



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2020



Environment and Social Development Organization-ESDO

## About ESDO

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 the environment of Bangladesh. As a service-oriented, non-profit, non-government organization, ESDO strives to improve livelihoods, and socio-economic statuses and provide environmental education to some of the most vulnerable communities in Bangladesh. ESDO invests in people to care for the environment by 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. Environment and Social Development Organization-

## ESDO Our Mission and Vision








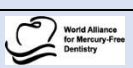

The mission of ESDO is to promote and encourage an environmental movement through a participatory democratic framework involving diverse social groups and to assist them with ideas, information, and leadership for promoting a safe, sustainable, and toxic-free world. The vision of ESDO is to see Bangladesh as well as all developing nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Working towards Protecting and



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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

	Asian Center for Environmental Health
	Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA)
	International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN)
	International Union for Conservation Nature (IUCN)
	The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC)
	Toxic Links
	United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP)
	World Alliance for Mercury Free Dentistry
	Zero Mercury Working Group

### Introduction:

In Bangladesh, 1.086 million metric tons plastic waste is generated every year from different sources of randomly discarded plastic products. Seventy three (73) thousand tons of plastic waste ends up in the sea through our mighty rivers: the Brahmaputra, the Meghna and the Ganges. In Bangladesh, only 5% of all plastic waste produced is recycled. About 9% of it is incinerated, while 86% is accumulated in landfills, dump sites and ultimately end up in the natural environment. Lack of knowledge, understanding and public awareness regarding marine pollution and the role of micro plastic litter is the main reason for this pollution. In this context, Environment and Social Development Organization, ESDO has initiated the project entitled "Combating the Pollution Threat from Micro-plastic Litter to Save Marine Health in the Bay of Bengal. The ultimate aim of the project is to reduce and stop use of Microbeads and single-use plastics (in the form of sachets and single use plastic packaging) therefore, stopping



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their flow into the Bay of Bengal. ESDO has successfully completed the first two years of the three year project duration with remarkable achievements. The objectives for the third year of the project includes: research coordination/conduction, raising mass awareness, dialogue initiation with government and non-government bodies on single use plastic ban issues, secure government regulation to stop Microbeads and single use plastic (SUP) pollution, and building coordinated networks with CSOs in countries bordering the Bay of Bengal.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak started in the world just in a few weeks in the first three months of 2020. It makes fear, havoc, death, and full lockdown of public movement around the world. Awareness, information, knowledge, attitudes, and related behaviors among us are very important to control the COVID-19 situation. Not only in Bangladesh but all nations on the Earth also haven't found any way out yet. So social media is the most effective platform that can play a significant role to disseminate information and knowledge to the public. WHO has been playing a key role to provide information and knowledge in this situation. As a responsible organization and global campaigner of environmental health Environment and Social Development Organization–ESDO tries its best to inform the public to determine COVID-19.

ESDO is using social media to create public awareness and knowledge for self-defense from the coronavirus in this difficult time. In the newsletter, we also accomplished ESDO's national and global contributions to protect and prevent life and nature from plastic, toxic chemicals, POPs waste, and hazardous waste pollution. We believe we will overcome this situation together, and the learnings from this phenomenon will remind us to change our behavior and lifestyle. We will be responsible for our nature and life.

### **Consultation: Solid Waste Management Rules 2020**



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Proper waste management is already a major problem in the urban areas of the country, let alone solid waste. How do you think it should be done?

An expert consultation was held to brush up the final draft of the solid waste management rules 2020. The meeting also focused on expert's feedback on the finalization of the 'Solid Waste Management Rules 2020'.

The meeting took place at the Department of Environment (DoE) on 19th March 2020. The discussion included a suggestion to add the definition of Hazardous Waste and a revision of rule 5. This revision should add information of some areas which are termed as 'Excluded areas from City Corporation'.

Dr. Mollik Anwar Hossain, Additional DG, DoE; Md. Ziaul Huq, Director (Air Quality Management), DoE; Masud Iqbal Md. Shameem, Director, Dhaka Zone; Khondokar Md. Fazlul Huq, Director, Law; Md. Sadekul Islam, Director, Administration were present at the meeting. Sayda Mehrabin Shejuti, Assistant Program Officer, ESDO, attended the meeting as a representative. Representatives from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Waste Concern, and Bela were also present at the meeting.

### **ESDO Welcomes New Executive Members and Advisors**



ESDO has welcomed four esteemed citizens of the country as Executive Board Member, Technical Advisory Board Member, and member of the general council in the month of March 2020.

On 14 March 2020, ESDO Chairperson Syed Marghub Murshed formally welcomed former Secretary Mr. A N Shamsuddin Azad Chowdhury, Former Additional IGP Md.



