

Agricultural Extension in South Asia

Strengthening Climate Adaptation and Resilience

Platform: [UNCC Learn](#)

Duration: Self-paced

Certification: Yes, it is free

Collaborators: UNITAR, GIZ, and the SAR project



Climate change is no longer a distant issue; it's something we face every day, especially in the agricultural sector. From unpredictable rainfall to recurring droughts and shifting crop cycles, its effects are increasingly disrupting food production systems and rural livelihoods. For researchers, planners, and extension professionals, this unfolding crisis has created an urgent need to better understand climate risks and support communities in preparing and responding effectively.

Strengthening Climate Adaptation and Resilience

Overview Course Certificate



In this context, I enrolled in the course “[Strengthening Climate Adaptation and Resilience](#)” offered by the [United Nations Institute for Training and Research \(UNITAR\)](#) through the UNCC Learn platform. The course stood out for its focus on adaptation planning, climate finance, and inclusive approaches—areas that directly align with my academic and research interests. It is a free, self-paced programme developed under the [SAR \(Strengthening Climate Adaptation and Resilience\) project](#), supported by [GIZ](#), and remains open to learners worldwide. The aim is to build the capacities of professionals, civil servants, and practitioners working in the field of climate change and development.

The course offered a thoughtful and well-structured journey through three major themes: understanding climate risks and adaptation, integrating adaptation into planning and budgeting, and exploring ways to finance climate action. It is particularly relevant for those working in climate-vulnerable regions across South Asia, including civil servants, NGO workers, and researchers.

The course is modular, self-paced, and accessible to professionals with varying levels of prior knowledge on climate policy. It comprises three well-organized modules:



Module 1: Climate Change Adaptation: The Basics – This module introduces fundamental concepts such as climate risk, vulnerability, and adaptation strategies. It also emphasizes the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change and provides an overview of key policy frameworks, including the UNFCCC, National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Module 2: Mainstreaming Adaptation into Planning and Budgeting – The second module discusses how adaptation can be effectively integrated into public governance systems. It explores vertical and horizontal coordination between institutions, the principles of locally led adaptation, and introduces tools such as [Climate Budget Tagging \(CBT\)](#) for tracking adaptation-related expenditures.

Module 3: Financing Climate Change Adaptation – The final module highlights the critical role of finance in building resilience. It explains the current climate finance landscape, introduces mechanisms such as blended finance and thematic bonds, and discusses strategies to mobilize both public and private investments in climate adaptation.

Each module includes short video lectures (some linked via YouTube), reading materials, practice questions, and reflection prompts that help learners connect concepts with real-world scenarios. The exercises are designed to be application-oriented—for example, matching financing tools with adaptation plans or identifying gaps in planning systems. Final quizzes and real-life case studies provide regional relevance, while the conceptual frameworks have global applicability.

Certification is awarded upon scoring a minimum of 70% in the final quizzes of each module, with up to three attempts allowed.

A key strength of the course is its emphasis on inclusivity. It encourages learners to recognize how climate impacts are not evenly distributed, highlighting the specific vulnerabilities faced by women, marginalized groups, and local communities.

Although the course is primarily intended for policymakers and institutional planners, many of its concepts are relevant to practitioners working at the grassroots level. It reinforces key tools such as the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Climate Budget Tagging (CBT), and various

integration strategies that align local actions with national climate priorities. It also covers financial mechanisms like blended finance, thematic bonds, results-based climate financing, and debt-for-nature swaps, offering insights into resource mobilization for adaptation. These insights can help extension professionals to:

- Facilitate awareness and capacity-building activities on locally appropriate adaptation practices
- Encourage inclusive planning by engaging women and marginalised groups
- Support local institutions in identifying adaptation needs that align with policy priorities
- Communicate field-level challenges and experiences to inform district or block-level planning processes

This course offers a valuable opportunity to strengthen one's understanding of climate adaptation from both a policy and practice perspective. Its crisp and flexible content delivery is well-suited for learners, while the reflection questions and quizzes support critical thinking and real-world application. With its practical approach, accessible format, and focus on inclusion, the course serves as a strong resource for professionals working at the intersection of climate, development, and community engagement.

Looking back, the course helped me better understand how national adaptation frameworks relate to the realities faced by rural communities. It offered clarity on how planning and budgeting tools influence the way adaptation priorities are set and supported. This has directly informed how I now approach my research on drought adaptation, especially in examining how extension systems engage with locally led responses.

It is highly recommended for extension professionals, researchers, development practitioners, and students seeking to build a grounded and holistic view of climate resilience in agriculture and beyond.



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