



Review Report on Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

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(Draft)

Citizen's Review on the Progress of SDGs in Bangladesh

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

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List of abbreviations

BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BILS	Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FYP	Five-Year Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GED	General Economic Division
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum
ILO	International Labour Organization
LFS	Labour Force Survey
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSDA	National Skills Development Authority
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNGP	United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

Introduction

1.1 Background

In September 2015, the member states of the United Nations committed to 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** (hereafter 2030 Agenda) is centred on the 17 goals and a total of 169 targets, which are to be achieved by 2030. The SDGs build on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) but strives to go further and strives to end all forms of poverty and to advance sustainable development everywhere.

The **High-Level Political Forum (HLPF)** is the main United Nations Platform on sustainable development and has a central role in monitoring and reviewing the SDGs at the global level. As a part of this process, the HLPF encourages the member states to “conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven.” An official national review process of SDG related activities is already in place under which report on Voluntary National Review¹ (VNR) was prepared in 2017 and the Annual Review Report in 2018.

In order to enhance the depth and capture on-the-ground experiences with advancing SDGs, that are otherwise not captured in the scope of national reviews. Non-state actors, such as civil society organizations (CSOs) and the private sector, have an important role in not only advancing the SDGs but to also monitor and report perspectives from the ground. This, ultimately, is expected to help increase accountability and transparency, especially in regards to ‘leaving no one behind.’ **‘Leave no one behind’ (LNOB)** has emerged as an encompassing theme of the 2030 Agenda. The LNOB framework has essentially helped mainstream addressing inequality and increase emphasis on inclusion across the 17 Global Goals.

1.2 CSO engagement and responsibility in the 2030 Agenda

The **Citizen’s Platform for SDGs** was launched in 2016 with the objective to enable a national platform that leads and contributes to the effective delivery of the SDGs in Bangladesh. The Platform is in-charge of monitoring and communicating the overall SDG implementation process at the local and national levels. The Platform has also enabled the scope to strengthen cooperation and collaboration among organizations working toward the same agenda.

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPR) defines CSOs as: “non-state, not-for-profit, voluntary entities formed by people in the social sphere that are separate from the state and the market.”² CSOs play a key role as independent entities that hold governments, international organizations

¹ The VNRs can be accessed on the UN’s Knowledge Platform for sustainable development. For more information, see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>.

² <https://www.ungpreporting.org/glossary/civil-society-organizations-csos/>.

and multilateral development banks accountable for their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. CSOs are also essential in translating global goals into local and national actions and achievements. As such, cooperation and inclusion are central themes in its ideal implementation which can be achieved through effective management with CSOs and NGOs. Ultimately, the advancement of the SDGs depends on the combined effort by the government and all stakeholders.

Based on the different areas of work, interested organizations have formed six Goal Groups to prepare the Citizen's Review Reports on their chosen goals. The reports are meant to focus on the progress of the SDGs with reflection from the contribution of non-state actors. Together, the review reports are expected to present an understanding of the progress made and any challenges that need to be addressed head-on. This review report is focused on SDG 8 that calls for decent work and economic growth.

1.3 About the SDG 8 review report

With the ambition to contribute to transparency and provide additional insights, this report presents an understanding of Bangladesh's performance in advancing Goal 8. The overall objective of this report is to review the progress made towards SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth in Bangladesh, with special context to the contribution of non-state actors and the pledge to 'leave no one behind.'

This review report is expected to contribute to the HLPF 2019 discussions in July 2019. The report has been developed with three broad objectives: i) to assess the progress with SDG 8 in Bangladesh, ii) capture the lessons learned so far as well as the challenges and emerging best practices, and iii) recommendations for going forward.

The review report is structured as follows. The following section briefly introduces the methodology adopted for this report. It is followed by presenting an understanding of the Bangladeshi context in context to SDG 8 followed by an overview of how SDG 8 has been included in the national agenda. Following, it delves into the progress with relevant indicators, the role of the civil society and examples of projects and interventions. This is followed with information on the public-private partnerships in realizing Goal 8. The final section notes observations and recommendations for going forward from document review and stakeholder consultations.

Methodology

In order to prepare this report, BRAC drew insights and information from multi-stakeholder consultations, brief surveys and document and data review. The consultation process included workshops with CSOs as well as government representatives from the relevant ministries, development partners, NGOs and

private sector actors. The workshops helped evaluate the SDG 8 priorities for Bangladesh, check-in on the progress made, identify existing gaps and to discuss the CSOs' role in achieving the goals.

2.1 Conceptual framework

Two core frameworks were utilised when developing this report. First, the agenda to 'Leave No One Behind' (LNOB) and second, the integration of CSOs and the private in advancing Goal 8.

LNOB can be considered an overarching principle that in an important commitment to reducing inequality and to reaching to most vulnerable and marginalised (Fukuda-Parr & Hegstad, 2018). It is important to note that the concept of LNOB continues has some inherent ambiguity. This is also reflected in the missing piece in conceptualizing and understanding how state and non-state actors can mainstream this concept in their individual and collective work.

The importance of non-state actors, particularly CSOs and the private, was recognized following the Millenium Development Goal (MDG) experience and in the process of developing and implementing the 2030 Agenda. The existing targets and indicators do not associate the roles of non-state actors. There remains a need to recognize a role for CSOs and the private sector.

2.2 Indicators and data collection

SDG 8 accommodates 12 targets and 17 indicators, 14 of which are quantifiable and three are descriptive indicators. While it was easy to gather the 2016 and 2017 data for most indicators, there are still some indicators that do not have the needed data. The majority of data was collected from the SDG Tracker hosted by the Access to Information (A2i) programme.³ **Table 1** presents the classification and availability of indicators under SDG 8.

A stocktaking exercise was implemented with the CSOs working directly on SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth with the Citizen's Platform network where the organizations share their contributions as well as prominent success cases thus far. Further, the Citizen's Platform partners and organizations were surveyed to understand CSO and private sector perspectives on the SDG 8 Targets and which SDG 8 Targets they perceive as more important.

Secondary data sources, namely from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) and General Economic Department (GED), are utilized to understand the status quo and to complement the qualitative observations. The Labour Force Survey 2016-2017 from BBS informed the majority of information regarding the labour market statistics. Additional data was gathered from UN agencies (including the ILO, UNCTAD and UNSTAT) as needed.

³ For more information, see: <https://a2i.gov.bd/sdg-tracker/>.