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Mokhlesur Rahman, Former Conservator of Forest and IUCN Country Director Mr. Ishtiaq Uddin Ahmad and Faculty of Mandy Dental Collage Dr. Alim Al Razee on the occasion of their joining to ESDO as The Executive Board Member, Advisory Board Members, and GC Member respectively. Dr. Alim Al Razee also joined ESDO as a General Member in the luncheon organized by the organization.

Secretary-General Dr. Shahriar Hossain and Executive Director, Siddika Sultana made a brief about ESDO's recent endeavors towards a pollution-free world. Among other Mr. Ali Hossain Admin and HR Manager and Syeda Meherabin Shejuti, Assistant Program officer also present in the luncheon introduction ceremony.

### **ESDO SG & ED Call on Secretary MoEFCC**



An ESDO delegation made a courtesy call with the Secretary of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change at his office on 11 March 2020. Mutual information sharing and discussion were focused on ESDO initiatives at the national and international levels on Chemicals management, Mercury, Lead, and Plastic Pollution issues. Particular interest by the government on Minamata convention ratification and national implementation plan, Policy on Plastic pollution particularly on SUP regulation and Use Lead Acid battery. ESDO delegation offers all possible cooperation and engagement of such government action.



The ESDO delegation led by Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary General; Siddika Sultana, Executive Director along with Sayda Mehrabin Shejuti, Assistant Program Officer met with Mr. Mahmud Hasan, Additional Secretary, Environment; and Mr. A. Shamim Al Razi, Additional Secretary, Development, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change at the ministry.

ESDO team shared its milestone achievements in the development sector and its new arena of operation in the realm of environment and handed over reports and awareness materials to honorable Additional Secretaries.

### **Mercury Free Dentistry for All!**



ESDO has been committed to pushing forward to the Government to phase-out Dental Amalgam. Following a joint initiative, ESDO has conducted a Mercury-free Dentistry survey throughout the month in collaboration with the Bangladesh Dental Society (BDS). Six surveys in different areas of Dhaka were conducted by ESDO survey team. A total of 44 dental chambers were visited, out of which 13 dental chambers were recognized as Mercury Free Dental Chambers. This survey is a part of the national assessment on dental amalgam user and non-user.





## Scientific Advisory Committee Meeting on Marine Litter Held in Nairobi

25-27 February 2020 | Nairobi, Kenya



Meeting of the scientific advisory committee on the assessment of sources, pathways, and hazards of litter, including plastic litter and microplastic pollution was organized from 25 to 27 February 2020, in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting was organized by the Global Program of Action (GPA) for the Protection of the Marine Environment of UN Environment Program.

The objectives of the meeting to ensure that the comments received from reviewers are adequately addressed and the meeting identified the gaps, missing references, and agreement on the overall initial findings/recommendations/conclusions from the draft assessment. It also discussed future perspectives and research priorities. As a member of the scientific advisory committee, Dr. Shahriar Hossain represents ESDO in the meeting. He played a significant role and chair two working sessions at the conference. A total of 33 Scientists and experts plus UN Environment officials attended the meeting.



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## NGO Bureau's Take on Children's Health



Mercury contamination in the environment can be a major reason for the disabilities of our children. It can even be lethal to children health. NGO Bureau of Bangladesh Government has expressed concern on the fact at meeting with different NGOs. ESDO attended a meeting on “Children Health and Disabilities of Children” organized by the NGO Affairs Bureau took place at NGO Bureau on 3 February, 2020. Children Health Awareness Foundation (CHAF) and Smile Train also co-organized the session. The meeting focused on the learnings about how birth defects are occurring and how heavy metals and toxic chemicals are related to this. The session served as a good platform for ESDO to showcase the organization’s significant works on heavy metals waste pollution in Bangladesh, and to aware about the lethality of heavy metals. The director General of NGO Affairs Bureau K M Abdus Salam precised the session, while member of the standing committee on Health and Family Welfare Ministry Professor Dr. M. Abdul Aziz, M.P graced the meeting as the chief guest. SmileTrain Project Director Pediatric Surgeon Prof. Dr. Bijoy Krishna Das appeared as special guest. ESDO Jr. Program Associate Golam Rabbani attended the meeting on behalf of ESDO.



