Institute of Development Studies

actionaid

Harnessing synergies: mainstreaming climate change adaptation in disaster risk reduction programmes and policies

Katie Harris and Aditya Bahadur

Above
Andhra Pradesh, India: Beginning of the road that the local administration opened following local community advocacy campaign

Front cover
Gramiya Vikas Manch, India: How empty bottles can be used to make a life jacket, demonstration being displayed by DRR volunteers

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Acronyms

CCA	Climate change adaptation
CEAD	Centre for Environment and Development
CSO	Civil society organisation
DRM	Disaster risk management
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
DRRS	Disaster Risk Reduction through Schools programme
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction
HFA	Hyogo Framework for Action
IDS	Institute for Development Studies
NAPA	National Adaptation Programmes of Action
SMT	Senior management team
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
VPA	Vulnerability and Poverty Assessment

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Executive summary

The time is ripe. Practitioners and policy makers working across the globe are recognising the importance of bringing together disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA). There is increased recognition of the value of mainstreaming CCA into DRR activities, to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience. That said, there is a lack of practical, actionable recommendations on how to create an environment where attempts to mainstream CCA into DRR can flourish: who leads such initiatives and what motivates these actors; what 'real world' challenges are faced and how are they overcome; what tactics and methods can be employed to undertake mainstreaming and what kinds of expertise and knowledge is needed? This report is the foundation for a process that seeks answers to these questions. It intends to help mobilise action through action-oriented advice from those who engage with DRR and CCA on a daily basis through the realities on the ground.

Over the past ten years the agenda to bring DRR and CCA closer together has continued to gain momentum. What has emerged are a number of opportunities and critical global agreements that recognise the need to link the two agendas. However, convergence has continued to progress at a faster rate conceptually and on paper than in practice.

ActionAid attempted to address some of the questions relating to *how* we can mainstream CCA into DRR programmes and policies, by commissioning a process that resulted in practical and actionable advice. As an initial contribution, this report draws on the insight and experience of over 100 disaster risk managers from a range of contexts across Africa and Asia. The report provides practical tips, action points, advice and guidance on the process of mainstreaming. Running through all sections are suggestions for possible actions to achieve mainstreaming, tactics that can be employed and the expertise, capacity and skills needed to undertake these actions.

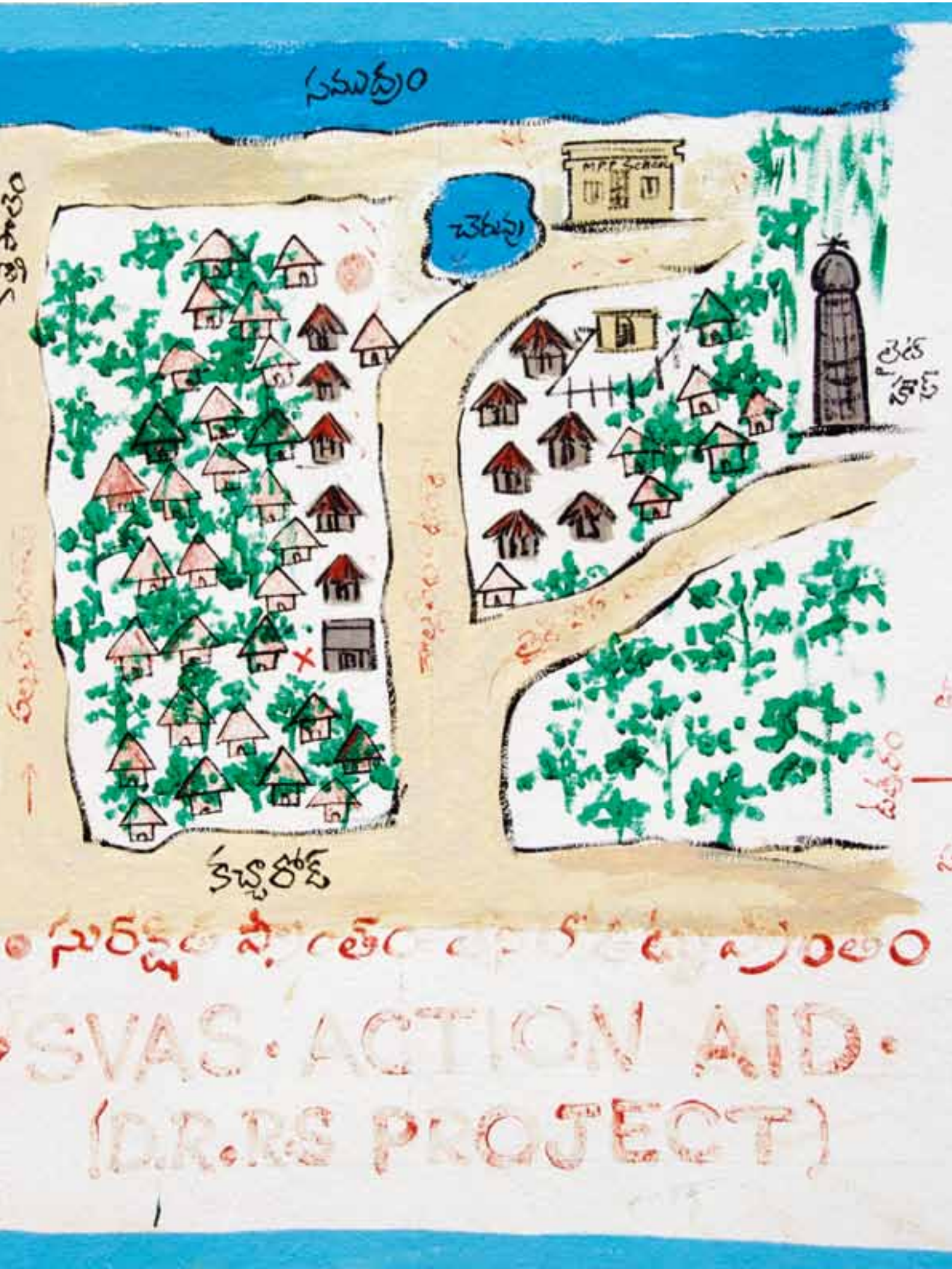
Unfortunately it cannot be taken as a given that a good idea will flourish. Despite sharing common goals of reducing poverty and vulnerability and increasing resilience CCA and DRR often lack the necessary political backing and financial investment. In the current economic climate the trend for donors and governments wanting 'hard' results and physical development investments may continue to hamper much needed support for the 'softer' activities associated with mainstreaming.

Based on the premise that promoting and harnessing links between CCA and DRR requires constructive, actionable guidance, a conceptual tool known as the Zebra was developed by Harris and Bahadur and is introduced in this report. The Zebra is a process that can be used by practitioners and policy makers across the board as it recognises that no two contexts are the same. The main purpose of the tool is to provide a structured framework for programme managers to think through the mainstreaming process. The Zebra contributes to the existing body of academic literature and conceptual thought on mainstreaming by providing a means to think through real-life situations in order to identify handy tips, action points, insights and guidance about how to mainstream CCA into DRR policies and programmes.

There is no single pathway to mainstream CAA into DRR programmes and policies and there are no 'silver bullets' for developing climate smart DRR approaches. It is possible, as we have demonstrated here, to learn from experience, debate ideas and identify which suggestions are most likely to be effective in a given scenario. All attempts to bring about a change in policies, organisations or strategies will have some effect – the challenge is creating a substantial enough effect that will result in the desired outcome. It is important for disaster risk managers therefore to understand the nature of change that they are aiming for and envision the end state of the mainstreaming process in order to carefully define the direction in which they are moving.

Making the case for mainstreaming is not simply about re-thinking the way we work, it demands changes in our operating structures, the institutional 'homes' and the way funding channels and policies govern the work carried out in the name of CCA and DRR (Mitchell, Ibrahim, Harris et al., 2010).

Right
Andhra Pradesh, India: A map – made after the PVA – painted on a school wall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1. Introduction: the time is ripe

At a glance, in this section:

- **Find out why now is the time to start thinking seriously about integrating climate change**
- **Realise the impact of climate change on disasters**
- **Find out more about what you can expect from this report**
- **Consider the similarities and differences between DRR and CCA**
- **Learn about the Zebra process**

1.1 Introduction

The time is ripe. Practitioners and policy makers working across the globe are recognising the importance of bringing together disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation (CCA). There is increased recognition of the value of mainstreaming CCA into DRR activities to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience. But there is a lack of practical, actionable recommendations on how to create an environment where attempts to mainstream CCA into DRR can flourish: who leads such initiatives and what motivates these actors; what 'real world' challenges are faced and how are they overcome; what tactics and methods can be employed to undertake mainstreaming and what kinds of expertise and knowledge is needed? This report is the foundation for a process that seeks answers to these questions. It intends to help mobilise action through action-oriented advice from those who engage with DRR and CCA on a daily basis through the realities on the ground.

Even gradual, mean changes in the climate can increase the vulnerability of the poor and make the work of disaster risk managers more difficult. That is why, for the majority of policy makers and practitioners the rationale behind calls for greater mainstreaming of CCA into DRR, and their mainstreaming into development more broadly is self-evident. Exploiting the overlap between CCA and DRR is one way to ensure disaster risk managers can continue to have a positive impact on reducing vulnerability. But this is not the sole responsibility of the disasters community. There is

Above
Andhra Pradesh, India: Disembarking from the local ferry

broad consensus that climate change impacts almost every facet of development work and for development to be meaningful it must 'take on' climate change in a number of ways. In doing so, development programmes aimed at reducing poverty will be less likely to cause unintended negative impacts which result from a failure to accommodate for increased uncertainty – sometimes known as mal-adaptation. Climate change is an enormous problem with extremely diverse effects that have a bearing on almost all development programmes. Tackling this effectively and building the resilience of communities requires sustained long-term support, with long-term visioning. Project-based adaptation interventions are not a sustainable solution.

