

# **TIMES of PANDEMIC**

**CSD Newsletter  
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**ULAB**  
UNIVERSITY OF LIBERAL ARTS  
BANGLADESH

# CSD NEWSLETTER 2020

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# Message from Director

## Samiya Selim

2020 has definitely been a year to reckon with! We had to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic and the havoc this created for all of us across the globe, alongside with several other natural and man-made shocks. It has certainly been a year to reflect on what is important in life, both in our personal and work lives.

In the wake of all this, it is with much pride that I share our Newsletter 2020 which captures how the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) team persevered, adapted and became a stronger unit under such trying circumstances. We were able to deliver our existing research projects - no small feat given the fieldwork we had to do during covid lockdown, and with the number of covid cases and deaths within our small team of 9. We switched to online teaching whilst bringing in innovation and creativity in the teaching process, published nine peer reviewed academic articles, mentored junior RAs and interns whilst working online, delivered our outreach programs with partners, and brought in two large international project grants. One of the crucial aspects of doing all this, as our worlds merged into a timeless and space less warp, was keeping our mental strength and work-life balance (somewhat intact) during it all!

There has been many reflections and learning from 2020 but one of the key ones I wanted to take forward to 2021 and actively work on - for CSD and for myself - is to address how we build more equitable and inclusive research partnerships, how we seek out fairer and more inclusive pathways in research collaborations, and be mindful of the impact our research has on the communities we work with.

From past experience, we have seen that often researchers, particularly from the Global North (GN), reach out to partners from the Global South (GS), with a previously designed research question. These questions tend to be formulated outside the social, cultural and ecological setting of the communities who are the focus of the research. We want to work towards more inclusive and equitable research pathways where we make time and effort to listen to the voices of the communities we work with. This includes the grassroots and community based organized who are best connected to the communities. We also need to advocate for flexible research funding streams that would allow us to accommodate such inclusive and participatory research. We are already seeing the need for this flexibility with the COVID-19 pandemic - how both funding bodies and existing funding projects are having to adapt the focus of their work to address new research agenda arising from the negative impacts of COVID-19.

We have to continue the dialogue between researchers and other stakeholders, both from the global north and south, on how best to address research questions that includes the voices of the primary users of that research. This will improve on transdisciplinary and co-designed research projects that are equitable in nature, and inclusive of all the stakeholders that are part of the research community. We will strive to do this more actively at CSD.

Wishing everyone a calmer and prosperous 2021!

## Dr. Samiya Selim

Associate Professor and Director  
Center for Sustainable Development  
University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh



# Editorial

## Working in the Times of Pandemic: Reflections from CSD

Rumana Sultana



Policies to control the spread of COVID-19 influence the way we work. Social distancing measures have closed physical workplaces; only a subset of works have had the option to move online. Academic institutions are better placed to function virtually.

The Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), the oldest research center of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), is a platform for students and researchers to learn about sustainable development, environment, climate change, and do research for scientific advancement and societal development. The center, despite the pandemic challenges, has set a good number of inspiring examples of resilience in the areas of online teaching-learning, research, communication, and outreach activities, enabling connections between the students and faculties and between the universities and the wider community.

### The bright side of online teaching-learning

A big concern amid the pandemic is the continuation of education at all levels. In an absence of COVID-19 vaccines, classroom-based education became a significant concern. Thus, Bangladesh has kept all its educational institutions closed since mid-March 2020. Given its long experience of online education through Moodle, the ULAB was one of the few universities of Bangladesh, which could make a quick but very challenging transition from the classroom to online teaching in the Fall trimester. As a part of the ULAB, the CSD also continued its online teaching-learning activities very effectively by adopting innovative options in three trimesters of 2020. The bright side of realtime interaction, brainstorming with discussion boards, engagement with no-task interaction, multiple communication tools, and recorded lecturers helped make the online classes engaging and enjoyable.

“We can communicate with course teachers without any hesitation in online platforms safely from homes... My classes were fantastic with the ability to pause, rewrite and re-watch lectures, communicate with the class in a chatbox and really see and remember what was taught.” — An ULAB student said during an online class

Another bright side of online learning is uninterrupted teaching-learning. Even when the CSD faculties were diagnosed with the COVID-19, teaching-learning was not stopped, but continued with support from responsible faculties, recorded classes, and related online quizzes.

### Research projects during pandemic

The pandemic also hit research project management hard. In 2020, the CSD was managing several projects, including greening Technical and Vocational Institutions, COVID-19 and climate change impacts on small-scale fisheries, health concerns of climate migrants, natural resource for governance for women leaders, clean technology solutions for artisanal fisheries, power in land administration, ocean sustainability, and understanding of vulnerability and viability of small scale fisheries all in collaboration with development organizations, and international and national universities. In the current pandemic context, project activities are being continued respecting the health measures and physical distance. Initially, the CSD faced some challenges to continue research projects. With time those challenges were addressed effectively with the mitigative measures.

Challenges	Mitigative approaches
Limitation in data collection methods (e.g., interviews, questionnaires)	Data collected virtually with mobile-phone interviews and zoom meetings
Limited likelihood of field visits	Local partners visited the field and collected data
Unresponsiveness of stakeholders to interview request	Flexibility in timing and more extended interviews
Possibility of losing non-verbal communications	Ensured interviewers with good connectivity and understanding ability

Outputs of some of the research projects were published or accepted for publication in indexed and impactful journals, including *Climate Risk Management*, *Disaster Medicine*, and *Public Health Preparedness*, *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, *Learned Publishing*, and *PLOS one*.

