

# **FIELD VISIT WITH YOUTH ICCCAD FELLOWS**

**DATE: 10TH TO 14TH OF SEPTEMBER, 2023**

**AREA COVERED: MONGLA & PAIKGACHA, KHULNA**

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction:</b> .....	3
<b>Day 1: A Glimpse into Climate Projects</b> .....	4
<b>Explore Climate Vulnerability and Community Solutions and Adaptation</b> .....	4
<b>Learning from Locally Led Adaptation (LLA) practice in development project</b> .....	5
<b>Visit a historical place “Shat Gumbaj Mosque”</b> .....	6
<b>Day 2: Engaging with Communities</b> .....	7
<b>Interaction with Local Community</b> .....	7
<b>Visit the Eco-system of Mangrove</b> .....	8
<b>Day 3: Exploring Vulnerability and Resilience practice in Paikgacha</b> .....	9
<b>Community Visit</b> .....	9
<b>Reflection Workshop</b> .....	9
<b>Takeaways</b> .....	10
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	10

## Introduction

ICCCAD acknowledges youth contribution to climate action, it believes in youth empowerment through knowledge and capacity building. Under youth leadership program, ICCCAD has a youth fellowship programme with 20 youths across the country. As a capacity building process of 20 youth fellows, the programme organized a series of capacity-building initiatives like residential workshop, field visit & online training courses.

A residential workshop had been held at early august this year. After the intensive and insightful three-day residential training sessions on Climate Change, a field visit was mandatory, where fellows could get the practical experiences of academic knowledge they have learned through the residential workshop.

So, the group of 20 passionate ICCCAD Youth Fellows with the ICCCAD colleagues started the journey from the 10th to the 14th of September 2023. The field visit led them to the climate-vulnerable regions of Khulna, Mongla, and Paikgacha in Bangladesh. The primary aim of this field visit was to equip the ICCCAD Youth Fellows, with a firsthand understanding of climate change challenges and solutions at the grassroots level. This report summarizes the essence of the transformative experience during this journey to some of the vulnerable areas due to climate change and meeting people knowing their adaptation measures through interacting with them.

## Day 1: A Glimpse into Climate Projects

The first day of the field visit was designed to have an overview of Mongla. Mongla is one of the most climate-vulnerable Upazilla of Bangladesh. Mongla municipality has also some good practices of adaptation. So, the first day of field visit was aimed at exploring the climate vulnerability and solutions in the locality

### 1.1 Explore Climate Vulnerability and Community Solutions and Adaptation

The field visit team had a great privilege to have a facilitator who has more than 03 years of experience working in Mongla. So, at the very beginning of the field visit, the facilitator explained the climate vulnerabilities of this area. Salinity, tidal Surge, frequent natural disaster, water crisis are the remarkable climate vulnerabilities for this area. The team also learned climate adaptation techniques like building embankments for tidal surges, advanced early warning systems in response to frequent natural disasters, community base rainwater harvesting systems to supply pure drinking water to solve severe water crisis. The fellows visited two rain water harvesting system, implemented by BRAC and World Vision.

Climate Vulnerability at Mongla	Impact on community	Adaptation Techniques
Salinity, Tidal Surge, Frequent natural disaster	Reduce agricultural production, Drinking water crisis, Fragile infrasture	Saline-tolerant seeds, sustainable embankment, rainwater harvesting system

Table 01: Highlights of learning from community visit



## 1.2 LEARNING FROM LOCALLY LED ADAPTATION (LLA) PRACTICE IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Fellows got the opportunity to explore a project developed in locally led adaptation theme, in a collaboration with ICCCAD, BRAC and SPARC. The team visited BRAC project office at Mongla and met colleagues dedicated to building climate-resilient and migrant-friendly towns. Colleagues from BRAC project office at Mongla, provided them with invaluable insights into their work and the challenges they face.