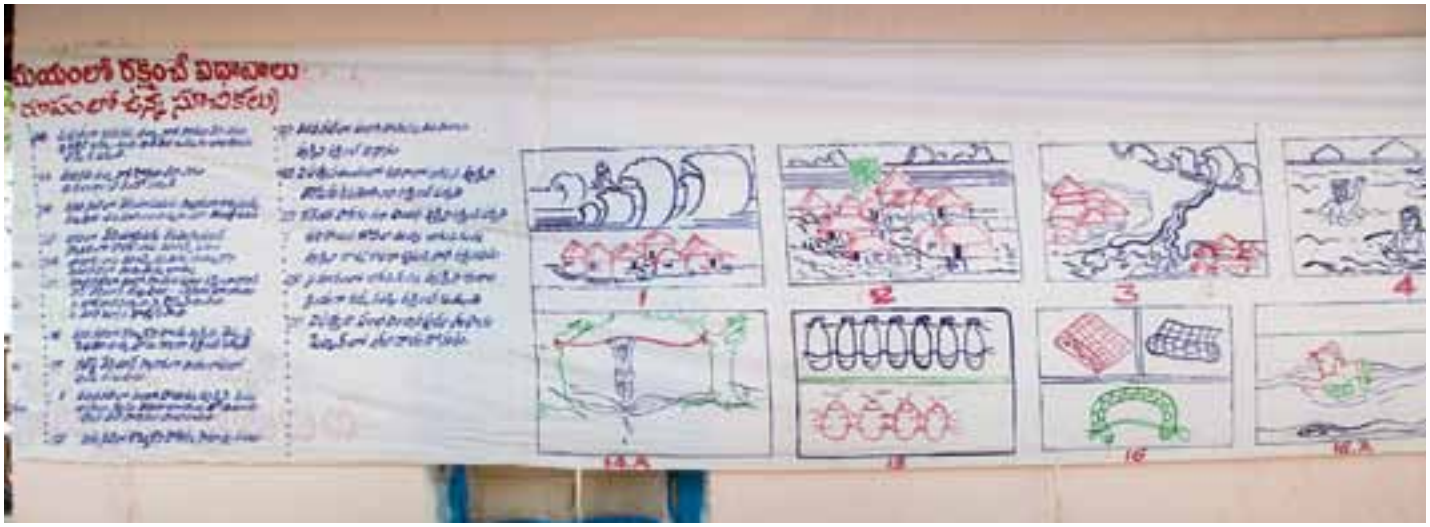
1.2 Seizing the moment

Climate change adaptation is high on the international political agenda and has the potential to receive significant support from new funders. With clear statements signifying the impact of climate change on disasters, the connections between CCA and DRR are being emphasised in national and international frameworks and agreements. This is an opportune moment for the disasters community who can, and should, benefit from this momentum by demonstrating their experience as policy makers and practitioners with credible knowledge on managing risk, increasing resilience, dealing with uncertainty and reducing vulnerability. In short, the DRR community can position themselves as eligible, credible recipients of climate financing.

The impact of climate change on disasters

- **There is growing scientific agreement that climate change will increase the frequency and intensity of some hydro-meteorological disasters, posing new challenges for disaster managers (IPCC, 2007).**
- **Variable precipitation and extreme temperatures will negatively impact crop yields leading to more malnutrition and increasing vulnerability of already marginalised communities to shocks and stresses (FAO, 2008).**
- **Climate change may negatively impact traditional coping strategies, eroding people's ability to recover. There will be a greater need for adaptive social protection measures as climate change increases the frequency of disasters – disasters risk managers will be required to help adapt traditional coping strategies to deal with the dynamic climatic context (FAO, 2008).**
- **Increased pressure on natural resources will add new dimensions and dynamics to conflict (see Lind, Ibrahim and Harris, 2010).**
- **The 'business as usual' approach to DRM is no longer sufficient. Disaster Risk Management (DRM) needs to 'significantly shift its approach to risk calculation and intervention design to incorporate climate modelling and its associated uncertainty' (Mitchell, Ibrahim, Harris et al. 2010: 7).**

Right
Andhra Pradesh, India: The office of AA partner organisation CEAD



Above
Andhra Pradesh, India: A banner used to explain what to do when disaster strikes

1.3 About this report

ActionAid attempted to address some of the questions relating to how we can mainstream CCA into DRR programmes and policies, by commissioning a process that resulted in practical and actionable advice. As an initial contribution, this report provides practical tips, action points, advice and guidance on the process of mainstreaming. Running through all sections are suggestions for possible actions to achieve mainstreaming, tactics that can be employed and the expertise, capacity and skills needed to undertake these actions.

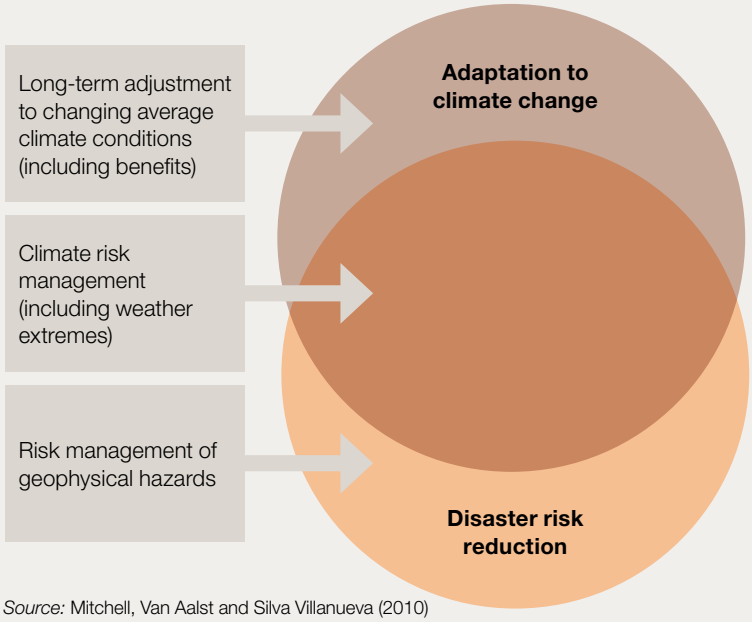
This report draws on the insight and experience of over 100 disaster risk managers from a range of contexts across Africa and Asia. In collaboration with the ActionAid Disaster Risk Reduction through Schools (DRRS) programme, the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) synthesised the findings from a series of reflection workshops in Nepal, Kenya and Thailand. The ideas generated from these workshops are presented here in this report. Although written primarily for those working in the DRR sector (including policy makers, practitioners, programme staff and management), practitioners and policy makers working in other operational environments may also be able to identify with the challenges raised by the participants who took part in this process.

The focus of the report is on mainstreaming CCA into DRR programmes and policies. This does not exclude organisations and departments that are competent in climate change but are less familiar with DRR as much of the advice is concerned with organisational change, encouraging and shaping new thematic foci, taking on new areas of work and increasing collaboration with other expertise outside the normal sphere of engagement. Because of this, organisations and departments who feel competent in both DRR and CCA may also find the contents useful in generating stronger links between CCA, DRR and broader development work.

1.4 CCA and DRR: convergence but not conflation

There are a number of points of overlap between CCA and DRR that have the potential to be exploited to enable improved and more effective interventions. Here we explore areas of convergence, but also of divergence. Broadly speaking, it is understood that CCA aims to help communities undertake long-term adjustment to changing average climate conditions, whereas DRR entails engaging with a wide variety of potential extreme events (Mitchell and Van Aalst, 2008). Consequently, CCA and DRR are not the same and should not be conflated (see Figure 1 – Overlap between DRR and CCA). DRR deals with all hazards, including geophysical hazards. CCA deals exclusively with climate related hazards associated with changes in the average mean climate conditions. That said, both CCA and DRR aim to reduce the impact of hydro-meteorological hazards, but on different timeframes (Mitchell and Van Aalst, 2008). CCA aims to help communities undertake long-term adjustment to changing average climate conditions, DRR focuses on dealing with short-term occurrences.

Figure 1. Overlap between DRR and CCA



Source: Mitchell, Van Aalst and Silva Villanueva (2010)

Other areas of divergence exist that require closer examination. The following points are adapted from Mitchell and Van Aalst (2008) and explored further in Table 1 – Conceptual and practical differences between DRR and CCA):

- The DRR community has traditionally focussed on reducing vulnerability whereas the climate change community is primarily concerned with reducing exposure.
- DRR focuses on extreme environmental events whereas CCA is about engaging with ongoing, subtle changes in mean climate conditions.
- DRR practitioners usually come from the field of humanitarian assistance whereas those working with climate change are traditionally members of the scientific community (but this is beginning to change, as more people working on CCA are being recruited from the ranks of those engaged with DRR).
- DRR has traditionally identified existing risk as a starting point for activities whereas CCA looks to the future by using climate models and forecasts (here too there are some signs of convergence as DRR is now engaging with future scenarios to a greater extent).
- As DRR thinking and practice has been in existence longer than CCA, there are a large number of DRR tools to implement DRR programmes in comparison with the relatively small number of CCA tools (again, this is beginning to change, with tools linking CCA and DRR such as the Climate Smart Disaster Risk Management approach, see Mitchell, Ibrahim, Harris et al. 2010).
- DRR has traditionally suffered from limited and ad hoc financial support, but thanks to the political momentum around climate change there are sizeable and growing funding streams for CCA (there are early signs of convergence here too as the DRR community is increasingly engaging with CCA funding mechanisms).