## Extended outreach activities

Despite the pandemic-imposed social distancing, the CSD team organized and participated in webinars, online panels, virtual roundtable discussions, press conferences, virtual lectures, and training sessions by harnessing the benefits of extended digital connectivity.

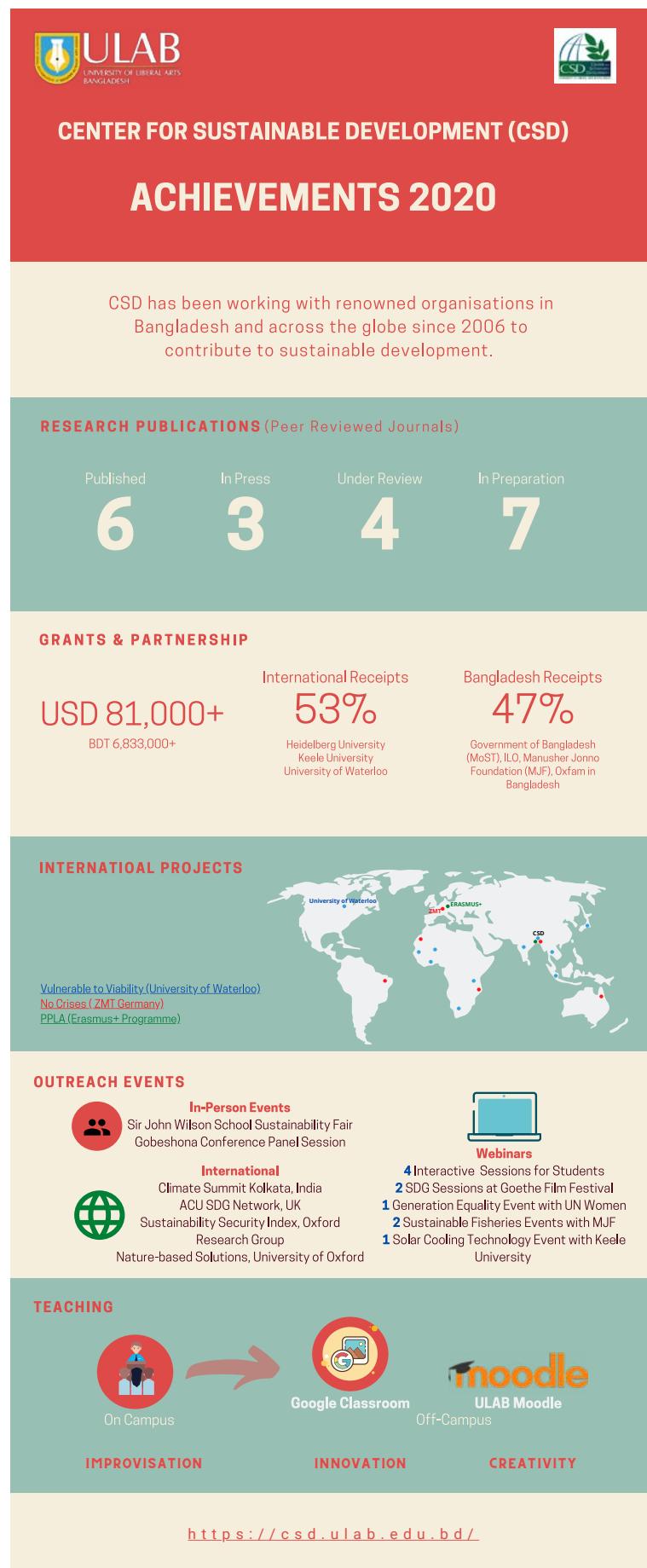
One example can be drawn from a CSD webinar (mentioned in this issue under SDG 7) on 'Clean technology solutions for artisanal fisheries in Bangladesh' in July 2020. Here discussants from the different parts of the world participated virtually. Another example is the webinar organized for students on 'Getting jobs in new normal', where students from ULAB and other universities participated virtually and learnt without hassle.

This transfer of conversations to digital pace was also advantageous for CSD team members, who joined online events organized by institutions in the United Kingdom, United States of America, Canada, and Germany, without hampering academic and research activities.

Although there have been silver linings in research, partnership making, interactive online teaching-learning, and outreach activities, at the end of the day, the CSD team is deeply saddened by the tragedies of the COVID-19 pandemic. These are tough days still continuing as we publish this newsletter. We need to come together as a group from a distance to find ways to survive this moment and set the improvements we wish to see in the CSD after the pandemic.

### Dr. Rumana Sultana

Assistant Professor and Research Associate  
Center for Sustainable Development  
University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh



### 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



## Ongoing Research Project: Health in Climate Migrants

Since March 2020, the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), in association with Heidelberg University, Germany, was conducting a research entitled "Health in climate migrants: generating qualitative accounts of health in the Bhola Slum, Dhaka, Bangladesh."

To interview climate migrants, the CSD team made up of four fresh graduates of ULAB, visited three slums, including Bhola Slum, Sattar Mollah Slum, and Rayer Bazar Slum. They conducted interviews with more than 60 climate migrants and ten health care people. While interviewing the team found out the kinds of disease slum people now had in Dhaka and the kind of diseases they had back home and where they go to get medical support (which was mostly the nearest drugstore and some private doctors). It was learnt that the unhygienic lifestyle and less support from the government made their lives unhealthier. It was alarming to note that these people did not realise how bad their living condition was.

