



# Brief Introduction

Voices for Interactive Choice & Empowerment

## MISSION STATEMENT

- To build a pluralist society drawing on the interactions, choices and power of indigenous cultures and resources.
- Established in 2002

## WORKING AREAS

01

Rights & Justice

02

Environment  
& Climate Change

03

Development  
Effectiveness

04

Digital Rights and  
Media

## WORKING AREAS

05

Counter Hate-speech  
and Misinformation

06

Civic Space  
Protection

07

Public Health

08

IFI Monitoring

## BRIEF on VOICE



VOICE is a right based research and advocacy organization working mainly on the issues of human rights-- right to information and communication justice, privacy rights and data protection, freedom of expression, digital rights as well as around the issues of aid and development effectiveness, economic justice, food sovereignty, climate change, countering hate speech & misinformation, public health programme etc, both in Bangladesh and on a global scale.

By building a broader constituency of alternative voices to the mainstream development discourse through research and public education, VOICE takes a stand against unjust and undemocratic practices.

It strategically works through networking and partnership for a new development paradigm establishing a micro-macro linkage in order to generate increased support for policy influencing. It works with a team of activists on research and action and believes in promoting the capacity, knowledge and empowerment of people.

## OUR VALUES

Respect to  
HUMAN RIGHTS



Respect to  
MOTHER EARTH



Respect to  
OPEN CULTURE  
& DIVERSITY



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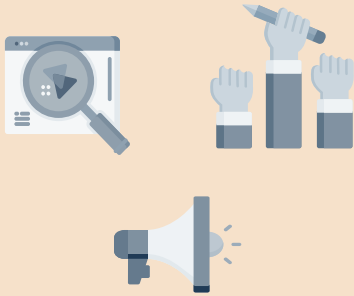
**OUR  
WORKING  
APPROACH**



**RESEARCH**



**CAMPAIGN &  
ADVOCACY**



# Research & Campaigns



## Research & Campaigns

- **E Waste management**, *Funded By APC (Running Project)*
- **Tobacco control Programme**, *Funded by CTFk (Running Project)*
- **Countering Misinformation Online through youth engagement**, *Funded By APC (Running Project)*
- **Protection and Protection of Human Rights/ Freedom of Expression**, *Funded By UNDP*
- **Situation analysis of foreign aid in Bangladesh**, *Funded By ChristianAid, UK*
- **Analysing Freedom of Expression on the Internet**, *Funded By FCO, APC/SIDA*
- **A Study of Health Services in Bangladesh**, *Funded by ActionAid Bangladesh)*
- **Nature of Online Surveillance and Censorship in Bangladesh**; *Funded by Open Net Initiative/IDRC*
- **Global Understandings and Rights Development**, *Funded by: ONI/IDRC*
- **Aid Effectiveness in Bangladesh: A Situational Analysis**, *Funded by BetterAid/ Reality of Aid (RoA) Network*

## Research & Campaigns

- VOICE launched an international campaign on **Climate Refugee Rights** in Copenhagen, Denmark during the UNFCCC in 2009. Built the international network titled **International; Campaign on Climate Refugee Rights (ICCR)** and it played as a Secretariat. VOICE was one of the members of the Steering Committee for the climate conference in Copenhagen.
- VOICE and ICCR organized events during **UNFCCC** held in different countries at different times. (Durban, South Africa, Qatar, Bangladesh, etc.)
- VOICE was also the founding member of the **Beyond 2015 Campaign** and it served 4 years in the executive committee since 2011-2015 and acted as official interlocutor for the UNDP to promote the post-2015 development agenda.
- VOICE is the networking member of many international networks including **Reality of Aid Network, Asia Pacific Research Network, Asia Pacific Food Sovereignty Network, Asia Pacific Network on Debt and Development on ADB, Association for Progressive Communication, Open Net Initiative** etc.

