



Citizens Conclave

# Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh

Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh

এসডিজি বাস্তবায়নে নাগরিক প্ল্যাটফর্ম, বাংলাদেশ

27 April 2019

Dhaka



## **Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh**



**Citizens Conclave on**  
**Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh**

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## Preface

In September 2015, Bangladesh became a signatory to the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, along with 192 other countries around the world. The significance of collaboration between state and non-state actors in achieving this universal, inclusive and transformative agenda is undeniable. In this backdrop, and with active participation of concerned citizens, the *Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh* was launched in June, 2016.

The key objective of the Platform is to play an active role in the implementation process of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Bangladesh, by fostering its transparency and accountability. The Platform believes that, concerted efforts of all stakeholders are needed, if the global goals and their targets are to be met in the national context by 2030.

In pursuing the cause of the SDGs, the Platform aims at empowering people by promoting inclusivity required for a just and fair society. This aligns very strongly with the theme of 2019's High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)—'Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality', for an in-depth review of pre-selected SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17. Indeed, this set of SDGs demonstrates a unique fit with the current development challenges of Bangladesh.

Thus, Citizen's Platform has prepared a set of reports to track the progress achieved in Bangladesh in the six goal areas since 2015. These reports were prepared through a process of wide-ranging consultations with government officials, development activists, business leaders, journalists and international development partners. Those goal-specific reports, along with an overview status, is going to be shared and discussed at the *Citizens Conclave on Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh*, a day-long event designed to draw inputs from the non-state actors of Bangladesh to take forward to the HLPF 2019 process.

The Conclave is being organised around the theme and specific goals of the HLPF 2019. Apart from the opening and wrap-up plenaries, there will be six parallel sessions on these particular goals. The Overview Report will be presented in the opening plenary, and feedback from the parallel sessions will be shared in the wrap-up plenary.

This whole initiative has been made possible—thanks to my colleagues of the Core Group of the Platform, Partner organisations, authors of goal-specific reports, those who played key roles in various sessions, and the participants of the Conclave from all over Bangladesh. Generous support by a number of organisations in favour of the Conclave and its preparatory process is much appreciated. The list of these valued supporters is included in this brochure.

Finally, the key role played by CPD as the Secretariat of the Platform, merits special mention. I am humbled by their demonstrated dedication and service.

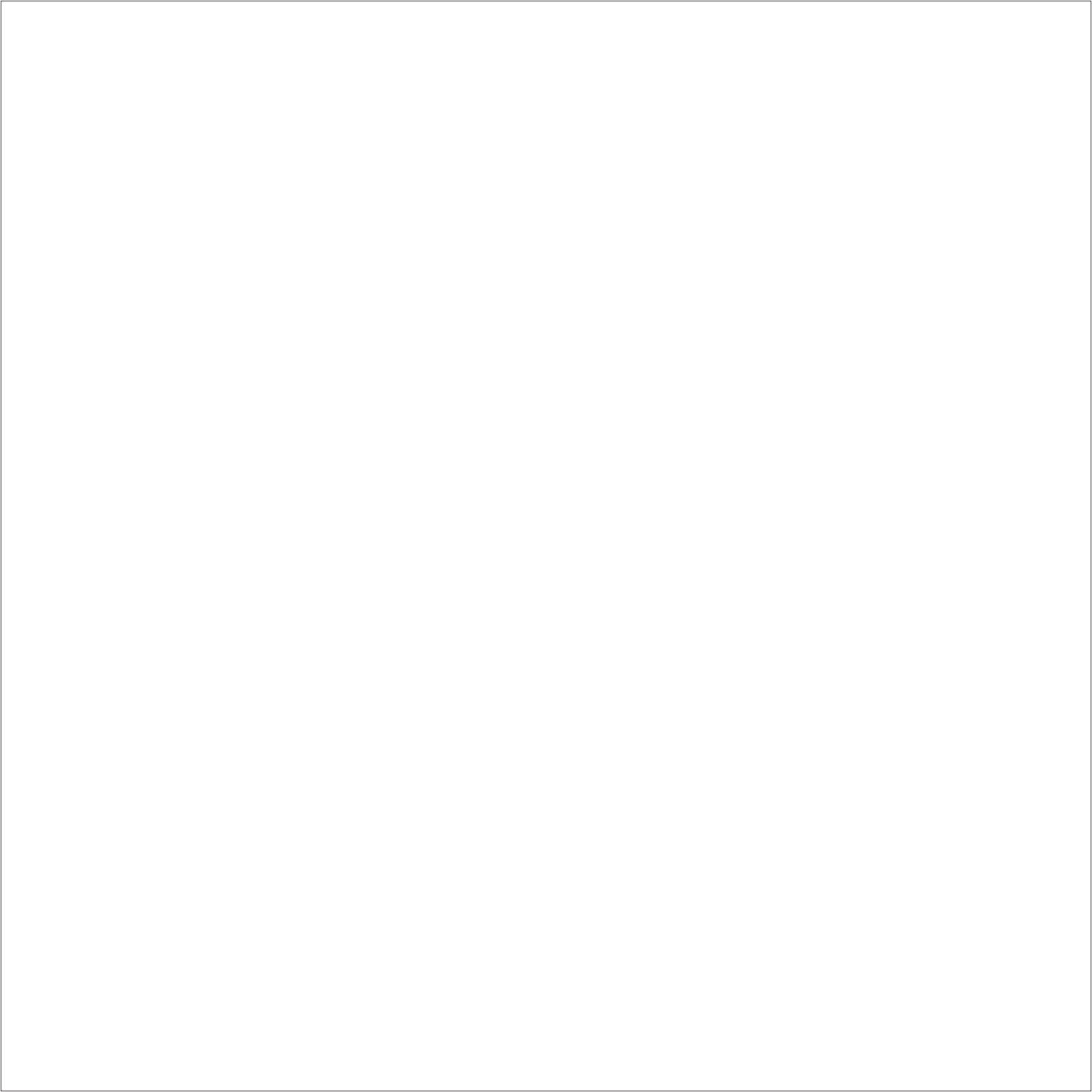
The outcome of the event will be fed into the global HLPF process.

April, 2019  
Dhaka

*Debapriya Bhattacharya, PhD*  
Convenor, Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh  
and  
Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)

# **Conclave Programme**

*(As of 25 April 2019)*



## Brief Programme

08.00 am – 09.00 am	<b>Registration</b>	
09.00 am – 10.00 am	<b>Opening Plenary</b>	Carnival Hall
10.00 am – 10.30 am	Refreshments and formation of Parallel Sessions	Harmony
10.30 am – 12.00 pm	<b>Parallel Sessions</b>	
	Parallel Session A1 - Goal 4: Quality Education	Carnival Hall
	Parallel Session B1 - Goal 13: Climate Action	Media Bazar
12.00 pm – 01.30 pm	<b>Parallel Sessions</b>	
	Parallel Session A2 - Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals	Carnival Hall
	Parallel Session B2 - Goal 10: Reduced Inequality	Media Bazar
01.30 pm – 02.30 pm	Lunch	Harmony
02.30 pm – 04.00 pm	<b>Parallel Sessions</b>	
	Parallel Session A3 - Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	Carnival Hall
	Parallel Session B3 - Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	Media Bazar
04.00 pm – 05.15 pm	<b>Wrap-up Plenary and feedback from Parallel Sessions</b>	Carnival Hall
05.15 pm	Refreshments	Harmony

## Detailed Programme

Time	Programme
9.00 am – 10.00 am Carnival Hall	Opening Plenary
	National Anthem
	<b>Opening Remarks by the Chair</b> <i>Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya</i> Convenor, Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh
	<b>Introduction of the Initiative</b> <i>Ms Rasheda K Choudhury</i> Core Group Member, Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh
	<b>Presentation of the Overview Report</b> <i>Dr Fahmida Khatun</i> Executive Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)
	<b>Reflections by the Guest of Honour</b> <i>Ms Mia Seppo</i> UN Resident Coordinator and Representative, UNDP Bangladesh
	<b>Remarks by the Chief Guest</b> <i>Mr M A Mannan, MP</i> Hon'ble Minister Ministry of Planning Government of Bangladesh
10.00 am – 10.30 am Harmony	<b>Vote of Thanks</b> <i>Ms Anisatul Fatema Yousuf</i> Coordinator, Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh
	Refreshments and formation of Parallel Sessions

## Parallel Sessions

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parallel Session A1</b>  <b>Goal 4: Quality Education</b>  10.30 am – 12.00 pm  Carnival Hall</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parallel Session B1</b>  <b>Goal 13: Climate Action</b>  10.30 am – 12.00 pm  Media Bazar</p>
<p><b>Introductory Remarks by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Dr Mahmud-ul Haque</i>  Additional Secretary (College)  Secondary and Higher Education Division  Ministry of Education  Government of Bangladesh</p> <p><b>Presentation by the Goal Group Anchor Organisation</b>  <i>Dr Mostafizur Rahaman</i>  Program Manager  Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)</p> <p><b>Comments from Discussants</b>  <i>Mr Chowdhury Mufad Ahmed</i>  Former Additional Secretary  Ministry of Education, Government of Bangladesh</p> <p><i>Dr Sajeda Amin</i>  Senior Associate  Population Council, New York</p> <p><b>Open Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Closing Observations by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Dr Mushtaque R Chowdhury</i>  Core Group Member  Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh</p>	<p><b>Introductory Remarks by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Dr Nurul Quadir</i>  Additional Secretary (Climate Change)  Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate  Change  Government of Bangladesh</p> <p><b>Presentation by the Goal Group Anchor Organisation</b>  <i>Ms Syeda Lamia Hossain</i>  Programme Officer  ActionAid Bangladesh</p> <p><b>Comments from Discussants</b>  <i>Architect Iqbal Habib</i>  Member Secretary  Urbanisation and Governance Committee  Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon (BAPA)</p> <p><i>Dr Saleemul Huq</i>  Director  International Centre for Climate Change and  Development (ICCCAD)</p> <p><b>Open Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Closing Observations by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Ms Shaheen Anam</i>  Core Group Member  Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parallel Session A2</b>  <b>Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals</b>                      12.00 pm – 1.30 pm                      Carnival Hall</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parallel Session B2</b>  <b>Goal 10: Reduced Inequality</b>                      12.00 pm – 1.30 pm                      Media Bazar</p>
<p><b>Introductory Remarks by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Mr Kazi Nabil Ahmed, MP</i>                      Member                      Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh</p> <p><b>Presentation by the Goal Group Anchor Organisation</b>  <i>Dr Khondaker Golam Moazzem</i>                      Research Director                      Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)</p> <p><b>Comments from Discussants</b>  <i>Dr Imran Matin</i>                      Executive Director                      BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University</p> <p><i>Ms Sara L. Taylor</i>                      Country Representative                      The Asia Foundation – Bangladesh</p> <p><b>Open Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Closing Observations by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Dr Iftekharuzzaman</i>                      Core Group Member                      Citizen’s Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh</p>	<p><b>Introductory Remarks by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Ms Aroma Dutta</i>                      Executive Director                      PRIP Trust</p> <p><b>Presentation by the Goal Group Anchor Organisation</b>  <i>Dr Rezwan-ul-Alam</i>                      Director, Knowledge Management                      Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)</p> <p><b>Comments from Discussants</b>  <i>Mr Zakir Hossain</i>                      Chief Executive                      Nagorik Uddyog</p> <p><i>Ms Khushi Kabir</i>                      Coordinator                      Nijera Kori</p> <p><b>Open Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Closing Observations by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Professor Mustafizur Rahman</i>                      Core Group Member                      Citizen’s Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh</p>
<p>1.30 pm – 2.30 pm                      Harmony</p>	<p>Lunch</p>

<p><b>Parallel Session A3</b>  <b>Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions</b>                  2.30 pm – 4.00 pm                  Carnival Hall</p>	<p><b>Parallel Session B3</b>  <b>Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth</b>                  2.30 pm – 4.00 pm                  Media Bazar</p>
<p><b>Introductory Remarks by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Dr Md Mizanur Rahman</i>                      Former Chairman                      National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh</p>	<p><b>Introductory Remarks by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Mr Michael Schultheiss</i>                      Deputy Head of Mission and Chargé d’Affaires                      Germany Embassy Dhaka</p>
<p><b>Presentation by the Goal Group Anchor Organisation</b>  <i>Mr Shahzada M. Akram</i>                      Senior Programme Manager                      Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB)</p>	<p><b>Presentation by the Goal Group Anchor Organisation</b>  <i>Mr Mohammad Azad Rahman</i>                      Programme Head, Advocacy for Social Change                      BRAC</p>
<p><b>Comments from Discussants</b>  <i>Dr Shahdeen Malik</i>                      Senior Advocate                      Supreme Court of Bangladesh</p> <p><i>Barrister Sara Hossain</i>                      Executive Director                      Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)</p>	<p><b>Comments from Discussants</b>  <i>Ms Vidiya Amrit Khan</i>                      Director                      Desh Group of Companies</p> <p><i>Mr Razequzzaman Ratan</i>                      General Secretary                      Socialist Labour Front</p>
<p><b>Open Discussion</b></p>	<p><b>Open Discussion</b></p>
<p><b>Closing Observations by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Ms Judith Herbertson</i>                      Head of Office (HoO)                      DFID Bangladesh</p>	<p><b>Closing Observations by Co-Chair</b>  <i>Mr Asif Ibrahim</i>                      Core Group Member                      Citizen’s Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh</p>

Time	Programme
4.00 pm – 5.15 pm Carnival Hall	Closing Plenary
	<p><b>Introductory Comments</b>  <i>Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya</i>                      Convenor, Citizen’s Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh</p>
	<p><b>Feedback from the Parallel Sessions</b></p>
	<p><b>Remarks by Guests of Honour</b></p> <p><i>Mr Sudipto Mukerjee</i>                      Resident Representative, UNDP Bangladesh</p> <p><i>Mr K. M. Abdus Salam</i>                      Director General (Additional Secretary), NGO Affairs Bureau                      Prime Minister’s Office, Government of Bangladesh</p>
	<p><b>Remarks by Special Guests</b></p> <p><i>Dr Shamsul Alam</i>                      Member (Senior Secretary), General Economics Division (GED)                      Planning Commission, Government of Bangladesh</p> <p><i>Mr Md Shahidul Haque</i>                      Foreign Secretary (Senior Secretary)                      Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh</p>
	<p><b>Closing Observations by the Chair</b>  <i>Advocate Sultana Kamal</i>                      Core Group Member, Citizen’s Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh</p>
5.15 pm Harmony	Refreshments

**Summary of Overview Report on**  
**Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh**

Prepared by  
**Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)**



## 1. Introduction

Bangladesh, as a signatory of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is engaged in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the last three years, and has also been playing an active role in the global discourse on the SDGs. The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has involved various stakeholders in implementing the SDGs within a ‘whole society approach’ to this end. The non-state actors have also been playing important roles in carrying out activities towards implementation of the SDGs. Keeping the agenda of the upcoming High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2019, and the SDG Summit in September 2019 in the purview, the motivation of the present report is to contribute towards more effective implementation of the SDGs in Bangladesh over the coming years.

