



2023

ANNUAL REPORT



Environment and Social Development
Organization-ESDO

FOREFORDS



Dear Members, Partners, and Supporters,

As we turn the pages of the Annual Report 2023, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the remarkable journey that ESDO has undertaken. This year, our collective efforts have resulted in momentous achievements, notably Bangladesh's ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury. The Plastic Free Campus initiative, coupled with our active engagement on international platforms, underscores our commitment to a sustainable future. I extend my sincere appreciation to the dedicated ESDO team and our global partners for their unwavering support. Let this report serve as a testament to our shared commitment to environmental health and social development.

Regards,
Syed Marghub Murshed
Chairperson, ESDO



Dear ESDO Community,

With great pleasure, I present ESDO's Annual Report 2023, capturing our impactful journey in environmental conservation and social development. From grassroots workshops to global forums, our initiatives like the Plastic Free Campus project showcase our holistic approach. Thanks to our dedicated team and partners. Let's keep shaping a sustainable future together!

Sincerely,
Dr. Shahriar Hossain
Secretary-General, ESDO



Dear ESDO Family,

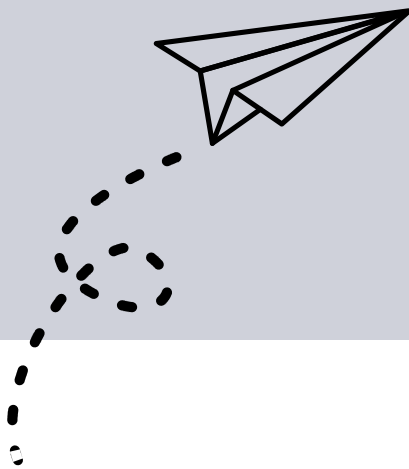
Reflecting on 2023, I'm thrilled by our strides in environmental justice and sustainability. From local workshops to global collaborations, we're shaping a positive impact. The Plastic Free Campus, groundbreaking studies, and partnerships with UNICEF and FEMNET highlight our commitment. Thanks to our global partners for their steadfast support. This Annual Report captures our journey toward a better world.

Best regards,
Siddika Sultana
Executive Director, ESDO

INTRODUCTION



ESDO is a leading Bangladeshi organization in policy advocacy, environmental capacity building and policy intervention. Since its inception in 1990, ESDO has helped more than 1 million people in Bangladesh to achieve a sustainable and self-reliant lifestyle and live in harmony with their immediate environment. ESDO has also been influential in guiding national policy, the organization's most significant achievement being the banning of plastic (polythene) bags throughout the country.



ESDO'S DEDICATION

ESDO is dedicated to advocating for awareness of environmental conservation amongst schools and youth, urban and rural communities in Bangladesh, building community capacity; conducting research to advocate for policy change and conserving indigenous knowledge in the name of environmental protection.

In addressing lifestyle practices of the poorer population of Bangladesh -where the poor do not have a choice as to how they utilize resources to survive and thrive-how is environmental conservation including this basic need - ESDO is continuing to empower communities by building individual and collective capacities inspiring people in the field of environmental management and conservation. Through encouraging participatory involvement through our holistic approach, ESDO therefore works to build the capacity of our beneficiaries to enhance their ability to: - take leadership in promoting a safe and sustainable environment, improve the socioeconomic situation of their communities, and be more in control of their own future. Our major capacity building activities include: education (literacy and environmental), alternative income generation, awareness-raising (conservation and community health), sanitation, Information Technology training, and organic farming.

OUR PHILOSOPHY



ESDO is a Bangladeshi organization working to spread the message about the need for environmental conservation – to ensure the protection of biological diversity and ecological balance. Since the official formation of ESDO in 1990, we have focused on generating knowledge amongst the wider community about how human activity can negatively impact on the environment of Bangladesh. As a service oriented, non-profit, non-government organization, ESDO strives to improve livelihoods, socio-economic statuses and provision of environmental education of some of the most vulnerable communities in Bangladesh. Socio-economic statuses and provision of environmental education of some of the most vulnerable communities in Bangladesh. ESDO invests in people to care for the environment through providing essential inputs and capacity building. Environmental and Social Development Organization wants to ensure self-reliant rural communities who live in harmony with their environment.

OUR MISSION



The mission of ESDO is to promote and encourage an environmental movement through a participatory democratic framework involving diverse social groups and to assist them with ideas, information, and leadership for promoting a safe, sustainable and toxic free world.

OUR VISION



The vision of ESDO is to see Bangladesh as well as all developing nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Working towards Protecting and conserving nature and life from toxic and plastic pollution; reducing poverty; increasing literacy and education; empowering women in rural communities, and improving sanitation and health services through sustainable environmental livelihoods.

Major International Project Partners

	<p>Asian Center for Environmental Health</p>
	<p>Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA)</p>
	<p>International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN)</p>
	<p>International Union for Conservation Nature (IUCN)</p>
	<p>The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC)</p>
	<p>Toxic Links</p>
	<p>United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP)</p>
	<p>World Alliance for Mercury Free Dentistry</p>
	<p>Zero Mercury Working Group</p>
	<p>UNICEF Bangladesh</p>
	<p>Break Free From Plastic</p>
	<p>Femnet</p>



Annual Report 2023

PROJECT PLASTIC FREE CAMPUS (PFC)



Plastic Free Campus (PFC) stands at the forefront of a global battle against the scourge of single-use plastic pollution. With unwavering commitment, PFC champions educational institutions as they rise to meet this monumental challenge. By empowering schools to become bastions of environmental preservation, PFC fuels a movement dedicated to safeguarding our planet. This initiative transcends mere waste reduction; it is a clarion call for social justice and a steadfast prioritization of human health. Together, we will ignite a revolution, turning the tide against plastic pollution and forging a sustainable future for generations to come.



PROJECT INTRODUCTION

Background

Once celebrated as a marvel of modern innovation, plastic has infiltrated every corner of our lives, with its global production skyrocketing from a modest 2 million metric tons in the 1950s to an overwhelming 400 million metric tons today. The future paints an even grimmer picture, with projections foreseeing an astronomical 1.1 billion metric tons of plastic churned out annually by 2050. Yet, this convenience comes at a devastating environmental price. In 2019 alone, plastic was responsible for belching out 1.8 billion metric tons of greenhouse gases, eclipsing even the aviation sector's contribution. By 2050, this figure could soar to a cataclysmic 2.7 billion metric tons of CO2 emissions annually from plastic production and incineration.

Plastic, born from fossil fuels, laden with chemical additives, fuels global warming at every sinister stage of its life cycle. Its non-biodegradable nature spawns insidious microplastics, wreaking havoc on both marine and terrestrial life. This pervasive crisis, threatening both our environment and public health, demands immediate, bold action. We must seek and embrace sustainable alternatives, for the very future of our planet hangs in the balance.

Project Overview

ESDO's odyssey began in 1992 with humble environmental education camps, passionately advocating for nature conservation. The fight against the scourge of plastic polythene bags soon took center stage. In 2014, ESDO ignited a spark of awareness among school students about the perils of single-use plastic. By 2018, this spark had become a roaring flame, as ESDO enlisted the youth to conduct Brand Audits of Single-use Plastic.



The year 2022 marked a pivotal moment, with ESDO launching a structured campaign to educate students about plastic pollution. The crescendo came in 2023, as ESDO, in collaboration with MTB, officially unveiled the Plastic Free Campus project, targeting ten schools across five divisions—Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna, Sylhet, and Rangpur. This ambitious initiative aims to nurture a new generation of environmental champions, schooling them in the perils of plastic pollution and empowering them to eschew single-use plastics.

The mission is nothing short of revolutionary: to cultivate plastic-free campuses and instill a waste-free ethos from home to school. Through environmental education camps in each of the five divisions, ESDO has equipped 500 students with the tools to battle single-use plastic pollution. These young warriors now lead the charge, living plastic-free lives and spearheading community campaigns against single-use plastics.

The Directorate General of Secondary and Higher Education has thrown its weight behind the project, catching the eye of the Minister of Environment, who has enshrined it in a 100-day priority action plan for 2024. With environmental education camps triumphantly completed in five divisions, plans are afoot to extend this initiative to the remaining three divisions. The Honorable Minister of Environment, Saber Hossain Chowdhury, has championed this cause, integrating it into a bold 100-day action plan.

In partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, ESDO is on a crusade to establish 16 plastic-free schools and villages. Having already achieved plastic-free status in 10 schools, ESDO, alongside the Ministry, is poised to complete the transformation of the remaining six schools through further environmental education camps. This is not merely an initiative; it is a clarion call for a sustainable future, a testament to the power of education and the unwavering resolve to combat plastic pollution.



PROJECT OBJECTIVE

- Develop a second generation of environmental leaders,
- Inform the younger generation about plastic pollution,
- Train them to reject single-use plastics.
- Additionally, start living a waste-free lifestyle from home to school and create a plastic-free campus.



TARGET POPULATION

- Teachers (particularly with Science or Social Science background)
- Volunteers (Girls' Guide and Boys Scout)
- Students from class 3 to 8



INCEPTION WORKSHOP ON “PLASTIC-FREE CAMPUS” PROJECT TO ENHANCE SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

In a bold stride towards a sustainable future, ESDO and Mutual Trust Bank Limited (MTBL) embarked on an ambitious crusade: the "Plastic-Free Campus" project. This visionary initiative was launched with great fanfare on January 22, 2023, in Dhaka. This project is more than an educational endeavor; it is a clarion call to arms. By enlightening the younger generation about the insidious dangers of plastic, ESDO and MTBL are forging a new breed of leaders. These young warriors are being equipped not just to reject single-use plastic, but to lead the charge against it. This initiative seeks to inspire and cultivate a generation of leaders who will champion the cause of a plastic-free world, ensuring a healthier, greener planet for all.

THE MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE INCEPTION WORKSHOP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- To understand the project in detail, the implementation plan and key outcomes
- To understand ESDO’s goals, mission and vision for environmental conservation initiatives
- To learn about the Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) endeavors and signify the Mutual Trust Bank Limited’s (MTBL) contribution to helping Bangladesh to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- To build rapport among relevant stakeholders



ORIENTATION WORKSHOP ON “PLASTIC-FREE CAMPUS” WITH TEACHERS AND GIRL GUIDES ASSOCIATION

Following the triumphant launch of the "Plastic-free Campus" initiative, ESDO organized a transformative two-day orientation for teachers and Girl Guides on January 23 and 24. This intensive training armed educators and volunteers with the knowledge and passion to lead the charge against plastic pollution.

A meticulously crafted booklet was unveiled, guiding teachers and Girl Guides in their critical roles and inspiring students to embrace a plastic-free lifestyle. The orientation was a whirlwind of dynamic activities: powerful Q&A sessions, spirited discussions, energizer sessions, and compelling lectures on plastic pollution and zero waste.

This wasn't just training—it was a call to action, igniting a fervent commitment to a sustainable future.

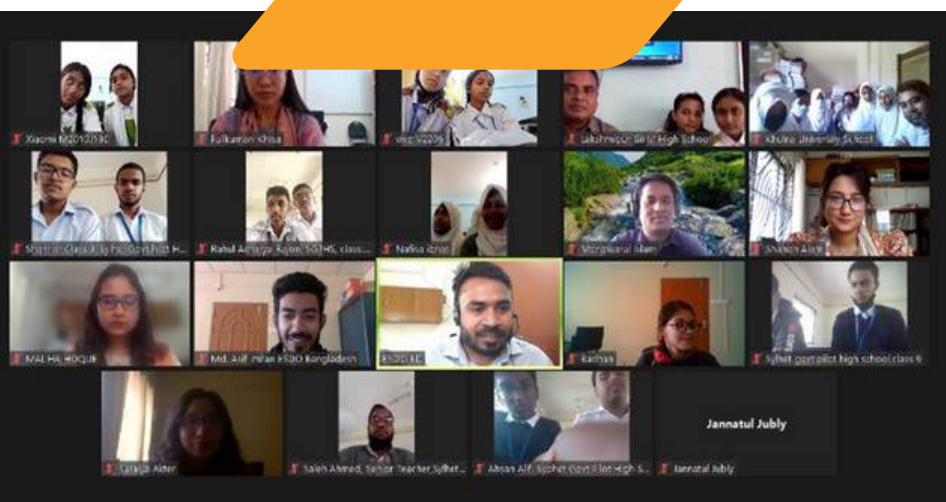
[Read more](#)



GIRL GUIDES AND BOY SCOUT ONLINE ORIENTATION WORKSHOP

On February 28, 2023, ESDO held a powerful virtual orientation for the Girl Guides and Boy Scout associations from five divisions. This session equipped volunteers with deep insights into the "Plastic-free Campus" project, readying them for the challenges ahead.

