

Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh

# The Journey and the Learnings



Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh  
এসডিজি বাস্তবায়নে নাগরিক প্ল্যাটফর্ম, বাংলাদেশ

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## Preface

On June 18, 2016, driven by the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a group of leading personalities of the country came together to launch the Citizens' Platform for the SDGs, Bangladesh. The Citizen's Platform, today, is a unique entity that is supported by more than 150 organisations from the civil society and the private sector. Its emergence is an exemplary organisational initiative and an insightful experience of collective public action.

As we look back, one may readily identify several distinctive phases of evolution during the decade-long journey of the Citizen's Platform. These phases are characterised by discernible milestones underpinned by innovative and adaptive responses attendant challenges. Let me recall a few of them.

- I. At the very outset, the Citizen's Platform sought to operationalise the vision of achieving sustainable development through programmatic activities in this regard. To this end, 12 specific parameters were identified to determine who should not be left behind in Bangladesh. This exercise greatly helped the network, persons with disabilities (PwD), and vulnerable communities at the core, shaping the Citizen's Platform's focus and activities.
- II. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Citizen's Platform quickly adopted digital solutions, shifting to virtual meetings while ramping up its presence on social media. This allowed the Citizen's Platform to keep its constituents informed and provide correctional feedback to relevant authorities (e.g., vaccination).
- III. Youth remained a central focus of the Citizen's Platform's activities all through. The Citizen's Platform was aligned with their aspirations and struggles and facilitated the young generation's participation in the national aggregate development discourse, through projection of youth cluster.
- IV. The Citizen's Platform moved from the policy narrative to projection of the disaggregated interests concerning vulnerable communities. This shift from the appropriate development narrative—solely beyond ritualistic—to their

representation and to the spaced experiences of marginalised communities brought light to the untold stories of those left behind.

In view of the above, this publication presents the key learnings from the Citizens' Platform's journey, which remained true to the spirit of the SDGs and inclusive growth:

- I. The Citizen's Platform, through its activities and learned engagements with government initiatives on the SDGs and policy reforms, seeks opportunities for collaboration and change.
- II. The network also validated the proposition that successful advocacy is grounded in knowledge-based, credible evidence.
- III. The Citizen's Platform realised very soon the need for robust documentation and proceed towards the preservation of institutional memory and capturing the innovative efforts of member organisations.
- IV. The need to expand the Citizen's Platform's organisational capacity and SDG literacy emerged as the network began gathering information.
- V. The need to engage youth, beyond the financial resources of the core network was acknowledged very early in the Citizen's Platform's journey and meaningful engagement had ensured registration of their aspirations on the national policy changes.
- VI. The importance of adapting to changing global and domestic landscapes, particularly in terms of financial sustainability and navigating the evolving civic space.

This publication comes at a moment when Bangladesh is undergoing a unique and defining transformation. With major shifts in the political and economic landscape—especially the changing government priorities and the ongoing global challenges—the conversation around inclusive development has taken on a new urgency. The role of non-state actors is being redefined, taking on greater significance in shaping Bangladesh's development and democratic path ahead. Thus, it is very opportune that this work arrives now, helping us refresh our institutional memories and rethink how we move forward. I hope my companions and compatriots find it useful in their efforts.

I also take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to the Core Group of the Citizen's Platform, the Partner Organisations, and international supporters. I am especially grateful to Mr Md. Mozahidul Islam, independent consultant and capacity-building expert, for his substantial contribution in preparing this document. I also extend my sincere thanks to Mr Martin Swapan Pandey, Joint News Editor at The Daily Star, for his meticulous proofreading and editorial guidance.

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Dhaka  
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**Our aim is to show that transformation is possible and is happening right now – in so many places, with so many innovations – and with the engagement of so many people.**

*-UN Secretary-General on SDG*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Being encouraged by the spirit and concept of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (2015-30), the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, was launched in June 2016 as an organised citizens' initiative by a group of eminent individuals of the country. The Citizen's Platform for SDGs, starting with 28 organisations, has now emerged as the largest forum for Non-State Actors (NSAs) – having 125 partner organisations – involving the unique blend of non-governmental development organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations (CSOs) and private sector associations in Bangladesh. The journey of the network has evolved through distinctive phases from 2016-2022. With its emergence as a leading CSO network in Bangladesh over the past six years, there is a need and demand among the stakeholders to understand the learnings from this journey. Moreover, a retrospective exploration will be useful for the Citizen's Platform in strategising its future programmes and activities encompassing the learning experiences. In view of this, the Citizen's Platform sought to undertake an exercise to develop a learning framework which will also document its emergence and evolution as well as guide its journey going forward.

### **1.1 Why this document**

The specific objectives of this initiative are threefold: firstly, to craft a comprehensive document that traces the evolution of the Citizen's Platform, drawing insights from collateral elements. Secondly, to capture the diverse learning experiences of

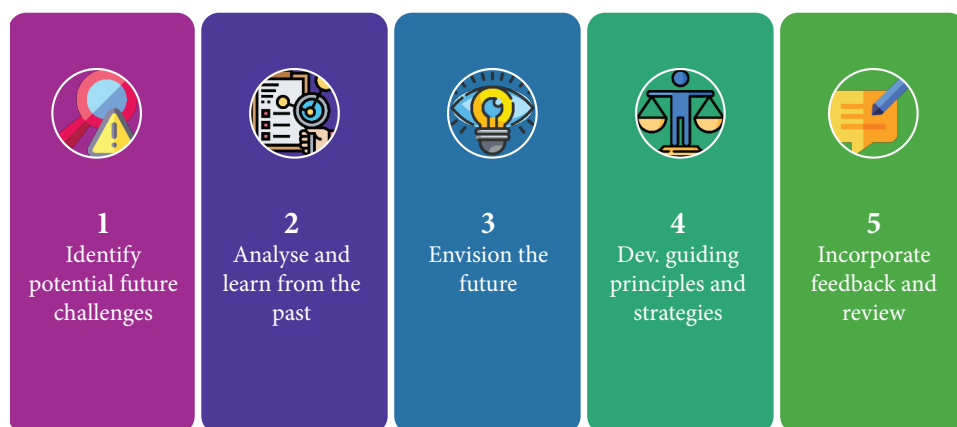
the network, detailing both its notable achievements and the challenges it faced along the way. And thirdly, to formulate a robust conceptual and operational framework that looks ahead, foreseeing and addressing the future challenges that the network may encounter in its journey ahead.

## 1.2 How was it prepared

This document is the result of a multi-step, inclusive approach involving a diverse group of stakeholders. Managed by the Citizen's Platform's Secretariat, the process involved the active participation of its Core Group members, Secretariat officials and members of the Partner Organisations, whose insights were systematically reviewed and incorporated.

The report is the product of a methodological and agreed-upon discussion among the network members. It was a unique effort to revisit the past and capture learnings for the future. To ensure a comprehensive exercise to capture the valuable insights and learning, a tailor-made process was necessary. Accordingly, it was decided that given the very nature and extent of activity of the network, the process should be qualitative.

A flexible and tailored learning framework was developed to guide the deferent input process of the exercise. The framework consisted of five steps, as shown in the figure. All exercise progressed in the following sequence.



The comprehensive study on the network has been fastidiously crafted, adhering to the highest standards of research methodology. The structure encompasses a systematic approach to data collection, analysis, and synthesis, ensuring the reliability and validity of the findings. The following outlines the key aspects of the research methodology, including the identification of resources consulted.

### *Literature Review*

A wide range of sources have been consulted for the document, including the Citizen's Platform's own records, prior interventions, and collaborative efforts with governmental and non-governmental entities at local, national and international levels.

The document also reflects a thorough analysis of various public discussions and expert consultations at subnational and national levels, as well as national and global knowledge products and information dissemination processes that have contributed to the network's development.

### *Collaborative Exchange*

A concept note was prepared upon discussion with the Secretariat to guide the consultation workshops. A separate checklist was developed for individual interviews.

Two consultation workshops were held, one to capture the perspectives of the national NGOs where representatives of nine NGOs participated. Participants were invited to ensure sectoral and geographical representation. Moreover, one specialist on marginalised issues was consulted through an in-depth interview. The other workshop was organised to incorporate the views and suggestions of the INGOs and the development partners. Seven INGOs and two development partners took part in the workshop.

Five of the Core Group members were interviewed one-to-one. Core Group members were interviewed to gain insights into the background and context of the network. It formed the essence of the section of the report dealing with initiation, formation, evolution, and progress of the network.

To capture the on-the-ground and behind-the-scene efforts for all activities of the Citizen's Platform members of the Secretariat were interviewed.

In adhering to the rigorous standards of research methodology, the development and finalisation of the draft report underwent a meticulous and systematic review and verification process. The initial stage involved an in-depth review by the Core Group, a body comprised of key stakeholders and leaders within the network. This review aimed to ensure coherence, accuracy, and alignment of the draft report with the network's objectives. The Core Group's insights and feedback played a crucial role in refining the report, addressing any discrepancies or gaps.

Subsequently, the draft report underwent a comprehensive review by the member organisations. This phase emphasised inclusivity, inviting diverse perspectives and expertise from the 150 organisations. Member organisations provided valuable feedback, bringing a collective and varied understanding to the document. This inclusive review process not only solidified the robustness of the report but also ensured representation from different sectors and viewpoints within the Citizen's Platform.

The iterative nature of the review process allowed for a dynamic exchange of ideas, insights, and constructive criticisms. This collaborative approach not only enhanced the overall quality of the draft report but also fostered a sense of ownership and shared commitment among the stakeholders. The engagement of both the Core Group and member organisations in the review process exemplifies a commitment to transparency, accountability, and the democratic principles inherent in the network's operations.

Following the reviews, the draft report underwent a thorough finalisation process. This phase involved synthesising the feedback from both the Core Group and member organisations, addressing any remaining concerns, and ensuring the document's coherence (referred to the Annex-7.3). The finalisation stage adhered to a rigorous quality control process, checking for consistency and accuracy, in adherence to the established research methodology.

The review by the Core Group and member organisations in different phases of the development and finalisation of the report allowed for a comprehensive and diverse assessment, ensuring the report's alignment with the network's overarching goals. This collaborative and iterative approach not only improved

the quality of the document but also reinforced the Citizen's Platform's ethos of collective decision-making and shared responsibility in advancing sustainable development objectives.

### **1.3 What is this document about**

This document takes readers on a transformative journey through the evolution of the Citizen's Platform. Commencing with an introduction that outlines its objectives and methodology, it digs deep into the network's inception, formation, and governance. Key elements such as communication, outreach, capacity building, and global recognition are explored in great details. Major achievements, spanning 'Leave No One Behind', knowledge divide, visibility enhancement, youth empowerment, and responses to challenges like the COVID-19 pandemic, are highlighted. Examinations of organisational, financial, and external challenges led to insightful recommendations for enhancements in networking, financial policies, communication and outreach, capacity building, and community knowledge development. The document concludes with a clarion call for action, presenting a strategic roadmap and learning framework for the network's future initiatives. Annexes offer additional details, featuring individual members, partners, and key resources.

## 2. CAPTURING A TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY

The Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, is a unifying force for diverse entities, including non-governmental development organisations, civil society organisations, and private sector associations. The network recognises the importance of reflecting on its transformative journey. This retrospective exploration is critical for extracting valuable insights and shaping future programmes in the light of the insights gained.

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals introduced a rich palette of objectives, offering an unprecedented opportunity for broader participation, especially from civil society and other non-state actors. The comprehensive and diverse nature of the SDGs dovetailed with the aspirations and challenges of developing countries like Bangladesh.

However, research and experience of organisations engaged in policymaking and implementation of MDGs showed that many nations, including Bangladesh, had not allocated incremental financial resources specifically for MDGs. This finding was an eye-opener, making it clear that a government-centric approach would not suffice for realising the ambitious goals set forth by the SDGs.

Thus, the emergence of the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, signifies a strategic shift towards a more inclusive and collaborative approach to development. Led by a group of leading organisations working for policy advocacy and human rights, universal education, right to information, combating corruption, and promoting dignified life for marginalised communities and livelihood, this initiative has garnered participation of citizens from diverse professional backgrounds who play instrumental roles in social transformation. Its inception followed extensive consultations at national and international levels, with a strong emphasis on the SDGs' principle of Leave No One Behind (LNOB).

The evolution of the Citizen's Platform went through the following broad and at times interconnected stages.

