



Bangladesh

Bangladesh has made significant economic progress over the past two decades, with an average [GDP](#) growth rate of 6.4% between 2010 and 2023. The country has also made notable strides in reducing poverty and improving health and education outcomes.

However, the benefits of this growth have not been shared equally. As the world's [eighth](#) most populated country, Bangladesh faces mounting pressure. Rapid urbanisation, currently at 40% and projected to reach 56% by [2050](#), is straining infrastructure and driving informal settlements. Climate risks are intensifying, with floods affecting [18.4 million](#) people in 2024. In 2022, nearly a [quarter](#) of the population lived in poverty.

SNV has been working in Bangladesh since 2006, partnering with local and national actors to design scalable, impact-driven approaches that help people access the capabilities, services, and opportunities they need to thrive while protecting the natural resources on which they depend. Partners include 14 city governments (Paurashavas), private sector companies, 119 micro and small enterprises, approximately 50 local civil society organisations, and other grassroots organisations.

Applying a systems change approach, SNV focuses on three areas: developing climate-smart, inclusive markets; strengthening investment readiness and business capacity; and leveraging private investment for development. Between 2014 and 2024, SNV positively impacted 1.7 million people.



Over 1.1M city residents

gained access to improved, safely managed sanitation services (2014-2024)



More than 14 municipalities

adopted digital or improved faecal sludge management systems (2014-2024)



500K+ smallholder farmers

trained in climate-smart agricultural practices (2016-2024)



450K+ households

gained access to cleaner cooking solutions and solar mini-grids (2018-2024)



Responding to the climate crisis

Bangladesh is among the world's most climate-vulnerable countries—20% of its land may be submerged by 2050, [displacing](#) up to 18 million people.

Coastal districts and areas face rising sea levels and saltwater intrusion, while inland farmers endure seasonal hunger. People living in informal settlements lack basic services or formal jobs, ethnic minorities face isolation, and women entrepreneurs confront gender-based barriers.

National momentum to address these challenges is growing through the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), the Climate Prosperity Plan, Nationally Determined Contributions, and leadership in the Climate Vulnerable Forum. SNV supports government efforts by piloting climate-resilient agri-value chains, inclusive business models, public-private partnership (PPP)-based infrastructure, clean energy access, and digitalisation. In 10 cities, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Integrated Municipal Information Systems (IMIS) tools are helping to enable climate-smart sanitation planning.

DFCD | Multi-country | 2019-27 | €440M

The Dutch Fund for Climate and Development (DFCD), a multi-country climate adaptation programme, is operating in select climate-vulnerable regions of Bangladesh, providing grants and technical assistance across several countries. Through DFCD, SNV offers business development services and early-stage capital to scale up climate-adaptive business models for sectors such as seeds and bio-pesticides and enhance value chains for vegetables and black shrimp production.

Currently, SNV is collaborating with several private sector partners to channel climate financing into the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, climate-resilient agriculture, wastewater treatment, and the creation of green products in Rangpur, Shatkhira, and Khulna. Over 5,200 farmers and entrepreneurs have received technical assistance to adapt rice, mango, tomato, and shrimp production to climate risks.

These efforts build local resilience and green entrepreneurship in line with Bangladesh's NAP and development priorities.

Partners: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, FMO, Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Climate Change and DoE, Departments in the Ministry of Agriculture of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Investment Development Authority, PPP Authority, and SNV

DFCD highlights, 2024-26



Six investable climate-resilient business models in agri-food and wastewater developed



50% private co-financing for climate infrastructure leveraged



5,000 smallholder farmers gained increased incomes and productivity



More than 10 private sector actors in agri-food and water

Accelerating inclusive business development

Bangladesh still faces challenges in achieving inclusive development, with 18.7% of the population living below the national poverty line, and significant rural-urban disparities in access to services. The Government's 8th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) and increased [social safety net](#) budget of BDT 1.13 trillion (€7.95M) provide strong enabling frameworks for equitable growth, the emergence of inclusive businesses, and increased demand creation. SNV leverages these opportunities by empowering smallholder farmers, especially women and youth, with climate-smart agriculture and market linkage. SNV supports inclusive business models and digital tools that improve service delivery in urban and rural areas. These efforts contribute to reducing inequalities and fostering resilient livelihoods. SNV's local partnerships and systems approach strengthen Bangladesh's pathway towards inclusive, sustainable development.

SEE-Clean Cooking | Dhaka and Khulna | 2022-25 | €970K

The Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem for Clean Cooking (SEE-Clean Cooking) project promotes market-based, inclusive solutions that boost consumer demand for modern energy. It also supports emissions reduction by accelerating the adoption of electric cooking technologies.

As of mid-2025, over 40,700 households had adopted electric cooking appliances, reducing emissions by more than 18,000 tonnes of CO₂. The project has supported 103 micro, small, and medium enterprises, including six led by women, with business development services, result-based financing, and innovation grants for product diversification, marketing pilots, and consumer financing. Over 30% of participating businesses report increased engagement of women in sales and distribution. The SEE partnership has also contributed to national policy dialogue, collaborating with the Ministry of Energy to increase visibility and momentum for e-cooking solutions within national energy access frameworks.

Partners: RVO, EnDev, SNV, IDCOL, Ministry of Energy, Power and Mineral Resources, and SREDA

"After working with the SEE-Clean Cooking project, my business, Saha Sufi Mofiz Wahed, widely known as Chula Ghar in Jhenaidah, took a step forward by hiring a women sales representative. It helped me connect with the female customer base better—allowing women to actively engage in the clean energy sector."

