

REPORT ON

“EMPOWERING YOUTH FOR CLIMATE ACTION: INSIGHTS FROM THE ICCCAD 2024 FELLOWSHIP ONLINE CLASSES”

Organized By
International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD)

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Date	Name	Topic	Time (GMT+6)
July 3, 2024	Afsara Binte Mirza	Circular Economy	19:30 - 20:30
August 26, 2024	Harjeet Singh	A Climate Justice Approach to Address Loss and Damage	15:00- 17:00
September 27, 2024	Liane Schalatek	Loss and Damage Fund and Funding Arrangements	17:00- 19:00
October 2, 2024	Fahad Hossain	UNFCCC Mechanism	20:00-22:00
Oct 19, 2024	Rawnak Jahan Khan Ranon	Loss and Damage	19:00 (GMT+6)
October 19, 2024	Dr. Hemant Ojha	Localizing Loss & Damage Action on the Ground	19:00-21:00

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, ICCAD successfully organized a series of six online classes as part of its youth fellowship program for the 2024 cohort. The online classes aimed to provide the fellows with comprehensive knowledge, practical skills, and innovative strategies to tackle climate change. Through these interactive sessions, fellows were introduced to key topics such as climate change adaptation, youth leadership, policy advocacy, and climate negotiations, with a focus on community resilience and action.



The classes were designed to empower young leaders from diverse backgrounds by offering them a platform for collaborative learning, knowledge sharing, and skill-building in climate action. Each session was carefully crafted to engage the fellows in discussions, provide real-world case studies, and introduce them to tools they can use in their climate advocacy work. The program successfully achieved its goal of fostering a cohort of informed and motivated young leaders who are prepared to take impactful steps in addressing climate change within their communities.

The report that follows provides a detailed overview of the class content, delivery methods, outcomes, and the overall impact on the fellows, highlighting the effectiveness of the program in preparing young climate advocates for real-world challenges.

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Date: July 3, 2024
Time: 19:30 - 20:30 (GMT+6)
Venue: Online

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Afsara Binte Mirza is working as a Research Officer at ICCCAD. Her research interest lies in locally led adaptation, just transition in least developed nations, non-economic loss and damage, climate finance and gender equality. She completed her undergraduate degree from the Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania in Economics and International Studies. Prior to joining ICCCAD, she was a Results and Knowledge Management at the headquarters of UN Women in New York.

Proceedings

1. Introduction to Circular Economy

The session began with an overview of the circular economy concept, emphasizing how it differs from the conventional linear economy. The speaker introduced the three main principles of circular economy:

- 1. Eliminate waste and pollution**
- 2. Keep products and materials in use**
- 3. Regenerate natural systems**

2. Circular Economy in the Textile and Garment Industry in Bangladesh

Bangladesh's textile and garment sector plays a major role in the economy but generates vast amounts of waste, particularly PET bottle waste and fabric scraps. The session discussed projects like SWITCH2CE, led by UNIDO and co-funded by the EU and Finland, which promotes circular supply chains. Another initiative, the Circular Fashion Partnership, focuses on textile waste recycling through collaboration with BGMEA and GFA. A key challenge remains the lack of proper infrastructure and technology to convert PET waste into Polyester Staple Fiber for textile production.

3. Case Study: Regenerative Agriculture in India

The Andhra Pradesh Community-Managed Natural Farming initiative aims to transition six million farmers to sustainable practices by 2031. The program reduces reliance on chemical fertilizers, improves soil health, and strengthens community leadership, particularly among women's groups. Its financing model combines public, private, and philanthropic support, ensuring long-term sustainability. This case study demonstrated how circular economy principles can be applied to agriculture for both environmental and economic benefits.

5. Way Forward

The session concluded with recommendations for individuals, businesses, and policymakers to promote the circular economy in Bangladesh. Emphasis was placed on integrating circular economy concepts into education, encouraging businesses to adopt sustainable models, advocating for government incentives for recycling infrastructure, and fostering collaboration between government, private sector, and civil society. Additional reading materials were shared on topics like sustainable fashion, circular food systems, and value creation.

Conclusion

The session provided a comprehensive understanding of circular economy applications in industries like textiles and agriculture, as well as policy frameworks from global leaders like Japan. Discussions underscored the importance of waste reduction, sustainability, and economic growth. The session ended with an interactive exchange where participants shared their thoughts on integrating circular economy principles into their respective fields

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Date: October 31, 2024

Time: 16:00 (GMT+6)

Venue: Online

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Harjeet Singh is the Global Engagement Director for the Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative, advocating for accountability in the climate crisis. With over two decades of experience, he bridges policy advocacy and community action. His work amplifies frontline voices and pushes for stronger climate commitments.