## **2.1 Adapting a Global Agenda in National Context**

The launching of the Citizen's Platform was by no means an abrupt event; neither did it happen without a context. The underlying conditions were already in the making -- relevant organisational elements were present and the need for such a unified entity already felt. It only needed the enabling environment and an opportune moment to piece together all the factors and germinate the latent potentials into a beginning. The major context and driving forces that triggered the process of the network's formation, among others, are:

Reducing inequality: Development initiatives, both by state and non-state actors, have been relentless in reducing poverty over the last five decades, with commendable success. However, while the focus has been on poverty, inequality started to widen, especially in the last couple of decades. Despite being concerned about the increasing inequality, individual NSAs had little in their capacity as addressing inequality essentially falls within the realm of macro policy regime. The MDGs prioritised eight development goals but was not explicit on inequality. Besides, it provided inadequate space for NSAs to be involved. Adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development brought out the concern of inequality in a comprehensive way. It helped outline policy areas to act on. Thus, the SDGs in a way triggered the inclusion of inequality in the development agenda. In pursuit of reducing inequality, NSAs identified that inequality is structurally embedded and policy reform is essential to address it. This led to the realisation that the foremost task in reducing inequality is advocacy for policy reform since independent, disjointed advocacy has only limited effect. Effectively, this new stage created by SDGs called for the actors to come together and set ground for the paradigm shift from independent to collaborative initiative.

Discrimination of the marginalised: Efforts to understanding inequality led to the dissection of discrimination and brought to prominence the diverse facets of marginalisation. Discrimination against the fringe communities further revealed that strengthening the demand side is essential both for short- and long-term results. Moreover, the 'Leave No One Behind' philosophy of SDGs drew focus on CSOs and NSAs working directly with the marginalised communities. This thrust



on the 'local' created space for organisations working with specific marginalised communities through customised programmes.

A strong representation of the demand side in development discourse is characteristic of the 'Agenda 2030'. This stress on the demand side increased the role of the NSAs with greater responsibilities. They engage directly with the community, and so they are rich in local knowledge. In fact, the NSAs are one of the major actors in organising and mobilising community, building awareness, identifying priorities and raising voice. In other words, they develop the synergy to infuse strength in the demand side of development.

Adoption of the 2030 Agenda for SDG: Agenda 2030 provided the overall enabling environment. In a generally shrinking civic space, it created a legitimate framework for effective citizens' engagements. Capitalising on this opportunity, the Citizen's Platform brought together a diverse group of organisations, creating synergies with dedicated agenda towards greater accountability and transparency in the development process, with emphasis on those previously left-behind.

The catalyst: The narrative would appear incomplete without the acknowledgement of the role of the catalyst that eventually made the Citizen's Platform possible. There is no room for ambiguity about CPD playing this critical role. Its long policy advocacy experience shows that supply side-driven policy advocacy has limited success. Hence, there is a need to integrate and embed the demands of the communities that are left behind in national policy discourse.

Eventually, a group of diverse organisations with similar objectives, including think-tank CPD, watchdog Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and human-rights advocate Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) initiated a dialogue about creating a multi-stakeholder platform for the SDGs in Bangladesh in 2016. In fact, the leadership of these organisations participated in various national and international dialogues between 2013 and 2015 to integrate Bangladesh's development challenges into the global development discourse.

CPD embraced the momentous drive of the Sustainable Development Goals as an opportune moment to establish a citizen-led platform designed to bridge this vital gap, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and responsive approach to national development in Bangladesh. To support this cause, a diverse range of leading organisations such as Apex, BRAC, Campaign for Popular Education

(CAMPE), TIB and Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) joined forces with CPD.

The Partner Organisations demonstrated great enthusiasm to collaborate, primarily due to the opportunity to utilise competencies of NGOs and other development actors, which would also contribute to informing public perceptions about their inclusive development approach. The members concurred that achieving the SDGs would require a paradigm shift in existing policies and underscored the necessity for collective, multi-stakeholder efforts to meet these ambitious targets.

## 2.2 Institutionalising the Initiative

### *Nascence: Pioneering the Path to Impactful Beginnings*

After a series of fruitful dialogues and consultations among various organisations, the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, was officially inaugurated on June 18, 2016. Its governance structure, activities, and objectives were formulated through extensive research and activism. The network introduced a well-defined term of reference, constituting an Advisory Group and a Core Group to oversee its operations. (See Annex-7.1)



The Core Group was composed of eight members, selected based on their expertise, reputation, and capacity to contribute. The group is a melting pot of representatives from civil society, academia, activists, and the private sector, embodying the multi-stakeholder approach central to the SDGs.

Thus, the Citizen's Platform emerged not merely as a new initiative, but as a refinement of years of engagement, learning, and recalibration. It marks a crucial step forward in the shared journey towards sustainable development in Bangladesh.

### *Secretariat formation and role consolidation*

One of the pivotal steps in the consolidation phase was the establishment of a strong secretariat to steer the network's activities. Given the expansive and complex nature of the network, CPD, in consultation with the Advisory and Core Groups, took it upon itself to crystallise the secretariat's structure and roles. Staff members from CPD were given additional responsibilities aligned with the objectives and operational needs of the Citizen's Platform. The secretariat was instrumental in carrying out a range of critical activities, including internal management and external communication tasks.

### *Multi-stakeholder engagement*

In the evolution phase, having acknowledged the intrinsic diversity and complexity of the sustainable development agenda, the network actively sought to establish a collaborative relationship with government and non-government organisations, private sector as well as regional and global bodies.

After a successful joint conference with the NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB), another milestone was reached with a dialogue focused on the role of private sector in achieving the SDGs. The dialogue was held in association with the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI). The Citizen's Platform's credibility was further cemented when two of its members were included in government committees, indicating recognition and acceptance at the policy level.

*The term ‘Partner’ means an organisation in the non-government and private sector that the Citizen’s Platform has enlisted for partnership. All partners shall be involved in the network on equal footing, and with due recognition of each other’s contributions – organisational, technical, financial and/or otherwise.*

**Source:** *Partnership Policy of Citizen’s Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh.*

In May 2017, the network organised a pioneering conference with the objective of fostering Government-NGO partnership in Dhaka. This was followed by other special conferences focusing on LNOB and youth, which were crowd-funded with participation of diverse stakeholders. Following the conference, a book compiling all policy briefs was published to encapsulate the discussions and resolutions.

The Citizen’s Platform adopted a multi-stakeholder partnership approach to deliver expected results towards the Sustainable Development Goals and provide clear guidance on how to build the most robust and effective collaborations. The network has been able to onboard a wide range of Partners – 150 organisations to be specific – that come from national NGOs, international NGOs and the private sector. (See annex-7.4)

In 2018, CPD collaborated with Oxfam in an EU-supported programme focusing on SDG localisation. Lessons from this programme were integrated into other initiatives of Citizen’s Platform, underscoring the importance of continuous learning and international partnerships.

### **Financial accountability**

Recognising the need for transparency and trust, especially in a phase where its financial and operational scales are expanding, the network has initiated a rigorous audit of its annual income and expenditure. The financial reports are no longer confined to internal audit but are shared openly during the Core Group meetings. The finance personnel from CPD have been actively supporting the network in carrying out the audit. This newfound transparency in financial

operations serves a two-fold purpose: instils confidence among current partners and also attracts potential partners and stakeholders who value accountability.

These actions underscore the network's dedication and ability to adapt and innovate, even in the face of overwhelming challenges. Through these initiatives, the Citizen's Platform not only sustained its ongoing activities but also demonstrated its role as a responsible, flexible, and vital entity in the broader context of sustainable development in Bangladesh.

## **2.3 Crafting Effective Communication and Outreach**

### *Communication*

In its emerging phase, the Citizen's Platform secretariat prioritised setting up of the network's communication channels to enhance its visibility and stakeholder engagement. A series of initiatives followed, including the development of its logo, communication materials, and digital presence. A dedicated website was developed, along with a Facebook page, Twitter handle, and email communication loops. These efforts were crucial in establishing the network as a cohesive and identifiable entity, both within Bangladesh and beyond.

### *Special initiatives and publications*

During this phase, the network also organised various events focusing on women rights, human rights, and the rights of Adivasis and Dalit communities. Additionally, a unique initiative resulted in the publication of a book titled 'Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh: Non-state Actors as Delivery Partners'. The book is the collection of the contributions of over 50 organisations towards SDG achievement in Bangladesh.

### *Geographical outreach*

Starting in 2016, the Citizen's Platform underwent a significant phase of expansion, stretching its tentacles beyond Dhaka. For instance, Codec and Committee of Concerned Citizens (CCC) organised events in Chattogram and Rangpur to increase regional engagement. Local members hosted these events, showcasing the decentralised nature of the network's efforts. Moreover, personnel dedicated

to the network often acted as resource persons to accentuate the significance of collaboration for SDG implementation.

### ***Capacity building***

Another focal area of activity during this consolidation phase was capacity building. Recognising the variegated nature of its membership and the need for specific skillsets to understand and implement the SDGs, the secretariat organised multiple batches of orientation programmes. These sessions were aimed primarily at NGO personnel but later expanded to include media representatives, government officials, and members from the private sector.

## **2.4 A Couple of High Points of the Journey**

In 2019, the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, was represented at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York, where the secretariat organised a side-event to highlight the contribution of the non-state actors in the context of Bangladesh to implement the SDGs. These contributions were explored in case of six SDGs that were identified for discussion at the HLPF 2019. This offered a global stage for the network to highlight its achievements and challenges. It also worked towards conceptualising what LNOB actually means in the context of Bangladesh, reviewing policies, and suggesting roles for non-state actors. In terms of influencing policy, the Citizen's Platform members have directly impacted the setting of 39+1 targets, aimed at localising SDGs at the sub-district level. This is an innovative approach to make the SDGs accessible and actionable at local administrative levels.

In a nutshell, Chapter 2 unravels the metamorphic expedition undertaken by the Citizen's Platform, revealing its evolution, finicky governance enhancements, strategic communication maneuvers, and instances of global acclaim. This introspective journey not only illuminates the network's historical trajectory but also lays the groundwork for comprehending its far-reaching influence and steering the course for future endeavours.

### 3. TOWARDS ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE IMPACT

This section explores into the notable achievements and milestones that define the Citizen's Platform's contribution to the nation's sustainable development landscape. From its inception, the network has evolved into a formidable force, uniting diverse stakeholders under a common umbrella. The following exploration illuminates the achievements that have shaped the Citizen's Platform into a catalyst for positive change in Bangladesh.

#### 3.1 Voice, Visibility, and Branding

The network brought 150 diverse organisations together under a single identity. Synergies among the members infused heightened energy in the united force. This multiplier effect gave strength to their voice, prominence to visibility and recognition. Specific achievements of the network in this context include:

CSOs in Mainstream: Member organisations constitute the Citizen's Platform, hence they are its lifeline. They contributed to the growth and stability of the network in multifarious ways. Perhaps the most valuable contribution by the members was the outreach service they provided for marginalised communities in far-flung areas. They have been instrumental in generating local knowledge, enabling localisation of SDGs and holding public hearings (12 in total). The contribution of local members was a key element in documents presented in national conferences. Most of the presentations in regional and national level were informed by research, social audit, and consultation by local members. For example, local members of the network conducted survey in government primary schools in Gaibandha, Nilphamari, Thakurgaon, and produced a fact-finding report which was shared with district and regional government and non-government stakeholders. Eventually, incorporating feedback, and sharpening the recommendations, the document was presented in the National Conference on

‘Investing in Public Primary Education: Local Concerns and Expected Actions.’ Another key contribution by the network members was the logistic support that they extended to others. Moreover, the members made significant financial contribution to organise events both at local and national level. The Dhaka-based members, along with the Secretariat, hosted regular meetings as needed while local events were organised, hosted and financed by local members. Thus, one of the most significant achievements of the network was capturing grassroots voices on various national development agendas and paving the way for these organisations to participate in national development dialogues. Through these actions, the network essentially put the slogan ‘Leave No One Behind’ into action.

**Participation in GoB Mechanism:** One of the network’s most noteworthy achievements was its active involvement in the high-level SDGs Working Team formed with the Director-General, Governance Innovation Unit of the Prime Minister’s Office as the Chair. The team, which also included government officials, academia, CSOs and private sector representatives, is responsible for providing recommendations to the ‘SDGs Implementation and Review Committee’ on SDGs implementation. This multi-sectoral collaboration was critical for the network’s credibility and effectiveness.

**Bridging with Private Sector:** This is the first such integration of private sector with CSOs and NSAs, drawing private sector’s attention to SDGs and their potential role in achieving them. Participation of business networks (e.g. BUILD) which already has a Working Group on environment and climate issues added special impetus to the network’s work. The Citizen’s Platform ensures active participation of the private sector in its events. In various discussions, the network brought forth CSR as well as sustainability issues while highlighting the private sector’s role and leadership for collective policy advocacy in favour of the grassroots citizens. Ensuring participation of the corporate sector is a milestone achievement for the network, which is instrumental in meeting the SDGs.

