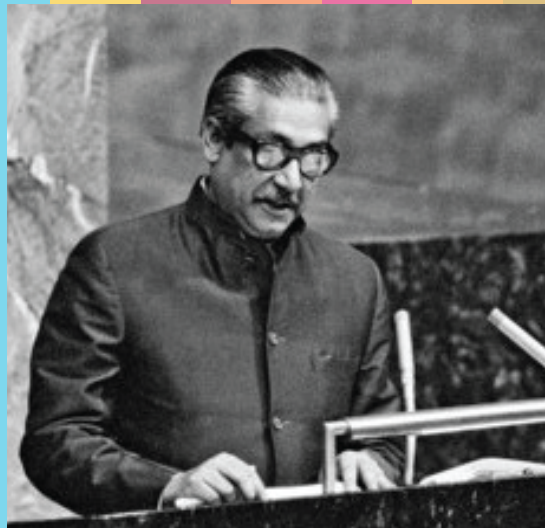




SDG SUMMIT 2023: BANGLADESH COUNTRY COMMITMENTS





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Section 1: Background

Bangladesh has wholeheartedly embraced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aligning them with its development agenda to prioritize the well-being of its people. The government has integrated the SDGs into its Eighth Five Year Plan (2021-2025), with 66 out of 104 monitoring indicators directly linked to the SDGs. This alignment reflects the values of its leaders, including Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who emphasized similar themes during their United Nations speeches.

To ensure that no one is left behind, the Eighth Five Year Plan places a strong emphasis on allocating more resources to underdeveloped regions and generating employment opportunities there. Special programs target vulnerable groups, including the homeless, landless, marginalized individuals, and those in remote areas, particularly women, children, and the elderly.

These efforts have yielded positive results. Bangladesh has significantly improved its global SDG ranking, moving from 120th to 101st place in just seven years. The country has achieved an impressive 6.7% average GDP growth with a pro-poor focus for the past fifteen years. Moderate poverty has decreased from 40% in 2005 to 18.7% in 2022, while extreme poverty has fallen from 25% to 5.6% during the same period. Universal access to electricity and self-sufficiency in rice production have enhanced food security and nutrition. Gender equality has improved, setting Bangladesh apart in South Asia. The United Nations has recommended the country's graduation from the least developed status in 2026, recognizing its success in economic and social development.

Notably, the government's shelter project 'Ashrayan' has rehabilitated around 0.56 million landless and homeless families with

a significant portion of districts and sub-districts now declared landless-homeless free. Bangladesh's youthful population is being leveraged through the National Youth Policy 2017, aligned with the SDGs. The vision of a "Digital Bangladesh" is propelling the country toward becoming a knowledge-based and technolo-

gy-driven society, with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina aiming to make Bangladesh 'Smart' and developed by 2041. This comprehensive approach underscores Bangladesh's commitment to achieving sustainable development for its citizens.



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Section 2: SDG Transitions and Priority Areas for SDG Investments

A. Social Protection and Jobs

1. Enhancing social protection and inclusion: Bangladesh is committed to reducing poverty and food insecurity through the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS), focusing on nutrition-sensitive, shock-responsive, gender, and disability-inclusive social protection programs. Initiatives like the Universal Pension Scheme and Employment Injury Scheme aim to provide financial security to citizens.

2. Overseas employment: The government aims to send five million skilled workers abroad within 5 years, emphasizing courses on skill development and market alignment.



3. Universal health coverage (UHC): Bangladesh is dedicated to advancing UHC, expanding health services, improving quality, and providing financial protection for all citizens.

4. Employment policy: The National Employment Policy 2022 addresses job creation, digital transformation and skills mismatches.

5. Youth and women's employment: Strategies include reducing youth NEET (not in education, employment, or training), promoting youth entrepreneurship, and providing skill development training to 0.8 million youths by 2024.



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B. Essential Services and Transforming Education

1. Universal literacy and primary education: Bangladesh aims to achieve universal literacy and primary education completion rates by 2030, increasing public expenditures on education to 3.5% by FY 2031.

2. Curriculum reform: The implementation of a new, competency-based curriculum promotes gender equality and quality education.

3. Expanding pre-primary education: Extending pre-primary edu-

cation from one to two years for 4+ year-olds enhance early childhood education.

4. Teacher recruitment and training: Bangladesh plans to achieve a student-teacher ratio of 30:1 by 2030, focusing on teacher standards and professional development.

5. Safe, green learning environment: Initiatives aim to eliminate education wastage, provide cash incentives, and scale up school feeding programs.