Based on the collected data, the researchers from the CSD and Heidelberg University started working on a paper highlighting the various challenges migrants face in Dhaka city. Among them, health issues, issues related to shelter and food, migrants' safety and security in

the slums, and the constant fear of losing employment and earning livelihoods were the most prominent ones. The study emphasizes that the government should take-up the policies that address these issues to improve the overall quality of the lives of these migrants.

The second part of the research was on "Left Behind Communities in Bhola," which started in October 2020.

To collect data from the residents of Bhola district, the CSD research team visited six villages, namely North Shulij, Khejurgachiya, Betuya, Samraj, Madraj, and Mohammadpur under Char Fasson upazila.

The team consisted of Research Associates and graduate students from the ULAB. The interviewees included the residents whose families, relatives, or neighbours migrated to other cities for a better life. In October 2020, the team conducted 60 interviews. Most of the interviewees lived in khas land (government-owned land). These villages were significantly different from one another, in terms of the houses and the livelihoods. Nevertheless, the people living in these areas are mostly related to the fishing profession. Some areas, like Betuya, were suffering more from others in terms of availing of basic services from the local authorities.



*During fieldwork in Char Fasson*



*During fieldwork in Char Fasson*





## "Sustainable Living"— an Event at Sir John Wilson School

On 19th February 2020, Sir John Wilson School in Dhaka gathered some experts from different occupational fields and contributed to raising awareness about sustainability in best possible ways. The school principal, Sabreena Shakeer, delivered the welcome speech.



School students at the 'Sustainable Living Event'

The first session of the program covered presentations from the distinguished guest speakers on Sustainable Fashion, Animal Life Conservation, and Plastic Recycling. The second session included demonstration of a beautiful project on 'Sustainable Farming', a rap song on 'Climate Change' performed by six students of class 4, a fantastic experience-sharing by two students on 'Ethical tourism' around the country, and an exciting 'Climate Change Game' arranged by the CSD.



Dr. Samiya A Selim talking at the 'Sustainable Living' event

## Minor in Sustainable Development Studies: Impact and Further Opportunities

Satisfaction is an important component for humans to keep them motivated and engage them to achieve long-term goals. Likewise, student satisfaction is important for the well-being of the students, and it also helps the university to understand the student's knowledge and requirements. The student satisfaction depends on many variables, but basically, it lies in the services provided by their individual universities. Apart from the requirements of the university, students have their personal targets, plans, goals, aspirations, values, and needs.. Students who get diversified chances to explore usually also get the chances to explore more opportunities that might help them in their future career. In this case, minoring in Sustainable Development Studies (SDS) gives the students a chance to explore different sectors apart from their major subject.

### What is the Minor?

Minor is the second academic discipline, and usually, it sets apart from the majoring subject. It can sometimes support major subjects or be stand alone learning subjects as well. Students usually take minor subjects to diversify their learning on different areas.

### Why is it offered?

Minoring in SDS offers the students to expand their knowledge on environment and sustainability, and they will get a chance to expand their opportunity in different fields in the job markets. Multinational companies, banks, business, and NGOs are encouraged to "go green", and this is one of the reasons the ULAB offers the subjects which will help its students to stand ahead in the competition job market.

### What is the objective of this Minor?

The objective of the SDS minor is to make the students aware of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been introduced by the United Nations (UN). The minor subjects are designed to make the students understand the basics of the SDGs and incorporate the knowledge in their individual careers to prosper.

## **What about the courses under this Minor?**

There are eight courses provided to the students, and five of the courses should be taken to complete minors under SDS. Two of the courses are compulsory and three are elective courses. These courses have a mixture of natural and social science, research, fieldwork, ideas on farming, sustainable living and more. Students need to complete fifteen credits to complete a Minor in SDS.

## **Methodology**

We conducted a short survey on the students with SDS as their minor. We collected their feedback to understand the students' perceptions and problems. The survey was divided into two parts; one for the undergraduate students and one for the graduate. We interviewed 20 undergraduate students and 20 graduate students. These interviews were conducted through telephone calls. During the time of pandemic, it was the most effective way of conducting it.

For the undergraduate students, we asked them questions about their concern about sustainable development as their minor and followed up by their career aspiration that is related to their minor. We found the necessity to ask the students if they want to attend a short training or course related to their minor, and surprisingly, almost all the interviewees thought it was a good idea. This survey gave importance to undergraduate students' opinions, suggestions, and demands. It gave them a voice to add their opinions to help us organize the minor a bit differently.

For the graduate students, we organized the survey to understand how better they have understood about their environment and its importance. As some of them are working and some are doing business, in that case, how are they incorporating their knowledge of their minor studies? The graduate students' reviews were important to us because, on the basics of their answers, we can fulfill the demands of the undergraduate students who are yet to take SDS as their minor.

One of the vital purposes of this survey was to know if their minor has affected their overall grades or not. In response, the majority of the undergraduate students said that they are comfortable with the SDS courses and their requirements; therefore, their CGPA overall was positively affected. Some added that SDS helped them improve their overall CGPA. Most of them took SDS as a minor because they wanted to keep the door of opportunities open for the development sector. Most of the undergraduate students aspire to take their major related subject, but only a handful of the students want to take SDS in their higher studies.

Through this survey, we brought out the demands for short courses and training, which the students found as an excellent opportunity. Moreover, their demands

were to introduce more SD courses, and there should be more classes available for the students so that they do not clash with other class timing. Apart from that, the faculties are worth praising, but as the demands for the course increases; therefore, more faculties should be available to the students. Some of the major results of the survey are given below.

