

## Five Major Components of Social Policy from SDGs and their Governance Aspects in the Context of Bangladesh

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### Abstract

### Original Research Article

The escalation and proliferation in the number of actors participating in governance & social policy process are possibly a well-known phenomenon in modern era to devise the compact and cross-border social policy components. The ardent needs of the marginalized and underprivileged groups of people and addressing social problems in Bangladesh are not empirically chronic to elucidate in the existing governance propensity. Highly changing world and social order, transforming actors' power dynamics & modernizing the traits and significance of institution are vividly playing a pivotal role to bring about a holistic form of social policy. Present paradigm of governance, actors' functions, location of goals of power including domains of authority on social policy are required to be discerned for the better prognostication of identifying the comprehensive social policy components from SDGs in the context of Bangladesh.

**Keywords:** Governance, Social policy, Transformation of power dynamics, SDG.

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## INTRODUCTION

Historically governance and social policy formulation are going after top-down approach. But to cope with the changing world order, many actors in global and spatial arena, institutions, socially constructed knowledge, and international negotiation are shaping the new structure of governance paradigm and social policy. Bangladesh also adapts it in its governance and policy related area. Governance and sustainable development are children of similar history and parentage. They emerged in the late 1980's, with shared characteristics and overlapping potential. By the mid 1990's they were common terms in popular and professional discourse, along with renewed interest in the role of institutions in societal change. Sustainability is best viewed as a socially instituted process of adaptive change in which innovation is a necessary element. The concept of sustainable development arose from two main sources: increasingly worrisome evidence of ecological degradation and other biophysical damage, both despite and because of the greater wherewithal provided by economic growth, and the largely disappointing record of post-WWII 'development' efforts, particularly the persistence, and

in some places worsening, of poverty and desperation in a period of huge overall global increases in material wealth. The 2030 Agenda is based on a global partnership involving many stakeholders, and requires mobilization of all means of implementation and a strong follow-up and review mechanism to ensure progress and accountability. The 17 SDGs help to steer a process of convergence, among Member States, within societies and with the rest of the world. This is also true for INDCs in the Paris Agreement, and the commitments in the Sendai Framework and Addis Ababa programmes. But priorities, progress, capacities can vary regionally and indeed by country. The 17 Goals outline an opportunity to organize, to overhaul global governance, to be honest for future generations; they are rooted in a philosophy of 'no one left behind,' with a human rights blueprint dedicated to 'furthest behind first' (Wolfish & Smith, 2000).

### Research Question

Which are the top five major components of social policy from SDGs and describe their governance aspects in the context of Bangladesh?

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Sort out the significance of major components to devise the cross-border social policy.
2. Perceive the governance aspects of policy components in Bangladesh.
3. Elucidate the propensity of power dynamics in global arena of policy formulation by SDG.
4. Identify the needs of the marginalized groups of people and social problems in Bangladesh.

### Research Description

In present era, the multiple centres of power along with the going after implications for social policy and governance are vastly scrutinized. While there has been a proliferation in the amount of various prominent actors participating in governance and social policy process, that accomplishment is not entirely a new phenomenon. The state is in constant transformation, adapting to different challenges it faces frequently. It is lucidly understandable that the state is in retrenchment regarding power exercise or that is not as powerful as it was once. Nowadays the state has retrenched a prominent role in governance and in the policy process. Moreover, in lieu of providing and extensive social security network, it has had on the new & reshaped roles, including assisting to prepare spatial populations for global business and social interactions.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

It can't be denied that the proliferation of centres of power on spatial, transnational, and international areas- has accompanied a eventual transformation in Bangladesh after 1990. At the very early in nineteen decades of last centennial in Bangladesh, social policy formation was a top-down approach. But with the course of time, world order has been dramatically changed. Structural adjustment program, Neoliberalism approach, multi-centric world order are the new substantives in global governance and policy. Bangladesh is not out of the changing trend. It's seen that world transformed its political ideology from democratic socialism to Neoliberalism. Different Civil society organizations (CSO), Non-government organization (NGO), Multinational corporations (MNC), Transnational Corporations (TNC), Private entrepreneurs etc are now playing role in policy and governance as assisting bodies of government. Identifying social problems and selecting the service to alleviate the troubles are now not only the function of government but also the prime responsibilities of other actors to devise it more influential and significant. So, an apple of discord is emerged in the surface of governance and social policy related epistemology whether the state loses its traditional power or reshapes.