**Collective Advocacy:** The network achieved a notable milestone by amplifying the unified voices of citizens, significantly bolstering the impact and resonance of advocacy efforts. This played a pivotal role in prompting policy reforms (e.g. incorporation of SDG in all programme/project implementation by NGO Affairs Bureau) and nurturing a development environment characterised by inclusivity. This also involved collaboration with CPD, bringing in its wealth of expert knowledge, and the network members contributing their advocacy resources.



The unique combination introduced a robust and well-connected process for effective advocacy to effectively convey the demands of service seekers to the service providers.

**Recognition:** A national entity driven by citizens, the Citizen's Platform has garnered recognition and commendation for its objectives, capable leadership, effective management, operational strategies, and internal governance. The network boasts inclusion of a diverse group comprising civil society organisations and private sector entities that are actively engaged in development initiatives. Moreover, the network has been proactive in extending its sphere beyond national borders, particularly within regional and international mechanisms tasked with influencing policy direction through the lens of human rights and participatory development. One of the significant achievements of the network is its successful endeavours to assess and communicate the country's progress, acknowledge challenges, and outline the future trajectory in alignment with the commitments made under the SDGs through the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process of the UN.

### **3.2 Addressing the Knowledge Divide**

The intellectual capacity of CPD as reflected through its numerous research publications has long been credited nationally and internationally. And the Citizen's Platform made optimum utilisation of this vast expertise of CPD. The network recognised that claiming legitimate rights by the marginalised is contingent upon knowledge of the policy declarations and planned allocation for the communities. It therefore became crucial to address the knowledge divide between demand and supply side stakeholders. Accordingly, the network developed itself as the knowledge actor and engaged in generating knowledge. The knowledge thus generated and disseminated built up the critical mass around implementation of the SDGs. This also resulted in raising demands together with demonstrating deficiencies in policy/action in an informed manner, supported by evidence. In the process, the network successfully achieved, among other things:

**Elimination of Linguistic Barrier:** The network released a Bangla version of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and extensively circulated it through a range of distribution channels, including government institutions, partner organisations, and public libraries, all provided free of charge. Additionally, the network has consistently generated and published a substantial volume of

research reports, policy briefs, concept notes, and media briefings, all in Bangla language. This commitment to producing content in local language underscores the network's dedication to ensuring accessibility and disseminating critical development-related information to community people.

**Documentation and Publication:** The Citizen's Platform allocated significant resources for meticulous documentation, including regular publications of event proceedings, thematic papers, event briefs, and policy briefs. For instance, 15 policy briefs were prepared during a youth conference, and the briefs were later compiled and published in the conference proceeding of Youth Conference 2018 organised by Citizen's Platform titled "Bangladesh and Agenda 2030: Aspirations of the Youth". All these materials are readily available on its website, providing an invaluable repository for researchers, policymakers, and the general public.

**Website:** The website is designed with added features that allow partners to share their own publications related to the SDGs. This co-sharing feature enhances the network's role as a comprehensive resource hub for SDGs.

**Academic Footprint:** The network's knowledge products have found utility across different groups beyond the immediate target community. Public agencies and institutes of higher education including the Public Administration Training Centre (PATC), NGO Affairs Bureau, Dhaka University are among the users of the products of the network.

### **3.3 Capacity Enhancement and Solidarity**

As the Citizen's Platform evolved, it invested in strengthening capacity and forging solidarity among the members, mostly through training. The network organised training for Partner Organisation, colleagues of print and electronic social media, and youth groups, among others. The training dealt with issues around SDGs, including social accountability tools and its application. Moreover, the network participated in the organisation, management, and content preparation of five national conferences and presented policy briefs.

Perhaps the most remarkable show of solidarity among the members could be found in the areas of funding. All five national conferences were 'crowd funded'. Besides, regional and local events were funded through contribution from the member organisations and the secretariat.

**Credibility:** The network has gained the trust of the diverse stakeholders, and as a result, its documents are often cited as authentic sources of information, further enhancing its credibility and reach as the network has now become a piece of fabric woven tightly with 150 unique threads that its Partner Organisations are. That the fabric continues to hold together, and that too stronger than ever, speaks for its strength and trust among the network members. Beyond the members, the network's credibility is also paramount. It would suffice to mention that the NGO Affairs Bureau incorporated SDGs in all project/programmes as a result of advocacy by the Citizen's Platform, and PATC invited resource persons of the network in their regular programmes.

### **3.4 Engaging Media**

The Citizen's Platform engaged media as a cross-cutting stakeholder in all its initiatives and activities. More importantly, it invested in media to build up the branding of the network through feeding the issues of local and national interests, emphasising the lens of disadvantaged citizens.

Since its inception, the Citizen's Platform has been closely working with local and national media to sensitise journalists on the SDGs. The launching of the network was shared through a media briefing at the Dhaka's CIRDAP on 18 June 2016. Ever since, print and electronic media covered the network's local, sub-national and national level programmes with importance.

The network built a unique relation with the media, which transcends the conventional one-way media engagement. To sensitise and inform the media personnel, several training and workshops have been conducted across print and electronic media. This has been complemented by talk shows, op-eds, interviews, and blog writings that continue to emanate from the network. Events conducted by the Citizen's Platform are uploaded on YouTube in their entirety, offering a comprehensive view of discussions, speeches, and deliberations. This expands the network's reach to a global audience who can easily access and participate in its activities virtually. On the other hand, national media published articles, opinion of the network leaders, invited them in talk shows and critical review of national and international policies regarding SDGs. Active engagement of the media played an important role in amplifying the voice of the marginalised raised and brought to the forefront of policy regime by the network.

### 3.5 Reaching Out to those Left Behind

In steadfast adherence to the principles of ‘Leave No One Behind’, the Citizen’s Platform has undertaken substantial endeavours to empower marginalised communities. This section sheds light on the network’s deliberate emphasis on localising SDGs and amplifying the voices of civil society organisations (CSOs) to champion the concerns of marginalised communities. The Citizen’s Platform’s resolute commitment is evident in its initiatives to empower CSOs, enabling them to advocate for the rights and needs of those on society’s fringes. Through authentic evidence and sustained efforts, the network serves as a catalyst for empowerment and active participation, ensuring that the marginalised not only gain inclusion but actively contribute to and reap the benefits of the sustainable development agenda. Highlights of some of its noteworthy initiatives are:

Indigenous people of the hills and plain land: Member organisations conducted research, consultation and dialogue on the state of the indigenous people and documented their deprivations, challenges, aspirations and opportunities. Based on the findings from the research and other evidence, the Citizen’s Platform developed and conducted training and continued advocacy to ensure accessibility of indigenous people to essential services and safety net. Besides, the network assessed achievements and gaps in the GoB programmes for indigenous people and put forward recommendations to the PMO and the ministries concerned.

Persons with Disabilities, gender diverse communities, geographically vulnerable and hard to reach (Char, Haor and costal) areas and Dalit: Advocating tirelessly for the rights of the most marginalised communities, the Citizen’s Platform stands as a stalwart supporter of Persons with Disabilities, gender diverse individuals, geographically vulnerable populations in Char, Haor, and coastal regions, as well as tea workers and Dalits. Demonstrating unwavering dedication, members have implemented a diverse range of initiatives, including social audits, community consultations, media dialogues, workshops, seminars, and the impactful LNOB national conference in 2017. These efforts are not confined to local boundaries, as the network recognises the global significance of these crucial issues and extends its advocacy to national and international forums, such as the HLPF and Southern Voice.

Having realised that these marginalised community issues need to be integral parts of Bangladesh’s development trajectory, the network persistently advocates

for their inclusion in various strategic documents. This includes pushing for representation in perspective plans, the five-year plan, sectoral strategic plans, and political parties' manifestos. By doing so, the network ensures that the voices of the marginalised are not only heard but are actively considered in shaping the policies and plans that will determine the country's development path.

### **3.6 Citizen's Platform's Resilience Amid COVID-19 Pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic posed an unparalleled challenge, disrupting global norms and impacting various aspects of human life. In response, the Citizen's Platform demonstrated remarkable agility, resilience, and effectiveness in navigating these turbulent times. Far from succumbing to inaction, the network transformed the crisis into an opportunity, showcasing its dynamic and responsive nature in addressing the immediate needs of Bangladesh's most vulnerable communities.

Recognising the disproportionate impact on the poorest and most marginalised, the network proactively engaged in discussions to enhance these communities' access to government stimulus packages and essential services. Virtual dialogues, involving the network members and government officials, were initiated to delve into these critical issues. To further its commitment, the network collaborated with CPD to commission a study, scrutinising the effectiveness of government support mechanisms for marginalised groups. This study focused on assessing the delivery, quality, and accessibility of aid.

Embracing technological advantage, the Citizen's Platform swiftly used modern communication tools such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams to hold virtual meetings. This ensured continuity of essential discussions and decision-making processes among members and the Core Group, overcoming the limitations posed in the absence of physical interactions. Additionally, an increased social media presence allowed the network to disseminate crucial information, updates, and findings, keeping members informed and engaged during these challenging times.

Despite the uncertainties brought on by the pandemic, the network maintained operational continuity, underscoring its unwavering commitment to its goals and objectives. Virtual platforms enabled regular meetings of the Core Group and members, ensuring that strategic activities, research initiatives, and dialogues crucial to the network's mission continued uninterrupted. In this way, the

Citizen's Platform played a pivotal role in responding to the evolving needs of the community at the time of a global health crisis.

### 3.7 Empowering Youth in Development Discourse

In 2011, the youth constituted nearly 30% of Bangladesh population.<sup>1</sup> In terms of the labour market, the youth represented about 48% of the working population. Against this backdrop, the Citizen's Platform viewed the youth not just as passive beneficiaries but active participants in charting the course towards a more inclusive, equitable, and prosperous future. The network is committed to nurturing a vibrant synergy between youth, government, and civil society, recognising that it is in the hands of the young generation that the legacy of sustainable development truly rests.

The network has been unwavering in its commitment to empower youth and amplify their voices in development arena. Recognising the critical importance of addressing the young population's concerns and integrating their perspectives into governmental mechanisms and the broader landscape of youth development, the Citizen's Platform has systematically woven youth-centric initiatives into its central agenda.

Through collaborations with members implementing youth-focused programmes, the commissioning of pertinent research titled Jubo Sommelon-2018, and the development of comprehensive policy advocacy strategies (Durniti Protirodh, Shushashon O Teksoi Unnayan Orjone Tarunner Bhumika) youth engagement in a holistic approach was made possible. The youth-focused recommendations coming out of consultations, conference papers, etc. have been effectively channelled to the relevant government departments, consolidating the network's commitment to empower and incorporate youth voices in shaping the future of national development.

The concerted efforts complement the network's overarching vision of harnessing the demographic dividend and fostering a youth-informed approach that resonates throughout the fabric of national development.

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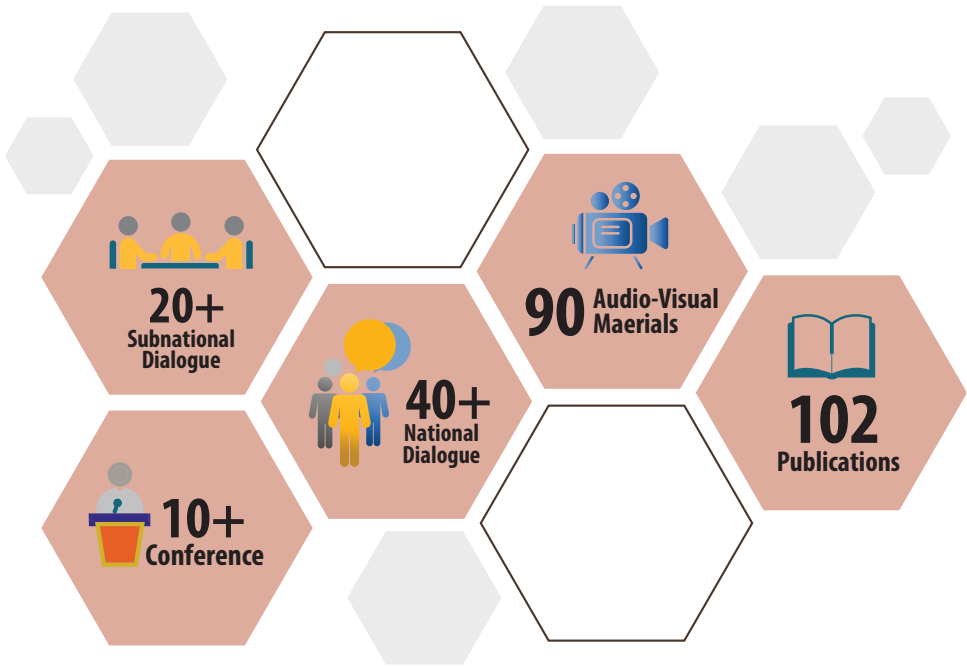
<sup>1</sup>Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). (2023). Population and Housing Census 2022: National Report (Volume I). [https://bbs.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bbs.portal.gov.bd/page/b343a8b4\\_956b\\_45ca\\_872f\\_4cf9b2f1a6e0/2024-01-31-15-51-b53c55dd692233ae401ba013060b9cbb.pdf](https://bbs.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bbs.portal.gov.bd/page/b343a8b4_956b_45ca_872f_4cf9b2f1a6e0/2024-01-31-15-51-b53c55dd692233ae401ba013060b9cbb.pdf)

Over the past years, a series of youth consultations, educational orientation sessions, and skill-enhancing training programmes were organised, culminating in an immensely successful national convention with representation from all regions of Bangladesh.

