

# **Mainstreamed Donor Policy Dialogue on Climate Change Risks in Vietnam**

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Mainstreaming Climate Change Risks (CCRs) into development, or the screening of development decision-making and implementation through a climate change risk-lens, has become an important policy in development practices in Vietnam. However, dealing with climate change risks is relatively new to Vietnam and the country's institutionally fragmented and centralised political system is an important impediment to successful mainstreaming. This study addresses how donors can assist Vietnam in effectively mainstreaming risks into sector-ministries. In order to provide an all-inclusive and clear picture, a division is made between mainstreaming on macro-level (donor-level), meso-level (national government level), and micro-level (sub-national level). Mainstreaming on each of these three levels is examined through the four dimensions of the Policy Arrangements Approach (PAA): discourse, actors, rules and resources. For each of these respective dimensions, a number of indicators is developed, which, when tested, show the degree of mainstreaming for all three respective levels. This reveals shortcomings and challenges. Finally, based on these findings, the study proposes that, by making use of the four-step process of the 'mainstreamed policy dialogue', donors could step-by-step help alleviate barriers to effective mainstreaming. More precisely, for each dimension of the PAA, actions for more effective mainstreaming are recommended.

*Keywords: mainstreaming, policy dialogue, JICA, Vietnam, Can Tho.*

## **Introduction**

In the 1990s, the climate change problem was seen as an abstract, global, technological and economic challenge. By the decade's end, the problem had been reframed as a development problem (Gupta & van der Grijp, 2010). Climate change issues have been increasingly linked to other fields of societal concern, such as health and education. The introduction and the increasing use of concepts such as 'vulnerability', 'risk' and 'adaptation' reflect a discursive turn in climate change policies, indicating a substantial

change in the naming and framing of the problems, and in the ways to tackle them. These discursive changes were paralleled by the introduction of a second set of concepts: ‘stakeholder approach’, ‘shared responsibility’, ‘top-down’, ‘bottom-up’ and so on, which explicitly pointed at the renewal of roles and responsibilities of the agencies involved, and on new coalitions between them. This has created new opportunities for new actors to intervene at different levels. Clearly, in recent years, climate change policy gradually became a multi-sector field. In this changed landscape, the discourse on ‘mainstreaming Climate Change Risks (CCRs) into development’ emerged. This refers to the need for development portfolios by donors as well as receiving countries to be screened through a climate change lens to achieve climate resilient development (Ayers & Huq, 2009; Klein et al., 2007). However, because of the complexity of different scales and dynamics between all actors involved in Vietnam, a differentiation is made between three levels of governance: the macro-level or foreign donor level, the meso-level or the level of the national aid receiving government, and the micro-level, which is the sub-national level (Persson & Klein, 2009). Furthermore, on the macro-level, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)’s Support Programme to Respond to Climate Change (SP-RCC) is chosen as a case-study and on the micro-level, Can Tho City is focused upon. All data is collected based on literature review, interviews and field observations.

In order to understand the dynamics between these levels, the concept of mainstreaming is put within the framework of the Policy Arrangements Approach (PAA; Arts et al., 2006). This approach explains that a ‘policy arrangement’, the ‘mainstreaming’ arrangement in this case, is made up of four dimensions, being discourse, actors, rules and resources, and that they should all be taken into account when analysing the ‘policy

arrangement'. Furthermore, through the development of indicators for each respective PAA dimension, the degree of mainstreaming is evaluated on each of the three levels, which reveals a number of gaps and challenges for mainstreaming. Based on these findings, the four-step process of the 'mainstreamed policy dialogue' between donor and recipient is developed for the optimisation of mainstreaming in developing countries.

The rest of this paper unfolds as follows: the subsequent section gives a theoretical overview of the PAA and lists the indicators. It is followed by a discussion on the outcome of the evaluation of mainstreaming on each level. The last section offers recommendations for the shortcomings, by elaborating on the mainstreamed donor policy dialogue tool.

Finally, due to the limited space, this paper cannot offer a fully detailed explanation of the choice of each indicator and argumentation for all scores. An exhaustive matrix with an explanation about the scoring process can be provided upon request to the author.

