CSD Center for Sustainable Development
University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh

ULAB
University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh

# CSD Newsletter

## 2025 | Issue 10



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July stands as one of the most painful chapters in our recent memory. But a tragedy so devastating that it is difficult to revisit without grief : The Milestone Tragedy.

Innocent children lost their lives in circumstances that should never have placed them in danger, and many more were left to carry physical scars, emotional trauma, and memories that will haunt their lives forever. What makes this incident particularly horrific is not only the scale of loss, but the profound injustice of it: young lives cut short, families shattered, and survivors forced to endure suffering far beyond their capacity.

Amid this darkness, acts of extraordinary courage and humanity emerged as the rescue teams, teachers, staff, students, and local people stepped forward without hesitation attempting to rescue the children and rushing them to the hospital. Teachers Maherin Chowdhury and Masuka Begum, along with school staff member Masuma Begum, lost their lives while courageously trying to save children.Their actions were driven not by obligation, but by an unwavering sense of duty, care, and love for those entrusted to them.

We at the Center for Sustainability Development, ULAB honor their legacy by reaffirming our commitment to safeguarding life, nurturing compassion, and working toward systems that place human dignity, safety and justice at their core.

# Message from the Director



Dear Reader,

Looking back on 2025, it has been a year of steady progress and learning for the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD). During a critical time of transition in Bangladesh and beyond, CSD has continued to focus on practical research, education, and action that address real challenges and support sustainable development.

This year, CSD took a stronger role in research that brought together different fields and focused on tangible solutions. We worked on key topics like climate change adaptation, ecosystem services, the blue economy and marine governance, the circular economy, renewable energy, and sustainability education - exploring and expanding in arenas where we can create impact through community engagement and policy alignment, ensuring our research leads to real results.

A highlight of the year was the 7th CSD Annual Conference on Sustainable Development. It brought together researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and development partners. The conference gave everyone a platform to share ideas, learn from one another, and discuss practical ways to support sustainability and resilience.

Another important step for ULAB and CSD was the launch of the Department of Environmental Studies and Sustainability (ESS). This new department builds on CSD's research experience and aims to prepare students with the knowledge and skills needed to address Bangladesh's environmental and sustainability challenges.

During the year, CSD also expanded its national and international partnerships. We worked together on collaborative research, policy discussions, training programs, and publications. Our growing work on green skills, climate-resilient livelihoods, and locally led adaptation reflects our commitment to inclusive and practical sustainability approaches.

**Professor Mahmood Hossain**
**Director, Centre for Sustainable Development**
**Head, Department of Environmental Studies and Sustainability**
**University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh**

# 7th CSD Annual Conference for Sustainable Development

## Inaugural Ceremony: Intertwined Crises, Integrated Solutions; Unpacking Resilience, Equity and Sustainability



The 7th CSD Annual Conference on Sustainable Development 2025 commenced on 1 November at the Six Seasons Hotel, Dhaka gathering leading academics, practitioners, and policymakers from home and abroad with this year's theme "Unpacking Sustainability, Resilience, and Equity". The opening session featured Ms. Farida Akhter, Honorable Advisor to the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, as Chief Guest, with special remarks from H. E. Ambassador Reto Renggli, and Ms. Syeda Madiha Murshed. Professor Sharmind Neelormi delivered a powerful keynote on the intersections of resilience, equity, and sustainability. Along with inaugurating the conference, Professor Imran Rahman, the Vice-Chancellor of ULAB announced the start of the exciting, new Department of Environmental Science and Sustainability at ULAB. Throughout the day, panels explored pressing issues, from building a national mechanism on loss and damage to incentivizing coastal stewardship and advancing the Energy-Food-Water nexus for a climate-smart Bangladesh. The day closed with renewed energy for collaboration and shared commitment toward inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development pathways.




## Parallel Session 01: Exploring the State of Loss and Damage in Bangladesh Towards a National Mechanism and Access to Finance

The first parallel session of the conference was a panel discussion that discussed ongoing efforts and challenges around Loss and Damage (L&D) in Bangladesh, identifying key gaps in building a National Mechanism on Loss and Damage (NMLD). Speakers stressed the need for fair and transparent access to global funding, and the session wrapped up with an engaging Q&A on practical next steps for Bangladesh's NMLD and strengthening readiness for future financing. Mr. Md. Shamsuddoha, Chief Executive at Center for Participatory Research and

Development (CPRD) said, "Access to Loss and Damage finance in Bangladesh must come with greater transparency, accountability and coordination among all key ministries."




Key Takeaways from session:

1. Bangladesh is well-positioned globally but must strengthen domestic transparency and institutional readiness to meet FRLD standards.
2. A unified, multi-dimensional Loss and Damage database is urgently needed to turn existing frameworks into operational mechanisms.
3. Nepal and Vanuatu offer practical models, showing how integrated governance and clear national policies enable effective and inclusive FRLD access.
4. Governance must shift to accountable, multi-ministry systems, with shared leadership between ERD and MOEECC, to link international finance with domestic implementation.
5. Sustainable FRLD financing requires multiple sources, including international replenishment, national budget allocations, and private sector participation.
6. The Santiago Network and local empowerment can provide technical guidance, transparent fund management, and inclusive, program-based delivery systems.

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## **Parallel Session 02:** IIED AABS Session: Enabling and Incentivizing Coastal Stewardship in Bangladesh: Actions to Improve Institutional and Policy Environments

The second parallel session, a panel discussion on, "Enabling and incentivising coastal stewardship in Bangladesh", focused on sharing findings from the Asia-Africa Bluetech Superhighway (AABS) report, "Strengthening Incentives for Coastal Stewardship in Bangladesh."

The session combined a panel discussion and workshop to gather stakeholder feedback, validate key insights, and identify next steps for strengthening institutional and policy frameworks supporting coastal stewardship in Bangladesh.



Ms. Farida Akhter, Honorable Adviser at the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Government of Bangladesh, stated that the ministry is already working on revising the definition of "fisher," considering its importance, with special emphasis on the inclusion of women fishers and other value-chain workers in the policies. The session wrapped up with an emphasis on translating discussion outcomes into practical policy actions for sustainable coastal management.




## **Bridging the Flows:** Water Energy Food Nexus for a Climate Smart Bangladesh



The final session for the first day of the conference was a roundtable discussion on the water-food-energy nexus titled **"Bridging the flows: Energy-Food-Water for a Climate-Smart Bangladesh".** The discussion opened with a short video of the SHIFT project, showcasing solar irrigation and biogas initiatives in rural Panchagarh that illustrated how integrated energy solutions can empower local communities. Speakers emphasized the urgency of linking the three sectors through inclusive policies and community-driven innovation.

Panelists agreed that coordinated policy frameworks, stronger data systems, and private sector partnerships are needed to operationalize the energy-food-water nexus. Suggestions included promoting agrovoltaic systems, reusing water, offering soft loans for renewable projects, and adopting area-based, flexible policies tailored to local contexts.






## **ENGAGE Session:** Assessing the Role of Water Governance under Climate Stress: Learnings from Agro- Ecological Experimentation in the Sunderbans

The second day of the conference began with the ENGAGE session, which opened with a roundtable discussion on "Assessing the Role of Water Governance under Climate Stress" The session explored the complex challenges of managing water resources in climate-stressed coastal regions, highlighting how shifting salinity, extreme weather



and competing water uses are reshaping local livelihoods and ecosystems. Professor Jenia Mukherjee emphasized the importance of co-created, community-driven solutions. Participants reflected on traditional, institutional, and nature-based approaches to water governance, underscoring the need for adaptive, inclusive, and collaborative frameworks to enhance resilience and ensure sustainable water management in the Sundarbans and beyond.




## **ENGAGE Session:** Co-production of Knowledge and its Role in Social Resilience in the Sundarban Deltas

The second part of the ENGAGE session, titled "Co-production of Knowledge and Its Role in Social Resilience in the Sundarbans Delta," focused on how locally grounded knowledge can strengthen resilience in climate-affected coastal communities. Speakers discussed how best practices can be translated into policy, how resilience knowledge is created and shared, and how stronger collaboration between researchers, practitioners, and policymakers can turn ideas into action. Participants were divided into three groups, academia, policymakers, and practitioners, to reflect on how knowledge is produced, valued, and applied across different sectors. The discussion emphasized the importance of community participation and context-specific learning in developing practical, inclusive solutions for sustainable coastal management.








## **V2V and Turning Tides Session:** Blue Carbon Ecosystems and Coastal Communities: Inclusive Governance for Strong Marine Tenure, Equity and Livelihoods



On the second day of ULAB's 7th CSD Annual Conference on Sustainable Development, the session on "Blue Carbon Ecosystems and Coastal Communities" brought together leading scholars and practitioners to examine the intersections of climate science, coastal livelihoods, and inclusive governance. Moderated by Dr. Sisir Kanta Pradhan, the session highlighted how Blue Carbon ecosystems, mangroves, salt marshes, and seagrasses serve not only as powerful carbon sinks but also as cultural, economic, and social lifelines for millions.

Dr. Prateep Kumar Nayak emphasized that discussions on Blue Carbon remain overly "carbon-centric," often overlooking the everyday realities of coastal communities. Echoing this concern, Dr. Martin Zimmer cautioned that carbon credit markets frequently benefit corporations more than the communities safeguarding these ecosystems, underscoring the need for equity and ethical governance.