## **Thoughts about SDS in the lens of graduate and undergraduate students**

### **Summary (Graduate students)**

- Built a coherent understanding of sustainability and environment
- Raised leadership in sustainability related role playing
- Developed knowledge to incorporate sustainability related issues in career
- Added value to major
- Improved overall CGPA

### **Summary (Undergraduate students)**

- Strong perception about the development sector/ sustainability related job opportunities
- Motivation in development/sustainability related higher studies
- Explore further connection with the major courses
- Better impact on the CGPA
- Interest in SDG related short course/training
- Practice based curriculum
- Organize field trip
- Provide relevant internship and research opportunities as research assistant or data enumerator
- Exposure to external stakeholders to attend course related workshop, training, and dialogue
- Partnership with development and private sectors organizations
- Motivation towards diversified job opportunities beside major studies related jobs
- Career oriented counseling
- Cooperation in clearly understanding the topic.

## Way forward

- Organize more field trips
- Few practical based curriculum
- Encouragement needed to advocate students on the SDGs
- Promotions to attract students to take SDS as their minor

## Lived Experience (Graduate)

Themes	Variables	Lived experience about the impact
Knowledge	Built coherent understanding about sustainability and environment	A School of Business (USB) student, says that she knew about recycling, but she was not completely aware of it. Now that she has gained knowledge about sustainability, she knows the importance of recycling. She tries to recycle products as much as possible. She has a boutique, and she delivers her products to the customers in a cloth bag. She says that plastic bags are harmful to the environment, and she chose to use cloth bags for business instead of plastic bags.
Development	Developed knowledge to incorporate sustainability related issues in career	A student from the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) department shared her opinion on how she can use her SD minor knowledge in her workplace. <i>"My major is marketing, but I can still use the idea of sustainability at my workplace. For instance, I can give my opinion on a product and make sure that the packaging of the product is done without plastics."</i>
Value to the major	Added value to major	A student from the Department of English and Humanities (DEH) department shared that SDS has added value in her major studies, which is English. She also added that she wants to work in NGOs, and this is what she always wanted. This was the reason for her to take SDS as minor.
Impact on CGPA	Improved overall CGPA	Rhysa, a fresh graduate who majored in Finance, says that SDS has helped her to understand more about the environment. She also added, <i>"not only that, but SDS helped me improve my CGPA overall. Managing a good CGPA with Finance is tough, but my minor has helped me to balance it."</i>
Motivation for higher studies	Developed motivation to do further higher studies related to sustainability	Abeeda from the USB department is already leading a sustainable lifestyle. She shared her story during the interview that her father has a plant nursery, and she plans to take over the business right after she graduates. Abeeda also wishes to do a master's degree related to sustainability as she wants to work in the development sector.
Leadership for sustainability	Raised leadership in sustainability related role playing	A student, whose major is Media Studies & Journalism (MSJ), says that she advocates for conserving energy at home by switching off the lights and fans after leaving a room. She also added that she is practicing this with her friends and family.

## Lived Experience (Undergraduate students)

Themes	Variables	Lived experience about the impact
Higher studies	Motivation in development/sustainability related higher studies	A student, who is doing her internship program at the CSD, wants to study SDS for her master's degree. She added that " <i>I want to join NGOs, and for that I will have to take SDS for master's</i> ".
Relevancy with major	Explore further connection with the major courses	A DEH student, says that nothing matched her major studies better than SDS. She wants to explore different options, and she finds NGOs the safest career for any woman. She adds that working in an NGO will help her to work with a purpose.
Impact on grades	Better impact on the CGPA	A student from the MSJ department said that " <i>the curriculum of SDS does not require to memorise a lot of things rather encourage using practical examples in the answer scripts and It actually helped me to get a good CGPA</i> ".
Further training or short courses	Interest in SDG related short course/training	Almost all the interviewees thought that SDG related short course/training would be a great idea. This will give undergraduate students an opportunity to improve or develop their skills. The graduated students can join in to make their juniors aware of the work culture or share their experiences in their individual job fields.



Graduates Minored in SDS doing fieldwork in costal Bangladesh for the international project "No Crises"

## Research Assistants and Intern at the CSD



**Syed Tauheed Raihan** is a Research Assistant at CSD . As a students of Department of English and Humanities, he minored in Sustainable Development Studies (SDS) under the General Education Department (GED). He completed his internship at Bangladesh Petrochemical Company Limited, working as an Intern Researcher, primarily in plastic recycling.

Currently, at the CSD, Tauheed is working in the collaborative project with Heidelberg University, Germany, in producing policy papers on the internal migrants of climate change and their healthcare. He is also involved with small-scale fishermen project, focusing on conflict relations, COVID-19 response, fishing-ban, and communication technologies.

**Rafia Islam** is working as a Research Assistant at CSD by majoring in Human Resources Management (HRM) and minoring in SDS. She did her internship in 'Dutch Club Dhaka' and 'CSD' at a time from February to April 2020. Her main learning from the internship was 'Greening Institute' through various research works and market survey of sustainable products. She learned about professionalism and office culture by doing the whole work.



As a RA, she has recently worked with different projects related to Heidelberg University, women's life of fishing villages, Post-Covid responses, fishing ban, and life of marine communities. From CSD, she has developed some skills from basic to advanced level such as communication, teamwork, time management, self-esteem, transparency and so on. Also, she learned new things from various training like Qualitative Data Collection Process, and how to conduct Thematic Analysis.