### **Mainstreaming Climate Change Risks into Development through the Policy Arrangements Approach**

Although 'mainstreaming' is widely used, the term remains rather ambiguous and an official definition does not yet exist. Hence, this paper develops the following description, assembled from various usages:

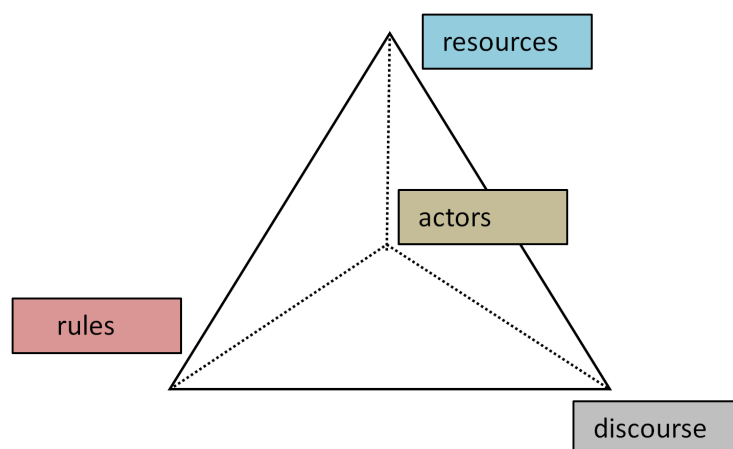
Mainstreaming looks at socio-economic development from a climate change perspective, while thoroughly integrating information, policies and measures for climate change into development planning and decision-making by developing countries, donors, NGOs and the private sector. Ideally, this should happen in a

horizontal way, meaning the full incorporation of climate change responsive activities among various sector-Ministries. There is also a need for vertical mainstreaming: the inclusion of multiple stakeholders, representatives of all social layers of civil society and government, including communities and industry. Mainstreaming requires a proactive approach. Climate change becomes a political and ideological concept, thereby shifting from a marginal position to the center. Mainstreaming calls for scaling up local experiences ensuring the long-term sustainability of investments (Knaepen et al., 2012).

Although a mainstreaming action might be successful for one level, it might not be classed as successful for another. 'Success' depends on scale of implementation and the criteria used to evaluate it at each scale (Adger, 2005). Following this logic, a three-fold division is made: Firstly, mainstreaming starts at the macro-level or donor-level, where the total aid budget and priorities for assistance are set. Donors are best positioned to work through the existing channels of multilateral and bilateral assistance to build the capacity for mainstreaming considerations on CCRs across the relevant institutions. Secondly, at the meso-level, or the level of the national government of the recipient country, country strategies and development plans are agreed. At this level, all sector ministries should develop plans to deal with CCRs, since governments are responsible for the implementation of projects. Also, the development of institutional mechanisms and capacity-building at the meso-level in order to mainstream is highly required. Finally, at micro-level, or sub-national level, projects are designed and implemented, making them 'climate proof' so that they would not be affected by the impacts of climate change (Persson & Klein, 2009; Gupta, 2010).

In order to analyse mainstreaming on each of these three levels, the Policy Arrangements Approach (PAA) is used. The PAA was developed in the late 1990s at

Nijmegen University in the Netherlands in order to understand dynamics in environmental politics. Although it has not been applied to the case of climate change and donor/developing countries dynamics, its comprehensive character is highly conducive for analysing this study's issue of mainstreaming. A 'policy arrangement' is defined as "the temporary stabilisation of the content and organisation of a policy domain" (van Tatenhove, Arts & Leroy, 2000). Using this framework, 'mainstreaming' as a 'new policy arrangement' is described and analysed in terms of its content and organisation through four dimensions: (1) Discourses, referring to the views and narratives of the actors involved. This dimension is elaborated through the theory of Discursive Institutionalism, developed by Schmidt (2008); (2) Actors and their coalitions involved in the policy domain; (3) Resources and decisions on budget; (4) Rules, in terms of actual rules for political interaction as well as concerning climate change. These four dimensions of the policy arrangement are inextricably interwoven, a relationship symbolised by the tetrahedron, in which each of corners represents one dimension (Figure 1). So, any change in one dimension induces change on other dimensions. Hence, the analysis of a policy arrangement should address all dimensions.



