

25 JUNE 2026

LEARNING ACROSS BORDERS: WHAT NEPAL CAN LEARN FROM BANGLADESH'S CLIMATE INNOVATIONS





INTRODUCTION

Climate change is no longer a distant challenge in South Asia. Countries like Nepal and Bangladesh are already experiencing the impacts manifested in floods, droughts, erratic rainfall and landslides. In this context, regional collaboration and knowledge exchange are becoming increasingly important. With this objective, a six-day exposure visit to Bangladesh was organized from 19–24 April 2026 by People, Energy & Environment Development Association (PEEDA) Nepal in collaboration with the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB).

The visit brought together 13 participants from eight organizations working in climate change, biodiversity conservation, agriculture, and sustainable development in Nepal. The exposure visit provided an opportunity to observe practical climate adaptation and mitigation technologies, engage with local organizations and communities, and understand how Bangladesh is responding to climate challenges through innovative, low-cost, and community-driven solutions.



A Journey of Learning and Exchange

The visit began in Dhaka with meetings at the CCDB Head Office in Mirpur, where Nepali and Bangladeshi teams exchanged experiences on climate change impacts and ongoing responses. These interactions highlighted the shared climate vulnerabilities between two countries and open a space for mutual learning and future collaboration.



Climate Centre Experience: Innovation in Practice

One of the most significant moments of the visit was the field tour to the CCDB Climate Centre in Gazipur, where around 80 climate technologies and practices were demonstrated in a single integrated learning space. The Centre showcased both mitigation and adaptation solutions, including renewable energy systems such as solar energy applications, wind turbines, improved cookstoves, electric vehicles, and solar irrigation pumps, alongside climate-smart agriculture practices like vertical farming, hydroponics, rainwater harvesting, bottle drip irrigation, biochar farming, and zero-energy cool chambers.



What stood out most was not only the diversity of technologies but also their simplicity and affordability. Most solutions are designed for community-level use, demonstrating that effective climate action does not always require expensive or complex systems, but rather practical and locally adaptable innovations.

Climate Action at the Grassroots Level

The field visit to Manikganj provided deeper insight into community-led climate action. A key highlight was the interaction with the women-led Krishnachura Forum at Koyra Natun Bazar, which demonstrated strong local leadership in climate-resilient agriculture. The group shared practical experiences of natural farming, vermicomposting, sack-based cultivation, and seedling production using tray systems and coco dust. These low-cost practices are environmentally sustainable while also supporting household livelihoods and food security.

This experience reinforced an important message: ***Climate resilience is not only driven by institutions or externally designed projects but is fundamentally shaped by communities themselves. Local knowledge, leadership, and ownership are central to sustaining climate solutions.***

Relevance for Nepal: Opportunities for Scaling

Many of the technologies and practices observed during the visit are relevant to Nepal, particularly in rural and climate-vulnerable regions. These include rainwater harvesting systems, bottle drip irrigation, vermicomposting, solar irrigation pumps, improved cookstoves, and zero-energy cool chambers.

Although several of these practices already exist in Nepal, they are often fragmented, applied inconsistently or not formally recognized as climate adaptation solutions. This highlights an important opportunity to strengthen documentation, recognition, and systematic scaling of existing local innovations, and to integrate them more effectively into national climate strategies and development planning.



Relevance for Prakriti Resources Centre (PRC)

The lessons from this exposure visit align closely with PRC's ongoing work on climate adaptation, nature-based solutions, and low-carbon development initiatives such as electric stove distribution and solar installations in communities and schools. The low-cost practices observed in Bangladesh offer valuable models PRC can draw on to strengthen its community-level interventions and capacity-building training.

The visit also reinforced the value of women-led community leadership, an area PRC actively works on. The Krishnachura Forum's experience as a women-led group driving local agricultural innovation offers a useful reference point for PRC's own efforts to build community leadership into its resilience programming. Altogether, the visit offers PRC not just new techniques, but a working example of how nature-based solutions, low-carbon technologies, and community leadership can come together in one locally driven model of resilience.

Moving Toward Inclusive Climate Action

The visit also emphasized the importance of integrating adaptation and mitigation approaches in a complementary way. Renewable energy systems reduce emissions and improves energy access, while climate-smart agriculture strengthens food security and resilience to climate shocks.

Equally important was the recognition that inclusive climate action requires the active participation of women, local communities, and indigenous knowledge holders. The Bangladesh experience demonstrated that locally driven approaches are often the most effective and sustainable pathways for long-term resilience. We returned with fresh perspectives, practical ideas, and renewed motivation to promote locally driven climate solutions.



Strengthening Regional Collaboration

Another key outcome of the exposure visit was strengthened collaboration between organizations in Nepal and Bangladesh. Climate change is a shared regional challenge, and countries across South Asia can greatly benefit from exchanging knowledge, technologies, and locally tested solutions. The visit created opportunities for continued learning, partnership building, and future joint initiatives on climate adaptation and mitigation.

Looking Ahead

The exposure visit was more than a study tour. It was a practical learning experience that demonstrated how climate technologies, community participation, and local innovation can come together to build resilience.

The key lesson is clear: effective climate action does not always require expensive or highly sophisticated interventions. Often, the most impactful solutions are low-cost, locally adapted, and rooted in community knowledge and practice.

As climate risks continue to intensify across South Asia, strengthening regional cooperation and promoting locally grounded climate solutions will be essential for building a more resilient and sustainable future.



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The authors gratefully acknowledge PEEDA for their generous support in organizing and facilitating this exposure visit.

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