Table 1. Conceptual and practical differences between DRR and CCA

Differences		Signs of convergence
DRR	CCA	
Relevant to all hazard types	Relevant to climate and weather-related hazards	DRR programmes have always considered weather-related hazards but there are indications that some are now taking into account the impact of climate change on hazard frequency and magnitude and on vulnerability and planning interventions accordingly.
Practice of DRR strongly influenced by post-disaster humanitarian assistance	Origin and culture of CCA derived from scientific theory and international climate change policy process	Common ground found in joint mainstreaming into development sectors – so specialists on both adaptation and DRR working in infrastructure, water/sanitation, agriculture and health for example.
Most concerned with the present and near future – i.e. addressing existing risks based on assessment of local experience and historical record	Most concerned with the short, medium and long-term future – i.e. addressing uncertainty and new risks derived from the impacts of climate change	DRR increasingly forward-looking and CCA increasingly using existing climate variability as the entry point for activating adaptation processes. The idea of 'no regrets' options are a key area of convergence.
Traditional/local knowledge is the basis for community-based DRR and resilience building	Traditional/local knowledge at community level may be insufficient as impacts of climate change introduces new risks and changes to the frequency and magnitude of existing hazards	Growing number of examples where local knowledge and meteorological/climatological knowledge is being considered side-by-side to inform DRR interventions
Traditionally considered risk a function of hazard, vulnerability, exposure and capacity	Traditionally treated vulnerability interchangeably with physical exposure	IPCC special report on 'managing the risks of extreme events and disasters for advancing adaptation (due 2011), promises convergence in this area
Full range of established and developing tools	Range of tools under development	Significant progress made in integrating learning from DRR into adaptation tool development
Incremental development, moderate political interest	New, emerging agenda, high political interest	Disasters becoming more synonymous with climate change and governments recognising the need to consider both simultaneously
Funding streams often ad hoc, unpredictable and insufficient	Funding streams increasing and promise to be considerable, though problems of delivery and implementation widespread	DRR community demonstrating signs of being increasingly savvy in engaging in climate change adaptation funding mechanisms

Source: Mitchell and Van Aalst, 2008. Modified from Tearfund (2008), *Linking Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction*

Over the last ten years the agenda to bring DRR and CCA closer together continued to gain momentum. That said, convergence continued to progress at a faster rate conceptually and on paper than in practice. What has emerged over the past five years are a number of opportunities and critical global agreements that recognise the need to link the two agendas, for example, the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA, 2005), the Global Assessment Report (UNISDR, 2009), the Least Developed Countries Fund, the Special Climate Change Fund and the Global Facility for Disaster Risk Reduction (GFDRR). As Mitchell, Van Aalst and Silva Villanueva (2010) note, while some National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) prove the exception to the rule, the majority of CCA and DRR processes at national level continue to function in parallel. This is also true of CCA and DRR programmes within most donor funding mechanisms and civil society organisations. Despite this, opportunities do exist and we need to learn to seize them. For example, CCA provides an opportunity for environmental and humanitarian communities of practice to move away from siloed approaches and instead work closer together and complement each other's efforts.

Unfortunately, good ideas alone are of little use, they need to be put into action to make a difference. Despite sharing common goals of reducing poverty and vulnerability and increasing resilience, CCA and DRR often lack the necessary political backing and financial investment. In the current economic climate the trend for donors and governments wanting 'hard' results and physical development investments may continue to hamper much needed support for the 'softer' activities associated with mainstreaming. As Mitchell, Van Aalst and Silva Villanueva (2010: 9) note '*attention to incentives, institutions and instruments to promote good risk-aware development is urgently needed*'. Making the case for mainstreaming is not simply about re-thinking the way we work, it demands changes in our operating structures, the institutional 'homes' for CCA and DRR and the way funding channels and policies govern the work carried out in the name of CCA and DRR (Mitchell, Van Aalst and Silva Villanueva (2010: 9).

1.5 Introduction to the Zebra

The Zebra (see Figure 2 – The Zebra) is a conceptual tool developed by Harris and Bahadur for ActionAid. It provides disaster risk managers with a way to think through real-life situations by presenting real or invented scenarios on mainstreaming CCA into DRR, and DRR into broader development programmes. The Zebra challenges practitioners and policy makers to reflect on their own learning, experience and action to draw-out practical advice for mainstreaming.

Above
Ijara, Kenya: A PVA session held in a school

The Zebra is based on the premise that promoting and harnessing links between CCA and DRR requires constructive, actionable guidance. The Zebra contributes to the existing body of academic literature and conceptual thought on mainstreaming by providing a means to identify handy tips, action points, insights and guidance about how to integrate CCA into DRR policies and programmes.

In order to generate insights, three conceptual pillars have been identified that reflect the key facets of any mainstreaming process. These three pillars are:

- The enabling environment and conditions for creating an enabling environment.
- The key drivers and their incentives.
- The challenges likely to be encountered and possible solutions.

These three conceptual pillars form the basis of the tool known as the Zebra (and reflect the structure of this report).

1.6 The Zebra process

The Zebra process requires small working groups to be identified and each group provided with a scenario. In order to prepare for the Zebra process, the scenarios should be considered very carefully. Scenarios need to be pitched at the right level for the group's participants, be at a scale they can relate to and on a challenge that is somewhat familiar to them. Examples of scenarios used in ActionAid reflection workshops include:

"You work for a NGO which has expertise in Disaster Risk Reduction. Your NGO wants to convince the Home Ministry to integrate climate change into the National Disaster Management Policy. What steps would you take?"

"You are the head of the Disaster Risk Reduction team in a National NGO. You would like your organisation to integrate climate change into your DRR portfolio. What steps would you take to enable this to happen?"

In the context of a given scenario each group should initially consider three elements (listed below) and note down ideas and experience that could help overcome, confront and/or address the challenge presented in the scenario (see grey columns in Figure 2 – The Zebra). These three elements are:

a) Elements of the enabling environment.

b) Individuals/organisations that would be responsible for driving the process.

c) Challenges that they are likely to face.

Once each group has discussed their ideas about these three elements, the second part of the exercise involves the participants considering three additional elements, each paired with the original (see white columns in Figure 2 – The Zebra). The group should review their notes written for the first three elements and pair ideas and experience to the additional three elements i.e. so that each driver identified is paired with suggestions for how to incentivise that driver, and each challenge has suggested solutions. The additional three elements are:

ai) The factors that lead to the construction of an enabling environment.

bi) Ways of incentivising the key drivers.

ci) Possible solutions to expected challenges.

It is important to recognise that the process of discussing each element of the Zebra is just as valuable as the final written results. The discussions generated by the process often highlight the differences in understanding how best to mainstream CCA into DRR; and provide insight into people's different opinions on how to achieve change in any given context.

Figure 2. The Zebra

Enabling environment	Creating an enabling environment	Actors/drivers	Incentives	Challenges	Solutions
Elements of the enabling environment which would facilitate this initiative	The factors that would lead to the construction of an enabling environment	Individuals / organisations which would be responsible for driving the process	Ways of incentivising the key drivers	Challenges that they are likely to face	Possible solutions to expected challenges

2. The enabling environment

At a glance, in this section:

- **Learn how to make a convincing case to your organisation**
- **Encourage an amenable management, partners and a supportive mandate**
- **Question why policies and institutions are important for climate change**
- **Consider the importance of engaging communities and local government**
- **Realise the necessity of good research and analysis**
- **Forge partnerships to become better informed**
- **Get tips on how to be creative with advocacy and raise your profile**

2.1 Introduction

Creating an enabling environment is fundamental to making changes on any level at any scale; be these changes to internal organisational policy, community priorities or national government policy. An enabling environment is not a static entity, nor is there a blueprint for what one should look like or how it is achieved. Moreover, what is enabling for one goal may be hindering to another. When considering how to create an enabling environment - for example, for mainstreaming climate change into DRR policies and programmes - it is important to remember that an enabling environment is associated with governance contexts, which are imbued with power. Making or even advocating for changes to in/formal policy and practice will involve power relationships.

2.2 Making the case to your organisation or department

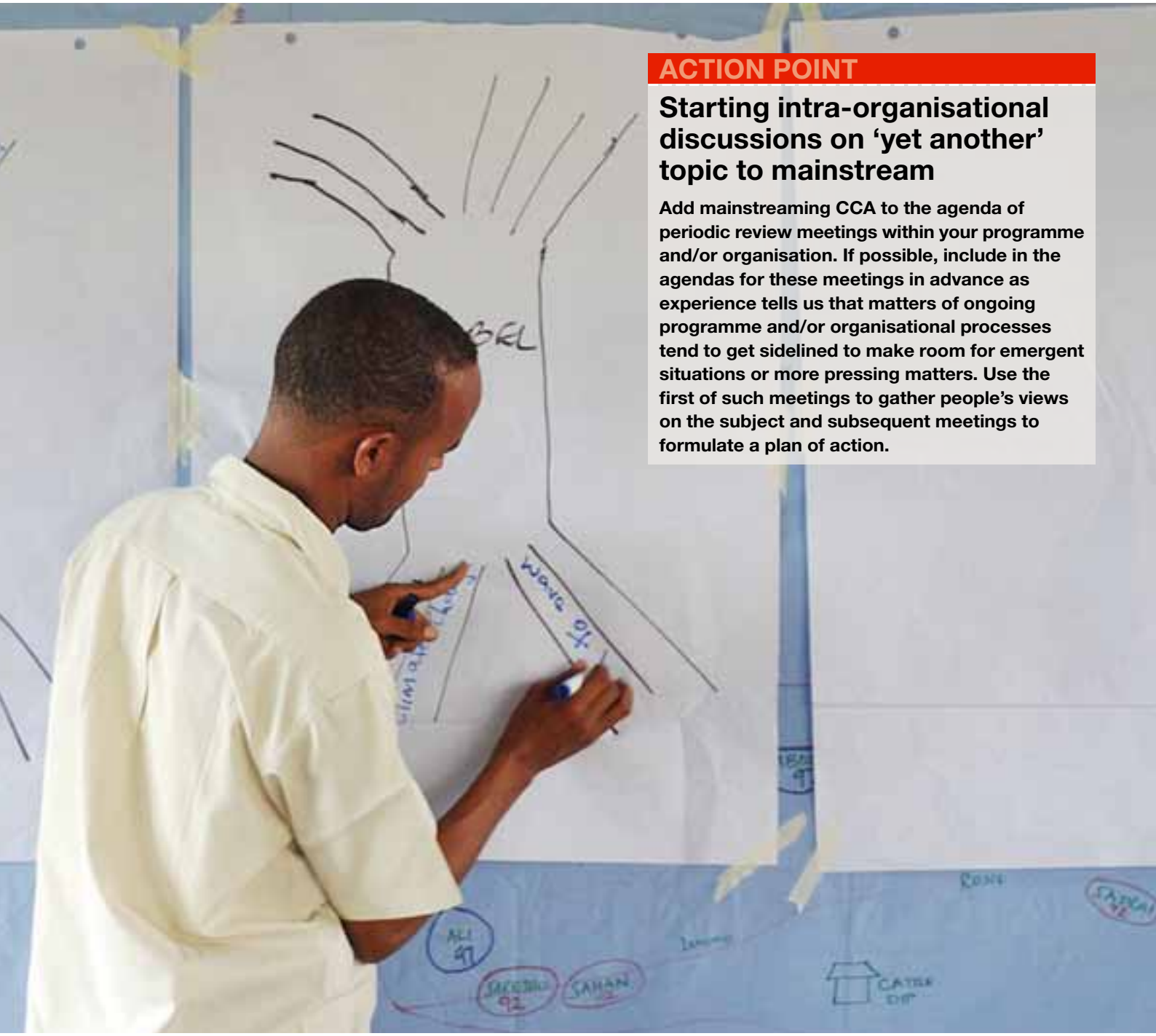
Generating an environment where climate change is fully and effectively mainstreamed into DRR approaches in a systematic way demands that a convincing case is made to your organisation. To effectively make the case for mainstreaming within policies, projects, departments and organisations advocates need to be well informed of potential opportunities for revising key work plans, strategies and thematic priorities, e.g. strategic reviews and programme monitoring processes. Take strategic reviews, for example, advocates need to understand the drafting processes and try and influence key persons in the process.

