

Voices of Resilience

The Voices of Resilience is a special edition newsletter capturing the essence of the impactful event at Cox's Bazar. This publication aims to showcase the stories, insights, and collaborative efforts that unfolded during this thought-provoking symposium and field visit.

Published by :

Center for Climate Change and Environmental Health (3CEH), Asian University for Women (AUW), 20/A, M M Ali Road, Chattogram, Bangladesh

Supported by:

International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada

Copyright

©2024 by Publisher. All rights reserved. Without the publisher's prior written authorization, no portion of this Newsletter may be copied, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any format or by any means, whether graphic, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise. The Publication Committee oversaw the book's composition and design.

Photo Credit

Center for Climate Change and Environmental Health (3CEH)

Acknowledgment

We extend sincere gratitude to Ms. Tahiya Tasnim for her tremendous contribution in preparing this Newsletter. It has been published to feature the symposium on "Education, Environment, and Health Situation of the FDMN Camps, Cox's Bazar" under the 'Knowledge for Democracy Myanmar (K4DM)' initiative which is generously funded by IDRC and Global Affairs Canada. We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to all participants of symposium and field visits, the AUW team and the Research Assistants of 3CEH for their dedicated support and teamwork.

Event Overview

The Center for Climate Change and Environmental Health (3CEH) of Asian University for Women (AUW) orchestrated a pivotal event in Cox's Bazar, addressing the intertwined challenges of education, environment, and health in the Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) camps. Supported by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada, the two-day event commenced on March 6, 2024. Day 1 featured the symposium, while Day 2 unfolded as a field visit to the Rohingya camp-16, Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

Day 1

On Day 1, the symposium served as a platform for sharing research, innovative solutions and collaborative discussions aimed at addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by the Rohingya community.

Day 2

Day 2's Awareness building campaign and field visit offered participants a firsthand glimpse into the realities confronting the Rohingya community, fostering a deeper understanding of their challenges and resilience.

Through the art of storytelling and visual representation, the symposium and field visit encapsulated the essence of solidarity and empathy. They inspired attendees to redouble their efforts in championing the rights and dignity of FDMN, reinforcing the imperative of collective action in addressing humanitarian crises.





About 3CEH



The Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Health (3CEH), established in April 2021, serves as a critical force in combating environmental degradation and the advancing threats of climate change, particularly within Asia and notably in low and middle-income countries. This center merges the expertise of scholars, policymakers, and practitioners to spearhead leadership in environmental health and climate change, embodying a commitment to bring positive change.

3CEH excels by adopting a transdisciplinary methodology, merging local and global knowledge to devise innovative solutions for the intricate challenges at the nexus of environmental health and climate change. Its activities encompass education, skill development, cutting-edge research, community engagement, and evidence-based policy making. This comprehensive approach ensures a sustainable and far-reaching impact on the communities it targets.

A significant emphasis of 3CEH is on empowering female researchers in Asia, providing them with vital skills for conducting essential research on climate and environmental issues. The center boasts a diverse team of skilled Research Assistants from various disciplines, who play a crucial role in its success through their commitment to research and community education on sustainable practices and child protection from environmental risks.

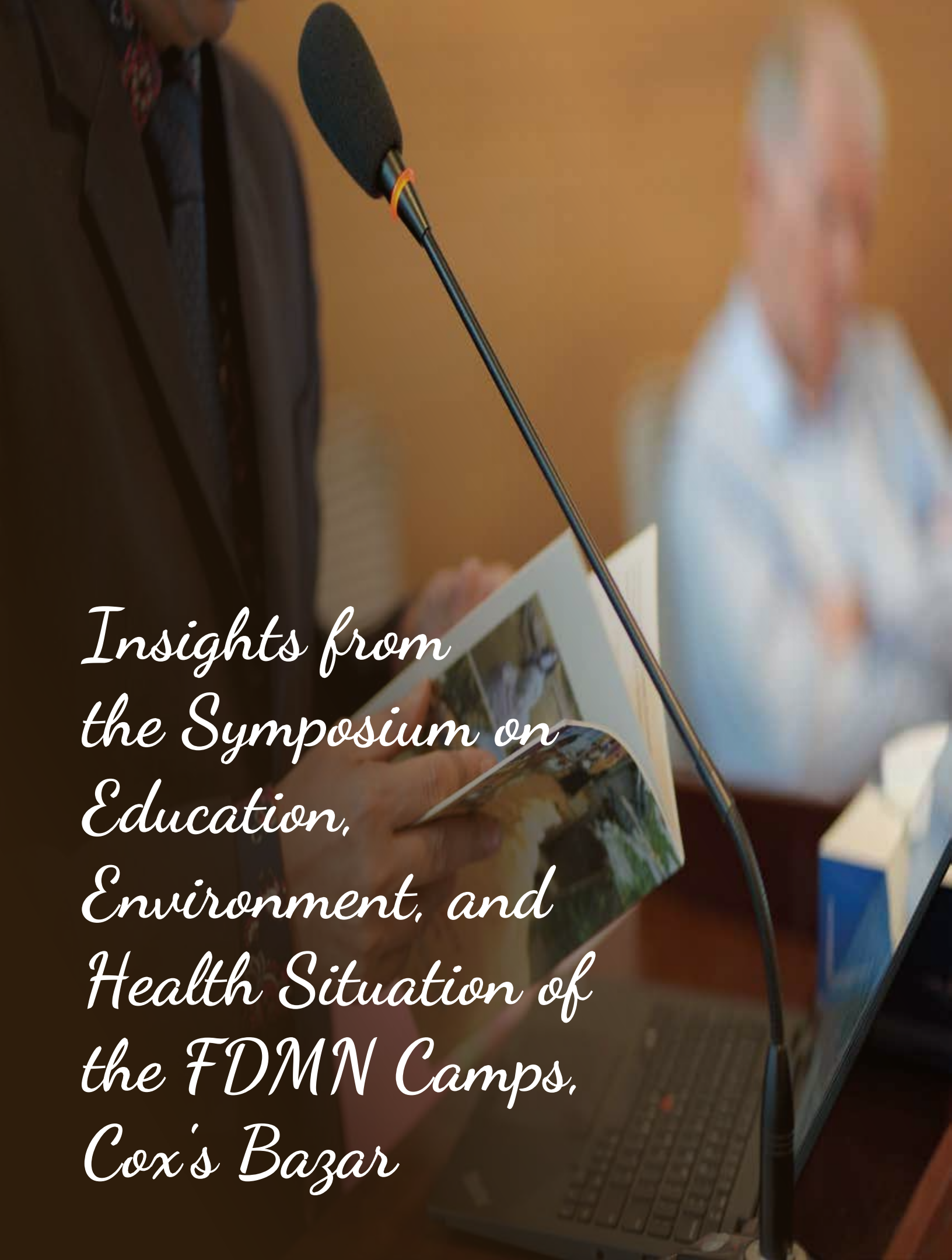
Beyond its academic achievements, 3CEH is recognized for its field research in Bangladesh and capacity-building efforts in over 20 countries, enhancing its global perspective and impact. The center's team is adept at delivering extensive training on Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), environmental, and climate change issues, benefiting students from the Asian University of Women and other institutions, thereby fostering an inclusive and collaborative learning environment.