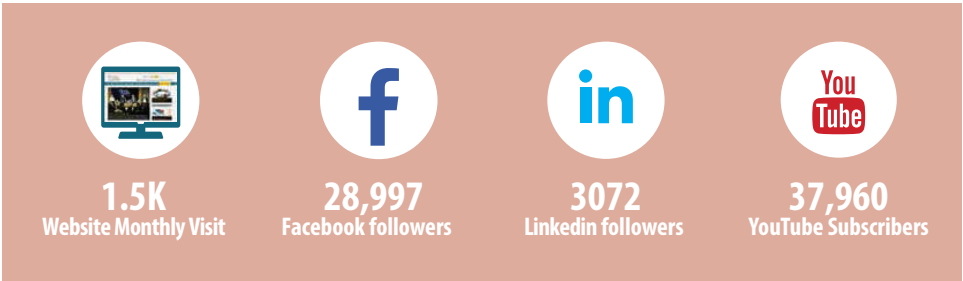
One major issue that came out of the conference was the nominal participation of youth in policy formulation. The network raised the issue and put forward recommendations to the policy level, including ministries of Youth and Sports, Education and Office of the SDGs Affairs under the Prime Minister's Office. Besides, investments in youth in general and capitalising on the demographic dividend in particular is insufficient as reflected in the allocation for education in the national budget. Moreover, development funding for youth beyond government is inadequate. Only a few development organisations have youth-focused programme and still fewer youth-focused organisation in the country. International development partners also consider youth as a cross-cutting issue. The network, among other things, through budget analysis highlights the deficiency in investment in youth and the need to prioritise the issue.

In this chapter, the interventions of the network stand out as a catalyst for positive transformation, exerting influence on policies, empowering marginalised communities, facilitating collaboration across sectors, and nurturing inclusive development. The Citizen's Platform's unwavering dedication to its fundamental principles, coupled with its adeptness in navigating evolving challenges, reinforces its standing as a powerful force shaping the sustainable development trajectory of Bangladesh. In summary, the Citizen's Platform has emerged as a dynamic and impactful entity, playing a momentous role in steering the nation toward a more sustainable and inclusive future.

Milestones Unlocked: Citizen's Platform's Journey to Success



Social Media





## 4. LEARNING FROM THE CHALLENGES

This section digs into the multifaceted challenges and opportunities of the Citizen's Platform. Organisational hurdles, including capacity constraints, the absence of an M&E framework, and budgetary alignment issues, are explored alongside financial limitations arising from an event-based funding model. External challenges, such as global crises and political instability, shape the network's landscape, while its potential lies in diverse membership, government commitment, human rights initiatives, and strategic engagements. Drawing insights from past experiences, the network underscores the need for adaptability, youth involvement, and strategic alignment to navigate a dynamic development landscape. The imperative of reviewing strategies for long-term financial viability is emphasised in response to changing global and domestic contexts.

### 4.1 Navigating the Organisational Challenges

- i. **Capacity Constraints:** The network's secretariat is critically understaffed and under-resourced, making it challenging to manage the myriad responsibilities that come with serving a diverse membership. The personnel are stretched thin, juggling tasks related to programming, networking, and communication. This situation not only leads to operational inefficiencies but also compromises the quality of work. In an environment where rapid responses are often needed, the lack of capacity has hampered the network's ability to serve its members effectively.
- ii. **Absence of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework:** The Citizen's Platform does not have a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, making it difficult to assess the impact of various projects. It also hampers data-driven decision-making. The lack of a structured M&E approach means that important progress went untracked, making it nearly impossible to measure success or learn from failures.

- iii. **Budgetary Alignment Challenge:** The network has faced difficulty in persuading its partners to align their budgetary resources with the outlined mandates and advocacy goals. Even among those partners willing to engage, there exists a lack of clear guidance on how to operationalise these mandates effectively.
- iv. **Advocacy Cohesion:** The unclear operational pathway exacerbates the network's struggle with cohesive advocacy. The result is a fragmented approach that diminishes its overall ability to make an impactful contribution to larger policy issues.
- v. **Limited Outreach:** There is a marked gap in the network's reach beyond the central and divisional level, particularly when it comes to marginalised communities like Persons with Disabilities, Dalit, and other vulnerable groups. These underserved communities are often the most in need of advocacy and resources that the network aims to provide, making this a critical challenge to its mission.
- vi. **Challenge of Advocacy Follow-Up Mechanisms:** The Citizen's Platform currently grapples with the challenge of not having a formalised follow-up mechanism specifically for its advocacy initiatives. This absence compromises the network's ability to assess the effectiveness and impact of its advocacy efforts, thereby limiting opportunities for data-driven strategy adjustments and accountability.

## 4.2 Balancing the Books

- i. **Financial Limitations:** One of the omnipresent challenges that the network faced revolves around financial limitations. These constraints have had a significant impact, primarily due to the network's funding model, which heavily relies on event- or initiative-based funding. This approach creates a recurring pattern of funding that is marked by unpredictability, severely hampering the Citizen's Platform's capacity for long-term planning. The event-based nature of funding further impedes its ability to swiftly seize new opportunities and respond to emerging challenges.
- ii. **Challenges and Opportunities Amid a Shifting Landscape:** A changing landscape in terms of funding sources adds to the complexity. Factors such as Bangladesh's graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) to a Developing Country, abrupt reductions in funding commitments, the emergence of non-conventional funding models like Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), and issues related to governance within public procurement systems have

all posed challenges. There also exists a disproportionate gap between the quality and expertise within Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in seeking government-led project support, resulting in missed opportunities for fund mobilisation.

- iii. **Unleashing the Potential for Social Impact:** In contrast to many developed nations, the culture of philanthropy in Bangladesh remains relatively underdeveloped, with limited evidence of substantial philanthropic initiatives. While policies regarding Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) do exist, their impact is not commensurate with the potential, both in terms of coverage and real-time interventions. Crowdfunding, too, remains underutilised and not yet fully understood within the sector, making it an unsuitable option for running development and advocacy programmes.

### 4.3 Facing the External Tides

As a civil society network in Bangladesh, there are several external circumstances and obstacles that are beyond the Citizen's Platform's control. Yet these factors significantly affect the network's ability to focus on its core objectives and advocate for essential policy reforms. These challenges can include crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, political instability, and other unforeseen events that divert precious resources and attention away from the network's primary mission. They may also encompass issues related to resource constraints, limitations in research capabilities, and difficulties in effectively conveying the diverse voices of its members to relevant authorities. These external challenges emphasise the crucial need for the network to be adaptable and resilient, as it operates within the dynamic and ever-changing context of Bangladesh. Strategic improvements are essential to overcome these hurdles and to ensure the network's continued and effective mission. Moreover, effective engagements with international bodies become increasingly important, as it allows the Citizen's Platform to influence global policies and establish valuable international partnerships that can further its goals.

- i. **Unfavourable Circumstances:** Global and national crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic, the Rohingya influx, and political instability characteristic of election years created an environment of instability that detracts the network's primary focus on SDGs. These distractions divert critical resources and attention, making it difficult to maintain a consistent strategy.

- ii. **Policy Advocacy and Government Engagement Gap:** The Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, confronts dual challenges that weaken its policy advocacy and impact. On the one hand, the inability to commission specialised research to track government actions on SDGs diminishes its capacity for evidence-based critique or endorsement. On the other hand, the network struggles with effectively channelling the voices of its diverse members to the central government due to a lack of well-defined strategy and mechanism. These two limitations are interconnected, each complicating the other and collectively hampering the network's potential influence over policy reform and government accountability.
- iii. **No Compilation of Partner Efforts:** There has not been any initiative to compile the efforts made by partner organisations towards the SDGs. Given the network's broad-based membership and diverse partnerships, a consolidated report on these efforts could provide a more robust basis for advocacy, collaboration, and gap identification.
- iv. **Dilemma in Thematic vs. Cluster-Based Focus:** The Citizen's Platform has faced an internal dilemma in categorising its work on the SDGs—whether to arrange them based on thematic areas, like health, education, and poverty alleviation, or to organise them into clusters that might focus on specific demographics or geographies. This ambiguity complicates the allocation of resources and efforts, and can potentially dilute the effectiveness of its initiatives.
- v. **International Representation:** The network has yet to engage with international bodies effectively, particularly in the context of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) or in the preparation of shadow reports that need to be submitted to the United Nations to convey the citizens' voice. This lack of engagement limits the Citizen's Platform's ability to influence international policies or attract global partnerships.

#### 4.4 Exploring the Horizon of Opportunities with Citizen's Platform

The network is in a unique position to leverage a variety of opportunities that can mitigate its challenges and amplify its effectiveness. These opportunities are mapped out below in a comprehensive manner:

- i. **Diverse Membership and Government Relationships:** One of the network's strongest assets is its broad and diverse membership base. This diversity provides a fertile ground for cross-sectoral collaborations and innovations.



**All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.**

*- Article I: Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

The network also enjoys functional relationships with government-designated bodies, which could be instrumental in shaping policies and advocating for change.

- ii. **Government Commitment to Targets:** The government is not just obligated but also invested in achieving various developmental targets, including the SDGs. This commitment, translated into actual plans and budgetary allocations, creates an opportunity for the network to align its objectives closely with those of the government, thereby enhancing the likelihood of achieving the shared goals.
- iii. **Facilitator for Human Rights Initiatives:** Given the network's focus and reputation, it could play a significant role in convening stakeholders around human rights-related global initiatives. Acting as a facilitator, the Citizen's Platform could bring together different sectors for dialogue, collaboration, and action in areas such as gender equality, education, and social justice.
- iv. **Expertise within Core and Advisory Groups:** The Core Group formed with eight members and the Advisory Group with 11 members. They are among the most eminent personalities in Bangladesh, having vast experience and expertise in varied fields such as economics, education, human rights, private sector engagement, and governance. This intellectual capital is an invaluable resource for the network, enabling it to approach issues from a multidisciplinary perspective and offering nuanced solutions.
- v. **Support from International Bodies:** The presence of the Residential Commission of the United Nations (RC of the UN) in the Citizen's Platform provides an international perspective and potentially opens doors to global resources and partnerships. While UNDP's support is currently focused on the government, the network's alignment with broader UN objectives can still offer avenues for collaboration and resource mobilisation.

- vi. **Local Philanthropy and CSR:** There is untapped potential in exploring partnerships with local philanthropic organisations and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Microfinance organisations, in particular, offer a pathway to connect with marginalised communities, which aligns with the network's objectives.
- vii. **Partner Commitments:** Partners have already committed to providing human resources for organising national and local events. This commitment could be leveraged to amplify the network's reach and effectiveness in both rural and urban areas.
- viii. **Leveraging Thematic Discussion:** The network has the opportunity to plan and host centralised and divisional meetings that focus on thematic areas. This approach allows for more focused discussions and solutions, potentially resulting in more effective strategies and implementation.
- ix. **Enhanced Digital Presence:** The Citizen's Platform can enrich its website by leveraging the commitment from its partners to regularly disseminate information among the stakeholders as well as among the wider audience. An updated, resource-rich website can serve as an effective tool for public engagement, awareness, and education.
- x. **Strategic Engagement and Youth Involvement:** Given the Citizen's Platform's broad network and influence, it is well-positioned for strategic engagements that can lead to resource mobilisation. Moreover, its potential for youth engagement can infuse the network with fresh perspectives and energy crucial for long-term sustainability.

## 4.5 Lessons from the Past and Learnings for the Future

The journey of the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, until September 2023 marks a proactive citizen-led stride towards inclusive development. The key takeaways have been drawn from practical engagements, evolving financial strategies, and communal outreach, among other realms. These insights offer a realistic blueprint for boosting the network's collective efficacy and impact in driving the SDG agenda forward by 2030.