Presentations from Indonesia, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, and India showcased the diverse pressures facing Blue Carbon ecosystems from tourism-driven degradation in Karimunjawa National Park to governance gaps in Bangladesh's coastal regions and livelihood tensions in Malaysia's Perhentian Marine Park. Speakers included Prof. Indah Susilowati, Dr. Jewel Das, and Prof. Gazi Md. Nurul Islam collectively stressed that conservation must align with community rights, local knowledge, and fair benefit-sharing.

Dr. Navya Vikram Nair highlighted the growing risk of "blue grabs," where restoration and carbon market initiatives advance faster than social safeguards, raising questions of who governs and who benefits. Closing the session, Dr. Mohammad Emran Hasan demonstrated the potential of geospatial technology for monitoring Blue Carbon stocks while warning that exclusionary development continues to threaten coastal ecosystems.The Q&A reinforced widespread concerns about data deficits, policy contradictions, and accountability. Overall, the session underscored that Blue Carbon solutions must integrate justice, participation, and multidimensional governance to truly support the communities who depend on and protect these ecosystems.

## ACCESS4ALL Session: Quantifying the Impact of Climate Education and Emerging Green Skills

The day 03 of the conference opened with the interactive workshop building on the EU-funded ERASMUS+ project "Adapting Climate Change Education, Skills, and Sustainability for Advancing Locally-Led Solutions (ACCESS4ALL)." The session brought together academicians, policymakers, and practitioners to co-develop measurable indicators for assessing climate change education in Bangladesh and across the Global South. Participants engaged in group activities to design a "green skills matrix," followed by a poster display and synthesis discussion.





Discussions focused on barriers to integrating climate education into curricula, bridging the gap between classroom learning and green industry needs, and advancing hands-on, community-based approaches.

The workshop featured insights from education and sustainability experts and concluded with reflections from the three principal investigators, Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid (BRAC), Dr. Ayaz K. Rabbani (IUB), and Dr. Samiya Selim (ULAB), emphasizing collaboration and the localization of sustainability education with consortium partners from Maastricht University and Heidelberg University.

## ACCESS4ALL Session: Strengthening Policy Pathways for Climate Education in Bangladesh

This high-level policy panel with international partners aimed at translating community-led climate knowledge into teachable, measurable green skills. The session began with Edwin Koekkoek, First Counselor and Team Leader for Green Inclusive Development at the Delegation of the European Union in Bangladesh, who emphasized the need for integrated and collaborative approaches to accessible



education. To set the stage for the dialogue, a policy brief developed under the ACCESS4ALL project was presented. Following the presentation, representatives from the Bangladesh Accreditation Council, National Skills Development Authority, Bangladesh Technical Education Board, and the Technical and Madrasa Education Division offered their reflections on the national policy. Professor Mesbahuddin Ahmed, Chairman, Accreditation Council, emphasized the need for greater public engagement, noting that "We must build public awareness and a collective understanding of the importance of environmental and green education, so that it becomes an integral part of our national curriculum."

The session concluded with an open dialogue involving educators and policymakers, followed by closing remarks from ULAB Vice Chancellor Professor Imran Rahman. He emphasized that university courses should also be evaluated by students to ensure ongoing improvement in teaching and learning. Professor Imran further reaffirmed ULAB's commitment to advancing climate literacy and sustainability leadership in Bangladesh.

## Workshops

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### Green Skills for Climate Change Professionals Course



The Green Skills for Climate Change Professionals course under the Erasmus+ funded Adapting Climate Change Education, Skills and Sustainability for Advancing Locally-Led Solutions (ACESS4ALL) project, equips early-career practitioners with practical, inclusive, and locally grounded climate adaptation skills. The first six-week pilot successfully blended expert-led sessions, peer learning, and field visits, empowering participants to apply green skills to real-world challenges and develop project ideas, including climate adaptation plans for vulnerable communities.

Building on this strong foundation, ACCESS4ALL has now relaunched the second phase of the professional certificate course. This ongoing phase continues to expand practice-based, future-ready learning by integrating local contexts with the essential green skills increasingly demanded by today's climate and sustainability workforce.



## Shift Installation of Solar-Powered Irrigation Systems (SIP) and Agrovoltaics System

The University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) team inaugurated the solar-powered irrigation systems (SIP) for the communities in Narayanjot and Ronochandi, Panchagarh, on December 17–18, 2024. This initiative, funded by USAID Bangladesh through the #SHIFT project, aims to transform farming practices in the region by introducing sustainable solar irrigation solutions and agricultural practices. The launch event included a comprehensive workshop that featured technical training on the maintenance and operation of the SIPs, along with a field visit to ensure proper system functionality. This effort underscores the impact of renewable energy in enhancing agricultural resilience and supporting local communities.





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## The Dice Project

The DICE project, a collaborative effort between Lund University and Center for Sustainable Development, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, focuses on the non-economic loss and damage (L&D) resulting from extreme climate events. Its goal is to reshape the understanding, measurement, and governance of L&D, specifically in relation to climate change impacts.



The ULAB CSD team, led by Tahura Farbin, Sanzida Alam, Md. Sakhawat Hossain, and six Data Enumerators, successfully conducted fieldwork in several villages in Munshiganj Union and Gabura Union for the DICE project from February 20th to 28th, 2025. The team conducted 420 surveys, 20 semi-structured interviews, and 8 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) within the community. These interactions provided deep insights into the non-economic losses experienced by community members. The team also learned about the strength and adaptive strategies of the Munshiganj and Gabura Unions stewards, who continue to face increasingly frequent and severe climatic events.

## Training for Farmers under ENGAGE4SUNDARBANS

In January 2025, the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) organised a training session with local farmers in Protapnagar, Asasuni, Satkhira.
The session was attended by around fifty participants, including farmers, agricultural experts, community members, market linkage personnel, and project collaborators from the Sajida Foundation and CSD.

Following introductory and ice-breaking activities, a collaborating member of the project, Mr. Nurul Islam Biplob, from SAJIDA Foundation, briefly outlined the project goals and training activities. He mentioned that the project partners had collectively decided to cultivate four specific crops: Fennel, Beetroot, Mustard, and Sunflower. He further emphasized that the participants were selected from diverse backgrounds, some being full-time farmers while others engaged in different professions.





In the final session, Md. Faisal Imran from CSD, ULAB, shared his expertise and encouraged participants to practice intercropping- growing additional crops alongside the main crop on the same land. He highlighted an innovative farming method that is being applied by Indian farmers, which allows for year-round, multiple crop cultivation on a single plot. This technique enables the farmer to continue harvesting throughout the year, thereby ensuring a consistent cash flow. To support his presentation, he showed a documentary video of the farming method and explained their cultivation system in detail. Additionally, he encouraged and shared the knowledge with farmers to produce organic fertilisers and insecticides themselves. Such practices could significantly reduce overall production costs and enhance sustainability.

## Training and Field Visit under PROTIBESH



The Center for Sustainable Development (CSD); University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) led a significant project titled PROTIBESH, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The overarching objective of this project was to assess and quantify the valuation of ecosystem services (ES) within several Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) across the ecological zone of Sylhet and the Sundarbans region of Bangladesh. The services would evaluate the community dependence on multiple resources such as fire-wood and fodder collection, fish and crab hunting, agricutural related associations such as growing different crops in the KBA and farming associations such as poultry and duck farming, livestock raising.

This project marked CSD's first large-scale household-level data collection effort. All members of the CSD team played active roles, leaving their individual contributions in the project. The data collection activities were carried out throughout the month of January 2025. To prepare the field team for this rigorous task, CSD organised two comprehensive training sessions for the associated data collectors on January 11th and January 21st. For operational efficiency, data collectors were organised into five regional teams: Lawachara National Park area, Ratargul swamp forest area, Tanguar Haor, Hail Haor, and Sundarban, the mangrove forest area.

Each team was responsible for conducting household surveys within their designated ecological zone, capturing both qualitative and quantitative data related to the local population's interactions with and dependency on biodiversity and ecosystem services.

The PROTIBESH project not only strengthened CSD's field-based research capacity but also fostered inter-institutional collaboration, built technical skills among data collectors, and contributed to the broader discourse on sustainable natural resource management in Bangladesh.



## ENGAGE Project: Research Data Collection and Field Implementation Monitoring



On February 14, 2025, the ENGAGE research team conducted a comprehensive field visit as part of two parallel research initiatives. The first research focused on the valuation of the Ecosystem Services by the pollinators of the coastal region in Bangladesh. As part of the pollinator valuation study, Md. Faisal Imran collected extensive field data from multiple sunflower and mustard plots, adopting diverse observational angles and methodologies to ensure a robust dataset.

Simultaneously, the second research, titled Understanding Neighbourhood Dynamics in Community Resilience, was led by Sawda Yeasmin, with the support of Co-Principal Investigator Atia Fairuz. The research team conducted four Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and one Key Informant Interview (KII) with community members, targeting a deeper understanding of local social networks such as bonding and bridging relationship, diversified capitals of the targeted communities, and adaptive strategies in the face of environmental shocks and stress.