## Research & Campaigns

- Internet Censorship, Surveillance and Information Control Mechanism
- Surveillance and Freedom: Global Understandings and Rights Development (SAFEGUARD)
- Alternative review of the implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action commitments in Bangladesh
- Post 2015 Development Agenda
- Resists Corporate Control Over Seed & Food
- Information and protecting people's right to Privacy
- CSOs Enabling Environment and development effectiveness
- Climate change, climate migrants and climate financing
- Campaign on access to information and community radio
- Campaign on CSOs Enabling Environment and Development Effectiveness
- Campaign on Economic Justice through monitoring IFIs like WB, ADB, IMF, WTO etc,
- Campaign on Tax Justice and Fiscal Reforms



# **Projects completed on Privacy, Internet & Digital Rights**

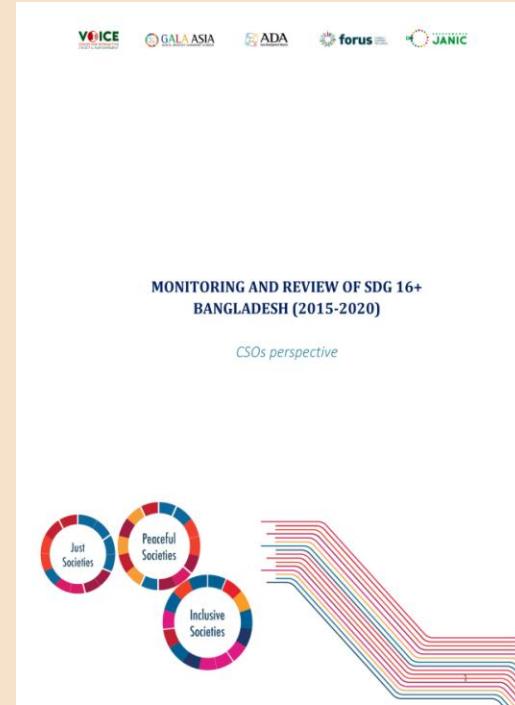
## **Projects completed on Privacy, Internet & Digital Rights**

- Defending and Strengthening Freedom of Expression on the Internet in Bangladesh, Funded by Foreign and Commonwealth Organization (FCO), 2012-2013
- Internet Censorship, Surveillance and Information Control Mechanism: A Review of the Bangladesh Context, Funded by IDRC, 2009-2011
- Surveillance and Freedom: Global Understandings and Rights Development (SAFEGUARD), Funded by IDRC, 2013-2014
- Access to Information and protecting people's right to Privacy, Funded by IDRC, 2011-2012
- Beyond 2015 Asia: Policy to Action Media Challenge, Funded by SIDA, 2015
- Strengthening and Monitoring the Scenario of Freedom of Expression for Promoting Human Rights in Bangladesh, Funded by UNDP, 2019-2020
- 'Assessment of Freedom of Expression Online in Bangladesh: Analyzing Regulatory Framework and Advocacy for Strengthening Online Expression' Funded by APC, 2018