The present report has the following objectives: (a) critically examine the implementation progress of the SDGs in Bangladesh in six goal areas identified for review at the upcoming HLPF; (b) assess the contribution of non-state actors in Bangladesh in attaining the SDGs; (c) identify key implementation-related challenges and draw lessons to raise the efficacy of SDG implementation; and (d) recommend measures to attain the SDGs in Bangladesh by 2030.

The theme of HLPF 2019 is ‘*Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*’, which resonates very closely with aspirations of Bangladesh in relation to SDGs. The HLPF will undertake a review of progress concerning six of the 17 Goals and the associated targets. The goals identified for the 2019 review are particularly critical for Bangladesh, because of their overriding importance in the context of the current state of development of the country. The six SDGs selected for 2019 review are: Goal 4: Quality Education; Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth; Goal 10: Reduced Inequality; Goal 13: Climate Action; Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; and Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

The present report has made extensive use of the six goal-specific reports prepared by dedicated groups of the Citizen’s Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh. The reports and underlying ideas were shared with key stakeholders, and feedbacks were received through four consultations that were organised by the Platform. Key stakeholder communities, such as government officials, international development partners, media professionals and representatives from the private sector were present in these consultations. Various government documents, secondary materials, and national and global data sources were consulted to get the needed information. Analytical tools were deployed and trend analysis was undertaken to make necessary projections.

## 2. Integration of SDGs into National Policies

Bangladesh is one of the front-runners in institutionalising the SDG implementation mechanism. Its specific measures in this regard include—establishing high-level platforms, coordination of intergovernmental agencies, integration of policies, undertaking priority-setting exercise and devising action plans. Initiative

has also been taken to involve non-state stakeholders in the official institutional framework of SDG implementation process through adopting a ‘whole society approach’. However, these initiatives suggest that more success has been achieved in the ‘upstream’, and that there is a lack of progress in the ‘downstream’. A number of future challenges may be drawn from the experience of first four years of integrating SDGs into the national development process in Bangladesh.

First, the government has achieved major strides in aligning the SDG targets with the Seventh Five Year Plan (7FYP). Curiously, some of the critical areas (such as targets under SDG 4) were not found to be aligned with the 7FYP. There is no clear direction and timeline as to how, through revisions, the ‘not-aligned’ targets will be integrated into the current or future SDG-oriented national development plans, policies and strategies. This calls for further scrutiny and fine-tuning of the national action plan for SDGs.

Second, the concept of ‘localisation of SDGs’ has received a great deal of attention among the government officials and policymakers; a manifestation of which can be observed in the planned upscaling of the ‘Natore Model’. However, ensuring its proper implementation in an inclusive manner still remains a major challenge. Here, further actions are required to strengthen the local government through overcoming the structural bottlenecks. Local solutions have to be devised through identifying local priorities and problems, and utilising local knowledge and resources.

Third, while financial resource requirement for implementing the SDGs has been estimated and their possible sources have been identified, mobilising funds from the potential sources at the projected rate would be a difficult task, particularly for a country like Bangladesh, which has one of the lowest revenue-GDP (gross domestic product) ratios in the world. Flow of funds through foreign aid, foreign direct investment (FDI), South-South cooperation and blended finance are still low, compared to their targets. Therefore, the major effort should be put on tax reforms, attracting private investments and identifying other innovative sources. Additionally, non-financial resources should be tapped. These include facilitating technology transfer, seeking favourable market access and urging for conducive international trade rules.

Fourth, efforts in identifying the data gaps for SDG indicators is well-appreciated. However, limited or no progress has been made so far in generating new data from various sources, such as through initiating new surveys, from administrative sources, and by recognising non-official data. Meanwhile, while financial support for the national statistics office (NSO) has almost doubled in absolute terms, it has declined as a share of total budget during the last five fiscal years. Budget allocation for the Statistical and Informatics Division (SID) of the government has increased from Tk. 381 crore in FY2014-15 to Tk. 599 crore in FY2018-19, but declined as a share of total budget, from 0.2 per cent to 0.1 per cent over the same period. There is also not much progress with regard to harnessing more disaggregated data for addressing the vulnerable and marginalised groups, and ensuring that ‘no one is left behind’.

Fifth, there is no formal platform as yet for institutionalising partnership with the private sector, though some attempts were observed in organising dialogues with them. In some cases, private sector representatives were called as special observers. As the resource requirement suggests, the private sector will have to play a pioneering role in financing the SDGs. Hence, involving them in each step of the SDG implementation process from early on is critically important. Same is also applicable for the non-government organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs). Furthermore, the role of the parliamentarians is still unclear. There is no framework till date for the parliamentarians to discuss and debate on progress, challenges and success stories of SDG implementation during the parliament sessions.

There are also a few more issue which require further attention. These include: trade-off and synergies are not adequately conceptualised and put into policy priorities; opportunities of collaboration at the sub-regional level are not adequately explored; systemic concerns, such as trade war, deteriorating global and regional circumstances and national transitions should be taken into consideration while planning and reviewing Bangladesh's progress on SDGs. Also, it is often noticed that, government's efforts are confined within the traditional conceptualisation of inclusiveness. Hence, fulfilment of the aspiration of 'leaving no one behind' during the SDG implementation process may prove to be difficult.

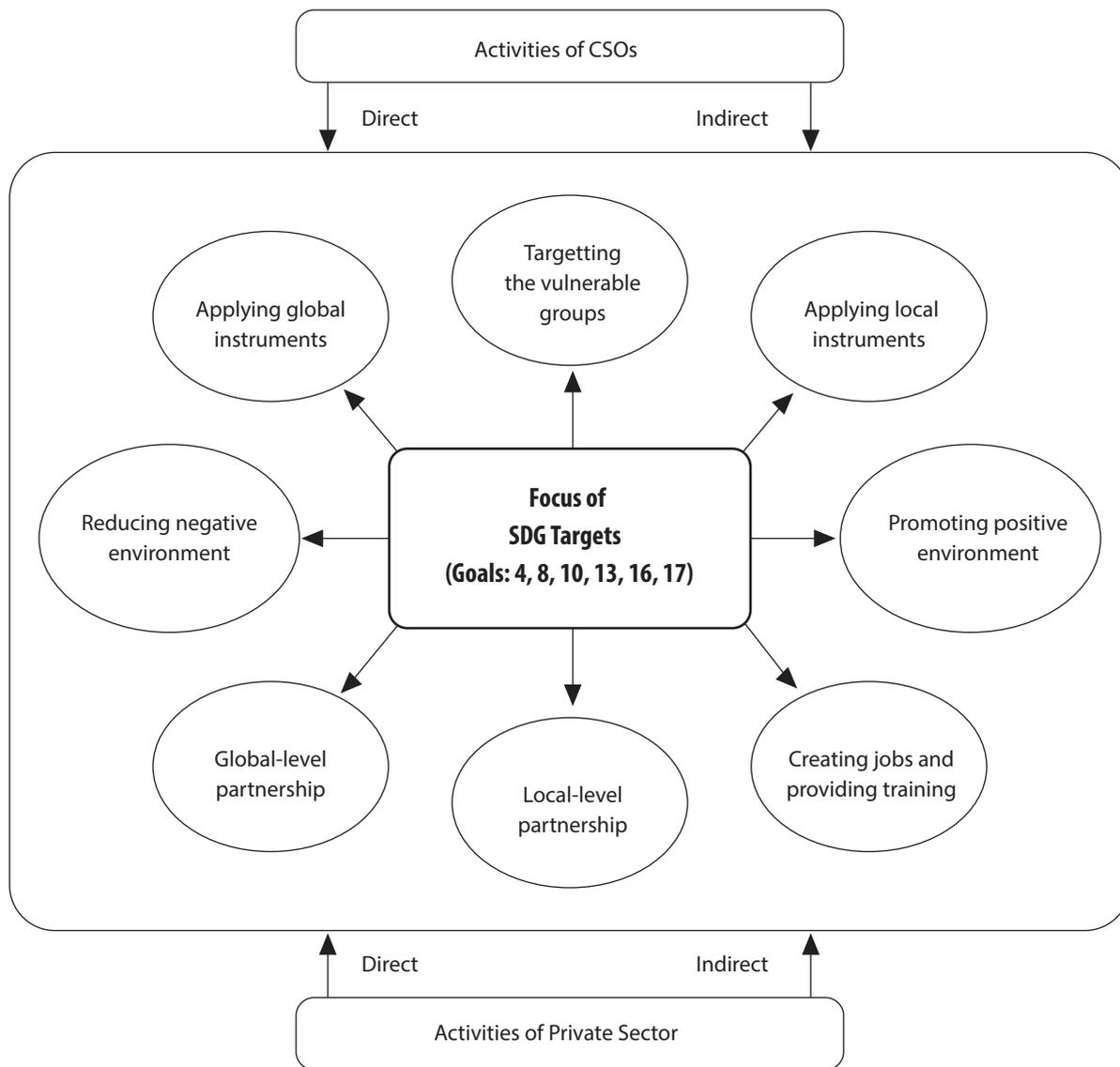
Overall, it may be said that, often at the implementation level, 'business as usual' actions have been put under 'SDG bracket', rather than transforming these types of practices for delivering SDG aspirations. It appears that, the SDGs Implementation Review (SIR) and the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) are considered as key annual follow-up and review processes at the national level. However, one may expect a more rigorous mechanism under these processes, which will need to be followed by concrete policy actions. It has been almost four years since the adoption of the SDGs on 25 September 2015. Therefore, it is high time to address the SDG implementation-related challenges.

### **3. Changes in Non-state Actors' Activities and Priorities**

Implementation of the SDGs has been promoted under a 'whole society approach', with the engagement of state and non-state actors in different goals. However, scope of the actors' engagement is guided by the targets under different goals. A review of scope, nature and level of engagements of non-state actors indicate that their engagements vary across different targets of the selected six goals. Figure 1 and the analyses below present a summary of their engagements in various SDG-related activities.

In the post-2015 period, CSOs have largely been involved in activities in line with their traditional areas of experience and expertise. Some CSOs have set up internal SDG team within the organisation, while some are continuing their regular or ongoing activities that are already in place, and which resonate with the objectives of the SDGs. The most prominent initiative in Bangladesh has been the launch of the *Citizen's Platforms for SDGs, Bangladesh*, comprising like-minded CSOs and private sector organisations with a view to

**Figure 1: Different focus of selected SDGs and scope of engagement of non-state actors**



Source: Illustration by the author.

contribute to the national SDG process along with the government. The Platform Partners have attempted to work towards fulfilling the core commitment of the SDGs, i.e. 'leave no one behind'.

Hence, CSOs have enhanced their focus on vulnerable groups, particularly the poor and marginalised communities, such as the dalits and harijans, adivasis and differently-able people, sex workers, transgender groups, climate-vulnerable population, among others.

Notable difference is observed in case of Goal 13 which focuses on climate change. This is also because, the issue has received increased attention following the 2015 Paris Climate Conference. CSOs are now more aware with regard to greater accountability of the use of climate funds for adaptation-related programmes. Besides, the notion of human rights activism at community level is developed—to uphold citizen's rights and environmental promotion through community forums.

Another change in focus is observed in case SDG 17. During the pre-2015 period, CSOs' focus was mainly on trade and aid-related issues. CSOs have now expanded their attention towards other issues, such as technology transfer from the developed countries and capacity development. There is also a renewed realisation regarding the importance of partnership with various stakeholders for implementation of the SDGs.

Several activities are being undertaken by CSOs which are geared towards reducing inequality (SDG 10). Some of these include: capacity development and leadership promotion; sensitisation of service-providers; alliance, network and linkage building; community awareness and capacity development on human rights and violence against women; legal aid support to victims of violence against the marginalised people, including women; skills development training and linkage with trade and job markets; linkage with financial institutions for credit facilities; monitoring and strengthening of service-providing institutions by applying social accountability tools; advocacy and lobbying for law and policy implementation; beggar rehabilitation; and enhancing resources and increasing capacities of poor households.

CSOs have also been applying new instruments or programmes through setting up new networks and institutions. Rights-based CSOs have undertaken policy activism to enact new policies, laws and rules to lessen the adversities of weak governance situation (SDG 16).

In case of funding, it can be observed that, the share of official development assistance (ODA) for least developed countries (LDCs) has increased only by a modest level since 2000. The flow of fund targetted to Bangladesh's CSOs has experienced a change in recent years, particularly following the influx of Rohingya population from Myanmar since 2017. A large part of the recent rise in the flow of foreign fund is particularly for supporting the Rohingya people. It is to be noted that, CSOs and NGOs do not have alternate sources of funds at the national level to carry out their intended activities in relation to the SDGs.