Both associations voiced their enthusiasm and commitment, lauding the initiative and pledging to engage students in the mission to transform their campuses into plastic-free sanctuaries. This moment marked a pivotal step towards a sustainable future, driven by the passion and dedication of young environmental champions.





VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION WORKSHOP ON PLASTIC-FREE CAMPUS AT RANGPUR ZILLA SCHOOL

Continuing the momentum of the PFC project, ESDO held an impactful orientation workshop on February 16, 2023, at Rangpur Zilla School. Teachers, six Girl Guides from Rangpur Government Girls High School, and seven Scouts from Rangpur Zilla School gathered for a participative and engaging session.

Project goals, plans, and activities were unveiled, and volunteers were briefed on their crucial roles. This workshop forged a powerful connection between the volunteers and ESDO, ensuring the successful execution of the Plastic-free Campus initiative. Participants left empowered and ready to champion a plastic-free future.





**ESDO TEAM ORIENTATION
FOR CLASSROOM SESSIONS
OF PLASTIC-FREE CAMPUS
PROJECT**

Book Launching Ceremony of Plastic Free Campus (PFC) Project

ESDO, alongside MTBL and MAUSHI, orchestrated a landmark book launching ceremony for the Plastic-free Campus Project. Under the esteemed inauguration of Saber Hossain Chowdhury, MP, the event on May 22nd, 2023, at JDPC in Farmgate, Dhaka, unveiled crucial educational materials. These include student books, mentor's handbooks, posters, and more—crafted to ignite awareness and catalyze a shift from plastic to sustainability.

Policymakers, experts, DOE representatives, and students from Lalmatia Girls High School joined forces, marking a monumental stride in combating plastic pollution. This launch heralds a new era of youth-led environmental stewardship, paving the way for a cleaner, greener future. [Read more](#)



Environmental Education Camp under Plastic Free Campus (PFC) Project

After months of relentless preparation, the ESDO team launched its "Plastic-free Campus (PFC)" project with an inaugural environmental education camp. Held on May 10 and 11, 2023, at Lalmatia Girls High School and College in Dhaka, this transformative event unfolded with a meticulously crafted schedule.

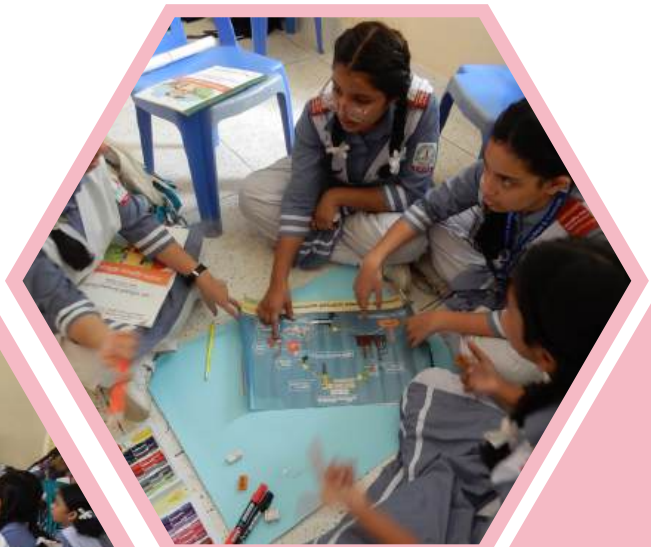
The camp featured captivating PowerPoint sessions on ESDO's mission, Earth's challenges, and the scourge of plastic pollution. Students delved into the lifecycle and impacts of plastic, explored the 4R concept (refuse, reduce, reuse, refill), and dissected Bangladesh's waste management landscape through interactive activities and vivid audiovisual presentations.

From engaging role-plays to heartfelt storytelling and empowering poster presentations, every moment was designed to inspire and empower the next generation of environmental leaders. This camp wasn't just education; it was a rallying cry for change, igniting a passion for sustainability that will shape our future.



Environmental Education Camp under Plastic Free Campus (PFC) Project at Lalmatia Girls High School

Students of Lalmatia Girls High School and College actively participating the group activities in the environmental education camp. **Read More**



Environmental Education Camp under Plastic Free Campus (PFC) Project at Rangpur Zilla School and Rangpur Govt. Girls' High School



Environmental Education Camp at Sylhet Govt. Pilot High School & Hazrat Omar Faruque R. Academy

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Environmental Education Camp at Govt. Coronation Secondary girls' High school & Khulna University School



Environmental Education Camp at Lakshmipur Government Girls High School and Prothom Alo Trust: Alor Pathshala



PROJECT

LEGISLATION TO COMBAT SINGLE-USE PLASTIC POLLUTION IN BANGLADESH

Action line of the year “Beat Plastic Pollution”

ABOUT PROJECT

Our water bodies have become contaminated with a range of waste, including drifting plastic and synthetic materials, resulting in water pollution. In Bangladesh, located in South Asia, around 73,000 tons of plastic waste enter the sea daily through the Padma, Jamuna, and Meghna rivers, as reported by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). This influx exacerbates existing waste management challenges and contributes significantly to environmental pollution in the country, which ranks 10th globally in plastic waste production. As of 2019, a survey by the International Growth Center suggested that individuals throw away about 87,000 tons of single-use plastics every year in Bangladesh. Approximately 96 percent of this waste comes from consumer items, 33 percent of which are non-recyclable sachets.

To address this issue, the Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO) has initiated a project titled "Legislation for Combating Single-Use Plastic Pollution," aiming to enact laws banning single-use plastics and restricting other problematic packaging materials.

ACTIVITIES

- **Plastic-free Super Shop**
- **High-Level Policy Dialogue**
- **Brand Audit**
- **Plastic-free Education**
- **Youth Awareness Campaigns**
- **Plastic-free July**





PLASTIC-FREE SUPER SHOPS

ESDO embarked on a mission to Meena Bazar Supermarket, meeting with the Chief Executive Officer to ignite a movement towards plastic-free stores and zero-waste lifestyles. Meena Bazar, a celebrated and influential supermarket in Bangladesh, has boldly embraced a reduced plastic policy. They have already made significant strides, such as introducing reusable bags in their stores, and have adopted the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) strategy to steadily phase out plastic packaging. ESDO is passionately championing this cause, rallying renowned superstores across the nation to join the fight. Leading this charge is Unimart, a prominent superstore in Bangladesh, which has become a beacon of hope by promoting nationwide refills and setting an inspiring example for the adoption of the refill method.



**Let's
switch
to refill**





Pre-discussion
Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on the worldwide plastic treaty (INC-2)

Date: 23 May 2023, Time: 11:00 am- 12.00 pm
Platform: Zoom 



Syed Marghub Murshed
Respected Chairperson of ESDO and former secretary of the government of Bangladesh



Dr. Ainun Nishat
Emeritus Professor at the Center of Climate Change and Environmental Research



Dr. Shahriar Hossain
Secretary General of ESDO



Ms. Siddika Sultana
Executive Director of ESDO

#BeatPlasticPollution

ESDO hosted an online media briefing on the second INC-2 for the global plastic treaty, focusing on transformative systems change to address plastic pollution.

Key discussions included reducing plastic production and consumption, promoting refill and reuse models, ensuring accountability and transparency, and urging affluent nations to lead the zero-waste transition. A comprehensive global plastics treaty would curb major polluters, conserve resources, and contribute to a cleaner, safer environment.

[Read more](#)

Media Briefing on Pre-Dialogue About the Second Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on the Global Plastic Treaty (INC-2)



ESDO convened a pivotal Debriefing Meeting to delve into the groundbreaking outcomes of the INC-2 on the Global Plastic Treaty. The primary mission of this gathering was to dissect and strategize the essential elements and provisions that would form the backbone of the "zero drafts" for the forthcoming INC-3. This assembly saw an intense examination of the deliberations and resolutions from INC-2, spotlighting the powerful declarations made by ESDO and Bangladesh.

[Read more](#)

Debriefing Meeting on Reflection on the Second Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-2) on the Global Plastic Treaty

JOINT VENTURES



Action Aid: World Environment Day 2023 Celebration Beat Plastic Pollution, Promote Transition, Fund Our Future

On June 5, 2023, ActionAid Bangladesh marked World Environment Day with a bold stand against plastic waste, hosting powerful events in Dhaka and its regions. In Dhaka, the air was electric as young activists and climate experts confronted the climate crisis, emphasizing the critical role of youth and analyzing the fiscal year's budget for climate action.

The call for urgent measures against plastic waste echoed loudly, with participants pledging to reduce their carbon footprints. The event's climax was a stirring performance by young advocates on plastic's harmful impact. Dr. Shahriar Hossain and Maliha Hoque of ESDO lent their voices as panel discussants, epitomizing the fight against environmental degradation.

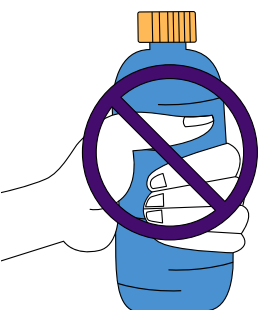


Joint Seminar with Bangladesh Environmental Lawyer Association "Stop Using Single-Use Plastic and Start Using Eco-Friendly Alternatives"

To mark World Environment Day, BELA joined forces with ESDO and six other organizations to ignite a movement against plastic pollution in Bangladesh. The Deputy Minister of MoEFCC honored the event as chief guest, with the Director General of DoE presiding as session chair. The seminar pulsated with the energy of students from various educational institutions and media representatives.



Shahriar Hossain, Secretary General of ESDO, delivered a compelling presentation on combating plastic pollution, unveiling potent solutions. ESDO's Executive Director, Siddika Sultana, took the stage as a panelist, alongside her dedicated colleagues Maliha Hoque and Shanon Iffat Alam, rallying the youth to stand against the plastic plague.



Walton's Private Sector Dialogue on World Environment Day 2023



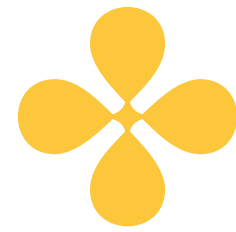
In celebration of World Environment Day 2023 and to emphasize the urgency of addressing plastic pollution, Walton, a prominent electronics company in Bangladesh, partnered with UNDP to organize a Private Sector Dialog titled "Sustainable Solution to Plastic Pollution." Mr. Shamsul Alam, Chairman of Walton Group, graced the event as the Chief Guest, while a representative from UNDP moderated the seminar. As a panel discussant, Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary General of ESDO, participated in the event.

Seminar on Plastic Pollution in Forests and Other Natural Ecosystems: Way Forward on 21 June 2023

On June 21, 2023, Dr. Shahriar Hossain of ESDO delivered a keynote on the severe impact of plastic pollution on forests and ecosystems, covering sources, waste generation, disposal, toxicity, microplastics, and transboundary pollution. He also discussed ESDO's research and solutions. Mr. Mostafa Yousuf from The Daily Star followed, addressing synthetic plastic consumption, pollution hotspots, effects on wildlife and water bodies, and issues with plastic pollution laws and waste management.

The seminar heightened awareness, deepened understanding, and exposed policy gaps, emphasizing the need for strong partnerships. Participants from various sectors engaged in discussions, underscoring the urgent threat of plastic pollution in Bangladesh's ecosystems.





PLASTIC-FREE JULY

Plastic Free July is a global movement that encourages individuals, communities, and organizations to reduce their plastic consumption and waste. It started in 2011 as an initiative by the Plastic Free Foundation in Australia and has since grown into an international campaign. The goal is to raise awareness about the environmental impact of plastic pollution and to promote sustainable alternatives to single-use plastics.

Participants are challenged to avoid single-use plastics for the entire month of July, adopting habits such as using reusable bags, bottles, and containers, and avoiding products packaged in plastic. The movement emphasizes small, everyday actions that collectively lead to significant environmental benefits. It also aims to inspire long-term changes in behavior and policy to reduce plastic waste year-round.