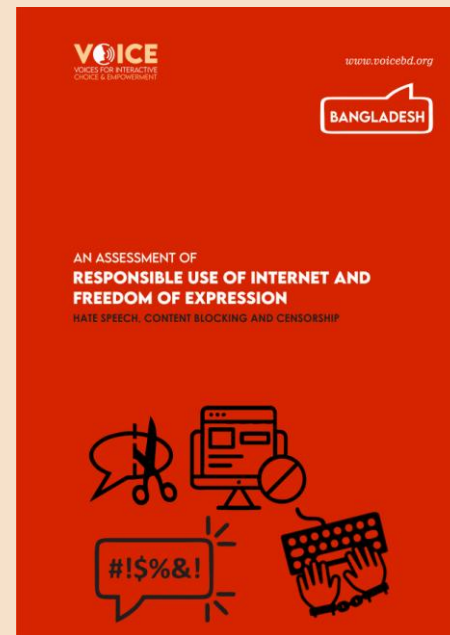
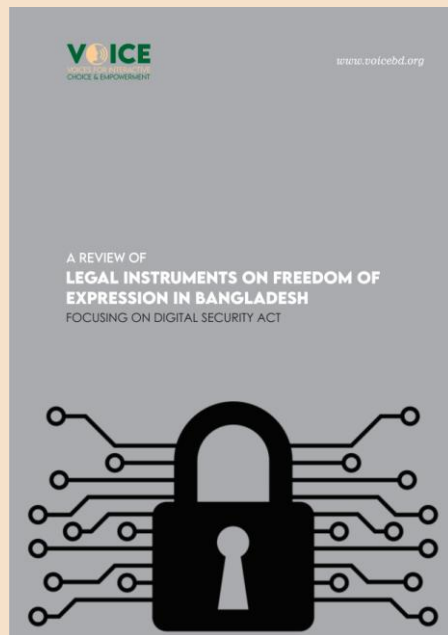


# Recent Publications

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

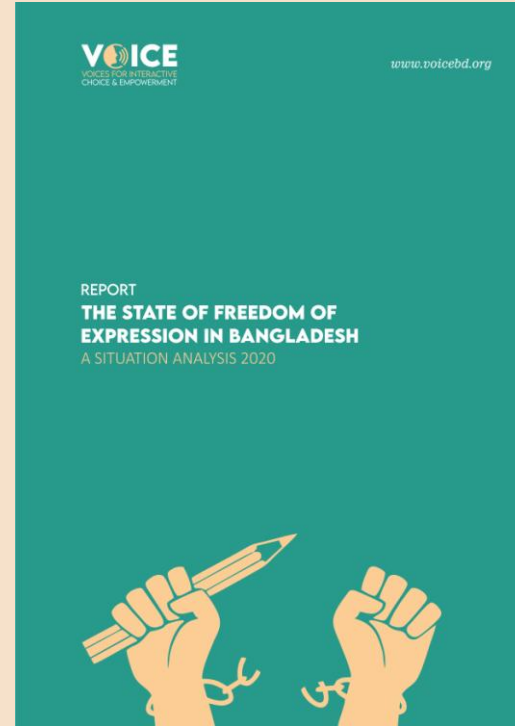
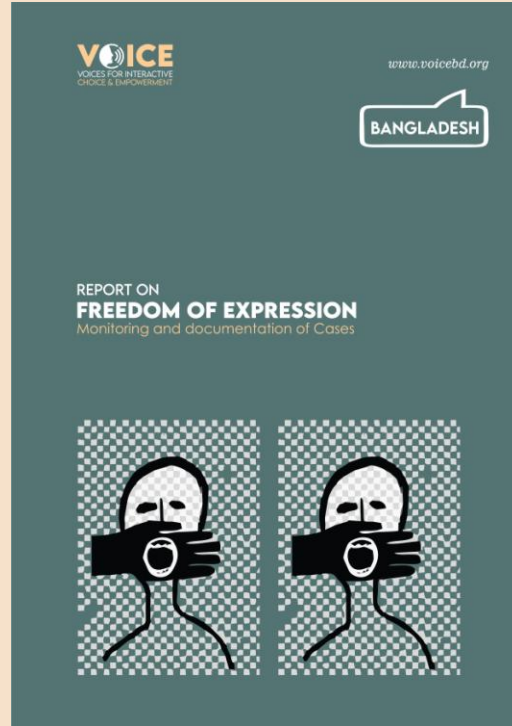