**Figure 1 - The tetrahedron as symbol for the connections between the dimensions of a**

**policy arrangement** (Adapted from Arts et al., 2006)

However, the PAA is mainly an analytical tool and it does not offer instruments for evaluation of policy making. The four dimensions are therefore used as building blocks for the creation of eight primary indicators that are further divided into 2 to 5 secondary indicators for each level (Table 2). This list of indicators has been developed by making use of a number of sources, such as: Mitchell, T. (2003), *An Operational Framework for Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction*; OECD. (2009), *Policy Guidance – Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Development Co-operation*, CARE International (2009), *Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation – A Practitioner’s Handbook*; and previous work by the author (Refer to Knaepen et al. (2013). *Mainstreamed Donor Policy Dialogue on Climate Change Adaptation in Vietnam: Case Study of JICA*).

Dimension	Primary indicators	MACRO Secondary indicators	MESO Secondary indicators	MICRO Secondary indicators
Discourse	<i>Policies, Plans &amp; strategies</i>	- Separate CC* policy - CC in country strategy	- Decentralisation - National CC policy - Sectoral action plans - CC in PRSP / SEDP / SEDS**	- Decentralisation - Local CC policy - Sectoral action plans - CC in SEDP / SEDS
	<i>Climatic data</i>	- CC scenarios	- CC scenarios	- CC scenarios
Actors	<i>Authority</i>	High-level CC coordination	High-level CC coordination	High authority CC coordination
	<i>Cooperation</i>	- Donor coalition - All-sector approach	- Institutional CC arrangements - National CC platform	- Institutional CC arrangements - Local CC platform
	<i>Stakeholder involvement</i>	- NGO engagement - Micro-engagement	- NGO engagement - Micro-engagement	- NGO engagement - Scaling up

<b>Rules</b>	<i>Declarations</i>	- MDGs*** Goal 1 - Paris Declaration Ownership	- MDGs Goal 1 - Hanoi Core Statement ownership	- MDGs Goal 1
	<i>Legislation</i>	Judicial advice CC	Laws CC / Decisions	Laws CC / Decisions
<b>Resources</b>	<i>Budget</i>	- Separate CC financing - Pilot projects CC - CC budget mechanism	- Separate CC financing - Pilot projects CC - CC budget mechanism	- Separate CC financing - Pilot projects CC

**Table 2 – Mainstreaming indicators per dimension, per level**

\*CC: climate change; \*\* PRSP: poverty reduction strategy paper; SEDP: socio-economic development plan; SEDS: socio-economic development strategy; \*\*\* MDGs: Millennium Development Goals.

In order to practically test these indicators, a ranking system ranging from 1 until 4 has been developed: 1 for *no*, 2 for *low*, 3 for *moderate* and 4 for *high*. Calculating the average of each set of indicators, the level of mainstreaming is divided into five categories from very high (4.0>3.4), high (3.3>2.8), medium (2.7>2.2), low (2.1>1.7) to very low (1.6>1.0). Finally, this entire testing process will decide upon a number of key elements that constitute the good or bad practice of mainstreaming CCRs into development in Vietnam. The final outcome will then be used for the development of the mainstreamed donor policy dialogue.

In the following three parts, the degree of mainstreaming is discussed on each of the three respective levels.

### **Mainstreaming on the Macro-Level**

In 2008, Vietnam ratified the National Target Programme to Respond to Climate Change (NTP-RCC). A year later, JICA, in cooperation with the Agence Française de Développement (AFD; France's Development Agency) signed a loan agreement with the Vietnamese Government for the Support Programme to Respond to Climate Change

(SP-RCC). The SP-RCC seeks to directly build institutional capacity through supporting the implementation of the NTP-RCC and is the case study for the macro-level (NTP-RCC, 2012). More generally, Japan is Vietnam's top donor and its own growth and industrialisation experience have resulted in that its development vision is distinctive from other donors, being unique in its large share of loans and giving priority to economic infrastructure development (Ohno, 2007). However, in recent years, the importance of concepts such as policy dialogue and climate change grew, of which the SP-RCC is an important example.