## Open Forum on “Ban Single-Use Plastic” held in Mymensingh



"Do you know virtually every piece of plastic that ever made still exists in some shape or form? Yes, plastic is the most problematic waste ever created on this planet". MILLION plastic bottles are bought EVERY MINUTE around the world, and that number will top half a TRILLION by 2021. And Less than half of those bottles end up getting recycled ESDO, in association with Mymensingh City Corporation, organized an open forum entitled 'Single-Use Plastic: Hidden Cost of Health and Environment.' People from different stakeholder groups and professionals participated and discussed the issue. Open forum took place on 15 February at the Mymensingh City Corporation Auditorium in Mymensingh. Marghub Murshed, Former Secretary of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, has graced the event as the Chief Guest. Former Additional IGP Mr. Mokhlesur Rahman, ESDO Secretary General Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary of the local Press Club, Mymensingh Development Association Chief Executive Syeda Selima, ESDO Executive Director Siddika Sultana, Spokes person of Jagroto Shumon Chandra Ghosh, The Daily Samakal staff reporter Mir Golam Mustafa spoke amongst other. More than a hundred people, including experts, activists, government officials, academicians, policymakers, media, and the general public attended the event. The participants expressed their solidarity with ESDO's 'Ban Single-Use Plastic (SUP)' campaign. They urged the government or concerned authorities in issuing a regulation to ban the manufacture and use of single-use plastic in Bangladesh by 2021 in compliance with a recently published High Court ruling.



## City People Join Hands to Ban Single-Use Plastic!



As we know, there is more microplastic in the ocean than there are stars in the Milky Way, and nearly TWO MILLION single-use plastic bags are distributed worldwide every minute. This huge amount of disposable but non-biodegradable material also creates a massive amount of waste that persists in nature for hundreds of years and pollutes the environment.

ESDO, with the local Press club, organized a public human chain and rally to create awareness about plastic pollution and support the countrywide Ban Single-Use Plastic. A human chain titled, "Ban Single-Use Plastic in Bangladesh," took place on 15 February 2020. Along with the ESDO team, people from different social and economic backgrounds took part in the human chain. Participants showed their support and solidarity on "Banning Single-Use Plastic initiated by ESDO in 2016 in Bangladesh, which was followed by a rally.





## A Look Back On Mercury Free Dentistry Survey



Following the commitment to stop the use of mercury in dental treatment, ESDO conducted a pretesting on Mercury-Free Dentistry. Additionally, ESDO recognized the dental chambers that don't use mercury in their treatment anymore. The retesting survey was conducted at the Bakshibazar area in Old Dhaka of the capital city. On 12 February, a team of four ESDO members went on to Bakshibazar with questionnaires. The questionnaires were prepared for the primarily Mercury-Free Dentistry survey. The objective was to retest the polls. The questionnaires were applied to dentists, dental patients, technicians, importers, and retailers of a dental chamber. The retesting was a success, and many recommendations found useful, which helped in the primary survey.

## VWC for Sustainable Management of Plastic



A cordial meeting was held in the Department of Environment (DoE) with relevant stakeholders to form a vocational working committee (VWC). The meeting was concluded with an understanding of establishing an advisory and regulation committee in coordination with the govt. and NGOs. The meeting titled "Sustainable Management



of Plastic/Polyethylene made Products and Sachets” took place on 9 February 2020. The VWC will be organized through several projects for ‘Sustainable Management of Plastic/Polyethylene made Products and Sachets’. For the implementation of this committee, Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) advice will be taken from various development organizations (National and International), and Production and Marketing Companies (national and Multinational).

The meeting was chaired by Dr. A. K. M. Rofiq Ahmed, Convener of the committee and Director General of Department of Environment (DoE). Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary-General and Golam Rabbani, Jr. Program Associate was present at the meeting from ESDO.

### **ESDO Participates in IPEN Global meeting and Forum 2020**

**6th February - 10th February 2020 | Bishoftu, Ethiopia**



IPEN’s 2020 Global Meeting and Forum on Chemicals and Waste took place in Bishoftu, Ethiopia, from the 6 to 10 February 2020. More than 100 environmental, health and human rights leaders from over 50 countries came together in this event. They shared the works conducted locally and globally to ensure a just and healthy future for everyone. The participants and stakeholders also pledged on eliminating harm to human health and save the environment from toxic chemicals. The Global Meeting was conducted simultaneously in English and French. Participants focused on global networking, policies, skill sharing, trainings and sharing the outcomes of IPEN’s 2020 Plan. Ms. Siddika Sultana, Executive Director of ESDO was a speaker in the skill-sharing event. She was talking on Social Media campaigns on Plastic pollution and e-waste issues. The objectives were to Strengthen the Toxics-Free Future Global Movement, Learn from



Each Other and Share Skills, Promote Organizational Capacity-Building & Development, Celebrate Achievements: Acknowledge collective and organizational achievements, reflect on the Evolving Global and National Policy Landscapes, strategize around IPEN's 2030 Goals & Program, and Elevate the Profile of Chemicals & Waste Issues.

### Sign Up to Ban SUP!



What if you are told that the amount of plastic produced in a year is roughly the same as the entire weight of humanity? 8.3 BILLION Metric Tons of plastic have been produced since plastic was introduced in the 1950s. These large amounts of plastics also create a huge amount of waste too.

