ICCCAD
International Centre for Climate Change and Development

Pilot Training on Climate Change for the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) Sector Workers

Location: Hemayetpur, Awaj Foundation's Training Center
Date: 29th of August 2025

Acknowledgement

The International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) expresses its sincere appreciation to all participants who engaged in the pilot training. This publication presents a comprehensive summary of the training sessions and key findings. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Awaj Foundation for their invaluable support in facilitating the training. Special thanks to the project team for their exceptional commitment and effort towards the design and execution of this training. Special appreciation to Nishat Tasnim and Maliha Momotaj Himu for their active support as rapporteurs.

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Design credit: Nafia Saddaf

Photography credit: Dharmachandra Tonchongya

Executive Summary

This report outlines a summary of the pilot training on climate change adaptation, labour rights, and some components of a just transition, delivered to garment workers in Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) sector. With the sector facing increasing risks from climate-induced heat stress during the summer and waterlogging during the monsoon season, this training was developed in a contextual and interactive manner by ICCCAD with the support of the Laudes Foundation. The training was delivered to a diverse cohort from Tier 2 and 3 factories (who are yet to transition to a greener pathway) through a blend of animation, theatre, and art sessions. Group activities revealed workers' priorities during the climate crisis, such as improved ventilation, medical facilities, childcare, cooling systems, and social safety nets. The training was well-received, with participants demonstrating strong engagement and understanding regarding the subject matter. Recommendations for future sessions include improved logistics, clearer tier-based participant selection, and enhanced session formats to deepen learning and inclusivity.

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Message from the Project Manager

The devastating threats of climate change are impacting the workforce and marginalized communities extensively in Bangladesh. Hence, capacitating and empowering the workers on climatic impacts is an imperative for the ready-made garment (RMG) sector, which employs a substantial proportion of the country's workforce and is a major part of Bangladesh's gross domestic product (GDP) earnings. The green transition is needed for both the economy and people.

Therefore, this pilot training mainly aimed to capacitate the RMG workers through an interactive training module and enhance their knowledge on the basics of climate change; adaptation strategies at the factory and household level; and discussed negotiation skills with management to build a climate-resilient workplace. The next series of training will follow a learning-by-doing process and aim to raise the decision-making capabilities of the workers.

Introduction

Background

Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) sector, employing nearly 4 million workers and contributing to 85% of the country's export earnings, is increasingly at risk due to climate-induced stress particularly from extreme heat. Heat waves threaten not only workers' health but also reduce productivity and profitability of the RMG sector. Without adaptation measures such as improved ventilation, cooling systems, and better workplace design, the sector could face significant job and export revenue losses by 2030.

To address this, ICCCAD, with support from the Laudes Foundation, is implementing a 3-year project titled *"Capacitating the Garment Industry Workers for a Greener Climate Transition in Bangladesh."* As part of this initiative, pilot training is being launched to strengthen RMG workers' understanding of climate change, labour rights, and just transition.

Objective of the training

This pilot training aims to deliver a contextualized and interactive training module for the garment workers that resonates with their lived realities amidst the climate crisis.

Training Overview

Target Audience

The climate change training strategically engaged a cohort of approximately 20 factory workers, selected based on age, occupational role, and factory type to ensure diverse representation and effective knowledge transfer. Participants spanned three age groups—young workers (18–28) adept in social media, mid-career staff (25–35) who influenced workplace norms, and experienced workers (35–40+) who mentored others. Occupational roles included machine operators, technicians, floor managers, helpers, and committee members, fostering peer learning and sector-wide improvement. Workers were drawn from Tier 2 and 3 factories, which typically lacked LEED certification and climate awareness, to promote standardisation and uplift compliance.

Training Methodology:

Climate Animation Videos:

The training module consisted of 2 short animations; the first one is a 6-minute video focusing on the impacts and adaptation strategies of climate change inside and outside factories, drawn from the lived experiences of the garment workers. It also discussed ways of involving higher management to implement some of the strategies inside the factories, as well as collective initiatives that can be led by communities for household-level adaptation. The second animation provided an introduction to the concept of climate change, exploring the definition of climate change, the ways in which the climate is shifting, and its specific consequences for Bangladesh.

