



CASE STUDY

Institution Building in Bangladesh:

Establishment of the SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Committee

Background Information

Bangladesh's leaders focused their efforts on poverty reduction during the years of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In doing so, they achieved the goal of bringing the portion of its society living in poverty below 29%. The country also did well on other measures as it approached the goal of universal primary education, while also reducing child mortality and improving mental health. But other figures, like those around environmental sustainability and development were not on track as they transitioned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

As they looked to deliver on their SDG commitments in a holistic manner, Bangladesh's leaders chose to establish a new Inter-Ministerial Committee, formally known as the SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Committee. Chaired by the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, the new group would facilitate and implement the country's SDGs Action Plan. Membership of the group includes twenty Senior Secretaries that represent all the country's ministries and agencies, and each of those departments is responsible for monitoring and auditing a portion of the SDG indicators.

Approach, Delivery, & Challenges

Bangladesh's SDG efforts are integrated with its national development work. The goals were built into its 7th Five Year Plan (FYP), covering the years 2016 to 2020. SDG-related roles and responsibilities were mapped out to all the country's ministries, divisions, and agencies. Those groups were then tasked with developing specific action plans to help achieve the SDG targets they're responsible for. These efforts are led and monitored by the newly-created SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Committee that was established in the Prime Minister's Office.

To drive broad participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), development partners, the private sector, media, and civil society organizations (CSOs), the Bangladeshi government has adopted a "Whole of Society" approach to the SDGs. The SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Committee is leading these efforts as it develops and implements the SDGs Action Plan.



Bangladesh's Five-Year Plans (FYPs) align with the start and end years of the 2030 Agenda. This allows the country to deliver three successive plans (the 7th, 8th, and 9th FYPs) in those years, giving them multiple opportunities to assess progress and adapt their approach along the way. This will provide outsiders a natural experiment to observe around the challenges and opportunities inherent to integrating and mainstreaming the SDGs in development plans.

The General Economics Division (GED) of Bangladesh's Planning Commission was tasked with leading the development of action plans and assessment of funding needs for the country's SDG efforts. The GED is also responsible for organizing workshops for officials assigned to lead SDG efforts at the Ministries, Divisions, and agencies. Collectively, those individuals with SDG responsibilities make up the SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Committee.

Bangladesh's leaders understand the need of comprehensive, reliable data to inform good policy decisions, as well as to ensure stakeholder accountability for the SDGs. In recognizing this necessity, they are developing a monitoring framework to provide the necessary data and analysis to report and act on the country's SDG targets. They started this work in December 2016, as the GED led a two-day long Inter-Ministerial Consultation Workshop on designing the SDG Monitoring Framework. The purpose of the workshop was to facilitate the creation of appropriate tools to monitor progress. It also aimed to help those responsible for capturing data to see the importance of working together to ensure the timely delivery of reliable data. Doing so would allow those responsible for analysis to produce up-to-date reports on the country's progress.

The approach to developing the framework had been inclusive in nature. The effort included research experts from throughout the Bangladeshi Government, including policy makers, public planners, and members of the national statistical office, along with representatives of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the Planning Commission, and the Implementation Monitoring Evaluation Division (IMED). Those stakeholders have helped examine existing data and provided feedback on which of the SDG indicators they believed to be most relevant for Bangladesh, as well as how to improve the availability of the necessary data.

The output of the SDG Monitoring Framework efforts was reviewed by all relevant ministries, divisions, and agencies. That effort was followed by thematic consultations with development partners, civil society organizations, academics, the private sector, think tanks, and Bangladesh's academic community. This fed into the work of the Ministerial SDG Monitoring and Implementation Committee.

Financing SDG programs is viewed as the key to delivering on Bangladesh's targets. Financial assessments are ongoing, but early estimates suggested the need for a significant increase over the roughly US\$80 billion per year that's already expected to be spent on development.

Bangladesh's SDG efforts have been aided by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), which has provided financial and technical support via two programs: Support to Sustainable and Inclusive Planning, and Engaging with Institutions, which are helping with the overall planning and effort towards inclusive engagement in the SDG process.

Benefits & Lessons Learned

In 2017, Bangladesh completed its first Voluntary National Review (VNR). That report identified key challenges the country will have to overcome to deliver on its SDG targets. Those challenges included: mobilizing finance; engaging with stakeholders; data management; and localizing and contextualizing the SDGs via local development plans and strategies.

Localizing the SDGs is believed to be a key to success in Bangladesh. Contextualizing and integrating the targets and indicators with local development plans will tie the abstract national figures to concrete local efforts. Fostering commitment at that level will aid progress and support the country's inclusive development



approach.

In January 2017, the Planning Commission of the GED (the Secretariat of the SDGs Implementation and Monitoring Committee), conducted a review of the country's data generation and statistical capabilities. The output of that assessment was a report that analyzed the data shortcomings the country would have to overcome to achieve the goals. It found significant challenges in the collection, analysis, disaggregation, and dissemination of data, and that they need to foster bilateral collaboration at the local, regional, and global levels as they build capacity and share best practices. The report also found they had the data necessary to track seventy SDG indicators, and part of the data they needed for an additional one hundred and eight indicators, but they did not have sufficient data for the remaining sixty-three indicators.

Opportunities & Next Steps

Bangladesh is focused on the timely preparation of development reports, as well as delivering on their SDG targets. The country is also looking to secure the financing that's needed to fully implement their plans for the SDGs. For which, an additional US\$928 billion is needed. This is on top of all funding that was previously secured.

A data group analysis found that Bangladesh currently has less than 30% of the data needed to track SDG indicators. To remedy this, a national monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is being created, and public-sector agencies are beginning to be monitored against SDG targets. These efforts are being integrated with a national system for results-based management that's known as the Annual Performance Agreement.

In preparing to deliver the country's development goals, in concert with the SDGs, Bangladesh has published a training handbook for its 7th Five-Year Plan. This book details the lead and co-lead ministries for specific SDG targets, as well as their supporting agencies. They are now in the process of developing an action plan for the implementation of the SDGs, and they're doing so with a multi-stakeholder, inclusive approach.

Sources & Verification

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