Table 1. *Global Tier classification and national data availability for SDG 8 indicators.*

Indicators	Global Tier classification ⁴	Availability	
		2016	2017
8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita	Tier I	Yes	Yes
8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person	Tier I	Yes	Yes
8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex	Tier II	Yes	Yes
8.4.1 Material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP	Tier II	No	No
8.4.2 Domestic material consumption, domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP	Tier I	No	No
8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities	Tier II	Yes	Yes
8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	Tier I	Yes (not PWDs)	Yes (not PWDs)
8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training	Tier I	Yes	Yes
8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age	Tier II	No	No
8.8.1 Frequency rates of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status	Tier II	Yes	Yes
8.8.2 Level of national compliance of labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status	Tier III	No	No
8.9.1 Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP and in growth rate	Tier II	No	No
8.9.2 Proportion of jobs in sustainable tourism industries out of total tourism jobs	Tier III	No	No
8.10.1.a. Number of commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults	Tier I	Yes	Yes

⁴ To facilitate the implementation of the indicator framework, the IAEG-SDGs classifies all indicators into three tiers based on their methodological development and availability at the global level. Tier I indicators are conceptually, have well-established methodologies and are regularly produced. Tier II indicators are conceptually clear, have established methodologies but are not regularly gathered. Finally, Tier III indicators do not have internationally established methodologies and are being developed or tested. Information for Table 1 is collected from UNSTATS: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/iaeg-sdgs/tier-classification/>.

8.10.1.b Number of automated teller machines (ATMs) per 100,000 adults	Tier I	Yes	Yes
8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider	Tier I	Yes	Yes
8.a.1 Aid for Trade commitments and disbursements		No	No
8.b.1 Existence of a developed and operationalized national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy	Tier II	No	No

Source: Bangladesh SDG Tracker

2.3 Limitations

This review report is not without limitations. Constraints related to time and resources limited the extent to allocate and consolidate information. This is the first review report and is expected to guide the CSOs and other actors working to achieve SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth in Bangladesh.

SDG 8 that calls for ‘decent work and economic growth’ is an important part of the LNOB agenda and the goal for ‘shared prosperity.’ It is interesting to note that under Goal 8 indicators, there are no indicators that directly report on economic inequality. The nearest measure includes Indicator 8.5.1 ‘average hourly earnings of female and male employees.’ The overall structure of the targets and indicators do not fully account for the prevalence of the informal economy in many countries.

Further, it is also important to note that this report only covers a small representative sample of all CSO and private sector activities in Bangladesh. Lastly, it is perhaps noticeable that this report was written with a greater emphasis on the CSOs than the private sector. Going forward, it is worthy to develop a robust database of CSO and private sector activities related to SDG 8 as well as to create a detailed framework on how the non-state actors can not only advance the Goals but also help monitor the progress. In addition to this, future frameworks and reviews can also benefit from building more linkages between the different Global Goals.

Real-time data availability is also a major constraint in conducting a more robust analysis of the progress related to Goal 8. Gathering the data for 2018 was nearly impossible to prepare this report. The majority of indicators included report on the statistics from a 2016 and 2017. Further, there is a lack of data persons with disabilities (PWDs), which should be acknowledged in the upcoming discussions.

Goal 8: Developing a global and national understanding

3.1 Goal 8 in the global and regional contexts

SDG 8 calls to “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.” Although the employment and productivity has made tremendous progress, much more remains to be done to increase employment opportunities, promoting decent work and advancing labour market inequality, promoting safe workplaces and improving financial services for sustained and inclusive economic growth. Economic growth should be inclusive and sustainable. The need for growth alongside employment.

South Asia has experienced dynamic economic growth over the past decades. The World Bank notes that South Asia is expected to remain the fastest growing region in the world (World Bank, 2017). Yet the inclusiveness and sustainability of this growth remain a concern. As the economies transition and youth segment bulges, there is a growing need for job creation. So far, countries have not been able to translate economic growth into decent work creation (World Bank, 2017). Across South Asia, economic growth has not been able to fully harness the youth bulge and demographic dividend through job creation (UNESCAP, 2016). Some key priority areas under SDG 8 include (UNESCAP, 2016):

Sustained job-creation through industry-oriented structural transformation. Job creation continues to be a challenge across the world, including the South Asian region. Although South Asia hosts some of the world’s fastest growing economies, the rate of job creation remains to be matched with the demand and its young workforce. Economic growth alone cannot generate massive numbers of additional jobs needed for the growing workforce (World Bank, 2017). Further, the low unemployment rate among women is prevalent in South Asia, which has been consistently below the estimated.

Harnessing the demographic dividend. Investing in human development through quality education and vocational training and enabling an equal opportunity will allow the South Asian economies to take advantage of its young workforce. As such, governments are starting to recognize the importance of skills development and are investing in human resources development and skills formation.

Social protection and financial inclusion. South Asian countries have the potential to scale-up models of social protection, including those based on income support, employment guarantee and conditional cash transfers. Besides expanding microfinance programmes, the economies can leverage on mobile banking and financial services for it to include those most marginalised and remote.

Enhancing environmental sustainability. As the economies seek transformative development, it is pertinent that the region and its countries prioritise clean energy and environmental upgradation,

including enhanced energy efficiency and waste recycling. This priority also effectively brings in access to the needed technology and enabling the required financing to bring them to the South Asian countries.

3.2 Decent work and economic growth in the context of Bangladesh

Inclusive economic growth. Although Bangladesh has maintained a steady economic growth of around seven per cent, the youth unemployment continues to be an issue that needs a greater attention. As Bangladesh seeks to lift people of poverty and leave no one behind, policies and actions grounded in the principles of equity and justice are not only important but essential. Nonetheless, Bangladesh continues to face several challenges, including increased economic disparity. As income and wealth inequalities rise, the state and the CSOs must work to actively to limit increasing disparities. Bangladesh's vision to accelerate economic growth and to emerge as a 'developed' country by 2041 requires that the economy is able to bring as many people, including youth and women, into productive and decent work.

Labour force participation and unemployment. Providing full and productive employment for the labour force in Bangladesh is the most important priority, especially for the government. Prosperity and advancement depend on how well people employed and in what conditions. Implementing SDG 8 thus becomes a top-most priority of the government of Bangladesh. **Table 2** presents some key statistics from the latest Labour Force Survey (2016-2017) published in January 2018 (BBS, 2017).

Table 2. Bangladesh labour market information from LFS 2016-17.