Session Overview

The session, aimed at deepening youth understanding of Loss and Damage (L&D) in the context of climate justice, was delivered by Harjeet Singh, a prominent climate advocate. The training was organized by ICCCAD in collaboration with the Youth Negotiator Academy (YNA) to highlight the role of the newly established Loss and Damage Fund and the importance of fair access to climate finance.

Key Points of Discussion

Welcome Remarks

- Sumaiya Selim, Programme Coordinator at ICCCAD, introduced the session, highlighting the role of youth in climate negotiations and ICCCAD's efforts to empower young people in climate action.

Harjeet Singh's Keynote Presentation

- Harjeet discussed the disproportionate impact of climate change on vulnerable countries like Bangladesh, emphasizing extreme weather events and slow-onset crises. He outlined the history of the Loss and Damage framework, from its origins in 1991 to the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund at COP27, while stressing ongoing challenges in its implementation.

Public Finance and Fossil Fuel Responsibility

- Harjeet highlighted the need for climate justice, asserting that major polluters should fund climate recovery through grants rather than loans to prevent further debt burdens on vulnerable nations.

Youth in Climate Justice

- He underscored the role of youth-led movements in shaping climate policy and holding governments accountable. Engaging with COP processes and national advocacy were key strategies for driving change.

Q&A Session

- Participants discussed barriers to fair Loss and Damage funding and the influence of wealthy nations in climate negotiations. Harjeet encouraged youth to engage in both grassroots and global advocacy for equitable climate finance.

Key Takeaways

- Climate Justice: Loss and Damage efforts must prioritize vulnerable communities.
- Youth Engagement: Active participation in climate negotiations is crucial.
- Public Finance: Funding should be grant-based and accessible at the community level.

Conclusion

This session provided a comprehensive overview of Loss and Damage, underscoring the importance of climate justice and youth participation in driving the agenda forward. Harjeet's insights were invaluable, and the session concluded with a call to action for youth to take an active role in pushing for the fair distribution of resources for those most impacted by climate change.

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Date: September 2024
Time: 17:00 (GMT+6)
Venue: Online

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Liane Schalatek, Associate Director at Heinrich Boell Stiftung, Washington, DC, has over 20 years of experience in climate finance, gender mainstreaming, and sustainable development. She has played a key role in climate finance negotiations and the Green Climate Fund's operationalization. Liane holds dual Master's degrees in International Affairs and Political Science from George Washington University and Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg.

Session Overview

The session, led by Liane Schalatek, explored the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) and its role in climate finance. She highlighted its governance, challenges, and the need for equitable access. Participants engaged in a dynamic Q&A session, addressing concerns about accessibility, bureaucratic hurdles, and the future of climate finance in addressing loss and damage.

Key Points of Discussion

Welcome Remarks

- Sumaiya Selim, Programme Coordinator at ICCCAD, opened the session by emphasizing the importance of youth involvement in the Loss and Damage (L&D) agenda. She introduced Liane Schalatek, highlighting her expertise in climate finance and international development.

Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD)

- Liane Schalatek outlined the FRLD's role in addressing climate-induced losses, its governance, and civil society's involvement. She emphasized challenges like equitable distribution and direct access, stressing the fund's urgency as climate damages are projected to reach \$290–\$580 billion annually by 2030.

Key Points:

- The FRLD emerged as a response to the urgent financial needs of countries facing the impacts of climate change.
- Civil society played an instrumental role in advocating for the establishment of the fund.
- The fund's structure addresses both economic and non-economic losses, which have long been overlooked in climate finance discussions.
- The importance of ensuring access to the fund for local vulnerable communities, particularly those in Least Developed Countries (LDCs), was emphasized.
- The projected costs of climate-induced damages, estimated to be between \$290 billion and \$580 billion annually by 2030, underline the critical need for funding mechanisms like the FRLD.

Interactive Q&A Session

- Participants engaged in discussions on the fund's accessibility, governance, and bureaucratic challenges. Concerns were raised about restrictive criteria that could delay funding access. The session underscored the need for flexible, community-focused mechanisms and the complementarity between the FRLD and other climate finance initiatives.

Conclusion

The session reinforced the FRLD's importance in supporting vulnerable nations facing climate impacts. While progress has been made, challenges in equitable access and flexibility persist. With COP 29 approaching, ensuring adequate resources and youth involvement will be key to shaping a just climate finance system.