## RECENT PUBLICATIONS





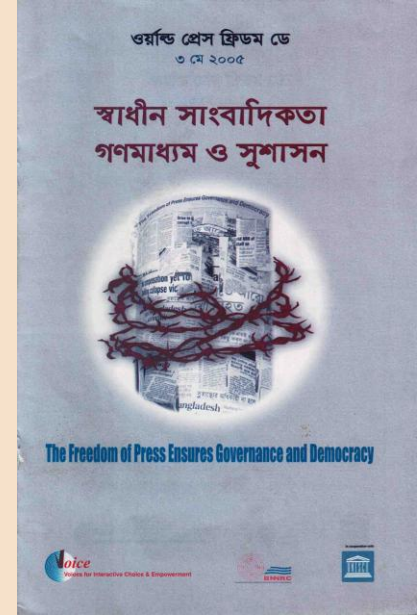
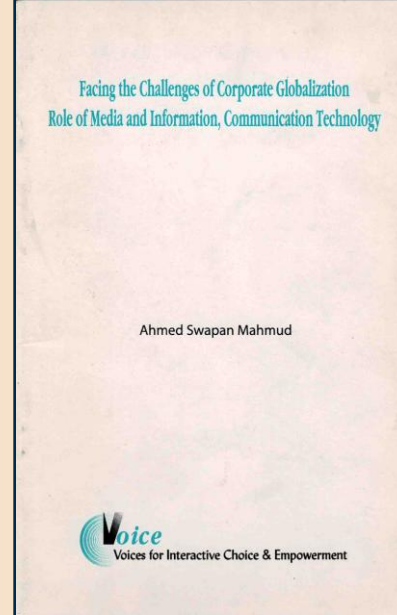
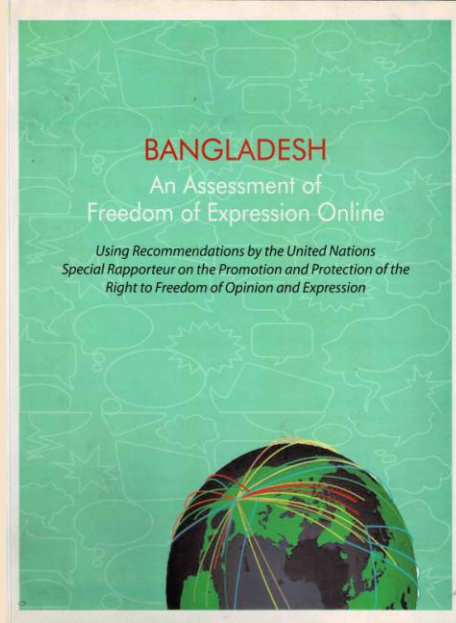
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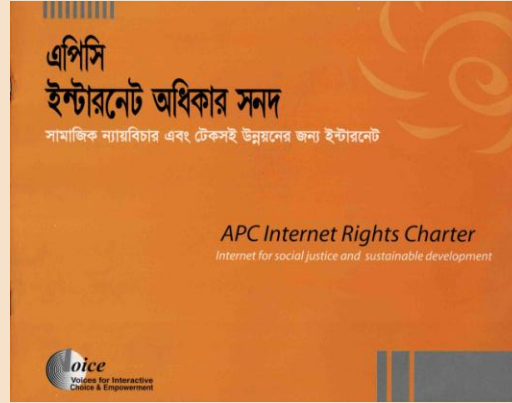


# **Publications on Privacy, Internet, Digital Rights & Freedom**

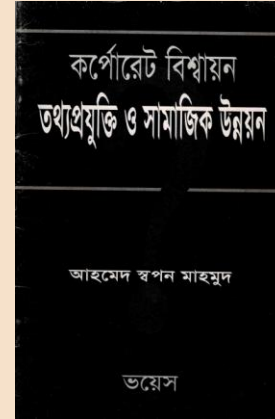
**Publications on  
Privacy, Internet,  
Digital Rights &  
Freedom**  
a few among many