Indicators (%)	2015-16	2016-17
Labour force participation rate	58.5	58.2
Female	35.6	36.3
Male	81.9	80.5
Urban	56.0	58.2
Rural	59.6	59.3
Unemployment rate	4.2	4.2
Female	6.8	6.7
Male	3.0	3.1
Youth unemployment rate		10.6
Female		15.0
Male		8.2
Employment by informality	86.2	85.1

Female	95.4	91.8
Male	82.3	82.1
Employed by broad economic sector	-	-
Agriculture	42.7	40.6
Industry	20.5	20.1
Service	36.9	39.0

Source: BBS

The 2016-17 LFS shows that the total number of the labour force has increased to 63.5 million - an increase of 6.8 million over seven years since 2010. Although the labour force participation has increased over the past years, the female labour force participation (FLFP) is extremely low and well below the world average. It is, however, higher than the average for South Asia, which was around 28.3% in 2015. The difference in participation rates is also quite between the female and male populations. Further, of the women in the labour market, over 90% were in the informal sector in 2016-17 - almost 10 percentage points higher than that among men. Bringing women into the labour market is also essential to help reduce inequality and for the LNOB framework. As evident, the informal economy continues to host the larger share of those employed. In 2017, over 85% of those employed were working in the informal sector. This share is even larger for women at almost 92%.

Because of extreme poverty, many Bangladeshis leave the country as migrant workers only to support their families and are compelled to work in terrible working and living conditions. Individuals with little or no education have much lower access to decent work opportunities.

Falling real wages. From 2015-16 to 2016-17, the national real average wages fell by 2.5% (CPD, 2018). When disaggregated by gender, this decline was 1.9% for men and 3.8% for women. Working poverty remains a challenge across the globe. When setting minimum wages, the cost of living must be taken into account and it should be evidence-based.

Protection mechanisms. Social protection policies, including minimum wage provisions and social transfer programs, are critical in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable populations. Roughly half the country's population continue to live on about US\$ 2 per day. In the context of various barriers, having a job doesn't by default guarantee an escape from poverty. This slow and uneven progress requires us to rethink and retool our economic and social policies aimed at eradicating poverty. A continued lack of decent work opportunities, insufficient investments and under-consumption lead to an erosion of the basic social contract underlying democratic societies: that all must share in progress. It also notes the widespread deficit of Decent Work and calls upon governments to address the challenges.

The Decent Work Agenda. Reference of Decent Work is found in many other goals of SDGs. To lift themselves out of poverty and to improve livelihood, people need jobs. However, jobs must be decent,

productive and provide fair wages. In Bangladesh, the ILO along with the government, workers' organizations and employers' associations are working directly on the Decent Work Agenda.

Trade. Bangladesh's graduation from the least developed country group will lead to the withdrawal of some trade preferences that the country's exports have enjoyed in the past decades. Adequate policies and discussions need to be taken to ensure that the graduation does not harm country's exports and sufficient innovation and diversification needs to be encouraged to make Bangladesh competitive in the global market.

3.3 National priority targets under Goal 8

The 7th Five-Year Plan (FYP) formulated by the General Economic Division (GED) of the Planning Commission outlines the work and strategies that the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) will implement in the years 2016-2020. This plan coincided with the launch of the SDGs and therefore stresses on the importance of the implementation of the global goals, especially since the country entered the ranks of low middle-income countries in 2014 and harbours the vision of reaching middle-income status by 2021 (World Bank, 2016). The 7th FYP provides specific strategies and priorities for the SDGs grounded in the context of Bangladesh.

The 7th FYP also has themes centred on some indicators of SDG 8. This includes "GDP growth acceleration, employment generation and rapid poverty reduction" and "A broad-based strategy of inclusiveness with a view to empowering every citizen to participate full and benefit from the development process." These two themes are aligned with these Goal 8 indicators as priorities. The targets that coincide with Goal 8 are:

- Attaining average real GDP growth rate of 7.4% per year over the plan period
- Creating good jobs for the large pool of under-employed and new labour force entrants by increasing the share of employment in the manufacturing sector from 15% to 20%
- Total revenue to be raised from 10.7% of GDP to 16.1% by 2020
- 12.9 million, additional jobs will be available during Seventh FYP including some two million jobs in abroad
- FDI to be increased substantially to US\$ 9.6 billion by 2020 from present US\$ 1.57 billion
- Increased productivity, access to finance and policy support for urban micro-small and medium enterprises
- Encouraging female enrolment in technical and vocational education
- Spending on social protection as a share of GDP to be increased by 2.3% of the GDP

IN FOCUS: Global Initiative Decent Jobs for Youth

Decent Jobs for Youth was launched in 2016 as an UN System-wide effort, focusing on the youth employment challenge that is central to the 2030 Agenda. Accordingly, Decent Jobs for Youth

emerged as a global, multi-stakeholder initiative that is bringing together governments, social partners, the private sector, youth and civil society organizations, in an effort to scale up action and impact youth employment. The different actors are working together to share knowledge, leverage resources and take action at the country and regional levels.

Bangladesh became the first country from the Asia-Pacific to commit to the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth. The commitment was forged through the Bangladesh government's flagship programme on the digital agenda, *a2i - Innovate for All*. The programme has pledged to train 250,000 Bangladeshi youth on digital skills and to deliver 340,200 apprenticeships by 2023.

National progress with advancing Goal 8 in Bangladesh

4.1 National performance reporting

The Voluntary National Review (VNR) is an exercise for states to conduct regular reviews and to communicate experiences (both successes and challenges) in advancing the 2030 Agenda. Bangladesh completed its first VNR in 2017. In December 2018, the GED of the Bangladesh Planning Commission published the first SDG Progress Report for Bangladesh.

4.2 National performance against selected targets and indicators

This section provides a critical view of the progress reported with selected targets. While there has been some commendable progress in the first quarter, there remains a need to dig beyond the stated indicators and pay further attention to the LNOB framework.

The first two targets under Goal 8, Target 8.1 and 8.2, are concerned with sustainable economic growth and increased productivity and diversification. Attaining high economic growth is at the forefront of Target 8 and Bangladesh moving in a positive direction with the annual growth rate. However, there needs to be a greater understanding and presentation of how this growth is being distributed.

While the growth rates are promising, it is also equally important to understand if this growth is reaching the various segments of the economy and society. The rate of economic growth has not been accompanied by an increased pace of job creation and poverty reduction (Khatun, 2019). In 2016, Bangladesh's GINI coefficient for per capita income stood at 0.48 and wealth at 0.74 (Bhattacharya, 2018). In a recent ranking based on the commitment to reducing inequality, Bangladesh was ranked as the 10th least committed globally (Oxfam, 2018). With the agenda to 'leave no one behind,' Bangladesh needs to be vigilant that this growth is sustainable and inclusive.

Table 3. Progress with Target 8.1 and 8.2 indicators.

