and dire, Calls on all to heed its solemn plea. A tale of complexity, fraught with strife, It weaves through every thread of human life. The air we breathe, once pure and clear, Now cloaked in smog, grows heavy with fear. In busy urban areas, children heading to school in the early morning may find themselves confronted by a thick layer of smog that obscures the air they breathe. At the same time, farmers working in the fields struggle with unpredictable rainfall patterns and fluctuating temperatures, making it increasingly challenging to decide which crops to cultivate. These difficulties can lead to poor decision-making based on insufficient information, trapping individuals in cycles of debt and contributing to ongoing poverty. By 2050, unchecked climate change might force more than 200 million people to migrate within their own countries, pushing up to 130 million people into poverty and unravelling decades of hard-won development achievements. (World Economic Forum, 2024).

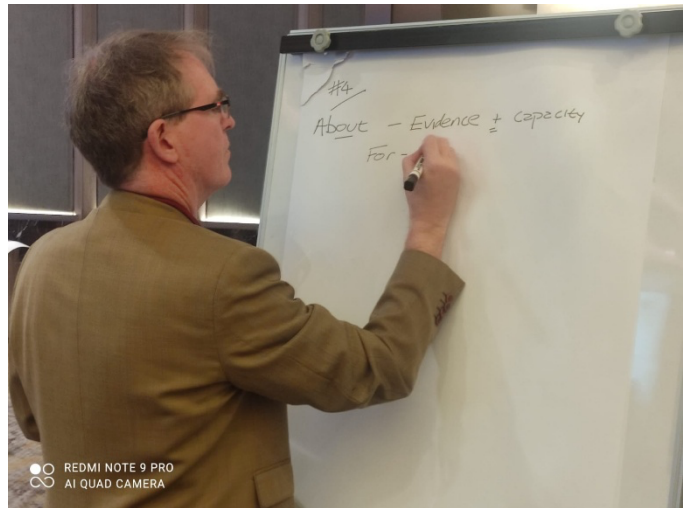
As a development professional with major experience in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change, I recognise the vital importance of informed decision-making within the climate change dialogue. Addressing climate change requires a multifaceted approach. One essential method is to diligently track and monitor progress in climate mitigation, adaptation, and financing at both national and international levels. Additionally, we need to assess and strengthen institutional capacities, tailoring our interventions to meet the specific challenges faced by each organization. On a more personal level, individuals can take meaningful steps by setting their own climate goals, such as reducing their carbon footprints or eliminating single-use plastics from their lives.

On December 13, 2024, I had the esteemed opportunity to participate in a climate change workshop organized by the Climate and Environment Charter Secretariat in collaboration with Community World Services Asia (CWSA) and ADAPT. This workshop, titled “Mainstreaming Climate and Environmental Action in Humanitarian Contexts,” was conducted at the picturesque Hotel Rembrandt in Bangkok, Thailand, following the Regional Humanitarian Partnership Weeks(RHPW).

A central objective of the workshop was to examine how organizations are effectively integrating climate and environmental considerations into their humanitarian programming. In my capacity as a representative of Humanitarian Aid International (HAI) from New Delhi, I found the pre-workshop



discussion, facilitated by the insightful Miss Nishanie Jayamaha, to be an invaluable platform for enhancing our understanding of the workshop's objectives. This preparatory session enabled me to align my perspectives with the anticipated outcomes of subsequent discussions. During the workshop, I was also afforded the opportunity to share my insights regarding the impactful community-based climate change initiatives implemented by HAI in collaboration with colleagues from Islamic Relief Bangladesh and EcoWeb, The Philippines. The proceedings commenced with a serious tone, as participants were invited to join various groups to deliberate on strategies for integrating humanitarian efforts with climate change adaptations. One of the most important aspects of the workshop was the discussion about the commitment of organizations that signed the climate charter. This commitment is crucial for ensuring that participants continue to incorporate climate change considerations into their humanitarian efforts beyond the workshop. It is essential for signatories to fully understand the commitment they made; while many may have participated in drafting it, they often struggle with the execution of that commitment.



Together, we explored the commitments, programming, operations, strategies, and successes that have arisen from collaborative efforts with communities that are most affected by climate change. In the post-lunch session, participants engaged in a productive activity setting the strategic discussions, targets, and goals. Bundled into groups participants were provided with charts and paper cards. Each one has to reflect on a "lesson learned", one area where they desired support, and one aspect for potential collaboration. This exercise not only generated innovative ideas but also highlighted valuable insights gained throughout the workshop.

The experience left a profound impact on all of us. Personally, I departed with renewed determination and a clear action plan to implement at HAI, ensuring alignment with the commitments outlined in the climate change charter and our humanitarian goals. Additionally, I appreciated the opportunity to connect with influential figures in the field, particularly Mr. Paul Knox from ADAPT. His insights were both inspiring and thought-provoking, and I look forward to nurturing this interaction into a more meaningful dialogue over time.

In closing, I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the organizing team for their efforts in facilitating such a meaningful workshop, and to Miss Nishanie Jayamaha and Miss Natasha Westheimer for their exceptional facilitation.