Training Overview

Theatre Session:

This module unfolded in two compelling acts, highlighting the impact of climate change on garment workers and their pathway to adaptation. The first act followed a climate migrant family's move to Dhaka and entry into the RMG sector, portraying the emotional and physical toll of factory life due to the heat, long hours, and unsafe working conditions. Interactive moments helped the audience connect deeply with the story. The second act focused on practical adaptation strategies such as preventing heatstroke and managing illness. It showcased workers' demands for better facilities, including cold-water stations, improved ventilation, cooling vests, and day-care centres, while emphasizing the role of Participation Committees in negotiating these improvements.

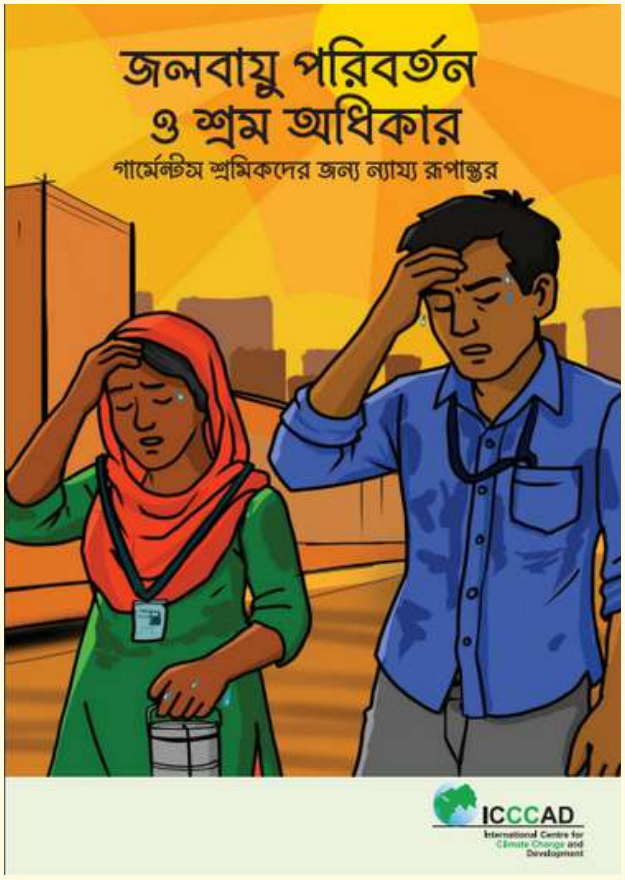
Artwork Session:

To foster discussion, share ideas, and creatively apply the knowledge they have gained from the earlier modules, the final module was a collaborative art session, where participants were divided into 4 evenly sized groups of 5. Each group received a factory layout chart along with a set of icons representing climate-friendly solutions. Their task was to place these icons in areas of the factory that they felt needed improvement. In addition to using the provided icons, participants were encouraged to draw their own symbols or write down ideas that could contribute to creating an ideal and climate-resilient workplace.

At the end of each session, a few minutes were set aside for participants to engage in reflective discussions, allowing moderators to assess their understanding of the module content.

Training Overview

Training Materials Distribution



In addition to the interactive sessions mentioned above, a basic climate change booklet was distributed to strengthen the participants' understanding of the topics discussed during the training. This booklet has been designed in Bangla with detailed illustrations to make the content accessible to all. With the help of these, participants were encouraged to share their newly gained knowledge with families, relatives, friends, and neighbours to extend the impact beyond the factories. The climate booklet was also distributed to keep the participants motivated and engage them in peer-to-peer learning within the workplaces to benefit colleagues who had not attended the session.

Participants were also provided with a seasonal calendar of 2026 outlining tailored adaptation strategies for each season of the year where climatic impacts can be challenging for the participants.

Ice Breaking Session

During the ice-breaking session, representatives from the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) introduced themselves and outlined their work, aiming to build trust and encourage collaboration. Participants were then invited to reflect on their own understanding of climate change, which prompted a range of insights grounded in their lived experience. Their insights illustrated how climate change is increasingly shaping daily life and working conditions in Bangladesh.

The country no longer experiences six distinct seasons; instead, only summer, winter, and monsoon persist. Summers have grown oppressively hot, winters more severe, and monsoon rainfall increasingly erratic often extending to four months rather than the traditional two. These shifts have made commuting during extreme weather conditions particularly challenging. Workers reported a rise in unfamiliar illnesses they suspect are climate-related, while heat waves and cold spells continue to erode productive hours. Most factories lack adequate ventilation and cooling systems, and heat-induced skin conditions are widespread, yet access to appropriate treatment remains limited.