- i. **Seizing Opportune Moments:** The Citizen's Platform came to life and evolved against the backdrop of the Agenda 2030 for implementation of the SDGs. It provided enabling environment, need and stimulus for organisations to join hands for collective efforts. The genesis of Citizen's Platform brings to light the crucial importance of capitalising opportune moments to achieve specific

objective, for instance pursuing a certain agenda. Throughout its journey, the network made use of this learning. The Citizen's Platform was quick to utilise the opportunities to engage and initiate discussions and dialogues, highlight issues, and put forward recommendations when the office of Chief Coordinator SDG Affairs was established under the Prime Minister's Office, as well as during formulation of the 8th five-year plan and other perspective plans of the government.

- ii. **Inform and Influence:** It is essential to inform properly and adequately while attempting to influence. The network always achieved maximum results from its advocacy and other campaigns when those were grounded on knowledge-based credible evidence. Advocacy for the rights of Dalit is one such example. As a result of the persistent advocacy, their access to public services increased: they received Khas land, had greater access to school and the government announced different stimulus packages for them. The catalyst here was the meticulous and methodical documentation of facts and figures. It is, therefore, vital to collect, analyse and disseminate knowledge and evidence to inform policy and practice.
- iii. **Preserving Institutional Memory:** The Citizen's Platform has a solid documentation and archiving system. Documentation of activities serves multiple purposes, including providing reference, source of learning, evidence, and inspiration. However, the network considers that the documentation system need upgrading and expansion. It is important to understand that every member organisation is an active contributor towards the objectives of the network. It is, therefore, imperative to recognise activities of each member and appreciate their contribution. However, individual member organisation may not have the right skills and resources available at the right time to do it themselves. So the Citizen's Platform feels that it should broaden the range of documentation to ensure that the valuable and innovative activities of the NSAs and CSOs are adequately captured. Documentation process should prioritise activities which relate to SDGs delivery, graduation from LDC and demonstration of resilience and innovation in recovering pandemic-induced lost resources and opportunities. (See Annex-7.5 and 7.6)
- iv. **Growth & Adaptation:** From a handful of Partner Organisations to 150 Partner Organisations, the Citizen's Platform has evolved into a mature organisation. Along its growth and progress, the roles and responsibilities of the network have also evolved, which requires a new set of organisational capacity. At the network level, the Secretariat already deals with 150 Partner Organisations and the number is expected only to go up. Expectations of the

partners from the Secretariat are higher than it can deliver with its current resources as they do not operate on a fulltime basis. The network realises that while leadership of the Partner Organisations are conversant with different aspects of SDGs, there is room for enrichment of ‘SDG literacy’ within individual organisations. Besides, pursuing issues of SDGs with the government requires considerate leadership. At programme level, it is noted that extensive local participation in national events strengthen people’s voice. The network allocates substantial resources for documentation and dissemination of activities around SDGs. However, more needs to be done. To recap, the network understands that it is time to distinguish the mature state of the organisation from the formative stage. Thus, it identifies the necessity to modify organisational rules, procedures and practices, and accordingly formulate policies to reposition the network to cater to the emerging needs of the Partner Organisations and their activities.

- v. **Putting Youth at the Centre:** ‘Youth’ is no homogeneous monolithic entity. The network identified that while a section of youth involved with organisational activities is generally aware of the SDGs and enthusiastically participate in the activities, the section of youth outside of any sort of organisation has little or no knowledge about SDGs. In other words, within the broad community of ‘youth’ there are different sections of youth who are not as integrated with the network’s activities as some other sections of their peers. The Citizen’s Platform acknowledges its limited reach beyond central and divisional level. The network also understands that it is failing to tap into the energy and productivity of this youth force. Yet, they have their own views and aspirations of development which is not necessarily the same as others. We recognise that the Citizen’s Platform needs to reach out to the youth communities that are not yet involved in organisational activities and incorporate their entitlement in the youth-focused agenda to truly materialise the theme ‘Let the Country be What the Youth Aspires the Country to be’.
- vi. **Responding to the Changing Ecosystem:** The Citizen’s Platform realises that shifts in global development scenarios are occurring at an accelerated pace. At least Bangladesh is being affected by a large number of factors in recent years. Apart from the broad shift of priorities of international/multilateral development partners, Rohingya refugee crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, the global crisis in the wake of Russia-Ukraine war, and graduation from LDC all had and have impacts on development financing in Bangladesh. The international community is focused more on immediate humanitarian response to natural disaster, pandemic, refugee crisis and the like. The



network recognises that external fund flow has diminished, and the trend is to continue while a long-term sustainable financial model must be developed and installed. Therefore, it must revisit its policies and strategies to ensure long term financial viability. The domestic landscape is also going through shifts. Review of the strategies to refresh and realign is imperative in the emerging civic space which tends to be more and more constrained.

The chapter concludes by distilling key lessons from the Citizen's Platform's journey. Emphasising the importance of seizing opportune moments, informed and influential advocacy grounded in evidence, robust documentation and archiving, organisational growth and adaptation, placing youth at the centre, and recognising the changing global and domestic landscape, the network outlines a blueprint for future success. The need for strategic improvements, adaptability, and effective engagement with international bodies is underscored as the network aims to drive the sustainable development agenda forward.

## 5. STRATEGIC PATHWAY AND INNOVATIVE MEASURES

Traversing the intricate landscape of sustainable development in Bangladesh, the Citizen's Platform grapples with a spectrum of challenges and opportunities that thornily shape its organisational course. From tackling internal obstacles like capacity and financial constraints to navigating external dynamics such as global crises and political instability, the network's journey reflects the nuanced nature of its mission. Amid these challenges, notable opportunities emerge, including a diverse membership base, government commitment, and unexplored potential in human rights initiatives and strategic collaborations. Informed by past experiences, the network emphasises key lessons—seizing strategic moments, conducting insightful advocacy, maintaining comprehensive documentation, fostering organisational adaptability, promoting youth inclusion, and aligning with the evolving development landscape. Stepping forward, a strategic roadmap unfolds, emphasising the necessity of adaptability, effective international engagement, and a renewed emphasis on ensuring enduring financial sustainability. This section explores forward-looking strategies and initiatives that resonate with the Citizen's Platform's mandates and goals as below:

### 5.1 Organisation and Networking

- i. **Strengthen the Secretariat:** Given the broad range of tasks the network must handle, strengthening the Secretariat is essential. Resources should be allocated for recruitment of sufficient number of staff and specialised training programmes aimed at enhancing the skills and capacities of the newly recruits as well as the existing team. The introduction of a youth internship programme could be another way to strengthen the Secretariat. It can serve multiple purposes: it provides the young generation with exposure and learning opportunities while offering the Secretariat additional support.

- Regular engagement with focal persons from different fields can further strengthen the Secretariat by bringing in specialised knowledge and skills.
- ii. **Adapting to Changing Civic Landscape:** Given the shifts in the global and domestic development landscape, the network should revisit its strategies and policies to ensure long-term financial viability. The network should adapt to the evolving civic space, which is becoming more constrained, by realigning its strategies to continue its mission effectively.
  - iii. **Extending Outreach to Marginalised Communities:** Continue prioritising marginalised communities in activities of the Citizen's Platform. It is crucial to keep in focus that representation of the marginalised and strengthening their voice is a cornerstone of strength of the network. Moreover, this will draw more local organisations into the network. The Citizen's Platform recognises that local stakeholders often exhibit more enthusiasm for SDGs than other actors. As a result, the network needs to implement a coordinated and targeted communication approach that specifically caters to local stakeholders. This approach will be instrumental in improving SDGs' appreciation and understanding among local communities and organisations, fostering greater grassroots support for sustainable development initiatives. At the same time, it will ensure that organisations with expertise in various national development issues, particularly those working with marginalised communities, remain actively engaged. This collective approach has been proven instrumental in advocating for the rights and needs of marginalised communities.
  - iv. **Optimising Members Engagement:** The Citizen's Platform undertakes its activities under three modalities. To best support the member organisations, a clear assessment of all members is essential. Members must also be aware of each other's expertise, as well as their shortcomings and needs. With a comprehensive inventory of the members, the secretariat and the network would be able to better plan activities and allocate resources. This action not only fosters a shared commitment towards common objectives, but also minimise conflicts and optimises the collective strength and effectiveness of the network in driving towards the Sustainable Development Goals.
  - v. **Seizing Opportune Moments:** The network should continue to capitalise on opportune moments to further its objectives and specific agendas. These moments can include policy formulation events, government plans, and other strategic occasions. The network should maintain its vigilance and readiness to engage and advocate effectively.

## 5.2 Financial Sustainability

- i. **Aligning Financing with Vision:** A sustainable financial model that is less reliant on external funding sources, sustainable and aligned with Long-Term Vision should be developed. The network should actively seek funding that adheres to specific criteria, ensuring it is reasonable, predictable, and flexible to support the organisation's long-term vision. This shift in approach should focus on estimating funding requirements for core interventions for a minimum of three years. Such a sustainable funding model will address financial limitations and enhance the network's effectiveness in fulfilling its mission.
- ii. **Diversify Partnerships and Resources:** The Citizen's Platform should explore partnerships beyond traditional supporter and include organisations that can offer logistic, human resource, or creative support. It should also actively seek Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding, potentially creating a new stream of financial resources that align with its objectives. It is to be noted that the Core Group has already discussed in principle to collect funding from the corporate sector. However, a strategy needs to be clearly outlined before pulling corporate funding to avoid any conflict of interest.
- iii. Crowdfunding could be a source of funding, but it is still underexplored, and the network may assess the potential.

## 5.3 Strengthening the Communication and Outreach Plan

- i. **Bilingual Publications:** To enhance communication effectiveness and inclusivity, the network should prioritise the development of bilingual publications. This practice will facilitate better engagement with a broader community, including local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Citizen's Platform partners, and youth. Considering the broader outreach, the language should be simple, avoiding academic style.
- ii. **Prioritise Audio-Visual Materials in Public Communication:** Based on the Citizen's Platform's experience, it is evident that audio-visual materials have greater impacts on the audience compared to traditional printed materials. Therefore, the network should prioritise the development and dissemination of audio-visual content in its public communication efforts. This could include videos, documentaries, animations, and other multimedia materials that effectively convey key messages related to SDGs. By leveraging the

- power of audio-visual content, the network can engage and educate a broader audience, making SDG-related information more accessible and compelling.
- iii. **Dedicate Resources to Enhance Digital Outreach:** Recognising the instrumental role of social media and digital communication in reaching wider audiences, the network should allocate dedicated resources and efforts to further enhance its digital outreach activities. By dedicating resources and strategic efforts to digital communication and outreach, the network can maximise its online presence, engage a more extensive and diverse audience, and effectively convey its messages and initiatives.
  - iv. **Compile Partner Contributions:** An organised compilation of the contributions from various partners can offer a 360-degree view of the progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving the SDGs. This collective insight can then be used to inform future strategies and collaborative efforts.

#### 5.4 Enhancing Capacity and Competency

- i. **Emphasis on Local Events:** The network should organise more local-level events. These grassroots events will help the network reach and engage with marginalised communities and community-based organisations, ensuring their voices and concerns are integrated into broader advocacy efforts.
- ii. **Focus on Local Organisations:** There should be a comprehensive strategy to actively engage marginalised communities and their organisations, such as Persons with Disabilities, Dalits, indigenous communities, and other vulnerable groups. This should include targeted outreach and specific initiatives to address their unique needs and challenges.
- iii. **Prioritise Small Community Organisations:** It is crucial to extend the Citizen's Platform's reach to the local level by engaging with grassroots organisations. Local partners can offer invaluable insights into community-specific needs and challenges. In order to do so, the network should invest in building capacity of the small community-based organisations, and bringing those organisations in partnership with local CSOs in implementing activities of the network would directly enhance their capacity. The network should consider establishing a dedicated funding window to support grassroots initiatives and allow members to sustain their efforts.
- iv. **Thematic Groups:** Collaborate with organisations that have expertise in specific SDG targets to form thematic groups. These groups can focus on the concerns of different marginalised communities and work alongside the Citizen's Platform's overarching goals.

- v. **Event Planning and Follow-Up:** Before embarking on new initiatives or events, a comprehensive review of past efforts is essential to avoid duplication and learn from previous experiences. Post-event monitoring should also be an integral part of the M&E framework, allowing for continuous improvement and adaptive management of resources. Partner organisations should be part of follow-up together with the secretariat.  
The follow-up mechanism should look specifically into the recommendations concerning the youth and keep advocating the policy recommendations, including official policy to integrate youth participation and implementation. It is to be noted that a section of youth, who are not affiliated with organisational activities, remains out of reach. These youth should be reached out.
- vi. **Establish a Robust M&E Framework:** The lack of a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework hampers effective progress tracking and decision-making. A comprehensive M&E framework would consist of clearly defined performance indicators, methodologies for data collection, and strategies for using the collected data for adaptive learning and strategic planning. This framework would be instrumental in measuring both short-term outputs and long-term impacts, thereby allowing for more effective resource allocation.