3CEH's scholarly contributions are notable, with numerous publications in high-impact factor journals and fellows advancing their studies at prestigious universities like Oxford and Cambridge. This underlines the center's academic excellence and its role in cultivating a vibrant community committed to addressing significant environmental and health challenges worldwide.

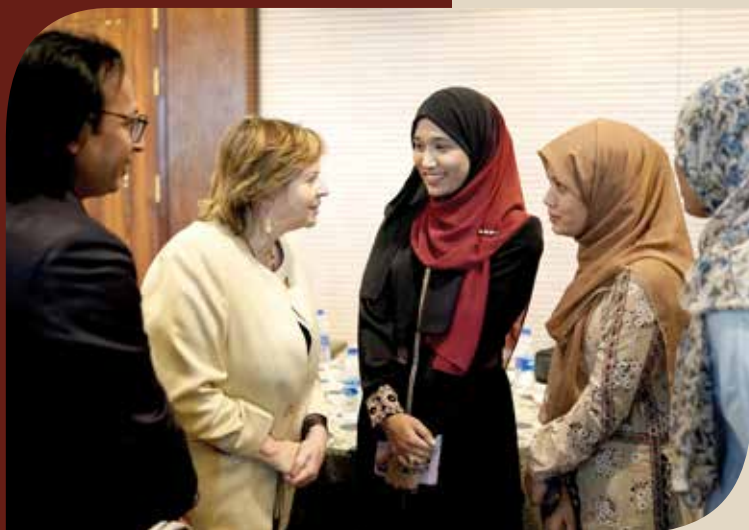
Collaboration is key to 3CEH's success, demonstrated through projects with leading universities and international organizations, including the University of Victoria, Oxfam, UNHCR, and Save the Children, among others. Supported by IDRC Canada, United Board, and the European Commission, 3CEH is engaged in impactful projects, showcasing its dedication to practical solutions and a sustainable future.

All in all, the Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Health stands out for its innovative, collaborative, and impactful efforts to tackle the urgent issues of environmental pollution and climate change, driving towards a sustainable and resilient future for Asia and beyond.





*Insights from
the Symposium on
Education,
Environment, and
Health Situation of
the FDMN Camps,
Cox's Bazar*



The Symposium on Education, Environment, and Health Situation of the FDMN (Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals) Camps, held at the Long Beach Hotel in Cox's Bazar, served as a pivotal gathering to address the complex challenges encountered by the Rohingya community. The symposium aimed to foster knowledge exchange, dialogue, and collaboration to find sustainable solutions to the challenges confronting Rohingya refugees.

The event began with highlighting the aims and objectives of the symposium, emphasizing the urgency for collective action and sustainable solutions in the backdrop of Cox's Bazar, home to one of the largest refugee camps globally. Dr. Sayed Mohammad Nazim Uddin set the stage for discussions as the co-chair, followed by Dr. David Taylor, who chaired the event.

The symposium served as a platform for esteemed guests and experts from diverse fields to share invaluable insights, deepening understanding of the challenges facing the Rohingya community in the FDMN camps. Through presentations, panel discussions, and interactive sessions, the event fostered robust dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders committed to enhancing the well-being of Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. These discussions sparked meaningful conversations aimed at addressing the multifaceted issues encountered by the Rohingya community.



Leading Voices Unite: Chair, Co-Chair, and Esteemed Guests Gather for Rohingya Symposium



