

YOUTH FELLOW FIELD VISIT REPORT 2024



Organized By

International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Youth Field Visit 2024, organized under the CAP-RES Project, provided an immersive learning experience for youth fellows, offering them firsthand insights into locally led adaptation strategies in Kuakata. Over three days, the fellows engaged with BRAC officials, community leaders, and grassroots organizations to understand the impacts of climate change on coastal communities and explore adaptation initiatives.

Key highlights included an in-depth discussion with BRAC on the "Developing Migrant Friendly Towns Through Locally Led Adaptations" project, a visit to Asia's first Water Museum, interactions with the youth-led disaster response organization Amra Kolaparabashi, and field-based qualitative research through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The visit concluded with reflective presentations and insights on linking NGOs, municipalities, and government efforts for sustainable climate adaptation. Overall, the discussions and site visits provided valuable perspectives on grassroots climate resilience efforts, enabling fellows to bridge theoretical knowledge with practical applications in community development and adaptation planning.



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
<hr/>	
Introduction	4
<hr/>	
Day 1: Learning from BRAC and Community Field Visit	5
Meeting with BRAC Officials.....	5
Visit to the Water Museum.....	5
Engagement with Amra Kolaparabashi.....	6
<hr/>	
Day 2: Community-Based Research Activities	6
Focus Group Discussions & Key Informant Interviews.....	6
<hr/>	
Day 3: Reflection and Policy Insights	7
<hr/>	
Conclusion	8
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INTRODUCTION

The field visit aimed to provide youth fellows with practical exposure to climate adaptation efforts in vulnerable coastal communities. Kuakata, being a coastal area, was selected due to its high climate vulnerability, as identified through long-term climate data analysis. The visit enabled participants to engage directly with experts, local stakeholders, and affected communities, fostering a deeper understanding of ground realities and sustainable intervention models.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand how climate-induced migration is being addressed through locally led adaptation initiatives.
- To analyze the socio-economic impacts of climate change on coastal communities.
- To explore ways in which youth can play a proactive role in climate resilience efforts.



DAY 1

Learning from BRAC and Community Field Visit

Meeting with BRAC Officials

The fellows visited the BRAC Office in Kuakata, where they learned about the "Developing Migrant Friendly Towns Through Locally Led Adaptations" project. Project Manager Md. Rafiquzzaman Biswas provided an overview of how BRAC collaborates with local communities to address migration challenges caused by climate change.

The project is designed to identify key vulnerabilities through Local Climate Adaptive Pathways (LCAP) and Workable Climate Adaptive Pathways (WCAP), which involve extensive community engagement. BRAC has implemented similar interventions in Mongla, which now serve as a model for Kuakata. Through focused group discussions and municipal collaborations, the project aims to create sustainable livelihood options that reduce forced migration.

Key concerns raised during the discussion included:

- The challenge of sustaining alternative livelihood options for fishermen during cyclone seasons.
- The cultural barriers in gathering reliable community data, particularly from women.
- The role of local municipalities in integrating community-led adaptation strategies into urban planning.



Following the session, the fellows visited the field site where the project is being implemented, interviewing locals to understand their lived experiences. The visit provided insights into how adaptation interventions are tailored to community needs, ensuring long-term sustainability.

Visit to the Water Museum

In the afternoon, the youth team visited Asia's first Water Museum in Pakhimara village, founded by Imtiaz Ahmed. The museum serves as a symbol of water conservation efforts and contains water samples from over 80 rivers across Bangladesh and beyond. Each sample is carefully documented, with information on its collection date and location.

Museum Secretary Mr. Joyanal elaborated on the significance of preserving water





heritage, explaining how climate change and pollution threaten river ecosystems. A documentary was screened, showcasing the drastic impact of infrastructure development on aquatic biodiversity and traditional livelihoods. The visit underscored the importance of integrating water conservation into broader climate adaptation strategies.

Engagement with Amra Kolaparabashi

The team visited the cyclone shelter in Kolapara and met with Amra Kolaparabashi, a youth-led volunteer organization focused on disaster response. Field Coordinator Saifullah Mahmud, an ICCCAD Youth Fellow alumni, shared the organization's journey from a five-member initiative in 2014 to a network of volunteers across multiple unions.

Key discussion points included:

- The importance of early warning dissemination and community-based disaster preparedness.
- Strategies for engaging women and disabled individuals in emergency response planning.
- The need for financial support and resources to sustain grassroots disaster response initiatives.

The visit highlighted how youth-led efforts can significantly contribute to local resilience, despite challenges related to funding and resource constraints.