Additionally, the entire ENGAGE team visited all five implementation fields to monitor progress and engagement directly with the participating farmers. The farmers expressed great satisfaction upon receiving agricultural land through the project initiative. During that time, farmers were in the process of preparing their land for cultivation. In the soil preparation phase they used both organic and inorganic fertilizers to ensure optimal soil health and productivity. Following land preparation, the farmers planned to cultivate four selected crops as part of the project intervention: Beetroot, Fennel, Mustard, and Sunflower. The project expects the implementation process will help them upscale their life and livelihood.

## Stakeholder Convening and Writing Workshop at Heidelberg University



On May 23rd, 2025, Heidelberg University hosted a North-South exchange on climate change education in Germany. The Adapting Climate Change Education, Skills and Sustainability for Advancing Locally-Led Solutions (ACCESS4ALL) team from ULAB and IUB shared their experience piloting green skills curricula and developing MOOCs for students and professionals, contributing to global efforts to integrate climate into higher education.

## Visit at the Graduate Institute, Geneva (IHEID), Switzerland

On March 7, 2025, Md. Faisal Imran traveled to Geneva, Switzerland, to meet with Dr. Christophe Gironde, Senior Lecturer in Development Studies, and Mrs. Lucile Mougea at the Graduate Institute, Geneva. This meeting served as a preparatory engagement for the upcoming workshop titled "Scaling Up Co-developed Experimentations and Solutions for Sustainability" held at Geopolis, University of Lausanne. The workshop aims to foster interdisciplinary exchange among researchers and practitioners from India, Bangladesh, and Switzerland who collaborate with local communities in the co-development of sustainable solutions to strengthen social resilience.




During the meeting, they engaged in in-depth discussions on the knowledge and insights derived from grassroots-level interventions. They also critically reflected on the opportunities and challenges of scaling up Solution oriented Research for Development (SOR4D) initiatives, taking into account the diverse social, political, and economic contexts, as well as the constraints experienced in our real-world laboratories situated in India,Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, and Bolivia.

## Visit at the IUCN Headquarters at Gland, Switzerland



On March 11, 2024, Md. Faisal Imran, Senior Research Associate Cum Lecturer visited the headquarters of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Gland, Switzerland, for a meeting with Ms. Flore Lafaye de Micheaux, Head of UNEP Consultation. Alongside Dr. Emilie Cremin, Coordinator, SOR4D project, UNIL, he was hosted by IUCN officials to engage in an in-depth discussion on the conceptual framework of Nature-based Solutions (NbS). NbS are increasingly recognized as strategic interventions that address societal challenges through the protection, sustainable management, and restoration of natural and modified ecosystems- yielding benefits for both people and nature.

However, the conceptualization and operationalization of NbS remain complex and highly context-dependent, which continues to be a focal point of ongoing research. This visit provided a valuable opportunity to deepen his understanding of the evolving NbS framework and to refine his approach to integrating it more intentionally within his research and practice.

## STRIVE Research Project Fieldwork

Tahura Farbin (Lecturer & Research Associate), Asraful Islam (Research Assistant), and Ummay Habiba (Lecturer & Senior Research Associate) from the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh successfully completed ethnographic fieldwork for the STRIVE Research Project from 4th February to 6th March 2025 and 17th April to 29th April.



This research, jointly undertaken by Meridian Institute and ULAB CSD, explored the Blue Carbon Economy through the lens of stewardship, governance, and inclusive, community-based solutions, especially considering Bangladesh's complex geopolitical realities and governance systems. The fieldwork was conducted in Shihortoli and Nill Dumor villages of Munshiganj Union, where the team engaged in immersive ethnographic observations, informal and structured interviews, and forest walks near the communities. Through the interactions, the team uncovered powerful and often untold stories about forest access, community dependence on the Sundarbans, and the challenges faced due to complex permit systems, increasing restrictions, and illegal forest incursions.

## Field visit to monitor progress under ENGAGE (April 9, 2025)



On April 9, 2025, the ENGAGE team members Md. Faisal Imran (Senior Research Associate), Sawda Yeasmin (Research Assistant), and Atia Fairuz (Research Assistant) from the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), visited Protapnagar in Satkhira, Bangladesh. The purpose of the visit was to complete the rest of the research data collection and to follow up on the progress of machinery installation under the ENGAGE project.

As part of the project intervention, two machines are being introduced in Protapnagar: a beetroot powder processing machine and an oil extraction unit. Farmers have been discouraged from cultivating oilseed crops such as mustard, sesame, and sunflower due to the lack of local oil processing facilities. While beetroot grows well in Protapnagar's soil, the area's remote location makes transporting fresh produce to urban markets costly and inefficient. To address this, the project is installing a beetroot powder processing unit to extend shelf life, reduce waste, and help establish a sustainable supply chain linking Protapnagar with markets across Bangladesh.





Both machines are currently under construction at a nearby workshop in a city close to Protapnagar. During the visit, the ENGAGE team closely monitored the progress of the machinery development and confirmed the expected delivery date with the manufacturers.

## Field Visit with Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)

On June 23-26th, ULAB CSD's Lecturer and Research Associate Sadia Lena Alfee and Research Assistant Atia Fairuz, visited Matarbari in collaboration with Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) to observe ongoing entrepreneurship training with the women-led Matarbari Boutiques, who represent the recent development-induced land displaced families. The team facilitated focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) with communities affected by land acquisition in Dholghata, where ongoing development threatens local livelihoods. They also took part in the training workshops for displaced women artisans about social media handling and business entrepreneurship.





During the sessions, residents voiced deep psychological distress, mistrust toward institutions, and a strong demand for land rights-based training delivered with empathy and cultural sensitivity. The visit underscores the importance of participatory, community driven approaches and trust-building as essential foundations for effective and inclusive development interventions aimed at protecting the rights and dignity of displaced settlers.

## Rethinking Social Protection for Coastal Fisheries: AABS National Workshop




The AABS workshop, titled "Rethinking Social Protection in Enabling More Effective and Equitable Fisheries Management in Coastal Bangladesh" organised by Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) under the Asia-Africa Bluetech Superhighway (AABS) project funded by IIED and supported by the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), ULAB brought together experts and practitioners to rethink how social protection can more effectively serve Bangladesh's small-scale fisheries. The workshop was an ode to the resilience of Bangladesh's coastal communities - an ode to the effective and equitable social

protection, and a heartfelt tribute to the enduring nexus between human well-being and conservation.

Participants from a wide range of cross-sectoral backgrounds actively explored inclusive policies, stronger institutional capacities, and sustainable financing to uplift coastal communities. CSD team members Md Faisal Imran, Md Sharafat Chowdhury, Sawda Yeasmin, Atia Fairuz, and Md Sakhawat Hossain Saikat actively contributed to conceptualising and conducting the workshop.




## Study Tour to CCDB Climate Centre



In December 2024 and August 2025, students from the Biodiversity and Nature Conservation and Environment and Sustainability courses at ULAB participated in two immersive study tours to the CCDB Climate Park in Maona, Gazipur.

Led by faculty members Md Faisal Imran and Md. Nuralam Hossain (IN), and supported by CSD research assistants, the visits engaged over 130 students across both semesters. These field experiences offered students a unique opportunity to explore climate-smart, place-based innovations including agroeclogy, Nature-based Solutions (NbS), and Locally Led Adaptation (LLA). Through hands-on observation, students learned how climate-resilient agricultural systems and community-led initiatives are being implemented to address Bangladesh's growing vulnerability to natural hazards, ranked 7th among the world's most disaster-prone countries (Germanwatch).




## ACCESS4ALL Team Strengthen Climate Education Collaboration in Europe



The ACCESS4ALL team joined a stakeholder workshop hosted by Maastricht University (UM) on 10–11 September 2025 to advance North–South collaboration in climate change education. The sessions focused on translating community-engaged learning into online formats that reflect Global South realities, while discussions with UM faculty deepened insights on MOOC development, sustainability, and integration into academic curricula beyond Bangladesh.

The visit aimed to consolidate learnings from the pilot phase, plan the next steps of the project, and strengthen long-term sustainability. As an extension of the workshop, the team conducted an experimental learning session at Bugenhagenschule Alsterdorf in Hamburg on 12 September 2025.. The visit also introduced the team to the Klimaschule+ initiative, showcasing innovative approaches to climate education and sustainability planning in European schools.



# Events Organized and Events Attended

## Climate Change Adaptation, Dispossession and Displacement (ADD+) Project Inception




CSD-ULAB's ADD+ Sundarbans team joined the project's inception meeting in Bangkok, Thailand (Jan 23–26), collaborating with global partners to explore how climate adaptation may unintentionally lead to dispossession and displacement.



Funded by ISR, the ADD+ project spans Bangladesh, India, Ghana, and the Philippines, and aims to address the critical gaps in understanding how climate change adaptation (CCA) measures in Bangladesh may adaptation (CCA) measures in Bangladesh may inadvertently lead to displacement, dispossession, and gendered inequalities.

## Public Lecture at the University of Lausanne (UNIL) Switzerland, Under Solution-Oriented Research for Development (SOR4D)



On March 17, 2025, at Geopolis, University of Lausanne (UNIL), two research teams from the SOR4D programme, ENGAGE and SCALAGRO, presented their ongoing work, highlighting pathways from grassroots engagement to the scaling up of interventions. The presentation was followed by an open feedback session involving researchers and students from UNIL, which fostered rich dialogue on the future of sustainable agriculture. This exchange provided an important platform to critically assess the scalability of co-developed solutions and to explore innovative strategies for agroecological transformation.

