



## DAMN WEATHER!

<b>Time</b>	45–60 minutes
<b>Level</b>	pre-intermediate
<b>Skills</b>	reading, speaking
<b>Knowledge goal</b>	to introduce the impact of climate change on developing countries through the example of Bangladesh
<b>Materials</b>	Ss' worksheets: p. S1 – Lead-in – weather situations p. S2 – Main activity – Ex. 1, 2, 3 (one per student) p. S3 – Follow-up – Sheet A + B

### 1 Lead-in

- As a class, talk about the weather in your country. Ask Ss:  
*What is the weather like in this country? What general things would you tell a foreigner about the weather in this country?*
- Tell Ss you want to know how the weather affects their lives. First, dictate the following sentence beginnings and then ask them to finish them. You can give an example:  
*When it is raining, I don't go for walks/ I feel down/ I like watching people without umbrellas etc.*  
When it is raining, ...  
When it is 35 degrees outside, ...  
When it is very windy, ...  
When there is one metre of snow, ...  
When there's fog, ...
- Listen to their ideas.

### Variation

Split Ss into several groups and distribute two or three weather situations per group (p. S1). In their groups Ss should firstly think how to present the particular weather just by performing a sketch not shorter than 10 seconds. Tell them that after they have prepared it, the group will show their sketches to the other Ss who will guess what weather they are depicting.

### 2 Main activity

- Tell your Ss that the topic of today's lesson is Bangladesh and the impact of the weather on it. Firstly, ask Ss what they know about Bangladesh. If possible, bring a map. You can check their knowledge by reading the following information aloud and asking them if they are true or false.
  - Bangladesh is in Africa.* FALSE (it's in Asia)
  - There are only three rivers in Bangladesh.* FALSE (There are 230 rivers)
  - Bangladesh is the size of Greece.* TRUE

- Bangladesh is one of the most populated countries per square km in the world.* TRUE. There are 150 million people per approx. 140,000 square km – approx. 1000 people per square km. In the European Union, there are about approx. 110 people per square km.
- About half of the population lives in extreme poverty, i.e. on less than 1 dollar per day.* TRUE
- Distribute Ex. 1 with new vocabulary to each student. They can work in pairs.
- Check it as a class.
- Ss will read a story of a woman from Bangladesh (Ex. 2). First, ask them to scan the text and find how often this woman (Mazeda) sees one of her children these days. Correct answer is: She sees her daughter once a year. Then ask Ss to read it and complete the gaps below (Ex. 3).
- Check Ss' answers and understanding. Ask further questions:

*What are some of the greatest worries of the Bangladeshi people? What makes their lives so difficult?*

*Are there any floods in your country? If so, how are they different from floods in Bangladesh?*

### 3 Follow-up

- Tell Ss they will learn more about some of the causes of weather problems in Bangladesh and also about future predictions.
- Ask Ss to form pairs and give them Sheet A and Sheet B from p. S3. Tell them they have got the same text but with different gaps. Each student's task is to make questions and find out the missing information from their partner. Ss should not show their sheets to each other. You can do the first question together as an example. You could also ask Ss to write down their four questions and then check them together.
- After they have completed all the gaps, teacher reads the whole text aloud.

- Check understanding:

*Are floods in Bangladesh less or more frequent than before?*

*What is contributing to the changes?*

*What does the future hold for Bangladesh?*

- At the end, ask Ss the following questions. As the questions are really demanding and finding answers requires a lot of courage and imagination, give Ss some thinking time first (e.g. 5 minutes). Make sure Ss understand there are no right or wrong answers – they can come up with whatever they want. Do not forget to mention that there is not much being done in this regard now and that their suggestions might be actually recommended to the Bangladesh government, to their people, to your country's government or to the United Nations. Then talk about it as a class.

*What do you think Bangladesh, as one of the poorest countries in the world, can or should do about these predictions?*

*Is there anything we can do about it?*

## KEY

### Ex. 1

1D, 2A, 3F, 4B, 5G, 6E, 7C

### Ex. 3 – Possible answers:

A. river erosion, floods

B. wheat, rice and jute but now they grow nothing/don't grow anything/cannot grow anything.

C. they are poor/they have no income/they don't have enough to eat.

### Ex. 4

River erosion and flooding are part of everyday life in many areas of Bangladesh. Floods are nothing new in this country but in the past 20 years they have been more frequent and much worse. For example, in 1988 and 1998 more than two-thirds of the country were under water. During the 2004 floods, 30 million people became homeless.