The private sector in Bangladesh has enhanced its activities related to social compliance to some extent. More specifically, they are active in ensuring decent jobs, and are more aware of the need to reducing pollution created from industries. The private sector has formed different entities such as foundations and funds, as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities. They also support educational institutions and provide training to workers. The private sector has been collaborating with CSOs in SDG implementation through the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh.

Awareness raising has been another area of SDG-related activities by CSOs. There are examples of CSO activities in developing inclusive education model in rural areas in collaboration with communities. There are also initiatives to increase awareness of trade union members, women peer leaders and workers, regarding their rights and entitlements (SDG 8). A few organisations are working with dalit, harijan and transgender communities for upholding their rights.

A number of CSOs are working towards implementation of programmes for developing effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels (SDG target 16.6). They are involved in ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels under SDG target 16.7.

In a number of cases, CSOs have to interface their SDG-related activities with the government. The Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh has been working with different government ministries and institutions at central and local levels on various aspects of SDGs. CSOs undertook activities in collaboration with different ministries and departments or other public authorities. A Strategic Framework and Action Plan on SDG 4 has been prepared under the leadership of the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) and Ministry of Education (MoE), where a number of organisations provided inputs. Both in case of Goals 8 and 17, the private sector is working as the research and advocacy support partner, and secretariat for the Private Sector Development Policy Coordination Committee (PSDPCC) at the Prime Minister's Office, headed by the Principal Secretary. PSDPCC has representation from 13 trade- and business-supporting ministries and five leading private sector bodies. With regard to Goal 13, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), along with a number of CSOs, has prepared a scoping paper to explore the potentiality of the National Mechanism on Climate Change-induced Disaster Losses and Damages in Bangladesh. With regard to Goal 16, CSOs are working with the government for promoting legal identity for all, including birth registration, by 2030 (SDG target 16.9).

The above discussion indicates that, CSOs and the private sector are carrying out SDG-related activities in different manners, forms and structures. Since the inception of SDGs, there has been a shift in their understanding towards their organisational planning of programme interventions, which is guided by their increased awareness on SDGs—their importance, scope and prospects in the Bangladesh context. Based on the above discussion, it is clear that their involvement in the SDG process is reflected in five specific areas. These are: (a) strategic change in focus of the actors' activities and interventions; (b) new initiatives focusing

the SDGs; (c) changes in funding pattern for CSOs; (d) awareness raising done by the actors; and (e) interfacing of SDG-related activities with the government.

#### 4. Outlook for Reaching the SDGs by 2030

In this section, an attempt has been made to project the progress of a select group of indicators under the six SDGs that will be reviewed during the HLPF 2019. The objective is to show if the current trends of progress continue, how much will be achieved by 2030. This exercise can be a guide for the policymakers and non-state actors as to how they should prioritise their actions depending on the distance they have to travel towards achieving the SDGs by 2030.

There are 68 targets and 95 indicators under the specified six SDGs. However, forecasting of all the indicators was not possible, mainly for two reasons. First, all SDG indicators are not quantifiable. Second, data for forecasting those indicators, particularly reliable long-term data, are not available. Hence, this research could include 38 targets and 50 indicators of those six SDGs for the forecasting exercise.

In order to understand the possibility of achieving the SDGs by 2030, forecasting has been done using long-term official data from various sources. One important caveat of this exercise is that, the results of the projection relate only to the specific SDGs indicators, and cannot be interpreted as the future performance of the whole SDG itself. The present study has ranked the six SDGs based on the performance of the targets and indicators related to those SDGs.

In doing so, colours have been put to indicate the state of progress, and then values were assigned to the colours. Hence, *first*, in order to get a bird's eye view of the state of the six selected SDGs in Bangladesh, Red-Amber-Green statuses have been assigned for each of the indicators considered in this report. 'Red' status represents that the indicator is going in the wrong direction; it requires radical policy changes and significant efforts from all involved stakeholders in order to reverse the trajectory. 'Amber' status represents that the indicator is going in the right direction, but requires some policy interventions to steer it towards SDG target achievement by 2030. 'Green' status represents that the indicator is going in the right direction, and the target will be achieved within 2030. *Second*, scores have been assigned based on the performance. Indicators that fall within the Red category are assigned a score of 1, Amber category indicators get 2, and Green category indicators receive 3. Based on the colour-based classification system, Table 1 presents the status of the performance of the selected indicators.

SDG 4 has 11 indicators in total. However, data could be obtained on seven indicators. All the indicators for SDG 4 are in Amber status, except for indicator 4.5.1, which is Green; and indicator 4.b.1, which is Red. Schooling completion rates, pre-school enrolment rates and literacy rates are increasing, and educational facilities are improving. Nonetheless, progress of these indicators is, in most cases, both slow and

**Table 1: Heat map of selected SDG indicators in Bangladesh**

<b>SDG 4 Education</b>	<b>SDG 8 Decent Work</b>	<b>SDG 10 Inequality</b>	<b>SDG 13 Climate Action</b>	<b>SDG 16 Peace and Justice</b>	<b>SDG 17 Partnership</b>
4.1.1: Schooling completion rate	8.1.1: Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita	10.1.1: Growth rate of income of poorest 40 per cent	13.1.1a: Households affected by disasters	16.1.1: Intentional homicide per 100,000 people	17.1.1: Tax-GDP ratio
4.2.2: Pre-primary participation rate	8.2.1: Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person	10.5.1: Financial soundness indicators	13.1.1b: Aggregate economic loss due to disasters	16.1.2: Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population	17.2.1: Net ODA received as % of GNI
4.5.1: Gender parity index of literacy rate	8.3.1: Informal employment rate in non-agriculture	10.B.1: Net ODA received	13.1.1c: Sickness and injury due to disasters, by area	16.1.3: Prevalence of violence against women	17.3.1: Net FDI inflow
4.6.1: Literacy rate	8.4.2: Domestic material consumption per capita	10.C.1: Remittance costs	13.1.1d: Sickness and injury due to disasters, by disaster	16.2.1: Proportion of children with aggression experience	17.3.2: Volume of remittances as a proportion of total GDP
4.A.1: Schools' access to electricity, technology and sanitation	8.5.2: Unemployment rate		13.1.1e: Average economic loss per household due to disasters	16.3.1: Reporting of violence	17.4.1: Debt service as proportion of exports
4.B.1: Volume of ODA for scholarships	8.6.1: Proportion of youth NEET		13.1.1f: Non-schooling days due to disasters	16.4.1: Illicit financial outflows	17.6.2: Fixed internet broadband subscriptions
4.C.1: Proportion of trained teachers	8.7.1: Proportion of children in child labour		13.2.1a: Growth rate of greenhouse gas emissions	16.4.2: Number of arms act cases	17.8.1: Proportion of individuals using the internet
	8.10.1a: Commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults		13.2.1b: Annual average temperature change	16.5.1: Public official bribery rate	17.11.1: Share of global exports

(Table 1 contd.)

(Table 1 contd.)

<b>SDG 4 Education</b>	<b>SDG 8 Decent Work</b>	<b>SDG 10 Inequality</b>	<b>SDG 13 Climate Action</b>	<b>SDG 16 Peace and Justice</b>	<b>SDG 17 Partnership</b>
	8.10.1b: ATMs per 100,000 adults			16.7.1: Proportions of parliament seats held by women	17.17.1: Investment in energy with private participation
	8.10.2: Proportion of adults with a bank account			16.10.1: Kidnappings per 100,000 people	17.19.1: Resources for strengthening statistical capacity
	8.A.1: Aid for trade commitments and disbursements				

Source: Author's compilation.

qualitatively inadequate. Gender parity in literacy has already been achieved, and is expected to be maintained up to 2030. However, the volume of ODA inflows for scholarships is declining, and is unlikely to rise in the coming years.

For the SDG 8, 11 out of a total of 17 indicators have been evaluated. Four indicators are found to be in Red status, four indicators in Amber status, and three indicators in Green status. GDP per capita, GPD per employed person and number of commercial bank branches are all expected to continue increasing till 2030. The share of youth not in education, employment or training (NEET) and the share of children in employment are both decreasing, but need greater policy attention. The number of automated-teller machines (ATMs) and the proportion of adults with bank accounts are increasing, but the volume of cashless transfers and the level of inclusion in the formal financial system remain rather low. Both youth unemployment and informal employment in the non-agricultural sector are high, and expected to rise.

As for the SDG 10, the prospect of achieving it appears bleak. Among the 11 indicators, four were considered in this report. Three out of these four indicators are in the Red status, with only one indicator being in the Amber status. The income share held by the poorest 40 per cent is expected to keep falling from the already low level that was present in 2015. This will lead to an increase in income inequality in the country. In the meanwhile, the state of the banking sector, which accounts for the largest part of the financial sector, is

in a difficult situation. Non-performing loans (NPLs) are at high levels, and they are creating a drain on public resources since the government is bailing out banks with taxpayers' money year after year. While total resource flows for development have increased in recent years, it was mainly in the form of project aid, and was inflated after the influx of the Rohingyas from Myanmar since August 2017. The transaction cost of sending remittances is on the rise, and this is particularly disconcerting, since it creates incentive for diverting the flow of remittances from the legal to the illegal channels.

The situation of SDG 13 looks most grim. Country-specific quantifiable indicators on climate change are almost non-existent. So the present study had to rely on proxy indicators which are closely related to climate change for two targets under SDG 13. And, though there are eight indicators under five targets of SDG 13, eight proxy indicators have been included within two targets of SDG 13. All of the considered eight indicators fall in the Red category. The number of households affected by natural disasters is rising, and by 2030 around 30 million households are expected to be affected by natural disasters. The effects of natural disasters in the forms of economic losses to households and the economy, incidence of sickness and injury, as well as loss of schooling days—are all at high levels, and expected to get worse in the coming years. Greenhouse gas emissions are forecasted to increase at faster rates in 2030, which will also be accompanied with warmer average temperatures. Overall, the analysis of SDG 13 indicates that, Bangladesh is in a precarious situation with respect to climate change, and has to take preparations to deal with the impact of climate change.

Except for three, all 10 indicators considered for SDG 16, out of a total of 23 indicators, are in the Red status. Three indicators are in Amber status. However, even the Amber status of these indicators is largely due to poor reporting and information gaps, rather than an actual positive scenario. Murder, violence against women and children, bribery and illicit financial flows—are all disturbingly high, and most of these crimes will increase in 2030, if they follow their historic trends. On the other hand, reporting of violence is quite low, and reporting of detention or kidnapping is virtually non-existent, except for high profile cases. Therefore, it is unlikely that the official data on these indicators provide an appropriate representation of the ground reality.

Finally in case of SDG 17, out of 25 indicators, 10 could be examined. It is found that, three indicators are in Red status, five indicators are in Amber status, and two indicators are in Green status. Apart from debt service, the other indicators of finance which are critical for SDG implementation, such as tax-GDP ratio, net ODA and volume of remittances, all are in unfavorable positions. Indicators of technology, such as number of fixed broadband subscriptions, show that Bangladesh is significantly lagging behind the rest of the world. Bangladesh's trade regime is anticipated to carry forward its traditionally strong performance as the share of Bangladesh's exports in global exports is forecasted to keep rising till 2030. Resources for strengthening statistical capacity will dry up, if the current declining trends continue.

In the *second* phase of the present exercise, the SDGs are ranked based on the trend of current and projected performance by assigning scores on the colours. The rankings presented in Table 2 show that SDG 4 tops

**Table 2: Ranking of SDGs based on projected performance by 2030**

Rank	SDG
1	Goal 4: Quality Education
2	Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals
3	Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth
4	Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
5	Goal 10: Reduced Inequality
6	Goal 13: Climate Action

**Source:** Based on author's analysis.

the list, while SDG 13 is at the bottom of the six SDGs considered. However, it may be mentioned that, SDGs 4, 8 and 17 are close in terms of their achievements on the targets and indicators considered. Similarly, in case of SDGs 10 and 16, indicators considered for analysis followed almost similar trend of performance. It is important to keep in mind that, the ranks assigned to each goal are on the basis of analysis of quantitative data. Therefore, qualitative aspects of education and information gaps in the governance-related data are not accounted for.

Based on the target- and indicator-level performance of the six SDGs, overall Red, Amber or Green statuses are assigned to each of the six selected SDGs in Figure 2. Here, Deep Red represents the worst status and Deep Green represents the best status. SDG 13 is in Deep Red status, SDGs 10 and 16 are in Red status, and SDGs 4, 8 and 17 are in Amber status.