Dr. Samiya Selim, Director & Professor of CSD, ULAB and Md Faisal Imran, Senior Research Associate & Lecturer from CSD, ULAB presented their findings from a transdisciplinary research under Engage4Sundarbans.

## Solution-Oriented Research for Development (SOR4D) Seminar "Resilience in the Sundarbans"

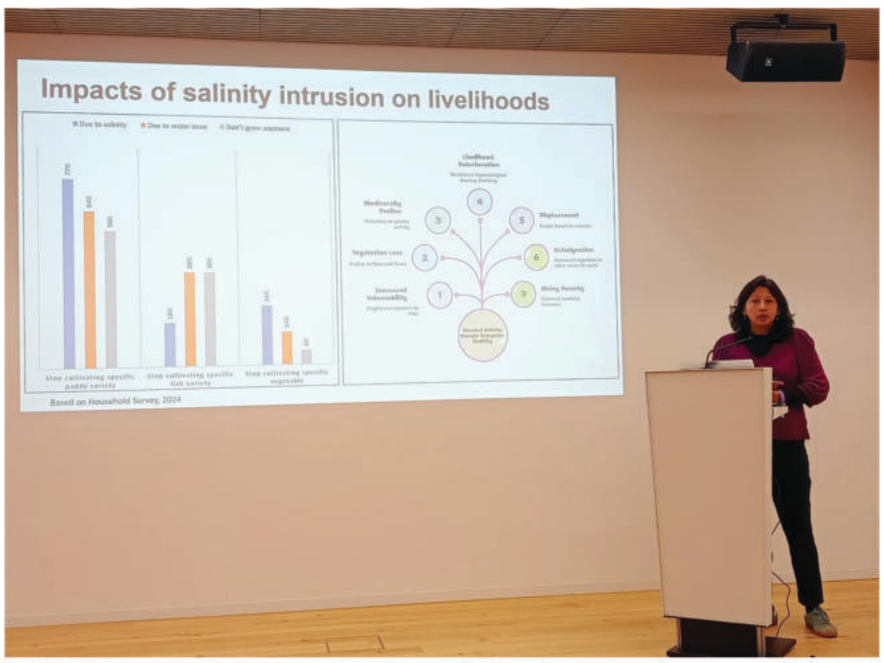


On March 18, 2025, the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) participated in a seminar organized by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), co-funder of the Solution-oriented Research for Development (SOR4D) programme, alongside the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). The seminar, titled "Resilience in the Sundarbans", was opened with a poignant reflection from a project participant: "How long can free birds live in a cage?"-a statement capturing the lived realities of communities in transition.

The project seeks to enhance social resilience through collective farming practices led by coastal communities residing in the vulnerable zones of the Ganges-Brahmaputra delta, at the fringes of the Sundarbans forest. It critically examines the concept of riskscapes as perceived by small-scale farmers in Pratapnagar, Bangladesh, and Kumirmari, India—specifically how these communities navigate managed retreat, a complex process influenced by socio-political dynamics and exposure to environmental hazards such as flooding, storm surges, and salinization. Through comparative analysis grounded in archival research, household surveys, and ethnographic fieldwork, the research team synthesizes cross-border experiences of climate-induced challenges.

Central to the project's vision is the revival and governance of community-managed commons, intended to foster collective action, reinforce social cohesion, and build long-term resilience in socio-ecologically fragile landscapes.

Dr. Samiya Selim, Director & Professor of CSD, ULAB and Md Faisal Imran, Senior Research Associate & Lecturer from CSD, ULAB presented their findings from a transdisciplinary research project under Engage4Sundarbans.



## Writing Workshop at a Chalet in Gryon, Switzerland, Under Solution-Oriented Research for Development (SOR4D)



From March 20 to 23, 2025, the ENGAGE team comprising members from Bangladesh, Switzerland, and India, convened for an intensive writing workshop at a chalet in Gryon, Switzerland. Over the course of four days, they were engaged in collaborative writing and critical reflection, with a particular focus on advancing our pending research paper on the concept of 'riskscapes' in the coastal Sundarbans of both India and Bangladesh. In addition to manuscript development, the team also reviewed the progress of the ongoing project and strategized future pathways for scaling interventions aimed at enhancing the resilience and well-being of coastal communities in the region.

Dr. Samiya Selim, Director & Professor of CSD, ULAB and Md Faisal Imran, Senior Research Associate & Lecturer from CSD, ULAB attended the workshop.

## 14th Asian Fisheries and Agriculture Forum

Dr. Samiya A Selim, Professor & Director at CSD-ULAB, participated in a high-level roundtable at the 14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum in New Delhi, India on February 13, 2025. This Science-Policy Dialogue focused on "How Can the Vulnerability to Viability (V2V) Transitions Approach Help Achieve Sustainable Fisheries in India and Asia?" The high-level roundtable brought together experts from academia, policy, and practice to examine key factors influencing small-scale fisheries (SSF) vulnerability, explore policy pathways for enhancing viability, and outlined actionable recommendations.

As V2V Country Coordinator for Bangladesh, Dr. Samiya highlighted the main vulnerabilities and the key elements of viability in the small-scale fisheries context of Bangladesh, elaborating on how the V2V transitions approach is relevant in addressing these vulnerabilities and strengthening pathways.





## Green Skills and Climate Change Adaptation: Through a Southern-Led Lens in Bangladesh

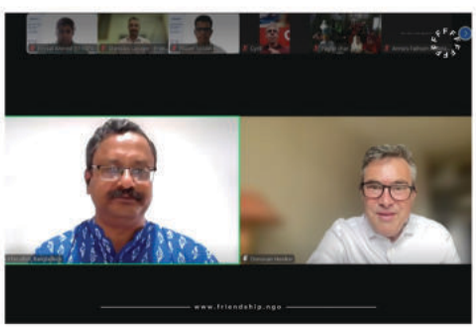
On Earth Day 2025 (22nd April), CSD-ULAB hosted a policy roundtable titled "Green Skills and Climate Change Adaptation: Through a Southern-Led Lens in Bangladesh" to address the national green skills gap and the need for coordinated education and policy efforts. This discussion was aimed at bringing relevant and timely discussion on the future trajectory of green growth in Bangladesh.



A dynamic roundtable discussion, with government representatives, policy advocates and makers and academics, examined the current landscape of green workforce development in Bangladesh, emphasizing the rising demand for green skills and the need for coordinated policy action to address existing gaps.

## The Connected Schools Project 2025

Dr. Haseeb Irfanullah, Visiting Research Fellow at the Center for Sustainable Development, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, joined the closing event of The Connected Schools Project 2025 as a guest and shared how the project, part of Friendship NGO's ongoing Inter-School Connectivity Programme, has created transformative learning experiences for both students and teachers.



The Connected Schools Project 2025 recently concluded with an inspiring virtual closing event, bringing together over 1,400 students from 34 schools across Bangladesh, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and Switzerland. It was the fifth edition of its 'Inter-School Connectivity Programme (ISCP)' running since 2021. The program was hosted in the climate-vulnerable river islands of northern Bangladesh and fostered empathy, understanding, and youth-led climate action across continents through interactive virtual and in-person exchanges. As climate challenges grow more urgent, initiatives like these reinforce the importance of global solidarity and youth engagement in shaping a resilient and sustainable future.

## Third United Nations Ocean Conference Panel

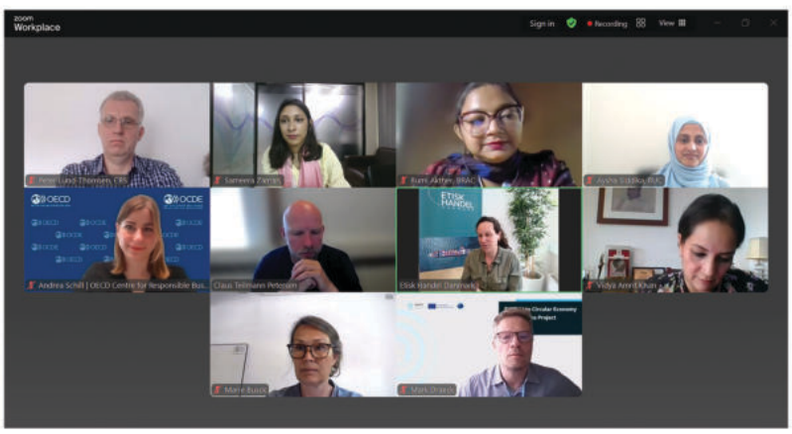
Dr. Samiya Selim, Professor & Director at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), ULAB, recently spoke at the #UNOC3 panel, The Ocean That Feeds Us Pavilion, where she shared insights from the ongoing research on incentive-based programs in Bangladesh.

Her talk highlighted the Rice Compensation Scheme and emphasized the importance of linking alternative livelihood programs for fishers with climate-resilient skills and job pathways. These locally grounded strategies showcase how equitable tools and incentives can support small-scale fishers and strengthen coastal stewardship making sustainability a shared responsibility, not a burden.




## Webinar on New Insights on Potential and Impacts in Local Recycling Systems in Bangladesh

CSD-ULAB Director Professor Samiya Selim and Research Associate, Sameera Zaman, presented findings from a recent study on climate change impacts across Bangladesh's textile recycling value chain in a webinar organized by Etisk Handel Danmark, along with researchers from Copenhagen Business School, Roskilde University, and BRAC University on June 17, 2025. The webinar highlighted insights from the project "Climate Change and Global Value Chains in Bangladesh" and offered a platform for discussion on the future of textile recycling. It also emphasized the need for inclusive policy approaches that recognize the role of informal recyclers and address structural inequalities to build a climate-resilient circular economy.



