

Youth Climate Dialogue



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**Place: Six Season Hotel, Gulshan 2, Dhaka,
Bangladesh**

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1.Introduction:

The climate crisis, with its disproportionately severe impacts on vulnerable frontline communities, poses an unprecedented threat to fundamental human rights such as the right to life, access to food and water, equal protection, and a clean and healthy environment. This crisis jeopardizes the well-being of both present and future generations. Despite some progress in recent years, current commitments and actions are insufficient to address the urgency of the climate emergency. We are dangerously veering off course from achieving the long-term goals outlined in the Paris Agreement.

In response to this existential threat, youth worldwide, including those in Bangladesh, have come together to amplify their voices and perspectives through the COP28 for Climate Justice. COP28 stands as a historic moment, and the Global Youth is delivering a landmark call to action, urging world leaders to rise to the challenge. As the last generation with the ability to take decisive action, it is our responsibility to keep global warming within the 1.5°C limit and maintain a safe and just operating space for the planet's current and future inhabitants.

These Youth Demands will be presenting at COP28 result from an extensive and inclusive process, incorporating the voices of youth including participants in ICCCAD's Youth Fellowship and Youth Innovation fund. These demands transcend a mere list of action points; they serve as a potent advocacy tool, a source of inspiration, and a resounding call to action. We extend an invitation to policymakers, international organizations, civil society, and other stakeholders to participate in the Youth Climate Dialogue before COP28 to engage with these crucial policy demands.

2.About the Programme:

The Youth Climate Dialogue held on 27th Nov 23 to highlight the significant contributions and journeys of ICCCAD youth fellows and to present condensed demands and youth statements to be showcased at COP28. The Dialogue was Chaired by prof Mizan R Khan, Deputy Director of International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD). Joyee Chakma, Youth Representative emceed the session.

3.Program Inauguration by Prof Mizan R Khan

Prof Mizan R Khan started the session expressing the gratitude towards late Dr. Saleemul Huq to promote youth activism is a constant mission of ICCCAD.

We are falling, utterly falling at the youth activism. We need to be more active to perpetuate sustainability

In his speech, he expressed his concern on global carbon emission and the contribution of different countries for carbon emission. He said that we have been emitting greenhouse gas for about 22 giga tones (gt) since 1992 which has now become >60 gt. He also mentioned that, Collectively, the G20 countries emit more than 80% GHGs and thus the role of these countries is the most significant. On the other hand, the Least Developed Countries contribute to 1% of CO₂.

He highlighted the importance of youth to take lead of climate initiatives. He address the climate issue in Bangladesh as Climate Diplomacy and mentioned that, climate diplomacy is a quite traditional diplomacy in Bangladesh and all diplomacy is practiced by older people. He also suggested youth generation to updated about contemporary issues on the climate change area. He outlined the potentiality of youth to contribute in climate change and development for their networking skill, technological knowledge and energy to collaborate and united.



4. Overview of ICCCAD Youth Fellowship Programme by Md Tariqul Hasan:

Md Tariqul Hasan Rifat, the Programme Coordination of youth at ICCCAD, presented a brief of the Youth's activities and the journey of the of the 1st cohort of ICCCAD Youth Fellows. Right before that, all the participants stood up for 1 minute silence for the sudden death of the former Director of ICCCAD, Late Professor Dr. Saleemul Huq, OBE.

Rifat also described about the Youth Innovation Fund, where there are three components under Youth Innovation Fund to Incubate ICCCAD Youth Fellows, Youth Fund to Sponsor Green Idea/Campaign competition for University Clubs and lastly Youth Fund to catalyze youth projects. The youth fellows were trained and mentored at ICCCAD through different platforms starting with residential training, online classes, field visits to climate-vulnerable regions of Khulna, Mongla, and Paikgasa in Bangladesh. .

The ICCCAD youth fellowship was given to 20 youth fellows and 2 out of those 20 basing on the overall performance two of the Youth fellows represented at the COP28 happening in Dubai. Apart from these, 4 fellows have won youth innovation fund, 4 youth organization won Catalyze youth projects and other 4 of university clubs totaling 12 grant winners of the Youth Innovation fund.



5.COP28 and its Significance for the Youth

Al Mamun Rakib and Shimi Chak, two of the ICCCAD Youth fellows who have been selected to visit the COP28, gave a presentation showcasing youth's agenda and demands on climate change impacts and how this can be addressed at the COP28.

