

Connecting Campus and Community: Universities and Building Climate Capacity

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**The Gobeshona Conference for Research on Climate
Change in Bangladesh**

**Independent University Bangladesh
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Going back to 2015

- In October 2015, Professor Huq and I participated in a UNFCCC workshop, “potential ways to enhance capacity building activities.”
- About 75 people attended.
 - Most were delegates from developing nations
 - Very few from universities - Professor Huq and I participated



United Nations
Framework Convention on
Climate Change

Yamide Dagnet of the World Resources Institute



Emphasized the need to:

- ***Strengthen institutional arrangements*** and enabling environments to support the achievement of the Paris Agreement
- ***Enhance collaboration*** between institutions and mechanisms undertaking capacity building within and outside UNFCCC
- ***Integrate capacity building*** at national, regional levels, with both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders

and...

Ms. Dagnet noted that:

- Capacity building efforts were **“all over the place”**-- scattered around various areas of work with no real coordination or monitoring of efforts and effectiveness of activities.
- She recognized the importance of **“institutional strengthening”**

And that capacity building should include:

- Training materials, best practices, recommendations, workshops, curriculum and education
- Peer exchange, South-South, North-South, triangular cooperation
- Synergies of climate change and sustainable development
- Community based projects



And in Paris

- **Articles 11 and 12 of the Paris Agreement address capacity building and climate-related education, training, and public participation**
- **The Paris Agreement creates a new organization - The Paris Committee on Capacity Building (PCCB), and authorizes the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT).**



At Climate Change Meetings

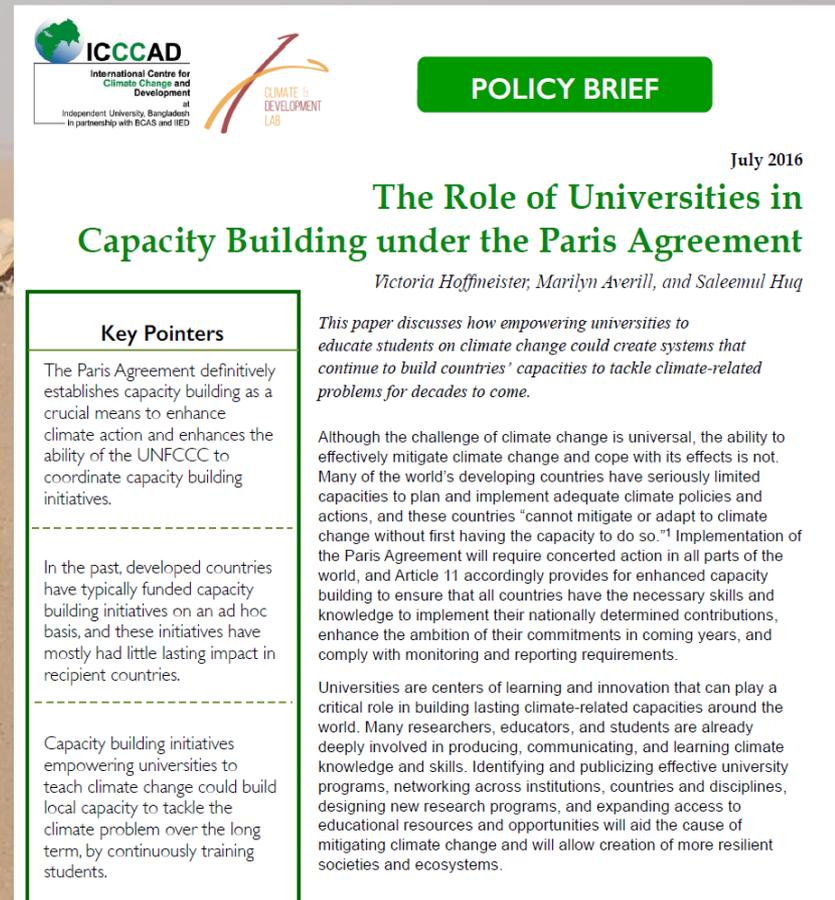
Discussions about what universities could do...

- To address the ideas of Ms. Dagnet and colleagues
- To support the work of the Paris Committee on Capacity Building
- And to contribute to community efforts to confront climate change – in the most vulnerable countries



A role for Universities?

- In a July 2016 ICCCAD Policy Brief, Dr. Huq and colleagues voiced a number of reasons for university involvement:
- Global engagement
- Research collaborations
- Problem-based work
- Access to information
- Distance learning
- Student exchanges



The image shows the cover of a policy brief from the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) at the Independent University, Bangladesh. The cover features the ICCCAD logo, the Climate & Development Lab logo, and a green button that says 'POLICY BRIEF'. The title of the brief is 'The Role of Universities in Capacity Building under the Paris Agreement', written in green. Below the title, the authors are listed as Victoria Hoffmeister, Marilyn Averill, and Saleemul Huq. The date 'July 2016' is also present. A 'Key Pointers' section is highlighted in a green box, containing three main points about the Paris Agreement's role in capacity building, the historical context of such initiatives, and the importance of university-led efforts.