## CSD at BRAC's Frugal Innovation Forum (FIF)

"If commitment for mitigation is not demonstrated, adaptation has always been a challenge. To me, NbS is protecting natural resources bases so that you can adapt better" – stated by Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Adviser to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of Bangladesh, at Frugal Innovation Forum (FIF) 2025 organized by BRAC.




This year, the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), ULAB, and SAJIDA Foundation actively participated and shared their grounded knowledge under ENGAGE4Sundarbans at FIF 2025. This two-day residential conference provided a platform for development practitioners, climate practitioners, entrepreneurs, and the larger development ecosystem to openly discuss emerging climate challenges and adaptation solutions in the Global South.

"The climate crisis is not a crisis for our grandchildren. It's not even a crisis for our children. It's for us. Right now. In our own lifetimes" – stated by Asif Saleh, Executive Director, BRAC, at FIF 2025.

Over the last few years, this solution-oriented research, followed by 'experimentation,' worked with people's commons, stimulated local governance, and challenged the ongoing 'managed retreat'. Md. Faisal Imran from CSD, was the proud residential exhibitor of FIF 2025.

## INSERM Climate Change and Health Seminar



The INSERM Climate Change and Health Booster Program was launched at the beginning of 2024, with the aim to better understand the impacts of climate change on human health and to promote interdisciplinary collaboration.

Dr. Samiya Selim, Professor and Director of CSD, ULAB, presented at the INSERM Climate Change and Health Seminar in Paris on 30 September 2025. She highlighted global climate adaptation pathways and the importance of integrating health into adaptation policies, drawing from her research with coastal communities in Bangladesh. Furthermore, she emphasized the need for transdisciplinary collaboration to strengthen the nexus between climate change, health, and mental well-being.



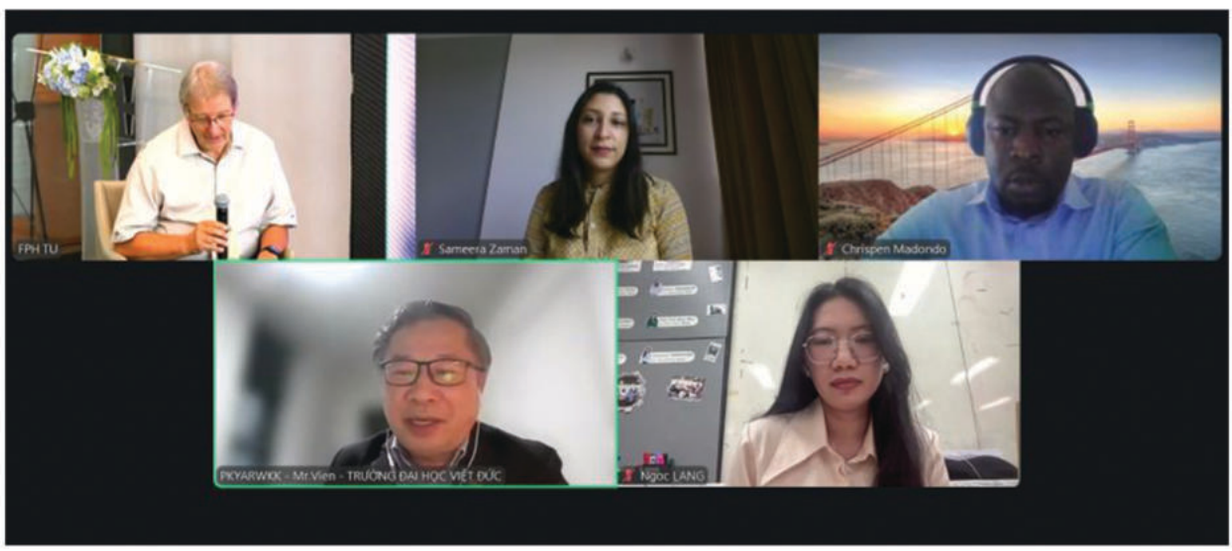
## Life, Land & Society International Seminar




Dr. Samiya Selim, Professor and Director of CSD, ULAB, presented at the Life, Land and Society International Seminar hosted by the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies (PLAAS), University of the Western Cape, on October 8, 2025. Her talk was on, *"Governing the Commons: An Ethnographic Exploration of Local Adaptation Responses to Complex Global Problems,".*

## GLOW Conference 2025

Sameera Zaman, Lecturer-cum-Research Associate at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), ULAB, was invited as a panelist at the GLOW Conference 2025 on 10 October, hosted by Thammasat University under the Erasmus+ CBHE GLOW Project. She shared her experiences with transdisciplinary teaching and learning through her work in Sustainable Development education and the Erasmus+ ACCESS4ALL project, highlighting approaches that integrate sustainability, participatory pedagogy, and experiential learning.



## Paper Presentation by Young Scholars Session at the CPD Climate Week 2025, held on 19 October 2025




Ms. Nayma Akther Jahan joined as a judge for the Student Paper Presentation session titled "A World Beyond Crises: Climate Solutions That Work," organized at the CPD Climate Week 2025 arranged by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). The session focused on energy and sustainability-related issues and featured research presented by young scholars from diverse academic and geographic backgrounds.



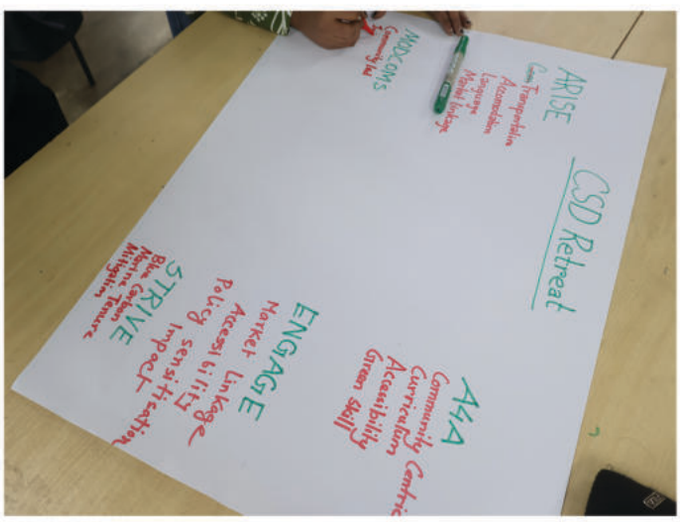

In her role, Ms. Jahan applied a rigorous, policy-informed lens to evaluating the papers, emphasizing innovation, methodological strength, and real-world relevance to climate and energy challenges. Her constructive feedback encouraged participants to strengthen both their analytical depth and practical applicability. Her engagement enhanced the academic quality of the session while supporting an inclusive platform for emerging researchers. Her presence as a judge at CPD Climate Week 2025 highlighted CPD's commitment to nurturing youth-led research and advancing informed dialogue on sustainable energy transitions and climate-resilient development pathways.

# CSD Annual Retreat 2025

The CSD Annual Retreat, held in February 2025 in the serene natural landscape of Sreemangal, brought the entire team together for reflection, collaboration, and strategic thinking. Over the course of the retreat, team members revisited their shared journey at CSD, discussing key achievements and lessons learned, while collectively brainstorming innovative ideas to shape a long-term vision for advancing sustainable development in 2025 and the years ahead. Through interactive group sessions, workshops, and thematic mapping exercises, the team co-developed strategic directions that align with CSD's evolving research priorities. Beyond structured activities, the retreat also offered valuable time for colleagues to reconnect with nature, unwind, and strengthen team bonds.










# Launch of the Department of Environmental Studies and Sustainability (ESS) at ULAB

In 2025, the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) marked a major milestone in sustainability education with the establishment of the Department of Environmental Studies and Sustainability (ESS) under the School of Environmental and Life Sciences (SELS). As Bangladesh faces rapidly evolving environmental challenges, the new department aims to build a generation of graduates equipped to respond with scientific rigor, innovative thinking, and community-driven solutions.

**A New Academic Home for Sustainability Education**

The School of Environmental and Life Sciences is envisioned as a space where science, society, and sustainability converge. The ESS Department embodies this mission by integrating environmental science with interdisciplinary perspectives from ULAB's liberal arts curriculum. Students are encouraged to think critically, work collaboratively, and engage directly with real-world challenges through research, fieldwork, laboratory practice, and community-based projects.





**Program Vision, Mission, and Academic Goals**

The program offers a strong foundation in environmental and sustainability sciences while developing students' analytical, communication, and problem-solving skills. It emphasizes an integrated understanding of social, ecological, and policy dimensions of sustainability, preparing graduates for careers in conservation, ecology, climate adaptation, environmental management, development, and research. Through this holistic approach, the Department aims to cultivate leadership, ethical responsibility, and a lasting commitment to environmental protection and social well-being.

**Learning Environment and Student Opportunities**

ULAB's long-standing excellence in sustainability, reflected in global rankings and institutional practices, strengthens the ESS program. Students benefit from close mentorship, hands-on training, field exposure, and pathways to research and internships. With Bangladesh at the frontline of climate impacts, the program equips graduates with skills urgently needed in a rapidly changing world.

