

Unilever Bangladesh, the UK Government & EY award 2 Bangladeshi climate impact enterprises grants of BDT 10 million

SMEs Deshifarmer and Techno Plastic Solutions have been selected from over 50 applicants to receive up to BDT 10 million each to scale their work and impact.

DHAKA, BANGLADESH, January 7, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- TRANSFORM, an impact accelerator led by Unilever, the UK Government and EY, today announced grants of up to BDT 10 million each for two Bangladeshi SMEs. The grant winners, selected from 50+ applicants, offer novel solutions promoting climate resilience.

Deshifarmer is an agri-tech platform set up to support smallholder farmers struggling to access the market and facing high levels of food waste. Its end-to-end solutions connect farmers directly to consumers, cutting out intermediaries and increasing farmers' income, while ensuring safe, traceable food products for consumers.

TRANSFORM's support will be pivotal in scaling the enterprise's initiatives, promoting climate-smart agriculture on a larger scale and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Deshifarmer aims to benefit 3,000 farmers and 20,000 consumers in its first year of working with TRANSFORM.

Techno Plastic Solution tackles ocean plastic pollution by increasing collection infrastructure in coastal communities and empowering its members with training and efficient collection equipment. With TRANSFORM's help, the enterprise will be launching a pilot program in Kuakata to specifically target discarded fishing nets and PET bottles. It is projected to collect as much as 100 tonnes of monthly plastic waste.

Launched in October 2023, the Bangladesh Climate Challenge is an initiative aimed at identifying and supporting enterprises working on climate resilience. In addition to grant funding, TRANSFORM supports visionary enterprises to scale their solutions through a combination of



business insights, practical experiences, resources and networks.

This is the first time that Unilever, the UK Government and EY have worked together locally in Bangladesh to find and select entrepreneurs for the programme. It follows similar initiatives that TRANSFORM recently ran in India and East Africa.

Raviraj Durwas, South Asia Lead at TRANSFORM, Hindustan Unilever, said:



"Local impact enterprises, with on-the-ground knowledge and insights, are in a unique position to address their regional challenges. Therefore, it was important to us at TRANSFORM that we worked with the SAJIDA Foundation and British Asian Trust to find the best innovators from local communities that we otherwise might not have access to. Fuelling their efforts with financial support, mentorship and supply chain access is how we can drive meaningful social and environmental change."

Sarah Iqbal, Head of Impact Partners at the SAJIDA Foundation said:

"We're delighted to have partnered with TRANSFORM and the British Asian Trust to catalyse real change in Bangladesh. We look forward to seeing how the grantees scale their business and impact."

Marjan Nur, Climate and Environment Adviser at British High Commission Dhaka said:

"As a major development partner, we know that we cannot achieve the ambitious UN SDG goals with aid alone. We need cross-sector collaboration that draws on the best of our resources, networks and know-how. Equally important, we must ensure decision-making is put in the hands of local champions who understand the local context best. This Challenge exemplifies our efforts to do both."

Pragyal Singh, Consulting Partner, at EY India said:

"Social enterprises hold some of the best ideas to drive systematic change and progress against the UN SDGs; and believe that holistic support via funding and business consultancy is key to scaling their impact. TRANSFORM was established to leverage the power of public-private collaboration and do just that for Deshifarmer and Techno Plastic Solution. We look forward to

seeing how they can improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in the region and tackle ocean plastic pollution."

Eshrat Waris, Bangladesh Director from the British Asian Trust said:

"Following its agenda of climate resilience, the British Asian Trust is proud to support TRANSFORM in unlocking Bangladesh's circular economy potential with innovative, local solutions."

TRANSFORM has supported 10 other enterprises in Bangladesh, reaching over three million lives. This includes [Bhumijo](#), an impact enterprise dedicated to providing hygienic public toilets and wash facilities for all, serving over 7,000 people a day; and [Refill Bangladesh by Bopinc](#), who are designing and piloting a scalable refill station distribution model to counteract the problem of plastic pollution caused by single-use sachets.

Globally, TRANSFORM has supported over 125 enterprise projects across 17 countries and reached over 18 million lives. For more information on TRANSFORM, visit: transform.global

ABOUT THE ORGANISATIONS

TRANSFORM is an impact accelerator that unites corporates, donors, investors and academics to support visionary enterprises. TRANSFORM tests and scales new solutions that support low-income households by tackling environmental challenges, improving health and wellbeing, and building inclusive economies. We combine grant funding, business insight, practical experience, resources and networks. Established in 2015 and led by Unilever, the UK Government and EY, our tailored approach creates evidence that we share widely to help leaders across the world solve global challenges.

SAJIDA Foundation is a value-driven, non-government organisation founded in 1993. They aim to empower communities, catalyse entrepreneurship, build equity, and establish enterprises for good with an overarching vision of ensuring health, happiness, and dignity for all. SAJIDA's operations in Bangladesh have touched over 6 million individuals through its multi-sectoral development programmes that focuses on poverty alleviation, community healthcare and climate change.

The British Asian Trust wants to see a South Asia that is prospering and fair for all. The Trust's work supports ambitious, sustainable solutions that enable marginalised people to achieve their full potential. Since starting in 2007, the British Asian Trust has had a positive impact on the lives of almost 12 million people in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The Trust works with our supporters towards a South Asia that is better for all.

EY exists to build a better working world, helping create long-term value for clients, people and society and build trust in the capital markets. Enabled by data and technology, diverse EY teams in over 150 countries provide trust through assurance and help clients grow, transform and

operate. Working across assurance, consulting, law, strategy, tax and transactions, EY teams ask better questions to find new answers for the complex issues facing our world today. EY refers to the global organization, and may refer to one or more, of the member firms of Ernst & Young Global Limited, each of which is a separate legal entity.

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