ICCCAD
International Centre for
Climate Change and
Development
at
Independent University, Bangladesh
In partnership with BCAS and IED

CLIMATE & DEVELOPMENT LAB

POLICY BRIEF

July 2016

**The Role of Universities in
Capacity Building under the Paris Agreement**

Victoria Hoffmeister, Marilyn Averill, and Saleemul Huq

This paper discusses how empowering universities to educate students on climate change could create systems that continue to build countries' capacities to tackle climate-related problems for decades to come.

Although the challenge of climate change is universal, the ability to effectively mitigate climate change and cope with its effects is not. Many of the world's developing countries have seriously limited capacities to plan and implement adequate climate policies and actions, and these countries "cannot mitigate or adapt to climate change without first having the capacity to do so."¹ Implementation of the Paris Agreement will require concerted action in all parts of the world, and Article 11 accordingly provides for enhanced capacity building to ensure that all countries have the necessary skills and knowledge to implement their nationally determined contributions, enhance the ambition of their commitments in coming years, and comply with monitoring and reporting requirements.

Universities are centers of learning and innovation that can play a critical role in building lasting climate-related capacities around the world. Many researchers, educators, and students are already deeply involved in producing, communicating, and learning climate knowledge and skills. Identifying and publicizing effective university programs, networking across institutions, countries and disciplines, designing new research programs, and expanding access to educational resources and opportunities will aid the cause of mitigating climate change and will allow creation of more resilient societies and ecosystems.

Key Pointers

The Paris Agreement definitively establishes capacity building as a crucial means to enhance climate action and enhances the ability of the UNFCCC to coordinate capacity building initiatives.

In the past, developed countries have typically funded capacity building initiatives on an ad hoc basis, and these initiatives have mostly had little lasting impact in recipient countries.

Capacity building initiatives empowering universities to teach climate change could build local capacity to tackle the climate problem over the long term, by continuously training students.

Why Universities?

- Universities are about building capacity
- Universities are optimistic and future-oriented
- Universities are about progress and improvement – and solving problems
- Universities have “capital”, particularly intellectual and human
- Universities are trusted and respected



Why Universities?

- Universities focus on human dimensions of climate change, not just the technical – both the social sciences and the hard (physical, biological) sciences – *human dimensions such as culture, gender, and governance*
- Universities build capacity among the younger generation and their idealism – *“to solve problems that the older generation created”*

Why Universities?

- **Capacity building is a cross-cutting issue, related to adaptation, finance, mitigation, and more...**
- **Universities are cross-cutting institutions – putting value on multi-disciplinary work**
- **Universities coordinate, organize, mobilize**
- **Capacity building is important to developing countries -- and universities should support this concern as a priority**

How?

- Create organizations of universities dedicated to building capacity about climate change
- An emerging vision among universities – led by Dr. Huq
- The Least Developed Country University Consortium for Climate Change (LUCCC)
- Universities Network for Climate Capacity (UNCC)

LUCCC and UNCC goals

- *To foster a south-south collaborative network* for enhancing research capacity and proficiency in climate change (LUCCC)
- *To stimulate cooperation and collaboration among universities* and other institutions that are engaged in climate change capacity building (UNCC)
- *To mobilize the capacity of universities to develop and implement teaching and training programs* in different climate change aspects (LUCCC and UNCC)
- *To work with and for the most vulnerable communities* - two way collaborative capacity building that helps all parties (LUCCC)
- *To engage with and support the Paris Committee on Capacity Building* and the implementation of Article 11 of the Paris Agreement (UNCC)

And Connect Campus and Community

- Capacity building should be country-driven (Paris Agreement, Article 11)
- In-country efforts at every scale, particularly with communities
- Universities can – and should – work in and with communities to solve problems, improve resilience, and adapt to climate change
- The LUCCC and UNCC can play important roles

Two Universities' Missions

Independent University Bangladesh (IUB)

“to achieve the goals of higher education and of sustainable economic growth in the country through a two-way relationship between community and university”



Oregon State University (OSU)

“As a land grant institution committed to teaching, research and outreach and engagement, Oregon State University promotes economic, social, cultural and environmental progress for the people of Oregon, the nation and the world”



To Conclude

- Both IUB and OSU are committed to outreach and engagement – critical parts of connecting campus and community to address the important challenges of climate change.
- Conferences like Gobeshona 3 are essential.
- As we participate in the Gobeshona Conference on Climate Change and engage excellent presentations and discussions -- **let us share ideas about connecting campus and community to address both the immediate and long term problems of climate change.**

Thank you for interest!
I welcome your comments, questions,
concerns...

-- Gregg