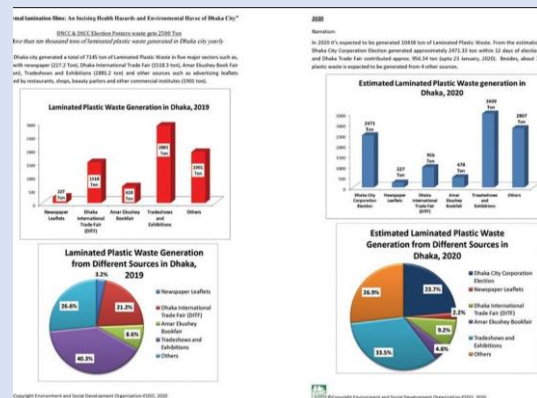
As plastic is the one of the most non-biodegradable materials ever invented in the world, plastic wastes are polluting our natural environment persistently. A number of Awareness Campaigns on banning Single Use Plastic (SUP) issue were organized by ESDO in different location of Dhaka City on 5 February this year.

The campaigns mainly took place in Rayer Bazar, Hajaribag and TSC of Dhaka University area. IEC materials such as leaflets, flyers and factsheets on the harmful impacts of SUP were distributed among the people to create mass awareness. The awareness campaign was accompanied by a Signature Campaign to raise the public voice in support of SUP ban in Bangladesh. About 80 people put their signature in support of ESDO's Ban SUP movement, and expressed their solidarity in building Single Plastic Pollution Free Bangladesh.





## Dhaka City Election 2020 Posters gets 2500 Tons Waste!



More than ten thousand ton of laminated plastic waste is generated from different sources in Dhaka every year, which causes health hazards and environmental havoc. ESDO has conducted a Study on “Thermal lamination films: An Incising Health Hazards and Environmental Havoc of Dhaka City”, which focused exclusively on laminated posters, leaflets, stickers being used in the city. Study findings were disclosed through a press briefing at the head office of Environment and Social Development Organization-ESDO on 28 January, 2020.

According to the study, about 7145.2 tons of laminated plastic waste was generated in 2019, and in 2020 it's expected to hit up to 10438 tons. These plastics are not recyclable, so it may cause serious health and environmental problem for the city dwellers. ESDO urged for immediate preventive actions in this regard for the sake of public health and environmental protection. Particularly they requested to the Bangla Academy authority and others exhibitors to stop and not to allow plastic laminated poster, leaflets, and sticker in the upcoming Amar Ekushey Bookfair, tradeshows and exhibitions scheduled throughout 2020.

Syed Marghub Murshed, former Secretary of Bangladesh government and Chairman of ESDO; Dr. Shahriar Hossain, Secretary General of ESDO; Siddika Sultana, Executive Director of ESDO; Prof. Dr. Abu Jafar Mahmud, Principle Technical Adviser of ESDO; Shahnaz Monir, Director International Program; along with other ESDO members and journalists from different news media were present at the



## A Survey on Ceramic Industries Causing Air Pollution



Esthetic designs of ceramic tiles and crockery are part and parcel of modern eclectic lifestyle. But do you know that cement industries are one of the major sources of ambient air pollution in Bangladesh?

ESDO conducted a survey on Air Pollution in Gazipur area in January. The goal was to perceive the extent of the pollution created by ceramics factories. A team of four members from ESDO visited four cement factories on 25 January in Gazipur area. The factories are X ceramics Ltd, Ansar road at Mawna in Sreepur, Greatwall Ceramic Ind. Ltd at Gilarchala, also in Sreepur, Shinepukur Ceramics Ltd. Mir Ceramics Ltd. at BEXIMCO Industrial park in Chakrobari, Joydebpur; that is also at Mawna in Sreepur. People from the industry as well as people of the community were interviewed during the survey. Sharmin Ashrafi, Jr. Program Associate of ESDO lead the survey, while Golam Rabbani, Jr. Program Associate; Samina Khondaker, Trainee Program Associate; and Nurun Nahar, Volunteer of ESDO assisted her.

## Signature Campaign on banning SUP



Have you ever thought how use of Single Use Plastic (SUP) can be the major reason for water clogging on rainy days? Plastic is one of the most non-biodegradable materials ever invented. Lack of proper disposal of plastic materials floats them. ESDO conducted an awareness campaign on the ill effects of SUP in the bustling Dhanmondi area on 19 January. The event was also accompanied by a Signature Campaign. A team of four from ESDO briefed people about the affect of SUP on environment and human health. Nazma Ahmed, Program Associate of ESDO led the campaign team. Khalilur Rahman, Program Associate; Sanjida Bary, Project Associate; and Nurun Nahar, Volunteer of ESDO assisted her to conduct the campaign.