**Jennifer Das** is working as a Research Assistant at CSD. She completed her Undergraduate Program at ULAB under the Department of English and Humanities (DEH). She took SDS as her Minor Studies under the GED. She completed her Internship Program at CSD in the summer of 2020. During her Internship Program, Jennifer made some valuable contributions to the Manusher Jonno Foundation and Heidelberg University projects.

Recently, she has been to Bhola, Char Fashion for Heidelberg University's project to understand the problems of the left behind people in that community for climate change, health-related, and politics related issues. Besides, she had been involved with women from the fishing community to understand their role in decision making for their family. From an Intern to a Research Assistant, Jennifer has acquired skills to be more organized and communicative with her work.



**Maria Rahman Meem** is working as an intern at CSD. She studies BA at ULAB under the Department of English and Humanities. This is her last semester. She took SDS as her Minor studies under the GED. She is doing her internship from the month of 1st November 2020. During her internship, she transcribed the female conversations on the project of "Solar C" which helps her to understand the fishing community who face different types of problems in their livelihoods. She also transcribed the project of "Heidelberg University," which helps to understand people's problems based on climate change or health-related issues. She was taught how to do coding also. During her internship, Maria can develop her skills by learning different kinds of new things.



**Tamanna Afrose** has worked as a Research Assistant at CSD . She has completed her graduation at ULAB under the School of business with a major in marketing. She has also completed SDS under GED. While working at CSD, she was successfully involved with various research projects with Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), and Heidelberg University, Germany. Furthermore, she exhibited her coordination and communication dexterity while working on the SOLAR C project with Keele University, United Kingdom.



**Mizanur Rahman** has completed his graduation at ULAB under the School of business. He took SDS as his Minor Studies under the Department of GED. While studying at ULAB he has worked as a Research Assistant at CSD. Rahman thinks CSD has been one of the finest platforms to begin his development sector career. As a RA, he has got colorful experience working on several research projects. While working on the SOLAR C research project, for instance, he has done extensive fieldwork at the Bhola Char Fassion area, collecting unique and valuable information from the lives of fishers living there. He has also successfully coordinated various CSD research field trips.



## Capacity Needs Review and Capacity Building Program Development on Water and Natural Resource for Governance for Women Leaders

Water Governance in the Transboundary Rivers of South Asia (TROSA) is an Oxfam implemented project supported by the Government of Sweden. The project wants to enable the communities that depend on Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) basin in Nepal, India, Bangladesh, and the Salween river of Myanmar to claim their rights, participate in decision-making on water governance, and build their resilience. The project focuses on strengthening women's participation in water governance and natural resource management and increasing the capacity to influence the policy. Women play an important role in the livelihood systems of rural and riverine communities, and loss or insecure access to water resources has a greater impact on them. In this context, the CSD is working with Oxfam in Bangladesh to increase the transformative leadership of women leaders living in Bangladesh to create sustainable change that promotes women's rights and gender equality. As part of this engagement, the CSD will review the capacity needs of women leaders to identify the gaps and required knowledge for future advocacy on water and natural resource governance. Moreover, interactive training

modules will be designed to enhance women leaders' capacity towards water and natural resource governance.

## Event: "I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights"

On 8th March 2020, the International Women's Day was celebrated uniquely at the ULAB. A short seminar was organized by CSD with a gathering of some research experts, ULAB's Vice-Chancellor Prof. Dr. HM Jahirul Haque, and two guests Ms. Dilruba Haider, Program Specialist-Disaster Risk Reduction Climate Change and Humanitarian Action, UN Women and Ms. Ishrat Shabnam, Chief of Party (Acting), SHOUHARDO III, CARE Bangladesh. The seminar was held at the auditorium of ULAB's Permanent Campus in Mohammadpur.

The welcome speech of the seminar was delivered by Prof. Imran Rahman, Dean of ULAB School of Business and Special Advisor to the Board of Trustees. He warmly welcomed and greeted the guests of the event on the International Women's Day. He appreciated the idea of the CSD on choosing such a topic for the seminar, which was 'Mainstreaming Gender in Research Design and Decision Making' and celebrating the day uniquely.



Guests, panelists, presenters and organizers of the "I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights" event

## 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



### Webinar on “Clean Technology Solutions for Artisanal Fisheries in Bangladesh: Prospects and Challenges”

The CSD organized the above webinar on 22nd July 2020. This program was a joint initiative of Keele University, UK, and the ULAB. This online program aimed to identify the key challenges in the use of technology to support sustainability in rural communities, identify priorities for developing solutions and to form a working partnership, and plan to help develop and embed solutions that have an impact.

**Webinar on  
Clean Technology Solutions for Artisanal Fisheries  
in Bangladesh: Prospects and Challenges**

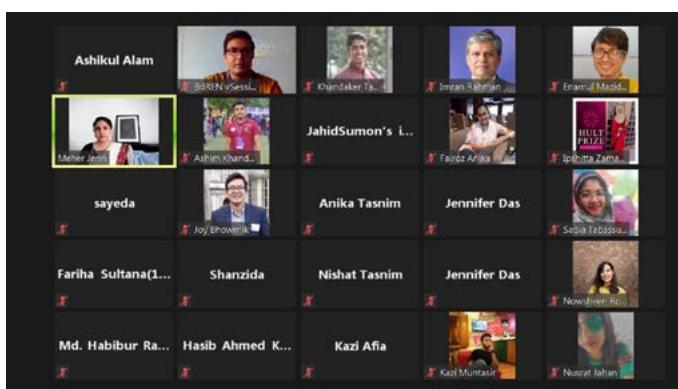
Wednesday, 22 July 2020, BD Local Time - 15:00-17:00 (GMT+6)  
UK Local Time – 10:00-12:00 (GMT+1). Online Platform: zoom

