



CRS' CAMPAIGN ON

# Climate Change

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**ACTION TOOLKIT**



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Text ACT to 677-68



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## Front cover

**Bangladesh is one of the countries most vulnerable to the impact of climate change, experiencing more frequent and severe storms that cause devastating flooding.**

Photo by Ismail Ferdous for CRS

# Help Our Planet and Family Overcome Climate Change

**Still a college student**, Shahadat Hossain supports his wife, parents and two younger brothers in their hometown in Monpura, an island in Bangladesh. Shahadat grows vegetables to feed his family and sell at market, providing income that enables him and his brothers to attend school.

But Shahadat's livelihood is becoming increasingly threatened.

Bangladesh's long coastline, near-sea level elevation, and many rivers and waterways make the country prone to cyclones and floods. As climate change produces more frequent and destructive storms, Shahadat's family and community and other communities throughout the country face life-threatening risks.

## THE PROBLEM IS GLOBAL

It is estimated that **1 in 7 people** in Bangladesh will be displaced by 2051 because of climate change. **One in 7 by 2051—less than 30 years away.** Despite contributing the least to climate change, communities affected by poverty are the most harmed by its impact. They often lack access to basic infrastructure and support to help them overcome the devastation caused by climate change. People lose their crops—their clean water—their homes—and they struggle to recover. And this is happening in varying degrees around the world.

Rising temperatures. Longer and more extreme droughts. More intense rainfall. We have even witnessed the consequences of climate change in the

United States as increasing and more severe wildfires, hurricanes, tornadoes and record heatwaves devastate entire regions. And it will only get worse here and around the world if we don't **act now.**

## THE SOLUTION IS US

### Worldwide, Catholic Relief Services

works shoulder-to-shoulder with communities most vulnerable to climate change to become more resilient to its impact. In Bangladesh, Shahadat learned how to protect his crops from flooding and prepare for future disasters through a CRS program. From South Asia to the Dry Corridor in Central America and across drought-stricken parts of Africa like Kenya and Madagascar, farmers collaborate with CRS to adopt innovative agricultural practices to help them survive in the face of climate change.

But surviving is not enough. Countries must work together to stop global warming—to protect our planet and global family so our sisters and brothers can *thrive*. **YOU AND YOUR COMMUNITY are a critical part of this effort!** Your voices—your talents and gifts—your prayers and support are needed to minimize the effects of climate change and, ultimately, to eliminate global poverty. This is your moment and your movement to build a world that benefits all people and upholds human dignity—**our planet and global family depend on it.**



Photo by Amit Rudro for CRS



# Prayer for Climate Change

## CARING FOR ONE PLANET, ONE FAMILY



*Oh God, creator and owner of all that exists,  
you have given us rule over the works of your hands,  
and put all things at our feet because you made everything good.  
However, our ambition has led us to act selfishly,  
to find ways to use up your gifts  
and discard them when they are no longer useful to us.*

*Little by little, we have been wearing out what seemed to be endless,  
and very late we realized that  
where there were waters in which the fisherman sailed,  
now there are deserts and abandoned boats.  
Where there were trees in which birds nested,  
now there are ashes from logs consumed by fires.  
Where there were fields where animals grazed,  
now there is a world of concrete.  
Where there was joy when the rain watered the lands,  
now there is sadness because the rain's intensity devastated the crops.  
Where there were houses where families grew up,  
now there are memories flooded by the rising rivers and seas.  
Where the brightness of the stars and the moon could be seen,  
Now the night sky lights up with car headlights.*

*Holy Father, do not let us be indifferent to what is happening around us.  
Send your Holy Spirit  
to water our arid hearts with hope,  
stoke in us the flame of fraternity,  
make us set the world on fire with acts of justice in favor of those who suffer most,  
transform our attitudes and make our minds fertile to new ways of living,  
enlighten us to propose, support and defend projects and laws that protect the environment,  
take our hands to till ways of solidarity,  
and make our works and words bear fruit.*

*Send your Holy Spirit  
like a wind that changes the way we relate to each other and to nature,  
like a fresh breeze that purifies our intentions,  
like fire that ignites our being with your love for our common home and those who live in it.  
Make us overflow with joy once again when we contemplate your wonders.*

**Amen**

# Transform the World Together

## BECAUSE YOUR FAITH KNOWS NO BOUNDS

Our faith and values call us to be missionary disciples—people who have encountered Christ in the face of people who are poor, who share the Good News with others and who are prophetic advocates for justice and the common good. We are called to live in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in need. But if we want to create sustainable change for people living in poverty around the world, that demands action. Movement building is an act of solidarity with people who are poor—it is also an entrance into community with one another.

Be part of the movement and invite others to join. This is a movement in which millions of people in the United States and around the world increase the Church's impact and influence in combatting global poverty, violence and injustice.

Building a movement is easy with these steps!

### STEP 1: SUBSCRIBE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CRS' CAMPAIGN ON CLIMATE CHANGE

**Each one of us is called to reduce the impact climate change has** on our global family, the ecosystem and its fauna. By subscribing to CRS' emails and texts, you are joining a movement of people committed to making a difference in the lives of our sisters and brothers around the world. You will receive:

- **Stories and information** on how climate change is impacting the lives of the poorest of our sisters and brothers and how CRS is responding to the crisis.
- **Prayers and retreats** that help individuals and groups reflect on their role in building a more just society.
- **Fundraising opportunities and online tools** to get your community involved in contributing to the common good of our global family.
- **Alerts on the latest advocacy pushes** that you can take and forward to your network for a greater impact in advancing policies to end global poverty.

Don't miss out! Subscribe today at [crs.org/act](https://crs.org/act) and encourage your networks to join too!