# International Funded Projects

**ACCESS4ALL**

ULAB secured the Erasmus+ CBHE Grant for the project titled Adapting Climate Change Education, Skills and Sustainability for Advancing Locally-Led Solutions - ACCESS4ALL in 2023. In collaboration with BRAC James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, Independent University Bangladesh, Maastricht University, and Heidelberg University, ULAB aims to co-produce and co-develop a southern-led curriculum. Climate education in the Global South has long been shaped by narratives and practices from the Global North, often leaving a gap between higher education and employability in green transformation fields in countries like Bangladesh. To address this, the ACCESS4ALL project was launched. Its mission is to reshape curriculum development for climate change in the Global South and bridge the gap between academic learning and employment opportunities in Bangladesh. ACCESS4ALL is developing short courses to equip students and professionals with demand-driven green skills, empower and mobilize communities in climate-affected areas, and create a globally-accessible repository for the resources.

The project has taken one step further in closing this knowledge gap and broadening access to climate education with its innovative approach in transforming its co-developed course for emerging climate professionals into an MOOC. This online course, incorporating diverse pedagogical methods, aims to introduce learners, both within the Global South and beyond, to climate issues unique to this context. Together with the in-person course, this MOOC represents a groundbreaking approach, with a strong focus on community engagement and the Southern context, equipping students with essential green skills for a sustainable future.

**ARISE**

ARISE (Addressing Resource Use Through the Lens of Innovation, Sustainability, and Equity), was launched in January 2024 as a collaborative initiative by CSD-ULAB and Young Power for Social Action (YPSA), funded by the Environmental Defenders Collaborative (EDC). The project exemplified a transdisciplinary action-oriented approach, fostering collaboration across diverse sectors and expertise. This initiative, spearheaded by CSD-ULAB, brought together academic institutions, NGOs, community organizations, and market players to address the socio-environmental challenges arising from extensive blue economy developments in the Maheshkhali region.

The ARISE project prioritized an inclusive and integrative framework, involving multi-stakeholder partnerships with YPSA, Jothashilpo, and Broque. This collaboration leveraged expertise in environmental justice, community empowerment, expert designers, and market development, ensuring the initiative addressed the interconnected dimensions of environmental sustainability, social equity, and economic resilience. These partnerships were vital in bridging academic research with ground-level action, creating pathways for meaningful change

**AABS**

Asia-Africa BlueTech Superhighway (AABS) is a seven-year initiative (2023–2030) funded and implemented by WorldFish in partnership with multiple global collaborators. The project aims to transform aquatic food systems across Asia and Africa by strengthening food and nutrition security, enhancing employment and income opportunities, and promoting climate-resilient management of marine and coastal resources. In Bangladesh, where fish is the primary animal-source protein and fisheries support millions of livelihoods, AABS leverages South-South collaboration to improve sustainability, resilience, and prosperity in vulnerable coastal communities. AABS focuses on two major work packages in Bangladesh: Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture (IMTA) and Incentives for Coastal Conservation and Fisheries Management. Through environmental assessments, farmer and market surveys, and the development of IMTA demonstration sites, the project aims to scale climate-smart aquaculture systems that integrate fish, shellfish, and seaweed production. Additionally, AABS works to build strong institutional and policy environments for incentive-based coastal conservation. By combining research, innovation, and community participation, AABS supports both national production goals and long-term coastal resilience in the face of escalating climate impacts.

**ENGAGE**

The project 'Elicit Needs-based Grassroots Action through Cross-Group Engagement (ENGAGE)' aims to enhance social resilience through Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and diverse livelihood options in the Sundarbans. The project aims to overcome the boundary of the social-political system of the Sundarbans and facilitate transboundary knowledge exchange by creating a consortium of academics, NGOs and governments from India and Bangladesh. Its goals include supporting adaptive practices within the Sundarbans riskscape, exploring, understanding, and mapping climate risks and disaster impacts on the Sundarbans, and stimulating situated adaptive mechanisms to harness social resilience in and of the delta through trans-disciplinary engagement to craft high impact pathways across (post) development interventions at the ground level, unleashing cross-learning possibilities from bilateral exchanges across transboundary Sundarbans.

While the academic partners ULAB, Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, and University of Lausanne focus on research components, implementation partners SAJIDA Foundation and Sundarban Jana Sramajibi Manch (SJSM) work on-field in both countries to implement integrated farms and inland fisheries in the vulnerable Sundarban region. Through these interventions, the project works to create a community-to-community knowledge sharing platform with a participatory approach to involve the local communities. For this, academics, NGOs, Governments and communities come together to work towards enhanced social resilience in one of the most climatic-risk prone areas in Bangladesh and in India.

**STRIVE**

Securing Blue Carbon Ecosystems for Sustainable Fisheries and Climate Adaptation in the Sundarbans (STRIVE) is a pioneering initiative aimed at developing an inclusive, community-centered framework for the management of blue carbon ecosystems in the Sundarbans, Bangladesh. With our local partner LEDARS and funded by The Meridian Institute, STRIVE is a two year project. By drawing on global expertise and leveraging strong relationships with local fishing communities and area management authorities, STRIVE seeks to establish a sustainable stewardship model for blue carbon systems. This model prioritizes the knowledge, care, and active agency of local communities in managing these critical ecosystems.

STRIVE integrates action research, capacity building, and policy advocacy to empower communities with secure tenure rights and the skills needed to engage with blue carbon markets. A key focus is on strengthening local institutions and enhancing women's leadership to ensure that blue carbon and climate action initiatives are equitable, just, and rooted in community-driven solutions. Key activities include empowering community institutions by strengthening local organizations and women-led groups to amplify their voice and influence in managing blue carbon ecosystems.

**V2V**

The Vulnerability to Viability (V2V) Global Partnership is a transdisciplinary knowledge network supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada under its Partnership Grants Program. It unites members from Africa, Asia, Canada, and other regions with the shared goal of addressing the challenges faced by small-scale fisheries (SSF) globally.

The V2V Global Partnership focuses on identifying and addressing the diverse factors that contribute to the vulnerability of small-scale fishers. Through collaborative engagement with fishing communities, NGOs, governments, and academic partners, the partnership works to enhance the viability of SSF by fostering resilience, sustainability, and equitable governance systems. The V2V network emphasizes community-engaged, transdisciplinary research and operates in six Asian countries—Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, and Thailand—and six African countries—Ghana, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and Tanzania. By bridging physical, cultural, and disciplinary boundaries, V2V creates a platform for knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, and co-developing solutions to address the impacts of global change on small-scale fisheries.

Ultimately, the V2V Global Partnership aims to empower small-scale fishers to transition from vulnerability to viability, ensuring their sustainability and contributions to food security, livelihoods, and ecological health worldwide.

**ADD+**

The Climate Change Adaptation, Dispossession, and Displacement (ADD+) project, funded by the Institute of Social Research (ISR), aims to address the critical gaps in understanding how climate change adaptation (CCA) measures in Bangladesh may inadvertently lead to dispossession, displacement, and gendered inequalities. While many CCA programs exist, they are often fragmented, unevenly implemented, and risk contributing to maladaptation, where adaptation efforts harm rather than help vulnerable populations.

The ADD+ project focuses on mapping the relationship between climate change adaptation (CCA) and displacement by investigating how adaptation strategies in coastal Bangladesh affect local communities, particularly in terms of land use, displacement, and livelihood disruptions. It also examines the gendered impacts of CCA programs, analyzing how these initiatives disproportionately affect women, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and power imbalances.

**SHIFT**

Traditional farming practices heavily rely on fossil fuels for irrigation and chemical fertilizers, causing environmental degradation and climate change. USAID, through the Bangladesh Advancing Development and Growth through Energy (BADGE) project, has awarded the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) grant funding to address these challenges with the groundbreaking project "Strengthening Households with Integrated Farming through Energy Transformation (SHIFT)."

SHIFT aims to revolutionize conventional approaches to agriculture and energy usage, fostering sustainability and climate resilience. By leveraging solar energy for irrigation, SHIFT seeks to promote sustainable food production while providing essential freshwater support to Tetulia Upazila, Panchagarh District. Moreover, by converting waste into biofertilizers and optimizing electricity usage, the project aims to reduce chemical dependency and enhance community livelihoods.

**CALL**

Climate Action at Local Level (CALL) is a nationwide initiative supported by the Embassy of Switzerland and implemented by a consortium of nine Swiss NGOs, led by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and co-led by Swisscontact. Guided by a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA), the programme aims to build a climate-smart and disaster-resilient Bangladesh by empowering communities and local actors in key climate-vulnerable hotspots, including the southwest coast, northwest riverine regions, the Jamuna char areas, Cox's Bazar, and urban-industrial zones in Dhaka and Chattogram. Bangladesh's high climate vulnerability demands urgent, coordinated, and locally led action, CALL responds to this need by aligning local-level initiatives with national climate policies and frameworks.

As a facilitator within this consortium, the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) supports the co-creation of an Adaptable Roadmap to strengthen locally led climate action across the programme. CALL emphasises localisation through partnership-based approaches, ensuring that 18 Implementing Partners (IPs) lead on-the-ground interventions while Consortium Partners (CPs) act as facilitators and knowledge brokers. The initiative also promotes innovative partnership models, cost-sharing with local governments, and collaboration with local businesses. Through reviewing existing practices, capturing global lessons, and developing integrated action pathways, CALL aims to institutionalise effective, inclusive, and sustainable climate action at the local level in Bangladesh.