Key Findings of Artwork Session

Factory Zone	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Production Zone	Proposed use of heat-resistant materials, solar energy backups, clear walkways, and achievable production targets.	Placed proper ventilation systems, green infrastructure, and heat-resistant materials.	Placed ventilation systems, water stations, fire extinguishers, and proposed a community fund to support workers.	Featured cooling stations, heat-resistant materials, and worker-led climate mitigation planning.
Ironing & Fusing Section	Placed cooling vests and rubber mats to reduce heat stress and physical strain.		Included fire extinguishers, heat-resistant materials, cooling vests, and heat safety training.	Introduced a heat adaptation plan to address high-temperature stress.

Key Findings of Artwork Session

Factory Zone	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Dining Zone 	Envisioned the dining zone with green infrastructure and social safety net planning.	Utilised the area for discussing fair wage policies.	Space for discussing daycare, medical insurance, trade unions, first aid boxes, wage negotiation skills, and community-led adaptation planning.	Space for discussing fair wage policies, highlighting their commitment to both environmental sustainability and social equity within the workplace.
Medical Facilities	For discussing medical insurance and fare wage policies, reinforcing their holistic approach to worker well-being.	Utilised the space for workers' capacity building initiatives, daycare services, and social safety net planning.	Medical centre was marked for upgraded facilities and fire extinguishers.	

Key Findings of Artwork Session

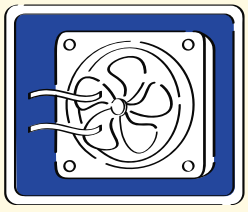
Factory Zone	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
General / Overall Area	Designated for daycare services, reflective roof coatings, cooling stations, and capacity-building initiatives, including heat safety training and climate adaptation planning.	Participants suggested solar energy backups, water stations, improved medical facilities, and reflective roof coatings. They emphasised workers' capacity building initiatives, daycare services, and social safety net planning.	Designated the area for a cooling station, while the roof featured green infrastructure and indoor plants to reduce heat. The medical centre was marked for upgraded facilities and fire extinguishers, and the corridor for additional water stations.	Across the overall factory layout, they proposed a community-led adaptation plan, capacity-building initiatives, medical insurance, green infrastructure , and a community climate fund.
Machinery Area	Area was marked for requiring improved equipment, machine guides, and introduction of innovative technologies.	Placed enhanced ventilation and heat-resistant materials.		

Groupwork Discussion

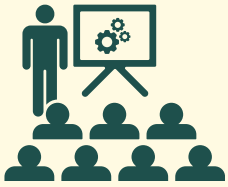
Across the 4 groups, the participants collectively envisioned and discussed an ideal, climate-resilient, and worker-friendly factory environment. The recurrent priorities emerging across all four groups include the urgent need for improved ventilation, particularly in production zones where airflow is limited and heat builds up rapidly. Ironing and fusing stations were identified as especially vulnerable to high temperatures, prompting calls for both enhanced ventilation and the provision of cooling aids such as vests and hand fans. Rubber mats were also recommended by group 1 for the fusing station.

All groups also emphasized the importance of increasing the number of water stations throughout factory premises to ensure workers remain hydrated and comfortable during long shifts. Group 3 proposed the strategic placement of fire extinguishers throughout the factory premises as a precautionary measure to mitigate potential fire hazards arising from excessive heat. Training and awareness-building were also highlighted as essential to equip workers with the knowledge and tools to manage climate-related risks effectively.

Priority adaptation measures from the participants:

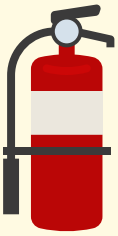


Proper Ventilation



Training and awareness building of workers

More water stations



placement of more fire extinguisher

Groupwork Discussion

Medical support was another widely shared concern, with participants advocating for on-site medical centres, regular visits from specialised doctors (especially gynaecologists), and comprehensive health insurance schemes to address both routine and gender-specific health needs. The urgent need for accessible, age-appropriate daycare facilities to ease the burden on working mothers and reduce absenteeism was also discussed.

Alongside childcare, participants stressed the importance of providing quality educational opportunities for workers' children, ensuring they have access to learning. Participants also called for improved social security, fair wages, and respectful treatment within the factory. Group 1 also discussed safeguards against illegal termination and stressed the importance of realistic production targets. These proposals reflect a broader desire for a factory environment that nurtures not only the workers but also their families, promoting stability and future growth.