A strategy for lobbying for the mainstreaming of CCA into DRR is to focus on the 'big picture'. For example, to be able to state exactly how CCA aligns with an organisation's overall vision and can help that organisation to achieve its mission. This will require internal research to understand what other DRR programmes are doing and how climate change is, or will, affect their work. Making the case also requires DRR experts step out of their DRR role and put themselves in the position of other programming staff – to ask the question, what would make you take on CCA? This requires demonstrating how mainstreaming CCA can help other programmes achieve their goals and be pitched so it directly relates to achieving an existing vision, targets and commitments.

A lack of understanding and coordination with other programmes and departments can act as a barrier to this, but equally the process of mainstreaming CCA within DRR can help boost cross-project and intra-organisational working.

It is important to ensure that the CCA approach and methods promoted for mainstreaming are the most current and relevant. This demands that CCA be presented to DRR country programmes in a way that is tailored to the specific context of that country or region. Be cautious not to simply use the same materials that have been used elsewhere (especially if dated) without adequate tailoring.

Encouraging mainstreaming of CCA into DRR activities requires regular meaningful communication between the various parts of an organisation, department or institution. For example, it is critical that programme managers from within the same organisation speak



ACTION POINT

Starting intra-organisational discussions on 'yet another' topic to mainstream

Add mainstreaming CCA to the agenda of periodic review meetings within your programme and/or organisation. If possible, include in the agendas for these meetings in advance as experience tells us that matters of ongoing programme and/or organisational processes tend to get sidelined to make room for emergent situations or more pressing matters. Use the first of such meetings to gather people's views on the subject and subsequent meetings to formulate a plan of action.

Above and left
Ijara, Kenya: A PVA session held in a school

the same language, share similar view points and understand the need for mainstreaming as a precondition to any initiative aiming to achieve effective DRR.

2.3 Encouraging an amenable management, partners and a supportive mandate

The level of flexibility and willingness to take up new mainstreaming topics is vital for mainstreaming CCA. Most participants believed the critical leverage point for this is a willing and invested senior management team (SMT) – or equivalent management structure – with the drive to take the agenda forward. Apart from the SMT as a whole, outreach to particular individuals such as programme coordinators is essential, as is having a network of local partner organisations onboard (discussed further later).

ACTION POINT

Strategic outreach

Influence the SMT by first undertaking strategic outreach to senior persons (e.g. the country director, board members etc.) who then influence the various key players. One way of doing this is through partnering with external experts or champions – these can be expert consultants who may have spearheaded mainstreaming initiatives in other organisations or even people employed in other like-minded organisations that have mainstreamed CCA in their DRR work effectively. This needs to be accompanied by a series of detailed inductions, orientations and simple briefings to introduce the SMT to the need and concept of mainstreaming CCA within DRR.

TOP TIPS

Engaging the SMT

- **Identify a focal person to liaise with the SMT regularly (preferably someone well organised with a vested interest and knowledge of the topic).**
- **Collate a 'knowledge bank' of information that advocates (and the SMT) can draw on to support their case. This bank should include examples of the impacts of similar mainstreaming initiatives in other organisations and processes that other organisations have adopted for mainstreaming other issues into programmes (e.g. gender or HIV).**
- **Review programme/country strategies and identify sections that need to be amended to make space for the incorporation of CCA. If the overall programme/country strategy can be amended to include CCA mainstreaming as a priority then the SMT should be more inclined to support it.**

ACTION POINT

Establishing champions

To achieve CCA mainstreaming it is critical to establish champions. Champions are well informed, well respected, persuasive individuals usually connected to a specific stakeholder group (such as communities, NGOs, donors and governments). Champions are able to generate support for the inclusion of CCA within their respective department and/or organisation. They can link with like-minded champions from other organisations, as it is likely that similar challenges will be faced and can learn from each other. Champions can also motivate other members of staff to engage with the topic to ensure knowledge is shared and calls for mainstreaming are sustainable and widespread rather than depending too heavily on specific individuals.

2.4 Building a supportive policy and institutional environment

The existence of international and national agreements, protocols and policies on climate change are an important element of an enabling environment that would facilitate the mainstreaming of CCA into DRR policy.

If national government DRR and/or CCA policies exist they extend a powerful platform from which to hold governments accountable for mainstreaming. The same can be said for policies of individual country offices and donor priorities, both of which should align with national priorities. Similarly, if those funding DRR programmes highlighted the importance of CCA mainstreaming to implementing NGOs these organisations will have a clear reason to carry out mainstreaming. In addition, DRR managers and field staff emphasised the need for adequate institutions/bodies within the government who are charged with engaging with climate change (e.g. a climate change unit within the Environment Ministry). This gives a clear target audience and point of focus for advocacy activities.

To bring about a suitable policy environment for mainstreaming it is necessary to demonstrate the links between climate change, disasters, poverty and vulnerability, and to proactively engage with ongoing policy processes and attend civil society consultations on relevant polices. Other methods include exposing policy makers to the challenges that climate change brings (discussed further later).

Integrating CCA into government DRR policy is not just about having the right policy in place. A semblance of a good governance agenda should be prevalent, and policy making processes need to be well established as there is likely to be little traction when arguing for mainstreaming in countries mired in wars, internal strife or political deadlocks. Ideally, the policy making bodies we are influencing will already understand and aspire for democratic models of decision-making and promote transparency and accountability in all their activities and transactions.

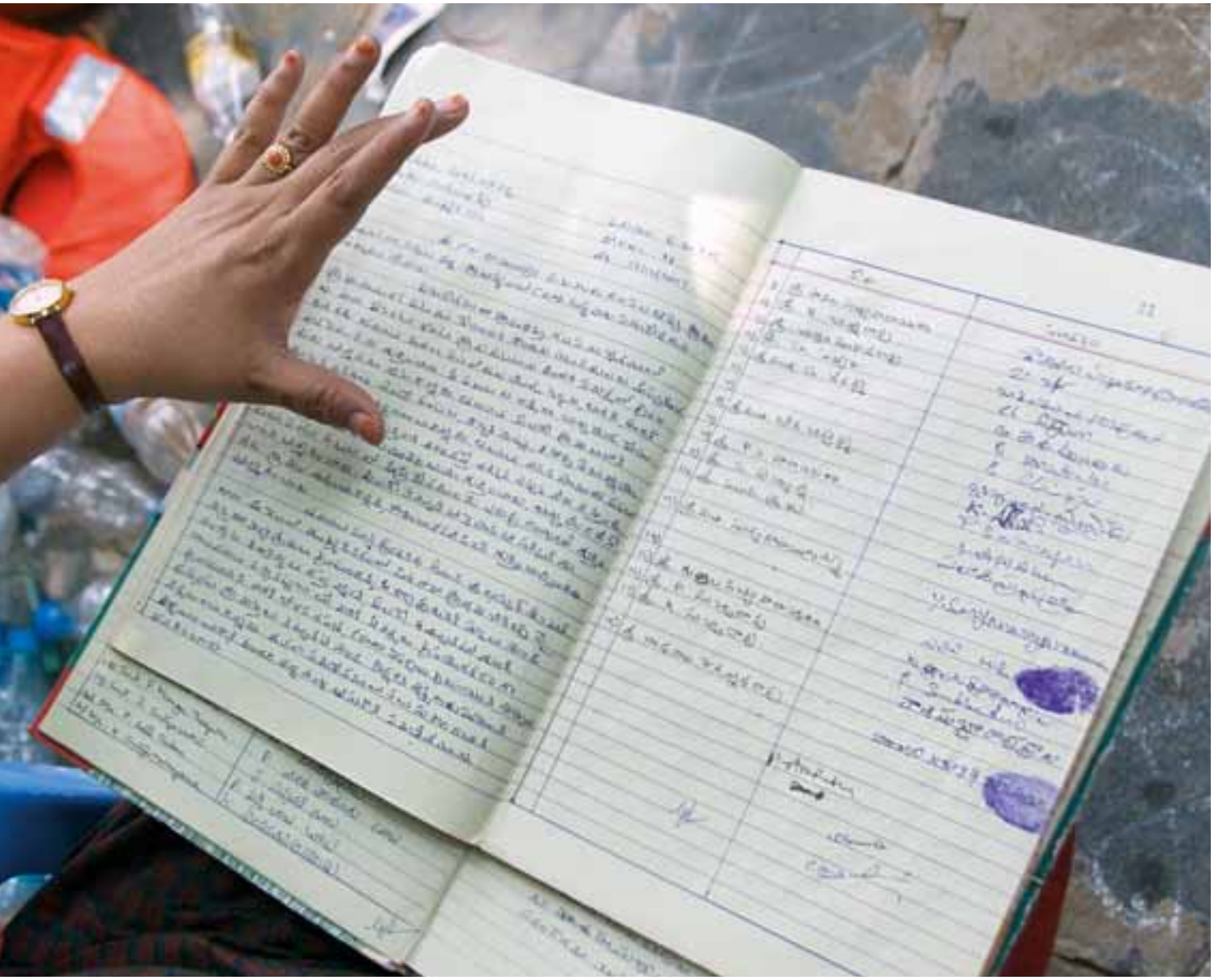
It is also important to widen the scope and look at government bodies, committees, ministries and other organisations that may not be directly connected with the policy in which you are aiming to integrate climate change considerations. There are often other key bodies (behind the scenes) that exert a critical influence on national policy processes (e.g. Planning Commissions).