Research conducted by the author revealed that overall mainstreaming is considered of medium degree at the macro-level (Knaepen, 2013). This outcome however counts for the case of JICA and might differ from cases of other donors, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Looking at the discourse dimension, great acknowledgement of the need to mainstream CCRs is observed on the international level (e.g. OECD, 2009, *Policy Guidance for Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Development Cooperation*). Donors have usually more access and means to take part and learn from the international climate change debate. JICA has actively created its own climate change policies. This acknowledgement is also written down in the JICA country strategy papers for Vietnam. Moreover, mainstreaming within JICA's policies is mostly developed at the discourse dimension. This fact constitutes a first incentive for JICA to play a role in 'advocating' for mainstreaming policies (Government of Japan, 2004, 2009). However, JICA scores low in terms of 'actors'. JICA's growth oriented infrastructure programmes focus little on cooperation with other actors (Ohno, 2007). Yet, the recently established SP-RCC, a policy programme that



deals with mainstreaming CCRs on meso-level, constitutes an important mechanism for bringing donors together. This is positive since ‘harmonised donor cooperation’ is crucial in the context of mainstreaming (OECD, 2005). However, the SP-RCC leaves little room for engagement with NGOs and micro-level stakeholders, despite the fact that these are important requirements for a complete mainstreaming practice (JICA. (2011). Senior Project Formulation Advisor, Disaster Management and Rural Water Supply, Interview). Then, as the rules are concerned, JICA and other donors clearly support the MDGs and Vietnamese poverty rates have fallen in recent years (JICA, 2012). As mentioned above, JICA’s most important aid pillar in Vietnam however is ‘growth through great infrastructure investments’, based on its own industrialisation and growth experience. But, in order to further decrease poverty in Vietnam, the country should focus on stabilisation as was urged by the donor group during the last Consultative Group Meeting in 2011 (World Bank, 2011). Hence, it is questionable whether this can be achieved if JICA aims at continuing with its growth-oriented policy. Then, overall, donors respect Vietnam’s ownership and budget support has increased. In contrast to its usual project-based approach, JICA’s SP-RCC is done through budget support, which is evidence of a positive change, since JICA usually works on a project-base. Also, one of the greatest achievements of the SP-RCC is the development of a financial mechanism that ensures that budget is allocated to climate change projects. Through this, more ownership will be granted to the Vietnamese government (NTP-RCC, (2012); JICA. (2012). Climate Change Programme Advisor for SP-RCC, Personal Communication).

**In sum, JICA made great progress in terms of mainstreaming CCRs into its official aid documents. However, more improvement is required in terms of**

**engaging with and promoting the role of other actors, such as NGOs and micro-level stakeholders (Table 3).**

Main achievement	Main barrier
<b>Discourse:</b> Climate change risks mainstreamed in documents	<b>Actors:</b> Low engagement with NGO / micro-level / other donors

**Table 3 - Main achievements and barriers at macro-level**

### **Mainstreaming on the Meso-Level**

Since the *doi moi* economic reform process in 1986, Vietnam moved from a centrally planned, command economy to a market economy. As a result, the country attained a mid-income country status in about two decades (World Bank, 2012). However, alongside growth, a problem occurred that clearly jeopardises Vietnam’s prosperity: the risks induced by the changing climate (UNFCCC, 2007). Moreover, despite tendencies towards political modernisation, the country’s communist and centrally planned heritage is a strong barrier to the achievement of mainstreaming. Hence, the degree of mainstreaming is lowest on the meso-level, where most barriers were identified. In terms of discourse however great improvement has been made, thanks to a general understanding of CCRs, of which the NTP-RCC and references in Vietnam’s Socio-Economic Development Plans are evidence (Prime Minister, 2008; Knaepen et al. 2013). The NTP-RCC, ratified in 2008 has set a new benchmark in terms of increased understanding of climate change impacts, of which several sector-ministerial and provincial Action Plans to Respond to Climate Change are a concrete outcome (MARD, 2011; MoET, 2009). However, the gap between approval of plans and implementation of these plans remains. Furthermore, the meso-level scores lowest in terms of actors.