INDICATORS	2030 TARGET	2016	2017	2018
8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita	7.5%	5.77%	6.05%	6.4%
8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person	6.5%	6.27%	4.99%	5.56%

Source: SDG Tracker

Target 8.3 promotes development policies that enable job creation and innovation and Target 8.5 calls for decent work for all. The majority of the employed population continue to be engaged in the informal sector. According to LFS (2016-17), about 85% of all those employed were engaged in the informal sector. This portion is even higher among women, where almost 92% of all working women were in the informal sector. While the informal sector has continued to an important source of livelihoods for the majority, its regulation and governance is a major concern. here remains the need to gradually reduce informality - through both the right policy and incentives and the enforcement of regulations (CPD, 2018).

For Indicator 8.5.1, the ‘hourly’ earnings is replaced with ‘monthly’ earnings as the data for the former is not available. This is an important indicator that can help shed light on pay disparities. The data in **Table 4** also shows the wage disparity by gender, where women, on average, earn less than men.

The national unemployment rate has remained somewhat consistent over the years, including a higher rate for women (by 3.6 percentage points). Among all age groups, youth (15-24) has the highest rate of unemployment at 10.6% in the LFS (2016-17). This is pressing as the youth group continues to grow the state and the private sector must actively work to create decent jobs.

In order for Bangladesh to advance Targets 8.3 and 8.5, all actors must come together to promote a job-centric growth. Here, the state has a big role in enabling an environment that promotes entrepreneurship, innovation and business growth and should actively pursue suitable macroeconomic policies. There also needs to be stimulation for the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through financing and training opportunities, where both state and non-state actors can actively engage through targeted business and skills development services.

Table 4. Progress with Target 8.3 and 8.5 indicators.

Indicator	Target 2030	2016	2017
8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex	65%	77.8%	78%
Female		88.7%	85.5%
Male		75.2%	76%

8.5.1 Average hourly* earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities (in Taka)	21,024.9	12,897	13,258
Female		12,072	12,254
Male		13,127	13,583
PWDs		-	-
8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	2.5%	4.2%	4.2%
Female		6.8%	6.7%
Male		3.2%	3.1%
PWDs		-	-
Youth		-	10.6%

*Presented as monthly earnings

Source: LFS (2016-2017), SDG Tracker and the World Bank.

Target 8.5 directly calls for the reduction in youth not in employment, education or training (NEET). As highlighted earlier, harnessing the demographic transition and promoting youth employment should be critical for the country. **Table 5** shows the change in portion of youth in NEET. The indicator suggests that there has been some improvement in bringing in more youth into education, employment and training. This share remains distant for the 2030 target, especially among women.

Table 5. Progress with Target 8.5 indicators.

Indicator	Target 2030	2016	2017
8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training	3.0%	28.9%	27.4%
Female		46.9%	44.6%
Male		9.9%	9.8%

Source: The World Bank and SDG Tracker

Target 8.7 aims to eradicate child labour and modern day slavery. There is only one indicator under this Target that seeks to measure the share and number of children engaged in child labour. Although an important target, there is no official data on child labour in Bangladesh since 2013. The Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE) had adopted a National Child Labour Elimination Policy 2010, which provided a framework to eradicate ‘all forms of child labour by 2015.’

Anecdotal evidence suggests that while the prevalence of child labour had been curbed in the formal sector, its occurrence remains high in the informal economy and outside the scope of traditional enforcement models. It is important that the government and the relevant international organizations

(such as the ILO and UNICEF) take steps to survey the number of working children in the coming years, which will allow all actors to have the same understanding of the situation status.

Further, as the target also calls for an end to modern day slavery and human trafficking, there is also a need to find ways to document progress with this goal outside the scope of the stated indicators. The government and non-state actors should discuss the best ways to capture this progress.

Table 6. Progress with Target 8.7 indicators.

Indicator	Target 2030	2016	2017
8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5-17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age	0	-	-
Female		-	-
Male		-	-

Source: SDG Tracker

Target 8.8 is concerned with ensuring the protection of labour rights and safe working environments for all, including migrant workers. There are three indicators under this target, the data for two which were easily accessible. This is an important indicator as it provides a glimpse into trends in working conditions and occupational safety. As **Table 7** shows, there was a decline in the number of fatal injuries but an increase in the number of non-fatal injuries from 2016 to 2017. It is also interesting to note the increase in frequency among women.

Indicator 8.8.2 is Tier III indicator. That is, the methodology for computing this indicator is yet to be finalised at the global level. However, respect for labour rights and compliance remains a cornerstone for Goal 8. So far, there is a lack of trade union involvement in the SDG discourse in Bangladesh and the dialogue on collective bargaining can be improved.

Table 7. Progress with Target 8.8 indicators.

Indicator	Target 2030	2016	2017
8.8.1.a Frequency rates of fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status	100	126	105
Female		9	15
Male		117	90
8.8.1.b Frequency rates of non-fatal occupational injuries, by sex and migrant status	100	181	498
Female		68	191
Male		113	307

8.8.2 Level national compliance of labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on ILO textual sources and national legislation by sex and migrant status	-	-	-
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Source: SDG Tracker

Target 8.10 is concerned with financial inclusion across countries. The indicators related to SDG Target 8.10 show advances in the number of bank branches and ATMs as well as the portion of adults who are connected to some form of financial institution. While this makes traditional banking a challenge, it also encourages all actors to explore some innovative financial services, such as intelligent microfinance products and service providers (such as bKash). There needs to be a greater focus on how to further mainstream such financial instruments through innovative policies.

Table 8. Progress with Target 8.10 indicators.

Indicator	Target 2030	2016	2017
8.10.1.a. Number of commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults	12	8.88	8.99
8.10.1.b. Number of automated teller machines (ATMs) per 100,000 adults	9	8.07	9.08
8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider	-	44%	50%

Source: SDG Tracker

Civil society and private sector engagement in advancing Goal 8

5.1 Engagement of CSOs in the 2030 Agenda

Civil society was a key stakeholder in the conceptualisation and development of the 2030 Agenda. Now, it has a central role in advancing the ambitious goals at all levels - global, national and local. The civil society's role is of particular importance in the localisation of the SDGs.

Localisation is defined as “the process of defining, implementing and monitoring strategies at the local level for achieving the SDGs” (Democracy Development Programme, 2016). As such, localisation is the local implementation of the Global Goals and the monitoring process at the sub-national level. The

inclusion of CSOs has become imperative in both service delivery and monitoring. A strong civil society can be a positive difference for sustainable goals on the ground and the role of CSOs in representing people and their interests - especially those of the marginalised - is an integral component of the 2030 Agenda and in 'leaving no one behind.'

