

Introduction

Tajikistan is the poorest country in Central Asia. The difficult transition after independence in 1991, the 1992–1997 civil war, and recurring natural disasters have resulted in widespread poverty, particularly among rural people. An estimated 53 per cent of the seven million population lives below the poverty line, and 17 per cent below the extreme poverty line. More than 70 per cent of poor and extremely poor people live in rural areas.¹

Despite being one of the countries least responsible for the greenhouse gas emissions causing climate change, Tajikistan is one of the most vulnerable. Poverty, poor health and inadequate education, weak infrastructure, and a dearth of private investment, combined with exposure to natural hazards such as drought, flooding, mudslides, extremes of heat and cold, and earthquakes, have resulted in frequent humanitarian crises. In addition, food production already faces many serious challenges, including the limited space available for crops and livestock due to steep slopes and high elevations, and micro-climates that are unsuitable for agriculture.

Tajikistan's poverty is increasingly feminised. Male migration for work to other parts of the former Soviet Union has created large numbers of women-headed households. Because there are few wage-earning opportunities in rural Tajikistan, many women are dependent on remittances from male relatives, but these are often unreliable and may dry up entirely. Smallholder farming on household plots is therefore their main livelihood.

Families in rural areas frequently have many children, which increases poverty and women's workloads. Girls tend to be withdrawn from education earlier than boys, leading to lower educational qualifications and fewer earning opportunities. Land reform legislation, although not overtly discriminatory, lacks mechanisms for gender-sensitive implementation. Lobbying work by international organisations has succeeded in increasing the amount of land certificates issued to women from two per cent in 2002 to 14 per cent in 2008, and land-use certificates have been issued for 60 per cent of arable land as part of land reform. But flaws remain in ensuring equitable and secure provision of land-use rights.

Policy Instruments and Implementing Tools

Tajikistan is a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol. It has developed a First and Second National Communication to the UNFCCC outlining the country's key vulnerabilities. A National Action Plan for Climate Change Mitigation completed in 2003 specifies priority activities designed to respond to urgent adaptation needs.

Tajikistan is a participant in the Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR). The PPCR government lead is the Deputy Prime Minister and the focal point is the Deputy Head, Department for Environment



Specific impacts of climate change

- The unpredictability of seasonal weather increases the risks attached to planting and other agricultural decisions.
- There are also potential threats to the availability of water as many glaciers shrink in size and disappear, leading to a significant long-term decrease in river flow. This increases the risk of low run-off in the dry season and could trigger a sharp reduction in the overall supply of water.
- Temperature increases will result in an average decrease in crop yields. Grasslands are also expected to become less productive. Heat stress and reduced water intake for livestock may reduce milk yields and increase the prevalence of livestock disease.
- Meanwhile, the increase in river water flow in the wet season brings the threat of floods and heavy sedimentation.
- Climate change is also expected to increase the risk of malaria in mountainous central Asia as conditions conducive to mosquito reproduction reach higher elevations.²

¹ FAO (2009), 'FAO Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission to Tajikistan', <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/ak339e/ak339e00.htm>

² Oxfam (2009), 'Reaching Tipping Point? Climate Change and Poverty in Tajikistan', <http://publications.oxfam.org.uk>

Protection and Emergency Situations under the Executive Office of the President. However, despite the involvement of powerful figures and agencies, a government reshuffle left the focal point post vacant between April and August 2010, when the Strategic Program for Climate Resilience (SPCR) document was being completed. The multilateral development banks (MDBs), principally the World Bank, facilitated the process. Proposals for funding were prepared jointly by the government and MDBs, although the lack of capacity within government meant that much of the work was done by MDB staff and consultants. Since early 2011, when the new government climate change focal point retired, this government post has once again been vacant.

Several joint missions were conducted between October 2009 and October 2010, led by the three principal MDBs – the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). At each turn, mission reports outlining the priority areas, activities and next steps were agreed by the government and MDBs. Meetings were also held with other government stakeholders, selected international organisations, bilateral donors and civil society to solicit feedback on the document outcomes, including Tajikistan's grant application. A final SPCR request for \$50 million was completed and eventually approved by the PPCR Sub-Committee in November 2010 in Washington DC.