The main challenge in terms of successful mainstreaming is located at this dimension, with sectoral fragmentation as its greatest barrier. Although a number of new institutions, such as the Steering Committee to Respond to Climate Change, has been inaugurated, the creation of a national multi-actor ‘platform for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction’ failed so far, mainly because of this fragmentation issue (Knaepen, 2013). MoNRE has been officially appointed to coordinate all actions related to climate change, but it does not have the mandate to coordinate the actors involved (Prime Minister, 2008). Furthermore, it should be understood that, besides the need to deal with the adverse impact of climate change, the NTP-RCC was created for donors to have a framework for dealing with climate change (Interview, August 2011. Climate Change Policy Advisor, UNDP). Based on the high amount of resources that entered Vietnam since then, this goal has been achieved. These resources are allocated to MoNRE, but as long as they stay within MoNRE, CCRs remains an ‘environment’ problem and not a ‘development’ issue, although this is required for successful mainstreaming as set out earlier. Moreover, meso-level engagement with NGOs is low and strong top-down tendencies hamper the scaling up of local experiences (UNDP. (2011). Climate Change Policy Advisor, UNDP, Interview). In addition, the rules dimension has the most advanced level of mainstreaming, thanks to progress in terms of poverty reduction in the framework of the MDGs as well as efforts in the area of ‘ownership’ working towards more aid effectiveness. Finally, judging from the resources perspective, a number of shortcomings are identified, like obscurity of a separate climate change financing scheme as well as yet clearly defined roles for the various ministerial players in terms of budgetary responsibilities (Thornton, 2010). Additionally, within the NTP-RCC, most funding is dedicated to research and

scenario-building, while it is recommendable to invest more in pilot-projects (Fortier, 2010; Interview, August 2011. Climate Change Component Manager, CARE).

**In sum, the national Government scores strongest points in terms of reducing poverty and in terms of aid effectiveness principles such as ‘ownership’. In recent years, the Government ratified a number of decisions and decrees for dealing with climate change thereby constituting a firm legislative frame. However, its greatest shortcoming lies in the actors dimension, mainly due to sectoral fragmentation and a lack of vertical cooperation (Table 4).**

Main achievement	Main barrier
Rules: poverty reduction / ownership / decisions and decree for climate change	Actors: sector-fragmentation / low engagement with other stakeholders (e.g. NGOs and micro-level)

**Table 4 - Main achievements and barriers at meso-level**

### **Mainstreaming on the Micro-Level**

The study of micro-level focuses on Can Tho City. Hence, the outcome of the level of mainstreaming at micro-level cannot be generalised for the entire micro-level in Vietnam. Overall, mainstreaming in Can Tho is considered as high and scores best among the three levels studied. Several factors explain this high achievement (Knaepen, 2013). First of all, in terms of discourse, Can Tho benefits from its status as a Class A city, being placed directly under the central Government, which gives way to more authority compared to cities places under the provincial authority (Waibel, 2010). Furthermore, fragmentation issues and turf disputes usually decrease at the micro-level, compared to the meso-level. Then, within the framework of the Asian Cities Climate

Change Resilience Network (ACCCRN) project, a Climate Change Coordination Office (CCCO) was established in Can Tho that focuses specifically on bringing actors from all sectors together to work towards a sector-wide climate change response. Moreover, there is obviously more engagement with NGOs and the highest authority in Can Tho has been very involved with the work of the CCCO (Bach & Vu, 2012). Although scaling up local experiences into development planning in Can Tho requires more efforts, the actors dimension scores highest (Challenge to Change. (2012). Senior Associate, e-mail correspondence). Then, fewer points go to the rules and the resources dimension. As the rules are concerned, Can Tho is industrialising rapidly and benefits from a number of foreign aid projects, through which poverty has been reduced in recent years, although poverty is still considered as the main reason for vulnerability (World Bank, 2010; CCCO. (2012). Head, CCCO, e-mail correspondence). Next, in terms of legislation, among several positive developments towards decentralisation, a grassroots ordinance has been approved and Can Tho's Action Plan to Respond to Climate Change, is just like the NTP-RCC at meso-level, considered as an important benchmark in terms of changed awareness (Can Tho People's Committee, 2010). However, climate change is not yet part of the local SEDP or SEDS and the CCCO does not have a formal mandate, which means that its existence would formally end when the ACCCRN project ends (Challenge to Change. (2012). Senior Associate, e-mail correspondence). Finally, there is no separate climate change budget in Can Tho, although the city receives funds within the framework of the NTP-RCC (CCCO. (2012). Head, CCCO, e-mail correspondence; World Bank, 2010). More work on the creation of a separate mechanism is required, just as at meso-level. Fortunately, Can Tho, the most important Mekong Delta City benefits from a high number of specific climate

change adaptation projects. The outcomes of these pilot-projects should be scaled up and should also be brought to other cities.