WORDS OF WISDOM

Advocating to donors

- **Taking donors for field visits to particular communities is a start, but to really be effective expose them to the broader picture of how mainstreaming will lead to a change in the existing programme that they are funding or plan to fund.**
- **Instead of ad hoc meetings, institutionalise channels through which you can share lessons with donors. It is particularly effective to share feedback from communities directly with donors, face-to-face.**
- **If possible, undertake outreach and advocacy to the donor as part of a group or alliance. Always try and present yourself as a member of a wider coalition/network of concerned parties, with similar views and positions.**

Above
Andhra Pradesh, India: Minutes from a community meeting



2.5 Engaging communities and local government

The experience of DRR managers tells us that unless partner organisations are on-board with the mainstreaming agenda, it will never gain momentum. As most international NGOs rely on a network of local partner organisations to execute projects, it is critical these organisations understand the value of mainstreaming CCA and its significance for continuing effective DRR.

Similarly, it is vital to secure 'buy in' from communities that field managers interact with on a daily basis. Until the communities understand and support engagement with CCA, any mainstreaming initiatives can achieve only limited success. One way to engage a community is to facilitate a participatory process where they define for themselves the shape that mainstreaming takes (for example, support them to analyse how the climate affects their lives and use this information to inform any mainstreaming initiatives).

In addition to engaging communities, consider communicating targeted messages to local government officials to raise awareness of the impacts of climate change on their constituents. In instances where national level policies exist, the policies can be communicated to officials, and modalities of translating them at the local level can be developed.

2.6 Consolidating knowledge and analysis

A necessary precursor to any initiative aiming to mainstream CCA into DRR policies and programmes is the availability of good quality research, data and information. Having empirical evidence is crucial for understanding the changing nature of disaster risks as a result of climate change, and using this to inform planning, monitoring and evaluation. Evidence is also necessary to support advocacy initiatives (aimed at mainstreaming) to gain traction amongst policy makers and overworked practitioners. This evidence ideally needs to be disaggregated at the national, regional and local levels. Climate patterns, potential impacts and the social and economic

impact of failing to mainstream CCA are just some of the issues that require high quality scientific information to inform credible programmes and policies.

To generate the relevant knowledge, at least two things need to be taken into consideration. One, a programme of community engagement needs to be undertaken to understand how inaction on mainstreaming is, or could, impact the lives of the most vulnerable. Two, strategic partnerships with regional and national research and scientific institutions need to be forged. Such partnerships can enable the information gathered from communities on changing disaster and climate risks to be compiled (and contrasted) with empirical evidence supplied by academic researchers and scientists. Forging strong partnerships is an effective way to ensure the DRR community is informed by current climate information, without having to become experts in climate science themselves.

2.7 Employing creative advocacy

Creative advocacy is a must for building and sustaining an enabling environment. To bring about the right action, it is important to make the best use of knowledge and evidence. To be able to hold donors, civil society organisations and the government to account, advocates for mainstreaming will need to think outside the box. This includes: understanding the interests and agendas of key policy makers and strategising a way to frame arguments to directly appeal to them; carefully employing emotive or moral appeals; mobilising public opinion within affected communities then opening channels of dialogue between communities and the government.

Creating the right enabling environment requires being proactive and designing positive advocacy messages that present the impacts of climate change on disasters in a way that is manageable and achievable; making it explicit that action can and should be taken. This requires building people's capacity to engage in debates around climate change, profiling success stories and piloting projects at the community level that can be used as a basis for replication elsewhere and at different scales.

ACTION POINT

Forging partnerships to become better informed

The DRR community is not suddenly required to become conversant in the intricacies of climate science. However, it is necessary to ensure that, if possible, where climate research is being carried out or is available that the necessary links are made so this information is integrated in DRR policies and plans. Moreover, not all contexts require more research, many simply need existing information to be communicated and shared.

In order to access information through effective partnerships, a scoping of relevant scientific and academic institutions in a country or region should be conducted. Parameters for this scoping could include things such as the quality of research outputs, geographical scope of data collection, profiles of staff, frequency of publications etc. Conversations with the most suitable institutions can then be initiated with a view to forging partnerships to share information, knowledge and analysis.

TOP TIPS

Creative advocacy

DRR experts believe that evidence-based advocacy is the most effective. This could include:

- **The collection of evidence of how climate change is increasing disaster risks and uncertainty. And how this in turn is impacting communities and the need for adaptation.**
- **The collection and communication of evidence on how mainstreaming CCA into DRR has been successfully undertaken in other institutions.**
- **Communicating how inaction on mainstreaming CCA could reverse the gains made by disasters and development projects in a particular area.**
- **The collation, synthesis and presentation of relevant case studies on the benefits of mainstreaming CCA into DRR policies and programmes.**

Positive, proactive engagement with the media in advocacy campaigns can also provide rich dividends. If acting in collaboration, the media can gain access to evidence that makes for powerful and hard-hitting new stories. For example, if a national-level network of representatives from communities affected by natural disasters combine with a group of interested media persons, it is possible to develop and execute an advocacy plan with widespread coverage.

2.8 Raising your profile

The potential that mainstreaming CCA and DRR holds for promoting both individuals and organisations as 'forward thinking' and 'ahead of the game' may act as an added incentive. In order to do this, CCA needs to be promoted to create an enabling environment

Above
Ghana: Placard used in a climate change march

as a cutting edge area of work. For this reason, DRR experts feel the skill of communicating is not only crucial, but something that is undervalued. For example, there are few training programmes or support systems that help practitioners and policy makers learn how to communicate effectively. Even when training programmes do exist it is often incredibly difficult to find resources to support individuals to attend. When championing something potentially politically charged and controversial, such as climate change, the importance of this skill is exacerbated and is an important part of creating an enabling environment.

Remember, raising your profile to create an enabling environment is not about competition between agencies, but about strengthening ties between those with a similar agenda. For some, collaboration is seen to have a number of significant benefits, ranging from developing certain standardised and credible practices and policies on mainstreaming, to tapping into larger funds from a wider range of sources and for effective policy advocacy work.

Creating the foundation for mainstreaming CCA can also be done by preparing contingency plans and preparedness activities that incorporate CCA into DRR activities in relief and recovery. By viewing disasters as an opportune moment where change can happen, any space created can, and needs to be, utilised to promote the integration of CCA.

ACTION POINT

Creative communication

A number of different creative communications techniques can increase the level of awareness on the importance of mainstreaming CCA into the DRR sector. These include: creating short videos; identifying a climate champion (possibly a high profile media star); undertaking focussed outreach targeting particular policy influencers; engaging in sustained dialogue with national governments; and using billboards and publicity materials displaying relevant messages.

3. Actors and drivers

At a glance, included in this section:

- **Consider the diverse number of drivers involved in mainstreaming CCA into the DRR sector**
- **Think about what incentivises drivers to engage with mainstreaming**
- **Realise the value of mobilising a network of affected communities**
- **Learn about the importance of having a focal person**
- **Get tips on how to generate interest within your senior management team**
- **Think about how to hold government to account**

3.1 Introduction

Each context, situation and challenge embodies its own set of actors and drivers. As a general overview, a brief summary of the main actors, suggestions of the role they could play in supporting mainstreaming and the possible incentives for that driver is provided in Table 2 – Summary of drivers and incentives. Due to the limitations of space this section focuses on key drivers: affected communities, focal persons, senior management teams and government and policy makers.

