

Environment and Social Development Organisation – A symbol of hope in Bangladesh

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The Environment and Social Development Organisation (ESDO) is a non-profit, non-government action research organisation based in Bangladesh which focuses on environmental conservation, biological diversity and social justice. Established in 1990, they strive to improve the livelihood of vulnerable communities in Bangladesh by providing inputs and building capacity to facilitate self-reliance and living in harmony with a healthy environment.

Notable achievements

Plastic bags: ESDO is highly regarded for its “Anti-Polythene/Plastic Campaign” in 1990 which resulted in the complete ban of plastic bags throughout Bangladesh, and ultimately paved the way for similar bans in other nations worldwide

National Environment Award 2020: ESDO was recognised nationally with this award for its contributions to environmental education and outreach in Bangladesh.

Plastic free campus: ESDO is working with local schools to raise awareness of plastic pollution, encouraging students to refuse single-use plastic and follow a zero-waste lifestyle.

Engaging Youth for a Better Future: ESDO recognise engaging youth in environmental issues is crucial to its goals and empowers them to contribute to long-term solutions. As the future guardians of the planet, the younger generation possess an inherent sense of activism, passion and innovation. ESDO have been active in contributing to environmental education as well as awareness campaigns using social media and workshops.

Zero Waste Communities: ESDO runs programs to transform organic household waste into compost, generating local livelihood opportunities through organic fertiliser sales.

Celebrating World Environment Day

ESDO recently organised a vibrant art exhibition to celebrate World Environment Day, inviting over 50 artists to express their environmental concerns through art. The three-day exhibition was held in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh from the 14th to 16th June 2026. These were some of the objectives of the exhibition:

- Raise awareness of environmental issues, especially pollution
- Encourage sustainable lifestyle choices
- Encourage community participation in environmental protection efforts
- Inspire young people to become advocates for pollution reduction

*Using art as a powerful
medium of expression to
uphold our shared
environmental reality and
concerns*

Here are some inspiring glimpses from the art exhibition:



Figure 1 (left): "Fading Wings" depicting gradual loss of biodiversity and ecological balance due to climate change. The Hornbill bird with a background of a decaying atmosphere symbolises the slow disappearance of life from the environment.

Figure 2 (right): "Insidious" represents the silent but growing threat of plastic pollution, as a terrifying robotic monster emerges from a plastic bottle, symbolising the destructive force hidden within our culture of convenience and consumption.



Figure 3 (left): "First Meal" portrays a mother breastfeeding her infant while consuming a meal contaminated with plastic waste and a fish filled with debris. It highlights growing concerns about microplastics and what future generations are inheriting due to our reliance on plastic today.

Figure 4 (below right): "The Suffocating City" reflects the harsh reality of urban pollution with a smoke-filled atmosphere, lifeless trees and masked people roaming the streets.



Figure 5 (above left): "Petals in the Dust" depicts a scene where the sky is covered with dust and smoke, and the fields are littered with piles of garbage. Yet despite the gloom, the laughter of children brings hope in the struggle to survive, and that laughter may be our last hope.



You can find out more about this exhibition from ESDO's Instagram page [Instagram](#)

Find out more about ESDO in general here [ESDO - Environment and Social Development Organization](#)