5.2 Role of CSOs in advancing Goal 8 in Bangladesh

Although the primary accountability for the SDGs belongs to states, the SDGs explicitly call for action by local and non-state actors. The constitutional mandate makes it imperative that Bangladesh localises the SDGs. At the national and local levels, CSOs are key actors materialising global goals into national priorities and advancing people-centred initiatives and governance.


The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has acknowledged the crucial role of CSOs in the implementation of SDGs. In its 7th FYP (2016-20), the GoB has mentioned the important roles that the CSOs play for the implementation of the SDGs. The Plan explains that partnerships and coordination with CSOs are required to ensure that an efficient monitoring and evaluation (M&E) process takes place. In fact, according to GoB's approach of "Whole of Society," the government encourages wider participation of NGOs, development partners, private sector, media and CSOs for the implementation of the SDGs.

CSOs and NGOs in Bangladesh with significant interventions on achieving the development targets of SDG 8 include Access Bangladesh Foundation, ActionAid Bangladesh, Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS), British Council, BRAC, CARE Bangladesh, JAAGO Foundation, Plan International, Practical Action, Save the Children, etc.

In addition, there are specialized institutions like Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) which is the only labour institute in the country and is responsible for protecting workers' rights with just and friendly policies. In addition to the capacity building and supporting trade unions, BILS also provides training, advocacy, education, and promotes decent work practice.

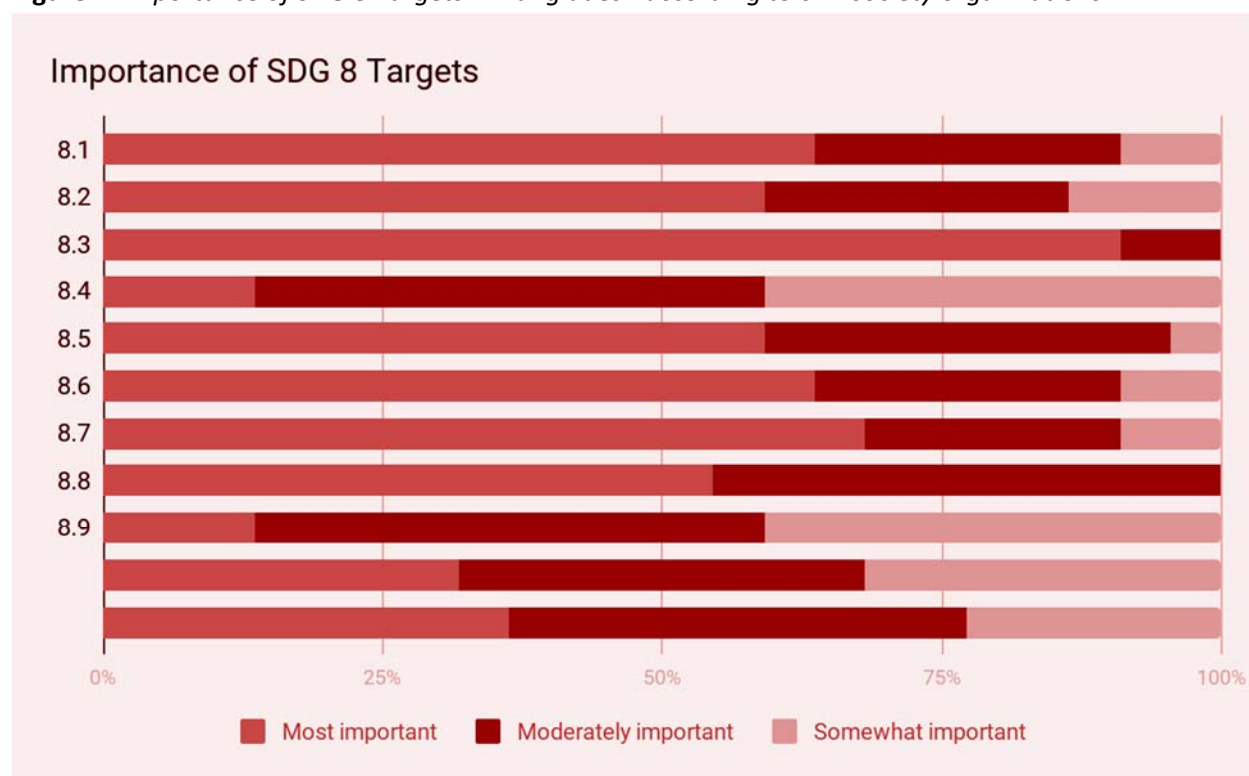
The CSOs are more commonly involved with promoting sustainable economic growth, addressing youth unemployment and combating child labour. These organizations are less involved with the other SDG 8 components.

Sustainable Development Goal	More involved	Less involved
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable economic growth • Full and productive employment • Youth unemployment • Access to financial institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher economic productivity • Global resource efficiency in consumption and production • Protection of labour rights and promote safe working environment • Sustainable tourism • Child labour
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As part of a quick survey done to identify which are the top priority targets in SDG 8 as per local context according to the members of the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, targets 8.3, 8.7 and 8.1 came up as 1st, 2nd, and 3rd most important respectively.

Figure 1. Importance of SDG 8 Targets in Bangladesh according to civil society organizations.



5.3 Civil society initiatives and projects in focus

The case studies gathered here represent only a small amount the working being done on Goal 8 by CSOs in Bangladesh. It is small, but representative sample of civil society interventions.

BRAC is one of the leading organizations that has adopted a multidimensional and comprehensive approach to achieve the ambitious targets set by SDG 8. It has seven programmes: upgradation of the

ultra-poor, employable skills for decent work, access to essential services for hard-to-reach population, mainstream financial services to improve financial inclusion for the underserved, ultra-poor and marginalized communities, pro-poor urban development, universal access to healthcare, nutrition, and water and sanitation. BRAC also has two social enterprises that work on lifestyle products, dairy items and food products.

BRAC works in both formal and informal economy, identifying occupations in demand and skills in short supply, in partnership with market actors and employers. It offers technical and vocational training, enterprise and institution-based apprenticeships, as well as entrepreneurship and enterprise development support, especially for start-ups in the informal economy. The institute-based training focuses on classroom-based training and is currently working closely with large industries and Government funded projects. The migration programme works towards equipping migrants with employable skills and provides various support services to returnee migrants. Moreover, the TUP and microfinance programmes ensure access to income generating activities for beneficiaries. BRAC Social Enterprises equip individuals – microentrepreneurs, farmers, and producers - with the necessary tools and resources needed for greater economic participation. BRAC supports in establishing vital linkages across value chains to ensure market viability. The social mission is to establish inclusive ecosystems that improve conditions for both producers and consumers.