ESDO has been actively involved in promoting Plastic Free July in Bangladesh as part of its broader mission to combat plastic pollution and promote environmental sustainability. Here are some insights into ESDO's association with Plastic Free July:

- Awareness Campaigns
- Educational Initiatives
- Community Engagement
- Policy Advocacy
- Collaborative Efforts
- Media Campaigns
- Plastic-Free Initiatives
- Youth Engagement



Mobile Campaign

- Around 800 people showed their solidarity with ESDO's campaign by signing to ban single-use plastic and sharing their views on plastic pollution.
- Along with the youth of Bangladesh, the mass community also joined the campaign and raised their voice to end plastic pollution.

Consultation on the Environmental Threat of "Single-use plastic."

- The webinar highlighted the harmful effects of single-use plastics on the environment, wildlife, and human health.
- Potential solutions to mitigate plastic pollution were explored.
- Economic consequences of single-use plastics were discussed, including impacts on coastal communities and industries dependent on fisheries and tourism.
- Financial losses due to plastic pollution were noted.
- The strain on public finances from cleanup efforts, waste management, and infrastructure damage was emphasized.

Read More





Plastic-free Campus Intervention in Khulna

ESDO conducted interactive sessions where students delved into the harmful effects of plastic pollution and explored mitigation strategies. The students actively participated, showcasing their understanding through poster presentations and waste identification exercises. They demonstrated impressive knowledge by identifying plastic waste as hazardous, emphasizing that incineration is more damaging to nature than production.

Plastic-free Campus Intervention in Sylhet

On July 12-13, 2023, ESDO led a Plastic-Free Campus intervention at Sylhet Pilot School and Hazrat Omar Faruque (R.) Academy. This two-day camp aimed to raise awareness about plastic pollution among students. It covered the impacts of plastic, alternatives to single-use plastics, the zero-waste concept, and the 4R principles (reduce, reuse, refill, refuse).



ESDO'S INITIATIVE TO COMBAT PLASTIC POLLUTION



Recognizing the urgency of the plastic pollution crisis, ESDO took bold steps on August 9, 2023, at Kamrangirchar. ESDO's initiative raises awareness and implements practical solutions to combat plastic waste.

Policy Dialogue on Plastic Pollution Towards Plastic Treaty Negotiation



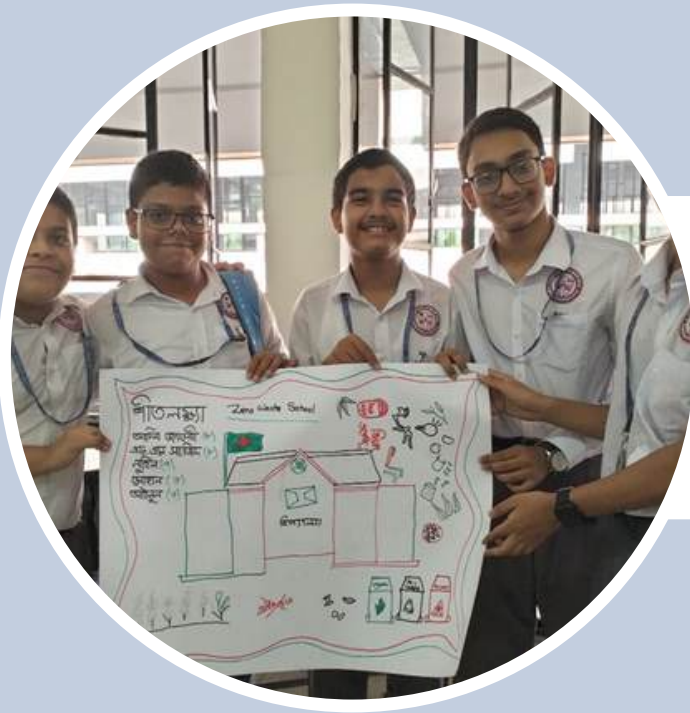
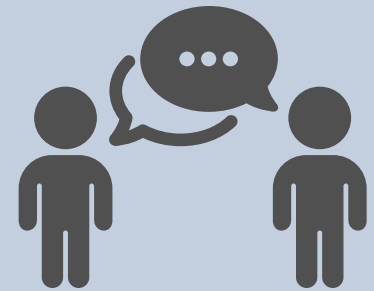
Environmental activists and experts are calling for an immediate nationwide ban on single-use plastics with strict enforcement. On August 30, 2023, ESDO hosted a policy dialogue in Dhaka titled "Plastic Pollution Towards Plastic Treaty Negotiation."

Single-use plastics like bags, straws, and disposable utensils significantly contribute to environmental degradation and pollution, harming wildlife and human health. ESDO's push for a ban addresses this critical issue, advocating for sustainable consumption and waste management. ESDO's initiative aligns with global efforts to combat plastic pollution and protect the environment, inspiring other organizations dedicated to environmental preservation and sustainability. [Read more](#)



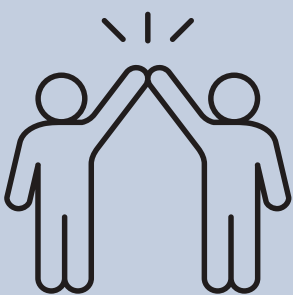


**Consultation on
"Environmental and Social
Impacts of Plastic Pollution:
Importance of Transitioning
to Plastic Alternatives"**



**ESDO and St. Joseph Higher
Secondary School Unite for
a Plastic-Free, Green and
Sustainable Campus**

**Volunteer Orientation for
Brand Audit of Single-use
Plastic**





BRAND AUDIT

2023

A brand audit is a participatory science initiative that involves counting and documenting the brands found on plastic waste to help identify the corporations responsible for plastic pollution.

The foundational brand audit methodology was designed by the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA), Mother Earth Foundation, Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG), and Greenpeace Philippines. These pioneering groups collaborated in 2017 to organize the first large-scale brand audit on Freedom Island in the Philippines.

Since 2018, ESDO, in association with Break Free From Plastic (BFFP), has been conducting brand audits in different divisions of Bangladesh, actively engaging the youth network. These audits aim to identify major plastic polluters and hold them accountable, leveraging the energy and enthusiasm of young people to drive the initiative.

ESDO's Brand Audit 2023 Exposes the Major Polluters of Single-Use Plastic

In a powerful collaboration with BFFP, ESDO conducted its 6th Brand Audit in Dhaka and Rangpur, two pivotal cities in Bangladesh.

In Dhaka, a determined team of students from Lalmatia Girls High School, Lalmatia Housing Society School, and St. Joseph Higher Secondary School, along with volunteers and ESDO members, took on the challenge. Meanwhile, in Rangpur, students from Rangpur Zilla School and Rangpur Govt. Girls High School led the effort.

Their united efforts resulted in the impressive collection of approximately 158 kilograms of plastic waste, highlighting the significant impact of coordinated action against plastic pollution.



Refuse single-use plastic and keep the earth clean

PROJECT “LEAD ELIMINATION”

About Project

For over sixteen years, the Environment and Social Development Organization (ESDO) has been dedicated to eradicating lead in paints and establishing stringent regulations for lead-free alternatives. Since 2010, ESDO has focused on raising awareness, educating the public, and advocating for legislative changes to eliminate lead paint. Our research and initiatives, supported by the European Union and in collaboration with the International POPs Elimination Network, have been pivotal in this mission since the inception of the Lead Paint Elimination Project in 2012.

Our core mission is to foster environmental awareness through community involvement, providing continuous support with information and ideas for initiatives that lead to a healthy, safe, and sustainable environment. We strive to promote a healthier, toxic-free world through awareness and action. Since 2008, ESDO has been engaged in a comprehensive lead elimination awareness campaign and policy lobbying efforts.

Through key studies and projects funded by IPEN and the EU, we have meticulously identified and analyzed the current status, causes, and extent of lead pollution. Beyond our research, we mark International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week annually to highlight the detrimental effects of lead on human health and the environment. Our efforts also include regular meetings and policy discussions with relevant authorities to advocate for the prohibition of lead use.

Recently, ESDO, in collaboration with UNICEF, launched a groundbreaking project titled "Addressing Children's Environmental Health with a Particular Focus on Lead Poisoning in Bangladesh." This initiative aims to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to mitigate lead poisoning by adapting green practices and demanding immediate regulations for industrial paint to protect children and environmental health in Bangladesh.

Media Briefing on “Lead in Paint: A Significant pathway of Lead Exposure in Bangladesh”

Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution-BSTI has set a standard of 90 ppm for using lead (Pb) in paints but lead paint is still available in Bangladesh. This information was revealed in research conducted by ESDO in 2022. Based on the research findings, ESDO prepared a report entitled 'Lead in Paint: A Significant pathway of Lead Exposure in Bangladesh'. This report was launched through a media briefing on 19 January, Thursday at ESDO head office. This research was conducted to compare the presence of lead in decorative and industrial paints.



This research aimed to compare the presence of lead in decorative and industrial paints with previous results to ensure the phase-out of lead-based paint in Bangladesh. Sixty-three samples from 39 national and multinational brands were analyzed, including red, yellow, and golden yellow paints. Among these, 32% were industrial paints, and 68% were decorative paints.

The analysis revealed varying lead concentrations in all samples. For decorative paints, 30.8% contained lead ranging from 90–250 ppm, while 69.2% had less than 90 ppm. Industrial paints showed a more concerning scenario: 50% of the samples had high lead content, with one orange paint containing a staggering 97,000 ppm despite bearing a 'Lead-Free' logo. The remaining 50% had lead levels within or below 90 ppm. Alarmingly, no samples were genuinely lead-free despite being labeled as lead-safe. The highest lead concentration was found in a specific industrial paint, underscoring the need for stricter regulations.

[**Read more**](#)



International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (ILPPW) 2023

About ILPPW

Since 2012, International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (ILPPW) has been observed to shine a spotlight on the critical health impacts of lead exposure, celebrate the efforts of countries and partners to protect children from lead and expedite the global phase-out of lead-based paints.

Despite widespread recognition of lead's harmful effects and proactive measures by numerous nations, childhood lead exposure remains a significant concern for healthcare providers and public health officials worldwide.

This crucial week features a rich tapestry of events aimed at raising awareness about lead poisoning. Activities include human chains, rallies, policy dialogues, art and debate competitions, workshops, and consultations, all designed to educate, inspire, and mobilize communities globally toward a lead-free future. (Source: WHO)

Every year since 2012, from 20th-26th October ESDO, has been observing International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action (ILPPPW) by conducting different types youth youth-involved competitions, human chain, and round table meetings with relevant stakeholders and associations. In this International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (ILPPW), ESDO tries to raise awareness and promotes action to address the human health effects of lead exposure, especially for children. During the week, government, academicians, industry, and civil society advance efforts to prevent childhood lead poisoning, and special laws to eliminate lead in paint.



Empowering Youth Voices Through Art Competition to Celebrate International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (ILPPW) - 2023

Environment and Social Development Organization - ESDO in collaboration with Bangladesh Shishu Academy conducted an art competition on 21 October, 2023 at Bangladesh Shishu Academy as part of our efforts to celebrate International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (ILPPW-2023). About 100 students from 3 different groups participated in this art competition. This initiative aimed to raise awareness about the severe health hazards of lead exposure, especially among children.



The art competition provided a platform for young talents to express their creativity and knowledge, highlighting the importance of preventing lead poisoning. ESDO also encouraged Special children to participate, empowering them to combat plastic pollution through their art. Through art, children and participants conveyed powerful messages about the need for safer environments, lead-free products, and increased public awareness. [Read More](#)



**National
Policy
Dialogue with
Private
Sectors to
Observe
International
Lead
Poisoning
Prevention
Week (ILPPW)
2023**



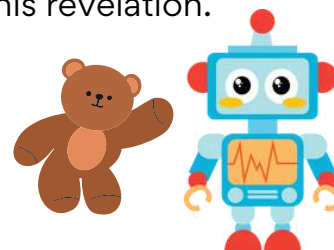
On October 22, 2023, Bangladesh observed ILPPW' 23 with a significant event aimed at tackling the serious issue of childhood lead poisoning. This important occasion, initiated by the Lead Paint Alliance, saw the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and the Department of Environment (DoE) collaborate with ESDO, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), and UNICEF to host a national dialogue. The event brought together key stakeholders from the private sector, policymakers, and the media to discuss strategies for eliminating lead poisoning among children in Bangladesh.