## 5.5 Improving Community Knowledge and Research

- i. **Broader SDG Review:** The Citizen's Platform should assess the activities undertaken by member organisations independent of the network in relation to the SDGs. This can help in identifying gaps and opportunities. This would ensure that the network's actions and the members' independent activities are aligned with broader SDGs and can adapt to changing needs.
- ii. **Invest in Contextual Research:** The network should actively invest in research that identifies emerging trends and challenges in development. Such research can serve as the basis for adaptive planning and timely interventions, enabling the network to remain relevant and effective.
- iii. **Information Update Mechanism:** A structured mechanism should be established to regularly update the Citizen's Platform's website with information and insights collected from partners. This serves as a valuable resource for all stakeholders and enhances the network's role as a knowledge hub.

In conclusion, the forward-looking strategies and initiatives outlined in this chapter represent a comprehensive and dynamic roadmap for the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh. As the network steers through the convoluted landscape of sustainable development, these recommendations underscore a commitment to adaptability, inclusivity, and sustained impact. By strengthening the organisational foundation, diversifying financial avenues, enhancing communication and outreach, and prioritising community engagement and research, the network aims to not only overcome challenges but also to capitalise on the myriad opportunities that lie ahead.

## 6. TRANSLATING STRATEGY INTO ACTIONS

### 6.1 Roadmap for a Sustainable Network

The Citizen's Platform, guided by its commitment to the SDGs, has traversed a productive and eventful journey. Now is the time for the network to internalise the learnings and chart a renewed course of action. An Action Chart has been designed as a management tool which is to be periodically reviewed, and is meant to furnish a structured framework for planning, implementation and progress tracking the Citizen's Platform's programmes and activities.

In alignment with its overarching mission and strategic outlook, the Citizen's Platform aspires to act as a catalyst for sustainable development, envisioning global representation and fostering cross-sector partnership. This holistic and dynamic approach positions the Citizen's Platform to make substantive contributions to global agendas and bring meaningful and positive changes in Bangladesh (*See the table below*).

**Action Chart**

Specific Activities	Responsible Entity	Implementation Timeline
Recruit appropriate number of staff for the secretariat for carrying out the envisaged activities, managing administrative duties, coordination and ensure effective follow-ups	Secretariat	Immediate-term (0-1 year)  To be addressed in the 1st year and thereafter



Specific Activities	Responsible Entity	Implementation Timeline
Develop a multi-modal communication strategy to ensure consistent and effective dissemination, outreach and policy advocacy	Secretariat	Short-term (1-3 year)  To be initiated during the 1st year
Create thematic expert panels with representation of partner organisations to promote Citizen's Platform agenda	Secretariat, Core Group	Short-term (1-3 year)
Expand partnership with youth-led and youth-served organisations by introducing the Associate Partner category	Secretariat, Core Group, Partner Organisations	Short-term (1-3 year)
Consider expansion of partnership with private sector and individuals	Secretariat, Core Group	Short-term (1-3 year)
Develop and conduct a regular learning capturing initiative for consistent assessment and improvement of the Citizen's Platform's various projects and initiatives	Secretariat, in consultation with relevant stakeholders	Short-term (1-3 year)
Conduct periodic review of SDG implementation involving Partner Organisations	Secretariat, Partner Organisations	Short-term (1-3 year)
Initiate a structured internship programme aimed at exposing young professionals to issues related to SDG delivery	Secretariat, Partner Organisations	Short-term (1-3 year)
Expand outreach to regional and international fora related to SDG implementation	Secretariat, Core Group	Short-term (1-3 year)
Develop a resource mobilisation strategy for medium-term funding focusing on predictability and diversification of sources	Secretariat, Core Group	Short-term (1-3 year)
Engage with Partner Organisations to improve their capacities on SDG-related issues	Secretariat	Medium-term (3-5 years)

**Source:** Developed by the Secretariat with inputs from stakeholders.

## 6.2 Learning Framework for the Citizen's Platform

Anchored in a dedication to transformative and inclusive methodologies, the Citizen's Platform's Learning Framework signifies a strategic and dynamic response to the tricky challenges posed by the sustainable development agenda. At its core, this initiative is founded on a profound realisation that the landscape of sustainable development is in a perpetual state of evolution. The framework acknowledges the critical need for ongoing learning, understanding that sustainable progress demands a proactive approach to current challenges and future uncertainties. Essentially, the network positions itself as a learning organisation, finely attuned to the subtleties of the development landscape and consistently committed to staying at the forefront of advancements.

A key component of the framework is the methodical establishment of a systematic approach to reliably assess and enhance its diverse activities and initiatives.

- I. Pursing organisational consolidation
- II. Improving network strength and capacity
- III. Knowledge building and evidence generation
- IV. Innovating policy advocacy and influencing
- V. Enhancing effectiveness of communication and outreach
- VI. Internalising learnings for improved performance

Reflection questions	
A. Pursing organisational consolidation	
<i>Human resource</i>	
-	How many staff members does the Secretariat currently employ, dedicated to Citizen's Platform (full-time and partial)?
-	What is the percentage/number of staff deployed for research, communication and outreach, and networking?
-	Are the posts/recruitment created based on Secretariat requirements?
-	How does the Secretariat handle staff shortages or gaps during the time of carrying out diverse activities?
<i>Resource mobilisation</i>	
-	How is the experience of resource mobilisation efforts of the network, and how has it changed over time?

Reflection questions	
-	How diversified is the funding portfolio? Multiple and diverse sources or depends on a single source?
-	What is the USP of the network to secure support from various sources?
-	How does the Secretariat engage with the supporters to incentivise and motivate for medium-term partnerships and collaboration?
-	How many supporters have been engaged with the programme/project development process for consortium/core funding?
-	Is the Secretariat support (staff salary) secured for next six months?
-	What is the percentage of funds secured to carry out the activities in one year? How does it prioritise funding allocation to different initiatives or activities? Is it donor-driven?
-	How many programmes/projects have been developed and supported by different supporters in one-two years?
-	How does the Secretariat leverage its networks and connections to access funding opportunities?
-	How does the Secretariat adapt its resource mobilisation strategies in response to external challenges?
-	Success stories and innovative approaches for resource mobilisation.
-	How does the Secretariat ensure transparency and accountability in financial management?
<i>Risk management, adaptation and sustainability</i>	
-	How well can the network adapt to changes or challenges (e.g., political shifts, funding limitations)?
-	What contingency plans or risk management strategies are in place?
-	Number of risk assessments conducted;
-	Number of risk mitigation strategies developed and implemented;
-	Number of incidents resolved successfully.
B. Improving network strength and capacity	
-	How has the number of partner organisations of the network changed over time?
-	What is the diversity (e.g., geographical, sectoral) of the network's membership?
-	How has the number of collaborative organisations of the network changed/ evolved over time?
-	How frequently do the partner organisations engage in Citizen's Platform activities (e.g., meetings, forums, joint projects)?

Reflection questions	
-	What is the level of active participation and contribution from the partner organisations?
-	What motivates the partner organisations to collaborate actively with the network?
-	How often do members collaborate or communicate outside of formal activities of the Citizen's Platform?
-	Are there any sub-groups or clusters within the network, and how do they interact with each other?
-	How effectively is knowledge and expertise being shared among network members?
-	How has the Citizen's Platform contributed to enhance the capacity of the partner organisations to influence policy or public opinion?
-	How do the administrative and governance structures of the Citizen's Platform operate?
-	What processes are in place for decision-making, and how inclusive and transparent are they?
-	What collaborative projects or initiatives have been undertaken by network members?
-	What have been the outcomes or impacts of these collaborative efforts?
-	How regularly is feedback from network members collected and acted upon?
-	What mechanisms are in place for continuous learning and adaptation within the network?
-	What new external partnerships have been formed as a result of the network's efforts?
-	How have these partnerships enhanced the network's capacity or reach?
-	How has the public profile and recognition of the Citizen's Platform improved?
-	Are there any notable instances where the network's efforts have been publicly acknowledged?
C. Sustaining knowledge and evidence generation	
-	How are the issues/areas/themes of research work determined?
-	How many research initiatives are undertaken in one year?
-	How many publications are prepared in one year?
-	Do the generated knowledge and evidence cover the issues and concerns of the disadvantaged communities?
-	Do the evidence-generation activities allow adopting a co-creation approach?

Reflection questions	
-	How many partner organisations are engaged with the Secretariat for knowledge generation efforts and in what capacity?
-	What is the number of publications disseminated among relevant stakeholders in one year?
-	What is the number of downloads of knowledge products in one year?
-	How many PowerPoint presentations and briefs are prepared in one year?
-	How does Citizen's Platform blend its generated knowledge with its advocacy efforts?
-	How does Citizen's Platform interpret its success/achievements and failures/challenges in generating knowledge?
-	How does Citizen's Platform motivate and engage its partner organisations with the knowledge generation works?
-	Does Citizen's Platform encourage its partner organisations and other stakeholders to make use of its knowledge inputs? How do the partner organisations utilise these knowledge inputs in their existing advocacy existing?
D. Innovating policy advocacy and influencing	
-	What innovative approach has the Citizen's Platform pursued in the areas of advocacy and influencing?
-	What specific policy changes have been achieved as a result of the policy advocacy efforts?
-	How have these policy changes influenced the target population or the issues concerned?
-	To what extent have decision-makers (e.g., government officials and legislators) shown increased awareness or support for policy uptakes?
-	Do policy interlocutors reference the Citizen's Platform's data, reports, or recommendations in their discussions or decisions?
-	Has the Secretariat/Citizen's Platform participated and organised events on any global and regional development platforms?
-	Is there any Secretariat/CPD's representation/participation in the government-formed committees on SDGs?
-	How has public awareness as regards the advocated issues changed over time?
-	Which advocacy strategies (e.g., media campaigns, public demonstrations, lobbying) have been most effective in reaching the advocacy goals?
-	What challenges have been encountered in implementing these strategies, and how were they overcome?

Reflection questions	
-	What new partnerships or coalitions have been formed to support the policy advocacy efforts?
-	How effective have these partnerships been in advancing the advocacy goals?
-	How replicable are the successful advocacy strategies in different contexts or regions?
-	What plans are in place to scale successful advocacy efforts to a broader audience?
-	How has feedback from stakeholders (e.g., community members, policymakers, partner organisations) been collected and incorporated into the advocacy strategies?
E. Enhancing effectiveness of communication and outreach	
-	Who are the primary and secondary target audiences for the communication and outreach activities?
-	What channels of communication are used to reach these target audiences? What are the tools of communication involved in this regard?
-	Is there any categorisation for the target audiences set as regards the channels of communication?
-	What is the total number of people reached through different communication channels (e.g., social media, newsletters, events)? How has the reach of these activities grown over time?
-	What is the level of engagement (e.g., likes, shares, comments, participation in events) on various platforms and activities?
-	Which types of content or activities generate the most engagement?
-	How does Citizen's Platform ensure that issues are covered and marginalised communities are represented in various events (e.g., webinars, public meetings)?
-	What is the level of engagement and satisfaction among participants representing different marginalised communities?
-	How often and in what ways does the audience provide feedback on the communication and outreach efforts?
-	What are the main themes or issues raised in the feedback?
-	How clear and understandable are the messages communicated by the Citizen's Platform? How are the messages improvised for specific communication tools and for the relevant audiences?
-	Which communication channels and tools (e.g., social media, website, email, press releases) are most effective in reaching and engaging the target audience?
-	Are there any channels that are underperforming or could be better utilised?

Reflection questions	
-	How many visitors does the website receive, and what are the most visited pages?
-	What is the average time spent on the website, and what is the bounce rate?
-	How much and what type of media coverage has the Citizen's Platform received? Are the messages accurately represented in the media?
-	To what extent have communication and outreach activities influenced changes in knowledge, attitudes, or behaviours among the target audience?
-	Can any specific behaviour changes be directly linked to the communication efforts?
-	How has the overall awareness and understanding of the Citizen's Platform's issues or causes changed over time among the target audience?
-	Are there measurable increases in awareness or understanding as a result of specific initiatives or activities?
-	How efficiently are resources (e.g., time, budget, personnel) being used for communication and outreach activities?
-	Are there areas where resource allocation could be optimised for better results?
-	How well are communication and outreach activities coordinated with other efforts or initiatives by the network?
-	What is the level of collaboration with partners, stakeholders, or other organisations in communication efforts?
-	How regularly are communication and outreach activities monitored and evaluated for effectiveness? What metrics or indicators are used to assess performance?
-	How have these stakeholders responded to the Citizen's Platform's messages?
-	How has the Citizen's Platform adapted its communication strategies based on lessons learned or feedback received?
-	What specific changes or improvements have been made as a result of this learning process?
F. Internalising learnings for improved performance	
-	What is the number of learning-sharing meetings held at the national level in one year?
-	What is the number of learning-sharing meetings held at the local and regional level?
-	How are best practices and failures/challenges identified?
-	What challenges have you faced in adopting these best practices, and how were they overcome?

