

Climate change: Ade on the frontline

Climate refugees in Dhaka, Bangladesh

Video summary	Before watching	While watching
Ade Adepitan meets climate refugees in Bangladesh, who have been forced by rising sea levels to seek a new life in their capital city of Dhaka. With a quarter of Bangladesh lying less than seven feet above sea level, climate change is threatening to inundate much of the country. Many people in the country's low-lying rural areas are running out of options, so are migrating to the city. The population of Dhaka has doubled in the last 20 years from 10 to 20 million people. Download/print a transcript of the video.	You might want to recap what students know and think about Bangladesh. Ask them to create a mind-map on what they already know. They could also add to this during the film. Locate Bangladesh on a map, ask students to describe the location and consider what type of weather/climate the country has. You could create a poll and ask students to give three words that come to mind when thinking of Bangladesh and/or Dhaka and discuss what the class consensus indicates. This would help assess prior knowledge and misconceptions and also provide a talking point to return to after watching the film. Introduce key terms such as: Vulnerable: the likelihood of being harmed by a natural or man-made hazard. Migration: the movement from one place to another. This can be temporary, permanent or seasonal. Climate refugee: a person who has had to move because the place they live in has been severely affected by climate change. Sanitation: the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and faeces as well as the provision of clean drinking water.	You may wish to stop at relevant points during this short film to pose questions and check understanding, or wait until the end. Useful questions might include: • Why are people migrating to the city? • What is the 'soundtrack of Dhaka'? • How many people migrate here each day? (More than 1000) • How much has the population grown by in the last 20 years? (Doubled to 20 million) • What kind of a place is this? You could stop the film at various points and ask students to describe what they can see or you might use some screen grabs together for a later activity to build a sense of place. • What would it feel like to live here?
After watching		
Zoom into the maps you used to locate Bangladesh, and the capital city of Dhaka and use these to discuss the problems of flooding and why this is so bad here. As well as being a low-lying country, most of the land forms a delta from three main rivers - the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna - which seasonally flood. Heavy monsoon rains and meltwater from the Himalayas contribute to seasonal flooding and other factors such as deforestation also play a part. In the past, these flood events have created fertile floodplains for agriculture but climate change means that the rate and increase of flooding now threatens people's daily lives. Discuss the film afterwards and develop the sense of place, the bustling urbanisation and what it might feel like to live there. You might use a sound-track of the city over some screen grabs showing different views of the streets and buildings and the people living there to develop this and describe what can be seen and heard. You could ask students how this compared with their original ideas.		

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After watching (continued)

You could explore the phrase 'climate refugee' and ask students to provide a clear explanation for this term. You could then discuss and identify the push and pull factors of migration and the environmental factors that have caused people to make this journey.

Students could make a list of the 'pull' factors towards Dhaka such as the thought of a better life, jobs and increased security; and the 'push' factors taking them away from the low-lying rural areas such as the loss of their homes and livelihoods, crop failure, and poverty.

You could watch the film again and ask students to gather numerical statistics that help explain the scale of the problem. If more than a 1000 people are arriving each day and the population has doubled in the last twenty years what might the future hold? Can students suggest mitigation and adaptation strategies that could help?

This film supports the KS3 geography curriculum by investigating our changing climate and how human and physical processes interact to influence and change landscapes and environments.

At KS4, the film supports understanding about the impacts of rapid climate change on environments and people's lives. The film develops understanding about the economic, social and environmental consequences of climatic hazards (AQA) for example and changes caused to the natural environment. It also raises questions about land use and water scarcity.

This clip could be used to support the delivery of geography to KS3 and KS4 students. Specifically, this topic appears in OCR, Edexcel, AQA, WJEC KS4/GCSE in England and Wales, CCEA GCSE in Northern Ireland and SQA National 4/5 in Scotland.

Where next?

Compare this location to another that is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change - for example, Tuvalu in Oceania.

Tuvalu is a series of islands, some of which are coral atolls. The residents of Tuvalu experience water bubbling up through the coral when there is a high tide. The islands are low-lying and therefore rising sea levels are a real threat to the lives of the Tuvaluan people.

Links

Rivers and flooding in Bangladesh:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zgycwmn/revision/4>

Climate change:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zx234j6/revision/1>