3.2 Network of affected communities

There is value in promoting the mainstreaming agenda in cohort with coalitions, networks and/or alliances as this can generate stronger advocacy positions. Many DRR managers feel the most effective network would be at national level comprising of representatives from communities affected by natural disasters, as those at the

Above and below
Ijara, Kenya: A PVA session held in school to explain what vulnerabilities are

Table 2. Summary of drivers and incentives

Drivers	Suggested role that driver could play in supporting the mainstreaming of CCA into the DRR sector	Possible incentives for that driver
Civil Society Organisations	Provide the link between affected communities and policy makers. Document evidence of effects of climate change on disasters. Help consolidate a strong advocacy environment.	Enhanced capacity and experience to deal with the links between disasters and climate change. Raising the visibility of the organisation may result in a number of positive spin-off effects such as access to increased funding.
International campaign groups	Potential (underutilised) resource with the capacity to support national champions for mainstreaming CCA into DRR. Provide access to a wider support base on specific campaign issues.	Opportunities for visibility on a topical and important issue - be a global voice for mainstreaming. Lead on new campaign issues around CCA and DRR.
Individuals from key CCA/DDR organisations	Act as champions for mainstreaming. Create momentum and generate support for change. Undertake policy outreach to the government / political establishment.	Feel empowered to generate change. Gain new kinds of knowledge on engaging with a critical issue. This could enhance an individual's 'marketability' and possibly lead to greater job security and promotions.
High profile champion	Drive the mainstreaming agenda forward. Gain access to media coverage.	Opportunities for visibility on a topical and important issue. Be seen as a leader in promoting CCA by DRR peers.
Recipients, particularly those from key target groups	If an organisation has a specific target group testimonies from these groups should be documented and used to create a case for mainstreaming CCA into DRR work.	Chance for vulnerable groups to be heard and to steer the agenda and benefit from interventions that build their resilience to climate change.
District-level institutions	Provide the necessary link between policy and action, being key players for turning policy into practice. Play a linking role between national and local level institutions.	To create desired policy change to enable a better working (policy) environment. Better serve recipient communities.
Parliamentarians, individuals from key ministries, politicians	Call for the mainstreaming of CCA into government disasters policies. Ensuring any new disasters policy under construction adequately includes CCA.	Opportunities for visibility on a topical and important issue. Exposure at international forums. Better serve constituents. In certain cases awards may be received which could increase ones credibility.
Donors	Provide funding for mainstreaming. Make integration of CCA into DRR a necessity in funding applications. Encourage other donors to do the same.	Be seen as a leader in creating mechanisms for more effective use of aid. Redefine and demonstrate sustainable development. Present their projects as climate smart / climate proofed and gain visibility and improved results.
Media	Highlight the negative effects of inaction on mainstreaming, to encourage policy makers to recognise the need to integrate CCA in disasters policy.	Gain credibility as reporters by harnessing opportunities for visibility on a topical and important issue. This is especially the case if stories are well timed to coincide with high-profile conferences.
Scientists	Supply data and information on the effects of climate change. Transform this into downscaled climate change data.	Opportunity to respond to public demand for information. May result in opportunities for obtaining research funding.
Academics and researchers	Explore the links between different action, policy and governance contexts to inform policy and practice. Document and assess local scale impacts of climate change and the implications for adaptation strategies.	Generate interest in research / evidence and gain access to a wider readership. Potential to stimulate calls for more research, if the practical use is clearly demonstrated.

ACTION POINT

Focal persons

The transition from focal person to SMT could involve:

- **Organising a half-day workshop where the focal person explains the progress made up to that point, to all staff. Bringing in high-profile, influential champions can help generate enthusiasm and interest in the workshop.**
- **Defines the next steps in a participatory manner with the SMT.**
- **Formally hand over responsibility for mainstreaming to the SMT in front of other staff.**
- **SMT agree to uphold an accountability mechanism where they commit to report on their progress in taking forward the mainstreaming of CCA into organisational DRR policies, programmes and priorities.**

forefront of the battle against climate change and disasters carry most moral authority in engaging with organisations and the government. Requests to government officials for meetings and action may not be so easily dismissed if it comes from a collation of those suffering from inaction. In support of this is a need to generate a body of evidence (in the form of testimonies) from communities that demand governments and organisations respond to the needs of their constituents and recipients.

Disaster risk reduction experts also feel that if the affected communities were to voice the need for mainstreaming, field managers may find it easier to make the case to the national-level management of their organisations. The incentives for communities would include the possibility of becoming better prepared to deal with uncertainty, increased flexibility in adapting to livelihood strategies and heightened awareness of the changing nature of disaster risks.

Remember, attempting to build coalitions and networks of like minded individuals and organisations across sectors can pay rich dividends in any programme of advocacy targeting the government on mainstreaming CCA into DRR policies. Many times the best advocates are not professionals but those suffering the impacts of climate change and uncertainty. Therefore 'bottom up' advocacy is crucial for credible and sustained policy work.

3.3 Focal person

A nominated focal person is a critical driver to any mainstreaming process. In the context of an NGO trying to mainstream CCA into DRR programmes different drivers can lead the process of mainstreaming at different stages. For example, initially the call for mainstreaming could be led by a designated focal person. Their main role is to build knowledge around mainstreaming issues (as an eye

Above
Ijara, Kenya: Identifying the vulnerable households on a community map during a PVA

opener for the organisation's staff). Ideally, in return remuneration or reduction in other duties should be provided so he/she can dedicate adequate time to this task. If supported by high-profile champions (discussed further later), this can greatly help to generate momentum for the mainstreaming process. Once a certain amount of knowledge has been built and the agenda gathers critical mass, the responsibility should be handed over to the SMT to carry the task forward.

The transition (from focal person to the SMT) should not only be a procedural one but one where the SMT is made accountable to drive the process from this point on. This finding correlates very closely to Tanner and Mitchell (2009) 'Towards Climate Smart Organisations' where they discuss phases through which organisations must pass on their way to fully appropriating climate change in their work. For example, in phase one a pioneer "builds the case for an organisational response to tackling climate change, drawing on available scientific knowledge and advice from experts and ... may focus efforts on internal awareness raising and external networking".

3.4 The senior management team

Many believe that within an organisation the SMT (or equivalent management body) needs to be the main driver of the mainstreaming process, as for many organisations the SMT determine the content of the country office strategies and priority themes. And, because: a) the SMT are the only body within the organisation who are effectively empowered to take the significant steps that are needed to push the mainstreaming agenda forward, and; b) mainstreaming can never be successful if it is driven by an individual, it has to be seen as something in which a larger coalition of influential individuals are invested in order to influence and motivate other members from within the organisation.

3.5 Government and policy makers

The role of the government, policy makers and government committees are critical in defining the nature and scope of any mainstreaming process in the policy arena (discussed further later). When probed on the arguments used to secure the government's leadership in this issue, DRR experts felt the most effective way is to explain to the government that inaction leads to a violation of certain agreements to which it is legally committed. For example, the Government of Nepal not incorporating climate change in agricultural policy might lead to food insecurity and possible future violation of *The Right to Food*, which the Government is committed to delivering to the population. Interestingly, John Twigg, in his seminal paper The Right to Safety: some conceptual and practical issues (2003), raises a similar point when he says that mainstreaming DRR is inherently connected with the fulfilment of certain fundamental human rights. This argument can be effectively employed to make a case for mainstreaming.

Local government was also identified as an important actor in promoting the mainstreaming of CCA into DRR policies and programmes, and development projects more broadly at the district and municipal level. While potentially useful in a number of different ways, DRR experts felt that local government is also very helpful in convincing donors of the need for mainstreaming at the community level and the urgency of funding mainstreaming initiatives.

ACTION POINT

Generating interest amongst SMT

The following action points are suggested for incentivising the SMT:

- **Explain how DRR and CCA align with the organisation's core mandate (overtly or tacitly).**
- **Highlight the potential impact of CCA on ongoing DRR projects and explain how a failure to mainstream could reduce the efficacy of the organisation's DRR programmes.**
- **Try and generate interest from the line managers of the SMT to support this agenda by ensuring the SMT receive directives from someone higher up the organisational structure (possibly from head quarters). If directives exist at this level the focal point driving the initial stages of the mainstreaming process can employ these to secure the support of the SMT for mainstreaming within the particular country office. This may require doing some homework to identify champions and supporters of the mainstreaming agenda within head quarters or the secretariat.**
- **SMT are charged with managing the profile and reputation of the organisation – explain that mainstreaming CCA within the organisational DRR programmes is critical to positioning it as a relevant, modern and effective in the face of new challenges associated with an uncertain climate and one that is plugged into key global debates.**

4. Challenges and solutions

At a glance, this section includes:

Challenges:

- **Working with the current funding environment**
- **Challenging results-driven project processes**
- **Defining what effective mainstreaming looks like**
- **Generating ownership of climate change within the policy environment**
- **Engaging policy makers**
- **Addressing unsuitable organisational structures**

Solutions:

- **Know climate change data**
- **Think seriously about programmatic sustainability**
- **Deal with mainstreaming fatigue by acknowledging success**
- **Make climate change relevant to current DRR work**

4.1 Introduction

Disaster risk reduction experts identified a number of organisational barriers for mainstreaming CCA into DRR, such as bureaucratic organisational processes, lack of capacity and knowledge on climate change, high staff turnover, ineffective procedures for retaining organisational memory and a culture of working in silos. Some of these can be remedied by the following:

- Finding a focal point within the organisation and champions to push the mainstreaming agenda forward.
- Exposing individuals to the negative impact of inaction.
- Publicising mainstreaming success stories.
- Undertaking specific capacity building events.
- Documenting any steps taken towards mainstreaming.

Lack of funding, appropriate knowledge on the subject, a lack of government support and the absence of mainstreaming in current organisational and government strategy are some of the other challenges that exist. Some steps that may help overcome these issues include strategic advocacy work to amend current policy, undertaking joint programming with the government and joint reviews of specific programmes.

Kathmandu, Nepal: Urban residents collectively repairing a street following flooding

4.2 Challenges

4.2.1 Working with the current funding environment

Funding is a key hurdle to achieving effective mainstreaming of CCA into DRR programmes. The current funding environment is geared toward individual projects. This is because it is easier to manage, monitor and show results for funding that is specifically invested in clearly demarcated programmes. The negative by-product of this system is that critical issues which need to be a part of ongoing programmes (as opposed to operating in silos) do not receive the necessary financial support they require.

Donors need to realise the critical influence they have on the feasibility of achieving better impacts within DRR. The current (and future) impacts of climate change will affect the contexts in which DRR and development programmes take place, beyond the timescale of specific projects. In order to ensure realistic, incremental changes take place over a longer-time scale, we need to move and think in ways beyond the two to three year funding cycles that currently restrict work to project-based interventions. What is more, the extremely diverse effects of climate change have a bearing on almost all development programmes so project-based interventions are not a sustainable solution. To tackle the problem of adapting to climate change all DRR and development programmes must factor in climate change in a holistic and sustainable way.

DRR managers dispute the notion that mainstreaming CCA into DRR programmes and policies does not cost anything. Many DRR experts feel that, once it has become an established part of programming, the cost of incorporating climate change considerations are minimal, and in fact make disasters and development funds more effective. However, in order to get to this point time, energy, training and personnel investments are required – all of which cost.