Reflection questions	
-	How are successes and failures/challenges documented and shared within the organisation and among the partner organisations and supporters?
-	What processes are in place to ensure that lessons learned from failures are disseminated and applied?
-	What systems are in place to ensure that successful strategies are replicated?
-	How does the Citizen's Platform approach the analysis of failures?
-	How does the organisation handle and analyse failures or setbacks?
-	How are lessons integrated into the network's workflow?
-	Can you provide examples of recent adaptive changes that have been made?
-	What initiatives are in place to encourage ongoing learning and development?
-	How does the organisation track the progress and impact of learning initiatives?
-	How does the organisation promote a culture of continuous learning, unlearning, and relearning? What initiatives or programmes support this framework?



## 7. ANNEXES

### 7.1 Citizen's Platform Governance Structure

#### Convenor

*Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya*

#### Core Group Members

*Advocate Sultana Kamal*

*Ms Rasheda K Choudhury*

*Dr Mushtaque Reza Chowdhury*

*Ms Shaheen Anam*

*Dr Iftekharuzzaman*

*Professor Mustafizur Rahman*

*Mr Asif Ibrahim*

*Mr Syed Nasim Manzur*

#### Coordinator

*Ms Anisatul Fatema Yousuf*

#### Advisory Group Members

*Late Mr Syed Manzur Elahi*

*Dr Hameeda Hossain*

*Dr Wahiduddin Mahmud*

*Mr Mostafa Monwar*

*Late Ms Rokia Afzal Rahman*

*Barrister Raja Debashish Roy*

*Ms Srimoti Saha*

*Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed*

*Mr Shykh Seraj*

*Professor Rehman Sobhan*

*Ms Khushi Kabir*

#### Secretariat Members

*Mr Towfiqul Islam Khan*

*Ms Tarannum Jinan*

*Mr Md. Rifat Bin Aowlad*

*Ms Nahian Raihana Prapti*

## 7.2 Partners of the Citizen's Platform (*in alphabetical order*)

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. Agrogoti Sangstha
8. Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK)
9. Article 19, Bangladesh South Asia Region
10. Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD)
11. Association for Social Development of Bangladesh
12. Avijan
13. Banchte Sekha
14. Bandhu Social Welfare Society
15. Bangladesh Adivasi Forum
16. Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA)
17. Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS)
18. Bangladesh Labour Foundation (BLF)
19. Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)
20. Bangladesh Mahila Parishad
21. Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS)
22. Bangladesh Nari Shramik Kendra (BNSK)
23. Bangladesh Open-Source Network-BdOSN
24. Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association (BNWLA)
25. Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC)
26. Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (BAPA)
27. Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan Somity (BPKS)
28. Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum (BSAF)
29. Bangladesh Youth Environmental Initiative
30. Bangladesh Youth Leadership Center (BYLC)
31. Blue Planet Initiative (BPI)
32. BRAC

33. British Council
34. Brotee Samaj Kallyan Sangstha
35. Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD)
36. CBM Global Disability Inclusion, Bangladesh
37. Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)
38. CARE Bangladesh
39. Caritas Bangladesh
40. Center for Disability in Development (CDD)
41. Center for Governance Studies (CGS)
42. Center for Sustainable Development (CSD), ULAB
43. Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)
44. Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID), Dhaka
45. Change Makers
46. Christian Aid
47. COAST Trust
48. Community Development Association (CDA), Dinajpur
49. Concern Worldwide
50. Cordaid
51. Credit Rating Agency of Bangladesh Limited (CRAB)
52. Counterpart International
53. Dak Diye Jai (DDJ)
54. Dhaka Ahsania Mission
55. Dhrubotara Youth Development Foundation (DYDF)
56. Dishari Protibondhi Nari O Shishu Unnayan Sangstha
57. Dnet
58. Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK)
59. Eco-Social Development Organization (ESDO)
60. Education and Development Foundation-Educo
61. ELLMA, Chattagram
62. Enfants du Monde
63. Films 4 Peace Foundation
64. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Bangladesh
65. Friends in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB)
66. Friendship

67. Gana Unnayan Kendra (GUK)
68. Gandhi Ashram Trust
69. GHASHFUL
70. Good Neighbors Bangladesh
71. Gonoshasthaya Kendra (GK)
72. Gram Bikash Kendra (GBK)
73. Gram Bikash Shohayak Shangstha (GBSS)
74. Habitat for Humanity International Bangladesh
75. Harmony Trust
76. Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Bangladesh
77. Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirchen Schweiz (HEKS/EPER)
78. Humanity and Inclusion Bangladesh
79. Integrated Social Development Effort (ISDE) Bangladesh
80. International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD)
81. JAAGO Foundation
82. JAGO NARI
83. Justice Watch Foundation
84. Kapaeang Foundation
85. Light House
86. Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA)
87. Manab Mukti Sangstha (MMS)
88. Manab Unnayan Kendra (MUK)
89. Media and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI)
90. Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF)
91. Marie Stopes Bangladesh (MSB)
92. Nabolok
93. Nagorik Uddyog
94. Naripokkho
95. National Development Programme (NDP)
96. National Forum of Organizations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD)
97. NGO Forum for Public Health
98. Noakhali Rural Development Society (NRDS)
99. Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Program (OKUP)
100. Oxfam in Bangladesh

101. People's Oriented Program Implementation (POPI)
102. Plan International Bangladesh
103. POLLISREE
104. PFDA-Vocational Training Center
105. Practical Action in Bangladesh
106. PRIP Trust
107. RDRS Bangladesh
108. Research Initiatives, Bangladesh (RIB)
109. Resource Integration Center (RIC)
110. Right Here Right Now Bangladesh Platform
111. Rights Jessore
112. River and Delta Research Centre
113. Rupantar
114. Safety and Rights Society
115. SAJIDA Foundation
116. Sacred Welfare Foundation (SWF)
117. Save the Children in Bangladesh
118. SERAC-Bangladesh
119. Shapla Neer
120. Shushilan
121. Sightsavers Bangladesh
122. SKS Foundation
123. Society for Development Initiatives (SDI)
124. SOLIDARITY
125. SOS Children's Villages Bangladesh
126. Spreeha Bangladesh Foundation
127. Steps Towards Development (Steps)
128. Street Child
129. Sushasoner Jonny Procharavizan-SUPRO Campaign for Good Governance
130. SwissContract Bangladesh
131. The Asia Foundation
132. The Federation of NGOs in Bangladesh (FNB)
133. The Fred Hollow Foundation
134. The Hunger Project-Bangladesh

135. The Share Trust Inc.
136. Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB)
137. Trinamul Unnayan Sangstha
138. Turning Point Foundation
139. Underprivileged Children's Educational Programs (UCEP Bangladesh)
140. Unnayan Sangha (US)
141. Uttaran
142. Voice of the Poor People
143. Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) Bangladesh
144. WaterAid Bangladesh
145. We Can (Amrai Pari Paribarik Nirajaton Protirodh Jote)
146. Welfare Association for the Rights of Bangladeshi Emigrants (WARBE)  
Development Foundation
147. Women with Disabilities Development Foundation (WDDF)
148. World Vision Bangladesh
149. Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)
150. Youth Opportunities Bangladesh

\*The list provided above is updated as of May 2025.



### 7.3 Individual/respondents of the interviews and consultations

Event/interview	Respondent
Meeting with the Secretariat	<i>Professor Mustafizur Rahman</i> Core Group Member, Citizen's Platform and Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)
	<i>Mr Avra Bhattacharjee</i> Joint Director, Dialogue and Outreach, CPD
	<i>Mr Towfiqul Islam Khan</i> Senior Research Fellow, CPD
	<i>Ms Tarannum Jinan</i> Network Focal Point, Citizen's Platform and Senior Administrative Associate, CPD
	<i>Mr Md. Rifat Bin Aowlad</i> Dialogue Associate, CPD
Meeting with Citizen's Platform's Convener	<i>Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya</i> Distinguished Fellow, CPD
Consultation meeting with National NGOs or Member organisations	Eco-Social Development Organization (ESDO), Jagonari, Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu), Light House, Avijan, Kapaeeng Foundation, Dhrubotara Youth Development Foundation (DYDF)
Consultation meeting with INGOs	Plan International, Save the Children, Porticus, FES, ActionAid Bangladesh, HEKS/EPER, EDUCO
Interview with the Core Group Members	<i>Ms Shaheen Anam</i> Executive Director, Manusher Jonno Foundation
	<i>Mr. Asif Ibrahim</i> Vice Chairman, Newage Group of Industries



Event/interview	Respondent
Interview with other members	<i>Dr Khairul Islam</i> Regional Director at WaterAid, South Asia region
	<i>Mr Zakir Hossain</i> Executive Director, Nagorik Uddyog
Review meeting with Core Group Members	<i>Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya</i> <i>Advocate Sultana Kamal</i> <i>Dr Rasheda K. Chowdhury</i> <i>Dr Iftekharuzzaman</i> <i>Ms Shaheen Anam</i> <i>Mr Asif Ibrahim</i> <i>Professor Mustafizur Rahman</i> <i>Ms Anisatul Fatema Yousuf</i>
Review meeting with Member Organisations	ActionAid Bangladesh Bandhu Social Welfare Society HEKS/EPER BRAC EDUCO Harmony Trust ESDO WARBE Share Trust Society for Development Initiatives (SDI) The Hunger Project-Bangladesh

## 7.4 Publications and Documentations

Sl.	Books	Published Date
1.	Education 2030 in Bangladesh: A Civil Society Perspective	December 2016
2.	ধরিত্রীর রূপান্তর: ২০৩০ সালের পথে টেকসই উন্নয়ন অভিযাত্রা	November 2017
3.	Quest for Inclusive Transformation of Bangladesh: Who Not to Be Left Behind – Executive Summary	December 2017
4.	The Ignored Generation: Exploring the dynamics of youth employment in Bangladesh	January 2019
5.	২০৩০ বৈশ্বিক উন্নয়ন এজেন্ডা ও বাংলাদেশ: বাস্তবায়নের সক্ষমতায় সরকারি-বেসরকারি সংস্থার অংশীদারিত্ব	November 2017
6.	Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh: Non-State Actors as Delivery Partners	February 2020

7.	Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh: Measuring Progress and Charting the Path Forward	February 2020
8.	অতিমারি, অর্থনীতি এবং নাগরিক অধিকার: সংলাপ সংকলন	February 2022
9.	সংলাপ সংকলন: জাতীয় উন্নয়ন, স্থানীয় বাস্তবতা ও নাগরিক অধিকার	February 2023
10.	বাংলাদেশের উন্নয়ন আখ্যান ও স্থানীয় বাস্তবতা: পিছিয়ে পড়া জনগোষ্ঠীর ভাবনা	September 2023
11.	Bangladesh's Development Narrative and Parallel Realities: Perspectives of the Left-behind Communities	September 2023
12.	Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh and the Way Forward: Looking through the Prism of Non-State Actors	July 2019

Sl.	Policy Briefs under Citizen's Agenda 2023: Towards a Different Bangladesh	Published Date
<i>Economic Cluster</i>		
1.	Transforming Agriculture for an Inclusive and Diversified Economy	May 2024
2.	Providing Decent Employment for Youth in view of Domestic and Overseas Markets	May 2024
3.	Providing Public Utilities and Services in the Backdrop of Unplanned Urbanisation	May 2024
4.	Ensuring Affordable and Clean Energy for All	May 2024
<i>Social Cluster</i>		
5.	Reducing Out-Of-Pocket Expenditure to Improve Universal Access to Quality Health Care	May 2024
6.	Triggers to Ensuring Quality Primary Education	May 2024
7.	Dealing with the Manifestation of Localised Vulnerabilities of Climate Change	May 2024
8.	Promoting Universal Social Protection System and the Need for Targeting Disadvantaged Groups	May 2024
<i>Governance Cluster</i>		
9.	Effective Implementation of Laws and Judicial Process for Eradicating Gender-Based Violence and Discrimination	May 2024
10.	Access and Justice for Ethnic and Religious Minorities	May 2024