# Publications (Journal/ Book chapters/ articles/Op-Eds)

## Journal Articles

**1.** Budrudzaman, M., Bärnighausen, K., **Selim, S. A.**, & **Irfanullah, H.Md.** (2025) Water, Water, Everywhere, Nor Any Drop to Drink: Qualitatively Unraveling the Nuances of Non-Economic Loss and Damage in Bangladesh. Local Environment, 1-20, 2496158. https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2025.2496158 (Taylor & Francis)

**2. Farbin, T.**, **Irfanullah, H. Md.**, & **Selim, S. A.** (2025). Whispers at the tea stall: social networks, situated choices and the relational dynamics of environmental migration. Local Environment, 1–20. https://doi.org/10.1080/13549839.2025.2519370

**3.** Govender, M., Das, J., Paul, S., Shuvo, S. S., **Selim, S. A.**, & Glaser, M. (2025) Toward blue justice in blue growth: Insights from local discourses on coastal megaprojects in Bangladesh, Ocean & Coastal Management, 269, 107766. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2025.107766

**4.** Hossain, M.K., Sutanto, J., Handayani, P.W., Anasthasia, A. H., **Bhowmik, J.**, & Frings-Hessami, V. (2025). An exploratory study of electronic medical record implementation and recordkeeping culture: the case of hospitals in Indonesia. BMC Health Serv Res 25, 249. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-025-12399-0

**5.** Hoque, M.M.M., Mizan, M.M.R., **Hossain, M.N. et al.** (2025) Spatial distribution and diurnal variation of particulate matters and gaseous air pollutants of Dhaka city, Bangladesh. Discov Atmos 3, 10. https://doi.org/10.1007/s44292-025-00031-z

**6.** Imran, Md. F., **Irfanullah, H. Md.**, Tanu, P. B., Shuprio, S. I. M., & **Selim, S. A.** (2025). Rooted in reality: Critical contextualization of nature-based solutions in coastal areas of Bangladesh. Nature-Based Solutions, 100289. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nbsj.2025.100289

**7. Jahan, N.A., Chowdhury, S.A., Irfanullah, H.Md., Selim, S. A.** (2025) Uptake of Solar Energy by Industries in Bangladesh: Driving Factors, Barriers, and Opportunities. Cleaner Energy Systems. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cles.2025.100205

**8. Lisa, S.A.**, Hasan, M.M. (2025), The Role of Teaching Practicum and Classroom Management Training in Preparing Early-Career Educators in Bangladesh: A Reflective Qualitative Study. Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris. https://doi.org/10.24042/btdgdh96

**9.** Lilier K, Dalglish SL, Reñosa MDC, **Selim S. A.**, Raihan ST, et al. (2025) The "most beautiful place" where "it's not possible to live": A qualitative study of relational well-being in an area of climate vulnerability, Bangladesh. PLOS ONE 20(9): e0325972. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0325972

**10.** M. Rasheduzzaman, M. S. Hasan, **N. A. Jahan**, A. Jawad and M. M. Hossain, "Assessment of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Mitigation Strategies for a University in Bangladesh," in IEEE Access, vol. 13, pp. 153741-153763, 2025, doi: 10.1109/ACCESS.2025.3605517.

### Book Chapters

**1.** ActionAid Bangladesh (2025). 10 Years of Water Discourse in Bangladesh: The Contribution of Water Museum. ActionAid, Dhaka. [Haseeb Md. Irfanullah and Samiya A. Selim are co-authors]

**2. Jahan, N.A.**, Habib, T., **Chowdhury, S.A.**, **Habiba Iqbal, U.** (2025). The Nexus of Migration: Economic, Sociopolitical, and Environmental Impact Factors in Bangladesh. In: Ullah, A.A. (eds) Handbook of Migration, International Relations and Security in Asia. Handbooks in Asian Studies. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-8001-7_103-1249.

### Reports

**1.** The Ocean Defenders Project (2025). Ocean Defenders: Protectors of our ocean environment and human rights. The Peopled Seas Initiative, Vancouver, Canada. https://oceandefendersproject.org/project-publications/-ocean-defenders-protectors-of-our-ocean-environment-and-human-rights/

### Policy Briefs

**1. Selim S. A.**, Pinto R and Bladon A. 2025. Strengthening incentives for coastal stewardship in Bangladesh.

## Op-Eds, Blog Posts, and Other Publications

**1.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (September 01, 2025). Ecological sustainability amid an uncertain refugee crisis. The Business Standard

**2.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (August 30, 2025). We must do better in mainstreaming health into climate action. The Daily Star

**3.** Jahan, N.A., Chowdhury, S.A. (August 10, 2025). Biogas and Biomass: Fuelling a cleaner, greener future in rural Bangladesh. The Financial Express

**4.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (Jul 19, 2025). Scaling up nature-based solutions requires policy commitment. The Daily Star

5. Jahan, N.A., Irfanullah, H.Md. (2025, July 14). Reducing the costs of just transition for Bangladesh's RMG workers. The Financial Express

**6.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (2025, July 14). Are Good Practices In Peer Review Really Good?. EditorsCafé

**7.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (2025, July 04). The climate budget for FY26 is disappointing. The Daily Star

**8.** Imran, Md.F. (2025, May 22). From the Sundarbans Delta to the Alps: Advancing Transdisciplinary Collaboration for Transformative Change. Mobility Grant Blogs.

**9.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (2025, Apr 24). How does 'Conservation Diplomacy' look like for Bangladesh? The Business Standard.

**10.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (2025, Apr 22). Five climate action reforms that are doable. The Daily Star.

**11.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (2025, Apr 23). How to write impactful research articles (Part 2). Rising Scholars Blog.

**12.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (2025, Apr 15). How to write impactful research articles (Part 1). Rising Scholars Blog.

**13.** Ifanullah, H.Md. (2025, April 09). Peer Review Has Lost Its Human Face. So, What's Next? The Scholarly Kitchen.

**14.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (2025, April 02). Rethinking nature-based solutions research in Bangladesh. The Business Standard.

**15.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (2025, Mar 26). Five Trends In The Publishers-Sustainability Nexus. The Scholarly Kitchen.

**16.** Irfanullah, H.Md. (2025, Mar 18). Why Should Publishers Conserve Nature? The Scholarly Kitchen.

**17.** Lisa, S.A., Farbin, T., Selim, S.A. (2025, February 04). Rethinking alternative livelihoods in Bangladesh: Who benefits, who loses? The Business Standard.

**18.** Lisa, S.A. (2025, January 31). Reclaiming our stories: The case for Bangladeshi literature in English curricula. The Business Standard.

**19.** Conrad, L.Y., Anderson, R., Irfanullah, H.Md., & Meadows, A. (2025, Jan 30). Ask the Chefs: Making Sense of Changing US Policies. The Scholarly Kitchen.

**20.** Lisa, S.A. (2025, January 01). The language of climate change: Can global terms capture local realities?. The Business Standard.

**21.** Zaman, S. (2025, Nov 23). Education in crisis: Why simply knowing isn't enough. The Financial Express

**22.** Künzel, V., Adil, L., Farbin T. (2025, Nov 06). Policy Responses to Climate Impacts in Light of Fragility, Instability, and Climate Security Dynamics. How to Manage the Double Burden?. GERMANWATCH

**23.** Jahan, N.A. (2025, Jun 21). From plastic peril to jute promise. The Financial Express

# CSD Team Members



## Dr. Mahmood Hossain

Dr. Mahmood Hossain is a Professor and Head of the Department of Environmental Studies and Sustainability, and Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). With extensive experience in forest ecology and environmental research, his work focuses on the complex dynamics of mangrove ecosystems, carbon stock assessment, nutrient cycling, and ecological monitoring to promote sustainable forest management. His research has contributed to developing allometric biomass models for carbon estimation and examining forest litter decomposition's nutrient dynamics in natural and restored forest ecosystems. Additionally, his research extends to exploring the adaptive mechanisms of mangrove species in response to climate-induced stressors and anthropogenic pressures to enhance restoration strategies and ecosystem resilience in fragile coastal environments. Before joining ULAB, he served as the Vice-Chancellor of Khulna University from the year 2021 to 2024.

## Dr. Samiya A. Selim



Dr. Samiya Selim is a Professor at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). She previously served as the Director of the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) until October 2025. She has studied and worked in both the UK and Bangladesh the past 15 years in the field of environment conservation, climate change and sustainable development. Her specialization is in the areas of ecosystem based management, sustainable livelihoods, social-ecological systems, climate change adaptation and resilience, ecosystem services, and science-policy interphase. Skilled in integrating social and natural sciences to address complex global challenges, particularly in the context of coastal social-ecological systems. Over the last 15 years, she has consulted for international organizations such as UNICEF, FCDO, USAID, UNDP, and ILO. Currently, Dr Samiya serves as the Country Coordinator of a global project on small-scale fisher resilience and vulnerability in addition to holding leadership roles, including Co-Chair of the Human Dimension Working Group.