Challenges and Issues

Stakeholder participation and involvement

The lack of stakeholder involvement in the PPCR process surfaced repeatedly. The MDB representatives explained their dominant role by calling attention to the limited capacity of national institutions and the reshuffle that left the role of government lead vacant for several months. Through its representatives, the government conceded its limited capacity to address climate change adaptation. Although several line ministries and agencies were involved in the design of the PPCR, their lack of understanding of the issues meant their input was limited.

Civil society groups, including the Tajikistan Climate Network, highlighted the lack of broader stakeholder consultation processes. The World Bank acknowledged the limited time allotted to consultations, though stressed that field visits and consultations were conducted with community members and households. In light of insufficient local expertise, significant funds were spent to cover the costs and fees of visiting international experts.

Project selection

Informed commentators from Tajik and international civil society organisations made a range of comments on, and critiques of, the projects chosen for the PPCR. In addition, some NGOs and UN agencies have pointed out gaps in the analysis and selection criteria.

Because the timeline of the project was truncated, the first phase was not completed (or in some instances even begun) before decisions were made on the second phase. The World Health Organization sought – unsuccessfully – to lobby for health to be included in PPCR projects, pointing out the impact of climate change on health infrastructure. Concerns were raised that reforestation as an adaptation strategy was not sufficiently considered and that lessons learned through successful bilateral forestry strategies might be overlooked. A number of organisations questioned the focus within the energy sector on large-scale, rather than small-scale, hydropower infrastructure and other renewable energy sources in rural areas. Another significant gap was the lack of an effective insurance mechanism in the agricultural sector that

SPCR investment decisions

- Building government capacity to manage climate resilience
- Improving the data gathering and weather forecasting capacity of the state meteorological agency
- Developing climate models for Tajikistan
- Enhancing the climate resilience of the hydropower sector
- Increasing the resilience of agriculture and sustainable land management
- Climate resilience in the Pyanj river basin

could allow farmers to mitigate the financial risks of climate-related crop failure. Many also found the selection lacking in gender analysis.

Arguing that the PPCR is an opportunity to embed climate change in development investments, some civil society groups, including Oxfam, FOCUS, Ecocentre, Little Earth and the Association of Dehkan (peasant) Farms, are calling for selection criteria more inclusive of the needs of vulnerable groups and mindful of being able to replicate good practices developed by different organisations or in different regions.

Governance

Implementation of the PPCR will need to be managed, monitored and evaluated. Many plans in the SPCR document still need to be detailed. The proposed governance structure in the SPCR document is focused around PPCR implementation and is being led by the ADB, which provided bridge financing under Phase one to fast-start a secretariat team by March 2011. Subsequently the secretariat will be funded with the capacity-building component of the Phase two grant. The secretariat will be vital in establishing other coordination mechanisms, including a steering group that will serve as a forum for discussion and a monitoring tool to ensure meaningful outcomes of the PPCR activities. Both national and international NGOs are insistent that civil society is represented on the steering group.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

1. PPCR-funded projects should address the needs of those most vulnerable to climate change

The mechanisms and processes for channelling adaptation funds should include the most vulnerable communities, particularly women and small-scale food producers. This requires re-orientating the SPCR and individual projects towards rural smallholder farmers, even if they are not a significant part of national economic statistics.

2. The government of Tajikistan must exercise full ownership of PPCR funding

The government should be the primary actor in designing, implementing and channelling resources for national climate change adaptation strategies. One lead agency should have the authority and functionality to develop the national strategic framework on adaptation, oversee implementation and coordinate financial resources. This lead agency should work with all relevant ministries and departments. A Tajikistan national climate change adaptation strategy should be further developed and aligned with national development and poverty strategies. PPCR funding should contribute to capacity building of government staff so that they are able to take leadership for climate-change investments in the country.