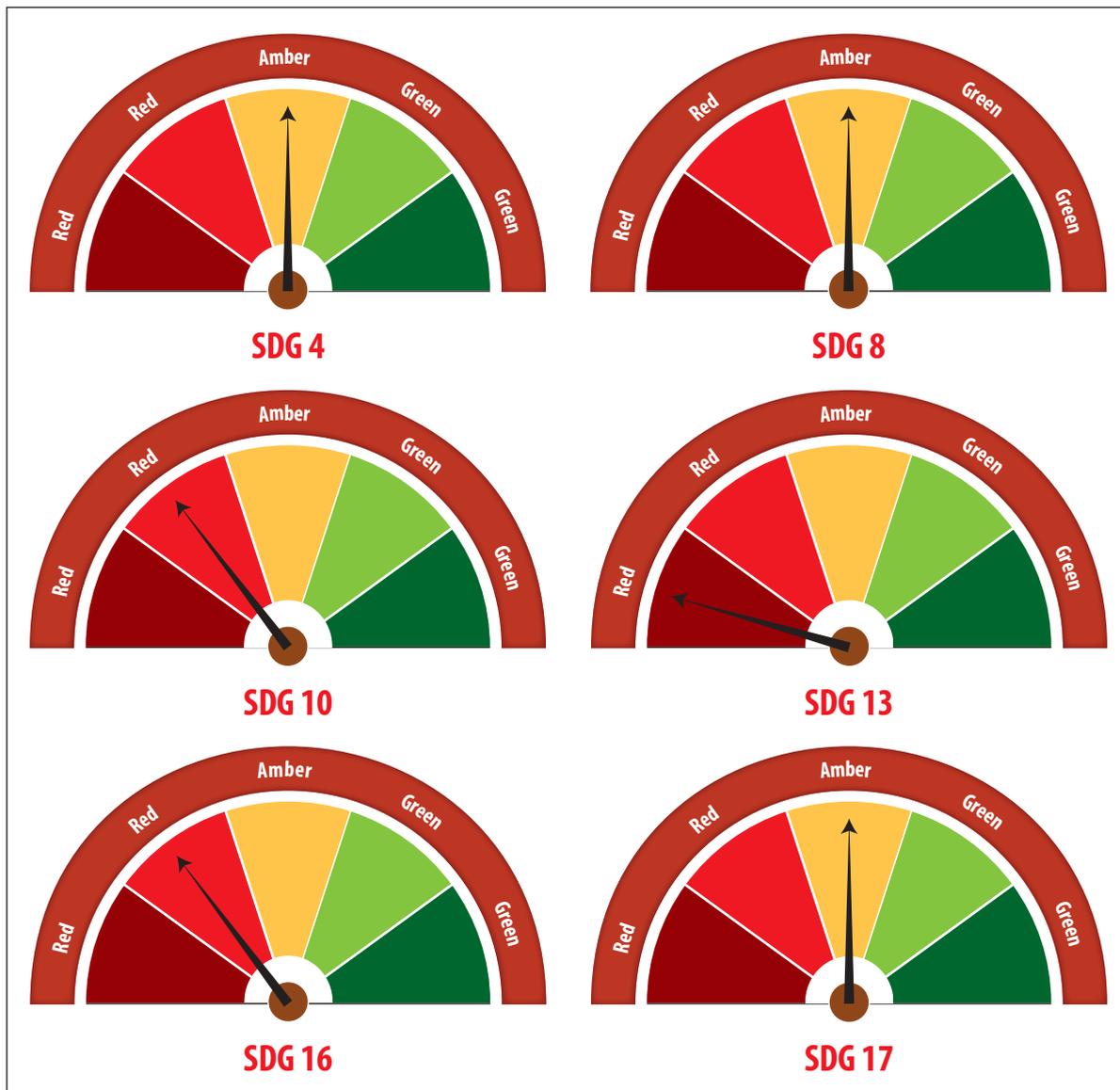
On the whole, from the exercise on the basis of averaging the status of the indicators under each goal, it can be deduced that, SDGs 4, 8 and 17 are going in the right direction, but require some policy interventions to steer them towards their achievements by 2030. On the other hand, SDGs 10, 13 and 16 are NOT going in the right direction, and require radical policy changes and significant efforts from all involved stakeholders in order to reverse their trajectories. Of course, climate change (SDG 13) is an issue which is not created by Bangladesh, and global initiatives are needed to reverse the trend in climate action.

## 5. Lessons Learnt

From the present exercise, a number of important lessons have been learnt which can be summarised as follows:

- Non-state actors are a key player in SDG delivery. While the private sector is making an overall discernible contribution towards achieving the SDGs, they are yet to fully align their activities with goals and targets of the global agenda. The CSOs, on the other hand, are working more at disaggregated level.

**Figure 2: Red-Amber-Green status of selected SDGs in Bangladesh**



Source: Author's illustration.

- Both the private and non-profit sectors are demonstrating sensitivity to the new global demands in areas, such as decent work, institutional accountability, qualitative improvement in intervention impacts, which are critical to realising the SDGs.
- A stable working relationship between the government and non-state actors based on mutual respect is key for the effectiveness of collaborative activities.

## 6. Challenges

- Data limitations have been a major challenge in undertaking this study. For many indicators, up to date and real-time data was not available; for others, there was no data at all. This made the task of assessing implementation progress difficult. Availability of data at the disaggregated level is crucial to measuring progress of SDG implementation, particularly if the perspective of 'leave no one behind' is to be captured. Detailed analysis of progress was constrained in the absence of disaggregated data concerning many indicators.
- There are several SDG targets, which are not quantifiable. As a result, projections on some of those have been done using proxy indicators, while for others the exercise could not be performed.
- National framework does not specify the role of CSOs and the private sector. The institutional framework for SDG implementation in Bangladesh does not recognise CSOs as partners. Thus, the role of non-state actors is underplayed at the official level.
- Establishment of a direct link of the work of CSOs and the private sector with SDG 17 (partnership) is difficult. This is because their activities are largely at the grassroots and in the field levels.
- CSOs have not received new and additional funds for carrying out SDG-related activities. Hence, their engagement is constrained by limited resources.

## 7. Recommendations

- CSOs need support for scaling up their activities on SDG implementation. Support for the Rohingyas by development partners should be allocated and reported separately. At the national level, the government should form a special fund for SDG implementation by CSOs.
- A voluntary initiative at national and global levels may be undertaken to ensure proper recognition of the contribution of the CSOs and the private sector. Such initiative should identify a set of proxy indicators to be called 'associated indicators', which will capture the activities and initiatives of CSOs and the private sector.
- All out efforts need to be taken at national and global levels for meeting up the data gap. More resources should be allocated for generating real-time data through primary surveys on a regular basis. The non-state actors and all citizens should have access to those data.

- The projections on targets and indicators of six SDGs indicating where the country is heading should be taken into consideration by the policymakers seriously. Clearly, the SDGs that are lagging behind, will require much more effort than what is given at present.
- The role of the non-state actors should be recognised adequately at the official level. Non-state actors have to be considered as partners in the institutional framework for SDG implementation in Bangladesh.

# Executive Summary of the Review Report on

## **Goal 4: Quality Education**

### **Anchor**

Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)

### **Co-Anchor**

Plan International

### **Associate Organisations**

British Council

Dhaka Ahsania Mission

Gonoshasthaya Kendra

JAAGO Foundation

Save the Children in Bangladesh

SERAC-Bangladesh

Turning Point Foundation



In September 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by world leaders at the United Nations, with a pledge to ‘transform our world’. Earlier in May 2015, the World Education Forum (WEF) 2015 in Incheon, Korea, had set the ambitious Education 2030 agenda, replacing the Education For All (EFA) 2015, to ensure “inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (UN, 2015).<sup>1</sup> The Education 2030 agenda is reflected in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) stipulated for education (SDG 4), one of the 17 SDGs. The SDG 4 reflects the important role of education by encapsulating targets in a stand, highlighting that the success of other SDGs (such as health, growth and employment, sustainable consumption and production, and climate change) is also driven by the education goal. For making SDG 4 a reality, a key concern for Bangladesh will be to address a number of challenges that are pertinent to different dimensions of education sector in the country, which relate to policy development, policy ownership, building consensus on key objectives and strategies and their effective implementation.

The report was prepared based on both primary and secondary data. Field-level data was collected through a structured questionnaire from non-government organisations (NGOs) working in the area of education. Various government reports, frameworks, guidelines, and non-state data (i.e. research reports, annual reports, project progress reports, fact sheets, policy briefs, spotlight reports, etc.) were also collected and reviewed in preparing the report.

## Progress So Far

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) began the task of implementing the SDGs from early on. In this regard, the government has partially aligned the SDG targets with the 7th Five Year Plan (7FYP), where all 17 goals are integrated. Fourteen (82 per cent) out of these 17 goals are fully aligned thematically, while three (SDGs 14, 16 and 17) (18 per cent) are aligned partially. Recognising the challenge of coordination among various ministries, the Honourable Prime Minister has established an Inter-Ministerial Committee on SDGs Implementation and Review, demonstrating the commitment of the government. The Principal Coordinator (SDGs Affairs), a newly created high-level position in the Prime Minister’s Office, heads the Committee. The government has also assigned ministry-wise SDG focal persons, including for the Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME). The General Economics Division (GED) of the Planning Commission has conducted and published a mapping of ministries by targets, in implementation of SDGs, aligning with the 7FYP, SDGs Financing Strategy, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, etc. Besides, a Strategic Framework and Action Plan on SDG 4 is almost ready under the leadership of MoPME and MoE, where UNESCO, Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO (BNCU) and Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) are jointly involved as associate partners.

As a result of all these initiatives, a significant progress has been made in SDG 4 and other goals over the years (2016-18). According to the *Sustainable Development Goals: Bangladesh Progress Report*, published by

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<sup>1</sup>UN. (2015). *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. New York: United Nations (UN).

the GED in December 2018, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) exceeded 1 at primary and secondary levels of education, and has remained above 1 for more than a decade. GPI at tertiary education reached its peak at 0.737 in 2014, and then declined to 0.701 in 2016 and 0.71 in 2017, respectively.

The non-state actors, particularly NGOs, are playing a significant role in implementing SDGs at the grassroots level by operating in the remote areas, and helping people to combat the adverse effects of climate change and achieving the Human Development Index (HDI)-related targets. In addition to microfinance services, NGOs are largely concentrating on human development issues, i.e. health, nutrition and population; education; water, sanitation and hygiene; skills development; disaster, environment and climate change; rural development; urban development; agriculture and food security; migration; gender justice; and poverty eradication—to name a few. The spirit of SDGs is to ‘leave no one behind’. The NGOs are working mostly to address the left-behind groups like those living in geographically hard-to-reach areas, deprived and underprivileged communities and physically-challenged people. Approximately a thousand NGOs in Bangladesh have different types of education and skill training programmes, and they are actively involved in attaining the targets of SDG 4. NGO programmes are focused on both service delivery and advocacy. With a service delivery approach, NGOs are carrying out programmes/projects to address the issues of dropout and left-out children; inclusive education; early childhood development (ECD) and care; girls’ education; education services for geographically hard-to-reach areas; technical and vocational education; lifelong learning; adult education; multi-lingual education; tertiary and vocational education; etc. According to the field data compiled by BRAC, since the launching of Education for All (EAF) in 2001, NGOs have been providing the following supports:

- Deliver education services to 2.9 million learners (61.71 per cent girls/female) through 79,573 learning centres/schools, and still continuing;
- Operating 37,000 formal and non-formal centres/schools with 1.7 million learners (56.56 per cent girls);
- Providing pre-primary education support including ECD through 25,000 centres covering 700,000 learners;
- Providing lifelong learning facilities through 20,000 community learning centres for 700,000 learners.

### **Gaps and Challenges**

Despite various efforts and progress achieved in SDG 4 in different dimensions, significant challenges remain, which include inclusive and equitable education, quality of education at all levels, quality of teaching, adult literacy and lifelong learning. Number of vulnerable and disadvantaged children are still out of the education system. Some of them had opportunities, but could not continue. Even though the net enrolment rate is 97.97 per cent, the dropout rate is still very high (18.8 per cent); the repetition rate is 5.6 per cent; and survival rate to grade five is 83.3 per cent. The average pupil-teacher ratio remains very high (46:1), and about 80 per cent of the schools are run on double shifts, with learning time in a school-year less than half of the international average of a thousand hours. The large student size in a class and small learning time combine

to limit effective contact hours. The percentage of teachers with professional qualification has fallen. Very few teachers have received leadership training (only 26 per cent), and the percentage of teachers who undergo regular professional trainings has fallen substantially. The student performance is also fallen. According to the National Student Assessment (NSA), students' performance has declined since 2011. In 2015, only 65 per cent and 41 per cent of grade three students performed at their levels or above on Bangla and mathematics, down from 68 per cent and 50 per cent in 2011, and 75 per cent and 57 per cent in 2013. The performance is even lower for grade five. Only 23 per cent and 10 per cent of grade five students performed at their levels on Bangla and mathematics, respectively, in 2015, down from 25 per cent and 32 per cent in 2011, and 25 per cent and 34 per cent in 2013.

The high dropout rate is a major challenge in secondary education. Less than half of students complete the 5-year cycle of secondary education, reflecting a huge waste of financial resources and an inefficient education system. A gender gap shows 51 per cent of boys completing the 5-year cycle, but only 43 per cent of girls. The participation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and tertiary education is also unsatisfactory. Science and technology is aligning the development plan of Bangladesh along with the objective to meet SDGs; this is a challenge as well as opportunity for Bangladesh. UNESCO in its 2015 report<sup>2</sup>, stresses the role of science and technology in leading to innovation.

There are four ministries involved with the delivery of education, training and technology services. These are: MoPME, MoE, Ministry of Science and Technology, and the ICT Division of the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology. The Ministries of Women and Children Affairs, Expatriate Welfare and Employment, Youth, Social Welfare, Health and Family Planning, and others also, have specific and significant involvements. From the output and results perspective, it is obvious that, there are issues of inter-ministerial linkages, which is a challenge for coordinated policy-making. The service delivery is heavily centralised, with most policy decisions and implementation managed from Dhaka. It is near impossible to manage adequate teacher attendance, quality of school infrastructure and quality of learning—without a decentralised service delivery. Recruitment of teachers and procurement of infrastructure and supplies are also heavily centralised, which often tend to suffer from lags and delays.

The public expenditure on education increased from USD 2.25 billion in FY2010-11 to USD 5.65 billion in FY2016-17, but has been kept at about 2 per cent of Bangladesh's gross domestic product (GDP)—one of the lowest percentages in South Asia and among the developing countries. Expenditure on primary education is around 45 per cent of the total education expenditure. Teacher salaries and school infrastructure development account for more than 90 per cent of the expenses. The government is the signatory of Muscat agreement, which recommended allocation of 4–6 per cent of the gross national product, and 15–20 per cent of the total government spending for education; thus, the current investment in education is much lower than the global standards in Bangladesh.