ACTION POINT

Working with the current funding environment

Change in donor funding mechanisms will most likely be a long process, so we need to think of inventive ways to support longer-term visioning and mainstreaming. In conjunction with efforts to secure donor support for mainstreaming, programme managers can include activities in project budgets that contribute to longer-term mainstreaming. This requires concerted effort on the part of programmers, as funds are likely to come from many disparate project budgets, but can be used for a set of activities that together create a coherent programme of work for mainstreaming CCA into DRR.

ACTION POINT

Dedicate time to work with donors

DRR experts suggested that taking time to build good relationships with donors is an important way to gain their attention and establish contacts with potential funders. In addition, making concerted effort to spend time in donor forums is necessary to build a positive reputation and influence current debates and thematic priorities.

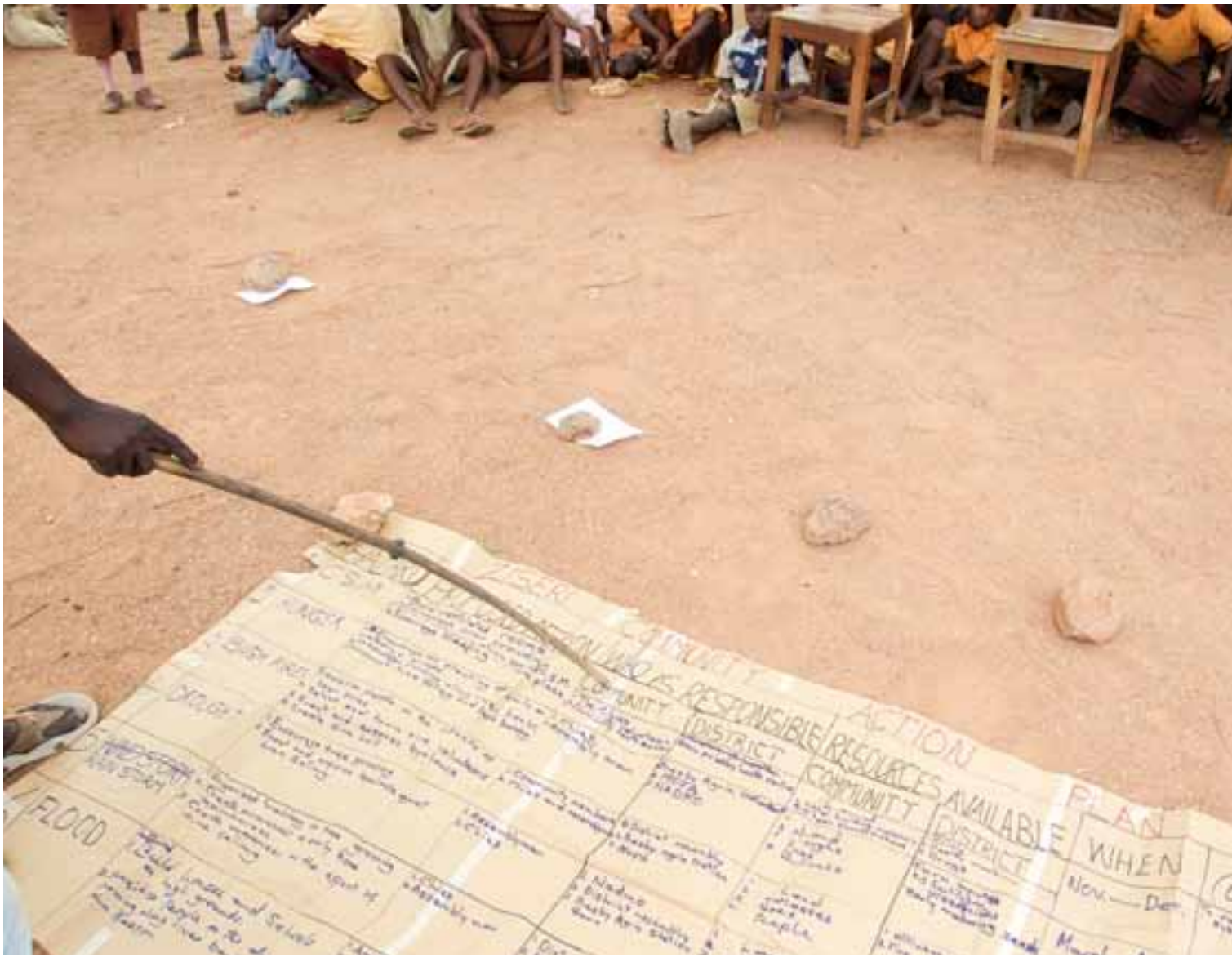
4.2.2 Challenging results-driven project processes

One of the main challenges for mainstreaming CCA into DRR is the need to demonstrate results to donors – something that is being increasingly called for in the current financial environment. Donor priorities do not necessarily support initiatives of mainstreaming and tend instead to focus on 'hard' solutions (for example, infrastructural improvements or developing physical assets) whereas many DRR approaches produce soft results. Proving the impact of so-called 'soft' approaches remains a challenge. Indeed, some communities and local-level government view success as short-term infrastructural development and are less appreciative of initiatives to mainstream CCA into DRR as they usually do not yield immediate, tangible benefits. This could be overcome by collating examples of the benefits of mainstreaming and communicating how mainstreaming enables ongoing community-level development work to become more robust. It must be recognised that, apart from collating examples, there is a need to lobby donors to make them appreciate that 'results' for mainstreaming will look very different to traditional project outputs or outcomes. It must also be emphasised that CCA cannot be seen just as an outcome but as a process to build resilience to climate change.

4.2.3 Defining what effective mainstreaming looks like

Achieving effective mainstreaming demands policy makers and practitioners identify what effective mainstreaming looks like. A collective visioning exercise is one way of achieving this, moreover the process and discussions involved in defining 'effective mainstreaming' is an invaluable exercise in itself. Once defined, indicators are then developed which make it easier to tangibly integrate CCA into DRR policies and programmes. The indicators allow for effective project management and the formulation of monitoring systems for measuring the progress and success of mainstreaming initiatives.

Substantial expertise in developing indicators for a range of issues already exists. Therefore developing



Above
Zizeri, Ghana: Action plan resulting from a PVA

indicators for mainstreaming CCA into DRR programmes is not entirely different from the processes and steps followed for integrating other issues. What is more, there is a wide body of thought and knowledge on developing effective indicators (and log frames) for almost every sector of development work and many of these guidelines may prove useful. Yet, there are very few monitoring and evaluation guides that specifically focus on the integration of climate change and disasters, although work is beginning to emerge (see www.csdrm.org forthcoming).

4.2.4 Generating ownership of climate change within the policy environment

The national policy environment is deemed one of the most critical factors in determining the extent to which governments will mainstream CCA into DRR policies at all scales. In many countries the required policy environment simply doesn't exist, a problem that is exaggerated in fragile, conflict affected and difficult environments. There is often a lack of clarity as to which ministers and parliamentarians are charged with responsibility for climate change and consequently a lack of 'ownership' of the issue amongst government bodies. This challenge is amplified in contexts where the nodal ministry for climate change holds opinions that conflict with various political parties on this issue. Some experts believe this could be partly resolved by collaborating with the United Nations to lobby the government and identify a relevant ministry. Another approach is to challenge the tendency for NGOs to act alone, and instead act in collaboration with one another to present a unified case to the government. This helps to avoid the current situation where policy makers are overwhelmed by NGOs' competing agendas. In support of this, the formation of a national platform on mainstreaming would help to coordinate efforts between all relevant organisations. In some contexts networks of NGOs already exist and in such instances mainstreaming should be added to their agendas.

4.2.5 Engaging policy makers

A critical challenge faced by many people attempting to promote the CCA mainstreaming agenda is either a lack of interest or failure to prioritise DRR, amongst policy makers. DRR experts feel that policy makers may not understand

ACTION POINT

Mainstreaming CCA into disasters policies: exposing policy makers to the right information

Some NGOs have substantial collections of relevant technical documents on the issue of mainstream climate change and disasters. These should be pooled and made accessible to policy makers who are interested in learning more about the mainstreaming process. It is critical to understand that key technical material needs to be made available to the right people in a format that permits them to absorb the key information very swiftly:

1. **Request relevant documents on mainstreaming topics into government policies (both generally and specifically on DRR) from your counterparts in other NGOs or research institutions.**
2. **Review these with one or two other team members to gauge the most useful material.**
3. **Prepare a short annotated bibliography with three or four sentences describing the most valuable publications.**
4. **Circulate to key policy makers during outreach sessions and make additional resources available to meet any requests.**

the need to pay attention to mainstreaming. They may see it as an interest harboured by a particular NGO, may be too busy or simply not have the relevant expertise to start thinking about another factor to consider in a policy process that is already difficult and convoluted. Ministries are also extremely hierarchical and limited success may result if outreach only extends to mid-level employees. Similarly if outreach targets only the senior policy makers without relevant communication to those charged with actually driving the policy forward, the initiative will not achieve its objectives fully.

Disaster risk reduction experts recognised it is important not to make the mistake of ignoring or dismissing the obvious by overlooking formal channels of petitioning policy makers. These may be lengthy and arduous processes but in bureaucratic systems once a formal entry is made and recorded it will (usually) ultimately find its way to the final destination.

4.2.6 Addressing unsuitable organisational structures

Current departmental and organisational structures are often not well suited to support adequate mainstreaming. Currently the way organisations are structured and the protocols employed are not amenable to effective mainstreaming of CCA due to a number of disparate issues: lack of clear understanding of who should be responsible for working towards CCA mainstreaming in DRR programmes; how existing staff can/should find the time to take on additional work; lack of funding for cross-cutting initiatives such as mainstreaming CCA; and lack of time and space for sharing knowledge on issues of mainstreaming.

Disaster risk reduction experts believe that rather than looking at short-term solutions the longer-term, culture and ethos of many organisations will need to shift. This requires a combination of efforts, many of which are discussed above, such as changing funding patterns, getting the SMT onboard, reviewing organisational strategies and policy priorities, shifting to longer-term planning modes and encouraging cross-departmental dialogue.