*Dr. David
Taylor*

**Chair of the event,
Interim Pro Vice-
Chancellor of AUW**



*Dr. Sayed
Mohammad
Nazim*

**Co-chair of the event
Founding Director of
3CEH,
Associate Professor of
Environmental
Science, AUW**



*Her Excellency
Lilly Nicholls*

**Chief Guest
The High
Commissioner for
Canada in
Bangladesh**



*Dr. Edgard
Rodriguez*

**Senior Program
Specialist at IDRC**



*Mohammed
Mizanur
Rahman*

**Refugee Relief
and Repatriation
Commissioner**



*Dr. Monira
Ahsan*

**Post-Doctoral
Researcher, Asian
Institute of
Technology,
Bangkok**



 *Mr. Khan
Md. Ferdous*

**Senior Manager,
Education in
Emergencies,
Save the Children,
Cox's Bazar**



*Dr. Mukesh
Kumar
Gupta*

**Assistant
Professor of
Environmental
Sciences, AUW**



 *Mr. Paul
Mc Callion*

**Senior Energy
officer, Energy
and Environment
Unit, UNHCR**



 *Muhammad
Talut*

**Deputy Secretary,
Office of the RRRC**



 *Dr. Nazmul
Alam*

**Associate
Professor of
Public Health,
AUW**



Dr. Sayed Mohammad Nazim Uddin

Dr. Sayed Mohammad Nazim Uddin, as the Founding Director of the Center for Climate Change and Environmental Health (3CEH) and an Associate Professor of Environmental Sciences at the Asian University for Women, eloquently set the stage for the Symposium on Education, Environment, and Health Situation of the FDMN Camps in Cox's Bazar. Expressing deep gratitude, he underscored the symposium's role in uniting scholars, policymakers, and practitioners to tackle environmental challenges and strive for a sustainable future. This event, according to Dr. Uddin, epitomizes the essence of collaborative effort and knowledge exchange, aiming to bridge the gap between academic research and practical application in addressing climate change and environmental health issues.

Highlighting the symposium's focus, Dr. Uddin spoke on the complex challenges faced by Rohingya refugees, including educational barriers, health concerns, environmental hazards, and energy injustices. He emphasized the importance of developing

inclusive energy solutions, sustainable water interventions, and community driven waste management strategies as commitments to resilience and positive change.

Under Dr. Uddin's guidance, 3CEH is committed to rigorous field-based research, leveraging a diverse team of Research Assistants to uncover innovative solutions to environmental dilemmas. He envisions a bold, transformative future for 3CEH, characterized by a transdisciplinary approach that encourages innovation in research methodologies and fosters collaboration with international organizations and universities, supported by global entities like IDRC Canada, United Board, and the European Commission.

Dr. Uddin's commitment extends to empowering women in the Asian region through educational initiatives and training programs, aiming to equip them with the necessary skills to confront climate and environmental challenges effectively. He proudly noted the success of graduates now studying at prestigious institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge, showcasing the impact of 3CEH's work.

In closing, Dr. Uddin called upon the symposium's attendees to join in a collective effort to address climate change and environmental health with urgency and determination, expressing gratitude for the warm welcome and the insightful engagement of all participants.



Dr. David Taylor
Interim Pro Vice-Chancellor
Asian University for Women

Dr. David Taylor played the role of the chair of this significant event. He expressed his honor in leading a forum so crucial to the exploration of Education, Environment, and Health Situation of the FDMN Camps, with a special focus on the Rohingya community in Cox's Bazar. He highlighted the symposium's role as a nexus for innovative ideas, research, and practical solutions. Dr. Taylor's confidence in the event's potential to broaden our understanding and promote sustainable, resilient practices was evident. He praised both the event and the associated publication for capturing a wide range of perspectives and expertise, reflecting a strong commitment to collaboration. This gathering, according to Dr. Taylor, is a testament to our collective dedication towards advancing the future of the FDMN camps, hoping it spurs meaningful dialogue and significant advancements in the field.



Her Excellency Lilly Nicholls
High Commissioner
for Canada in
Bangladesh

Her Excellency Lilly Nicholls, the High Commissioner for Canada in Bangladesh, brought unwavering dedication to the Symposium on Education, Environment, and Health Situation of the FDMN Camps in Cox's Bazar, showcasing Canada's steadfast support for global humanitarian efforts. In her speech, she emphasized Canada's values of democracy, justice, tolerance, and inclusion, resonating deeply with the challenges faced by Rohingya refugees. Through her active engagement, she enriched the understanding of these challenges and highlighted the importance of international collaboration. Her commitment to fostering inclusive growth, supporting global institutions, and building people-to-people ties reflects Canada's genuine humanitarian spirit. Her leadership offers hope for a brighter future for the Rohingya community, underscoring the significance of global cooperation in addressing complex crises.



**Dr. Edgard
Rodriguez, Senior Program
Specialist, IDRC**

Dr. Edgard Rodriguez boasts a rich background in sustainable development across Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. His proficiency in policy analysis, program evaluation, and research capacity building has been pivotal in tackling intricate challenges. Dr. Rodriguez's devotion to diverse fields enriches the collective comprehension of the Rohingya community's predicament in the FDMN camps. Through his invaluable insights, he fosters dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders, facilitating sustainable solutions. His dedication to empowering communities and advocating for inclusive development underscores his pivotal role in enhancing the well-being of Rohingya refugees. Dr. Rodriguez's steadfast commitment acts as a guiding light, sparking positive change and emphasizing the importance of global collaboration in tackling humanitarian crises.



**Mohammed Mizanur Rahman
Refugee Relief and Repatriation
Commissioner**

Mohammed Mizanur Rahman's steadfast dedication in his role as the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) since 2022, along with previous experience as an additional RRRC, illustrates his commitment to the Rohingya community. Through his tenure, he demonstrates a deep-rooted resolve to confront the challenges confronting Rohingya refugees in the FDMN camps. Mr. Rahman's extensive expertise and leadership offer invaluable perspectives, enriching the collective understanding of the complex issues faced by the Rohingya population. His unwavering dedication inspires positive action and emphasizes the significance of collective endeavors in addressing the struggles of Rohingya refugees. Mr. Rahman's tireless dedication reflects a profound commitment to humanitarian endeavors, propelling advancements and nurturing resilience within the Rohingya community.