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<sup>2</sup>UNESCO. (2015). *UNESCO Science Report: Towards 2030*. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

## Way Forward

Based on the discussion above, the following measures may be given priority to achieve the SDG 4 targets and other national and global agendas:

- Within a medium-term timetable, the proportion of GDP for public education budget should be raised to at least 4 per cent, and eventually to 6 per cent and/or 20 per cent of national budget. As interim steps, two pragmatic measures can be taken—an education cess (taking the positive and negative lessons from India and other countries into account), and tax incentives for individual and corporate contribution to education.
- The existing national objectives and targets in education as well as the targets of SDG 4 should be articulated in 8th Five Year Plan and the longer-term Perspective Plan.
- The highly centralised structure of education governance and management needs to be transformed to devolve authority and responsibility with accountability and transparency to the local level and to individual institutions.
- Finance and budget measures have to provide for sufficient number of teachers and ensure effective teaching-learning. Apart from improving current in-service training of teachers, measures have to be taken to make teaching one of the first career choices for talented young people, rather than the last one.
- A second-chance programme must be a part of the main strategy for universal primary education in order to serve the out-of-school children.
- To make lifelong learning a reality and expand functional literacy for youth and adults, a network of community learning centres offering relevant learning activities and supported by essential resources, complementing formal education, must be built up.

# Executive Summary of the Review Report on **Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**

## **Anchor**

BRAC

## **Co-Anchor**

Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD)

## **Associate Organisations**

Access Bangladesh Foundation

ActionAid Bangladesh

Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS)

British Council

CARE Bangladesh

Dhaka Ahsania Mission

Gonoshasthaya Kendra

JAAGO Foundation

Plan International

Practical Action in Bangladesh

Save the Children in Bangladesh

SERAC-Bangladesh

VSO Bangladesh



## Introduction

The eighth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 8) is about *Decent Work and Economic Growth*; this review report is an effort to understand the progress made, the challenges and the opportunities in realising the stipulated targets of this Goal in Bangladesh. BRAC was the anchor organisation, and Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) was the co-anchor organisation for the SDG 8 Goal Group that organised the consultation process and prepared the review report. The review emphasises the achievements so far, captures the lessons learned and emerging best practices, and provides considerations for the way forward. The report puts an emphasis on the contribution and intervention of the non-state actors and the central agenda of ‘leaving no one behind’.

## Progress and Challenges with the SDG 8

Although Bangladesh continues to maintain impressive economic growth, there are many challenges in effective realisation of the SDG 8. Increasing economic disparity, gender inequity, youth unemployment and lack of decent work opportunities are some of the challenges that require concerted efforts from different actors. In addition, the economy is still struggling to make an inclusive work environment for many disadvantaged and marginalised groups, which ultimately affects both bringing people into the workforce, as well as retaining them. While many progress numbers remain impressive, efforts to understand equity and inclusion should be increased. Some key highlights from the SDG 8 progress assessment include:

***Ensuring inclusive economic growth.*** SDG Targets 8.1 and 8.2 are concerned with the annual economic growth. The economy of Bangladesh has been experiencing sustained growth in the past year, with the annual growth rate of real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita reaching 6.6 per cent in 2018. While the overall economic growth is commendable, there remains scope to ensure that these improvements reach every segment of the country.

***Formalising and promoting decent work.*** Bangladesh continues to face the daunting challenge of ensuring formal jobs for all across the country. In 2016, about 85 per cent of the workforce was employed in the informal economy, almost 78 per cent of whom were in non-agriculture employment. The already existing challenge of securing labour rights and good governance are amplified in the informal sector. Further, the SDG Target 8.8 seeks to protect labour rights and safe work for all, including for economic migrants.

***Difficulties in ensuring good governance.*** Adequate and effective governance remains a concern for Bangladesh. It is not enough to create jobs and promote employment; it must also be ensured that these are decent jobs, and that rights and dignity of workers are secured. While there have been some positive improvements, especially in the garments sector, a lot remains to be done. Further, there is a need for increased dialogue on decent work in the non-garment sectors.

**Addressing unemployment rates and bringing youth into NEET.** SDG Targets 8.5 and 8.6 call for full and productive employment and reducing down youth not in employment, education and training (NEET), respectively. Youth unemployment rate is about twice as high as the national unemployment rate, reaching to around 10.6 per cent in 2017.

**Challenges in monitoring child labour.** The latest Child Labour Survey in Bangladesh was conducted in 2013, which makes it difficult to assess the progress made since the commencement of the 2030 Agenda. Anecdotal evidence suggests that child labour has been extensively curbed in the formal sector, but remains rampant in the informal sector. The government and the civil society organisations (CSOs) have an important role in helping bring these children into education and training, while ensuring that their livelihood is not threatened.

**Advancing financial institutions and facilities for all.** Although there is an increase in the number of bank branches and ATMs between 2016 and 2017, there is a need to develop a more in-depth understanding of clients and disadvantaged groups who may not access such services. It is important to note that, the more non-traditional financial services, such as microfinance and mobile banking services (e.g. bKash), have been able to reach a larger base of people and the marginalised communities across Bangladesh. Increased mobile phone and internet penetration, accompanied by technological innovation, have played an important role in advancing this outreach and inclusion. This should be considered important progress, although it may fall outside the scope of the SDG 8 indicators.

**Increasing sustainable production and consumption.** Bangladesh still needs to increase its efforts in greening its industries and adopting environment-friendly processes and technologies, especially in the manufacturing sector. More linkages with other SDGs, such as the SDG 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns), should be established to help advance SDG Target 8.4.

### **CSOs in Advancing and Monitoring the SDG 8**

**Understanding SDG 8 priorities in the local context.** When asked to rank the importance of SDG 8 targets, the largest share of CSOs considered Targets 8.3, 8.7, 8.1 and 8.6 as the top priority areas in Bangladesh's context. These targets include the promotion of development-oriented policies that support productive and decent job creation, actions to eradicate child labour and forced labour, sustaining economic growth, and combating youth unemployment.

**Targetting disadvantaged groups for skills development.** As the SDGs seek to 'leave no one behind,' many CSOs are implementing targetted interventions that are particularly designed to reach people from different backgrounds and those from marginalised communities. A number of CSOs are specifically targetting disadvantaged groups, and are trying to equip them with the necessary skills for acquiring feasible decent jobs.

**Building a skilled and well-informed workforce.** CSOs, along with the public and private actors, are working towards developing a skilled workforce in the country. Skill development interventions have focused on building specific technical skills, as well as soft skills. A combination of the two is essential to help job-seekers, especially the youth, particularly in view of the modern changing labour market. In addition to skill trainings, CSOs are also contributing by way of raising awareness about workers' rights and important life skills (such as, personal health and financial literacy); this also helps in advancing the decent work agenda.

**Advancing the issue of workplace safety and proper work environment.** A number of CSO interventions are focused on the readymade garment (RMG) sector to help improve the overall working environment in the factories. Some organisations are also working with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to support them in promoting good work practices, as well as to improve their businesses.

### Considerations in Going Forward

In concluding the present review report, a few key challenges and recommendations are presented from the perspective of the civil society's scope of work and engagement. Selected key recommendations include:

**Advancing SDG 8 with a collective voice.** There remains a scope to enhance coordination and collaboration between the different actors working to advance the SDG 8 in Bangladesh. The various actors—government representatives, civil society and the private sector—can further enhance their communication to keep each other informed about their activities, and coordinate their programmes, wherever possible. Another area that is highlighted in this regard, is the need for more concerted efforts related to corporate social responsibility (CSR) from the private sector.

**Ensuring inclusion at the core of all interventions.** CSOs should invest in mapping the ultra-poor and identifying the marginalised groups, and emphasise on disseminating information among them on how best to access the training and placement services that are available from various sectors. The low participation of female labour force remains a concern in Bangladesh, and should be addressed from the perspective of the related cross-cutting themes and advocacy efforts that would help address issues such as violence against women, promote caregiving facilities and ensure safe mobility. Where feasible, state and non-state actors should explore how technology can help in reaching different target groups. Further, as implementing actors, CSOs are well-placed to bring grassroots experiences and evidence to advocate for greater inclusion at the national level.

**Targetting and collaborating to streamline skills development efforts.** CSOs should increase the consultation process with the private sector prior to designing skill development initiatives and making resource allocation. This will essentially help bridge any demand and supply gaps, and the process of creating an employable workforce with specific skill sets that match the market demands. A robust national

monitoring system can be useful in maintaining a database of participants and their training records, which can help facilitate targeted job placements.

***Matching technological advancement and skills development.*** With the global advancement of technology, including artificial intelligence (AI)-equipped automated systems, the labour market is fast changing, and many traditional jobs are becoming redundant. This ‘fourth industrial revolution’ is making it imperative that countries invest in creating an agile workforce. Here, CSOs in Bangladesh need to work with the government’s National Skills Development Authority (NSDA) to identify strategies on how to bring about the process of innovations and retool a skilled labour force.

***Including returnee economic migrants and internal climate-induced migrants.*** As we seek to ‘leave no one behind’, both cross-border and internal migrants should be effectively included as programme beneficiaries. Some organisations have started working on the reintegration of the returnee migrants, many of whom are affected survivors of violence. CSOs and the government can increase their collaborative efforts in identifying alternative work opportunities for those at risk of environmental hazards and disasters.

***Increasing dialogue with the government and the private sector.*** The consultation process and review report has helped highlight the scope for CSOs to improve its engagement with the private sector. As the private sector has a key role in advancing job creation, civil society can increase their support in developing a skilled workforce and actively promote inclusion. Further, a relatively untapped area of collaboration is the SDG Target 8.9, which calls for the promotion of sustainable tourism. Increased collective efforts of the government, civil society and the private sector is required to collectively promote sustainable tourism that can increase job opportunities at the local level, and thereby benefit the local communities.

***Advancing a favourable business climate that attracts more investment and promotes job creation.*** The business climate is an integral component when discussing economic growth and job creation. When given well-informed incentives, businesses can effectively help advance the agenda for inclusive job creation.

***Customising and mainstreaming financial instruments to increase financial inclusion.*** Although the indicators related to SDG Target 8.10 show advances in the number of bank branches and ATMs, there needs to be a more comprehensive understanding of how these services are reaching the different socio-economic segments of the country. While this makes traditional banking a challenge, it also encourages all actors to explore some innovative financial services, such as intelligent microfinance products and service-providers (e.g. bKash). There needs to be a greater focus on how to further mainstream such financial instruments through innovative policies.

# Executive Summary of the Review Report on **Goal 10: Reduced Inequality**

## **Anchor**

Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)

## **Co-anchor**

Oxfam in Bangladesh

## **Associate Organisations**

Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF)	Dhrubataru Youth Development Foundation (DYDF)
Avijan	Indigenous Peoples Development Society (IPDS)
Bandhu Social Welfare Society	JAAGO Foundation
Bangladesh Mahila Parishad	Nagorik Uddyog
CARE Bangladesh	Naripokkho
Dhaka Ahsania Mission	Steps Towards Development (Steps)



## Introduction

The following summary captures the contributions of the non-government organisations (NGOs) in Bangladesh towards achieving the Goal 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 10 calls for reducing inequality within and among countries by reducing income inequality (10.1), promoting social, political and economic inclusion (10.2), addressing discrimination and inequalities of opportunity and outcomes, and ensuring equal opportunities and ending discrimination (10.3). SDG 10 requires adopting fiscal and social policies that promote equality (10.4), calls for improved regulation of global financial markets and institutions (10.5), enhanced representation for developing countries in financial institutions (10.6), and pursuance of responsible and well-managed migration policies (10.7). As means of implementation, SDG 10 urges upon developed countries to offer special and differential treatment for developing countries (10.A), and to encourage development assistance and investment in the least developed countries (LDCs) (10.B), and asks that steps be taken to reduce transaction costs for migrant remittances (10.C). The underlying aspiration is to attain SDG 10 by *leaving no one behind*.

This report has been prepared by the Goal Group for SDG 10, composed of Platform members working in various areas associated with the Goal 10. The summary report sets out the background of the report, captures the contribution of Bangladesh's NGOs in attaining Goal 10, highlights the lessons learnt in this connection, and offers recommendations to address the attendant challenges in attaining the targets of Goal 10 by 2030.

## Background

Removing social and economic inequality through equitable wealth distribution among citizens, and ensuring equal opportunity and participation of all, including women, in all spheres of national life, is a constitutional obligation of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB).<sup>1</sup> SDG 10 is of heightened relevance and importance to Bangladesh in the current context, particularly in view of the rising income and wealth inequality within Bangladesh and the slow progress in reducing divergence among areas, countries, globally. Along with poverty alleviation, addressing issues of rising inequalities has emerged as a key policy concern in Bangladesh. The government had articulated its objective to reduce income inequality, as estimated by Gini coefficient, at 0.45 or below during the Seventh Five Year Plan (7FYP) period (2016-2020).<sup>2</sup> Between 2010-2016 period, in spite of the rise in average income and significant fall in number of people below the poverty and hardcore poverty line, one observes growing disparity between rich and poor in Bangladesh, both in urban and rural areas.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, income inequality in Bangladesh has posted a rise from 0.45 to 0.48

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<sup>1</sup>[http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/print\\_sections.php?id=367&vol=&sections\\_id=24567](http://bdlaws.minlaw.gov.bd/print_sections.php?id=367&vol=&sections_id=24567) [Accessed: 17 March 2019].

<sup>2</sup>[http://plancomm.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/plancomm.portal.gov.bd/files/aee61c03\\_3c11\\_4e89\\_9f30\\_d79639595c67/7th\\_FYP\\_18\\_02\\_2016.pdf](http://plancomm.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/plancomm.portal.gov.bd/files/aee61c03_3c11_4e89_9f30_d79639595c67/7th_FYP_18_02_2016.pdf) [Accessed: 17 March 2019].