ESDO's Study Reveals Alarming Presence of Toxic Chemicals in Children's Toys

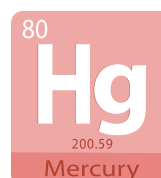
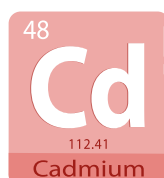
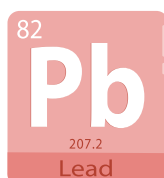
On October 23, 2023, ESDO held a media briefing and report launch at their head office. The event showcased ESDO's latest study, "Innocence Touched by Shadows: Investigating Toxic Chemicals in Toys," conducted in partnership with Ban Toxics. This comprehensive study delves into the presence of lead and other hazardous chemicals found in children's toys, highlighting the urgent need for stricter safety regulations to protect our children from these hidden dangers.



The report reveals the existence of dangerous heavy metals in children's toys, such as lead, mercury, and cadmium, at levels that greatly threaten children's well-being. These toys have average lead concentrations of 65.85 ppm, which exceeds the acceptable limit by about 5 times. Mercury - 30.6 ppm, surpassing the limit by 4 times; and Cadmium - 28.65 ppm, surpassing the limit by a significant 15 times. 55% of the toy samples tested were locally produced in Bangladesh. Immediate action is necessary to safeguard our children in light of this revelation.



High concentrations of toxic heavy metals, including lead, mercury, and cadmium, were discovered in children's toys in Bangladesh. The safety of children's toys is in question following the release of a report titled "Innocence Touched by Shadows: Investigating Toxic Chemicals in Toys" by ESDO. These findings have prompted urgent concerns regarding the potential risks to our children's health and development, underscoring the necessity for immediate action to tackle this crucial matter.





Youth of Bangladesh Demand to END Childhood Lead Poisoning on ILPPW 2023

On October 30, 2023, the youth of Bangladesh united for International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (ILPPW) to raise awareness about lead pollution. The campaign theme, "End Childhood Lead Poisoning," highlighted the urgent need to protect children from lead exposure.



ESDO, in collaboration with DGHS, icddr'b, IPEN, Nippon Paint, and UNICEF, organized a human chain and rally. Volunteers from Lalmatia Housing Society School and College called for a ban on lead paint and lead-based products. The rally, starting at the school, covered the entire Lalmatia area.



The youth demanded a ban on lead-based paint production, proper management of used lead-acid batteries (ULAB), and mandatory lead standards in toys. Their united effort sent a clear message: "Lead poisoning is unacceptable and can be prevented with collective action."

Be Lead-free today, get a healthier tomorrow.



Certificate and Prize Giving Ceremony on Art Competition of ILPPW 2023

The Certificate and Prize Giving Ceremony for the Art Competition during International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week (ILPPW) 2023 was a triumph, uniting artists, stakeholders, and advocates in a vibrant celebration of creativity and environmental consciousness. Organized by ESDO, the event aimed to spotlight the dangers of lead pollution, especially among youth.



Held on November 28, 2023, at Bangladesh Shishu Academy, the ceremony honored young artists who brilliantly used their creativity to highlight the critical issue of lead poisoning prevention. This memorable event not only showcased artistic talent but also emphasized the vital role of environmental awareness in safeguarding public health.



Field Visit on E-Waste Recycling Site and Impact on Health and Environment

Electronic waste includes anything with plugs, cords and electronic components. Common sources of e-waste include televisions, computers, mobile phones and any type of home appliance, from air conditioners to children's toys.

Environment and Social Development Organization- ESDO have conducted a field visit program which was focused on the recycling site of E-waste at Nimtali area in Dhaka city on 19 March, 2023 along with UNICEF, Bangladesh team. Maya Vandenant, Chief of Health, UNICEF Bangladesh and her team, Didarul Alam, Consultant, Unicef, Khalilur Rahman, Asst. Program Officer, ESDO visited this site and collected more information from local workers. Maya Vandenant asked different types of work to know about the health condition and working environment here. Local workers were responsive and they shared opinions. They said that they work here in risky conditions.



TIC / Consultative Meeting at DGHS

The PECP-TIC met on Wednesday, May 24, at 10 am in the PMR, DGHS Conference Room to discuss ongoing initiatives and plans for the World Environment Day program.

Representatives from UNICEF, ICDDR,B, IEDCR, Pure Earth, and ESDO presented their initiatives related to lead poisoning and plans to measure blood lead levels. Each organization will participate in seminars and events for World Environment Day in collaboration with UNICEF. Additionally, ESDO, in collaboration with BELA, BARCIK, Green Saver, Bandhu, WBBTrust, and ALRD, will organize a presentation on their work with plastics.



Consultative meeting of the Technical Implementation Committee for the “PECP to reduce Lead poisoning among children in Bangladesh related activities”

DGHS hosted a Consultative meeting for the Technical Implementation Committee on the “PECP to reduce Lead poisoning among children in Bangladesh” on Sep 17, 2023. Representatives from DGHS, UNICEF, ESDO, ICDDR,B, IEDCR, and Pure Earth attended to discuss agendas for ILPPW 2023. Topics included planning for ILPPW 2023, training doctors in Patuakhali on Sep 24, DGHS participation, training at DPE on September 30, and preparation and progress on training Alo Clinic doctors.

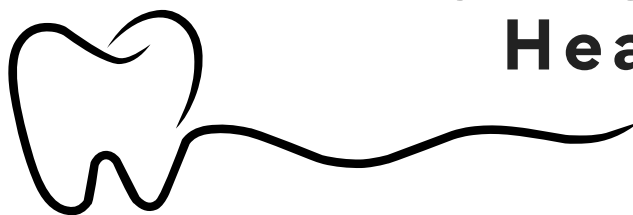


Project

“Contribution towards early ratification and implementation of the Minamata convention”



“Mercury-Free Dentistry for Environmental Health”



Introduction

This section of the report provides a summary of ESDO's actions on mercury-added goods. As we all know, mercury is found in a variety of products that are extremely dangerous to our health, including skin lightening lotions, bulbs, batteries, thermometers, amalgam.

ESDO has held several press briefings, workshops, international conferences, discussion shows, and other events related to mercury-added goods. Government officials, academics, media personnel, and the general public were all present at each occasion.

International Week of Mercury-Free Dentistry (MFD) Observed in Bangladesh and South Asia

From August 17th to 25th, 2023, ESDO led the "International Week of Mercury-Free Dentistry" in Bangladesh, aiming to eliminate mercury from dentistry by 2030. In collaboration with the Asian Center for Environmental Health and the World Alliance for Mercury-Free Dentistry (WAMFD), ESDO organized activities to raise awareness and push for a national ban on dental amalgam use and import.

On August 24th, ESDO held a mobile awareness campaign in Dhaka, featuring mercury-free dentists who provided practical demonstrations and interacted with the public. Over 400 signatures were collected from participants, including university faculties, students, and professionals, supporting the mercury-free initiative.



Mercury Added Products



Lumex Analyzer Functioning Orientation

On February 14, 2023, ESDO hosted a comprehensive training session on operating the Lumex Analyzer machine. Led by Khalilur Rahman, Assistant Program Officer at ESDO, the session was attended by the Secretary-General and other team members. Khalilur expertly demonstrated the cleaning and operation of the Lumex Analyzer, a device used to detect mercury levels in various products. During the session, he tested two skin-lightening products, revealing mercury concentrations of 3 ppm and 1.5 ppm, respectively.



Sample sending to Ban Toxic

The ESDO team dispatched 13 skin-lightening creams to the Ban Toxic laboratory for mercury content analysis. These creams, sourced from various online retailers, were meticulously inventoried, each assigned a unique code and number. After cataloging, the creams were securely wrapped in bubble wrap and shipped to the Philippines via DHL.



Expert Consultation for EEB Project

On May 3rd, 2023, ESDO held an Expert Consultation Meeting led by Prof. Dr. Abul Hashem to address mercury emissions in Bangladesh. The discussion focused on consulting the beauty parlor association and using Lumex Analyzer data for area assessment and report creation. Prof. Hashem advised the team to coordinate with the Department of Environment (DoE) to access beauty parlors and prepare a consent document to proceed with their research.

Interview and Discussion with NTV About Chemical and Cosmetics

On May 17th, 2023, NTV interviewed the ESDO research team to discuss their findings on chemicals and cosmetics. The team revealed that, despite BSTI's ban, 17 skin-lightening creams are still widely available online and in malls, with social media becoming a key sales channel. These creams pose serious health risks, including skin diseases and kidney problems.



ESDO's Executive Director, Siddika Sultana, shared personal experiences and highlighted the health dangers of chemical-laden products. Dr. Shahriar Hossain, ESDO's Secretary General, explained that all skin-lightening creams must comply with BSTI regulations, which limit mercury content to 1 ppm and hydroquinone to 5 ppm. Products exceeding these limits are deemed toxic.

"Exploring the Harmful Impacts: A Visit and Interviews with Experts and Victims on Mercury-Added Skin-Lightening Creams and Lead Poisoning"



On August 23, 2023, ESDO visited NICRH in Dhaka to document issues with mercury in skin-lightening creams and lead poisoning. Dr. Tasneem Hossain noted that women often pursue fairness without understanding the dangers of mercury in cosmetics. Dr. Cynthia Afreen warned that these creams contain harmful substances like mercury and lead, which can damage nervous systems and affect pregnant women. Despite BSTI's ban on 17 high-mercury creams, they remain on the market, often promoted by social media influencers. Dr. Salwa Mariya Majumder reported that users frequently suffer severe skin problems, with cases of worsening skin and burning sensations, as seen in a young woman who experienced adverse effects after 15 days of use.



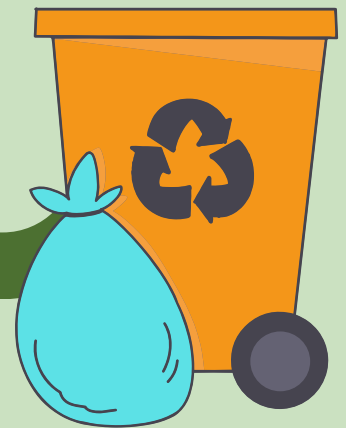
**REDUCE
PLASTIC**

Reuse



Field Activities

**ZERO
WASTE
VILLAGE**



refuse



reduce



reuse



refill

A Step Towards Ensuring Food Security in the Future: Toxic-free Organic Farming in Betgari



The farming plot is exclusively using compost, and the cultivator is pleased with the crop growth. This positive outcome has encouraged the cultivator to continue with compost-based farming long-term. The health of the crops on this organic plot is noticeably better compared to those nearby grown with chemical fertilizers. The plot produced a variety of vegetables including potatoes, spinach, brinjal, cauliflower, green chili, carrot, onion, and garlic.

Three types of potatoes were grown, covering most of the plot. After harvesting, a total of 340 kg of potatoes was collected, consisting of 29 kg of Desi Kukri, 22 kg of Lal Bograi, and 289 kg of Cardinal. Local residents are increasingly being inspired to adopt organic farming practices. Those who sampled the vegetables from this organic farm praised their excellent taste and noted the absence of the unpleasant odors found in vegetables grown with chemical fertilizers.



A Step Towards Ensuring Food Security in the Future: Toxic-free Organic Farming at Betgari Union in Rangpur District, Bangladesh

From March to May 2023, the farming plot was cultivated exclusively with compost. The farmer, pleased with the robust crop growth, is committed to continuing compost use long-term. Unlike the neighboring fields that used chemical fertilizers, the organic plot's crops thrived. This plot included potatoes, spinach, brinjal, cauliflower, green chilies, carrots, onions, and garlic, with a focus on Desi 29 Paddy, brinjal, green chilies, and pumpkin greens.

The Desi 29 Paddy is set for harvest in the first week of June. The success of the organic farming practices has inspired local residents to consider switching to these methods. Those who have tasted the produce from this organic plot have praised its superior flavor and noted the absence of the off-putting odor often found in chemically fertilized vegetables.



Follow-up on the Service of the Biogas Plant at Betgari Union in Rangpur District, Bangladesh

The installation of the first biogas plant in Pramanik Para, located in Betgari, has been successfully implemented. The recipients of this facility express their satisfaction with the service provided. They report that the gas production rate in the plant has increased, meeting their daily energy requirements. Currently, they are benefiting from the service for approximately four to five hours each day.