IN FOCUS: Age-old apprenticeship model modernised to serve school dropouts and marginalised youth

Implementing Organization: BRAC

SDG 8 relevance: 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6

With 2.2 million young people entering the workforce every year, 75% business leaders in Bangladesh claim that skilled workers are scarce. Here, youth unemployment rate is at nine per cent, while youth underemployment rate is at 20%.

BRAC built on the traditional master-apprentice system and came up with Skills Training for Advancing Resources (STAR), a six-month apprenticeship training equipping school dropouts and young people (aged 14-18) from ultra-poor and disadvantaged families with technical, vocational and soft skills, like financial literacy, customer relationship management and social awareness. Consequently, they become work-ready through a combination of theoretical and on the job training. The cost of training is eliminated by placing pairs of young apprentices at the workplace of their trainers, who are referred as Master Crafts Persons (MCP).

As of December 2018, STAR graduated almost 30,000 apprentices, reducing early marriage by 62% and increasing income and employment by six times. Since the model identifies specific skills that are in short supply and occupations that are currently in demand, there is a 95% job placement rate among the participants. The project is conducted in line with the National Technical and Vocational Qualifications Framework (NTVQF), which means all learners can become officially certified. STAR proactively ensures equal opportunities and inclusion for groups widely excluded from Bangladesh's employment sector, e.g. persons with disabilities, transgender people, religious and ethnic minorities

made possible by the door-to-door survey and verification process. As a result of STAR's impact, BRAC has signed a partnership with the Government of Bangladesh to deliver it nationwide. The government included the formalised approach to its agenda and is introducing an apprenticeship strategy accordingly.

STAR graduates can take business incubation support from BRAC's other project Promoting Business Incubation for Small Entrepreneur (PROMISE). They may even wish to switch industry by learning any one of 25 demand-based trades through a fee-based three-month apprenticeship under an MCP. Trained youth can upload their digital resume in Kormo – a digital job matching platform connecting interested employers and prospective candidates.

Among others, **ActionAid, BRAC, Swisscontact, and Save the Children International** focus on increasing youth participation in formal workforce, creating access to opportunities for marginalized people on skills development for pursuing income generating activities, and promoting workplace safety guidelines

IN FOCUS: Education for youth empowerment

Implementing Organization: Save the Children International

SDG relevance: 8.1, 8.2, 8.3

Bangladesh is one of the most populous countries with around 160 million inhabitants. Over 50 per cent of the population is younger than 24 years old. Different studies show that unemployment rate is 3.6% whereas underemployment rate is 36 per cent in Bangladesh. Besides, many children and adolescents work for pay in hazardous conditions.

Save the Children International's Education for Youth Empowerment (EYE) program works to empower adolescents and youth in Bangladesh by building their skills and capabilities, whilst also working with businesses and employers to help the youth and adolescents to transition to decent work and become active citizens. Youths who have dropped out of school and would otherwise have remained unemployed are provided employability skills training.

Adolescents and youth from marginalized communities, who would have otherwise got into menial underpaying jobs, are provided vocational skills training thus improving their chances for decent employment. The program has partnered with renowned private sector corporations who have agreed to enrol trained youth as apprentices in their organization. Moreover, youth has been empowered through the facilitation of different youth clubs, youth initiatives, and by providing them with different Transferable Life Skills (TLS).

The program has been proved to be sustainable because of its engagement with community, employers, youth and the duty bearers. The EYE model has been adopted by the Directorate of Primary Education through piloting and scale up of its urban slum children education (USCE) program and pre-vocational training (PVT) program under Reaching Out- of-School Children (ROSC-II) project.

The accelerated education component of EYE model has been approved and implemented by the

government in 10 City Corporations targeting 50,000 urban slum out of school children and its vocational training component has been approved and implemented by the government in 90 upazillas targeting 25,000 rural adolescents and youths. During 2016 to 2018, this model has reached 284,385 youths and among them 80% have been placed in decent job. The model reached 500 employers in the informal sector and 100 formal sector corporation in 2018.

IN FOCUS: Tech-based innovations and mutually beneficial relationships resolving age-old problems in dairy value chain

Implementing Organization: CARE Bangladesh

SDG relevance (Target numbers): 8.2, 8.5, 8.6 and 8.8

As the dairy market in Bangladesh matures, there is an increasing demand for better quality milk from the milk processing industry. But that requires improvements at various stages of the dairy value chain, including cow rearing practices, availability and usage of quality inputs, milk collection with digital fat testing facilities and marketing process equipped with proper preservation system. Through these necessary improvements in the dairy value chain, farmers can get access to high value market, receive fair prices for their output and spending optimally on cattle nutrition.

Funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, strengthening the Dairy Value Chain program of CARE Bangladesh worked with more than 52,697 households in 11 districts in north and northwest Bangladesh to address these needs. The results were remarkable as farmers' income increased by 164 per cent, productivity increased by 75 per cent, and milk consumption increased by 40 per cent. Moreover, the project created employment for men and women as livestock health workers, artificial inseminators, milk collector, input shop owners, grass sellers, milk by-product seller and cattle feed sellers.

CARE's Digital Fat Testing initiative helped them to get fair market price and ensure the access to high quality input market when CARE connected them with national level input suppliers through a network of branded shops called Krishi Utsho, a proven CARE-owned franchised input supply system. This is a win-win solution for all the involved parties across the dairy value chain as each is contributing to the business of the other.

Practical Action also has brought innovation to other rural sectors to create decent employment opportunities and improve livelihood of rural and marginalized communities, while also ensuring sustainability through partnership with key stakeholders.

IN FOCUS: Reducing unemployment to rural youth through non-farm jute enterprise development

Implementing Organization: Practical Action

SDG relevance (Target numbers): SDG 8.5, 8.6

Poverty is predominantly concentrated in rural areas. Nearly half the rural population, some 50 million people, is estimated to be almost unable to meet their minimum livelihood requirements and are mostly dependent on agriculture for their income. Therefore, the traditional dependence of rural maintenance on income from agriculture is weakening.

Practical Action has come up with an alternative non-farm solution to improve income through creating employment opportunities in the jute sector. Their project titled 'Poverty reduction through Inclusive and Sustainable Markets' (PRISM) strengthens the skills and employability of workers & entrepreneurs in cottage and small enterprises in order to enhance their competitiveness and income levels. This happens through intervention in both Jute product and Light Engineering value chains. Modern jute fiber extraction machine 'Aashkol' has been developed from this project which not only reduces associated labour costs by half and produce better quality processed jute, but also contributes to eco-friendly waste management, packaging sector and jute fiber processing which is less water intensive and fit for drought prone areas. This machine has been developed locally for improved threshing, thus making it easier to maintain and upgrade.