**In sum, Can Tho benefits from a high level of coordination and participation among various stakeholders such as local Government and NGOs and to a lesser extent among local people. Although coordination is generally higher at micro-level than at meso-level, Can Tho reaches a very high score thanks to the creation of a specialised CCCO. However, challenges remain: climate change should be mainstreamed into the city’s overall planning and sectoral plans to respond to climate change are not yet created. Finally, the main issue concerning resources is that there is not separate budget line for climate change projects dealing with risks (Table 5).**

Main achievement	Main barrier
<b>Actors:</b> Coordination among multi-stakeholders	<b>Rules:</b> No mainstreaming within socio-economic planning / no sector plans; <b>Resources:</b> No separate climate funding

**Table 5 - Main achievements and barriers at micro-level**

### **Synthesis and Discussion: Overcoming the Barriers to Mainstreaming through the Mainstreamed Donor Policy Dialogue**

Earlier in this paper, the indicators and their ranking system were briefly explained. The scope of this paper however does not allow for an exhaustive explanation of the ranking matrix that was developed for this study and can only offer the findings. Based on this matrix, mainstreaming was measured for each dimension and the total degree of mainstreaming for each respective level was calculated (Refer to Knaepen, 2013). Table

6 shows the outcome of this study.

Level	<i>Discourse</i>	<i>Actors</i>	<i>Rules</i>	<i>Resources</i>	TOTAL	Category
Macro	3.3	2.1	2.6	2.3	2.6	Medium
Meso	2.5	1.6	2.6	2	2.1	Low
Micro	2.8	3.2	2.5	2.5	2.8	High

