

Bangladeshi garment makers advance efforts to go green

The government's clean power department has signed a co-operation agreement with a major clothing industry trade body in a bid to drive net-metered solar rooftop installation.

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Factory owners will be offered low-cost finance as part of the agreement.

Factory owners in Bangladesh's huge [garment industry](#) will get helping installing [rooftop solar](#) after the sector's main trade body signed a memorandum of understanding with the government's [Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority](#) (SREDA).

The government body will help Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) members benefit from improved [energy efficiency](#) and rooftop solar, including through access to installation information and [low-cost finance](#).

The BGMEA has more than 4,000 member factories and Bangladesh is the world's second largest apparel producer after China. An official from the trade body said: "If we want to sustain ... business globally, we have to lower carbon emission. And for that we have to go for renewable energy."

Energy footprint

With industry accounting for 48% of the nation's energy consumption—and 30% of that figure used by textiles and apparel makers, according to junior power minister [Nasrul Hamid](#)—the hope is that the widespread adoption of [net-metered](#) solar rooftops in the industry will have a sizable impact.

Hamid said: "The energy consumption of [the] textile and garment industry can be reduced by 18% if they are equipped with advanced energy-efficient technologies."

With German development agency the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) set to provide technical support to the agreement signed today, a senior SREDA official told **pv magazine** BGMEA members have thousands of factory buildings where rooftop solar could be installed for self-consumption, with excess energy to be exported to the grid.

The SREDA official said the BGMEA is a signatory to the Fashion Industry Charter of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. "They are committed to lower[ing] carbon emission[s] and will be praised for producing goods through less carbon discharging," said the spokesperson.

SREDA will soon start work with interested factory owners to set up rooftop solar as demonstration projects.

State-run financier the [Infrastructure Development Company Limited](#), the Bangladesh Infrastructure Finance Fund Limited and international development partners could also offer financial support to the apparel sector.

SREDA chairman Mohammad Alauddin said businesses are an integral part of sustainable energy development. "This deal will pave [the] way to produce green energy and enhance energy efficiency," he said. Referring to his nation's emissions reduction commitment for the COP26 climate change conference in Glasgow in November, he added: "In the nationally determined contribution (NDC), Bangladesh has made [a] commitment to lower carbon emission[s], thus there is no alternative to [the] efficient use of energy."

Finance

BGMEA president Rubana Huq said lenders would have to come forward to back plans to green the industry. "For [a] green revolution, all the factories have to be made green," she said.

More than 100 Bangladeshi garment factories have already been certified green by the [U.S. Green Building Council](#) and more than 500 facilities have registered to make their manufacturing operations more environmentally friendly.