

CAP-RES youth visits the BRAC PLEASE Project



Learning from the frontlines

Author: Mahinur Saif, BRAC

Editor: Rukhsar Sultana, BRAC

Photos: Kingshuk Partha, ICCCAD



On 16 July 2025, ICCCAD Youth Fellows visited several sites under the BRAC PLEASE Project in Cox's Bazar, which is working to reduce plastic pollution while strengthening community resilience. This field exposure enabled the fellows to connect their academic knowledge with the lived realities and local solutions taking root in one of the most climate-affected regions of Bangladesh.



Project orientation session

The day began with a presentation introducing the fellows to the vision, approaches, and progress of the PLEASE Project. The session highlighted how the project applies behavioural science to design community nudges, integrates circular economy principles, and promotes climate-smart infrastructure for waste management. Fellows engaged with the project team to understand the layered challenges and adaptive responses in play.





Mithachori plastic recycling facility, Ramu

The fellows then visited the newly established **plastic recycling facility** at Cox's Bazar. This centre processes single-use plastics — often found polluting open areas and water bodies — into usable products such as **plastic lumber, durable sheets, and pellets**.

This facility stands as a practical example of how waste can be turned into value, supporting livelihoods while protecting the environment. It also illustrated how inclusive, locally rooted infrastructure can support a sustainable plastic value chain.



Tekpara model ward: a clean community in action

Next, the group visited Tekpara, a model ward demonstrating structured, community-led waste management under the PLEASE Project.

Here, fellows observed how households have adopted dual-compartment bins, how trained waste workers operate with proper tools and safety gear, and how local awareness campaigns have reduced visible litter and improved waste practices.

Floating barrier: protecting our waterways

The visit concluded at *Rumaliarchhora* canal, where BRAC has installed a floating plastic barrier designed to trap floating waste before it enters downstream ecosystems.

To date, this intervention has helped collect over **1,558 kg of waste**, including **652 kg of plastic, directly preventing harmful materials from reaching the Bay of Bengal**. The fellows also interacted with nearby community members who shared how the barrier has improved water flow and cleanliness in the area — supporting both ecological wellbeing and local livelihoods such as fishing.



Youth reflections: Learning by seeing

Reflecting on the experience, Jamil Hasan, one of the 2025 ICCCAD Youth Fellows, shared:

“Today was more than just a field trip. It was a firsthand look at how simple behaviour changes and local action can lead to big impacts. If supported and expanded, these efforts can help Cox’s Bazar move beyond plastic and become a model for climate adaptation.”

For many fellows, this visit reshaped their understanding of climate change — not just as a challenge to solve, but as a catalyst for innovation, resilience, and community-led transformation.