Md. Mamun, Manager, BRAC, and Md. Tarek, Deputy Manager, BRAC gave an overview of project to the visiting team

### 1.2.1 HIGHLIGHTS FROM SPEAKER, MR. MD. MAMUN

The ultimate goal of this project is to make a climate-friendly town for migrant people through locally led adaptation. Mainly, climate vulnerable cities are selected primarily for the project named Mongla, Patuakhali, Bhola, and Kuakata. There are 3 main activities for each town.

- Local Climate Adaptation Plan: 20 communities would perform from their end
- Ward Climate Adaptation Plan: 9 wards would perform
- Town Climate Adaptation Plan: 1 town would cover

The project work for community people capacity building on developing climate resilience plan and then they develop their own plan to adaptation plan.

### 1.2.2 HIGHLIGHTS FROM SPEAKER, MR. TAREK

Md. Tarek mainly discussed about the opportunity of climate migrants in Mongla. Some of his highlights are-

- There are about 80-85% people are migrant from different part of the countries over many years.
- There is opportunity of Economic processing zone, the port has been used properly nowadays as the travel time to Dhaka become lesser.
- The town is very welcoming for people

## Q&A Session about LLA programme

Q: Is there any occupational change for the migrant people?

A: Definitely. Most of the people were farmer but after migration they choose to do day labour

Q: Does community capacity building session include all genders?

A: At community level, the team for capacity building is selected by the specific community. But people mostly try to maintain the gender balance. We try to ensure diverse participation.

Q: What are the technical ways for selecting communities?

A: We follow the instructions of IPCC to perform CCVA (Climate change vulnerability assessment)

Q: Do you face any type of social attack?

A: Not really. As we work for them and by their participation, there is no place for discrimination. We actually form a team of CAC (Community Adaptation Committee) members from the community they are implementing the project from the front.

## HISTORICAL PLACE- SHAT GUMBOJ MOSQUE VISIT

First day visit was concluded with a visit to the historic “Shat Gombuj Mosque”, a remarkable architectural feat in the region. Fellows have also got a brief idea about climate change and it’s impact on infrastructure on the southern region of Bangladesh.

A debrief session and the planning for the next day took place coming back to the hotel





## SOME OF THE INTERVIEWS DURING FIELD VISIT

### Interview 01

Salma Begum (35) mentioned that between March to June, the water levels in our ponds are decreased, and it became unsuitable for use or drinking. The water level of the Pashur River also decreases, and the water's salinity has increased. They have to purchase usable water from different places, sometimes traveling so far to get it. During monsoons, they have easy access to fresh water, but they have to leave their homes due to floods. Still, they survive by adopting different methods to earn their livelihoods. They reserve the rainwater in small containers at home and use it little by little during the dry season for a long time. Making water usable by using a local filter system. They help each other with passing water

### Interview 02

Rabeya Khatun's sister Reshma Akhtar (Student, 17) said that she faced health and sanitation problems during the disaster. At that time, the necessary medical kits or medicines were not available in the shelter

### Interview 03

Rabeya Khatun said, "We were also a happy family when we lived in Bagerhat. My father (Tariqul Islam - age 70) was a farmer. But once we have faced substantial losses and decreased land productivity due to salinity intrusions. Then my father migrated to Mongla city for better livelihoods. We started to settle here on governmental land."

## 2.2. VISIT THE ECO-SYSTEM OF MANGROVE

In the second half of the day, the group set sail to the Sundarbans, particularly Karamjal, witnessing the biodiversity and fragile ecosystem of this UNESCO World Heritage site. The team had the opportunity to walk through the Sundarbans and learn about the ecosystem & species of there. From the visit, they could learn, how an ecosystem protected a region in past days from super cyclones like Sidr and Aila





## DAY 3: EXPLORING VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE PRACTICE IN PAIKGACHHA

On our third day of the field visit to Paikgachha, the team set out to discover more about this ancient and renowned upazila in the Khulna district of Bangladesh. Paikgachha is another most vulnerable area due to climate change. Fellows got the ideas from adaptation and mal adaptation practices from the locality.