Thus, Bangladesh stands on a solid foundation to take up the challenges of SDGs implementation. The overall macroeconomic environment, Government's growing ability for increased public spending, people's

awareness and participation in Government's development strides, and above all strong political commitment make Bangladesh a deserving candidate for becoming a success story in SDGs implementation. However, we are mindful of the fact that our success in realizing SDGs goals and targets would largely depend on our ability to overcome sector-specific challenges, performance of our public and private sectors and above all regional and international cooperation. The government of Bangladesh has also adopted a "whole of society" approach for implementation and attainment of comprehensive social policy from SDGs to identify the requirements of marginalized groups of people.

Generating adequate financial and nonfinancial resources from spatial, transnational & international sources will be crucial. Developing a holistic, coherent and coordinated rather than sector oriented implementation strategy would be critically important. This would be essential for maintaining the development momentum that the country achieved in MDGs era and picking up the required acceleration for SDGs implementation. Technology appears to be another key constraint, especially in terms of transforming towards the low carbon and low natural resource intensive pathways towards development. We need international cooperation for developing our capacity in harnessing benefits from modern environmentally sensitive technologies and products. Additional technical and capacity development support would be required for data generation and analysis at both institutional and individual level in order to store, manage and monitor vast data required for the SDGs. For monitoring of the SDGs, data must be provided from almost all ministries/agencies of the government because of interconnected nature of SDGs. Hence, the capacity of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) will need to be enhanced. Involving other stakeholders meaningfully in the implementation process of SDGs and ensuring proper coordination among them seem to be a major challenge.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper has been prepared following guidelines provided by governance and policy in a multicentric world (Wolfish & Smith, 2000) for preparation of country-specific voluntary national review. In preparing the report, we have taken the latest available data into consideration. Three guiding documents namely Mapping of Ministries by targets in the equity campaign brief (March, 2017), Implementation of SDGs aligning with the 7th FYP and Data Gap Analysis for SDGs have been immensely helpful in preparing the report. These three documents were earlier prepared with a view to navigate through the difficult pathways for transformation at the initial phase of SDGs implementation in the social policy and discern its governance aspect.

We have undertaken a number of exercises in framing and drafting this paper. We have tried to engage all the stakeholders' propensity in a robust process. We have also consulted the paper with all available and relevant ministries/agencies and national statistical organization and received their inputs. Besides we have also reviewed the paper with the ideas of civil society organizations (CSOs), non-government organizations (NGOs), private sector, development partners, academia, and media to make sure that the review contains diverse opinions and evolve as an inclusive national document. In the process, above mentioned ministries/agencies, NGO, TNC, MNC and other stakeholders are considered because of addressing

the needs of members of marginalized segments of the society and social problem in Bangladesh.

### Participants

Forty (40) Ministries ( Planning ministry, Finance ministry, Social Welfare ministry, Health ministry, Education ministry, Women and Children ministry including Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet Division would come up to lead implementation of the targets of SDGs in Bangladesh). NGOs (BRAC, CARE, some spatial NGOs), United Nations (UNDP, UNICEF, UNCTAD, WFO etc), European Union (EU), different MNC and TNC.

