

## Building Climate Resilient Migrant-Friendly Cities

### Main Outcomes

- The participants of this short course are well capacitated to advocate towards climate resilient migrant friendly cities.
- Participants have created their own individual and city level plans to cultivate the learning into actual results.
- The networking opportunities offered to the participants with ICCCAD, ACCCRN and all the guest lecturers and facilitators will prove to be helpful in their future undertakings

### Overview of the short Course

The International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) at the Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB) organized and conducted their **7<sup>th</sup> Annual Urban Climate Change Short Course on “Building Climate Resilient Migrant-Friendly Cities”** in Dhaka, Bangladesh from May 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> 2018. A total of eight participants including municipality engineers from different municipalities in the coastal region, as well as town planners, architect, university students, urban practitioners and government officials participated in the course. The six day long course was designed in such a way that the participants gained the theoretical understanding of climate change related issues such as hazards and impacts of climate change in urban areas, adaptation and mitigation options and the concept of climate resilient and migrant-friendly cities. Participants also gained practical knowledge from group exercises, field trip, games and videos with the aim of better understanding existing problems in cities and towns of Bangladesh. At the end of the short course, participants presented their future plans to make their municipality climate resilient and migrant-friendly. They also shared their future involvements with ICCCAD, and their individual workplan to disseminate the acquired knowledge in their own locality. Through this short course, participants became a part of the ICCCAD Alumni, which further developed their interests to actively participate in future ICCCAD events.

### Summary of the Discussion

The short course was facilitated by **Dr. Saleemul Huq, Sarder Shafiqul Alam, Dr. Feisal Rahman, and Shaila Shahid** from ICCCAD, and was based on a mix of lectures and group works. Each presentation was followed by the participants’ engagement in group works, games, videos and group presentations, which increased their capacity to put their theoretical understanding into practice. Furthermore, some guest lectures were given by **Catherien Terwisscha van Scheltings**, Director of Wageningen Urban Resilience Project, **Dipal C Barua**, Founder and Chairman of Bright Green Energy Foundation, **Mostafa Quaium Khan**, Advisor, Bangladesh Urban Forum and **S M Mehedi Ahsan**, Urban Resilience Specialist, KfW. The guest lecture sessions covered past experiences and successful examples of climate change adaptation, solar energy towards mitigation, as well as policy approaches towards achieving the New Urban Agenda, and finally the importance of public-private partnership to implement urban resilience projects in cities and municipalities.

During the opening of the short course, participants were given a brief description of ICCCAD's vision to make a dozen of cities and municipalities climate resilient and migrant friendly. While talking about the overall objective of the short course, Dr. Saleemul Huq encouraged the participants to actively engage themselves in theoretical learning and participatory group works and prepare their own individual and city level workplan to implement in their own locality.

The first day of the short course mainly focused on theoretical understanding of climate change science, its hazards and impacts in urban areas and identifying the most vulnerable people in cities due to climate change.

Furthermore, participants learned that even though Bangladesh is amongst the lowest contributor of global (greenhouse gases) emission, it is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world. During the lecture session, a video was shown to the participants from which they also learned that human are the main culprit behind climate change. Those methods highlighted the fact that without proper mitigation and adaptation measures, the impacts of climate change will be exacerbated in the future. After the lecture session, the participants played a game on adaptation, from which they found out that women and children are the most vulnerable to climate change due to both socio economic factors and cultural discrimination.

The second day of the short course emphasized on the need for quality data for improved resilience in cities and municipalities, as well as the need to reduce urban poverty, as well as including gender and youth in inclusive planning and decision making process. While identifying the source of data in a group exercise, participants shared experience from their locality and found out that some data at local level are missing and access to quality data is limited. In those exercises, participants also came to the conclusion that sometimes implementers at grassroots level do not realize what kind of information they need to successfully implement a public project. During his speech, **Dr. Huq**, Director of ICCCAD pointed out that data collection is not the sole responsibility of the government. People can also contribute to collecting, gaining and using data at their own will, which will enhance public responsibility at local level. Afterwards, while talking about urban poverty reduction, **Mr. Alam**, Coordinator, ICCCAD emphasized that we need to focus on local problems and people's local expertise to ensure a bottom up approach which includes all stakeholders, making poverty reduction strategy sustainable. Participants learnt that population is a potential resource for Bangladesh and if their human capital resource is utilized properly, they can contribute towards economic growth, instead of becoming a burden to the society. From **Ms, Shaila Shahid's** lecture on policy approaches to gender and informality in cities, also it was realized that "gender" not only adheres to women, but is a concept of socially constructed role of men and women. In this context, marginalized people should be given priority while mainstreaming gender equity in inclusive planning. They need to be empowered physically, socially, economically, and politically. Empowering youth is also important in decision making processes, given that they will face the worst impacts of climate change in the future. Afterwards, participant's played a game called "the human chain game" from which they realized that



Dr Saleemul Huq at the opening ceremony



Participants engaged in Adaptation Game

local problems can only be solved by local people with their own expertise. Experts from outside cannot comprehend the specific needs and the most suited approach to the solution.



