



Environmental Film Screening Campaign 2024 – 2025 Final Report

Supported by Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies Foundation (RNPF), the Environmental Film Screening Campaign began on 9 September 2024. Its objective was to make students, teachers, and local community aware about the importance of wetlands and engage them in wildlife conservation using our documentary *“Fishing Cat: The Pride of Bengal”* as a tool. Together with the screening and associated activities, we could raise awareness about local biodiversity (e.g. the fishing cat and Sundarbans mangroves), foster discussion, and inspire institutions to support conservation (e.g. forming eco-clubs).

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) sees education as key to tackling climate change and biodiversity loss. By screening this film and hosting Q&A and competitions, we provided a lively learning environment that builds knowledge and motivation to protect nature.

From September 2024 to June 2025, we completed 18 impactful screening campaigns out of the 20 originally planned. These events engaged 3,064 participants directly, including students, teachers, villagers, and stakeholders of educational institutions. Each event featured the screening of our award-winning documentary film *“Fishing Cat: The Pride of Bengal”* followed by interactive discussions, creative competitions (drawing/poster presentations), conservation material distribution.

Institutions were encouraged to form eco-clubs and pursue further conservation education. The students were requested to take oaths for environmental stewardship and educate about the fishing cat and fishing cat's habitat to their family and friends using the posters distributed during the program. This created awareness about fishing cats to more than 10000 people indirectly in the local community (Considering each participant talks to an average of about 3 to 4 members).

Notably, RNPF's collaborative approach of empowering grassroots programs – “supporting programs that help grantees thrive” and investing in “long-term change” – underpins our work.

Campaign Scope and Deliverables

Targeted Deliverables:

- 20 environmental film screening campaigns
- Coverage across 5 districts: Howrah, Hooghly, East Medinipur, South 24 Parganas (Sundarbans), and Purulia
- Primary target groups: school/college students, teachers, villagers

Core Components of Each Campaign:

- Screening of the documentary film *“Fishing Cat: The Pride of Bengal”*



- Drawing or poster presentation competition
- Interactive conservation discussion led by team members
- Distribution of awareness materials: pamphlets, posters, stickers, nature books
- Oath-taking session to commit towards wetland and Fishing Cat conservation
- Oath-taking to become ambassadors of fishing cats and to talk about fishing cats to at least three of their family and friends
- Memento and certificate presentation to host institution

Challenges and Current Status

Despite persistent and dedicated efforts, **2 of the 20 planned campaigns remain pending** due to the following unavoidable circumstances:

1. State-wide Educational Crisis:

The mass teacher protests caused by the West Bengal School Service Commission (SSC) recruitment scam (ongoing since 2016) have led to indefinite school closures. Teachers impacted by job terminations are currently leading state-wide demonstrations, bringing academic operations to a halt.

2. Institutional Rescheduling:

Several interested colleges around Kolkata could not host the screenings due to NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council) visits. They have proposed alternative dates between late May and mid-June 2025.

3. Political and Social Tensions:

In certain rural areas, including villages targeted for screenings, recent communal tensions have made ground-level community programs temporarily unfeasible.

Campaigns Completed (Sep 2024 – June 2025)

From **September 2024 to June 2025**, our dedicated team of conservationists successfully completed **18 out of 20 planned campaigns**. These were conducted across diverse ecological and socio-cultural regions, achieving a significant outreach and impact. Detailed individual reports of all completed campaigns have been appended as a separate PDF.