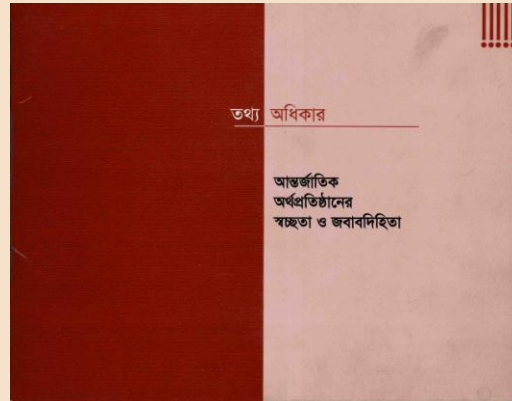
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a few among many



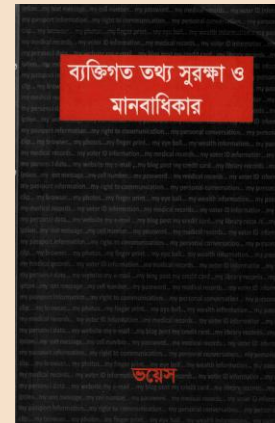
APC Internet  
Rights  
Charter



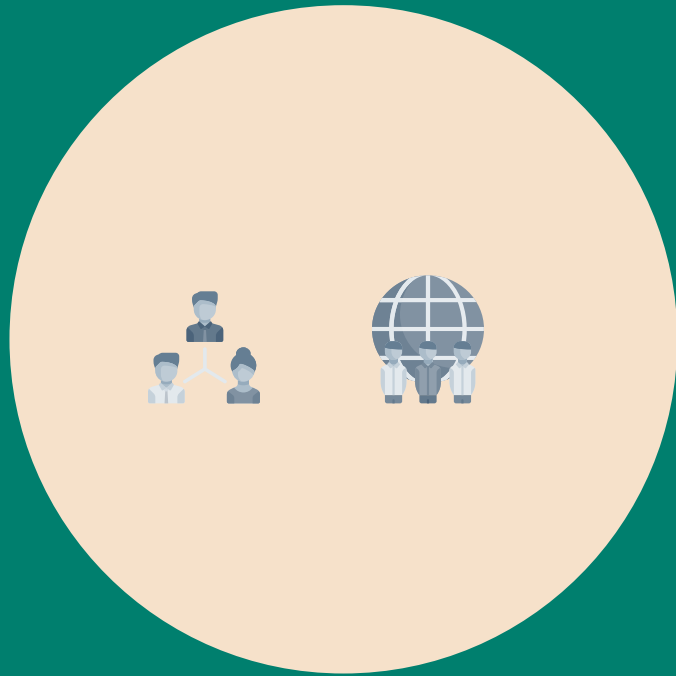
Corporate  
Globalization:  
ICT & Social  
Development



Information  
Rights: IFI's  
Transparency &  
Accountability



Personal  
Information  
Protection &  
Human Rights



# Other Publications

**OTHER  
PUBLICATIONS**  
a few among many

- ADB and the Crisis of Economy and Livelihood : Climate Change, Carbon Trade and Energy Policy, 2008
- Poverty and Social Protection Policies: Bangladesh Perspective, 2009
- Corporate Globalization and Politics of Agriculture, 2009
- Role of CSOs on Aid Effectiveness in Development, 2010
- Globalization and Livelihood Crisis, edited, at el 2002
- Corporate Globalization: Information Technology and Social Development (Bangla), VOICE, February 2003
- Facing the Challenges of Corporate Globalization: Role of Media and Information, Communication Technology, VOICE, February 2003
- How Globalization Affects the Life and Livelihood, translation and ed. 2004
- Corporate Globalization: Agriculture & Trade, VOICE, 2006



# **Research/Articles /Interview in global media**

Research/Articles  
published in global  
media  
a few among many

LE JOURNAL

alternatives

ÉDITIONS ACTUALITÉS - OPINIONS - CRITIQUES - DOSSIERS - PODCASTS À PROPOS -

## Climate change under neoliberal capitalism

Wednesday 10 September 2008, by Ahmed Swapan Mahmud

**There is little doubt that climate change is happening. As countries and international organisations ponder over how resolve an impending crisis brought about by global warming, they should also stop to consider whether the prevailing market oriented economy makes enough of an allowance to arrive at sustainable and genuine measures to contain this impending crisis.**