<sup>3</sup><https://cpd.org.bd/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/IRBD-FY2018-First-Reading-Presentation-final-13012017.pdf> [Accessed: 17 March 2019].

between 2010 and 2016.<sup>4</sup> The growing disparity in income levels between the top 5 per cent and bottom 5 per cent is a disquieting trend, which is manifested in the rise of the multiple of relative income share from 32 to 121 times between 2010 and 2016.<sup>5</sup> This scenario also got reflected in a report of the Development Finance International (DFI) and Oxfam<sup>6</sup>, which placed Bangladesh in the rank of 148th among 157 countries in the Global Index 2018 on Commitment to Reducing Inequality (CRI). Yet another emerging concern is the wealth inequality situation in Bangladesh with the Gini coefficient standing at about 0.74.<sup>7</sup> No doubt, given the emergent scenario, Goal 10 demands special attention in the Bangladesh context.

## **NGO Interventions and Contributions**

Bangladesh's NGOs are engaged in wide-ranging activities in the areas of reducing inequality, increasing access to various resources and services, mitigating vulnerabilities and enhancing capacities of the most marginalised sections of the society. These activities involve direct interventions, advocacy, research and policy influencing, through which non-state actors and NGOs are addressing many of the issues that are relevant to attaining SDG 10. Since NGOs in Bangladesh have a comparative advantage in reaching the marginalised groups, their contribution to attaining the SDG aspiration of 'leave no one behind' demands special mention.

As regards Target 10.1, NGOs are making important contributions by implementing various programmes that aim at raising the quality of human development and reducing the access gap for the poor. Platform Partner NGOs have, in their portfolio, several capacity development programmes including imparting vocational training towards better income opportunities and interventions towards improved livelihood. The target groups here are mostly the marginalised communities. The NGOs are also engaged in promoting the cause of social inclusion geared towards reducing income inequality and the creation of asset base.

Among the different targets of SDG 10, NGOs in Bangladesh are proactively engaged in the context of Target 10.2. A large number of NGOs are involved in a host of activities that aim at empowering people and promoting social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity and origin, religious, economic or other status. Many NGOs have specific programmes for the disadvantaged groups, such as adivasis, dalits, fisher-folks, transgender people, MSMs (men who have sex with men) and HIV patients. They go into hard-to-reach areas to work with hard-to-reach communities. NGOs also have specific

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<sup>4</sup>[http://www.bd.undp.org/content/dam/bangladesh/docs/Publications/Pub-2019/SDGs-Bangladesh\\_Progress\\_Report%202018%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.bd.undp.org/content/dam/bangladesh/docs/Publications/Pub-2019/SDGs-Bangladesh_Progress_Report%202018%20(1).pdf) [Accessed: 17 March 2019].

<sup>5</sup><https://cpd.org.bd/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/IRBD-Paper-State-of-Bangladesh-Economy-and-Upcoming-National-Elections.pdf> [Accessed: 18 April 2019].

<sup>6</sup><https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/620553/rr-commitment-reducing-inequality-index-2018-091018-en.pdf> [Accessed: 4 April 2019].

<sup>7</sup><https://www.thedailystar.net/opinion/economics/why-bangladeshs-inequality-likely-rise-1575079> [Accessed: 8 April 2019].

programmes for persons with disabilities; some carry out advocacy programmes to promote disability-friendly education, production practices and transportation, communication. Majority of NGOs have women empowerment programmes to help vulnerable and excluded women, imparting knowledge and skills with a view to enhancing income and employment opportunities.

As regards Target 10.3, NGOs in Bangladesh have been actively advocating for equal opportunities for all, and the elimination of all discriminatory laws. For example, they have been pressing for enactment of Anti-Discrimination Act, which at present is with the Ministry of Law, waiting to be tabled as a Bill.

In connection with Target 10.4, a number of advocacy NGOs in Bangladesh have been promoting the cause of fiscal justice and progressive fiscal policies, and for better and universal social protection. Non-state actors such as civil society think tanks have been forcefully arguing in favour of distributive justice and social protection through evidence-based research.

As regards Targets 10.5 and 10.6, a number of NGOs and other non-state actors such as think tanks have been actively engaged in various global fora, demanding greater voice and representation of the countries from the South in various global rules-setting institutions that deal with trade, finance, technology transfer, etc. Some think tanks are strongly arguing for more effective contribution by developed countries in making the three means of implementation work for attainment of the SDG 10. A few NGOs are working in areas that concern SDG 10.7 that fosters facilitation of safe migration. They are advocating for responsible migration and reduction of migration costs.

### **Learnings**

When NGOs and other non-state actors work in tandem and collaborate, the likelihood of success in Goal 10 areas is found to increase manifold. Concerted campaigns by NGOs, civil society, media and social support groups can play a catalytic role in protecting the rights of various marginalised communities. The organs of government are then compelled to take note and act. Many examples can be cited in this connection.

Education, health and livelihood supports, such as skills training, asset transfers and creation of income opportunities are critical to raising the level of income of the vulnerable communities and enhancing their risk-mitigating capacities. This contributes to reducing the income gap. Social safety net programmes can reduce vulnerabilities; however, for sustainable improvement of income levels and reduction of income inequality, more investment is needed in these areas. Effective GO-NGO (government and non-government organisational) collaborations can generate important synergies in this context. It is also seen that, such interventions are more successful, when those are well-coordinated and well-sequenced.

## Challenges

There is a dearth of community-specific and disaggregated data on dalit, harijan, transgender, bede and other marginalised groups. This undermines the cause of designing concrete programmes to address exclusion and reduce inequality. Effective GO-NGO collaboration could help attain SDG 10 in many areas, and can produce faster results. However, it needs to be noted that, the efficient service delivery capacity of the NGOs are not fully made use of by the government. A change in mindset is needed in this respect. Inclusion of indigenous peoples from the decision-making process is a formidable challenge, but remains important in addressing inequality. The state of overall representation and governance is important in this context. Job creation and enhancing labour productivity are domains where the government will need to play a more proactive role. Expansion of microcredit and loans for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), effective women empowerment initiatives, and programmes for environment-affected and displaced people are important areas of emerging challenges, where NGOs will need to be involved more in the future.

## Recommendations

More effective coordination and better sequencing of activities will be needed as regards various NGO activities and interventions towards attaining SDG 10 targets. In this context, strengthened local government institutions could play an important role in coordinating various activities at local levels—aimed at addressing the issues of inequality. Education, skills, credit support and job creation activities have strong interlinkages, and can produce better results, if these are better coordinated.

NGOs should make more effective use of social media to build a strong case in support of attaining Goal 10. Issues of rising inequality must be at the centre of this advocacy to mobilise social opinions, create social pressure and compel policymakers to act fast.

Non-state actors should join hands to pursue the cause of democratisation of global institutions. The government must finalise the draft Anti-Discrimination Act, to ensure that legal measures are in place for addressing inequality. Also, full implementation of the government's action plan, based on the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS), needs to be fast-tracked to make growth more inclusive for the poor and the vulnerable.

The government must pursue fiscal policies that help reduce inequality and lead to better distributive justice. The government should take advantage of the role of non-state actors to strengthen its efforts towards attaining Goal 10. Government can facilitate participation of the civil society organisations (CSOs) (NGOs), by creating a platform for consultation prior to preparing budget and getting feedback after the finalisation of the budget, to better reflect the demands of the citizen as regards disparity and inequality. Non-state actors should be engaged in monitoring, reporting and holding relevant government agencies

accountable for SDG implementation, so that the issues of disparity and inequality are properly addressed by concerned authorities.

The government should take urgent steps to establish a database that capture essential information as regards all marginalised communities. A separate table showing annual allocation in the national budget under the 'leave no one behind' theme of the SDGs, should also be included. The government should also accelerate the implementation of programmes that promote job creation, enhance labour productivity and raise income. The government should put in place microcredit programmes and loans to SMEs, particularly for women entrepreneurs.

### **Conclusion**

The growing inequality in terms of income, wealth, access to resources and justice afflicting the disadvantaged and marginalised population pose a serious threat to the attainment of SDG targets, not only with respect to SDG 10, but the Agenda 2030 itself. The SDG 10 is a cross-cutting area—failure here will undermine the cause of achievement in other SDG areas. While the political commitment of the government to reduce inequality is laudable, implementation of various government programmes through transparent and accountable governance is also of equal importance. Creating an enabling environment to exercise constitutional rights to have all voices heard could play a conducive role in reducing inequality and emerging as a more inclusive society. On its part, NGOs will also need to raise the efficacy of their interventions in support of the marginalised groups through better coordination and sequencing of their activities. Women's empowerment and enactment and enforcement of laws to safeguard women's interests must be seen as a precondition to attain the SDG 10 in Bangladesh.



# Executive Summary of the Review Report on **Goal 13: Climate Action**

## **Anchor**

ActionAid Bangladesh

## **Co-Anchors**

International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD)

WaterAid Bangladesh

## **Associate Organisations**

Brotee Samaj Kallyan Sangstha

Practical Action Bangladesh

Dhaka Ahsania Mission

Save the Children in Bangladesh

Enfants du Monde (EdM)



## **Introduction and Approach**

Bangladesh, one of the most at-risk countries to adverse impacts of climate change, has suffered economic and non-economic losses and damages over the last two decades, posing significant threat to the country's ambition of becoming a middle-income country by 2021.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted at the UN General Assembly in 2015, gave the world an ambitious aspiration that leads towards a transformational growth, with the commitment of leaving no one behind. Climate Action—the SDG 13, with five targets and seven indicators, is a unique goal that addresses the adverse impacts of climate change, and has a cross-cutting link with other SDGs. The goal is inseparably linked with the Paris Agreement for Climate Action and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, creating opportunities for affirmative synergies at national level for implementation.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) in Bangladesh have been working in the areas of adaptation and mitigation from local to global levels. Several of these organisations are working in partnerships and in consortiums. The objective of the present study is to stock-take the contribution made by the CSOs in addressing climate change in particular programmes, researches and policy spaces. This report also captures challenges and measures that need to be taken into account for achieving the targets of SDG 13.

## **CSOs in Programme Delivery and Advocacy**

The study showed that, the CSOs in Bangladesh have been working on issues related to climate change, disaster management and resilience building for decades. These activities can broadly be categorised in the following three major types of actions, which again interlink.

### ***Programme Interventions***

Based on the literature review and collected data, the study identified five areas of dominance in terms of programme intervention. The first of these areas is building leadership capacity of women and young people in taking climate action at community level. Many CSOs are focusing particularly on transformative women leadership, and income-generation scope and emergency response training for women and young people. Others have reported actions for enhancing women and young people's role in policy advocacy and influencing towards women's empowerment at house and community level. The second core area is—climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture. Empowering women farmers, building capacity to use sack gardening, agro-met services, vermin compost and digital weather boards are few initiatives to note in this regard. The third area is diversified livelihood, under which building and repairing electronic devices, welding, tailoring, carpentry, etc. skills are developed. Strengthening capacity of the community to understand climate change, disaster risk reduction and build resilience engaging women, young people and children is

the fourth area. Major activities focus on the dissemination of early warning systems, increasing the adaptive capacity of community, mock drills, training on disaster risk reduction. The last area is promoting context-specific alternative solutions through adaptation and mitigation. Examples of work under this area include, but are not limited to, solar lamps, eco-friendly stoves and solar water disinfection technology.

### ***Policy Advocacy***

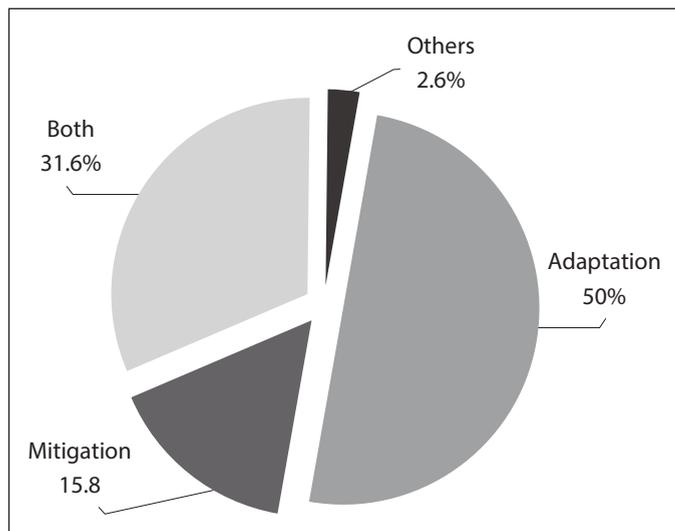
CSOs have been involved in the process of formulation and reviewing of government policies, plans and instruments. For instance, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change conducted several consultation workshops with the CSOs during the formation of Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), Bangladesh Climate Change and Gender Action Plan, and reviewing of the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), in collaboration with selected international non-government organisations (INGOs), are working on finalising a National Mechanism for Climate-induced Disaster Losses and Damages. In 2018, CSOs have published a report with analysis of, and recommendation for, government's climate budget, demanding for more accountable and effective process. It is worth mentioning that Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has contributed to increases in financing, institutional analysis, setting up institutional processes for approval and management of funds, international recognition of the importance of governance in climate change financing, creating demand for performance audits and evaluations, while simultaneously collecting evidence of problems and challenges experienced in the implementation of climate finance projects.

### ***Research and Awareness***

Awareness raising, as part of capacity building of the communities that are vulnerable to climate change and disaster impacts—is the most common area of intervention by the CSOs. The NGOs are investing a major portion of their project funds for finding local/contextual solutions that are socially acceptable and economically viable. The action research projects focus mostly on women, young people and children, who are the most vulnerable groups of the society. Furthermore, NGOs, in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh (GoB), have been supporting the conduction of the Joint Needs Assessment in post-disaster situation, to develop a comprehensive response plan and ensure effective financial allocation.