Rakib is a student and climate activist from southern Bangladesh, stands as a testament to the devastating impact of climate change on his homeland. Driven from his birthplace by the relentless erosion of riverbanks, he now resides in Barisal, a city witnessing the sea level rises that threaten to engulf 11% of the region's land. With an alarming 19.6 inches of water level increase projected for the near future,

Your paragraph, the livelihoods and homes of millions are at risk. Rakib's story is not unique; he is one of the 18 million Bangladeshis already displaced by climate change, a number that continues to grow exponentially. This stark reality fuels his determination to raise awareness on this critical issue at the upcoming COP 28 conference. He spoke not just for himself, but for the 19 million children whose futures hang precariously in the balance, urging the world to take decisive action to mitigate the climate crisis and safeguard their vulnerable lives. His voice, echoing the plight of millions, carries the weight of a nation grappling with the consequences of a changing climate, and serves as a powerful call for global solidarity in the face of this existential threat.

5.1..Youth's standpoint for climate justice by Rakib and Shimi

To understand the youth's concern on climate change, their demands to propose at COP28 and their point of view on tackling the red alarming issue, both the participant along with the youths working for climate justice, shared their views and demands for the upcoming COP28 happening in UAE. They have jointly addressed the following issues,

- Ambitious emission reduction targets**
- Climate justice and fairness in addressing impacts**
- Loss and Damage compensation and support**
- Biodiversity Protection**
- Youth involvement in decision making**
- Adaptation support for vulnerable regions like Bangladesh**
- Renewable energy transition**



5.2.. Youth Led Survey Result Sharing:

In order to address the complex concerns of climate change in Bangladesh, a multidimensional strategy that goes beyond traditional methodologies is required. This needs the formation of a robust and inclusive coalition comprised of many organizations and stakeholders, such as the LGBTQ community, indigenous communities, and youth.

Because of prejudice and a lack of resources, LGBTQ populations are frequently disproportionately affected by climate change. Their distinct points of view and living experiences are critical for developing successful climate solutions. Involving LGBTQ organizations in climate talks, supporting inclusive disaster preparation plans, and guaranteeing equitable access to climate funding are all critical steps toward a more just and resilient Bangladesh.

Indigenous groups have developed their expertise and awareness of their native ecosystems over decades. Their traditional traditions frequently provide useful lessons for resource management and climate adaptation. Integrating indigenous knowledge into climate action plans, respecting indigenous groups' land rights, and supporting their efforts to maintain biodiversity are all crucial for long-term resilience.

Youth are a potent force for change and creativity. Engaging them in climate education initiatives, giving them with forums to advocate for climate action, and supporting their entrepreneurial enterprises in clean energy and sustainable development are all critical components of constructing a future-proof Bangladesh.

Climate change is strongly connected to biodiversity protection. Protecting forests, mangroves, and other natural ecosystems is critical for minimizing the effects of climate change while also conserving Bangladesh's rich biodiversity. Investing in protected areas, supporting sustainable agriculture methods, and increasing public understanding of the need of biodiversity protection are all critical for a healthy world.

Climate education enables individuals and communities to comprehend the science of climate change, its consequences, and viable solutions. We can equip Bangladeshis with the information and skills they need to negotiate the difficulties and possibilities of climate change by introducing climate change education into school curricula, conducting community workshops, and leveraging accessible communication channels.

By building a diverse alliance that leverages the strengths and perspectives of LGBTQ communities, indigenous communities, youth, and other stakeholders, Bangladesh can chart a more inclusive and effective course for addressing climate change. This approach, coupled with a focus on biodiversity conservation and climate education, holds the potential to usher in a more sustainable and resilient future for all Bangladeshis.

6. Interactive Discussions/ Question & Answer Session

- Is there any anthropogenic cause for these climate change impacts?**
- Answer: No, all the impacts are shown and discussed here are solely caused by climate change impacts.**
- Then I suggest you to address the anthropogenic (man-made) causes and impacts.**

Answer: In reply Rakib and Shimi said that, there are people in Mehidiganj who don't even know about the term "climate change"

- Dr. Mizan here differentiated climate change and the anthropogenic effects on nature. He introduced a new term called, "Climate Variability" which he addressed to be a "short term phenomenon" compared to climate change phenomenon**