The consequences of climate change already threaten the planet and communities around the world. However, strong resistance is present among the northern as well as southern communities to change the existing system of over consumption and exploitative nature of the global transnational corporations and international financial institutions. Although it is the North that is mainly responsible for carbon emission and destruction of nature and socioeconomic condition the Southern elites cannot avoid the responsibility either. It is also clear that the southern elite show little willingness to take proper measures against pollution and destruction by corporations often backed by the international financial institutions. Rather, it is observed that these institutions and corporations undermine government policies undertake activities that cause enormous damage to the nature and people's livelihoods.

Martin Khor of the Third World Network points out that the global reduction of 80 per cent greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by 2050, that many consider necessary, will have to translate into reductions of at least 150 to 200 per cent on the part of the global North if the two principles—"common but differentiated responsibility" and recognition of the right to development of the South—are to be followed. But are the governments and peoples of the North prepared to make such commitments?



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### INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON CLIMATE REFUGEES RIGHTS (ICCR) LAUNCHED AT COPENHAGEN

December 11, 2009

Global civil society groups demanded a legal institutional framework for climate refugees.

[Copenhagen, Friday 11 December 2009] While the countries split wide open on combating climate change, the civil society groups have launched the 'International Campaign on Climate Refugees Rights (ICCR)' at Copenhagen. The social movement groups from Asia, Africa and Latin/Central America joined hands together to demand the rights of millions of people being displaced by the climate change.

Opening the launching of the campaign, Ahmed Swapan Mahmud, convener of the ICCR said, "global civil society


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Social Justice (1)



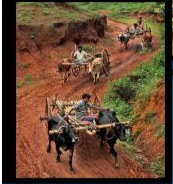
## The Reality of Aid 2014

An Independent Review of Poverty Reduction and Development Assistance




Rethinking Partnerships in a Post-2015 World: Towards Equitable, Inclusive and Sustainable Development

Democratic Ownership and Development Effectiveness: Civil Society Perspectives on Progress since Paris



Reality of Aid 2014 Report



The Reality of Aid

An Independent Review of Poverty Reduction and Development Assistance



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CRITICAL VOICES ON THE WORLD BANK AND IMF

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IFI GOVERNANCEIFI GOVERNANCE



From Issue 68 of The Bretton Woods Update

**RELATED ARTICLES**

Unjustifiable Bank domination over climate funds in Bangladesh  
20 NOVEMBER 2009

IFI GOVERNANCEcommentary

## Destructive development: A case of ecological debt in Bangladesh

20 NOVEMBER 2009 | GUEST COMMENT  
by Ahmed Swapan

'Development' has become synonymous with destruction in Bangladesh as many of the so-called development projects, financed mainly by the international financial institutions (IFIs), have huge negative impacts on the ground. Project interventions under IFI loan packages, which are prepared by hired consultants and negotiated with the bureaucracy without assessing the ground reality and demands of communities, have seriously threatened ecosystems and people's livelihoods. Even though there are a few examples of

## International Financial Institutions (IFIs)– The major barrier to change in the aid system

**Ahmed Swapan Mahmud**

*Voices for Interactive Choice and Empowerment (VOICE)*

### Introduction

The IFIs sit at the heart of the global aid architecture. The World Bank is a major source of finance for developing countries and the IMF has a crucial function in "signaling" which countries receive more funding from both official and private sources. These roles confer incredible power to these two institutions that have spread their wings well beyond their original mandates. The governance of the World Bank and IMF is severely skewed towards rich countries that dominate decision-making in these institutions.