### Approaches

**Table 1: Approaches to understanding the multicentre power in governance and social policy**

Approaches	Type of Power	Type of Center	Examples of centre of power
Approach 1	economic & military capability	States	USA, China, India, Japan
Approach 2	technological and financial capability, moral suasion, legal authority, international obligation	State actors such as federal (central) jurisdictions and municipal governments and branches of Government, non-state actors such NGOs and multinational corporations, global cities and regions intergovernmental organizations. quasi-state organizations	Ontario, the Supreme court of Canada, Greenpeace, Microsoft
Approach 3	Authority and common understanding	Spheres of authority, interaction between individuals, Intersubjective consensus and understanding	Market, international system, spatial political system

Note. Governance and Policy in a Multicentric World (Wolfish & Smith, 2000)

**Table 2: Overview of SDGs with Government 7 FYP to identify the five major social components**

SDGs	Social policy components (Integrated issues)
SDG 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere	i. Reduction in the headcount poverty ratio by about 6.2 percentage points (from 24.8% to 18.6%) ii. Reduction in extreme poverty by about 4.0 percentage points (i.e. 8.9 % in 2020) iii. Spending on Social Protection as a share of GDP to be increased to 2.3%. iv. Creation of a Lagging Region Fund
SDG 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.	i. Consolidation of Food Transfer Program as suggested by National Social Security Programme. ii. Reduce proportion of stunting among under-five children from 36.1% to 25%. iii. Reduce proportion of underweight children among under-five children from 32.6% to 20%
SDG 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing For all at all ages.	i. Under 5 mortality rate to be reduced from 41 to 37 per 1000 live births. ii. Maternal Mortality Ratio to be reduced from 170 to 105 per 100,000 live births. iii. Immunization, measles (percent of children under 12 months) to be increased to 100 percent. iv. Births attended by skilled health staff to be increased to 65 percent. v. Reduction of Total Fertility Rate to 2.0 vi. Increasing Contraceptive Prevalence Rate to 75%
SDG 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning.	i. Achieving 100% net enrollment rate for primary and secondary education. ii. Ensure quality education at primary, secondary and tertiary education. iii. Percentage of cohort reaching grade 5 to be increased to 100% from current 80%.
SDG10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.	i. Spending on Social Protection as a share of GDP to be increased to 2.3% of GDP. ii. Reduce Income Inequality from 0.458 to downward.

Note. Equity BD Campaign Brief, March 2017

### Data Analysis based on Theoretical Approach

During the analysis based on theoretical approach, we have faced in a broader propensity two types of challenged to accomplish the requirements of marginalized groups of people and sort out the social problems in Bangladesh.

#### Challenge 1

The changing world order in the power dynamics including various types of stakeholders' function spread out from transnational to international surface in modern world. In that case state will not be a hegemonic or monopolist in nature as it was in past rather it's blatantly reshaping its power dynamics in governance and social policy formation. Bangladesh also tries to cope with the changing situation but still the prime essence of present world order may get some perturbations because of lack of inadequate monitoring, less regulatory functions, unable to reach entirely at the root level, scarcity of resource management, political willingness and in capacitance in prognostication of lucid functioning. That's why the accomplishment of SDG goals within 2030 may be treated a far cry for above mentioned challenges.

#### Challenge 2

##### Resource Mobilization

SDGs are all encompassing requiring huge resources for implementation. Traditional sources of funding are insufficient to implement the SDGs. We need to find innovative ways of financing from both the public and the private sectors, development partners and ensure effective and efficient ways for utilization.

##### Stakeholders' Engagement

SDGs implementation requires a multi-stakeholder approach involving private sector, NGOs, CSOs, Media and Major Group of Other Stakeholders. Bangladesh has been working towards enhancing participation of all the stakeholders in its efforts to implement the SDGs.

##### Data Availability and Management

There are enormous challenges in collection, analysis, disaggregation, and dissemination of data. We need to build collaboration at bilateral, regional and global levels for capacity building and sharing of best practices.

##### Localization of SDGs

Localization of SDGs in line with domestic development plans and strategies has come up as a big challenge. We are encouraging inclusive and enhanced stakeholders' participation for local level ownership of the SDGs.