Priority adaptation measures from the participants:

Specialised doctors (especially gynaecologists)

Comprehensive health insurance schemes

Daycare support

Social security

Group Discussion






Key Learnings from the Pilot Training

Training Conduction and Time Management:

The pilot training was conducted within a duration of 1 hour and 45 minutes, which proved to be effective in maintaining participant engagement. For future sessions, it is recommended that the total duration not exceed 2 hours. Given the diversity of session formats ranging from theatre, animation to interactive groupwork, it is feasible to sustain attention while ensuring meaningful learning outcomes. Given limited time availability, it is also ideal to provide the snacks before starting the training and utilise this time for registration and an informal ice breaking conversation. One useful addition to the ice-breaking session could be allowing the researchers to share how climate change is affecting their lives along with the participants, thus providing a connecting point between the trainers and the participants.

Key Learnings from the Pilot Training

Participant Cohort:

Within the participant cohort, it is important to ensure greater representation from lower-tier factories, where workers frequently have limited access to training opportunities and may possess lower levels of formal education. Including individuals from these settings will help ensure that the training reaches those who are most in need, thereby fostering more equitable capacity-building across the sector. To achieve this, it will be essential to establish clear standards for tier classification as per our research demands and engage in discussions with Awaj Foundation to support more effective and inclusive cohort selection.

Booklet Distribution

It is recommended that the booklet be distributed at the commencement of the training rather than at its conclusion. This would allow both the trainers and the participants to utilise it as a reference guide throughout the training, as it contains all the necessary information. Early distribution would also help prevent last-minute congestion and minimise distractions caused by the simultaneous receipt of tote bags, booklets, and other motivational materials.

Session Specific Feedback

Animation: To strengthen the educational impact of the second animation on climate change, it is recommended to include a lecture component, as several key concepts have scientific aspects and require clearer explanation for participants to fully grasp them. Additionally, increasing interaction during this segment would enhance engagement and facilitate deeper understanding. It was evident from the participants' responses during the discussion that they had successfully absorbed the lessons from the first animation and the theatre performance. Most were able to answer the trainer's questions accurately.

Art Work: To enhance the effectiveness and ease of the exercise, a few adjustments to the provided factory layout were recommended by the participants, such as the inclusion of a meeting room, medical room, and rooftop. The layout can also be expanded using 2 chart papers instead of 1, and the icons can be made smaller to provide more space for the participants to add their own ideas through writing and drawing. To enhance relevance and inclusivity, icons representing female washrooms and drinking stations, especially those pertinent to gender-specific climate concerns, could be added. Icons relating to collaborative effort could be specified as to the collaboration type. As a trial, forming an all-female group in future sessions could help surface gender-specific issues that may not be voiced in mixed-gender settings. Overall, this session was highly engaging, with participants demonstrating a clear understanding of the task and performing it successfully. It served as a valuable tool for assessing their grasp of the components taught during the earlier sessions, particularly in relation to climate change adaptation strategies.

Session Specific Feedback

Theatre: Some revisions are recommended to improve the theatre presentation and better align it with the educational goals. The script needs to incorporate more explicit use of key terms such as climate change, labour rights, and just transition, as these are central concepts we aim to teach the participants. Performers should wear black to clearly distinguish themselves from the audience, and the performance should be delivered in one continuous segment without a break to maintain narrative flow; and tea can be served during the performance instead of an additional break. To ensure gender balance, more female actors should be included. It will better minimise excessive improvisation, so the session doesn't exceed the allocated time, and focus is kept on the core messages. The labour rights theme could be emphasised a little more, and the scene depicting the PC meeting requires adjustment to reflect the typical presence of management and the fact that solutions are usually addressed separately. Despite these suggested changes, the theatre was well-received, with participants showing strong engagement, confirming its value as an effective teaching method.

Feedback on Logistics and Evaluation

The quality of the sound system and projector display should be improved at the training centres to ensure that participants can clearly understand the content and remain engaged throughout the sessions. Greater attention must be given to these technical aspects, as they play a critical role in facilitating effective communication and maintaining focus during the training.

A clearly defined plan should be established for the registration process, the distribution of motivational items, and the provision of lunch boxes and travel allowances. This will help ensure smooth coordination, avoid logistical complications, and optimise the use of time during the training program.