Photo by Dooshima Tsee/CRS

## STEP 2: TAKE ACTION AS AN INDIVIDUAL AND WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

At CRS we promote three key elements that help us as individuals and society to achieve social justice: advocacy, giving and community collaboration.

Research shows that advocacy and raising funds are the two most impactful actions you can take to move the needle on important issues like climate change, which is why we focus on them and provide training on how to do them successfully. Additionally, taking action with others elevates the issues with your elected officials and government leaders. Pope Francis tells us in *Laudato Si'*, "Our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God."

With this in mind, to achieve bold goals requires people like you—who take consistent action—to invite others to do the same as we build communities of collaboration for the greater good.

**Visit the Action Center at [crs.org/act](https://crs.org/act) for resources and to learn about actions you can take right now on your own and with your community to help reduce the effects of climate change in the most vulnerable population of our common home.**

### a) Become an expert advocate.

Through advocacy, we work for justice by creating systemic change that eases human suffering.

When unpredictable weather patterns affect one region of our planet, we all suffer because we are **one planet, one family**. The laws that the United States government pass impact countries across the globe. Therefore, it is our responsibility to mobilize others to advocate legislation that supports human resilience in the face of climate change.

**Visit the Action Center at [crs.org/act](https://crs.org/act) to find tools to help you connect with your member of Congress, tips on how to write a letter to the editor, information to learn about key U.S. congressional committees, background documents on key legislation and more.**

Text **CLIMATE CHANGE** to **677-68** to get updates on the latest actions you can take in favor of our global family.

### b) Give.

We believe that the work CRS does with program participants around the world—supported by charitable contributions from people like you—is truly transformational. Through projects both large and small, CRS helps and works with communities to become stronger and thrive.

Raising funds is a tangible way to support our global family members who experience poverty, conflict, hunger, emergencies and other affronts to their human dignity accentuated by failing to care for creation. **Your donations and those you raise with your community will help provide emergency relief to people impacted by natural disasters, seeds to farmers who face long droughts and heavy rain, trainings on soil and water conservation practices to rural communities and more.**

Text **DONATE CLIMATE** to **677-68** to make a one-time online donation or visit [crs.org/act/fundraise](https://crs.org/act/fundraise) to explore different ways you can invite your community to give.



Photo by Philip Laubner/CRS

### STEP 3: START OR JOIN A CRS CHAPTER OR CLUB—AND INVITE YOUR NETWORKS TO DO THE SAME!

CRS Chapters and Clubs have a special role in being part of the transformational work of CRS and the Church around the world. When more people respond to their call to serve our human family, we can move the needle on critical issues and, ultimately, end global poverty. CRS Chapter and high school Club members support our global family through education, prayer, advocacy and giving actions. Benefits to joining or starting a CRS Chapter or Club include:

- **Connecting with others in the national network** to hear from expert speakers, get updates on key legislation, and hear best practices and success stories from chapters across the country.
- **Building leadership and skills** needed to write a letter to the editor, develop relationships with your members of Congress and inspire others to make a difference through giving.

Visit [crs.org/chapters-clubs](https://crs.org/chapters-clubs) or text **CRS CHAPTERS** to **677-68** to learn more about the work of CRS Chapters and Clubs and how you can be part of the movement!



Photo by Philip Laubner/CRS

# Read and Reflect

You were introduced to Shahadat on page 3. Read more of his story and reflect individually or with your community using the discussion questions.

**Check your clothing tags.** Track where your bananas or bag of lentils came from. There is probably something in your home that originated in Bangladesh, a country in South Asia with large textile and agriculture industries. Located on the Bay of Bengal next to India, Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. It's covered with rivers and streams, bamboo groves and wildlife.

Shahadat Hossain loves his home village in Monpura, an island in Bangladesh, where he lives with his family and spends a lot of time in his vegetable field. Shahadat supports his wife, father, mother and brothers by growing and selling vegetables.

Bangladesh experiences an intense monsoon season every year, which causes flooding and destroys farms and crops. Shahadat's home is in a lowland, and flooding is a regular and disastrous occurrence.

The monsoons are becoming more frequent and severe, making it difficult to farm and earn an income. Hunger and malnutrition are scary yet real consequences.

Shahadat is overcoming these challenges by participating in a Catholic Relief Services' project that helps families reduce their risk from natural disaster. He learned how to protect his plants from flooding by putting them on raised beds and how to make and use organic fertilizer to grow healthier crops. With these new skills and techniques, Shahadat is growing beans, pumpkin, eggplant, green chilis and tomatoes to sell—providing nutritious food for his family and community.

"With the CRS training, my family can grow vegetables with less money," Shahadat shares. "The vegetables I sell at the market help me to provide financially for my family."



Photo by Amit Rudro for CRS

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The story describes our global connection to Bangladesh through trade and industry. In what other ways are you and your community connected to Bangladesh and its people? To our entire global family?
2. The story mentions food insecurity as a consequence of climate change. What other problems have resulted from or could result from this global issue? How do these problems affect you and your community?
3. Shahadat overcame some impacts of climate change on his vegetable garden by adapting his farming methods. Individual action is important, but we need systematic change to stop global warming. In what ways can your community address climate change in the short- and long-term? What should be accomplished at the national and global levels?

Find more stories, reflections and other resources at [crs.org/act](https://crs.org/act).



Photo by Katlyn Holland/CRS

***Thank you*** for joining the movement to end global poverty and care for our *one planet, one family*. Together we can limit the impact of climate change on our sisters and brothers and build a world where all people have the opportunity to reach their God-given potential.

Find more resources to learn, pray and act at [crs.org/act](https://crs.org/act).

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## Join us

by texting ACT to 677-68 to get the latest  
CRS campaign news and alerts.

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