"Before, my father could predict how the river would change course over the years. But now it happens too fast," Mazedo says. People in villages know that their weather patterns are changing and it causes problems.

A lot of scientists believe that the floods will be more frequent in the future because of the climate changes. Bangladesh will be one of the countries most seriously affected by climate change. There will be more rain, and also more water coming from melting Himalayan snow to the rivers in Bangladesh. Millions of people will have their homes permanently under water and will have to migrate to find food, water and new shelters.

## 4 Idea for homework

**Climate changes.** Ss look up on the internet and make a list of:

- three alleged causes of the climate changes
- three measures that are being taken on national or global levels.

Do not forget to tell Ss that there is a great number of theories of climate changes and it is only up to them which ones they put on their lists. Explain to them that "measures" mean what is being done to counter some of the causes claimed – e.g. global agreements, national campaigns, national laws. Ss discuss their findings at the beginning of the following lesson.

### Recommended sources:

BBC – <http://www.bbc.co.uk/climate/>

Guardian – <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/climatechange>





Very hot weather,  
about 40 degrees

Chilly

Very windy



Foggy

Tropical storm

Sunshower  
with a rainbow

Heavy snow

Hail storm

Winter rain

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**1 Match the words with their explanations**

1	to erode	A	to change something from a solid into a liquid (e.g. ice into liquid water)
2	to melt	B	a safe place where you go when your life is in danger, e.g. because of the weather
3	flood	C	to run away from something
4	shelter	D	to wash away the top layer of soil. This is a serious problem for people who want to grow crops
5	riverbank	E	to damage something so that it cannot be repaired and used any more
6	to destroy	F	a natural disaster, when a river receives a lot of extra water
7	to escape	G	the earth on each side of river

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**2 Mazeda's story**

Mazeda Begum, 35, lived all her life in Balashighat, a village in northern Bangladesh. They grew wheat, rice and jute. In the 1990s, the river Tista began to erode the land which she lived on. She and her husband and three children had to leave their house three times, each time building a new shelter further from the river.

In 2000, the water destroyed everything the family had. They escaped by boat. Since that time, they have lived on a seven-metre high, five-metre wide embankment in a house built from palm leaves. There are 200 other families who also lost their homes because of the river erosion. As they cannot grow anything, they haven't got any income. Mazeda decided to send her nine-year-old daughter to work as a servant to a city hundreds of miles away.

This was five years ago. Mazeda sees her daughter only once a year. She says that now her daughter gets enough to eat and that she "did the right thing for her".

**3 Complete the gaps**

A. Mazeda's family left the places where they lived because \_\_\_\_\_

B. Before, Mazeda's family were growing \_\_\_\_\_ but now they \_\_\_\_\_

C. One of Mazeda's children works in a city as a servant because \_\_\_\_\_

**4 Bangladesh – sheet A**

\_\_\_\_\_ (What?) are part of everyday life in many areas of Bangladesh. Floods are nothing new in this country but in the past 20 years they have been more frequent and much worse. For example, in \_\_\_\_\_ (When?) more than two-thirds of the country were under water. During the 2004 floods, 30 million people became homeless.

"Before, my father could predict how the river would change course over the years. But now it happens \_\_\_\_\_ (How?)" Mazeda says. People in villages know that their weather patterns are changing and it causes problems.

A lot of scientists believe that the floods will be more frequent in the future because of \_\_\_\_\_ (Why?). Bangladesh will be one of the countries most seriously affected by climate change. There will be more rain, and also more water coming from melting Himalayan snow to the rivers in Bangladesh. Millions of people will have their homes permanently under water and will have to migrate to find food, water and new shelters.

**4 Bangladesh – sheet B**

River erosion and flooding are part of everyday life in \_\_\_\_\_ (Where?). Floods are nothing new in this country but in the past 20 years they have been more frequent and much worse. For example, in 1988 and 1998 more than two-thirds of the country were under water. During the 2004 floods, \_\_\_\_\_ (How many?) people became homeless.

"Before, my father could predict how the river would change course over the years. But now it happens too fast," Mazeda says. People in villages know that their weather patterns are changing and it causes \_\_\_\_\_ (What?).

A lot of scientists believe that the floods will be more frequent in the future because of the climate changes. Bangladesh will be one of the countries most seriously affected by climate change. There will be more rain, and also more water coming from melting Himalayan snow to \_\_\_\_\_ (Where?). Millions of people will have their homes permanently under water and will have to migrate to find food, water and new shelters.