6. Mainstreaming gender equality and inclusion: Bangladesh is committed to gender parity in schools and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

7. Quality higher education: Bangladesh aims to promote academic mobility and quality higher education through global conventions and academic networks.

8. Bangladesh National Qualification Framework (BNQF): BNQF's comprehensive structure will be legally established to provide a foundation for education streams.

9. TVET and industry linkage: Strengthening industry linkages in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programs aligns them with labor market demands.

10. Protection of children and young people: Initiatives aim to eliminate child marriage by 2041.

11. Providing housing: Providing housing to landless and homeless people.



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C. Energy for All and Shift to Renewables

1. Energy efficiency: Bangladesh seeks to enhance energy efficiency through modern and digital devices, reducing energy loss and optimizing consumption.

2. Clean fuels and technology: The government aims to increase reliance on clean fuels and technology to 30% by 2025 and 35% by 2030.

3. Renewable energy policy: An updated Renewable Energy Policy will incentivize and accelerate the adoption of renewable energy technologies.

4. Energy consumption reduction: Bangladesh targets a 20% reduction in primary energy consumption per GDP by 2030, emphasizing energy efficiency.



D. Securing Food, Water, and Sanitation Systems



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1. Food business operator's database: Establishing a comprehensive database of food business operators enhances monitoring and regulation.

2. Food safety policy: Developing and implementing a national food safety policy aligned with the Food Safety Act aims to ensure safety standards.

3. Food systems transformation: Initiatives include reducing post-harvest losses and waste

and promoting sustainable practices among producers.

4. Water Act amendment: Updating the Bangladesh Water Act to incorporate the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 supports water management.

5. Water supply and sanitation: Expanding access to drinking water services and sanitation facilities, aiming for 100% coverage by 2030.

E. Digital Transformation

1. Ethical use of AI: Bangladesh focuses on ethical AI, robotics, IoT, blockchain, and cybersecurity to augment human capacity.

2. Digitalization of social welfare programs: Transitioning social welfare programs to digital platforms enhances efficiency and accessibility.

3. Digitalization of food programs: Registering beneficiaries digitally in food programs improves planning and programming.

4. Digital migration process: Transforming the migration process from analog to digital for efficiency and transparency.

5. Digital commerce and ICT industry: Encouraging digital commerce, ICT industry growth, and a conducive business envi-

ronment.

6. Cybersecurity and digital economy: Enhancing cybersecurity and creating a digital platform for government agencies.

7. Digital agriculture transformation: Digitizing agriculture services to increase productivity, food security, and empower rural farmers.

8. Digital financial inclusion: Promoting digital financial access through branchless banking and mobile financial services.

9. Digitalization of health sector: Leveraging ICT for a digital health system, enabling oversight and governance by 2030.



F. Protecting Biodiversity and Nature

1. Haor and wetlands protection

act: Drafting and implementing an act for the protection, development, and management of haors.

2. Empowering local communities

ties: Engaging local communities in the conservation of natural tourism destinations through

Destination Management Organizations (DMOs).

3. Initiatives in Conservation:

increasing Forest coverage 16% by 2030, involving forest-dependent families, declaring protected areas, and species conservation.



G. Gender Equality

The Government pledges to accelerate targeted action to achieve SDG by 2030, focusing on:

1. Enhancing women's economic empowerment: By 2030, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) envisions a female labour force participation rate of 50%, which is currently at 42.6%. Hon'ble Prime Minister has committed to "increase women's participation in the ICT sector, including tech start-ups and e-commerce sector to 25% by 2026 and 50% by 2041". In support of this, the Government is committed to train 75,000 women on various topics related to ICT by 2032.

2. Eliminating gender-based violence: The National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and Children (2018-2030), with a costed annualized results framework, provides the strategic direction for planning, identifying resource gaps, and guiding resource allocations and implementation.

3. Ensuring women's leadership

and participation: The GoB emphasizes the importance of women's participation in public life, including in public institutions, businesses, and trade unions, as well as in decision-making processes and leadership roles across sectors. By 2030 FICCI's strategy is to attain 30% Women Leadership among the FICCI member companies.



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4. Increased resilience from crisis and shocks: The gender-responsive Standing Order on Disasters (SOD) 2019 and the National Plan for Disaster Management (NPDM) 2021-2025, among others, are key national instruments that will continue influencing inclusive climate change action and disaster risk reduction across Bangladesh.

5. Strengthening gender-responsive budgeting: Bangladesh adopted gender-responsive budgeting in 2009, with a

total gender budget allocation of 24.65% of the total budget. By 2025, the gender budget allocation will be, at minimum, 35% of the national budget.