Dr. Nazmul Alam

Associate Professor and Director
of Public Health Program, AUW

Dr. Nazmul Alam's presence at the symposium invigorated the discussions with his wealth of expertise. With his extensive knowledge and leadership in public health, devising sustainable strategies to improve healthcare access in humanitarian settings became more feasible. Dr. Alam's fervor for education and research, coupled with his practical experience, sparked stimulating conversations. He offered a comprehensive perspective on the intersection of public health and refugee welfare, enriching the symposium's discourse. His active participation reflects his dedication to humanitarian causes and underscores his commitment to making substantial strides in enhancing the well-being of marginalized communities.



Dr. Mukesh Kumar Gupta

Assistant Professor and Program
Director of
Environmental Sciences, AUW

Dr. Mukesh Kumar Gupta's presence at the symposium highlighted his expertise and dedication to environmental sciences. As an Assistant Professor and Program Director at the Asian University for Women, his contributions deepened discussions. Dr. Gupta shed light on the complex environmental challenges facing Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, offering sustainable solutions. His commitment to sustainable development likely sparked dynamic conversations and inspired innovative approaches. Dr. Gupta's active involvement underscores his proactive stance on urgent environmental issues and advocacy for marginalized communities. His participation significantly enhanced the symposium, fostering a better understanding of the environmental aspects of the Rohingya refugee situation.



Dr. Monira Ahsan

Post-Doctoral Researcher, Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok

At the Symposium on Education, Environment, and Health in the FDMN Camps, Dr. Monira Ahsan showcased her unparalleled commitment and insight. With a background spanning over twenty years in program management and research, with a special focus on gender equality and social inclusion, Dr. Ahsan emerged as a key voice in addressing the plight of the Rohingya. Her efforts to weave Gender Equality and Social Inclusion into emergency health policies, alongside contributions to Green Climate Fund initiatives, highlight her dedication to human rights. Dr. Ahsan's strategies against gender violence and for child protection have significantly propelled forward solutions for humanitarian crises. Her analytical acumen and strategic foresight have deepened attendees' understanding of the Rohingya's challenges.



Mr. Md. Ferdous Khan

Senior Manager for Education in Emergencies, Save the Children in Cox's Bazar

Mr. Md. Ferdous Khan provided invaluable perspectives that greatly enriched the symposium. His unwavering commitment to guaranteeing education rights during crisis situations is not only inspiring but crucial for humanitarian initiatives. Mr. Khan's expertise in developing robust educational systems ensures that children facing emergencies have the opportunity not merely to survive but to flourish, thereby paving the way for a brighter future for them and their communities. His participation and contributions at the symposium highlighted the essential role of education in emergency interventions, demonstrating his deep dedication to effecting positive change in the lives of those most vulnerable.



Mr. Muhammad Talut
Deputy Secretary,
Office of the RRRRC

Muhammad Talut's zeal as a thinker, ideator, and practical analyst of energy policy for sustainable development made his participation in the symposium noteworthy. His presence, as Deputy Secretary at the Office of RRRRC, demonstrated an ongoing commitment to tackling the multifaceted difficulties encountered by Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. Talut displayed an earnest dedication to promoting sustainable solutions that are beneficial for the environment and the refugee community by taking a proactive approaches. During the symposium, his passion and analytical skills probably generated innovative conversations and significant discussions. Without a doubt, Talut's presence aided in the sharing of insightful opinions and improved efforts towards enhancing the welfare of Rohingya refugees.



Mr. Paul Mc Callion
Senior Energy officer, Energy
and Environment Unit, UNHCR

Mr. Paul McCallion's presence at the symposium was pivotal, given his wealth of expertise in energy management and environmental response. As the Senior Energy Officer at UNHCR's Energy and Environment Unit, his leadership in coordinating initiatives for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh highlights a profound commitment to their welfare. With vast experience across humanitarian, development, and private sectors, and a focus on renewable energy solutions, McCallion demonstrates a dedication to fostering resilience. His contributions undoubtedly enriched the symposium's discussions, offering valuable insights to tackle the challenges confronting Rohingya refugees.

A young boy is seen from behind, pushing a bamboo raft down a river. The raft is constructed from several long, light-colored bamboo poles. The water is a milky, yellowish-brown color. In the background, there are lush green trees and a fence. The overall scene is bright and natural.

TRIPLE CRISIS IN MYANMAR

COUP COVID & CLIMATE CHANGE

GUSTAAF HOUTMAN
CHAYAN VADDHANAPHUTI

Book Launch

During the Symposium on Education, Environment, and Health Situation of the FDMN Camps in Cox's Bazar, two books were launched: "*The Book of Abstracts and Activities*", providing a comprehensive overview of research endeavors and initiatives, and another book titled "*Triple Crisis in Myanmar: Coup, COVID, & Climate Change*" focusing on brief description of the content or purpose of the book.

The Book "*Triple Crisis in Myanmar: Coup, COVID, & Climate Change*" edited by Gustaaf Houtman and Chayan Vaddhanaphuti, along with contributions from various authors, provides an in-depth exploration of the critical challenges confronting Myanmar, including the February 2021 coup, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the effects of climate change. The book delves into the socio-political dynamics, emergent identities, and volunteerism following the coup, as well as the role of civil society organizations in adapting to the post-coup landscape. It reveals the significant impacts of the coup and the pandemic burden on the country, emphasizing the importance of civil society and the difficulties faced by displaced migrants. Furthermore, it investigates the human rights abuses suffered by Myanmar's migrant laborers in Thailand and the consequences of climate change on at-risk populations. Offering a range of perspectives and grounded in empirical research, the book provides a nuanced understanding of the multifaceted challenges Myanmar faces, illuminating the intricate realities within the country amidst ongoing crises.