It was recommended to conduct a follow-up evaluation approximately two months after the initial training to assess the extent to which participants have retained the information. During this visit, the cohort may be engaged in a brief discussion over tea, providing an informal yet effective setting for reflection and assessment. This session will also offer an opportunity to review whether participants have completed the exercises included in the booklet and to get an idea of their understanding of the materials. Additionally, feedback on the booklet itself can be collected to inform future improvements and ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

Conclusion

The pilot training effectively introduced garment workers to the critical links between climate change, workplace safety, and labour rights, using engaging formats such as animation, theatre, and collaborative art sessions. Participants demonstrated strong understanding and enthusiasm, identifying practical adaptation strategies including improved ventilation, cooling systems, medical support, and social protection measures. Their contributions reflected a clear desire for safer, more equitable, and climate-resilient working conditions.

To build on this success, future sessions should focus on inclusive participant selection, especially from lower-tier factories, alongside improved logistics, technical setup, and session design. With continued collaboration and refinement, this training model can serve as a powerful tool for empowering workers and advancing a greener transition across Bangladesh's RMG sector.

Snapshots from the Training

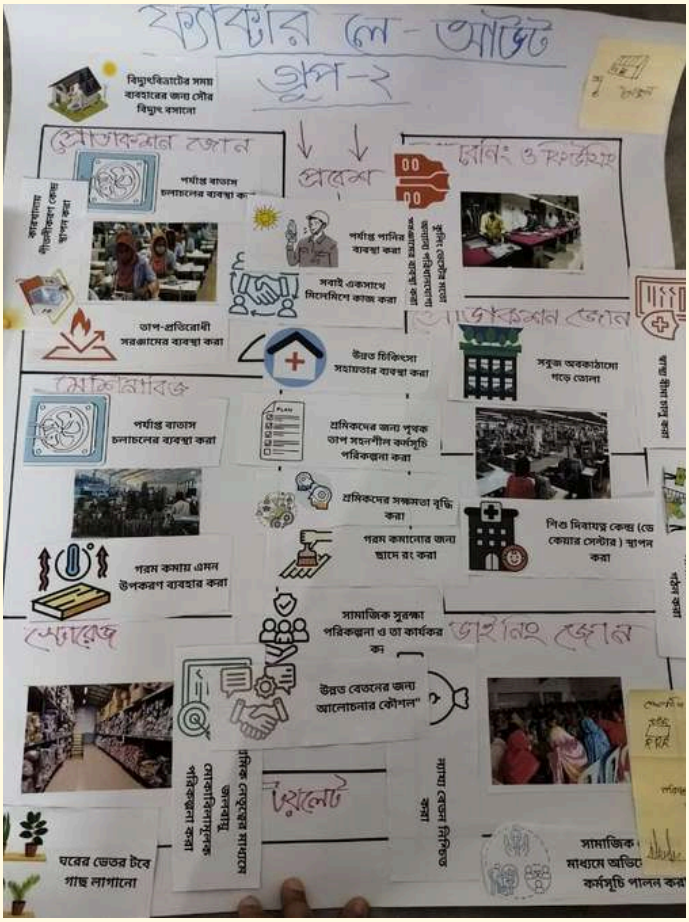
Annex : Agenda

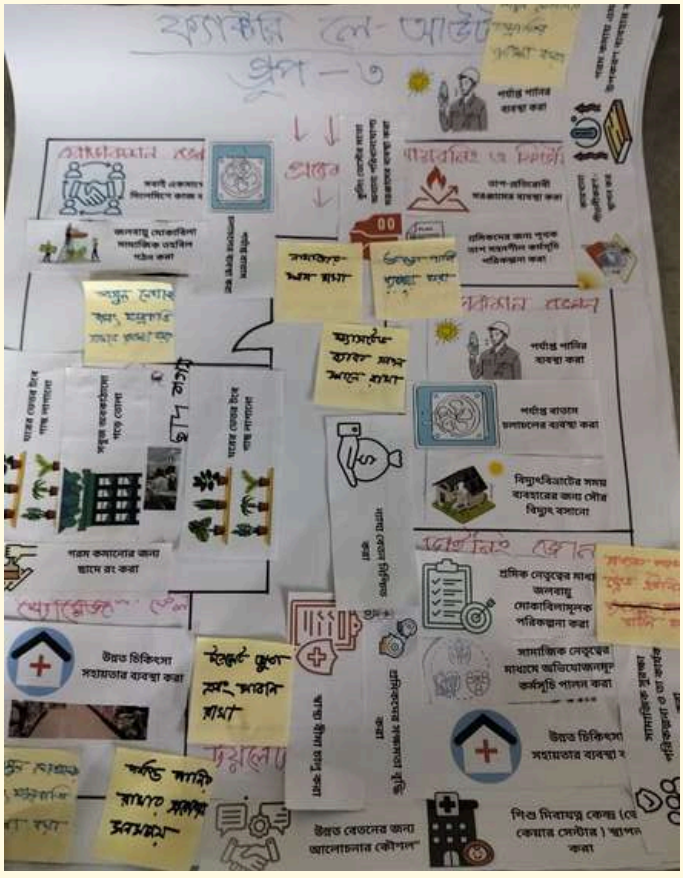
Activity	Description	Session Coordinator	Time
Welcome Remarks and Ice-breaking Session	Message from Project Manager (Afsara Binte Mirza) and Introduction of Participants and	Awaj Foundation and ICCCAD Team [Rapporteur: Nishat Tasnim]	**10:30 AM-10:50 AM**
Animation Session Part 1	Animated video on climate change impacts and adaptation strategies in factory taken from lived experiences followed by discussion	Dharmachandra Tonchongya and Mahzabeen Mahfuz Rapporteur: Nishat Tasnim]	**11: 20AM-11:30 AM**
Animation Session Part 2	Animation video on introduction to climate change followed by a discussion.	Maliha Himu Rapporteur: Mahzabeen Mahfuz]	**11:30 AM-11:40 AM**
Theatre Session Part 1	Theatre performance featuring the impacts and challenges faced by garment workers due to climate change.	Gayen Dohar Theatre Team Discussion Facilitator: Dharmachandra Tonchongya & Mahzabeen Mahfuz [Rapporteur: Maliha Himu]	**11:40 AM-12:35 AM**