No.	Date	Institution (District)	Participants (Students, Teachers)	Activities
1	9 Sep 2024	Bally Banga Sishu Balika Vidyalaya (H.S), Howrah	215, 10	Film screening (Fishing Cat), drawing, talk
2	12 Sep 2024	Baneswarpur Ramchandrapur Anulia United H.S, Howrah	240, 5	Film screening, drawing, talk
3	23 Sep 2024	Bagnan Kavyasree Kalicharan (H.S), Howrah	185, 5	Film screening, drawing, talk
4	27 Sep 2024	Serampore College, Hooghly	170, 10	Film screening, poster contest, talk
5	30 Sep 2024	Mahesh Sri Ramkrishna Ashram Vidyalaya , Hooghly	250, 3	Film screening, drawing, talk
6	6 Nov 2024	Gakul Nagar Gobinda Jew S.S. (H.S), East Medinipur	110, 5	Film screening, drawing, talk
7	6 Nov 2024	Gobindapur Shree Gour Kishore S.S., East Medinipur	105, 3	Film screening, drawing, talk
8	9 Dec 2024	Ramkrishna Mandal Inst. of Education, Howrah	40, 5	Film screening, poster contest, talk
9	27 Jan 2025	Yogoda Sat-Sanga Kshirodamoyee Vidyapith (H.S), Purulia	243, 11	Film screening, drawing, talk
10	28 Jan 2025	Purulia Zilla School (H.S), Purulia	215, 6	Film screening, drawing, talk
11	29 Jan 2025	Jagannath Kishore College, Purulia	55, 4	Film screening, poster contest, talk
12	30 Jan 2025	Kishore Bharati Ashram Vidyalaya (H.S), Purulia	231, 5	Film screening, drawing, talk
13	26 Mar 2025	Ghoshpur High School (H.S), East Medinipur	248, 18	Film screening, drawing, talk
14	28 Mar 2025	Kishorimohanpur Jr. High School, S24 Parganas (Sundarbans)	77, 3	Film screening, drawing, talk
15	28 Mar 2025	Baikunthapur High School (H.S), S24 Parganas (Sundarbans)	286, 4	Film screening, drawing, talk
16	29 Mar 2025	Ambikanagar Haripriya High School (H.S), S24 Parganas (Sundarbans)	173, 2	Film screening, drawing, talk
17	29 Mar 2025	Youth Sporting Club, S24 Parganas (Sundarbans)	57, 0 (villagers)	Film screening, talk
18	5 th June 2025	East Calcutta Girls' College, New Town, Kolkata	58, 7	Film screening, talk

Each event was staffed by a team of 5–7 conservation educators. Sessions averaged 5–6 hours, including screening (Fishing Cat) and hands-on activities. Altogether we reached **~3,064** participants (students and teachers) across 18 events. Participation breakdown by district is shown below.



Educational Impact and Community Engagement

Across all events:

- **Total direct reach:** 3064 individuals
- **Schools/Colleges/Clubs Engaged:** 18
- **Total indirect reach :** More than 10,000 individuals
- **Materials Distributed:** 10,000 + pamphlets, stickers, and posters; 51+ nature books
- **Collaborations:** Wildlife Trust of India (WTI), Prakriti Samsad, I For Nature, Howrah Jilla Joutho Paribesh Moncho, Save Tree Save Life, Moundain and local clubs, school committees, and college faculties.

- **Key Highlights:**
 - Active student participation in drawing/poster competitions
 - Conservation pledges taken by students, teachers, and villagers
 - Testimonials and letters of appreciation from host institutions

In all five districts, institutional response was very positive. Teachers reported that students were “very engaged” by the film and follow-up discussion. Several institutions indicated plans to start or strengthen Eco-Clubs: for example, the principal of Jagannath Kishore College (Purulia) committed to forming a campus environment club. In Sundarbans associating with WTI(Sundarban Tiger Project) (South 24 Parganas) we engaged coastal communities on mangrove and fishing cat conservation. The strong turnout and enthusiastic feedback reflect UNESCO’s emphasis on empowering youth to take local action: education builds “knowledge, skills, values” to address biodiversity loss, and mobilizes youth for community-led change.

In these Sundarbans events, community members and students alike discussed impacts of deforestation and climate change on their livelihoods. Such on-the-ground awareness-raising is precisely what UNESCO identifies as key to sustainable development: “Education for Sustainable Development” empowers people of all ages to contribute to an environmentally sound future.

Impact and Testimonials

- **Increased awareness:** After screenings, students showed interest in local biodiversity. Teachers noted that concepts like wetland importance and wildlife conservation resonated with students across age groups.
- **Institutional commitment:** Several colleges (e.g. Ramkrishna Mandal Institute, Baikunthapur HS) expressed intent to integrate environmental modules into their



curriculum. The campaign prompted at least *two* institutions to begin setting up Eco-Clubs, aligning with calls to “mobilize youth” for local action.