##### Data Gap Analysis

Bangladesh Planning Commission conducted a review of various means of data generation in the

country. It reveals that Bangladesh has data for 70 indicators and partially available data for 108 indicators. That's why we need to devise a new mechanism for data mining for the remaining 63 indicators. So it seems to be a big challenge for the attainment of final outcome.

#### Needs Assessment and Financing Strategy

We have done an estimate to determine the financing needs for SDGs implementation with a view to mobilizing internal and external resources. The preliminary assessment reveals that we may require around US\$ 0.7 trillion worth of additional resources for implementation of above mentioned five SDGs targets (Table 2).

### DISCUSSION

The Government of Bangladesh envisions transforming Bangladesh into a developed country by 2041. We have now a perspective plan in place (2010-2021) under which we are working towards transforming Bangladesh a middle income country by 2021. Essentially, as we are working on our next perspective plan (2021-2030), we will ensure proper reflections of SDGs issues in it. The Government is in the process of finalizing the SDG action Plan. This would make it much easier to allocate adequate resources to Ministries/ Agencies in their respective annual budgets for sector specific projects and initiatives. The Government has taken up a bottom up approach to prepare a clear roadmap for localisation of the 2030 Agenda through proper consultation with local government institutions. In order for ensuring "Whole of Society Approach" in our future SDGs efforts, we will develop institutional mechanisms to regularly engage with NGOs, CSOs, Businesses, Development Partners, marginalized segment of the society, professional groups, labour associations, women network, media, and Major Group of Other Stakeholders. The government has completed a financing needs assessment for sector specific demand of resources in implementing SDGs. In order for supplementing its regular budget for SDGs implementation, the Government plans to explore innovative ways of financing through intense bilateral and multilateral engagements and putting additional focus on domestic resource mobilization. Bangladesh is working towards developing a strategy on the role of private sector in implementing SDGs which will encourage private investment in public good.

We will strengthen the capacity of the BBS to spearhead the process of coordination with other data generating agencies so that it can contribute more as the national repository for all kinds of disaggregated data including gender, age, income, and geographic location. The BBS will also establish an integrated framework for ensuring availability, authenticity and reliability of administrative data collected by different Ministries/

Agencies. Bangladesh plans to participate in all major initiatives in the region and beyond regarding SDGs implementation to learn from the experiences and best practises of other countries and stakeholders. In order for ensuring the wider participation of people in general in SDGs implementation, we will continue our efforts to popularize core philosophies of SDGs through massive awareness campaigns.

## CONCLUSION

SDGs demand concerted efforts with strong political commitment. The 2030 Agenda comes at a time when Bangladesh has already kicked off its journey towards a developed country by 2041. Bangladesh has incorporated priorities of SDGs in all her development policies. The Government has adopted an inclusive approach to development so that the poorest and the most vulnerable section of the country can be integrated into its national development efforts. Bangladesh is confident to set an example as a leading SDGs achiever. Bangladesh could start the SDGs implementation early as the preparatory phase of our 7th FYP coincided with the formulation process of the 2030 Agenda. In a mutually reinforcing way, this has offered us a tremendous opportunity to contribute substantially to the global document while also appropriately reflecting the SDGs priorities in our national plan. As regards our progress, we have already completed SDGs Mapping outlining the specific responsibilities of Ministries/ Agencies. In addition, we have done Data Gap Analysis to identify the monitoring and evaluation challenges. We are at the final stage of formulating the SDGs Action Plan to align the efforts of individual Ministries/ Agencies with the targets of the SDGs. Another exercise to find out the financing needs is under process. Together, all these documents will provide us a consolidated framework for the SDGs implementation. The 7th FYP has laid down specific

strategies and priorities for addressing Poverty (SDG 1), Hunger (SDG 2), Health (SDG 3), Education (SDG 4), and inequality (SDG 10), Environment and Climate Change (SDG 12, 13, 14 and 15) and Governance (SDG 16) in Bangladesh context.

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