### 3.1 COMMUNITY VISIT

**3.1.1. Learning on adaptation:** Fellows got the idea about some good practices on locally led adaptation like, saline tolerant rice and vegetable cultivation, cyclone shelter cum school for emergency shelter during cyclone, rainwater harvesting and water treatment plant to minimize water crisis due to salinity.

**3.1.2. Learning on mal-adaptation:** Learning about mal-adaptation practice is equally important as adaptation practice. During this visit, the fellows had the opportunity to witness the shrimp hatchery, a crucial component of the local economy but at the same time, it is one of the prominent examples of mal-adaptation. The fellows had also learned why shrimp cultivation is a maladaptation.

### 3.2 REFLECTION WORKSHOP

A learning-sharing session among the Fellows provided an opportunity to reflect on the experiences and the knowledge gained throughout the field visit. All the ICCCAD youth fellows falls under several groups and prepared their points on they have learnt during the three-day field visit and presented that.



The field visit deepened our comprehension of issues related to migration, livelihoods, housing, and education, all intrinsically intertwined with the pervasive impacts of climate change in this coastal town

-Fahim Hossain , Youth Fellow



“Drinking water crisis is also severe in Hill tracks, But the rain water harvesting and treatment techniques I have learned from this field visit, I could replicate these ideas to my community”

- Sapla Ruram, Youth Fellow



## TAKEAWAYS/ACHIEVEMENTS

The field visit proved to be a transformational experience for the ICCCAD Youth Fellows, leaving us with profound insights and takeaways:

i. **Mobilization for Climate Action:** Fellows could identify climate-related challenges and potential solutions within local communities that will motivate them in future climate action considering the situation of locality.

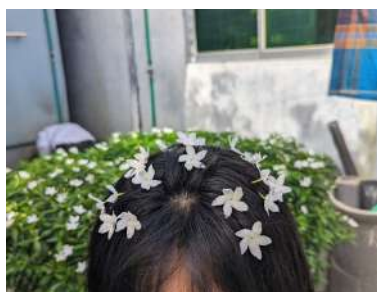
ii. **Research and Data Collection Skills:** Fellows got valuable skills in conducting field studies, and equipping them with standardized procedures and methodologies for collecting essential data. That skill will contribute to showcase climate vulnerability from root to international level through powerful writing

iii. **Local Best Practices:** Fellows had the privilege of learning from local communities' best practices in climate change adaptation and mitigation, offering us real-world solutions to pressing challenges. They could also replicate the good practices in their own community

iv. **Climate Realities:** Witnessing the climate change impacts and devastation in some of the most vulnerable areas was an eye-opener, reinforcing the urgency of our mission.

## CONCLUSION

After 03 days of field visit in most climate vulnerable area in Mongla and paikgacha, youth fellows got a clear idea on climate change impact and vulnerability of community people of south western coastal area of Bangladesh. We believe, this learning and practical experience will help them to raise their voice for climate justice. The learning will inspire them to fight for climate justice of those people to whom they got interaction with these 03 days of field visit.



## ANNEX: PARTICIPANT LIST

Sl	Name	Designation	Institution
1	Annas Makki	Fellow	ICCCAD
2	Jumana Akhter	Fellow	ICCCAD
3	Md Al-mamun Rakib	Fellow	ICCCAD
4	Md Fahim Hossain	Fellow	ICCCAD
5	Md Sadrul Islam Sourov	Fellow	ICCCAD
6	Md. Rakibul Islam	Fellow	ICCCAD
7	Md. Saiful Islam	Fellow	ICCCAD
8	Md.Fizul Islam	Fellow	ICCCAD
9	Mina Akter	Fellow	ICCCAD
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12	S M Saifullah Mahmud	Fellow	ICCCAD
13	Sadia Afrin	Fellow	ICCCAD
14	Shapla Swarna Ruram	Fellow	ICCCAD
15	Shimi Chak	Fellow	ICCCAD
16	Shirsha Songshoptak	Fellow	ICCCAD
17	Triratan Chakma	Fellow	ICCCAD
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19	Ashraf Ahamed	Manager - M&E	ICCCAD
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