Similarly, the beneficiaries of the second biogas plant are also highly content with the service they receive. They enjoy a consistent and reliable supply of biogas for four to five hours daily. Additionally, they are able to utilize the fertilizer produced as a by-product of the plant in their crop fields.

These beneficiaries have experienced improved livelihood opportunities through this service. Moreover, the availability of organic fertilizer generated by the biogas plant has sparked interest in transitioning towards organic farming practices. As a result, other members of the community are expressing enthusiasm for setting up their own biogas plants and seeking assistance from ESDO.





ESDO's networking with LP4Y (Life Project for Youth)

On April 18, 2023, ESDO's Rangpur office hosted a workshop for LP4Y's youth participants. The event featured 12 trainees and key LP4Y figures like Alison Magniez, Merie MetroSavilli, and Sharmin Sultana. The workshop included a PowerPoint on environmental awareness and zero-waste living, individual testimonies, and mock interviews. Participants learned about environmental issues, the benefits of a zero-waste lifestyle, and gained confidence for future job opportunities. The workshop also strengthened ties between ESDO and LP4Y, paving the way for future collaborations.

Entrepreneurs Day of LP4Y

On May 16, 2023, Green Village (GV) Bangladesh celebrated its first Entrepreneurs Day (E Day) with 130 participants, including representatives from NGOs like RDRS, ESDO, Friendship, and DYDF, as well as catalysts, youth, and aspiring entrepreneurs. The event featured motivational testimonies from entrepreneurs and partners. MD. Asif Imran, ESDO's Project Associate, shared his experience, and ESDO was honored with the Partner of the Year award from LP4Y.





Commercialization of Compost prepared by the Zero Waste Community of Betgari

The residents of Betgari community actively engage in compost production, generating a significant surplus that can be utilized for their own agricultural purposes. Due to the high-quality and increasing demand for their compost, they have recently begun selling it, marking their first venture into the market with a price set at 35 kg.



A Step Towards Ensuring Food Security in the Future: Toxic-free Organic Farming in Betgari



We are pleased to provide an update on our progress towards a sustainable future through organic farming. This annual report highlights our recent achievements, ongoing efforts, and future plans, showcasing our commitment to environmentally friendly agricultural practices.

Irri 29 Harvest: A Bountiful Yield

We are thrilled to report that our organic farming plot dedicated to Irri 29 rice has yielded remarkable results. After dedicated care and hard work, we proudly harvested a total of 239 kg of paddy. This success is a testament to the benefits of organic farming practices and the dedication of our farming community.





Amon93: The Next Chapter Begins

With the Irri 29 harvest complete, we are wasting no time in preparing for the next phase of our organic farming journey. Amon 93 rice was seeded within a day, and the cultivation process has already commenced. We are eager to see the seeds of this new season take root and flourish.



Cultivation and Irrigation: Sustaining Our Growth

Our commitment to sustainable practices extends beyond the crops themselves. We are pleased to share that after completing the Irri 29 harvest, we initiated irrigation and cultivation activities promptly. This ensures that our soil remains healthy and fertile for future crops, contributing to long-term sustainability.



Cultivation and Irrigation: Sustaining Our Growth

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Empowering Zero Waste Community in Rangpur: Zero Waste Project Activities Follow Up and Interest-Free Loans



During a recent meeting with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), we discussed follow-up activities for the Zero Waste Project and the Interest-Free Loan Program in Rangpur. Together, we're working towards a more sustainable and economically vibrant community.



Zero Waste Loan Program Meeting

ESDO organized a zero-waste loan program meeting on 25 September, 2023 at ESDO Rangpur office. The primary goal of this program is to involve unemployed individuals from the zero-waste community in various economic activities. The program has been named "Amar Swapno" and will be managed by Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) operating within the zero-waste community.



Under the "Amar Swapno" initiative, members of the zero-waste community will have the opportunity to access loans of up to 5000 Tk. This initiative aims to empower the zero-waste community by providing financial support, self-employment opportunities, and skills development. It aspires to reduce poverty and positively impact the region's GDP, ultimately contributing to sustainable economic growth while addressing environmental concerns related to waste management.

Betgari Union's Biogas Plant Success Story

The facility's users express their happiness with the assistance they receive. They claim that the plant's gas production rate has stabled and now satisfies their daily energy needs. They currently receive assistance from the service for four to five hours every day.

Additionally, they can use the fertilizer created by the plant as a byproduct in their agriculture fields. Through this program, the beneficiaries have had better prospects for a living.

Additionally, interest in switching to organic agricultural methods has increased due to the availability of organic fertilizer produced by the biogas plant. As a result, additional community members are enthusiastic in establishing their own biogas plants and requesting help from ESDO.



Ensuring Food Security in the Future: Toxic-free Organic Farming in Betgari- October-December, 2023

In the picturesque landscapes the Amon 93 harvest season has concluded with resounding success. Farmers, guided by the principles of organic farming, have reaped the rewards of their labor, boasting a total yield of 199 kg of paddy.

The fields, once adorned with lush green paddy, have now transitioned to the vibrant hues of Desi Kukri, Lal Bograi, and Cardinal potatoes. As the harvesting of these organic potatoes commences, the air is filled with anticipation and celebration. The farmers' commitment to sustainable and eco-friendly agricultural practices has not only resulted in a bountiful paddy harvest but also promises a flavorful and nutritious potato yield.



This organic farming plot stands as a testament to the harmonious coexistence of traditional farming wisdom and modern organic techniques. The Amon 93 harvest marks a milestone in the community's journey toward self-sufficiency, promoting a healthier environment and ensuring the well-being of both the land and its custodians.



Empowering Dreams: “Amader Swapno” Loan Program Commences in December”

In a stride towards community empowerment, the 'Amader Swapno' loan program has embarked on its journey, starting this December. This initiative is designed to cater to the community's unique needs, offering loans to Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) members. The funds are earmarked for diverse income-generating activities, including small-scale businesses, agricultural ventures, and skill development initiatives.

The 'Amader Swapno' program envisions a transformative impact on the community by providing accessible and affordable financial resources. Through these loans, the initiative aspires to catalyze poverty alleviation, fostering economic independence among community members. By supporting diverse ventures, from small businesses to agriculture and skill development, the program aims to be a concrete ripple effect of positive change, uplifting the community.

As the 'Amader Swapno' program takes its first steps, it stands as a beacon of hope and opportunity, symbolizing the commitment to realizing the dreams and aspirations of the community it serves. This initiative represents more than just financial support; it embodies a vision for a future where community members can thrive and contribute to the sustainable development of their surroundings.



EMPOWERING FUTURES: LP4Y AND ESDO FORGE COLLABORATIVE BONDS

In a dynamic partnership aimed at creating positive social impact, LP4Y and ESDO (Environment and Social Development Organization) have joined hands, fostering a collaboration that goes beyond boundaries. ESDO, recognizing the transformative potential of LP4Y's initiatives, has expressed its commitment by providing a letter of support, solidifying its collaborative efforts.

The partnership reached new heights when LP4Y extended an invitation to ESDO to participate in their impactful meeting held at Green Village, Bangladesh, situated in Tushvander Lalmonirhat. The meeting, attended by the Senior Program Associate of ESDO, Md. Asif Imran proved to be a platform for insightful discussions and shared visions.

During the meeting, LP4Y unveiled its achievements in 2023 and outlined its ambitious perspectives for 2024. Through presentations, testimonials, and workshops, LP4Y showcased its dedication to multiplying actions, positioning itself as a pivotal actor in the ecosystem of inclusion. The discussions focused on understanding the vast potential for collaboration and synergy between the organizations, aiming to contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive society. This collaboration between LP4Y and ESDO exemplifies the power of partnership in driving meaningful change. By combining their strengths and shared commitment to social betterment, these organizations are paving the way for a future where inclusivity and sustainability take center stage in community development.





Sustainable Energy Triumph: Biogas Plant Service Thrives in Betgari Union, Rangpur District, Bangladesh

In a ground breaking initiative, the installation of the first biogas plant in Pramanik Para, nestled within Betgari Union in Rangpur District, Bangladesh, has witnessed resounding success. This pioneering endeavor not only marked the introduction of eco-friendly energy solutions but also paved the way for a sustainable future.

The initial biogas plant, now fully operational, stands as a testament to the community's commitment to environmental stewardship. As a clean and renewable energy source, the plant has not only contributed to reducing the carbon footprint but has also provided a reliable and affordable energy alternative for the residents of Betgari Union.

⁶ Embracing the success of the first installation, the second biogas plant has further solidified the community's dedication to sustainable practices. Beneficiaries of the second plant express high satisfaction with the services they receive, emphasizing the positive impact on their daily lives. The utilization of biogas not only addresses energy needs but also contributes to waste management, creating a symbiotic relationship between environmental conservation and community welfare.

As the Betgari Union takes strides towards a greener and cleaner future, these biogas plants stand as shining examples of how communities can champion sustainable solutions for the benefit of both the environment and its inhabitants.

Expanding Sustainability: Urgent Need for Funding to Meet Growing Demand for Biogas Plants in Betgari

The success of the Biogas Plant initiative by the ESDO in Betgari Union, Rangpur District, Bangladesh, has sparked a surge in demand from the community. With an increasing number of residents eager to adopt this eco-friendly and sustainable energy solution, there is a pressing need for additional funding to meet the growing demand and extend the benefits of biogas plants to more households.

Expanding the reach of the Biogas Plant project requires substantial financial support to facilitate the installation of additional units, ensuring that more families in Betgari can access clean and affordable energy.

These funds will contribute not only to the installation of the biogas plants but also to community outreach, awareness programs, and training initiatives to empower residents with the knowledge to maximize the benefits of this environmentally conscious technology.

Investing in the expansion of the Biogas Plant project in Betgari is an investment in the community's sustainable future. It not only addresses the increasing demand for clean energy but also promotes responsible waste management practices, contributing to the overall well-being of the residents.

ESDO invites philanthropists, NGOs, and government agencies to join hands in supporting this noble cause. By pooling resources and funds, we can make a significant impact on the lives of the people in Betgari, creating a greener and more sustainable environment for current and future generations. Your contribution will not only fund biogas plant installations but will also empower communities to lead the way in sustainable living. Together, let's turn the growing interest in biogas into a transformative force for positive change in Betgari Union.



Twin Pit Composter Cultivates Prosperity and Sustainability in Betgari Union, Rangpur District, Bangladesh

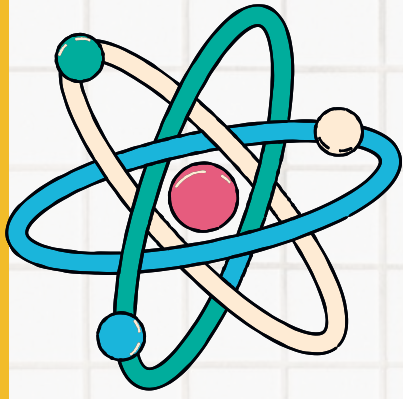


In the heart of Betgari Union in Rangpur District, Bangladesh, a transformative initiative has taken root—the Twin Pit Composter. Beneficiaries of this innovative composting system are cultivating both prosperity and sustainability in their agricultural practices.

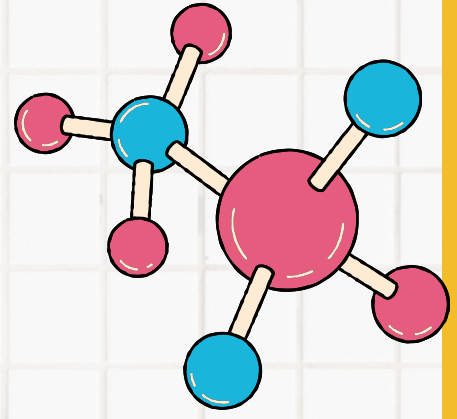
The local community has embraced the twin pit composter as a means to convert organic waste into nutrient-rich compost. This compost, in turn, has become a valuable fertilizer for their agricultural lands. The results have been nothing short of remarkable, with fields yielding impressive harvests and farmers experiencing enhanced soil fertility.

Encouraged by their success, beneficiaries are considering scaling up compost production for commercial purposes, promising economic growth and financial independence. The twin pit composter is aiding in pollution reduction, driving the community towards a Zero Waste approach. The story of the Betgari Union showcases how sustainable practices can harmonize economic growth, social well-being, and environmental stewardship. The Twin Pit Composter is transforming both fields and lives.

