WHITE PAPER

Urban Resilience and Flood Management in Dhaka

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ABSTRACT

This white paper reviews why Dhaka floods after heavy rain and proposes an integrated plan for drainage, wetlands, building rules and city governance to make the capital more resilient to a changing climate.

KEYWORDS

urban resilience, waterlogging, Dhaka, drainage, climate adaptation

FULL TEXT

Waterlogging after monsoon rain now disrupts daily life across Dhaka, damaging homes and businesses and cutting off roads for hours or days. More intense rainfall linked to climate change will make the problem worse without decisive action.

The causes are well known: canals and wetlands have been filled or encroached, drainage responsibilities are split across several agencies, and new construction often ignores natural water flows.

Drawing on experience from other delta cities, this paper proposes restoring key canals and retention ponds, giving one authority clear responsibility for drainage, enforcing building rules in flood-prone zones and investing in early warning for residents.

A resilient Dhaka is achievable, but it requires treating water as part of city planning rather than as an emergency that is handled only after the streets flood.

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