In the project, government-run Technical Training Centres (TTCs) provide training to the rural youth on trades including industrial sewing, mechanical, electrical and driving machine. In addition to all of this, an ICT-based job portal has been created creating access to job-related information for over 3,000 young men and women including extremely poor and persons with disabilities. To ensure that persons with disabilities (PWDs) are an integrated part of the complete model, Practical Action has partnered with ADD International who can help include this community in the entrepreneurship generation and job creation process. The success case has been adopted by government-run Technical Training Centers (TTC), Bangladesh Jute Research Institute (BJRI), Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Jute Diversification Promotion Centre (JDPC), and government's agriculture hotline Krishi Call Center (KCC).

Action Aid Bangladesh (AAB) has been implementing three projects – Action for Impact (A4I), Bangladesh Firestarter Initiatives (BFI), Sustainable and Responsible Action to Make Industries Care (SRAMIC) - directly aligned with SDG-8. All these projects aim towards advancement of full, productive economic opportunities and decent work for young women and men through creating access to TVET, entrepreneurship and employment opportunities as well as promote and demand workers' rights and decent work agenda especially for young women and men.

IN FOCUS: Women's Café: An oasis for ready-made garment workers

Implementing Organization: ActionAid Bangladesh

SDG relevance: 8.8

Ready-made garment (RMG) workers rarely enjoy their rights and get limited space to raise their voices at workplace due to lacking awareness of their rights and entitlements, absence of trade union and negotiation, and communication skills. Democratic space for the workers is shrinking. They hardly get any time for recreation due to workplace and family responsibility.

For addressing these challenges, Women's Café, established with the help of ActionAid Bangladesh and funded by European Union, is an innovative approach to create a breathing space for female factory workers. ActionAid has established 25 Women's Café in the workers' slums or adjacent to the selected industrial areas that allow trade union members, women peer leaders and workers to mobilise for the common goal of demanding worker rights and entitlements.

The café fosters a learning environment and offers a wide range of services. Female RMG workers come to the café to acquire knowledge and information related to the labour law and workers' rights, receive health care & legal aid, and share personal issues with other workers etc.

During the three-year project period, a total of 10,000 workers will be reached. After the project funding had ended, the cafés sustained through opening up daily product shop, tailor and beauty parlour for workers. 550 women peer leaders, trained through the project, can use their skills to support the management of the cafés. Factory management has benefited through reduction in disputes and increase in business productivity, while becoming more gender sensitive and concerned about employee welfare.

The British Council has a project titled “Active Citizen” that encourages intercultural dialogues to bring social inclusiveness and work with partner organizations to train participants in skills that will bring social change. There is also “International Skills Partnership”, a project that brings skills experts from different countries to train people with TVET skills, particularly non-technical skills including English communication.

IN FOCUS: Giving voice to migration related grievance

Implementing Organization: British Council

SDG relevance: 8.8

A large number of aspiring migrant workers in Bangladesh come back to the country empty handed and exploited by ill-motivated middlemen. Without any help on settling their issues, these victims become frustrated.

British Council supported other civil society organizations to develop migration grievance management committees (MGMCs) under a common platform. These committees manage migration related grievance or complaints at local level, raise migration related awareness and even provide necessary information for aspiring migrants. Some of the district offices of the project’s field level partners are also acting as Migration Information Support Centres (MISCs), engaging MGMC members. The model is effective given the local coverage and influence of the CSOs who run the MGMCs.

MGMCs receive capacity building support which strengthens its abilities to protect labor right in access to justice and information. In a survey (Sept 2018) to assess the level of satisfaction among service recipients of MGMC’s grievance management support, over 95 per cent respondents were either satisfied or highly satisfied. The concept of this project is in the process of being handed over to the Bangladesh government.

Access Bangladesh has created a remarkable example of how decent employment opportunities can be created for persons with disabilities which are not only best fit for their execution, but also allows them to earn enough income to survive well.

IN FOCUS: PWD-centric design thinking generating self-employment for youth with disabilities in doing green business

Implementing Organization: Access Bangladesh

SDG relevance: 8.3, 8.5, 8.6

Persons with disabilities (PWDs), especially the youth, face significant discrimination when it comes to employment opportunities. Challenges lie in both demand and supply sides. Most conventional jobs are designed in a way that prohibits a person with disability from carrying it out. Again, PWDs are often unable to attain necessary skills and knowledge which makes them even less competitive compared to rest of the job applicants.

Having embodied the spirit of leaving no one behind, Access Bangladesh has created a model to engage unemployed youth with disabilities in self-employment program through mushroom cultivation, seed production and supply chain business. Mushroom cultivation is one of the few trades which is suitable for PWDs (both male and female), since it is home-based, requires repetitive processes (requiring less instructions and so suitable for even persons with intellectual and mental disabilities), and can be learned easily. To start up mushroom cultivation, it requires limited funding and land. Again, the production process cycle is not that long, making it a feasible risk for PWDs.

The project beneficiaries receive training from government's mushroom development institute, where a mushroom marketplace has been set up as a result of the project's advocacy activities. The trained participants become part of cooperative societies and get access to organized wholesale and retail markets allowing them to earn US\$ 60 to US\$ 180 per month. Every year, the Ministry of Agriculture invites these cooperatives to promote its products in agriculture fairs.

5.3 Engagement of the private sector in the 2030 Agenda

The private sector is another major non-state actor in advancing the SDGs. The 2030 Agenda also recognises that “private business activities, investment and innovation and are major drivers of productivity, inclusive economic growth and job creation.” The Global Goals - SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 9 Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production and SDG 17 are some areas that call for direct engagement from the private sector.

Building dynamic, sustainable, innovative and people-centered economies and promoting decent work for all is central to the 2030 Agenda and is a focus of Goal 8 and engaging with the private sector is essential for the realization of SDG 8. Enterprises and companies contribute to sustainable development

by not only creating job opportunities for all but by also ensuring that these jobs respect workers' rights and they make decent work a priority.

5.4 Role of the private sector in advancing Goal 8 in Bangladesh

Employment in the private sector. Employment creation by the private sector is significant. As per Bangladesh Economic Review 2018, 59.4% is non-agriculture labour force, a significant proportion of them are engaged in different industrial sector run by private sector. Total number of enterprises as per census 2013 is 7.8 million, of which employment is more than 24.5 million (large, medium, small, micro and cottage) (Ibrahim, 2016). Employment generation and projection for year 2030 by different sector is presented in table 1. Appropriate policy intervention for creating investment enabling environment in private sector will double the number of total employment in these sectors.