### **Key Lessons Learnt**

The study revealed that 50 per cent of the respondents are working on 'adaptation', where about 16 per cent are focusing on 'mitigation' actions. Around 31.6 per cent of projects address both 'adaptation' and 'mitigation'. The adaptation and mitigation actions can also be further segregated by different priorities, such as awareness, advocacy work, research and technology development, and so on. However, there is a lack of research and projects that address loss and damage area. While few of the organisations are doing



an incredible job by bringing technological changes, such as climate technology parks and solar-based solutions, the area needs further innovation and support from developed countries.

### Challenges

Climate change is unpredictable. We do not know what course it will take in the next few years, when the global temperature rises by 1.5°C. Although there are global-level data and information, not much is known on local-level temperature-rise trajectory. Therefore, projects are mostly focusing on building social and economic capacity in short- to medium-term. The contribution of these projects is not always reflected in the

central database of the government, and hence, there is no single monitoring and reporting mechanism to share progress made under SDG 13 and the actual contribution of the CSOs.

### Way Forward

Based on the findings, challenges and opportunities, it is recognised that the CSOs require a common space to promote credible solutions to address issues under SDG 13, Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) in a comprehensive way. This also needs to be linked with different government initiatives for greater sustainability. It is imperative to have a joint monitoring and implementation plan (of the GoB and the CSOs) for the progress of SDG 13 and other global agreements on climate action. Specific steps should include collating and disseminating good practices, undertaking public information programmes on local initiatives, and focusing on action research on climate-induced disaster losses and damages.



# Executive Summary of the Review Report on

# **Goal 16: Peace, Justice and**

# **Strong Institutions**

## **Anchor**

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB)

## **Co-Anchors**

Brotee Samaj Kallyan Sangstha

Nagorik Uddyog

## **Associate Organisations**

Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF)

ActionAid Bangladesh

Bandhu Social Welfare Society

Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)

British Council

HEKS/EPER

JAAGO Foundation

Naripokkho

World Vision Bangladesh



## Introduction

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has adopted a multi-pronged approach for achieving the globally-adopted Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and necessary exercises have been conducted, that include mapping of relevant bodies and gaps in data, preparing monitoring mechanisms and tracking tools, and needs assessment of funds and possible sources. For achieving the Goal 16, the government has adopted an approach of promoting integrity and good governance among the public administration. However, the government is yet to develop a specific strategy and plan of action for achieving Goal 16.

This paper makes an attempt to assess the progress of Goal 16 in Bangladesh, capture the lessons learnt, and assess the way forward for more effective delivery of the SDG—identifying the concrete steps the government should take, and the partners need to pursue. This paper is based on secondary data collected from reliable sources, existing publications of civil society organisations (CSOs), and documentation of different sectoral reports of Bangladesh Government.

From the review of the progress, it is observed that despite different initiatives, the government planning lacks adequate emphasis on SDG 16, as there is significant gaps in the baseline data. Official information in light of target indicators are not available, particularly for, corruption and bribery (Target 16.5), public satisfaction on public services and institutions (Target 16.7), and extrajudicial killings (Target 16.10); while partial information are available on some issues, such as violence and related death rates (Target 16.1), and abuse, exploitation, trafficking and violence against and torture of children (Target 16.2). Among the 23 indicators of the 12 targets under this Goal, government data is available only on eight indicators of six targets.

Despite adequate preparedness in terms of having laws, policies and institutional arrangements required for implementing the targets under Goal 16, there are some gaps in implementation of the laws. In spite of various initiatives undertaken by the government, corruption and bribery, money laundering, violation of fundamental freedoms and human rights are continuing in Bangladesh. The National Integrity System (NIS) institutions are not effective up to the expected level. There is no framework to hold them accountable to the people in most of the institutions, and internal accountability system of these institutions are also weak. There have been an increasing trend of politicisation, thus leading towards the erosion of effectiveness of key institutions of accountability. Proactive disclosure of information of some institutions are not sufficient. According to the SDG Index and Dashboards Report 2017, Bangladesh fall under the *red category* in achieving the Goal 16, scoring 54 out of 100.

## **CSO Contributions**

CSOs have been engaged, along with the government functionaries, in implementing different programmes for achieving different targets of the Goal 16. These CSOs are providing support to the government through advocating for institutional, policy and legal reforms, intended for NIS institutions, such as different constitutional and statutory bodies and different public institutions. Different policy reforms have been carried out for sectors, such as gold import, education, health, NIS institutions, anti-corruption and climate finance. Legal reforms on issues such as anti-corruption, rights to information, anti-discrimination, and acid-related laws have been advocated. Reforms in private sector, such as in the readymade garments (RMG), has also been promoted through CSO activities.

Information dissemination through research and advocacy campaign on different issues covered under Goal 16 is another contribution from CSOs. They are also engaged in raising awareness through social mobilisation, engagement and advocacy at community level on governance and anti-corruption. Legal support has been provided for ensuring access to justice, especially for the poor, women victims of acid/domestic violence, marginalised, ethnic/adibashi, dalit communities. Capacity building activities are being operated for community people, especially the youth, on different issues including rights to information, legal and human rights, labour rights, social accountability tools, among others. Some of the CSOs are promoting community participation in monitoring and decision-making of public representatives, public service delivery organisations (health, education, land, etc.) through formation of committees/groups at the grassroots.

## **Challenges**

Some of the challenges of the CSOs include reluctance from the government to work with CSOs on some issues under Goal 16, particularly that are sensitive in nature, such as corruption and governance. There is a dearth of official data. Government's reluctance in corruption data generated by CSOs is also another challenge. Sometimes partisan political influence jeopardises partnership activities between the government and CSOs.

## **Way Forward**

Legal reforms recommended by CSOs with regard to limitations existing in different laws pertaining to ensuring human rights, protection of freedom of speech and expression, rights to information, right to life and livelihood, and strengthening NIS institutions should be sincerely considered by the government. The institutional and financial capacity of NIS institutions should be increased for better performance. The government should conduct a nationwide survey to determine the baseline on the state of corruption and bribery, people's satisfaction and trust on NIS institutions.

The participation of youth volunteers and social workers should be increased from both the government and CSOs. Their capacity should be strengthened to promote good governance, transparency and accountability of different institutions, to act as a driving force against corruption, human rights violation, violence against women and children, and to promote peace and justice in the social sphere.

Coordination among different public and civil society organisations should be increased to give special attention to gender-based violence. Legal aid and service-providers, including state and non-state actors who are working across the country, should work together to create a central database which identifies and measures the reach and operations of legal aid and services.

To ensure sustainable development of dalits and adibashis, who are lagging behind for various reasons, institutional mechanisms, such as a separate ministry (like the Chittagong Hill Tracts) and/or a commission is needed.



# Executive Summary of the Review Report on **Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals**

## **Anchor**

Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)

## **Co-Anchor**

ActionAid Bangladesh

## **Associate Organisations**

BRAC

Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD)

Care Bangladesh

Gram Bikash Shohayok Shangstha (GBSS)

Oxfam in Bangladesh



## Introduction

The Goal 17 of Agenda 2030 that promises to ‘*strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development*’ is one of the key goals which have been included for every single voluntary national reviews for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) till date. As a cross-cutting goal, it directs about resources and partnerships in three core areas (i.e. economy, society and biosphere), and has diverse set of targets and indicators under five different areas including finance, technology, trade, capacity building and systemic issues. The present study highlights the activities of the non-state actors of Bangladesh, i.e. civil society organisations (CSOs) and the private sector, in implementing the SDG 17, with a view to identify their specific engagements towards achieving different targets of the goal.

## Bangladesh's Priority Targets under SDG 17 and their Performance in the Post-2015 Period

A sample survey has been carried out to identify the priority targets under Goal 17 for Bangladesh. Out of 19 different targets, five most prioritised targets for Bangladesh are related to finance (17.1 and 17.3), technology (17.6) and systemic issues (17.17 and 17.18). In fact, domestic resource mobilisation and alternate source of financing, including foreign direct investment (FDI) inflow, remittance and debt management—have been identified as the top priority targets in achieving the Goal 17. Similarly, support for technological development and CSOs have turned out as priority issues for Bangladesh. Interestingly, no target from the areas of trade and capacity building have been identified as most-priority targets. This was perhaps because of changes in Bangladesh's needs over the years, owing to achieving double graduation in economic and social development in recent years. Among the priority indicators, Bangladesh's performance during the post-2015 period (data available for 2016 and 2017 only) is not very impressive; this includes weak state of domestic resource mobilisation under Target 17.1 (e.g. tax-GDP (gross domestic product) ratio), slow rise in alternate resource flows under Target 17.3 (e.g. FDI-GDP ratio), and decelerating trend in flow of fund for CSOs under Target 17.17. On the other hand, the performance in some indicators are on track, such as fixed broadband subscription under Target 17.6, and remittance-export ratio under Target 17.3.

## Role of CSOs in Implementing the SDG 17

The engagement of the CSOs in case of implementing different targets is largely in the form of policy activism, policy awareness and capacity building. Since the CSOs were involved in related issues even in earlier decades, it is important to review their role from intertemporal point of view—pre-2015 and post-2015, to appreciate the incremental changes in their participation in the SDG process. CSOs at the national level had been involved in areas of trade, tax and aid-related issues, following the global trend. In recent times, their engagements have been widened and deepened. On the other hand, a new set of CSOs have emerged who work on various non-traditional areas, such as technology and communication, partly in partnership with different private sector organisations. Newer forms of engagement of the CSOs have been found in addressing tax-related

irregularities, such as restrictive tax treaties and its consequences on revenue losses. National CSOs have been building partnership with global organisations, such as the Global Alliance for Tax Justice (GATJ), on various issues. CSOs have been involved in capacity-building activities through organising training workshops with a view to build a broader constituency, while enhancing capacity and strengthening networks and advocacy through raising voices on development effectiveness issues. Some of the CSOs have been working on issues related to tax, trade governance, climate finance, knowledge generation and research, capacity building of CSOs and community-based organisations (CBOs) on the issues and challenges pertaining to the SDGs and national Five Year Plans (NFYPs). Under different platforms, large number of CSOs and CBOs have been involved in dissemination, capacity building and GO-NGO (government-non-government organisational) collaborative activities. The engagement of the CSOs has been widened in case of promoting technological advancements and other non-traditional issues related to trade, such as promoting living wage for workers in the global value chains; fair price for the manufacturers of the exporting countries; engagement in global policy debates on Southern issues; negotiation and communications; working as community watchdog for climate finance of the government; enhancing participation of CBOs and CSOs in democratic governance in Bangladesh; strengthening their knowledge and leadership capacities at the grassroots level, in order to secure the social and economic rights of the vulnerable individuals and communities in designing and implementation of government policies and budgets related to SDGs; getting involved in multi-stakeholder partnerships to mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources; and developing programme-related database. In recent years, CSOs have been extensively working with youth population to address their concerns.

### **Role of Private Sector in Implementing the SDG 17**

Private sector has been recognised as a major player for implementing SDGs, which was absent earlier in case of Millennium Development Goal (MDG)-led initiatives. CPD has carried out a web-based data analysis of the engagement of the private sector at the global level, based on the information available in the website titled Sustainable Development Partnership Platform, which is a United Nations (UN)-led initiative. Key areas of their engagement at the global level include—activities for knowledge sharing on climate change, gender equality, community development, media services, livelihood development, e-schools, information and communication technology (ICT) capability development, training, improving organisational capacity, public-private partnerships, promotion of marketing products, green growth by reduced chemical use, and ideas for app development. Instead of engaging directly with the corporate entity, private sector has formed different entities, such as foundation, corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds and providing financial support to universities, research organisations, schools and banks to implement different activities. Such engagements are found in different forms between different organisations, such as foundation-university collaboration, foundation-CSO collaboration, university-foundation collaboration, and UN agencies-foundations-private companies' collaboration, etc.

In Bangladesh, the engagement of the private sector in addressing different concerns related to SDG 17 has been following by and large a ‘business as usual’ approach. According to the information of the business associations available in the websites, they have been working on various issues which are related to Goals 3, 5, 8, 9, 12, 14 and 17. However, very few of these could be identified as focused and targetted initiatives; and how much of those initiatives are purposefully built to address the targets of Goal 17, is not out of question either.

### Challenges and Way Forward

The study identified a number of issues and concerns, which are largely of four categories, including: a) framework-related; b) data-related; c) performance-related; and d) CSO and private sector engagements-related. Following areas need to be taken in due attention.

**National Framework does not specify the role of CSOs and private sector.** The institutional framework for SDG implementation refers CSOs and private sector ‘ornamentally’, and in some instances as ‘beneficiary’, in the SDG implementation process. It is expected, that role of CSOs and private sector will be duly recognised in the framework, by adding responsibility as ‘associate partners’.

**Gap between activities related to indicators and those of CSOs.** Given the nature of work of the private sector and CSOs, which are largely in the field and at the grassroots levels, creating direct link of their works with the Goal 17 indicators is rather difficult. A voluntary initiative at national and global levels needs to be undertaken with a view ensure proper recognition of their contribution. Such initiative should identify a set of proxy indicators to be called ‘associated indicators’, customised with the activities and initiatives of the CSOs and the private sector.

**Bangladesh could not come out from the ‘business as usual’ trend in implementing Goal 17.** There is no significant difference observed in the performance of top-priority targets in comparison to other targets of Goal 17 between pre-2015 and post-2015 periods. In other words, Bangladesh is still following a ‘business as usual’ approach in implementing the related targets under five areas of Goal 17—finance, technology, trade, capacity building and systemic issues. Private sector, as well as CSOs, have a strong role to play in key issues related to domestic resource mobilisation, FDI and technology.