Table 6 – Mainstreaming outcome per dimension and total outcome per level

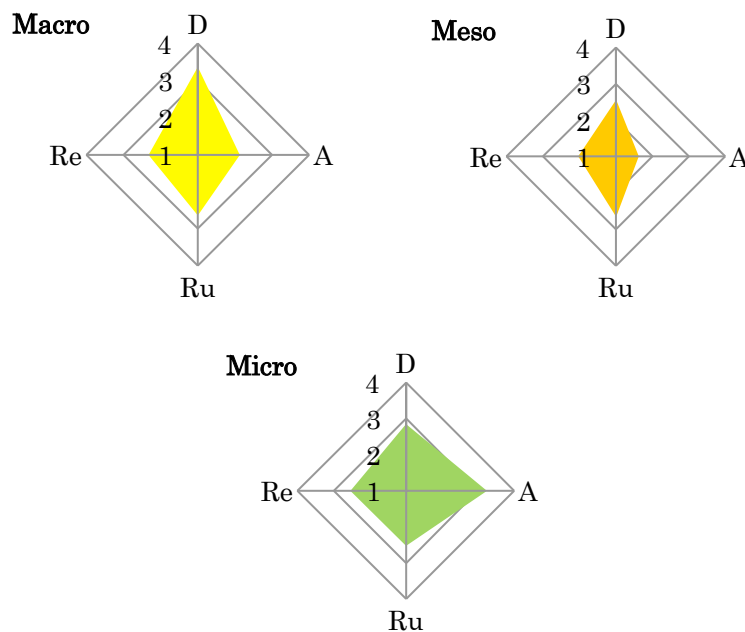


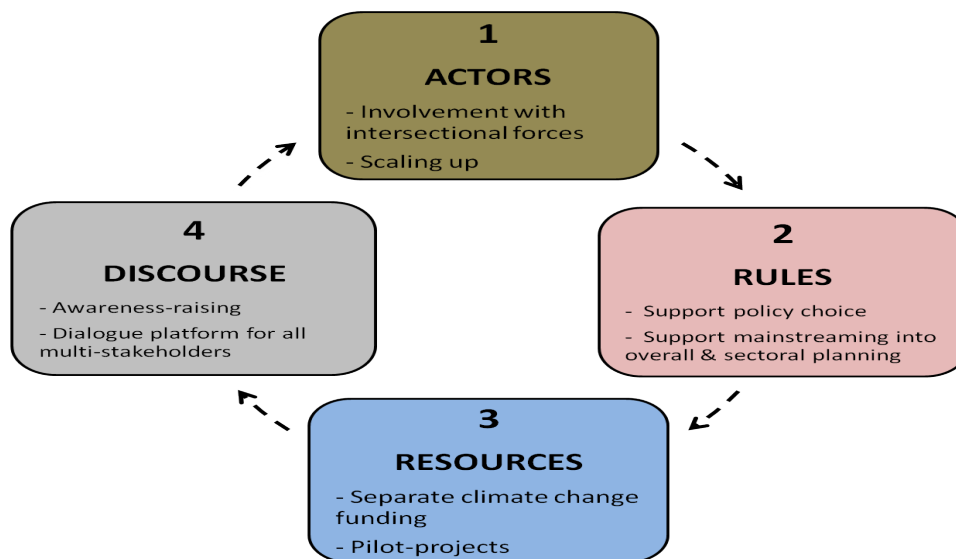
Figure 7 – Comparison between Mainstreaming on Three Levels

The three figures above (Figure 7) are visual depictions of the three outcomes per level. It is clear that mainstreaming still needs to overcome many barriers in order to become a common-sense practice. But how can barriers be overcome and moreover, how can the achievements be utilized? Answering this question requires the three levels of this study to be linked. It is mentioned earlier that donors are important advocates in favour of promoting climate change policies in developing countries. The findings at the macro-level show that the donor has most developed skills in terms of discourse, in terms of “framing the problem”, which puts the donor in the right position to take lead

in the dialogue process. Research has proven that the soft means of policy dialogue through which donors can influence policies is most effective (DANIDA, 2005; Ayers & Huq, 2009). Furthermore, since Vietnam has reached a mid-income country status, the focal point of aid is shifting from pure hard ware (e.g., infrastructure) to soft-ware oriented projects, such the encouragement of good governance processes through policy dialogue (Knaepen et al., 2013). This paper proposes that, in order to achieve a comprehensive approach, CCRs need to be included in the dialogue about development priorities between donor and recipient. In addition, the empirical study taught that mainstreaming is most successful at micro-level. How can donors push for change while learning from these experiences and integrating them into the dialogue tool?

The proposed dialogue tool is a harmonised effort of the findings above, the six stages of the policy process that indicate how donors can engage to exert influence at each stage (Morrissey, 2005) and the four steps of practical mainstreaming (Ayers & Huq, 2009). In addition, this tool is further adjusted to the specific situation, based on the findings of the Vietnam case study. This dialogue tool constitutes a recommended, ‘ideal’ model that, if applied properly, would lead to successful mainstreaming. In this model, each step of the mainstreamed policy dialogue converges with one of the four PAA dimensions, thereby highlighting the most important tasks per dimension, based on the most pressing barriers set out earlier (Figure 8).





**Figure 8 – Mainstreamed Donor Policy Dialogue on Climate Change Risks**

First of all, the main barrier identified at macro-level was a low engagement with other stakeholders such as NGOs. If donors want to create change in Vietnam, they should do this layer by layer as ‘disguised change agents’ since the Vietnamese political culture does not allow for direct involvement, or worse, direct criticism. Hence, in order to strengthen their position, they need to get involved with other stakeholders and build ‘coalitions’ (Knaepen et al., 2013). NGOs are for instance in a better position to bring knowledge about vulnerability to risks and local adaptation measures to policy-making level. Therefore, building coalitions with NGOs puts them in the position of ‘intersectional forces’ which leads to a stronger position for donors. Donors should also play a role in bringing the experiences of local adaptation to the level of socio-economic planning. Planning in Vietnam needs to be better adjusted to the characteristics of different regions and localities. Secondly, ‘ownership’ by meso-level as well as micro-level is crucial. Therefore, donors should support the policy choice. But at the same time, this support should promote full mainstreaming of climate change into

