

The Daily Star | actionaid

# Climate Justice Idea Competition 2024



PHOTO: RASHED SUMON

As Bangladesh faces the worst repercussions of climate change, negotiations for accessing the Loss and Damage (L&D) Fund will be crucial at the upcoming 29th Conference of Parties (COP29), to be held in November under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The amount pledged at COP28 for the L&D Fund—aimed at compensating loss and damage caused by climate-induced disasters in developing countries like Bangladesh—was approximately \$700 million. Bangladesh will need a strong voice in climate negotiations, backed by sufficient research and climate models, to prove the loss and damage caused by climate change in order to access the L&D Fund.

Alongside policymakers and climate activists, the youth of Bangladesh have the potential to play a pivotal role in combating climate change and representing the country on international platforms through climate negotiations and advocacy. In light of this, ActionAid Bangladesh and The Daily Star have once again taken an active initiative to advance climate justice by hosting the "Climate Justice Idea Competition 2024," highlighting innovative solutions proposed by the youth in three categories: energy transition, water rights and circular economy.

Following a four-month-long campaign and a nationwide call for ideas through various media, both online and

offline, an astounding 156 submissions were received in the aforementioned categories. Two experts in each category meticulously reviewed all submissions to select the top three ideas from each group, ultimately choosing nine exceptional teams with ingenious and viable solutions.

To prepare the selected teams for the grand finale, a technical session and a grooming session were conducted, during which each team presented their proposal before nine mentors with expertise in relevant fields. These mentors guided the participants and addressed any remaining feasibility gaps in their ideas.

The grand finale took place at The Daily Star Center on August 31, 2024, graced

by esteemed guests including Farah Kabir, Country Director of ActionAid Bangladesh; Ibrahim Al-Zayad, Chair of the Executive Board at ActionAid International Bangladesh Society; and Mahfuz Anam, Editor and publisher of The Daily Star. A distinguished panel of judges, comprising experts from civil society, the corporate sector, and the development sector, had the challenging task of evaluating the prototypes and final pitches, each consisting of a seven-minute presentation followed by a two-minute Q&A session. Ultimately, three outstanding winners were selected, one from each category, each poised to contribute significantly to advancing climate justice.

## IDEAS

### Energy Transition



#### CHAMPION

##### Team Atlas

##### IoT-based solar power

Team members: Sunny Jubayer, Faek Abdee, Nusrat Jahan

The team has developed a solar-powered IoT bot named "Agrover," designed to revolutionize farming by boosting both efficiency and sustainability. This cutting-edge robot automates tasks traditionally handled by tractors, seeders, and sprayers, consolidating these functions into a single IoT-enabled device.

The team aims to safeguard farmers from harmful chemical exposure, thus lowering health risks, including cancer, and eliminating the need for direct human intervention in the field through remote operation from home.

#### OTHER FINALISTS

##### Leeders

##### Eco-friendly cold storage

Team members: Mabiya Hussain Bintu, Shadik Shahreen, Abdullah Al Mamun

This initiative aims to establish community-based cold storage facilities powered by renewable energy, featuring IoT-based operations and eco-friendly designs using locally sourced materials like bamboo and wood. These solar-powered, fan-assisted units will preserve vegetables, fostering a sustainable market that benefits both farmers and consumers.

##### Solar Snow

##### Portable solar cold storage

Team members: Md. Ashiqur Rahman Ashik, Shomaya Akther Dipa, Walid Khan

The initiative aims to empower small-scale farmers by offering affordable, portable solar cold storage system that reduce food spoilage and enhance post-harvest income. It envisions a future where reliable food preservation is accessible to all, revolutionizing the agricultural supply chain to ensure fresh produce reaches consumers, regardless of location or grid access.

### Water Rights



#### CHAMPION

##### Unanimous

##### Ecoflow concrete

Team members: Tajreen Tabassum, Sabik Aftab, Tanvirul Islam The team offers ecoflow concrete, a porous solution for municipalities, developers, and eco-conscious homeowners to address waterlogging and improve urban infrastructure. It manages stormwater, recharges groundwater, and reduces runoff, mitigating flood risks while offering aesthetic versatility.

By facilitating groundwater replenishment, ecoflow concrete promotes sustainable water management. It can also be customized in color, texture, and design, creating attractive surfaces that blend with various environments. Additionally, its heat-reflective properties help cool the surrounding area, mitigating the urban heat island effect.

#### OTHER FINALISTS

##### Thirst Relief

##### Rain in a box

Team members: Shahana Alam, Jubayer Hasan Shoikat, Maria Akter

The initiative targets rainwater collection in salinity-prone areas to improve access to safe water, enhance health, and ease the lives of women. It features a sponge for water extraction, plywood for casting, and solar panels for heating, making the solution affordable, sustainable, and user-friendly.

##### Safe Water

##### Portable Filter

Team members: Md. Nabil Hassan, Lenah Mehbabin, Shariful Islam

The initiative aims to provide cost-effective WASH products for rural communities in Bangladesh, offering safe drinking water through a six-stage UV filtration process that removes 99.99% of bacteria and viruses, converting up to 15,000 liters of surface water into drinking water while reducing pressure on groundwater sources.

The transition toward green energy is inevitable. Many countries have already shifted entirely to renewable options, and others are following suit. So why shouldn't we? It is entirely possible for us to do the same through the ideas and innovations proposed by the youth of our country.

**FARAH KABIR**, Country Director  
ActionAid Bangladesh



With thoughtless planning and environmental neglect of natural resources, we risk destroying ourselves before the full impact of climate change even takes hold. Water is essential for us and future generations. We must address this issue with urgency, prioritize it over other concerns, and make sincere efforts to preserve this vital resource.

**MAHFUZ ANAM**, Editor & Publisher  
The Daily Star



156 submissions mean 156 new ideas. We aim to create a 'museum of ideas' where concepts come to life, allowing anyone to adopt and develop them collectively, many of which are perfect for impact investments. While one idea may win, combining them all can help build a stronger society—that's the true purpose of such competitions.

**IBRAHIM KHALIL AL-ZAYAD**  
Chairperson, Executive Board  
ActionAid International Bangladesh Society

### Circular Economy



#### CHAMPION

##### Swaccha

##### Eco-friendly toothbrush

Team members: Mahmudul Hasan, Shuaiba Chowdhury Khushbu, Ashraful Islam

The Aspire – Swaccha toothbrushes offer premium quality at just Tk20, setting a new standard for value. Each brush contains embedded seeds that transform it into a plant upon disposal, promoting environmental sustainability. Made from sustainable materials, these toothbrushes also enhance oral health by combating bacteria more effectively than standard options.

Key features include soil decomposition, improved fertility, reduced plastic waste, cost-effectiveness, and durability, with a business model targeting both B2B and B2C markets.

#### OTHER FINALISTS

##### FishBooth Lab

##### Waste to fish feed

Team members: Mohammad Shakil Khan, Zobair Alam Sunny, Labanna Datta

The initiative aims to utilize fish waste and trash fish to produce fish feed, reducing environmental pollution and developing eco-friendly solutions that create value in the economy. By lowering fish feed costs, it also seeks to mitigate the effects of climate change on coastal farmers.

##### Shitol Pati

##### Recycling clothes

Team members: Raiyan Tausifur Rahman, Zabir Al Zihad, Antara Sakira

The initiative recycles fabrics from BEXIMCO or Square, with tailors completing products that consumers can return to Shitol Pati for redesign. Consumers can select new designs like e-print, tie-dye, or embroidery, with designers earning royalties and tailors providing redesign services at a lower cost than new clothing.