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Date: October 2, 2024

Time: 20:00 (GMT+6)

Venue: Online

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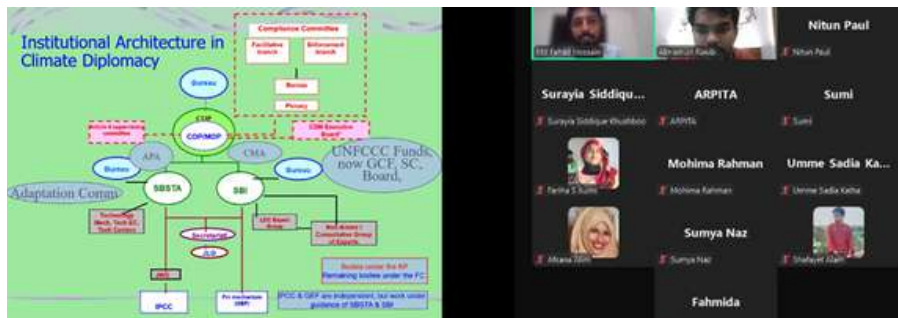
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Fahad Hossain is a climate change and development expert with a focus on supporting vulnerable communities in Least Developed Countries (LDCs). He works on projects that assess and improve mechanisms for managing loss and damage (L&D), particularly in the context of climate change. Fahad has contributed to stocktaking reports and research that aim to strengthen LDCs' capacity to address climate impacts and integrate L&D into national policies.

Session Overview



Key Points of Discussion

Introduction to the UNFCCC Regime

The session began with an overview of the UNFCCC's role in global climate governance, aiming to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations while ensuring food security and sustainable development. The speaker highlighted key principles guiding international climate action and the UNFCCC's role in shaping subsequent agreements like the Paris Agreement.

Role of Country Coalitions in Climate Negotiations

Countries negotiate in coalitions to amplify their influence. The session covered key groups like LDCs, which advocate for financial and technological support, and AOSIS, which pushes for stronger commitments due to rising sea levels. The G77 and China demand equity in climate finance, while LMDCs emphasize historical responsibility and call for greater action from developed nations. These coalitions play a critical role in shaping climate policies and securing resources for vulnerable countries.

The Paris Agreement: Key Action Areas and Support Mechanisms

Adopted in 2015, the Paris Agreement strengthened global climate commitments. It aims to limit warming to 1.5°C and requires countries to submit NDCs outlining emissions reduction plans. It also supports adaptation strategies and provides financial, technological, and capacity-building assistance to developing nations. Transparency frameworks and the Global Stocktake process help track progress and hold countries accountable.

Why the UNFCCC Alone Is Not Enough

Despite its importance, the UNFCCC lacks binding commitments, making enforcement difficult. The Paris Agreement addresses this by requiring regular NDC updates and financial pledges, but challenges remain. Some developed nations fail to meet commitments, and the voluntary nature of NDCs allows countries to backtrack. Stronger accountability measures are needed to ensure effective climate action.

Interactive Q&A Session

The session ended with discussions on the effectiveness of coalitions, the role of youth in climate advocacy, and access to climate finance. Participants stressed the importance of securing funds for vulnerable communities and ensuring accountability in climate pledges. The need for developing nations to leverage global frameworks for financial and technical support was highlighted.

Conclusion

The session highlighted the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement, and international climate negotiations. Participants learned about global climate agreements, country coalitions, and the commitments under the Paris Agreement. The discussion stressed the importance of transparency, accountability, and civil society engagement. As climate challenges grow, youth involvement is key in advocating for strong policies and a sustainable future.

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Date: Oct 19, 2024
Time: 19:00 (GMT+6)
Venue: Online

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Rawnak Jahan Khan Ranon is a Research Officer at ICCCAD, focusing on Locally Led Adaptation (LLA) and Non-Economic Loss and Damage (NELD). With an M.Sc. in Forestry from Khulna University, his work explores indigenous community, forest management, and accountability in adaptation. He has published research on NELD assessment tools and its local impacts. Beyond research, he enjoys reading novels and capturing life through his lens.

Session Overview

The session covered Loss and Damage, focusing on the distinction between economic and non-economic losses. It highlighted challenges in assessing non-economic impacts and presented a value-based approach using research from Bangladesh. The discussion emphasized the interconnections between economic and non-economic losses and concluded with recommendations to integrate local values into assessments through education, policy support, and community engagement.

Key Points of Discussion

Introduction to Loss and Damage

- The session introduced the concept of Loss and Damage, differentiating between economic and non-economic losses. Economic losses are quantifiable, like damage to infrastructure, while non-economic losses include intangible impacts such as cultural heritage, biodiversity, and mental health. The UNFCCC (2013) identified eight categories of non-economic losses, including loss of life, health, and ecosystem services.