During the field trip of the Short Course

During the third day, participants visited three slum settlements in Gazipur and Dhaka to gain a hands on experience from the field. They found out that most of the slum settlements are concentrated near large industries and garment factories, which makes it easier for people to commute to their workplace. At the same time, however, people living in those areas are exposed to climate change hazards. One of the participants stated that

*“The slum settlements are so congested that sunlights cannot penetrate, those poor people even live under the ground, making them more vulnerable to flooding during excessive rainfall. This kind of situation is unimaginable”*

On the fourth day of the course, participants attended several talks on the concepts of urban resilient and migrant friendly cities and on Bangladesh’s policy approach towards achieving SDGs and the New Urban Agenda. In **Dr. Feisal’s** lecture on understanding urban resilience, he emphasized the systems approach towards urban resilience and why inclusive planning is necessary to enhance accountability and transparency. Participants learned about the necessity to identify and map all stakeholders, organizations and agencies to gain an understanding of how the city functions as a whole. In order to develop the framework of climate change adaptation, it is essential to study the potential impacts of climate change on those systems. After that, **Ms. Catherien**, Director of Wageningen Urban Resilience Project, talked about the concept of migrant friendly cities. From her talk, participants understood that every town or municipality requires tailor-made solutions according to the city’s local problems and characteristics. There should be a blend of both top down and bottom up approaches while undertaking any climate change adaptation plan. The originality of the landscape should be considered to better preserve the ecosystem resources. From **Mr. Barua’s** lecture, who is the Chairman of Bright Green Energy Foundation, participants also understood the concept of solar cities which can be an effective way to power small towns and municipalities in the near future. While implementing such kind of concept plan, local people’s inherent capacities should be harnessed to ensure better living conditions for the most vulnerable living in cities. Afterwards, while presenting the initiatives taken by ACCRN ICCCAD in Bangladesh, **Mr. Alam**, the country representative of ACCRN Bangladesh invited all the participants to join the ACCRN knowledge platform and share their knowledge with urban practitioners and different institutes, with the aim to come up with a holistic solution. During the last session of the day, **Mr. Quaium’s** lecture on the progress of Habitat III also informed the participants about the urgent need to ensure strong commitments from the national government which will foster the implementation of more inclusive, sustainable and equitable policies towards achieving SDG-11 “Sustainable Cities and Communities” and the New Urban Agenda.



During a lecture session by Catherien on the concept of migrant friendly cities

On the fifth day, Participants were asked to review what they had learned in the last four days and relate to their own locality to identify the core problems, their cause and their effect linkage within a problem tree diagram. In between the group exercise, **Mr. Mehedi, from KfW Bank** presented some successful examples of urban resilience projects in Bangladesh, from which participants learned that if successfully implemented, climate change adaptation measures have the potential to become popular among mass people, which leads to a growing demand of similar kind of projects. Engagement from all stakeholders is necessary to make any initiatives inclusive and people oriented. After focusing on problem tree generation, participants also worked in groups to find out the desired solution to the problems, the means to the solution and finally the outcome of the solution through objective tree generation. Through these exercises, participants learned that one single problem can be tackled through different approaches and that every opinion needs to be considered in the decision-making process.



During the group work presentation

During the last day, participants shared their course evaluation. According to their feedback, the combination of researchers and practitioners was excellent, the course was well designed with lots of practical examples, field visits and community engagement processes, which helped them to connect with the reality.

Each participant gave a brief presentation of their cities and municipalities and shared their plans to make them climate resilient and migrant friendly.

In the certificate award session, **Dr. Huq** invited all the guests and participants to the Third Annual National Conference on Urban Resilience to Climate Change to find an effective solution through dialogue at national level. He specified that the conference theme was “Building Climate Resilient Migrant Friendly Cities”. Finally, Dr. Huq thanked all the participants, facilitators, guest lecturers and others for their contribution to this successful event.



Group photo of participants and facilitators

#### Takeaway message:

It is clear that every city and municipality needs tailor-made solutions to make themselves climate resilient and migrant friendly. This is why we need to include local knowledge and expertise in the decision-making process. In order to mainstream the concept of climate resilient migrant friendly cities, sharing ideas at local level should be prioritized while ensuring the inclusion of all stakeholders, organizations and implementing agencies. It is expected that the participants will share their learnings in their own locality and work on their own individual plan to make cities climate resilient and migrant friendly. In this manner, local people can enhance their leadership capacity and provide advocacy to different stakeholders to come to a holistic solution.