

Step-down Training

Youth-led Climate Action

Venu: CCRC, Morrelganj

2023



COMMITTED TO BRING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

“I am yet another ordinary 20-year-old, but my work extends beyond raising awareness only. My initiatives include enlightening my community, networking, compiling databases on loss and damage, and assessing risk factors in vulnerable areas,” said Nasrin.

Raised amid the rustic beauty of Morrelganj in Bagherhat, Nasrin Akhter’s childhood unfolded against the picturesque backdrop of her grandparents’ home, nestled beside the flowing river Panguchi. However, her youth encountered a tempestuous twist in 2007 with the merciless arrival of Cyclone Aila. High tides became regular intruders, cascading every 2 to 3 months. Some areas succumbed to prolonged submersion, while others witnessed a swifter resurgence. The absence of proper barriers intensified the impact, rendering Nasrin’s once idyllic surroundings vulnerable to the relentless forces of nature.

“People in my area are shifting professions due to extreme risk factors resulting from climate change. I have seen many farmers give up their profession due to extreme salinity causing the loss of fertility of the soils,” said Akhter.

It wasn’t until 2022, during a climate change seminar that Nasrin found solace in understanding

the reasons behind these calamities. Empowered by newfound knowledge, she emerged as a climate change activist in May 2022, swiftly achieving a leadership role in June. Her focus centered around empowering youths in resilience-deprived regions, where 30% of her team comprises resilient women overcoming societal challenges of working outside in remote Bangladesh. One of her team’s accomplishments has been a campaign that focused on the reduction of the use of plastic, replacing it with the use of cloth in some of the local shops in Morrelganj. Future endeavors promise a dedicated focus on enhancing women’s and transgender participation in this crucial cause.

Yet, Nasrin remains acutely aware of the hurdles faced by her and her team, as local governments lag in addressing youth-related issues associated with climate change. Despite her tireless efforts, the elusive echo of consistent action from authorities leaves Nasrin and her team feeling helpless. Her earnest desire resonates—to amplify the voices of youths and secure acknowledgment of their volunteer contribution, fostering a collective commitment to sustained progress.

Written by **Saudia Afrin**