Zar Chi Oo (aka) Ma Oo

Graduate student

International Program:

Social Science (Development Studies)
RCSD Center, Faculty of Social Sciences,
Chiang Mai University, Thailand

Ms. Zar Chi Oo (aka) Ma Oo and Mr. Aryuwat Raruen presented the book chapter, 'Transition Within an Agrarian Transition: An Alluvial Farming Community On The Irrawaddy In Central Myanmar,' which explores the lives and challenges of alluvial farmers in Sitkone village, located on an island in the middle of Irrawaddy. These inhabitants have a long history of living and working in the alluvial agricultural environment along an incessantly changing riverine space. The chapter explores how these farmers, who have long relied on the river's seasonal flooding for fertile soil, are now facing a "double transition" due to changing irregular floods, alluvial sedimentation patterns, and increasing integration into the national and global economy. It discusses the historical context of alluvial farming and the impact of political, economic, and environmental changes on the farmers' livelihoods. Despite the promises of guided agrarian transition, alluvial farmers find it increasingly difficult to make ends meet, leading to land disputes, debt, and migration. The current concept of agrarian transition may not adequately capture or address the experiences and needs of Myanmar's alluvial farmers, who are continuously seeking new opportunities on ever-changing alluvial land, especially in the face of climate change, political instability, and the limitations of neoliberal models of development.

Additionally, they also talked about the book chapter, "FROM CAMP STORIES TO 'IMAGINING COMMUNITY' ON THE THAI-MYANMAR BORDER", which delves into the concept of "imagining community" among Karen refugees who have resettled in the Thai-Myanmar border region. It focuses on understanding how the local context of refugees intersects with the process of repatriation, amidst political instability and conflicts between ethnic armed groups and the Myanmar military junta. Through interviews and participant observations, the chapter explores the diverse perspectives of the refugees. The theory of "imagining community" serves as a lens to comprehend the experiences unfolding in this complex setting. Living as a Karen refugee in this border area involves navigating between various competing forces, including the Myanmar military, Thai border police, and the Karen National Union (KNU). Despite the challenges, refugees choose to repatriate from camps to settle in KNU-controlled Wa Mwee Aye village, attracted by the potential for communal development and self-sufficiency. However, the village's vulnerability to attacks by the Myanmar army impacts the quality of life, particularly in terms of education, and living there necessitates acceptance of KNU patronage. Consequently, while physically removed from the camps, the notion of the camp persists in the refugees' imagination as a symbol of safety, sustenance, and education, to which they may have to return. Different age groups and backgrounds among the refugees evoke varied "imagining communities," shaped by their experiences in the camps or the village. This sense of community transcends physical space and may be transient, yet the ongoing interactions within the village and camps foster social bonds, creating a vast network that holds promise for the future despite the challenges faced.



Aryuwat Raruen

Graduate student from Center for
Ethnic Studies and Development
Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang
Mai University, Thailand

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS & ACTIVITIES

Symposium on Education, Environment, and Health Situation of the Forcibly Displaced Myanmar Nationals (FDMN) Camps, Cox's Bazar

The *"Book of Abstracts and Activities"* presents the significant research and initiatives by the Center for Climate Change and Environmental

Health (3CEH), focusing on addressing challenges faced by Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. It comprises twelve abstracts covering a wide array of issues, from the quality of education and indoor air pollution to fire safety, human-elephant conflicts, energy disparities, water access, sanitation challenges, and the implications of COVID-19 on water and sanitation infrastructure.

Each abstract proposes multidisciplinary research and collaborative solutions aimed at improving the refugees' well-being and livelihoods. The book also underscores 3CEH's commitment to capacity building and international collaboration, highlighting its efforts to empower communities and advance global solutions to environmental and humanitarian challenges. This compilation not only illustrates the impact and significance of 3CEH's work through vivid visual representations but also emphasizes the organization's dedication to fostering positive change through research, advocacy, and collaborative efforts.



*Presentations and
Panel Discussions
on Rohingya
Education*



Assessing the Quality of Education for Rohingya Refugees in Cox's Bazar and Its Potential Outcomes

Mosaddika Mounin
MA in Education
Asian University for Women



Ms. Mosaddika Mounin unveiled her insightful study on the educational landscape for Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar, focusing particularly on Camp 11. Her comprehensive research, employing a mixed-method approach and a 360 data set, bridges quantitative data from parents and students across primary and secondary levels with qualitative insights from eleventh graders and teachers. Mounin's work meticulously delves into the educational environment, the caliber of educators, and the trajectory of education and higher education possibilities within the Rohingya camps. Her findings reveal a multifaceted view of the current educational offerings, pinpointing significant areas for enhancement such as resource accessibility, teacher training, and curriculum implementation. Beyond these quantitative revelations, Mounin's qualitative analysis sheds light on the profound struggles faced by students striving for higher education and captures the educators' perspectives on the system's shortcomings and potentials. Her research transcends the immediate context of Cox's Bazar, offering pivotal lessons for policymakers, educators, and humanitarian entities involved in refugee education globally. By advocating for educational programs that are culturally sensitive and rights-focused, Mounin underscores the transformative impact such an approach can have on the futures of Rohingya refugees. Her presentation not only maps out the existing educational challenges but also charts a hopeful course for enhancing refugee education and support mechanisms worldwide.



Education for Rohingya: Education and Research for Changing Lives

Dr. Nyi Nyi Kyaw
Research Chair
on Forced Displacement in
Southeast Asia, Chiang Mai
University, Thailand



Dr. Nyi Nyi Kyaw participated in the symposium through Zoom, where he delivered a compelling talk titled "Education for Rohingya: Education and Research for Changing Lives." He asserted his belief in the critical importance of education and research in enhancing the well-being of Rohingya individuals. Dr. Kyaw emphasized that three key aspects must be taken into account: stakeholders, support, and topics. According to him, in forced migration and refugee studies, it is considered optimal to have research on displaced communities conducted by the communities themselves. However, for a significant political, social, cultural, and economic crisis such as the plight of the Rohingya people from and in Myanmar, this is not enough. Non-Rohingya individuals and entities must also be involved. In terms of support, he argued that providing only daily subsistence is insufficient. We have hundreds of thousands of Rohingya youths whose lives depend heavily on education and research. Therefore, we require more dedicated support for Rohingya youths who are already leading or will lead their own community when they return home or before that. In terms of topics, we should focus on three areas. Firstly, how to provide continued support for the subsistence of the refugees. Secondly, how to ensure that Rohingya youths receive special consideration and support. Thirdly, the politics and economics of repatriation.