- **Mr. Shohanur Rahman addressed that we fail to get enough fund from the government.**
 - **Another point raised that how gender friendly our cyclone shelters are?**
 - **Another participant raised a key point that, the international events only invite the known faces rather than those who live and work at the grassroots level and in some cases they are the actual victim of climate change impacts.**
 - **Another point raised that, the most vulnerable countries who actually get enough funding to tackle climate change in their respective regions, often they do not succeed to implement that.**
 - **Fahim, a youth fellow addressed that, it should be us who need to come to the front and take the responsibility to mitigate the climate change issues. We cannot simply put it on the government's shoulder since the sufferer of climate change will be all of us.**
 - **Another key point was addressed that we need to arrange more youth policy forum**
- Since there is a funding issue, one participant asked how we can get enough funding,**
- **Answer: Dr. Mizan answered that, where there is a will there is a way, we need to explore more where the fund is. We need to be more productive in getting the climate finance.**
 - **Another youth fellow said we need to implement more research especially in universities. For instance, in Since Khulna is severely affected by salinity intrusion, research based on salinity level, saline front can be conducted at Khulna University.**
 - **Shohanur Rahman raised a strong point to be addressed as he differentiated between the local and rural universities with the universities situating at the capital, the Dhaka. There are education and knowledge in universities based in Dhaka which has higher quality and in so many cases, get better opportunities and facilities compared to the local and rural universities outside of Dhaka. Thus, there can be significant knowledge conflicts in the national level which will be a pivotal hindrance in the youth development. Thus he addresses to reduce this gap between the local and capital based universities.**
 - **Md. Abdullah Salman, Assistant Professor at Barisal University argued on this and raised another important point that, since there are multiple departments in each university, we need to reach to the right department to address the specific issue related to that department so that objectives and purpose met.**
 - **One participant said that, we need to include the coastal youth into policy dialogues. It is because they are the first victim of climate disasters.**

Another participants added that, aside from the long term interventions, we must address the short term climate change impacts, issues and mitigation interventions since the "first victims" are the real victims. The victims are the children, the disabled, the poor and

- **other vulnerable groups who immediately get impacted by climate disaster and thus through short term interventions this injustice must be ensured.**
- **In addition to the previous point, another point got raised is that, the local people in the coastal areas require the facility of deep tube well during the time of post-disaster period when they lack pure drinking water due to heavy salinity intrusion. Thus, the immediate short term impacts of climate change has to be ensured with short term interventions.**
- **One participant asked to include climate change topics into the national curriculum such as, capacity building, locally led adaptation (LLA) and Loss and Damage (L&D). He/she emphasized on this point because, people lack significance knowledge on climate change. They are continuously suffering and dying from climate change impacts but they don't know the reasons of their suffering and the most dangerous part is that, they don't even want to know the reasons which is an alarming fact.**
- **Another important fact got raised is that, apart from national, regional conference and global events like conference of parties (COP), we need local level events as well. Or in other sense, we can arrange national COP at the local level so that the local thoughts, needs are met.**

7. Remarks from Abu Sadat Moniruzzaman Khan, Programme Head, Climate Change Programme, BRAC

Mr. Monir prioritized on two pivotal points that is very significant to be addressed firstly, managing our natural resources more wisely. This involves adopting eco-friendly practices and investing in renewable energy. Secondly, we must deepen our understanding of climate change's impact on our communities. Through research and collaboration, we can develop effective strategies to mitigate its effects and build resilience. He added that Dr. Huq's unwavering dedication to climate justice demands our attention. By understanding his vision, we can chart a course towards a more sustainable future.



8. Concluding Remarks from Nayoka Martinez-Bäckström, First Secretary, Environment and Climate Change

In her closing remarks, Nayoka Martinez, chief guest of the Youth Climate Dialogue expressed profound gratitude to all participants for their instrumental role in shaping the impactful Youth Climate Dialogue. She highlighted the unwavering passion, commitment, and innovative spirit demonstrated by the young leaders present, specifically acknowledging the esteemed ICCCAD youth fellows and recipients of the Youth Innovation Fund. Nayoka emphasized the enriching force of diverse perspectives in the discussions and commended the dedication to climate justice exhibited by participants. Looking forward, she encouraged harnessing the cultivated energy and translating it into broader climate policy and action initiatives. Ms. Nayoka emphasized the collective potential to instigate enduring change, inspiring positive transformations for the planet's health and the prosperity of future generations.



**Programme Agenda:
Participant List:
Will be attached as Annex**