11.	Giving Voice to the 'Silent' and Establishing Democratic Accountability	May 2024
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Sl.	Briefing Notes	Published Date
Briefing Note 1	Strengthening Effectiveness of the Non-State Actors' in COVID-19 Response Activities.	June 2020
Briefing Note 2	Post-'General Holidays' Health Risks. ()	June 2020
Briefing Note 3	New Challenges for SDG and Budget 2020-21	October 2020
Briefing Note 4	Experiences from the current situation at the grassroots level – Achievements and challenges	October 2020
Briefing Note 5	Voluntary National Review 2020 and Youth Perspectives	October 2020
Briefing Note 6	Post-Pandemic Status of CMSMEs and Effectiveness of Stimulus Packages	February 2021
Briefing Note 6	ক্ষুদ্র ও মাঝারি শিল্পের বর্তমান পরিস্থিতি ও প্রণোদনা প্যাকেজের কার্যকারিতা	June 2021
Briefing Note 7	Proposed City Court Act in Bangladesh: Challenges of Implementation	March 2021
Briefing Note 8	কোভিড-১৯ টিকা: বাংলাদেশে কে, কখন, কীভাবে পাবে	January 2021
Briefing Note 9	Why is the Price of Rice Rising? Who Gains, Who Loses? Dhaka: Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh	February 2021
Briefing Note 10	Remittance Flows in Recent Times: Where from Is So Much Money Coming? Dhaka: Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh	February 2021
Briefing Note 10	সাম্প্রতিক রেমিট্যান্স প্রবাহঃ এত টাকা আসছে কোথা থেকে?	February 2021
Briefing Note 11	কালো টাকা সাদা হচ্ছে: অর্থনীতির লাভ, না ক্ষতি?	May 2021
Briefing Note 12	অবশেষে স্কুল খুলছে – আমরা কতখানি প্রস্তুত?	April 2021
Briefing Note 13	জাতীয় বাজেট ২০২১-২২: পিছিয়ে পড়া মানুষের জন্য কী থাকছে?	May 2021
Briefing Note 14	এসডিজি বাস্তবায়নে যুবসমাজ; স্থানীয় প্রেক্ষিত ও যুব সমাজ	July 2021
Briefing Note 15	Youth, SDG Accountability & the Voluntary Local Review: Situating Bangladesh's Experience within the Global Context	July 2021
Briefing Note 16	চালের দাম বাড়ছে কেন? কার লাভ, কার ক্ষতি	August 2021
Briefing Note 17	নারী এবং সংখ্যালঘুদের ভূমির অধিকার ও নিরাপত্তা	September 2021

Briefing Note 18	নগর আদালত আইন: প্রস্তাবিত রূপরেখা এবং বাস্তবায়নের সম্ভাবনা	September 2021
Briefing Note 19	বাজেট ২০২১-২২ বাস্তবায়ন: পিছিয়ে পড়া মানুষেরা কীভাবে সুফল পাবে	October 2021
Briefing Note 20	বাংলাদেশের “বিযুক্ত” যুব সমাজ: কে, কেন এবং কীভাবে?	October 2021
Briefing Note 21	ব্রিফিং নোট ২১: বাংলাদেশের গার্মেন্টস শিল্প ও শ্রমিক: ভবিষ্যৎ চিন্তা	November 2021
Briefing Note 22	অতিমারি-উত্তর শিশুদের স্কুলে ফেরা	December 2021
Briefing Note 23	সাম্প্রদায়িক সহিংসতার বিরুদ্ধে নাগরিক প্রতিবাদ সভা	January 2022
Briefing Note 24	করোনা মোকাবিলায় স্থানীয় জনসম্পৃক্ত উদ্যোগ	March 2022
Briefing Note 25	আসন্ন বাজেট নিয়ে জনমানুষের প্রত্যাশা	May 2022
Briefing Note 26	প্রস্তাবিত বৈষম্য বিরোধী আইন ২০২২ নাগরিক প্ল্যাটফর্মের প্রতিক্রিয়া	July 2022
Briefing note 27	বাংলাদেশের শিক্ষিত যুবরা কাজ পাচ্ছে না কেন? বাজার কি বলে?	November 2022
Briefing note 28	Tea industry in Bangladesh and the state of tea plantation workers	November 2022
Briefing note 29	অন্তর্ভুক্তিমূলক উন্নয়নের লক্ষ্য হওয়া উচিত নীতিমালা ও বাস্তবায়নের পার্থক্য দূর করা	December 2022
Briefing note 30	জনসম্পৃক্ততাবিযুক্ত উন্নয়নে এসডিজি অর্জন সম্ভব নয়	December 2022
Briefing note 31	রাজনৈতিক সহনশীলতার অভাবে সামাজিক নিরাপত্তা হ্রাস পেয়েছে	December 2022
Briefing note 32	সিলেট বিভাগের চ্যালেঞ্জ দুর্গমতা, স্যানিটেশন ও সুপেয় পানির প্রাপ্যতা	December 2022
Briefing note 33	তৃতীয় দেশে ট্রানজিট সুবিধা দেয়ার সিদ্ধান্ত কার্যকর করা হলে কম খরচে পণ্য রপ্তানি করা সম্ভব হবে	December 2022
Briefing note 34	শান্তিচুক্তি বাস্তবায়ন ও স্থানীয়দের মতামতের ভিত্তিতে উন্নয়ন হতে হবে	December 2022
Briefing note 35	এসডিজি বাস্তবায়নে প্রয়োজন সঠিক প্রস্তুতি, হোমওয়ার্ক ও দূরদর্শী পরিকল্পনা	December 2022
Briefing note 36	বাংলাদেশে এসডিজি বাস্তবায়নে অতিমারি কী প্রভাব ফেলবে?	March 2023
Briefing note 37	বর্তমান আর্থ-সামাজিক পরিস্থিতি, জাতীয় বাজেট ও অসুবিধাগ্রস্ত মানুষের প্রত্যাশা	March 2023
Briefing note 38	নগরের পরিচ্ছন্নতাকর্মীদের পেশাগত স্বাস্থ্যঝুঁকি: উত্তরণের উপায়	March 2023
Briefing Note 39	জাতীয় বাজেট ২০২২-২৩: পিছিয়ে পড়া মানুষের জন্য কী আছে?	April 2023

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Briefing Note 40	ডিজিটাল ভূমি ব্যবস্থাপনা উদ্যোগ বাস্তবায়নে প্রয়োজন নাগরিক সম্পৃক্ততা	May 2023
Briefing Note 41	Role of CSOs and NGOs in LDC Graduation of Bangladesh: Opportunities and Challenges	November 2023
Briefing Note 42	Sustainability Reporting by the Private Sector in Bangladesh: Expectations and Experience	November 2023

Sl.	Working Papers	Published Date
Working Paper 1	Are we asking the right questions? Choices and Challenges in Assessing COVID-19 Impact on the Vulnerable in Bangladesh	January 2021
Working Paper 2	COVID 19 and Youth in Bangladesh: The Three Challenges	July 2021
Working Paper 3	Marginalised Communities in Bangladesh: Dealing with the Fallout from the Pandemic	November 2021
Working Paper 4	Disengaged Youth in Bangladesh: Concepts, Causes and Consequences	November 2021
Working Paper 5	Assessing COVID-19 Impact on SDG Delivery in Bangladesh: Framework, Measurement and Perspectives	July 2022
Working Paper 6	Dealing with the Aftermath of COVID-19: Adjustments and Adaptation Efforts of the Apparel Workers in Bangladesh	July 2022
Working Paper 7	Strategies Applied by Marginalised Communities to Cope with COVID-19 and its Effects	June 2023
Working Paper 8	COVID-19 Impact on Vaccination, Food Consumption, Maternal and Child Health	June 2023
Working Paper 9	Education during COVID-19: Impact, Coping and Policy Support	June 2023

Sl.	Citizen's Platform Briefs	Published Date
Citizen's Platform Brief 1	টেকসই উন্নয়ন অর্জনে সুশাসন ও গণতন্ত্র মূল	December 2016
Citizen's Platform Brief 2	টেকসই উন্নয়নে বেসরকারি খাতের অংশগ্রহণ জরুরি	December 2016

Citizen's Platform Brief 3	SDG Priorities for Bangladesh	December 2016
Citizen's Platform Brief 4	CSOs in SDG Implementation in Bangladesh	December 2016
Citizen's Platform Brief 5	Aligning SDG 4 and 7th Five Year Plan in Bangladesh: Prospects and Challenges	July 2017
Citizen's Platform Brief 6	Bridging Climate Action and Sustainable Development Goals in Bangladesh	August 2017
Citizen's Platform Brief 7	Quality Education: Is Absence of Accountability and Participation a Villain in the Scene?	August 2017
Citizen's Platform Brief 8	Localising the SDGs in Bangladesh	November 2017
Citizen's Platform Brief 9	The State of the Marginalised in Bangladesh	November 2017
Citizen's Platform Brief 14	Acid Survivors Foundation. প্রতিরোধ ও সম্ভাবনায় তরুণসমাজ	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 15	Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communications. কমিউনিটি রেডিও যুব সম্প্রদায়ের অংশগ্রহণ ও ক্ষমতায়নের এক অনন্য মাধ্যম.	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 16	শিক্ষা সংক্রান্ত টেকসই উন্নয়ন অভীষ্ট ও সমতলের আদিবাসীদের জন্য অধিকারভিত্তিক শিক্ষা ব্যবস্থার দাবি	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 17	ADD International Bangladesh. Promoting Mental Health of Youth in Bangladesh: From Evidence to Policy Advocacy	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 18	WaterAid Bangladesh. Youth in Action towards Sustainable Development Goal: Challenges, Opportunities and Way Forward. (2018)	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 19	Nagorik Udyog. বাংলাদেশের দলিত তরুণসমাজ প্রতিবন্ধকতা ও করণীয়	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 20	VSO Bangladesh. VSO Approach through Citizen-led Monitoring: Engaging Youth in SDGs	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 21	ActionAid Bangladesh. Engaging Young Women and Men in Decision-making Process	October 2018

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Citizen's Platform Brief 22	Naripokkho. Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights of Adolescents and Young People	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 23	Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust. Understanding Key Issues Surrounding Rape of Young People in Dhaka	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 24	Transparency International Bangladesh. দুর্নীতি প্রতিরোধ, সুশাসন ও টেকসই উন্নয়ন অর্জনে তারুণ্যের ভূমিকা	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 25	BRAC. Youth Education towards Employment: Is Everyone's Needs being Recognised?	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 26	Turning Point Foundation. টেকসই উন্নয়ন অর্জনে প্রতিবন্ধী তরুণ-তরুণীদের যৌন ও প্রজনন স্বাস্থ্য অধিকার	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 28	Gram Bikash Shohayak Shongstha. Youth with Disabilities and Gender Discrimination	October 2018
Citizen's Platform Brief 29	টেকসই উন্নয়ন অর্জিত ২০৩০: সংবিধানের আলোকে সমতলের আদিবাসী ও দলিত জনগোষ্ঠীর অধিকার ও বর্তমান অবস্থা	October 2018

Sl.	Conference Proceedings	Published Date
1	প্রতিবেদন: নাগরিক সম্মেলন ২০১৭ - বাংলাদেশে এসডিজি বাস্তবায়ন: কাউকে পেছনে রাখা যাবে না	September 2018
2	প্রতিবেদন: যুব সম্মেলন ২০১৮ - বাংলাদেশ ও এজেন্ডা ২০৩০: তারুণ্যের প্রত্যাশা	April 2019
3	প্রতিবেদন: যুব সম্মেলন ২০২২ - আজকে দাঁড়িয়ে, আগামীর ভাবনা	February 2023

Sl.	Special Publication	Published Date
1	Brochure for Citizens Conclave on Four Years of SDGs in Bangladesh (with report highlights)	April 2019

## A Journey to Remember, Some Lessons for Uptake

Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh: The Journey and the Learnings documents the transformative evolution of one of the most dynamic civil society initiatives of the country. Since its inception in 2016, the Citizen's Platform has evolved into a vibrant network of over 150 organisations, united by the core commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and driven by the shared principle of 'Leaving No One Behind'.

Blending narrative with reflections, this publication offers a unique institutional memory. It captures how the Citizen's Platform adapted the global agenda to the national context, amplified the voices of the marginalised in the policy process, promoted the aspirations of the youth at the national level and responded during the pandemic to protect the vulnerable groups.

The document also recalls how the network dealt with organisational challenges by protecting the civic space, accessing resources from non-traditional sources and creatively utilising the media to scale up its messages.

Anybody interested in the 'science of organisation', including the policy activists, social entrepreneurs, development partners and engaged citizens alike, will find this lucid historical record both insightful and instructive.

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