ACTION POINT

Mainstreaming CCA into disasters policies: engaging policy makers

- ***Do not immediately request mainstreaming.*** **Be careful not to begin your communication with policy makers from the nodal ministry with a request for mainstreaming CCA in a national DRR policy. You should begin with exposing policy makers to key climate change and mainstreaming issues in relation to disasters, before requesting them to undertake mainstreaming in the policy with which they are concerned.**
- ***Undertake a programme of capacity building for key ministry officials.*** **This could be series of short sessions informing them about key climate change issues linked to disasters or if possible, a one or two day workshop away from their regular places of work.**
- ***Outreach should happen simultaneously to the senior and mid-level employees.*** **This is to ensure policy makers are behind this agenda and those in charge of the day-to-day work are also well informed. If directives come from the top without there being adequate knowledge or interest in enforcing them, mainstreaming will not happen or will be procedural at best.**

Right
Kathmandu, Nepal: A painter finishing the outside of a repaired building

4.3 Solutions

4.3.1 Know climate change data

Having reliable and robust climate data to make a strong case for mainstreaming is important for DRR experts. At present, the availability, reliability and accessibility of climate data varies dramatically depending on the context. Unfortunately, there continues to be a general lack of awareness on climate change issues amongst some practitioners and policy makers and it is challenging that existing climate data tends to be unreliable and contradictory. This issue is starting to be addressed by linking in-country scientific/research institutions producing climate data with CSOs so that the information created is more robust through collaborative research and consensus and thus more useable.

4.3.2 Think seriously about programmatic sustainability

Partly related to the nature of short funding cycles and partly due to ineffective human resources retention policies, the inability of many organisations to retain key staff – particularly those with DRR expertise – is a significant challenge. This impacts not only an organisation's capacity to engage in DRR but also the institutional memory of the organisation for knowing good practice and avoiding replication of poor practice. Taking sustainability seriously and investing in staff to avoid a loss of institutional memory demands that mainstreaming initiatives involve a number of key staff members, to ensure that momentum is not lost should a staff member leave. These staff members can be led and motivated by the focal person or champion (discussed previously). Similarly, organisations should think about investing in trainers of trainers rather than sending one individual to participate in DRR and/or CCA training.

4.3.3 Deal with mainstreaming fatigue by acknowledging success

The first challenge DRR policy makers and practitioners often face is how to engage key people and get the right staff to back the mainstreaming agenda. Mainstreaming fatigue is often encountered where colleagues have little or no enthusiasm to add another issue to mainstream in their programmes. Or, for those in charge of programme departments or ministries, the challenge is to develop a method of prioritising between a number of different issues to be mainstreamed. Overall, programme staff are so busy with executing the core mandate of their programmes they do not have the time or inclination to engage seriously with mainstreaming.

Right
Kathmandu, Nepal: An example of the impact of poor building regulations

Ways to deal with mainstreaming fatigue include demonstrating how a failure to mainstream CCA may render current practice insufficient (Mitchell, Ibrahim, Harris et al. 2010); and how declining to mainstream CCA leads other kinds of mainstreaming (gender, HIV etc.) to become less effective. Other possible solutions include incentivising staff through praise and reward schemes.

Currently, there are few, if any, systems for recognising or rewarding steps taken by individuals working within the DRR sector to mainstream CCA in their policies, projects or programmes. Formally recognising policy makers and practitioners' efforts would not only further encourage those interested in mainstreaming but also act as an example to other staff by outlining that the organisation looks favourably on staff who invest in mainstreaming CCA. This idea could be implemented by publishing or promoting the work of these individuals and by mentioning key successful initiatives in annual progress reports. More specifically, there are relatively simple measures that would go a long way in supporting the mainstreaming agenda such as an award scheme (for example, UNISDR's Sasakawa Award).

ACTION POINT

Rewarding action and challenging mainstreaming fatigue

Once mainstreaming is approved by an organisation or department, how do you incentivise an individual to take up the mainstreaming agenda? A simple solution to the sigh that often confronts practitioners suggesting a new theme to mainstream is to develop formal efforts to praise staff who make the effort to invest time and energy into mainstreaming new themes such as climate change into their work. Rather than seeing mainstreaming as a burden, staff must be encouraged to view mainstreaming as something that will not only improve their work but also their capability as a practitioner. Suggestions:

- **Include mainstreaming in the terms of reference of new DRR programme staff.**
- **For existing staff build DRR achievements into individual career progression targets and monitor these on a quarterly basis.**
- **Look into the possibility of organising an exchange programme to immerse staff in the topic. This may help generate a deeper understanding and commitment to the cause.**

4.4 From abstraction to reality: making climate change relevant to current DRR work

There is a general consensus that discussions on mainstreaming are too abstract and academic. What is needed is a limited but focussed and thorough investigation of how climate change is, or possibly would, impact specific programmes or facets of a programme, as a stepping stone for advocating for mainstreaming.

For example, it is possible that as part of a DRR project, an organisation is planning on building a bamboo bridge to extend perennial access to a village on the banks of a river to a road on the other bank. This small project can be effectively used to demonstrate how to integrate CCA into a DRR activity and those pushing for mainstreaming should discuss how the height (due to changing levels of flow underneath), width (due to the number of people using it) and length (due to impact of river flow on bank erosion) of the bridge would all be feasibly impacted by changing climatic conditions. Using focussed points of analysis such as this helps move mainstreaming from the realm of abstraction to something the staff can actually action.

TOP TIPS

Taking the first steps towards demonstrating the need for mainstreaming

1. **Review the activity plan for a DRR project being undertaken by your organisation.**
2. **As a group with other interested staff, select a particular activity in which CCA could be included (e.g. a staff training session).**
3. **Collectively advocate for some degree of inclusion of climate change in this particular activity (e.g. module on basic climate science in the training).**

5. Conclusions

There is no single toolkit to achieve mainstreaming of CCA into DRR programmes and policies and there are no 'silver bullets' for the development of a climate smart DRR approach. It is possible, as we have demonstrated here, to learn from experience, debate suggestions and identify what is most likely to be effective in a given scenario. All attempts to bring about a change in policies, organisations or strategies will have some effect – the challenge is creating a substantial enough effect that will result in the desired outcome. It is important for disaster risk managers therefore to understand the nature of change they are aiming for and envision the end state of the mainstreaming process in order to carefully define the direction in which they are moving.

The Zebra (discussed previously) is a tool which allows programme managers who have been sharply focussed on the day-to-day management of individual projects, to pause, reflect and creatively devise strategies to ensure their work can continue to be relevant despite the exigencies of a changing climate. If used with a real life situation it enables colleagues to talk through their situation in detail and identify options for moving forward – suggestions that may be refined to form a strategy. If used with an invented scenario, colleagues are able to make suggestions they may not feel comfortable making with real-life cases. It provides free-rein for people to suggest ideas that may normally be out of their comfort zone sparking innovation and creativity.

After having conducted the Zebra process in the three different locations and analysed the findings in the context of relevant literature, some findings were identified. Firstly, a number of challenges faced by disaster risk managers can be resolved by applying

Above
Andhra Pradesh, Gollapeta: A map – made after the PVA – painted on a school wall

learning from past experiences. As the research demonstrated, many of the obstacles, such as getting colleagues to take on a new area of work, have arisen before and there is learned experience that can and should be drawn on. Secondly, understanding how to integrate CCA into the DRR sector requires investment in understanding processes associated with departmental and organisational change. It demands we take a closer look at how the institution in which we work 'ticks' – whether an INGO, research or government department. Often those who are most effective at getting their agenda heard and incorporated in longer-term strategic priorities are those individuals who understand how to influence. This is a skill in itself and should not be undervalued.

Despite identifying the value of the Zebra tool, it is also important to understand that it is only the starting point of the mainstreaming process. The Zebra provides a valuable framework for channelling ideas, spurring creative thinking on change and distilling the results of sometimes nebulous brainstorming sessions but is not designed as a tool to formulate a complete strategy for mainstreaming (a process which needs to be highly customised to suit the individual context). The Zebra is only one of many processes that together lead to the robust mainstreaming of CCA and DRR. There remain a number of unanswered questions around key aspects of mainstreaming such as the nature, quality and breadth of climate data required to effectively accommodate CCA into DRR work. Further investigation is also needed in identifying the additional resources to make existing programmes climate smart and the potential sources of these funds. Also, gauging whether effective mainstreaming has/is taking place through the development of specialised monitoring and evaluation methods is another area which requires more thought.

5.1 What this means for ActionAid

The research up to this point has taken place in three varied geographical contexts with the participation of a number of key informants (from an even wider geographical area) and has led to the collection of certain innovative, replicable ideas and tactics. While progress has been made there is substantial scope for ActionAid to take this agenda forward. The international leadership of the organisation could spearhead the process of conducting the Zebra process across country offices, collate the data collected and share lessons from this on a regular basis. Or they could request their regional offices to undertake this endeavour at a regional level and facilitate inter-office knowledge sharing within the region. Regardless of a larger global or regional push for learning on mainstreaming, this simple process was originally intended to support motivated country teams to catalyse change, innovate and infuse enthusiasm in DRR personnel at a national level. A valuable next step could be pilot activities in selected country offices to implement suggested tactics for mainstreaming CCA into DRR from these exercises.

Lessons from exercises conducted at any of these levels could inform and influence ActionAid's internal policies. The organisation could also use this process to induce change in others engaged in similar work. Using relevant civil society forums to regularly present/publish any findings would contribute to the development of an international community of practice that understands the importance of incorporating climate change in its work to move closer to fulfilling its mission of empowering the marginalised around the world.

Overall, actions such as these would allow ActionAid to herald a new DRR agenda – one that is relevant in a world battling the exigencies of a changing climate.

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Right
Andhra Pradesh, India: Centre for Environment and Development staff demonstrating the use of buoyancy aids

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