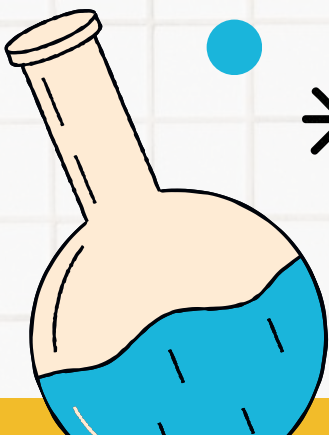
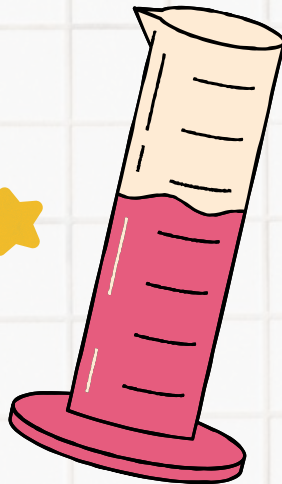
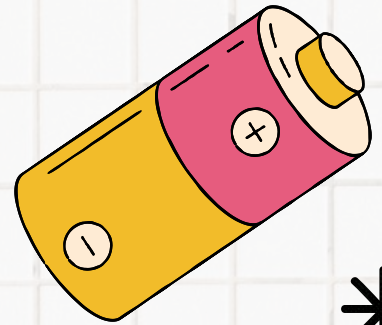
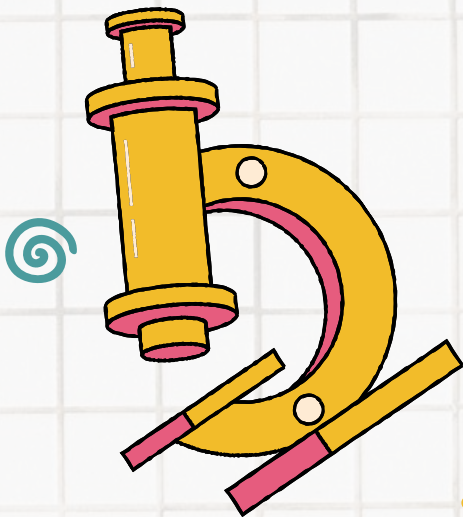




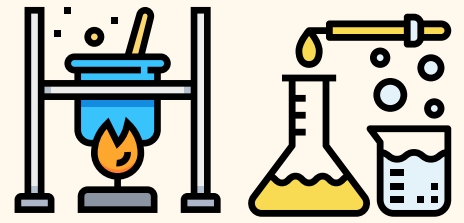
2023



RESEARCH ACTIVITIES



EDC (ENDOCRINE DISRUPTING CHEMICALS) FREE ASIA



Meeting on [WIOEH] EDC II Project Induction and Recruitment Session

The Wonjin Institute for Occupational and Environmental Health (WIOEH) scheduled a meeting on 7th May 2023 to initiate the collaborative Asian EDC Season 2 study. Representing ESDO, Project Associate Tanjima Hoque Trisha participated in the meeting. The speaker introduced the specific compounds that will be identified and studied. The discussion revolved around determining the number and types of products selected for sampling. The session's primary focus was to delve into the background and health effects associated with these substances.

EDC II 2023 Project Guidelines Meeting

On June 15th, 2023, WIOEH held a meeting to share project guidelines. The study will collect samples of body wash, face wash, mouthwash, deodorant, and other items from Bangladeshi markets to assess toxic chemical levels in these products.

EDC free Asia II

EDC Free Asia II Project Market Survey

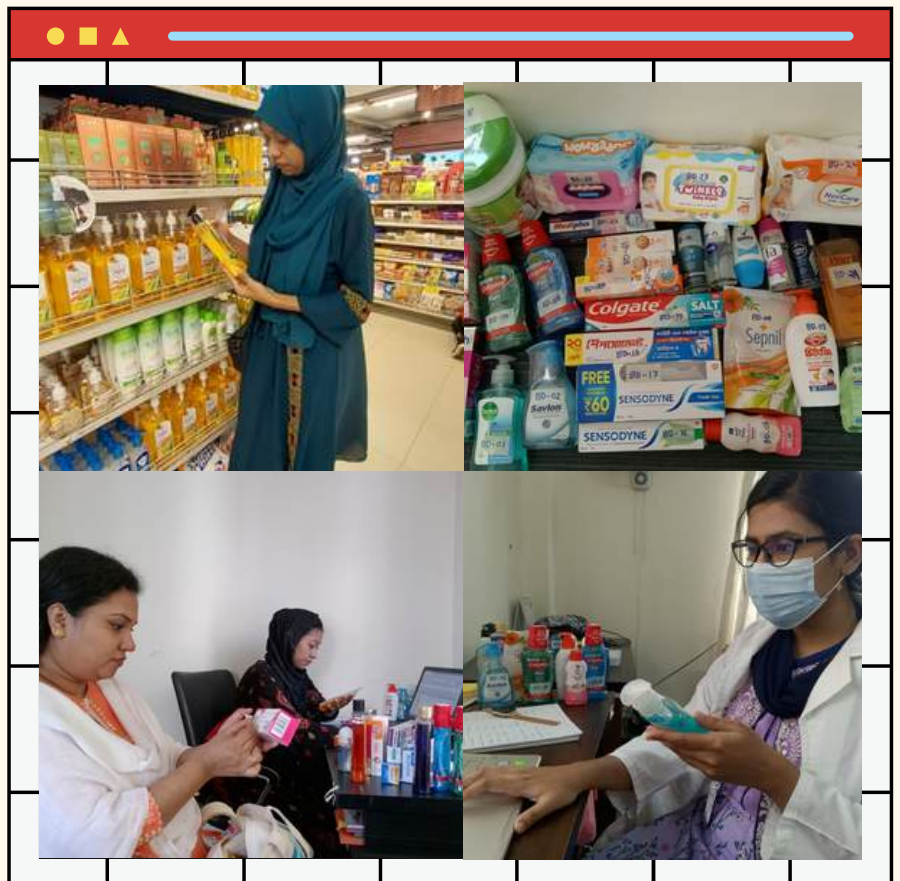
ESDO, in collaboration with WIOEH, examined toxic chemicals in Everyday Carry products like hand wash, body wash, mouthwash, and deodorant, which are harmful to users, especially women and children.



ESDO bought 30 samples from marketplaces like Chakbazar, Newmarket, Townhall market, and online stores. The research team selected popular product brands, numbered them, packaged them in bubble wrap, and stored them in a wooden box for shipment to Korea for analysis.

Sampling for EDC-free Asia II Projects

To spread knowledge, ESDO and WIOEH collaboratively examined the toxic chemicals in Everyday Carry products like hand wash, body wash, mouthwash, and deodorant, which are harmful to women and children. ESDO bought 30 samples from Chakbazar, Newmarket, Townhall market, and online stores. The research team selected popular brands, numbered, bubble-wrapped, and stored the samples in a wooden box for shipment to Korea for analysis.



PFAS IN WATER AND CLOTHINGS

PFAS (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) are a group of chemicals commonly found in various products, including nonstick cookware, grease-resistant and waterproof coatings on food packaging (such as popcorn bags, takeout containers, and fast food wrappers), coated paper products, and waterproof, water-resistant, and stain-resistant textiles (like clothing, shoes, upholstery, and carpets). They are also present in cosmetics and personal care products, industrial and household cleaning products, floor, car, and boat waxes, engineered coatings used in semiconductor production, metal plating and finishing, etching of metals, plastics, and glass, plastics, resins, and rubber products, surface coatings, paint, varnish, and inks, cable and wire insulation for electronics, and aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF) used to extinguish flammable liquid fires.

Recently, the ESDO team conducted a survey to detect the presence of PFAS chemicals in the textile sector, which accounts for about 50% of their global use. PFAS are widely used as water and dirt repellents and in impregnation treatments for outdoor wear and accessories for outdoor sports. The team visited many renowned supermarkets in Bangladesh to collect samples for testing.

In collaboration with IPEN, ESDO is conducting comprehensive research to identify PFAS in water and textiles in Bangladesh.



FIREFIGHTING
FOAMS



MICROWAVE
POPCORN BAGS



WATER RESISTANT
CLOTHING



PAINT



STAIN RESISTANT
PRODUCT



PERSONAL
CARE PRODUCTS

PFAS IN PRODUCTS



COSMETICS



NON-STICK
COOKWARE



FAST FOOD
PACKAGING



STAIN RESISTANT
FURNITURE



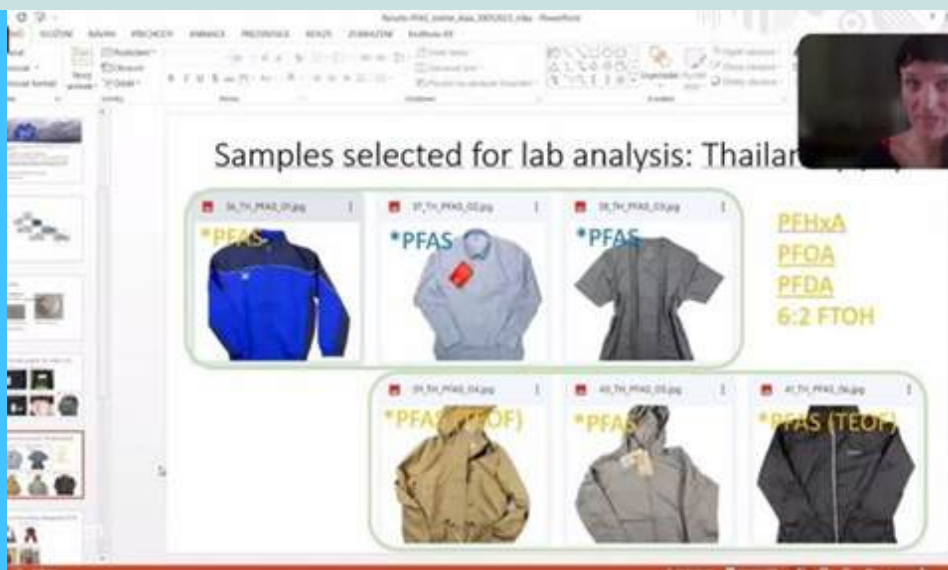
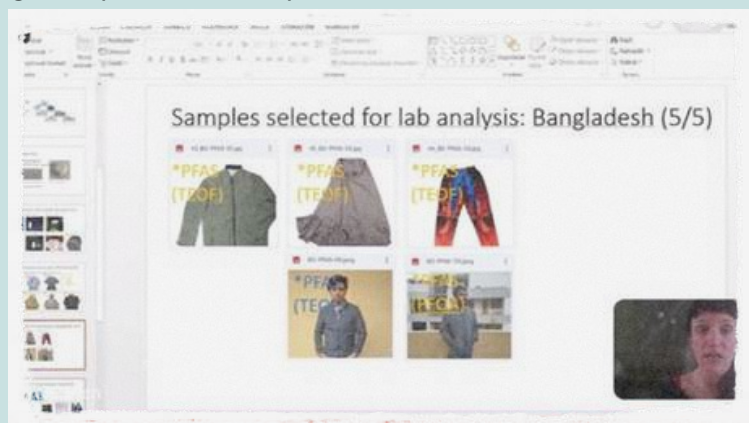
PHOTOGRAPHY



PESTICIDES

PFAS in Synthetic Outdoor Clothes: Result Sharing Meeting

In collaboration with ESDO, IPEN conducted a meeting on May 30th, 2023, about collecting various types of synthetic outdoor garments to detect the presence of PFAS chemicals. The primary objective is to gather evidence regarding the utilization of PFAS chemicals in clothing, contribute to the global ban on PFAS as a group of substances, facilitate national bans on PFAS, and encourage companies to cease the use of PFAS. Six samples were collected in Sri Lanka, and three were found to contain PFAS. In Thailand, six samples were collected, and all tested positive for PFAS chemicals. ESDO collected five samples from Bangladesh, and all of them were found to have PFAS chemicals. In India, out of nine samples, five contained PFAS. Researchers shared their insights on strategies to avoid these types of garments or chemicals during the production process.