**Speakers:**

- Professor Zoe Robinson**  
NRFHEA, Professor of Sustainable Higher Education, Director of Education for Sustainability, Co-Director of the Centre for Sustainable Futures, Keele University, UK
- Dr. Sharon George**  
Senior Lecturer, School of Geography, Geology and the Environment; Course Director, MSc in Environmental Sustainability and Green Technology, Keele University, UK
- Dr. Simon George**  
Associate Lecturer in Green IT and MSc in Circular Sustainability and Green Technology, Keele University, UK
- Dr. Samiya Ahmed Selim**  
Associate Professor, Director for Sustainable Development, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB)
- Dr. Shantanu Kumar Saha**  
Assistant Professor-cum-Research Fellow, IIT, Director for Sustainable Development, University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB)

**Research findings sharing on**  
Improving Livelihoods in Rural Fishing Communities: What people need - Dr. Shantanu Kumar Saha, ULAB  
Solar Cooling for Extreme Environments: What technology can offer - Dr. Simon George, Keele University, UK

## 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



### Webinar on “Jobs in the New Normal Life”

The COVID-19 pandemic has already impacted the whole world more than any one of us was prepared for. We keep hearing lockdowns and measures to beat the impact of the virus, but in parallel, the collateral damage that has happened to the new job opening has been unprecedented. Governments and citizens are finding ways to come out of this unprecedented catastrophe. Companies move more to hire freelancers and contractual workforce to carry out more and more jobs they need. Simultaneously, a crisis may create different jobs, such as healthcare and wellness sectors,

which will get a tremendous boost and create more jobs. In this regard, universities focus on creating human resources suitable for the new workforce after this pandemic condition. Therefore, the CSD organized a webinar for the ULAB students to listen to from the experts who were already working in the development sectors. The CSD offers a minor in sustainable development studies mainly taken by the students majoring in different subjects. Thus, this webinar aimed to share the opportunities in development sectors with students from different backgrounds. Experts from different educational backgrounds shared their stories in getting involved with this sector. Moreover, they discussed the impacts of COVID-19 in the workstream of the development sector and how a fresh graduate can fit her/him in the changed condition. Additionally, they shared what specific skills, knowledge, and training are required to get in this sector.

## 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



### Ongoing Project on “Ensuring Women and Minority Rights in Land”

The website for CSD’s ‘Ensuring Women and Minority Rights in Land’ project, pursued in collaboration with Dublin City University, Ireland and Wageningen University and Research (WUR), the Netherlands. Rebranded “PPLA” or “Politics and Power in Land Administration”, the website is live at [www.ppla.eu](http://www.ppla.eu). Featuring information on the project, key personnel, and partner organizations, it also hosts a blog, which is regularly updated, including research notes from the field.

The COVID-19 forced a pause on fieldwork and data collection, which was resumed on 6th December 2020. This second stage of research includes a third research site: Kalapara and Amtali upazilas in south Bangladesh. This will ensure that the greatest variation in physical characteristics is studied by the research, adding a coastal area prone to disasters to existing study sites in North Bengal and Mymensingh.

Preparations for the project’s “virtual classroom” component were well underway. Project partner organization “Uttaran” will be engaged in bringing the day to day experiences of its field staff, particularly project advisor Mita Rahman, to the classrooms of development studies majors in WUR. This will give the students a far clearer idea of what happens when “the rubber meets the road” during development interventions while also raising awareness of Uttaran’s work and the problems emerging from land administration faced by Bangladeshis.

## 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION



### Greening Dutch Club

The CSD in collaboration with Dutch Club (Netherlands Recreation Centre), provided internship opportunities to two ULAB students: Rafia Islam and Ismat Jahan Tandra to complete their graduation at the ULAB. During their internship period (February to April 2020), they were assigned to work on two areas of the club. The first assignment was to find out possible ways to reduce the use of single-use plastics and the second assignment was to find a way for sustainable solid waste management. Their internship role at Dutch Club was also focused on greening the institution with relevant research to conduct both at the club and fieldwork.

### Greening TVET Institutions

There is no alternative to protect our nature without greening educational institutions. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions is a platform that provides an enhanced tool to equip youth and adults with the skills needed in the changing world of work, including the knowledge and competency requirements to make the transition to green economies and societies. The CSD has been working on a project since April 2020 on Greening



Training session at the Gaibandha TVET institute

seven Model TVET Institutions and two Centre for Skills Excellence with the International Labour Organization (ILO). This project aims to support the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in reforming its (TVET) system



*Scoping missions at the TVET institutions*

through a partnership with the European Union (EU) and the Government of Canada. The primary role of the CSD is to establish sustainable practices and an improved link between education and training systems to growing worldwide demand for sustainable TVET. The CSD conducted scoping missions by visiting and moderating training sessions at selected model TVET institutes and prepared action plans with identified green initiatives. Besides, a webinar was organized on sharing the findings of Greening TVET Institutions' work on 20th July 2020.

### **Energy Efficiency & Pollution Free Production: A Visit to Kapita Auto Bricks Ltd.**

As a part of learning directly from the field, a group of ULAB students recently visited Kapita Auto Bricks LTD to study their operations. Energy-efficient pollution-free bricks seem to be the future of the brick industry. Students also gathered information in regards to the investment in this new technology.

The usual scene of red brickfields and black smoke all over the area is common in Bangladesh as the country's brick demand is being fulfilled through the conventional kilns. However, the use of science and technology has changed the conventional kiln to an advanced kiln, known as Hybrid Hoffman Kiln (HHK) that reduces the number of toxic air pollutants.