# CSD Team Members



## Dr. Haseeb Md. Irfanullah

Dr.Irfanullah is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Center. He is a biologist-turned-development facilitator, who often introduces himself as a research enthusiast. Over the past 26 years, Dr. Irfanullah has worked for different international environment and development organizations, academic/research institutions, funders, and government agencies in different capacities. He frequently writes, talks and conducts research on natural resource management, environmental governance, climate change adaptation, disaster risk management, nature-based solutions (NbS), locally led adaptation (LLA), and scholarly communication to stir conversations on these concepts and approaches. He is also an advocate of evidence-guided policy and practice change for effective conservation and resilience building efforts. Dr. Irfanullah has a PhD in aquatic ecology from the University of Liverpool, UK.

## Dr. Shahana Afrose Chowdhury



Dr. Shahana Afrose Chowdhury is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the Center for Sustainable Development with over 12 years of teaching experience and expertise in leading and managing renewable energy and sustainable development projects. Her extensive background includes research and development in renewable energy, climate change, environment, agriculture, and rural development, with significant contributions to the academic and development sectors in Australia and Bangladesh. Dr. Shahana holds a PhD in Green Chemistry from Monash University, Australia, and a Research Master's degree in Food Chemistry from RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia. Currently, she teaches sustainable development courses under the General Education Department. Her work exemplifies a commitment to sustainable practices and impactful research.

# CSD Team Members



## Sameera Zaman

Sameera Zaman is a Lecturer and Research Associate at the Center for Sustainable Development, ULAB since 2021. Through her research, she manages to pursue her passion for finding sustainable solutions to new-age problems and understanding the complex interactions of society with nature. Her current research areas include sustainability in education, sustainable behaviour, circular design, and the socioeconomic impacts of climate change. She completed her MSc. in Environmental Sciences from the University of Freiburg, Germany and has over 5 years of experience working on national and international research projects.

## Tahura Farbin



Tahura Farbin, is a Lecturer and Research Associate at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, where she leads and contributes to research on climate justice, environmental migration, and loss and damage in climate-vulnerable regions of Bangladesh. At CSD, her work combines academic instruction with applied, community-embedded research. She teaches courses on climate change and sustainable development while spearheading initiatives such as Greening ULAB and organizing national and international dialogues on sustainability and blue justice. Her research spans non-economic loss and damage, climate-induced displacement, blue-carbon governance, and the socio-political dynamics of coastal adaptation. She has led multi-method field studies, coordinated interdisciplinary research teams, and collaborated with national and international partners to produce evidence-based insights that challenge inequitable adaptation and development practices. Her ongoing work through projects like STRIVE, ADD+, DICE advances justice-oriented approaches to climate governance and community resilience.Since 2020, she has been involved with the DICE project at Lund University Centre for Sustainability Studies (LUCSUS). During her time as a Visiting Research Fellow at LUCSUS, she led the Bangladesh case study on Loss and Damage, identifying gaps in policy and practice to inform the design of L&D policy in Bangladesh.

# CSD Team Members



## Nayma Akther Jahan

Nayma Akther Jahan is a Lecturer and Research Associate at the Center for Sustainable Development, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh. She was the focal of SHIFT (Strengthening Households with Integrated Farming through Energy Transformation) USAID BADGE (Advancing Development and Growth though Energy) project. The project looked into the energy-food-water nexus and resource sharing model in Tetulia. She is also a focal of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) Climate Resilient Grant for 2023, and involved in ACCESS4ALL projects. She has experience of working with European Union, JICA funded projects. Her research focuses on sustainable energy, industrial sustainability, gender and climate crisis, Industrial revolution and use of Artificial intelligence and Big data in the socioeconomic context etc. Before joining ULAB, she worked as a Deputy manager at Dnet and Assistant Consultant at EQMS Consulting Ltd. With more than eight years of industry, academia, development, and consulting expertise, Nayma thrives in achieving customer success with customized, creative solutions. Along with her expertise in both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, she has a track record of leading teams and collaborating across functional boundaries to accomplish important goals.

## Md. Faisal Imran



Md Faisal Imran is a multidisciplinary academic and development practitioner currently serving as a Senior Research Associate and Faculty Member at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). He brings over a decade of professional experience in research design, implementation, and project management. His expertise spans biodiversity and nature conservation, Nature-based Solutions (NbS), Locally Led Adaptation (LLA), and social–ecological systems. He serves as the project focal for ENGAGE4Sundarbans, the Asia–Africa Bluetech Superhighway (AABS), and the CALL initiatives that collectively aim to address pressing societal challenges, generate equitable economic benefits, and promote biodiversity conservation.In his early career with USAID, Mr. Faisal gained extensive experience working with a wide range of stakeholders, including government institutions, international organizations, NGOs, and grassroots communities. He has contributed to numerous research and development initiatives involving data management, analysis, and evidence-based decision-making.

# CSD Team Members



## Sadia Lena Alfee

Sadia Lena Alfee is a Research Associate at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), ULAB and also a part-time Lecturer at the General Education Department. She has completed her bachelor's in Soil, Water & Environment from the University of Dhaka and did her master's in Environmental Risk Management from the University of Glasgow, UK. She holds the prestigious Commonwealth Scholarship and has several publications in international journals. She works across human-environment relationships in the context of pollution and climate change induced risks. Her work includes public perception analysis and community injustice associated with waste emissions from mega-development projects. She led the ARISE (Phase 2) as the project manager where she worked on reducing development-induced injustice towards coastal displaced communities. Having dynamic experience in both natural and social science disciplines, Sadia strives to reduce the science-policy gaps reflected in her scholarly works on natural hazard-induced toxicological risk databases for river sediments and decision-making strategies for sustainable alternatives for plastic banning. She is currently exploring pathways to build community resilience in the face of two planetary boundary problems - pollution and climate change.

## Md. Tanim Hasan



Md. Tanim Hasan is the Admin Officer at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). He completed his Bachelor's and Master's in Economics from Khulna University. He handles the center's financial matters, including project billing, accounts payable, payroll, and budgeting. He approaches all aspects of any job with a positive and hard-working mindset and is passionate about finding solutions to any challenges.

# CSD Team Members



## Sawda Yeasmin

Sawda Yasmin is a research assistant at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). With an MSc and BSc in Statistics from Khulna University, she has extensive experience in statistical analysis and modeling. A dedicated member of Project ENGAGE4Sundarbans, she documents project processes and analyzes household survey data. Previously, she worked as a data analyst on a feasibility study for a new maintenance workshop under the Ministry of Railway, Bangladesh. Currently, she is developing a research idea in sustainable development.

## Isra Tahiya Islam



Isra Tahiya Islam is a Research Assistant at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). She completed her Bachelor's degree at ULAB, with a major in English and Humanities, and a minor in Sustainable Development Studies. Alongside her role at CSD, she also serves as an English Speaking and Listening Instructor at the Center for Language Studies (CLS). Her research interests lie in the politics of language, psycholinguistics, and the correlation between environment and culture. Isra has also worked as a Campus Ambassador for Teach for Bangladesh (TFB), advocating for inclusive and high-quality education for all. She is currently engaged in the European Union-funded Project, ACCESS4ALL.

# CSD Team Members



## Md. Sakhawat Hossain Saikat

Md. Sakhawat Hossain Saikat is a Research Assistant at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). He holds both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Disaster and Human Security Management (DHSM) from the Bangladesh University of Professionals (BUP). His research interests lie at the intersection of disaster risk management, renewable energy, and climate change adaptation. He is currently involved in several projects focusing on renewable energy transitions, loss and damage assessment, climate action planning, blue carbon initiatives, and small-scale fisheries.

## Md. Sharafat Chowdhury



Md. Sharafat Chowdhury is a Research Assistant at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). He completed his bachelor's and master's degrees in Geography and Environment from Jahangirnagar University. He is expert in digital cartography, geostatistical and spatial analysis, GIS(Geographic Information Systems), and remote sensing, with extensive research experience in land use modelling, climate and environmental modelling, hazard risk mapping, and GIS-based statistical and machine learning techniques. Sharafat has authored several high-impact publications, some contributing to SDG-17. At CSD, he works across interdisciplinary projects, providing expertise in cartography and qualitative research on socio-ecological systems. His current work focuses on coastal stewardship, improving the livelihoods of small-scale fisheries, assessing displacement-induced vulnerabilities, and supporting the localization of climate action.

# CSD Team Members



## Nusrat Jahan Esa

Nusrat Jahan Esa is a Teaching Assistant at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) and is pursuing her undergraduate degree in English Literature at University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB). Her research interests encompass postcolonialism, existentialism, the study between environment and culture, and Loss and Damage. She has previously served as an English Speaking and Listening Instructor at the Center for Language Studies (CLS). Nusrat has also contributed to publications such as the Singaporean Journal - Borderless, The Business Studies, and Dhaka Tribune. Currently, she is engaged in the ISR-funded project, CiCADD.

## Rizwana Noorain



Rizwana Noorain is an Intern at the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD). She graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from Swinburne University of Technology Sarawak. Before joining CSD, she was involved in various youth-centered sustainability initiatives in Malaysia. As an alumna and mentor in the Sarawak Youth Green Leaders (SYGL) Program, she guided participants in developing biodiversity conservation projects and contributed to youth capacity-building efforts. She also played a key role in establishing the Sarawak Youth Network in Conservation (SYNC). At CSD, she supports communications, project documentation, and outreach activities, and assists with ongoing initiatives including the ACCESS4ALL project and the launch of the new Department of Environmental Studies and Sustainability (ESS).



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