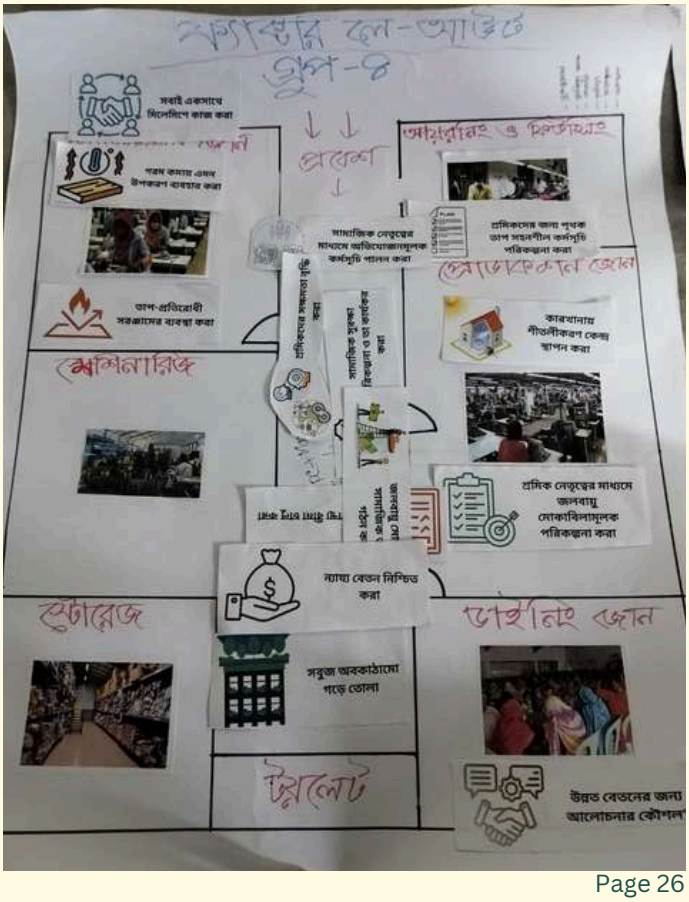
Annex : Agenda

Activity	Description	Session Coordinator	Time
Theatre Session Part 2	Second part of the performance featuring the climatic adaptation strategies the garments worker can take to have a better lifestyle. Followed by a	Gayen Dohar Theatre Team Discussion Facilitator: Dharmachandra Tonchongya & Mahzabeen Mahfuz [Rapporteur: Maliha Himu]	**11:40 AM-12:35 AM**
Artwork Session	Groupwork involving the participants to create an ideal workplace for them) utilising the the provided icons.	[Discussion Facilitator: Nafia Saddaf]	**12:40 AM-12:55 PM**
Concluding Remarks	Concluding remarks followed by feedback Q&A session and distribution of motivational materials	Maliha Himu [Rapporteur Nafia Saddaf]	**12:55 pm-01:10pm**

Annex : Artwork Session







Contact for more information:

Project Info Website