6. Implementing the women, peace, and security agenda: The Government of Bangladesh extended the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (NAP WPS) 2019–2022 period until 2025 and has reiterated its firm commitment to fulfilling the WPS agenda.

H. Disaster Risk Reduction

The government is strongly committed to strengthening national disaster preparedness and response through the implementation of innovative strategies like Anticipatory Action, which ensures timely interventions to mitigate the consequences of imminent disasters. The GoB has also included the issue of establishing a Humanitarian Staging

Area with due importance as part of strengthening the backbone of emergency response.

This issue has been reflected in the Standing Orders on Disaster and National Plan for Disaster Management. The government will finalize and implement the Disaster Risk Reduction Financing Strategy by 2024.



Section 3: Reducing Poverty and Inequality

The poverty and inequality targets for 2027 and 2030 are as follows:

Sl.	Indicators	Baseline (FY 22)	Target (FY 27)	Target (FY 30)
1.	Moderate Poverty, %	18.70	11.0	7.2
2.	Extreme Poverty, %	5.60	3.2	2.6
3.	Inequality (Gini coefficient-income)	0.499	0.490	0.485

The government has identified several key interventions to alleviate poverty and reducing inequality in the lagging regions. These include refocusing spending on health, education, and infrastructure needs, giving higher priority and greater beneficiary coverage of social protection programs, addressing irrigation and flood control issues, supporting agriculture research and non-farm rural enterprises, and enhancing access to labour training and international migration.



Section 4: Institutional Arrangements to Deliver the Goals

A. Data Ecosystems for SDG Monitoring and Reporting

1. Strengthen monitoring and reporting mechanism: The GoB has developed a Monitoring & Evaluation Framework with a

view to tracking the progress of SDGs implementation. The Government has also prepared SDG Action Plan aligning with the

Five-Year Plans. Bangladesh participated in Voluntary National Reviews process twice in 2017 and 2020. Besides, National Conference on SDG Implementation Review were organized twice in 2018 and 2022 involving all national and local stakeholders. BGMEA is currently creating a web-based data platform so that member factories can share the ESG data to link the industry's contributions to specific SDGs.

2. Strengthen data collection and dissemination infrastructure: The GoB is dedicated to improving its data collection infrastructure by adopting advanced methods and investing in modern technology such as big data, geospatial data, and

real-time monitoring, as well as mobile surveys.

3. Capacity building and data literacy: Bangladesh is resolutely committed to bolstering data management efforts. This commitment entails targeted and strategic capacity-building endeavours of government officials and other relevant stakeholders.

4. Multi-stakeholder collaboration: To streamline data generation, mitigate redundancy, and prioritize survey areas, the National Data Coordination Committee (NDCC) has been established incorporating all data producing agencies in the country.



B. Strengthening Public Sector Capabilities for Implementation

Government of Bangladesh aims to enhance its public sector capabilities and effectively work towards the implementation of the SDGs, fostering sustainable development and improved quality of life for its citizens. It has taken several initiatives to strengthen public sector capacities to effectively implement the

SDGs. These initiatives include developing policy frameworks, introducing capacity-building programs, and implementing institutional reforms aimed at enhancing coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of SDG-related activities across various government departments and agencies.

C. SDG Financing Needs and Mechanisms

In response to the evolving challenges of COVID-19 pandemic, and country's trajectory towards LDC graduation, the government is firmly committed to implementing an integrated national financing framework under the 8th Five Year Plan. The Government of Bangladesh pledges to undertake the following measures:

1. Establishment and operationalization of a high-level governance and oversight mechanism

2. Adoption of the updated development finance assessment and financing strategy

3. Creating SDG-specific financing roadmaps

4. Establishment and operationalization of an investment match-making platform

5. Ensuring policy coherence between national development priorities, global commitments, and the financing framework.



D. SDG Awareness Raising and Localization Plans

To implement the SDGs at the local level, 39+1 National Priority Indicators have been identified where 39 indicators come from the 17 SDGs that were considered (a) critical to the local context and (b) could produce reinforcing effects on other targets. The remaining 1 indicator selected by the local administrative unit based on workshops at the sub-district levels, was included to ensure the pledge of “leaving

no one behind,” considering the unique circumstances of each district or sub-district and reflecting the ground realities of the specific geographic region. In order to increase awareness among the target stakeholders, particularly students, youth, and local government entities, the Government is in the process of devising an action-oriented National SDGs Communication Strategy.



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