Panel Discussion 1



In the wake of illuminating presentations on Rohingya education, a compelling panel discussion on the topic ensued, moderated by Dr. Edgard Rodriguez, a Senior Program Specialist at IDRC. The panel boasted a diverse array of



experts, each bringing unique insights into the complex tapestry of Rohingya refugee education. Mr. Mohammad Mizanur Rahman, the RRRRC Commissioner, highlighted the government's efforts and challenges in addressing the educational needs of the Rohingya. Dr. David Taylor, representing the academic viewpoint from AUW, emphasized the importance of higher education and gender inclusivity in educational programs. Dr. Monira Ahsan, a Post-Doctoral Researcher from the Asian Institute of Technology, Bangkok, brought attention to the critical role of research in understanding and improving educational outcomes for refugees. Mr. Khan Md. Ferdous from Save the Children, Cox's Bazar, shared on-the-ground experiences and successes in implementing education in emergencies, underlining the necessity of innovative and flexible learning solutions tailored to the Rohingya context. The discussion served as a vibrant forum for exchanging ideas, challenges, and strategies, aimed at enhancing the educational landscape for the Rohingya, demonstrating a collective commitment to advancing their rights and opportunities through education.





*Presentations and
Panel Discussions
on Health and
Environment*

Energy Access and Welfare for Displaced Populations: Energy Justice in the Rohingya Refugee Camps of Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Nazifa Rafa
Phd Fellow Cambridge

In her presentation, Ms. Nazifa Rafa illuminated the intricate challenges facing displaced communities through the lens of energy justice and its alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through qualitative research conducted in Rohingya refugee settlements, Rafa explored the disparities in energy access, financing, and representation within refugee contexts, underscoring the profound impact of energy poverty on essential aspects of refugees' lives. Interviews revealed stark implications for food security, health, education, access to clean water, and gender inequalities, all of which impede progress towards SDGs. Crucially, Rafa highlighted the inadequacy of governance structures and participatory decision-making processes in addressing energy justice for refugees, emphasizing the need for inclusive policies and interventions. The study's findings underscored the imperative of empowering refugees in shaping sustainable energy solutions and integrating energy justice principles into humanitarian efforts. By addressing the multifaceted challenges of energy poverty, Rafa's research aims to inform policymakers, researchers, and practitioners about the importance of inclusive and sustainable approaches to energy access for displaced populations. Ultimately, the presentation serves as a call to action for fostering just transitions and ensuring the welfare of displaced communities through equitable energy access and empowerment initiatives aligned with the SDGs.





Environmental and Human Health Consequences of the Fire Accidents in Rohingya Refugee Camps, Cox's Bazar Bangladesh

**Ms. Parmin Fatema
UG 3 Student, AUW**



Ms. Parmin Fatema addressed the pressing issue of fire occurrences in one of the world's largest and most densely populated refugee camps. With an estimated 980,000 inhabitants residing in Cox's Bazar, the Rohingya community faces significant risks due to frequent fires, both intentional and accidental. Fatema's study, conducted through a cross-sectional approach involving 50 in-depth interviews with affected Rohingya individuals, sheds light on the root causes and repercussions of these devastating incidents. A stark revelation from the research indicates that a majority of participants perceive the massive fires as deliberate acts of arson, while smaller fires often stem from overcrowding and carelessness within the camp environment. The profound impact of these fires extends beyond physical damage, as respondents express heightened psychological trauma and pervasive fear of recurring disasters. Fatema's presentation underscores the urgent need to prioritize fire safety measures within Rohingya refugee settlements, emphasizing the imperative to protect both the environment and human well-being. By illuminating the environmental and health consequences of fire accidents in Cox's Bazar, Fatema's research calls for proactive measures and concerted efforts to safeguard the lives and dignity of the Rohingya community amidst challenging circumstances.

Indoor Air Pollution and Its Effects on Health in the Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh: A Cross-Sectional Study

**Ms. Taslima Razzak
Master's Student, AUW**



In her presentation, Ms. Taslima Razzak delved into the urgent environmental and health challenges faced by Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. With the world's largest refugee camps as their home, Rohingya communities confront a myriad of environmental adversities, including cyclones, landslides, floods, and notably, indoor air pollution. Razzak's groundbreaking cross-sectional study aimed to fill a critical research gap, highlighting the profound impact of indoor air pollution on refugee health—a topic previously overlooked. Employing a structured questionnaire and advanced monitoring technology, including the Laser Egg and Indoor Air Quality monitor, Razzak's study provided concrete data revealing alarming levels of relative humidity, PM2.5 particles, and Air Quality Index (IAQ) within the camps, surpassing WHO guidelines for healthy air quality. The findings underscored a concerning correlation between environmental factors and respiratory ailments, such as coughing, breathing difficulties, asthma, and tuberculosis, as well as skin conditions like chickenpox and dermatomycosis. Razzak emphasized the imperative for immediate action, advocating for the involvement of community leaders, international organizations, and governmental bodies to implement comprehensive policies addressing indoor air pollution, alongside improvements in healthcare, infrastructure, and housing systems. Her presentation not only sheds light on the dire environmental and health crises faced by Rohingya refugees but also serves as a clarion call for concerted efforts to safeguard their well-being and dignity amidst challenging circumstances.