It has been designed to improve heat retention in the kilns and to capture waste heat for re-circulation in the drying tunnel, which is used to absorb the moisture of the brick. The HHK doesn't have a tall chimney. Therefore, it reduces the emission of black smoke and other harmful gas. Kapita auto bricks limited is one of the eight factories of Bangladesh that manufactures bricks through HHK technology.



*ULAB students visiting Kapita Auto Bricks Ltd.*

# 13 CLIMATE ACTION



## Kolkata Youth Summit on Climate Change



Dr. Samiya Selim, Director of CSD participated and gave a plenary speech on “Changing Narratives – Acting Local Going Global” at the Kolkata Youth Summit on Climate Change, the largest of its kind in East India. More than 3000 students from more than 80 schools attended the event. Talks on the first day were very inspiring – from Neurosurgeon Dr. Sandeep Chatterjee and a Green Oscar award winner



wildlife filmmaker Asheika Kapur. A short documentary “Kolkata 2070” by Malika Jalan was also shown in the summit. In her speech, Dr. Selim provided ideas and inspiration on career paths, choices, and ways to lead more sustainable lives.

## Part of Gobeshona Platform on Climate Change Research

Dr. Rumana Sultana, Assistant Professor and Research Associate, CSD presented her paper in the plenary session entitled “Flood Disaster Risk and Household Level Coping Strategies: A Study on the Padma River Islands of Bangladesh” at Gobeshona 6 Conference, organized by International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) and Friendship. The session was chaired by Md. Mohsin and moderated by Kazi Amdadul Hoque of Friendship.



Basundhara Tripathy Furlong, another team member of CSD, also presented on “Climate crisis and mobility: Reality or exaggeration?” at GOBESHONA 6 Conference. It was Parallel Session 03: “Climate Change and Migration” and was hosted by ICCCAD and ULAB.

## Research Project: Impacts of Climate and COVID-19 on Marine Socio-ecological System

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread globally, many countries are taking unprecedented lockdown measures to control its impact on public health. However, such measures significantly impact other human activity domains, including livelihoods, gender equality, jobs, food security, and potential social unrest. In 2020, the CSD conducted a research project on the impacts of climate change and COVID-19 on the socio-ecological system of the Bay of Bengal, which was funded by Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF). A mixed method was used to collect data through extensive literature review and telephone ethnography. One hundred respondents were interviewed from the fisher community of Patharghata upazila of Barguna district and Moheshkhali upazila of Cox's Bazar district.

In October 2020, a virtual outreach event of this project was organized. Dr. Samiya Selim, Director, CSD, participated in that discussion, in partnership with MJF, titled "What ecological changes will happen to the Bay of Bengal from global warming?". Honorable Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change Md. Shahab Uddin was present at the talk as the Chief Guest. Dr. Selim said that the fishing community in coastal areas of Bangladesh need a sustainable solution for their livelihood as climate change is causing damage to the fish habitats. Dr. Selim recommended, to enhance climate change resilience for marine ecosystems and resources, knowledge dissemination through proper channel, protect ocean from land-based activities such as alteration of habitats, destructive fishing, untreated sewage, oil pollution from ocean and inland vessels and increase climate-friendly investment.

She also said the government needs to adopt science-based fisheries management practices to fine-tune spatial and temporal closures and gear modifications.

Dr. Rumana Sultana participated in a round table discussion on 7th September 2020 organized by Prothom Alo and MJF on the "65-day ban on marine fishing: The status of fishermen in Corona Pandemic and future course of action" to present the findings from this

research project. Dr. Sultana emphasized alternative income source generation, women empowerment, and equitable access to financial services as the key issues to overcome prevailing challenges.

## International Project: No Crises



*Fieldwork in Bhola*

The CSD partners in this 3-year multi-country project NO CRISES funded by Belmont Forum Transdisciplinary Research on Ocean Sustainability. The goal of ocean management is to accomplish fair and sustainable resource use. This means simultaneously achieving economic development (blue growth), environmental sustainability, social equity, and inclusion across space and time in a context of growing demands. With this project, the CSD proposes a mixed-method approach and cross-case study comparison to assess the origin, drivers, and mitigation strategies of ocean conflicts. Each of the six case studies will represent a hot spot where a different combination of social and ecological pressures, together with trade-off decisions, trigger ocean conflicts. A core set of methods is developed and applied to ensure comparability across locations to facilitate global learning. The origin of conflicts will be reproduced, and socio-ecological interactions qualified and quantified through participatory methods. Local artists' visualizations will collaboratively produce culturally meaningful narratives that will explicate trade-offs, and their negotiability, and allow ocean conflict pathways to be mapped from origin to possible resolution.

## International Project: Vulnerability to Viability (V2V)

The CSD is a partner of one of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) partnership grants working on Small Scale Fisheries - Vulnerability to Viability (V2V) partnership. The project's goal is to bring together a diverse team of experts (scientists, practitioners, policy and community actors) through the platform of the V2V Global Partnership to address this critical gap by focussing on fundamental questions concerning the impacts of global change on coastal-marine fisheries systems and how they can reduce their vulnerabilities and enhance their viability. This partnership will work with coastal-marine fisher communities in selected regions of Asia and Africa to help identify, highlight, and recognize their inherent strengths and develop the capacity to trigger viability elements. Thus, the CSD proposal underscored an urgent need to apply a transdisciplinary perspective that can be used to build on the strengths of coastal-marine fisher communities to respond to the challenges and overcome their vulnerabilities.