Challenges in Assessing Non-Economic Loss and Damage

- Assessing non-economic losses faces several challenges: categorization, where Western frameworks may not suit local contexts; compartmentalization, which oversimplifies interconnected impacts; and dichotomization, where economic and non-economic losses often overlap. The speaker emphasized the importance of locally-led assessments to accurately capture these impacts.

Centering Local Values in Loss and Damage Assessments

- A value-based approach was presented through research in Bangladesh, identifying 10 local values communities prioritize, such as development, education, health, and mental health. This approach ensures that loss and damage assessments are context-sensitive, integrating local values into the assessment process.

Case Study: Interconnections Between Economic and Non-Economic Losses

- A case study from Bangladesh illustrated how economic and non-economic losses are interconnected. For example, loss of crop yields can lead to financial insecurity and mental health issues, while migration can affect cultural identity and family ties. This highlights the need for holistic approaches to assess both types of losses together.

Way Forward

- The session concluded with recommendations to integrate local values into loss and damage assessments. These include promoting education and awareness, developing supportive policies, engaging affected communities in decision-making, and adopting holistic frameworks that address both economic and non-economic losses.

Conclusion

The session emphasized the importance of understanding loss and damage, particularly non-economic losses, and the need for context-sensitive, bottom-up approaches. It highlighted the interconnectedness of economic and non-economic losses and the value of integrating local perspectives into climate policy to ensure effective and equitable responses.

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Date: October 31, 2024
Time: 16:00 (GMT+6)
Venue: Online

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Dr. Hemant Ojha is an expert in enhancing community well-being in the Global South, with a strong background in forestry, economics, and political science. As the Principal Advisor at IFSD, Australia, he integrates research, policy analysis, and community empowerment in his work. He has founded two think tanks in Nepal on natural resource management and advises international development agencies, focusing on community-driven approaches to influence policy and practice.

Session Overview

The session, led by Dr. Hemant Ojha, focused on localizing Loss and Damage (L&D) actions, financing needs, and national policy frameworks. It highlighted the challenges in aligning field-based evidence with global policies, the significant funding gap, and the progress in L&D frameworks across countries like Nepal, Bangladesh, Senegal, and Vanuatu. The session emphasized the importance of bridging local experiences with global decision-making for effective L&D solutions.

Key Points of Discussion

Welcome Remarks

- Nusrat Naushin, Loss & Damage Programme Coordinator at ICCCAD, introduced the session, highlighting its importance. She welcomed the participants and introduced Dr. Hemant Ojha as the main trainer, emphasizing his expertise in Loss and Damage and the relevance of bridging global policy debates with local experiences.

Localizing Loss & Damage Action on the Ground

- Dr. Hemant Ojha's presentation focused on the process of localizing Loss and Damage actions, emphasizing the need to align field-based evidence with global policy. He discussed challenges, opportunities, and frameworks for L&D localization, drawing on the "Strength" project.

Key topics covered:

- Examination of the L&D localization process, including both challenges and opportunities.
- A brief history of L&D policy development, with a focus on the milestones from 1991 to 2023, including the establishment of the L&D fund.
- Challenges faced in localizing L&D policies and the need for continued research and advocacy.

Financing for Loss and Damage

This session explored the financial mechanisms needed to support Loss and Damage efforts. Dr. Ojha emphasized the critical gap between current funding and the growing need, advocating for financing that aligns with development goals while ensuring justice and equity.

Key points:

- Financing for L&D should support development goals and promote justice.
- The current annual need for L&D funding exceeds \$600 billion, while only less than \$1 billion is available.

National Policy Frameworks and L&D

Dr. Ojha reviewed the progress on national L&D frameworks in Nepal, Bangladesh, Senegal, and Vanuatu. He highlighted the successes, challenges, and the importance of national frameworks in advancing global policy development for Loss and Damage.

Key points:

- Nepal has a policy, but no actionable steps have been taken.
- Bangladesh is engaged in discussions for a national L&D policy, though progress is slow.
- Vanuatu is finalizing its L&D framework.
- Senegal has yet to initiate national-level discussions on L&D.

Conclusion

The session underscored the critical importance of evidence generation, financial mobilization, and proactive policy frameworks in effectively addressing Loss and Damage. Dr. Ojha concluded by stressing the need for a cohesive global strategy that ensures equitable solutions to the challenges posed by climate change. The session provided a valuable platform for youth participants to engage with experts and develop a deeper understanding of how they can influence climate policies at national and global levels.