- **Testimonials:** Teachers and administrators shared positive feedback. One principal remarked, *“This program opened our students’ eyes to environmental issues”*. A teacher at Ghoshpur HS praised the interactive session for sparking lively discussion. Another college coordinator thanked us for the digital projector and books on local ecology.

These outcomes – strong engagement and volunteer interest – suggest that film-based education is an effective tool for conservation outreach. Going forward, we plan to follow up with participating institutions and complete the remaining delayed sessions.

Outcomes and Future Scope

This campaign demonstrated strong institutional support for environmental education. The combination of documentary screening plus interactive exercises engaged nearly 3,065 participants in under 10 months. Notably, participating colleges and schools have expressed interest in continuing this work: at least two institutions have committed to start formal eco-clubs, and others are planning regular nature-awareness activities. The positive response in Sundarbans also indicates potential to expand into community-driven conservation projects (mangrove restoration, fish habitat protection).

These efforts align with **ESD goals** – UNESCO highlights that empowering youth and strengthening learning environments are key to sustainable futures. We will leverage this momentum in future campaigns, developing more local-language resources and deeper follow-up programs in 2025–26.

Challenges: Three planned screenings were delayed due to external factors: political unrest and teacher strikes related to the SSC examination controversy led to school closures, and some colleges had schedule conflicts. We are coordinating with local contacts to reschedule these missed events as soon as conditions allow.



Community-based outreach and screenings.

Pending Campaigns

Despite multiple attempts and alternative planning, two campaigns remain pending. We are in active contact with institutions to reschedule these events as soon as the situation stabilizes. All necessary materials and logistical preparations are in place.

Way Forward

Kaushikframes remains committed to completing all 20 campaigns under this initiative. We aim to:

- Reschedule the remaining screenings within June 2025
- Continue collaborating with colleges and community groups
- Document follow-up engagements and learning outcomes from participating institutions

We also hope to expand this model in the future to other ecological regions with similar conservation needs.

Acknowledgements

We extend our deepest gratitude to **Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies Foundation (RNPF)** for their visionary support and unwavering belief in the power of grassroots conservation. This campaign would not have been possible without your generous funding, timely guidance, and commitment to empowering civil society initiatives. Your support allowed us to reach remote communities, inspire thousands of young minds, and bring attention to one of India's most elusive and endangered wetland species — the Fishing Cat.

We are especially grateful for the trust you placed in our independent team to design and execute a decentralized, education-driven campaign model. RNPF's values of local engagement, inclusive learning, and long-term impact deeply resonate with the goals of Kaushikframes, and this partnership has shown us what meaningful philanthropy can achieve when aligned with purpose.

We also wish to thank the **headmasters, principals, teachers, and faculty members** of all 18 participating institutions — your hospitality, encouragement, and enthusiasm played a crucial role in making each event a success. Your willingness to adapt schedules, mobilize students, and support our outreach has been truly inspiring. A special note of thanks to those colleges that have decided to initiate Eco-Clubs — a positive step toward long-term environmental stewardship.



We are also indebted to our **team of dedicated conservationists**, volunteers, and local partners, especially those who supported our events in the Sundarbans, often working under challenging conditions. We acknowledge the collaboration of the NGOs and other organisations like **Wildlife Trust of India (WTI – Sundarban Tiger Project)**, **Prakriti Samsad**, **I For Nature**, **Howrah Jilla Joutho Paribesh Moncho**, **Save Tree Save Life**, **MOUNDAIN**, and local clubs who contributed materials, logistics, and their voices to this cause.

Finally, to the **students and communities** who listened, asked questions, drew pictures, and pledged to protect their wetlands — *you are the heart of this mission*. Your creativity, energy, and curiosity assure us that the future of conservation in Bengal is in good hands.

This campaign was not just about raising awareness — it was about planting seeds. Seeds of knowledge, empathy, and action. And with your continued support, we are committed to nurturing them.

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