**Engagement of CSOs has widened and partly shifted in the post-2015 period.** The engagement of CSOs which were concentrated on trade and aid-related activities during the pre-2015, has now been widened to various other areas, such as technology, capacity building, partnership building, etc. In this process, the nature of partnership has changed with more collaboration with the private sector, as well as at the cross-border levels. Given the huge fund requirement in implementing the SDGs, development partners should further enhance the flow of fund in Bangladesh. In view of the recent dynamics, an emerged aspect in this

regard should be the consideration that—Bangladesh’s CSOs need support for working exclusively for Bangladeshis; support for the Rohingyas by the development partners should be allocated and reported separately. At the national level, Bangladesh Government should form a ‘SDG Trust Fund’ in implementing SDGs by the CSOs.

***Bangladesh’s private sector is way behind compared to that of the engagements of the global private sector.*** Bangladesh’s private sector is yet to get prepared to set their strategies and activities in achieving SDGs, particularly for Goal 17. Globally, private sector is involved in diverse areas related to this goal through different entities and collaborative arrangements, whereas in Bangladesh, there are only few local initiatives found which actually target different SDG goals. This is particularly due to less awareness among the private sector about the SDGs, as well as limited presence of organised, formal businesses and corporate sector. Private sector could put emphasis on broader tax base, less tax burden on small and medium enterprises (SMEs); raising concern over rationale behind overconcentration of fiscal incentives to the readymade garments (RMG) sector, and demand for more balanced distribution of fiscal incentives between RMG and non-RMG sectors; strategic trade policy for sectoral development; enabling business environment for private investment including FDI; promoting bilateral free trade areas (FTAs) and other trade agreements with potential countries. Ensuring information technology (IT)-enable business environment, as well as promoting IT in businesses, needs to be catered by the private sector, as well as by the CSOs.

# **Concept Note of the Citizens Conclave**



## Background

The world has stepped into the fourth year of adopting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with a vow to transform the world. Along with other 192 countries, Bangladesh has also joined this journey of realising the SDGs by 2030. At this phase of implementing this complex development agenda, it is necessary to track the progress and identifying challenges and opportunities.

Keeping this in view, the *Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh* will organise a day-long event titled **Citizens Conclave on "Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh"** on Saturday, 27 April 2019, in Dhaka.

The event will be organised before the meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2019, which is to be held during 9-18 July 2019, in New York. This year, the theme of the HLPF meeting is: *Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*.

The Goals that will be reviewed at this year's HLPF are: **Goal 4:** Quality Education; **Goal 8:** Decent Work and Economic Growth; **Goal 10:** Reduced Inequality; **Goal 13:** Climate Action; **Goal 16:** Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; and **Goal 17:** Partnerships for the Goals. This year, 51 countries have volunteered for presenting their National Voluntary Reviews to the HLPF; unfortunately, Bangladesh is not amongst them.

In this connection, the Citizen's Platform will design and organise the event in line with the HLPF theme and goal relevance. The event will yield an outcome by analysing the state of progress of the specific aforementioned Goals, with an underlying objective to present it at the HLPF in New York through a side-event.

## Objectives

The Conclave will be organised with three major objectives:

- a. Assessing the progress of the selected six Goals in Bangladesh;
- b. Capturing the lessons learnt—best practices and challenges;
- c. Assessing the way forward for more effective delivery.

## Design of the Event

The event will be organised around the theme and specified Goals of the HLPF 2019. Apart from the opening and closing plenaries, there will be six parallel sessions on each of those SDGs, which will be organised in two phases. These parallel sessions will extensively discuss and analyse the progress, challenges and opportunities of these concerned Goals, and then come up with a status report.

The six status reports from the six thematic sessions will be used to prepare an Overview Report titled *Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh*.

### **Participation**

Thematically, the event will be organised in participation and collaboration of the following categories:

- Government organisations
- Non-government and civil society organisations
- International development partners
- Media

### **Organisation of the Event**

Operationally, the event will be organised by the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, in consultation with the Core Group members, and under the guidance of the Advisory Body of the Platform. Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), as the Secretariat of the Platform, will be responsible for the execution of the planned Conclave in cooperation, support and suggestion from the Platform Partners. The organisations which are not Partners of the Platform, can also be engaged with this event in various capacities.

*23 March 2019*

# **Supporters of the Citizens Conclave**

*(In alphabetical order)*



**ActionAid Bangladesh**

**Apex Footwear Limited**

**BRAC Bank Limited**

**Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)**

**Diakonia Bangladesh**

**Ha-Meem Group**

**LankaBangla Finance Limited**

**Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)**

**Max Foundation**

**Muslim Aid-UK**

**Plan International**

**Sightsavers Bangladesh**

**Summit Group**

**Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB)**

**UNDP Bangladesh**

**WaterAid Bangladesh**

**Akij Group**

**BRAC**

**Catholic Relief Services**

**DBL Group**

**Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition**

**HelpAge International**

**Malek Spinning Mills Limited**

**Marie Stopes Bangladesh**

**Meghna Group of Industries (MGI)**

**Newage Group**

**Practical Action Bangladesh**

**SNV Netherlands Development Organisation**

**Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation**

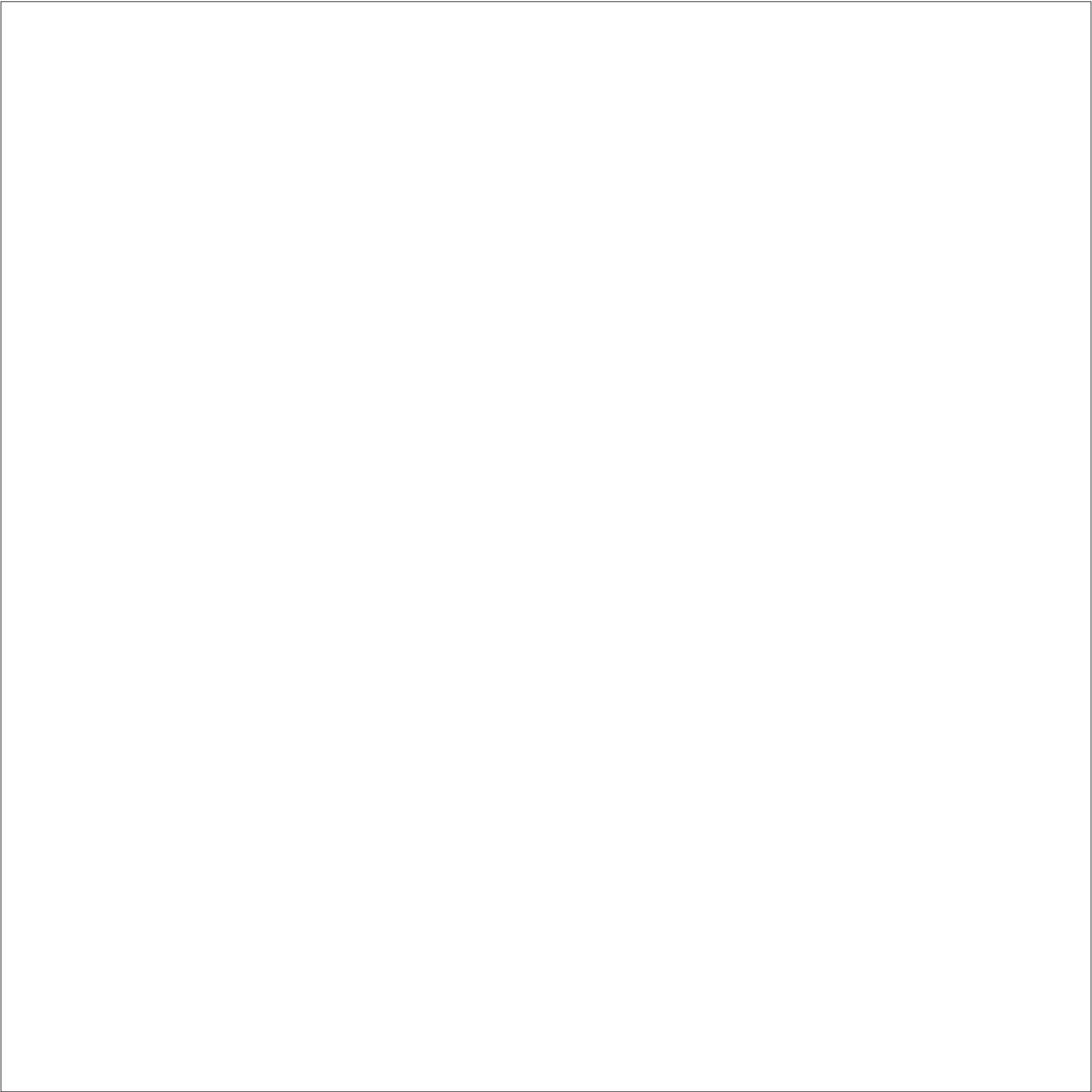
**UK Aid**

**Unilever Bangladesh Ltd.**



# Partners of the Platform

*(As of 20 April 2019)*



1. Access Bangladesh Foundation
2. Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF)
3. Action for Social Development (ASD)
4. ActionAid Bangladesh
5. ADAB
6. ADD International Bangladesh
7. Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK)
8. Article 19, Bangladesh and South Asia
9. Association for Social Development of Bangladesh
10. Avijan
11. Banchte Shekha
12. Bandhu Social Welfare Society
13. Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA)
14. Bangladesh Indigenous Peoples Forum (BIPF)
15. Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS)
16. Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)
17. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad
18. Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS)
19. Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association (BNWLA)
20. Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC)
21. Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA)
22. Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity (BPKS)
23. Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF)
24. Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (BYLC)
25. BRAC
26. British Council Bangladesh
27. Brotee
28. Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD)
29. Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)
30. CARE Bangladesh
31. Caritas Bangladesh
32. Center for Disability in Development (CDD)
33. Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB)
34. Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)
35. Change Makers
36. COAST Trust
37. Concern Worldwide
38. Dak Diye Jai (DDJ)
39. Dhaka Ahsania Mission
40. Dhruvataru Youth Development Foundation (DYDF)
41. Dnet
42. Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK)
43. Enfants du Monde
44. Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh (FNB)
45. The Fred Hollow Foundation
46. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Bangladesh (FES Bangladesh)
47. Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB)
48. Friendship
49. Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK)
50. Gandhi Ashram Trust (GAT)
51. Ghashful
52. Gonoshasthaya Kendra
53. Gram Bikash Shohayak Shangstha (GBSS)
54. HEKS/EPER
55. The Hunger Project-Bangladesh
56. Integrated Social Development Effort (ISDE) Bangladesh
57. International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD)
58. JAAGO Foundation
59. JAGO NARI
60. Justice Watch Foundation
61. Kapaeeng Foundation
62. Light House
63. Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA)

64. Manab Mukti Sangstha (MMS)
65. Manab Unnayan Kendra (MUK)
66. Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
67. Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)
68. Marie Stopes Bangladesh (MSB)
69. Nabolok
70. Nagorik Uddyog
71. Naripokkho
72. National Development Programme (NDP)
73. National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD)
74. Oxfam in Bangladesh
75. People's Oriented Program Implementation (POPI)
76. Plan International Bangladesh
77. Pollisree
78. Practical Action Bangladesh
79. PRIP Trust
80. RDRS Bangladesh
81. Research Initiatives, Bangladesh (RIB)
82. Right Here Right Now-Bangladesh Platform
83. Rupantar
84. SAJIDA Foundation
85. Sancred Welfare Foundation (SWF)
86. Save the Children in Bangladesh
87. SERAC-Bangladesh
88. Shushilan
89. Sightsavers Bangladesh
90. SKS Foundation
91. Society for Development Initiatives (SDI)
92. Steps Towards Development (Steps)
93. Sushasoner Jonny Procharavizan-SUPRO
94. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB)
95. Turning Point Foundation
96. Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP Bangladesh)
97. Unnayan Sangha
98. Uttaran
99. Voice of the Poor People
100. Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Bangladesh
101. WaterAid Bangladesh
102. WE CAN
103. World Vision Bangladesh (WVB)
104. Youth Opportunities Bangladesh
105. Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)







## Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh

এসডিজি বাস্তবায়নে নাগরিক প্ল্যাটফর্ম, বাংলাদেশ

*Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh* is an initiative of non-state actors of the country with representation from more than hundred non-government and civil society organisations and the private sector. The Platform seeks to contribute towards implementation of the SDGs in Bangladesh, and support the ongoing government efforts in this connection. Keeping in view the upcoming High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), to be held in July 2019 in New York, which will be followed by a Summit-level HLPF in September 2019, the Platform has planned the event titled **Citizens Conclave on Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh**, to draw inputs from the non-state actors of Bangladesh.

The theme of the HLPF 2019 is *Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*. The six Goals which will be reviewed at the Forum are: **Goal 4**: Quality Education; **Goal 8**: Decent Work and Economic Growth; **Goal 10**: Reduced Inequality; **Goal 13**: Climate Action; **Goal 16**: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; and **Goal 17**: Partnerships for the Goals.

The day-long Citizens Conclave has been designed around the specific Goals of the HLPF 2019, with the following objectives: (a) assess Bangladesh's progress in the selected six Goal areas; (b) capture the lessons learnt from SDG implementation experience and best practices, and the challenges in this connection; and (c) identify the way forward towards more effective delivery of the SDGs.

Six goal-specific review reports are going to be presented at various sessions of the Conclave, prepared by six Goal Groups (GGs), which include Partner organisations of the Platform and beyond, with expertise and interests in the respective areas of the selected SDGs. An Overview Report on four years of SDG implementation in Bangladesh will also be shared at the Conclave.

The underlying objective of the Conclave is to generate an outcome document, which will be presented at a side-event in the global HLPF process.

[www.4yearssdgs.bdplatform4sdgs.net](http://www.4yearssdgs.bdplatform4sdgs.net)



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