3. Civil society groups and communities should be guaranteed meaningful participation throughout the planning and implementation process of climate change funding

Civil society – particularly organisations representing those most vulnerable to climate change – should be able to fully engage and participate in the articulation and implementation of strategies and decisions about adaptation funding so that funding decisions integrate their needs and interests.

In order to facilitate community involvement and empowerment within the PPCR process, civil society organisations, local communities, households, and men and women farmers need to understand the concepts and

Possible interventions which could be supported by the PPCR:

- research to improve the scenario of climate change impact on various aspects of farming, pastures, water management, and the socio-economic situation of poor rural Tajiks;
- building infrastructure to improve access to weather forecasts for farmers and rural communities;
- piloting and rolling out adaptive approaches in conservation agriculture, pasture management, and water and energy efficiency;
- farm water-management (terracing and mulching, drip irrigation, etc);
- provision of new, more suitable, crop varieties for remote communities;
- capacity building in community-based disaster risk reduction;
- strengthening partnerships for research and development in the region, with the participation of farmers, local NGOs, the private sector, and academia.

practical application of climate change adaptation measures and the mechanisms by which these could be financially supported.

4. Gender equality and women's participation should be central to climate funding

Climate change will affect most severely those who are poorest and have limited capacities to adapt and mitigate its negative impact. Women are disproportionately represented in the poorest segments of society. Climate investments must therefore be based around a thorough gender assessment that examines the impact of climate change on women and on men, and guides investments that address the needs of both.

5. Capacity-building should accompany climate funding

Resources need to be set aside for capacity building, which should be rapid, up front and sustained throughout the adaptation process. Capacity building is needed across government ministries for local government leaders, as well as among civil society and community organisations. The capacity-building strategy should mirror each investment so that it is in line with identified tasks and enables accountability. Capacity-building should span technical competencies and the 'softer' engagement and leadership skills. Building capacity at the national level will also enhance programme ownership, and reduce the reliance on international technical assistance often imposed by donors and MDBs, as well as the high costs of international consultancies.

6. Climate funding processes should be transparent and accountable to the people of Tajikistan

Government and development partners should publicly disclose all documents related to the usage of PPCR funds and create regular and accessible public reports outlining how funds are allocated. Spending should be clearly disaggregated into measureable components in order to facilitate monitoring. The mandate, membership, resources, and capacity of the oversight and management body, as well as voting rights and conflicts of interest within that body, should be carefully considered. In the proposed steering group of the PPCR secretariat, civil society representatives must be present with full voting rights. Social audits and an independent watchdog, with representation from diverse stakeholders, could be established to ensure accountability.

7. National climate funding approaches should be informed by existing models

Approaches to climate change funding in Tajikistan should consider existing mechanisms that have been designed with a similar intention of poverty mitigation. Such mechanisms exist in state agencies and civil society projects. Where possible, climate finance modalities should build on existing structures rather than create new ones. Funding recipients should be allowed to access resources directly, without the need for intermediaries. As the PPCR will be the first of much larger future investments, it is an opportunity for Tajikistan to organise a single, representative body that can plan and monitor investments itself, and therefore avoid the transaction costs of multiple administration channels such as the MDBs.

More information on this issue can be found in Oxfam's new briefing paper, *Owning adaptation: Country-level governance of climate adaptation finance*. To download your free copy of *Owning adaptation*, please go to www.oxfam.org.uk/publications.

As financing for climate change adaptation gathers pace, it has become fundamentally important to identify how it flows into developing countries. This is a major opportunity to shape the governance of funding at the national level so that the needs of the most vulnerable can be met. The core issue is country-level ownership of adaptation finance. Consequently, providers of adaptation finance must put developing countries in the driver's seat, and the countries themselves must exercise leadership and respond to the needs of those most affected by climate change. Most importantly, civil society and vulnerable communities must be able to steer and hold accountable the way in which adaptation finance is used.

For more information on climate finance governance in Tajikistan, please contact Andy Baker (abaker@oxfam.org.uk)