DAY 2 Community-Based Research Activities

Focus Group Discussion Key Informant Interview

On the second day, the fellows conducted FGDs and KIIs in Purbo Hossainpara Bahirkhal Ward 9 to gather community perspectives on climate impacts. The groups focused on three primary themes:

Health Issues :

The community reported increased cases of fevers, diarrhea, and skin diseases due to contaminated water sources. Many attributed this problem to the lasting effects of Cyclone Sidr (2007), which disrupted local water systems.





Livelihood Challenges:

Fishermen expressed concerns about declining fish stocks and damaged equipment. Women in the community noted their economic dependence on male family members but showed interest in skill development programs to gain financial independence.

Water Scarcity & Migration:

Rising sea levels have drastically reduced the distance between the village and the coast, leading to increased flooding. Government relocation efforts have been met with mixed reactions, as many residents are unwilling to move due to their reliance on fishing.

Impact of Thermal power point:

Community members also raised concerns about the environmental and health impacts of the Payra Thermal Power Plant. They pointed out increased air and water pollution, which has affected both agricultural productivity and fisheries. The discussions underscored the need for sustainable energy solutions that do not exacerbate climate vulnerabilities.

In the afternoon, additional KIIs were conducted in Madhupara, where residents detailed the socio-economic transformations taking place due to climate stressors.

DAY 3

Reflection and Policy Insights

The final day of the program focused on consolidating the fellows' learnings through structured presentations and discussions. On the evening before the final day, the fellows were divided into four teams, each consisting of 4–5 members. They were provided with necessary stationery to create charts, slides, and other visual materials to aid their presentations. The primary objective was to reflect on their experiences, organize key learnings, and present their findings in a structured manner.

Each team demonstrated enthusiasm and analytical thinking, presenting their insights with clarity and coherence. The presentations covered various aspects of their engagement, highlighting observations, challenges, and potential solutions.





The session was then followed by Sumaiya Binte Selim Sudha, Coordinator of Gender and Youth Program of ICCCAD, appreciating the fellows on their efforts and then providing feedback to each group. She explained the Developing Migrant Friendly Towns Through Locally Led Adaptations in detail to the fellows to help them relate to the previously visited BRAC' s initiative and elaborated on how the municipality linked up with LLA and how ICCCAD collaborated on the project. She started from the building blocks and built up to the big project, using this project as an example of how real-life NGOs work to bring development in the long run.

Following that, Maria Akter, Assistant Project Manager of ICCCAD, explained the link between governments, municipalities and NGOs and how they work together in bringing change. She said, NGOs provide support and push the government in the right direction. The model the fellows have seen in Kuakata can serve as a blueprint for the local government. This model can then be implemented by the government in many other such towns.

The session concluded with Sumaiya Binte Selim Sudha highlighting the importance of policy advocacy among the youth and inspiring them to keep working on their goals with grit and determination, and not lose hope.

CONCLUSION

The Youth Field Visit 2024 served as an invaluable learning opportunity, bridging theoretical knowledge with real-world climate adaptation practices. By engaging with key stakeholders, conducting field research, and participating in discussions, the fellows gained deeper insights into the challenges faced by climate-vulnerable communities and the necessity of locally led adaptation strategies. Overall, the visit reinforced the importance of youth-led initiatives, collaborative policymaking, and sustained advocacy to build climate-resilient communities.



Annex : Participant lists

Name	Designation
Sumi Khatun	Fellow 2024
Durjoy Bhowmick	Fellow 2024
Shafayet Alam	Fellow 2024
Nirvik Chakma	Fellow 2024
Saila Sobnom Richi	Fellow 2024
Mohima Rahman	Fellow 2024
Farhana Akter	Fellow 2024
Jarin Tasnim	Fellow 2024
Atiya Sharmin	Fellow 2024
Arpita Das	Fellow 2024
Nitun Paul	Fellow 2024
Eco Talukder	Fellow 2024
Farhana Yasmin Ayesha	Fellow 2024
Suraiya Siddique Khushboo	Fellow 2024
Shahriar Mahmud	Fellow 2024
Umme Sadia Katha	Fellow 2024
Sumya Naz	Fellow 2024
Kazi Nayeem Hossain	Fellow 2024
Kurnikova Chakma	Fellow 2024
Sumaiya Binte Selim	Focal- Youth, ICCCAD
Tausia Tashin	Intern, ICCCAD
Maria Aktar	Assistant Project Manager, ICCCAD
Naznine Nahar	Project Officer-Youth, ICCCAD
Md Al Mamun Rakib	Previous Youth Fellow 2023
Saifullah Mahmud	Previous Youth Fellow 2023
Joyee Chakma	Youth Representative, ICCCAD

Representatives from Brac	
Md. Rafiquzzaman Biswas	Project Manager Operation
K H. Sazzadul Huq	Deputy Manager Technical
Md Atiquzzaman	Project Officer
Halima	Community Volunteer