Human-elephant conflict in Cox's Bazar Rohingya Camps

**Ms. Nafisa Islam
Alumni, AUW**



In her presentation, Nafisa Islam shed light on a pressing issue exacerbated by the Rohingya refugee crisis. With human-elephant conflicts (HEC) escalating due to mass deforestation for camp construction, Bangladesh's already precarious situation with its population of Asian elephants has become increasingly complex. Islam's study aimed to assess the severity of HECs since the onset of the refugee influx in 2015 and evaluate the effectiveness of current mitigation measures, such as Elephant Response Teams and Watchtowers. Surveys revealed that a significant portion of the host community noted an increase in conflicts since 2015, while a majority acknowledged the efficacy of existing mitigation efforts. By presenting perspectives from both host community members and Rohingya refugees, Islam's research offers valuable insights into the impacts of elephant encroachment on human settlements and the effectiveness of mitigation strategies. Furthermore, her study suggests potential enhancements to current measures based on community feedback. The findings not only contribute to the understanding of human-wildlife conflicts but also offer practical recommendations applicable to similar contexts globally, particularly in marginalized communities lacking adequate governmental or humanitarian support. Islam's presentation underscores the importance of addressing environmental challenges in tandem with humanitarian crises, advocating for sustainable solutions to mitigate conflicts and protect both human and wildlife populations.

Factors Determining Place of Delivery among Rohingya Women in Rohingya Refugee Camp, Bangladesh: A Community-Based Cross-sectional Study

**Ms. Omar Salma
Alumni, AUW**

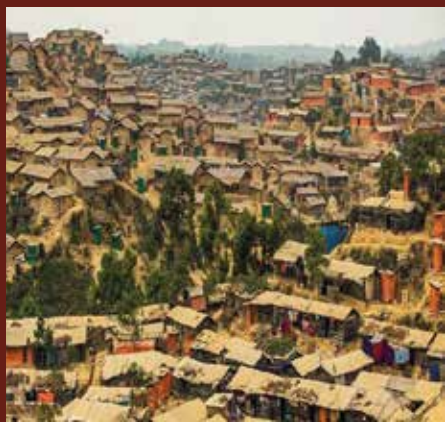


Omar Salma highlighted the critical issue of maternal health care access within the Rohingya refugee community during her presentation. With an alarming global maternal mortality rate, compounded by the challenges of providing adequate healthcare in conflict-affected regions, Rohingya women face significant barriers to accessing quality maternal health services. Her study aimed to unravel the complexities surrounding the place of delivery among Rohingya women in the refugee camps, shedding light on the factors influencing their decisions. Through a community-based cross-sectional approach, Salma surveyed 400 participants who had given birth in the camps within the last two years, revealing that a substantial majority opted for home deliveries. Factors determining the place of delivery ranged from socioeconomic status and education levels to the availability and accessibility of maternal health services, as well as women's trust in healthcare providers. The study underscored the urgent need for public health interventions, policy reforms, and improved measurement strategies to enhance the utilization and quality of maternal health care services within the camp. By elucidating the multifaceted dynamics shaping maternal health decisions among Rohingya women, Salma's research provides a crucial foundation for targeted interventions aimed at reducing maternal mortality and improving overall maternal health outcomes in this vulnerable population. The findings presented by Salma serve as a clarion call for concerted efforts to address the structural and systemic barriers hindering access to maternal healthcare services within the Rohingya refugee community.

Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy in Rohingya Refugee Camp, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

**Tofrida Rahaman
Alumni, AUW**

Tofrida Rahaman shed light on a pressing issue that has persisted within displaced Rohingya communities through her presentation. Despite global efforts to eradicate child marriage and teenage pregnancy, progress remains slow, particularly in conflict-affected regions like Cox's Bazar. Rahaman's study, a community-based cross-sectional analysis, aimed to dissect the underlying drivers of these phenomena among Rohingya refugees. Through interviews with 400 adolescents and young adults who experienced early marriage after displacement to Bangladesh, Rahaman uncovered a complex web of factors contributing to this trend. Fear of insecurity, poverty, and illiteracy emerged as prominent reasons for early marriage, compounded by cultural and social norms, family honor, and limited legal protections. While some participants cited physical and mental maturity for marriage, the prevalence of teenage pregnancies underscored the urgent need for intervention. Remarkably, despite high awareness of legal marriage age and family planning, a significant majority of teenagers had already experienced pregnancy before turning 18. Rahaman's research not only highlights the entrenched challenges faced by Rohingya refugees but also serves as a catalyst for awareness and policy reform. By illuminating the multifaceted nature of child marriage and teenage pregnancy in the Rohingya community, Rahaman's findings offer a crucial foundation for the development of targeted interventions addressing healthcare, socio-economic factors, and legal protections. Ultimately, her presentation advocates for comprehensive strategies that empower Rohingya adolescents and safeguard their rights, paving the way for a brighter and more equitable future.



Panel Discussion 2

The panel discussion, adeptly moderated by Dr. Mukesh Kumar Gupta, Assistant Professor of Environmental Sciences at AUW, offered a dynamic platform to explore the intricate nexus between health and the environment in Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh. Dr. Muhammad Talut, Deputy Secretary at the RRRC, shed light on governmental perspectives and initiatives targeting immediate and long-term environmental and health hurdles faced by refugees. Stressing collaborative efforts among governmental bodies, international organizations, and refugees, they emphasized the critical need for sustainable solutions. Mr. Paul McCallion, Senior Energy Officer at UNHCR, highlighted the pivotal role of energy access in improving camp living conditions, advocating for clean energy sources to combat indoor air pollution and broader environmental issues. Dr. Nazmul Alam, AUW's Associate Professor of Public Health, offered valuable insights into the health impacts of environmental challenges within the camps, promoting evidence-based policies and holistic interventions. The panel collectively emphasized community involvement, sustainable development, and refugee empowerment as crucial elements in fostering resilience and well-being. This discussion showcased the potential for impactful change through collaborative action and informed policymaking in addressing the multifaceted challenges encountered by Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar.