- Abu Nurain Khandaker,
Proprietor Saha Sufi Mofiz Wahed (Chula Ghar)

IAP | Multi-country | 2017-27 | €6.4M

Innovations Against Poverty (IAP) is a multi-country programme supporting businesses in low-income communities through market-based solutions to alleviate poverty across four countries. The IAP provides up to €200,000 in co-financed grants, technical assistance, and investment readiness support to businesses too large for microfinance but too small for traditional investment. It focuses on agriculture, clean energy, water, sanitation, food security, and nutrition, with an emphasis on women's economic empowerment and environmental sustainability. In Bangladesh, IAP launched its first round in July 2025, attracting proposals from circa 100 companies. After the final selection, IAP will work closely with three to four businesses targeting low-income markets to build their capacity for scaling. The IAP has leveraged nearly €32M and enabled over two million people to access essential goods and services.

Partners: SIDA, SNV, Inclusive Business Partners, and Bop Inc

BEAM+ | Gazipur and Jhenaidah | 2024-25 | €250K

The Bangladesh Energy Access to Modernisation (BEAM+) Referral Rewards Window builds on SNV's earlier work in expanding rural access to clean cooking in Bangladesh. Now in its second phase, BEAM+ focuses on scaling effective approaches and enhancing community engagement. It promotes higher-tier electric cooking, supports local manufacturing, and through the initiative's Referral Window, engages women promoters, increases women's income, and enhances their influence in household energy decisions. Aiming to transition 2,000 households to e-cooking and cut 1,200 tonnes of CO₂ annually, the project uses result-based financing and referral incentives to strengthen market systems and foster public-private collaboration for a more inclusive and sustainable energy future.

Partners: RVO, EnDev, SNV, local appliance manufacturers, IDCOL, and grassroots women's groups



Strengthening governance and PPPs

Strengthening governance, institutions, and PPPs remains central to ensuring effective service delivery, accountability, and inclusive development in Bangladesh. While progress has been made in decentralisation and democratisation—through legislation including the government's [8th Five-Year Plan](#), [Delta Plan 2100](#), and the [Climate Prosperity Plan](#)—local governments still face challenges such as limited financial autonomy, weak data systems, and low technical capacity. Meanwhile, new opportunities are emerging. Momentum around resource mobilisation, increased financing for local development, and the digitalisation of public services is creating space for institutional reform. SNV is supporting municipalities and private sector actors by providing technical assistance to strengthen service delivery and financing. The focus is on professionalising governance, enhancing digital tools, and aligning services with participatory, inclusive, and climate-resilient planning.

CWISE | Khulna, Kushtia, and Jhenaidah | 2018-23 | €4.87M

The Citywide Inclusive Sanitation Engagement (CWISE) initiative builds on SNV's partnership with the Gates Foundation and local governments in urban sanitation, launched in 2024. It has enabled safe faecal sludge management (FSM) for over one million people, doubled consumer demand for treatment services, and promoted the reuse of sludge in farming to reduce pollution.

In flood-prone, low-income areas, three decentralised treatment systems now serve more than 80 households. The CWISE initiative introduced the IMIS digital monitoring system and mobile payments, through Ekpay in Khulna, and has helped to secure long-term FSM contracts, including a 10-year agreement in Jhenaidah. In addition to the Department of Public Health Engineering's (DPHE) adoption of a CWISE cell. Many city governments are now interested in scaling SNV's public-private model of urban sanitation management.

Partners: Gates Foundation, Khulna, Kushtia, and Jhenaidah city governments, and SNV

WS4H | Nepal and Bangladesh | 2024-27 | €2.3M

The WASH Systems for Health (WS4H) programme is implemented in Nepal (led by SNV) and Bangladesh (led by WaterAid). In Bangladesh, SNV has entered into a partnership with five city governments to develop FSM business models, informed by earlier baseline assessments and stakeholder mapping. To strengthen governance systems, WS4H has engaged over 50 private sector actors, including vacuum operators, and supported three city authorities in piloting IMIS to collect and store real-time data on sanitation infrastructure and services. The programme assists in drafting participation guidelines for inclusive planning in two cities, Lalmonirhat and Paikgacha, with a focus on low-income and marginalised groups. It also co-organises capacity-building sessions with local governments and the DPHE on WASH governance systems and public finance tracking.

Partners: GFCDO, DPHE, City Corporations and Paurashavas, SNV, WaterAid, and ITN-BUET

SUWC | 12 cities and city corporations | 2022-27 | €6.4M

SNV's Sustainable Urban Water Cycles (SUWC) programme builds on over a decade of partnership towards improving citywide management of water, sanitation, and solid waste systems under growing climate and water stress. So far, the programme's focus on integrated planning has enabled over 700,000 people to access improved services. Twelve cities have developed inclusive WASH investment plans, nine FSM service models have been launched, and seven utilities now utilise digital tools to collect flood and waste data. Action for better plastic regulation is rising, and SUWC's support in forming over 40 PPPs has helped shape Bangladesh's first PPP guidelines for small-scale urban services. Since 2024, the Bangladesh Municipal Development Fund has been leveraging funds to invest in several cities where SNV operates.

Partners: Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and DGIS, DPHE and LGED, City Corporations and Paurashavas, PPP Authority and ITN-BUET, FSM Network, and SNV

SNV is a global development partner deeply rooted in the African and Asian countries where we operate. With 60 years of experience and a team of approximately 1,600 people, we strengthen capacities and catalyse partnerships that transform agri-food, energy and water systems. Working on the core themes of gender equality and social inclusion, climate adaptation and mitigation, and strong institutions and effective governance, we tailor our approaches to different contexts to achieve large-scale impact and create sustainable and more equitable lives for all.

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that matters