## 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



### Conference on the SDGs by the Association of Commonwealth Universities, UK



Joy Bhowmik, Lecturer and Research Associate of the CSD participated in the conference on the role of universities in achieving SDGs by the Association of Commonwealth Universities, UK.

Universities play a significant role in the SDG agenda through the operations in curriculum, teaching & learning, students, staff & community engagement, and research & communication. Moreover, universities are pioneers in capacity building, advocacy, and creating evidence from the field. Also, they act as a catalyst in monitoring the progress of the SDG agenda that helps the decision-makers to review and modify the actions of activities. In this regard, strong partnerships

among different universities, governments, development agencies, and private sectors may reduce the barriers to the operations of universities and would strengthen the capacity to contribute to the SDG agenda. Universities' contribution to the global and local arena will ensure that no one will be left behind on the global SDG agenda.

### CSD's Participation at the 1st EWUCRT Research Fair

A day-long 'Research Fair' was organized by the East West University Center for Research and Training (EWUCRT) at the East West University (EWU) at Aftabnagar, Dhaka on 5th March 2020. The CSD, along with some research organizations and industries of the country, participated in the 'Research Fair' offering their books and publications.

On the occasion, speakers highlighted the essentiality of quality research for the advancement of developing countries like Bangladesh. Researchers, industrial personnel, teachers, and students from different institutions participated in the program.

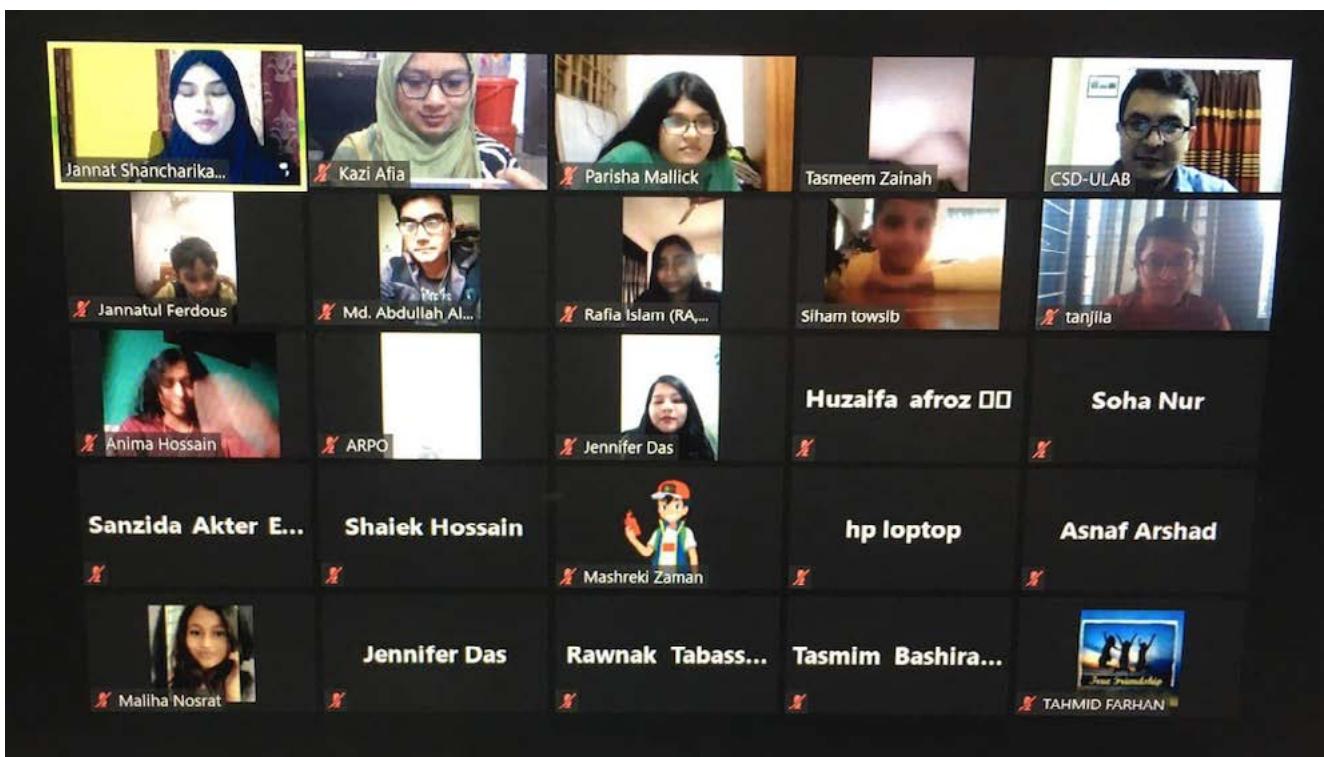


1st EWUCRT Research Fair

The objective of the ‘Research Fair’ was to showcase the best practices of research and development being carried out in Bangladeshi organizations and educational institutions, with the hope to create a bridge between academia and industry to foster research and innovation for the betterment of our country.

## Scientific Film Festival

CSD, in Collaboration with the Goethe Institute Bangladesh, organized a scientific film festival on 7th December 2020 in order to encourage young people’s interest in science: The focus was on the light of the different roles and its applications play in our everyday lives and what this reveals about the nature of the universe. The series of activities stretches from watching science films and further learning about science itself in the form of simple scientific experiments. Furthermore, on 17th December, CSD arranged “Learning through Interactive Games & Roles Playing” event based on SDGs intended for children aged between 5 to 13 years.



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