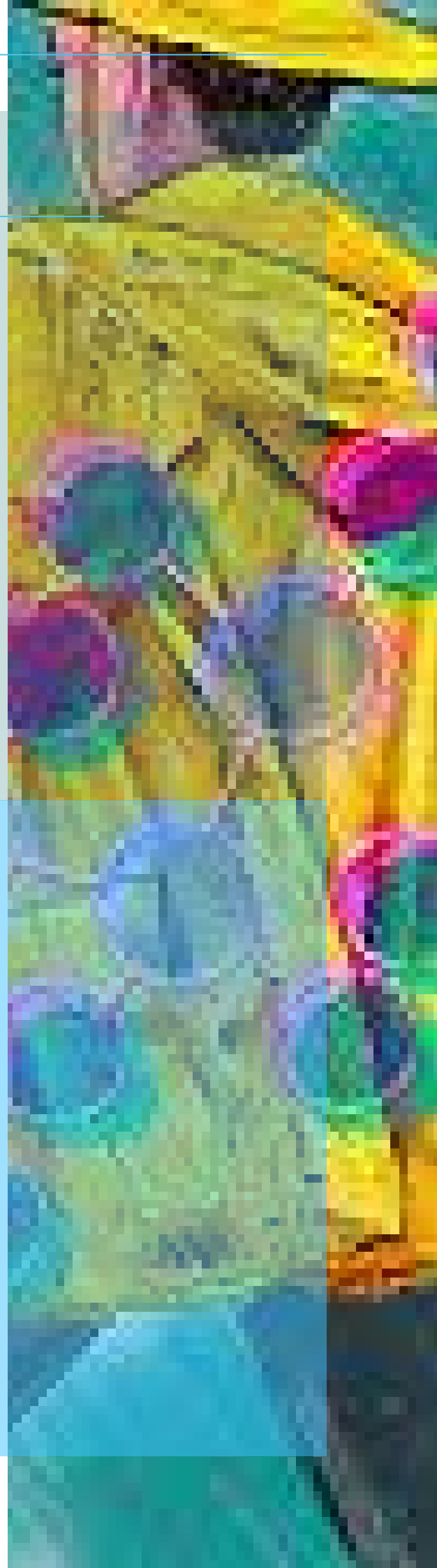
TFSDGs 4- PFAS in Clothing

On 20 October 2023, a meeting was held to discuss on the study on outdoor textiles PFAS contamination that examined samples from Asian, European and US jackets and other clothing. Jitka Strakova led the discussion and presented findings from samples collected from various countries in Asia, Europe, and the US. The study revealed that jackets are commonly found to contain PFAS. While jackets were frequently contaminated with PFAS, some other products, like t-shirts, were found to have PFAS as well. It was suggested to send an open letter to companies that are using PFAS in their products. The primary objective is to make these companies aware of the presence of PFAS in their samples and to receive their policies and reactions. A two-week period was allocated to get the replies from the companies.

In the month of November, a global report will be published based on the findings and responses gathered. This report is likely to summarize the extent of PFAS presence, the responses from companies, and the proposed strategic approach to phase out these substances. Following the responses from the companies, the plan is to proceed with a treaty and strategic approach to phase out PFAS.

This issue of PFAS is recognized as an emerging policy concern, and the goal is to encourage companies to transition to PFAS-free alternatives.

Siddika Sultana, Executive director of ESDO, Shanon Iffat Alam, Research and Campaign Associate of ESDO and Fullkumari Khisa, Junior Project Associate of ESDO participated in the meeting.



A report on PFAS “Forever Chemicals” Found in Outerwear and Clothing Sold Globally

A study released by Arnika, IPEN and 13 IPEN member groups and partners found toxic per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) chemicals, including globally banned substances in outdoor jackets and clothing purchased from thirteen countries across Asia, Africa, Europe, and North America. Most of the outdoor jackets were marketed for children and many of the products come into direct contact with skin.

PFAS, called “Forever Chemicals” due to their extreme persistence in the environment, are used in clothing and other products to confer stain- and water-resistance.

However, the study also found jackets and clothing made without PFAS, demonstrating that safer alternatives to the toxic substances are available.

Countries included were Germany, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Poland, United Kingdom, Serbia, Montenegro, Kenya, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the U.S.



Media Briefing and Report Launching of “Visual Pollution in the City of Dhaka: A Public Health, Environment and Traffic Distraction”

Last year, ESDO unveiled its latest study, “Visual Pollution in Dhaka: A Threat to Public Health, the Environment, and Road Safety,” during a media briefing. The report highlights that visual pollution is a significant contributor to vision impairments and mental health issues. Alarming, around 270,000 children in Dhaka endure eye strain and severe headaches annually due to this growing problem.

According to ESDO's findings, visual pollution leads to eye fatigue in over 24% of the population, with children being the most severely affected. Each year, nearly 270,000 children in Dhaka require medical attention for eye strain and debilitating headaches, based on data collected from 27 hospitals and clinics across the city. The study also reveals that nearly 17% of Dhaka’s residents now suffer from mental health issues linked to visual pollution. [Read more](#)



ESDO'S INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT



2023



GLOBAL PLASTIC TREATY

2
0
2
3



Forum international de Paris
mettre fin à la pollution plastique dans les villes
Paris international forum
plastic pollution in cities

The Second session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC 2)

From 29 May to 2 June 2023, ESDO participated in the second session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-2) in Paris, France, which focuses on developing an international legally binding instrument to combat plastic pollution, particularly in the marine environment. Siddika Sultana, ESDO's Executive Director, delivered a statement during the proceedings, and Dr. Shahriar Hossain, ESDO's Secretary General, also took part in the negotiations

High Ambition Briefing at INC - 2 regulating the recycling of toxic plastics.

Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary General, Environment and Social Development Organization - ESDO shared his thoughts on High Ambition Briefing at INC - 2 in Paris, France. [YouTube](#)

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The Third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC 2)

The third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (INC-3), took place at the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary General of ESDO and Siddika Sultana, Executive Director of ESDO participated at the INC 3 on behalf of ESDO and IPEN.

BFFP Plastics Treaty101 Webinar - South Asia

The Plastics Treaty 101 webinar on October 19, 2023, organized by Break Free From Plastic, focused on Plastic Treaty initiatives in South Asia. Siddika Sultana, Executive Director of ESDO, discussed the Global Plastic Treaty, highlighting the urgent need to address escalating plastic pollution and its impacts on environmental, social, economic, and health aspects of sustainable development. She called for immediate global action involving governments, the private sector, and citizens, using a whole-of-society and full life cycle approach. The webinar emphasized the multifaceted challenges of plastic pollution and the necessity of global cooperation and technological innovation for sustainable plastic waste management.

INC-3 Global South Media Briefing

On November 14, 2023, GAIA held a media briefing at Comfort Gardens Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya, both online and offline. The Global South delegation's demands included addressing the entire lifecycle of plastics, reducing production, ending harmful technologies like incineration, limiting toxic chemicals, ensuring chemical transparency, advocating for a just transition, requiring Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) based on the Zero Waste hierarchy, and pledging to implement policies through regulations. They also called for more upstream measures and inclusion of Waste Pickers, Indigenous Peoples, Frontline Communities, Women and Youth, and underrepresented countries from Africa, Asia, and SIDS.



INC 3 Debriefing by IPEN

On November 29th, the South Asia Debrief on the Plastics Treaty INC3 focused on negotiations around the zero-draft text, which must be finalized by the end of INC4. The goal is to address plastics throughout their life cycle, avoiding false solutions like chemical recycling, and instead emphasizing reduced plastic production and chemical transparency. While some progress was made at INC3, much work remains. Regional experts shared insights to understand the conference outcomes, government positions, and strategies for upcoming discussions.

Representing ESDO, Secretary-General Dr. Shahriar Hossain and Executive Director Siddika Sultana reviewed the INC-3 discussions and preparations for INC-4.





Fourth meeting of the intersessional process considering the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020- 27 February-3 March 2023

Siddika Sultana, Executive Director of ESDO, attended the Fourth Intersessional Process meeting (IP4) on the Strategic Approach and sound management of chemicals and waste beyond 2020, held from February 27 to March 3, 2023. She emphasized the need to build a toxin-free world by enhancing the safety of chemicals and waste for a healthier future. Sultana called for safer alternatives and sustainable product value chains to maximize benefits to human health and the environment while minimizing risks. She stressed that proper management of chemicals and waste should be a priority.



Science-Policy Panel to Contribute Further to the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste and to Prevent Pollution

In March 2022 the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) agreed in resolution 5/8 to establish a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution. Substantive discussions will begin at the resumed first Open-ended Working Group meeting (OEWG 1-2). The first session featured operational decisions and opening statements.

On behalf of ESDO and as a participant organization of IPEN, Executive Director of ESDO Siddika Sultana intervened on the 30th January session focusing on an integrated technique that would concentrate on the pollutants associated with chemicals at all stages of their lifecycle.

Intersessional Process for Considering SAICM and the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste Beyond 2020

The resumed fourth meeting of the Intersessional Process (IP4) of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) convened on 27 February, 2023 and focused on: airing new formal proposals for the “Beyond 2020” instrument on the sound management of chemicals and waste; narrowing the proposed targets for the instrument to 20; discussing a name for the instrument; and developing a list of topics that need specific resolutions at the Fifth International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5) in September 2023. On behalf of ESDO, executive director Siddika Sultana stated, raising community awareness and suggested reducing the production of toxic and hazardous chemicals to ensure safe chemical management. [Read More](#)



Mercury Waste Expert Meeting at Geneva from

16 to 18
February
2023



ESDO'S PARTICIPATION

Dr. Shahriar Hossain, ESDO's secretary general participated on behalf of ESDO

ESDO's Statement for BRS Regional Meeting



The regional preparatory meetings aim to support the 2023 COPs by allowing regions to consult, discuss issues, identify priorities and challenges, and formulate regional positions. ESDO's Secretary-General, Dr. Shahriar Hossain, attended the BRS regional meeting for COPs in Bangkok, Thailand. He submitted a statement on behalf of ESDO, highlighting concerns about PFAS compounds in the environment, food, and human serum, and their hazards to human health and the environment. He also discussed ESDO's studies on plastic waste regulations and implementation, lead pollution and its health risks, and e-waste management in Bangladesh.

13th meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the Basel Convention (OEWG-13)

The thirteenth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group took place from February 21 to 23, 2023, with pre-meetings on February 20. The Working Group focused on high and medium priority items in its work programme. Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary General of ESDO, participated and submitted a statement supporting the draft technical guidelines on the environmentally sound management of plastic wastes.



ESDO's Statement for BFFP Regional Meeting

After a three year, BFFP organized a global meeting on March 26-31, 2023 in Vietnam. Since the start of the pandemic, many of member have not had the opportunity to meet again in person as a global movement, so this year BFFP planned to meet in person with purpose review strategy and progress together, to renew and strengthen bonds and the values that make BFFP a vibrant and cohesive movement, share skills , and to do joint planning around key projects and ongoing initiatives (eg Global Plastic Treaty, Reuse, etc). On behalf of ESDO, Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary General of ESDO joined the meeting.



2023 APNN-Country Report Bangladesh

Executive Director of ESDO, Siddika Sultana joined the webinar and shared the summary report of the APNN country report of Bangladesh, WiES Bangladesh. WiES Bangladesh is working towards promoting women's rights and empowerment in the fields of science, technology, engineering, entrepreneurship, and mathematics in Bangladesh. By focusing on these areas, WiES Bangladesh aims to provide a platform for women to have their voices heard and contribute to these fields, which traditional on the mission and recent activities of WiES Bangladesh.

2023 APNN-Country Report Bangladesh



2023

2023 Conferences of the Parties to the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions (BRS COPs)

The BRS Triple COP, including the Basel, Rotterdam, and Stockholm Conventions, took place in Geneva, Switzerland, from May 1 to 12, 2023. Dr. Shahriar Hossain and Siddika Sultana, representing IPEN and ESDO, participated in discussions on hazardous waste, illegal trade, and the transboundary movement of plastic waste. On May 9, Siddika Sultana delivered a statement on behalf of ESDO, focusing on the six natural mineral fibers known as asbestos. She highlighted the link between Chrysotile asbestos and various cancers, including lung and ovarian cancer, and emphasized the need for further research on asbestos-related diseases.



SIDDIKA SULTANA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ESDO



DR. SHAHRIAR HOSSAIN
SECRETARY GENERAL, ESDO

SCIENCE POLICY PANEL

IPEN has engaged in the science-to-policy (Science-Policy) discussions under the BRS and Minamata Conventions, SAICM, and the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) for many years. In March 2022, UNEA adopted a resolution calling for the establishment of a new Science-Policy Panel to support action on chemicals, waste, and pollution.