Day 1 Reflections

Symposium on Education, Environment, and Health Situation of the FDMN Camps, Cox's Bazar, drew to a close with a sense of accomplishment and determination. Dr. David Taylor's closing remarks encapsulated the essence of the event, emphasizing the significance of the discussions held and the outcomes achieved. Attendees left the symposium with a renewed sense of purpose, armed with insights gained from expert presentations, panel discussions, and collaborative sessions.

Throughout the symposium, participants engaged in robust exchanges of ideas, sharing experiences and best practices to address the multifaceted challenges facing Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar. The interdisciplinary nature of the discussions facilitated a holistic understanding of the interconnected issues of education, environment, and health within the refugee camps.

As the symposium concluded, attendees departed with a heightened awareness of the urgent need for sustainable solutions and concerted action. The event served as a platform for forging partnerships, fostering dialogue between stakeholders, and catalyzing initiatives aimed at improving the well-being of the refugee population.

Moving forward, the symposium's legacy will endure through ongoing efforts to implement recommendations and strategies developed during the event. Participants remain committed to advocating for the rights and dignity of Rohingya refugees, working towards a future where education, environmental sustainability, and healthcare are prioritized for all.

In closing, the Symposium on Education, Environment, and Health Situation of the FDMN Camps, Cox's Bazar, served as a beacon of hope and collaboration, inspiring positive change and laying the groundwork for a more inclusive and equitable society.





*Field Visit
and
Awareness
Building
Campaign*



Day 2 of the event was marked by a Field Visit and Awareness Building Campaign on March 7th, 2024, with a dedicated focus on practical engagement and raising awareness within the Rohingya refugee camps in Cox's Bazar. Dr. Sayed Mohammad Nazim Uddin set the stage with an opening speech, emphasizing the importance of addressing crucial issues affecting the health and well-being of the refugee population. Following Dr. Nazim's remarks, Dr. David Taylor and other esteemed guests delivered speeches highlighting the significance of community involvement and cooperation in tackling environmental and health challenges within the camps.



Awareness Building Campaign and Seminar on Education, Environment and Health Situation of FDMN Camps

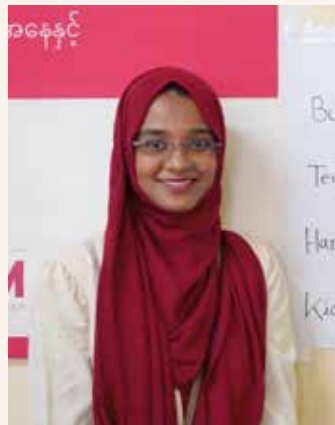
ရိုဟင်ဂျာ ဒုက္ခသည်စခန်းများ၏ ပညာရေး၊ သဘာဝပတ်ဝန်းကျင်ဆိုင်ရာနှင့် ကျန်းမာရေး အခြေအနေနှင့် ပတ်သက်၍ အသိပညာပေးကမ်းပွဲနှင့် ဆွေးနွေးပွဲ



The awareness-building session commenced with presentations covering diverse topics. Ms. Taslima Razzak provided insights into the impacts of air pollution on health, followed by Ms. Parmin Fatema's presentation on fire hazard prevention, and Ms. Mosaddika Mounin's discussion on the empowerment through mass education.



Ms. Taslima Razzak



Ms. Mosaddika Mounin



Ms. Parmin Fatema

Awareness Building Campaign and Seminar on Education, Environment and Health Situation of FDMN Camps

ရိုဟင်ဂျာ ဒုက္ခသည်စခန်းများ၏ ပညာရေး၊ သဘာဝပတ်ဝန်းကျင်ဆိုင်ရာနှင့် ကျန်းမာရေး အခြေအနေနှင့် ပတ်သက်၍ အသိပညာပေးကမ်းပွဲနှင့် ဆွေးနွေးပွဲ

Date: 7th March 2024
Venue: FDMN Camp, Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar.

Organized by: ASIAN UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN



Supported By: FDM



Dr. David Taylor and Dr. Edgard Rodriguez extended gratitude to all participants and contributors as the presentations concluded, acknowledging their valuable insights and contributions.



The highlight of the day was the camp visit and interaction with the community. Participants engaged directly with refugees, gaining firsthand insights into their daily lives, challenges, and aspirations. This immersive experience fostered empathy and understanding, underscoring the importance of collaborative efforts to effectively address the needs of the Rohingya refugees.



Overall, Day 2 of the event was characterized by proactive engagement, knowledge dissemination, and meaningful interactions. Participants left with a strengthened resolve to work towards sustainable solutions and improved outcomes for the refugee population in Cox's Bazar.





EMAIL: ccceh@auw.edu.bd
Web: <https://asian-university.org/academic-programs/ccceh/>

20/A, M M Ali Road, Chattogram,
Bangladesh



Since its inception in 2017, the Knowledge for Democracy Myanmar Initiative (K4DM) has dedicated efforts towards empowering researchers, enhancing research and higher education capabilities to provide evidence-informed recommendations for public policy. Currently in its second phase, the initiative steadfastly promotes inclusion, diversity, gender equality, and the principles of democracy by offering research fellowships, policy-oriented training, and facilitating capacity building across borders.

K4DM represents a collaborative effort led by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) alongside Global Affairs Canada.