The World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and other donor agencies have, for the past few decades, provided

capitalism, exerting a heavy influence on global trade policies that mainly promote trade liberalization and public sector privatization. Many of the least developed countries (LDCs) have become a place of experimentation for trade liberalization at the hands of international financial institutions (IFIs) who pressure the government into liberalizing trade policies. This causes serious devastation in public service sectors including health, education, water, agriculture and food.

Despite the movement for democratization across the developing world, International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have been continuing to bypass parliaments, a trend that is at odds with donor insistence on 'good governance.' The WB, IMF and Regional Development banks attach

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**Rio+20: A voice from Dhaka, Bangladesh**  
Ahmed Swapan Mahmud is an activist and researcher, and executive director and founder of Voice  
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## “International Campaign on Climate Refugees’ Rights” Demanded New Legal Institutional Framework at Durban UN Talks

December 6, 2011 admin

[Durban, 6 December 2011] Speakers in a public dialogue said that climate change catastrophe not only pose a mortal danger but also lead to the destruction of the means of livelihood which threaten millions of people in the global south to become refugees. Recent studies show that around 30 million people from the coastal areas of Bangladesh, 300 thousand from the Maldives, 10 million from Vietnam, 10 million from Mediterranean Egypt, and 600 thousand from Guyana will be displaced due to loss of land as a result of climate change effects.

The public dialogue organized by the International Campaign on Climate Refugees’ Rights (ICCR) was held at the University of KwaZulu-Natal today while the civil society groups urged the global leaders to form legal framework for the displaced victims-climate refugee.

Ahmed Swapan Mahmud, convenor of the Campaign said “a legal safeguard protocol should be in place to ensure the political, social, cultural and economic rights of the climate refugees by the international community presently meeting under the Conference of Parties (COP-17) here in Durban, South Africa”.

Hemantha Withanage from Friends of the Earth International, Sri Lanka, a member of the network urged that

# NEWAGE



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69TH UNGA

### Post 2015 goals should be people-centred: discussion

September 20, 2014 12:11 am 0 comments

Views: 107

#### Staff Correspondent

Experts and rights activists on Friday demanded a people-centred post 2015 development framework to ensure meaningful participation of all concerned stakeholders.

They urged the concerned authorities to adopt a strong, inclusive and legitimate post 2015 framework to succeed in the Millennium Development Goals, said a press release.

The speakers were present at a conference titled ‘A Transformative Post 2015 Development Agenda: Citizens’ Demands and Expectations’ held at the Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium, jointly organised by rights groups VOICE and Beyond 2015.

In the upcoming 69th United Nations General Assembly 2014, United Nations is going to prepare a new sustainable development framework with its member states as the Millennium Development Goal will end in 2015.

While presenting the keynote paper, VOICE executive director Ahmed Swapan Mahmud said the framework should address challenges including increasing rate of consumption, human rights, human security and inequality, climate change, and

**VOICE in UN &  
Others**  
a few among many



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxSPq1\\_WEpq](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FxSPq1_WEpq)



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# Network & Membership

## OUR NETWORK & MEMBERSHIP

- Member of Better Aid Coordination Group (BACG),
- Reality of Aid (RoA) Network,
- Member of the executive committee, Beyond 2015, Brussels
- International Committee member of NGO Forum on ADB, Philippines,
- Advisory Board member of Privacy International, UK,
- Member of Advisory Committee of EVAL- HEALTH EU funded Project, Spain
- Council member of Association of Progressive Communication (APC), South Africa
- Member of the Asia Pacific Network on Food Sovereignty (APNFS), Philippines
- Member, People's Protocol on Climate Change, Philippines
- Member, Water for People's Network, Philippines
- Member of Jubilee South Asia Pacific Movement on Debt & Development (JSAPMDD), Philippines,
- Member of South Asia Alliance for Poverty Eradication (SAAPE) Nepal,
- Member of Gender-CC, Germany.
- Member of One World- South Asia,



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