development. A number of donors have adjusted their activities within the framework of the NTP-RCC. But, since this is mostly a guidance framework, donors should provide full support by linking it further to concrete implementation tasks. Just mentioning 'climate change' in the plans is obviously not sufficient. At this point, only the first steps towards integrating CCRs into overall planning as well as the creation of sectoral plans have been made. Therefore, donors should further support the policy choice by linking this to concrete implementation projects and bringing these outcomes back to meso-level. Thirdly, as the resources are concerned, donors should demand a comprehensive scheme of climate change funding and a clearer role description for all Ministries involved. This would also increase the efficiency of the financial mechanism that has been developed so far through the SP-RCC. Additionally, pilot-projects are important. They can serve as 'lessons learned' and be important incentive mechanisms for the further promotion of the idea of mainstreaming. Fourthly, although the 2008 NTP-RCC can be considered as a benchmark in increased climate change awareness, the lack of understanding and awareness remains a clear barrier, as emphasised in the interviews. This barrier is often also part of the reason of other shortcomings at the other dimensions. For example, a lack of knowledge concerning the impact of climate change leads to less urgency to mainstream CCRs into the planning process on the rules dimension. As said above, donors are skilled in 'framing the issue' and hence they are in the right position to raise awareness, to explain the issue, to translate the science into practice, or in other words, to create a dialogue platform in which all stakeholders can participate. Furthermore, the findings have shown that mainstreaming is most developed at micro-level. One of the reasons for this good performance is the so-called Shared Learning Dialogue (SLD), which has been applied in Can Tho in the framework of the

ACCCRN (Bach & Vu, 2012; ACCCRN, 2011). The SLD aims at “creating a place for engaging multi-stakeholders across scales, communities and organisational and disciplines boundaries, for ensuring multi-directional information sharing and exchange. This would also contribute to transparency and partnership information.” The SLD is structured strategically as a three-step process: SLD1 raises awareness and explains about vulnerability; at SLD2 multi-stakeholders give feedback and selects pilot-projects; the draft of the city adaptation action plans is finalised at SLD3, based on comments from multi-stakeholders and these drafts are submitted to higher instances. This three-step process has been applied in Can Tho and is considered as one of the most innovative tools of the resilience planning process. An evaluation study says that “engaging local people in specific activities and enabling them to work with national and international experts is the most effective way to build their capacity and to ensure sustainability of the programme” (Bach & Vu, 2012). Learning from this, the basic parameters of SLD (multi-stakeholder engagement, information sharing, and partnership formation) that have proven effective should be transferred to meso-level. This would create an ideal model of mainstreaming at discourse level and should be scaled up to meso-level.

## **Conclusion**

Mainstreaming CCRs into development requires the complete governance architecture, from donor to local level, to be involved. Clearly, the dynamics between all stakeholders are becoming increasingly complex with an ever increasing multitude of actors. In order to deal with this complex research problem in an understandable, yet

all-inclusive manner, a division was made between three levels of actors: the macro-level (JICA in this case), the meso-level (Vietnamese government), and the micro-level (Can Tho City). Furthermore, because of these new dynamics, new roles, new institutions and policies required for the practice of mainstreaming, 'mainstreaming' was considered as a 'new policy arrangement'. Analysing this policy arrangement was then conducted through the four dimensions of the Policy Arrangements Approach (PAA): discourse, actors, rules and resources. Based on a matrix with indicators developed for each of the four dimensions, the degree of mainstreaming on each of the three levels and the shortcomings and challenges of each level in the context of mainstreaming were discussed. The paper also showed that mainstreaming was most developed at micro-level and least at meso-level, where institutional fragmentation turned out to be an important barrier. Building further on these findings, the so-called 'mainstreamed donor policy dialogue' was recommended, which could be used by donors to overcome barriers to ensure the required institutional, political and financial changes necessary for mainstreaming. This could be done for instance through scaling-up micro-level experiences. By relying on achievements and overcoming the most important barriers, this ideal model can lead to effective mainstreaming and in an ultimate stage, might even have spill-over effects to other fields and hence create a shift from government to governance. This shift would lead to 'political modernisation' and alter relationships between state, market and civil society, much required for effective mainstreaming. However, at this point, government remains much more important than governance, although *small* stories were identified such as in the case of Can Tho. Yet, the study has revealed that it is not possible to hold that 'everything remains the same'. The structures of the problem of climate change risk policy have become more complex

and with that uncertainty rises. Policy networks stretch over time and space beyond nation state borders and donors can play an influential role. And they should. This paper hoped to contribute to finding a solution to the complex issue of climate change, crossing over a multitude of scales.

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