SAICM IP4.2

The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) is a unique global strategy to create a world where chemicals are no longer produced or used in ways that harm human health and the environment. Fourth Meeting of the Intersessional Process for SAICM (IP4.2) took place in Nairobi, Kenya from 27 February to 3 March, 2023. Three regional POs: ESDO, Bangladesh; CEPHED, Nepal and OSHE, Bangladesh actively participated in the discussion.

EXCEPTIONAL ZERO WASTE WOMEN IN THE ASIA PACIFIC REGION

#ThisIsZeroWaste



Zero Waste Women in the Asia Pacific Region

GAIA released a new publication VISION & GRIT, Exceptional Zero Waste Women in the Asia Pacific Region in celebration of all the incredible women championing #zerowaste and making a difference in their communities and who have helped make the world we live in a better place. Siddika Sultana from ESDO, Bangladesh was quoted in the report.

<https://mailchi.mp/b838734f751d/south-asia-snapshot-july-december-12770625?e=dfd40bd186>



Reflections in Honor of International Women's Day: Honoring Women of IPEN



For International Women's Day this year, IPEN launched a blog series celebrating women's contributions to the field of chemicals. Olga Speranskaya, IPEN Senior Advisor and Co-Director, highlighted Siddika Sultana, co-founder and executive director of ESDO, in her post. Speranskaya praised Sultana's significant efforts since 1999 in addressing gender inequality and women's rights, especially in the textile sector.

Speranskaya noted that women in IPEN work closely with communities exposed to hazardous chemicals. Sultana is recognized for her dedication to protecting marginalized populations and developing strategies to mitigate chemical risks. The textile industry, a major global polluter, uses hazardous chemicals linked to health issues, particularly affecting women's reproductive health.

Siddika Sultana has observed that female textile workers often face injustice and lack proper care, making it difficult to manage family responsibilities. She collaborates with Bangladeshi groups to advocate for workers' rights and gender equality, focusing on raising awareness about workplace chemical dangers and promoting gender equity.

Seventh Global Environment Facility (GEF) Assembly



The Global Environment Facility has a unique governing structure organized around an Assembly, the Council, the Secretariat, 18 agencies, a Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, and the Evaluation Office. The GEF serves as a financial mechanism for several environmental conventions. The Executive Director of ESDO, Ms. Siddika Sultana has participated at the Seventh Global Environment Facility (GEF) Assembly and also provided a speech at the closing ceremony.

The Asia Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for COP-5 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury

The Asia Pacific regional preparatory meeting for COP-5 of the Minamata Convention on Mercury took place on September 5-6, 2023, in Bangkok, Thailand. Its primary purpose was to prepare for COP-5, scheduled for October 30 to November 3, 2023, in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting involved developing the provisional agenda with COP-5 Bureau members from the Asia Pacific region and discussing documents for COP-5. Governments and civil society organizations also formulated positions and strategies on various issues related to the Minamata Convention.



ESDO's Executive Director Siddika Sultana and Research and Campaign Associate Shanon Iffat Alam attended on behalf of ESDO, the World Alliance for Mercury Free Dentistry, and the Zero Mercury Working Group (ZMWG).



The Bonn World Conference Center hosted the ICCM5 meeting from September 25 to 29, 2023. The Intersessional Process for SAICM and the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste Beyond 2020 (IP4.3) took place from September 23-24, 2023, before ICCM5.

Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary General of ESDO, and Siddika Sultana, Executive Director of ESDO, participated in IP4.3. Ms. Sultana intervened in the Strategic Objectives and Targets section on the timeline of Sound Management of Chemicals.

Regional Meeting of Fifth Meeting of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM5)



Courtesy Visit at Swedish International Development Corporation Agency (SIDA)

On September 12, 2023, ESDO's Secretary General Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Executive Director Siddika Sultana, and Program Associate Maliha Hoque visited SIDA to discuss future collaboration on environmental projects. Nayoka Martinez-Backstrom, Deputy Head of Development Section, and Mostafizur Rahman, National Programme Officer-Climate and Environment, from the Embassy of Sweden in Dhaka welcomed the ESDO team.

ESDO's Intervention on Cosmetics and Dental Amalgam in Minamata COP-5, focusing on Gender



This year the 5th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury took place from October 30 to November 3 in Geneva, Switzerland. The Conference of Parties (COP) examined the first comprehensive set of national reports submitted by countries on the phase-out of mercury use, debating potential expediting measures and potential improvements to the reporting structure.

On behalf of ESDO and IPEN, Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary General, ESDO, and Siddika Sultana, Executive Director, ESDO, participated in the meeting. Siddika Sultana intervened on dental amalgam at the meeting.



Webinar on Dangerous Chemicals in Cosmetics: Challenges and Solutions for a toxic-free world

The World Future Council hosted a webinar titled "Future Policy Award 2023: For a Toxic-Free World," addressing the dangers of beauty products, particularly for children and young people. The Council's mission is to ensure a healthy, sustainable planet and just societies for future generations by promoting effective solutions to global challenges.

The webinar emphasized the Minamata Convention's role and national legislations in protecting children, especially girls and young women, from harmful skin-lightening products. Discussions also covered socio-cultural factors and the need for market regulation and awareness.

Ms. Siddika Sultana, Executive Director of ESDO, Bangladesh, participated as a panelist, sharing ESDO's efforts since 2016 in raising awareness about the hazards of skin-lightening cosmetics through campaigns in collaboration with the Zero Mercury Working Group and the European Environmental Bureau (EEB).



ESDO's approach includes:

- Conducts social media campaigns and shares informative case studies.
- Produces video documentaries with dermatologists, victims, parlor associations, and youth.
- Analyzes mercury content in skin-lightening creams in Bangladeshi markets.
- Disseminates findings through media and engages with sellers.
- Gains significant media coverage, boosting national awareness.
- Played a key role in Bangladesh's ratification of the Minamata Convention on Mercury in 2023.

GAIA Asia Pacific Regional Advisory Committee Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand

GAIA organized a meeting with the regional members of Asia Pacific from October 18 to October 20 in Bangkok. The objectives of this regional meeting were to provide updates on the work and connect new AP RAC members, review and provide inputs to GAIAAP's five-year strategic plan, facilitate spaces for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and share campaigns/ CTAs, ultimately contribute to cross-country collaboration, strengthen the governance structure of the network and elect a representative to the Global Advisory Hub.



Members from various organizations of different Asia Pacific countries; i.e. Philippines, Indonesia, China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and India participate in this meeting. From Bangladesh and on behalf of ESDO, Maliha Hoque, Program Associate joined the meeting.



2023

ESDO's first ever participation at Climate COP

COP28: Side Event on Mitigating Climate Change and Improving Public Health through Zero Waste Strategies

GAIA and ISWA jointly organized a side event titled “Mitigating Climate Change and Improving Public Health through Zero Waste Strategies” on 10 December 2023 at the Waste and Resources Pavilion of CoP28. ESDO's secretary general Dr. Shahriar Hossain joined this event as a speaker and addressed plastic pollution as a major cause of climate change at the COP28.

UNFCCC Climate CoP28: Side Event on “Mitigating Methane Emission Towards Environmental Justice



ESDO and GAIA jointly organized a Side Event at the CoP28 titled “Mitigating Methane Emission Towards Environmental Justice” on 11 December 2023 at CoP 28 Bangladesh Pavilion: B2, Building 21, Dubai, UAE.

Dr. Ainun Nishat, Emeritus Professor, BRAC University and Director of the Center for Climate Change and Environmental Research (C3ER) was the Guest of Honor at this event. Sanjay Kumar Bhowmik, Additional Secretary, MoEFCC, Bangladesh, Shibu K. Nair, Regional Organics Campaigner, GAIA Asia Pacific, and Hemant Mallya, Fellow, Council on Energy, Environment, and Water, India participated at this side event as the panelists.

New Projects

- ESDO & UNICEF Partnership for a Lead-free Future: Addressing Children’s Environmental Health with a Particular Focus on Lead Poisoning in Bangladesh
- Multi-actor Partnership for Improved Due Diligence Implementation in the Textile Sector via Worker- and Community-based Monitoring

ESDO-UNICEF Partnership for a Lead-Free Bangladesh

Inauguration From 3rd December 2023

Addressing Children’s Environmental Health with a Particular Focus on Lead Poisoning in Bangladesh

#End Childhood Lead Exposure



Mission

Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to mitigate lead poisoning by adapting greening practices and demanding immediate regulation for industrial paint to protect children and environmental health in Bangladesh.



Multi-actor Partnership for Improved Due Diligence Implementation in the Textile Sector via Worker- and Community-based Monitoring

Project Summary

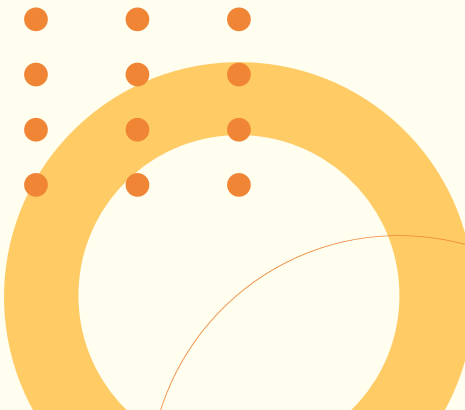


In order to ensure fair labor practices and sustainability within the textile industry, ESDO signed a new project with FEMNET titled “Multi-actor Partnership for Improved Due Diligence Implementation in the Textile Sector via Worker- and Community-based Monitoring” on the 21st of October, 2023. With a specific focus on the Ashulia and Savar regions, the overall objective of the project is to improve the working conditions of RMG workers and reduce the health and environmental hazards posed by the textile factories to communities in those regions.

Partners: BILS, BIDS, BLF, FNV, Femnet and Hije Support



This approach signifies a commitment to engaging multiple stakeholders in the textile industry, fostering collaboration between workers, communities, and organizations to collectively monitor and improve due diligence practices.



INSIGHT ESDO



ESDO Team Orientation

The new employee orientation is an exciting time for both the new hires and the organization. To warmly welcome the new members of ESDO, foster strong connections among the team, and help them understand ESDO's culture and values, a 3-day "Orientation Workshop" was held from January 1-3, 2023, at the "Surer Dhara" Auditorium, bringing together the Dhaka and Rangpur teams.

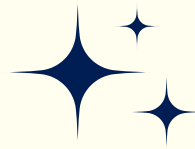
The workshop covered various topics, including introductory and ice-breaking sessions, team-building exercises, presentations on ESDO's initiatives, achievements, and vision, as well as sessions on presentation skills and interpersonal communication. The orientation began with formal greetings, followed by a series of engaging activities where participants were divided into teams for different competitions. All team members participated enthusiastically and with great dedication.

The Secretary General of ESDO delivered an insightful presentation on ESDO's research, providing a clear understanding of the organization's work. The Executive Director also shared her experiences with the organization, inspiring the participants. The 3-day orientation concluded with feedback from the participants, who were later awarded prizes for their hard work and outstanding performance.

ESDO's 33 Years of Glory!

Anniversary Celebration

On June 6th, 2023, ESDO reached a monumental milestone, celebrating 33 years of unwavering commitment to building a sustainable future for our planet. Since its inception in 1990, ESDO has made significant strides in championing environmental protection, promoting sustainable practices, and raising awareness about the pressing challenges faced by our global community.



To honor this momentous occasion, ESDO hosted an elegant dinner event that brought together a distinguished gathering of guests. Among the honored attendees were Habibun Nahar, the Deputy Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; Syed Marghub Morshed, Chairman of ESDO and former Secretary to the Government of Bangladesh; the renowned actor Jayanto Chattopadhyay; along with ESDO board members, government officials, academics, environmental activists, former ESDO members, and the current ESDO team. The evening provided a rare opportunity for these influential figures from diverse fields to come together in celebration of ESDO's remarkable journey.





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Website:
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A hand is shown on the right side of the image, holding a white piece of chalk and writing on a dark grey chalkboard. The word 'sustainable' is written in a cursive, handwritten style and is underlined with a thick white line. Below the underlined word, there are three bullet points, each followed by a word: a short horizontal line, the word 'social', another short horizontal line, the word 'economic', and a third short horizontal line, the word 'environment'.

sustainable

- social
- economic
- environment