With owning, operating and contributing to most of the investment of the country, the private sector yields over 77 per cent (over US\$ 314 billion) of the 7th Five-Year Plan's US\$ 407 billion in the country.²¹ This entails that partnership with the private sector and the GoB is a necessity to achieve the SDGs, and hence, Goal 8.

Developing Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The Industrial Policy 2016 formulated by the Ministry of Industries (Mol) focuses on the importance of partnerships between public and private sector. It states the need for the development of SMEs to create sustainable and inclusive growth through the generation of productive employment to create new entrepreneurs, mainstreaming women in the industrialisation process and international market linkage creation.

The government also has a significant role in this aspect. It needs to upgrade the contribution of human resources from 18% to 25% by 2021 and ensure that these people receive training according to National Technical Vocational Qualification Framework (NTVQF). Therefore, this will increase the living standard, the participation of people from the marginalized groups (women, transgenders, persons with disabilities, etc). Further, banks and non-bank Financial Institutions (NBFIs) are contributing towards this partnership by helping to finance the SMEs sector under close monitoring and supervision of Bangladesh Bank.

While drafting the Industrial Policy, the government took technical support of the Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD), a public-private dialogue platform supported by three leading business chambers in the country (i.e. DCCI, MCCI and CCCI).

Business Initiative Leading Development - a public-private platform. BUILD is working as the research and advocacy support partner and secretariat for the Private Sector Development Policy Coordination Committee (PSDPCC) at the Prime Minister's Office headed by the Principal Secretary. PSDPCC has representation from 13 trade and businesses supporting ministries and five leading private sector bodies.

BUILD receives advisory support directly from Advisor to the Prime Minister for private sector and investment. It provides policy inputs to the government for balanced policy prescriptions for private sector

development and for creating a level playing field for investment through five specific thematic areas: Trade & Investment, Taxation, SME Development, Sustainability & Green Growth and Financial Sector Development. BUILD in cooperation with MoI organized dialogues on industrial policy throughout the all divisions of Bangladesh to gather opinions from the private sector and academicians of those areas. All 690 quick win reforms suggested by BUILD are accepted and 35% of the reforms have already been implemented to improve investment opportunities in sustainable manner.

The gazette circulated by Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission (BSEC) stating any fully (100%) foreign owned company can increase capital up to 100 crore BDT without any permission of BSEC is one of the milestones propose reforms of BUILD to increase investment and FDI. BUILD is now advocating for implementation of this policy not only for foreign investors but also for local and joint venture investors provided they pay all the required money to the government exchequer for approval and can raise their paid-up capital without any harassment.

IN FOCUS: *Sudokkho*

Implementing organization: DBL Group

SDG 8 relevance: 8.2, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6

An example of a private sector organization which is contributing towards the implementation of Goal 8 is DBL Group. With the supply of quality apparels to globally renowned retailers, it has a skilled workforce of more than 35,000 employees. Further, DBL works with international development partners, like CARE, ILO and UNICEF.

It has projects like Sudokkho, which is a skills development program for sewing operators which caters to the capacity building for factory-based training centre, and also supports the industry to develop innovative and sustainable training models allowing employees to acquire the skills leading to employment in higher valued semi-skilled or skilled jobs . It also has projects focusing on issues like women's health and hygiene, community empowerment, disability inclusion, etc.

Mainstreaming the SDGs in private sector initiatives. The review process for this report highlighted a lack of information consolidation and communication in the private sector, especially in terms of activities outside the garment sector. Under SDG 8, the private sector has an important role in leading job creation and in ensuring that these jobs are decent. The private needs to take important steps in increasing diversification and through innovation and technological upgradation. The sector also is critical to advancing global resource efficiency in consumption and production. To enable these aspiration, appropriate support - both financial and non-financial - needs to be provided to the private secto actors.

Figure 2. *Resources needed for SDGs and private sector action.*

Financial	Government International organizations Private sector initiated fund
Non-financial	Information infrastructure Awareness buildup Policy

Source: CPD

Challenges and way forward

Continuous, concerted efforts on the part of the government, civil society and the private sector are needed in the effective realization of the SDGs. Through a multi-stakeholder consultation held on the priorities of Bangladesh for achieving SDG 8 and assessing role of CSOs. Participants included representatives from relevant government agencies, leading CSOs and NGOs, and private sector actors. Together, the participants identified some critical needs and challenges to advancing SDG 8 in Bangladesh:

Creating a database of organizations, projects and activities: This review highlighted the need to create a more comprehensive understanding of ‘who’s doing what’ related to SDG 8, both among the CSOs and the private sector, at the local level. Building such a database can also help foster dialogue and collaboration in advancing Goal 8.

Advancing SDG 8 with a collective voice: There remains a scope to enhance coordination and collaboration between the different actors working to advance SDG 8 in Bangladesh. The various actors – government representatives, civil society and the private sector – can further enhance their communication and help inform each other’s activities. So far, active participation from organizations has been limited and can be encouraged further. The review report has also helped highlight the need for more concerted efforts related to corporate social responsibility (CSR) from the private sector.

Ensuring inclusion at the core of all interventions: CSOs should invest in identifying the ultra-poor and marginalized communities to inform how to best enable access to training and placement services. This should help identify the mechanism for setting the fees. Simultaneously, donors need to assess market demand for which model of training, philanthropic or cost recovery. The low female labour force participation remains a concern in Bangladesh and should be addressed with not only training or job placement services, but also with cross-cutting themes and advocacy efforts that help address violence against women, promote care-giving facilities and ensure safe mobility. Where feasible, state and non-

state actors should explore how technology can help target and reach different groups. Further, as implementing actors, CSOs are well-placed to bring grassroots experiences and evidence to advocate for greater inclusion at the national level. There remains scope more strengthening the language on inclusion in the national agenda.

Including returning economic migrants and internal climate-induced migrants: As we seek to ‘leave no one behind’, both cross-border and internal migrants should be effectively included in programming. Some organizations have started working on the reintegration of returning migrant works, many of whom are affected survivors of violence. CSOs and the government can increase its efforts in identifying alternative work opportunities for those at risk of environmental hazards and disasters.

Targeting and collaborating to streamline skills development efforts: CSOs should increase the consultation process with the private sector prior to designing skills development initiatives and allocating resources. This will essentially help bridge any demand and supply gaps and an employable workforce with specific skill sets that match the market demand. CSOs should also invest in identifying the ultra-poor and marginalized communities to inform how to structure their costs and outreach without leaving anyone behind. A robust national monitoring and auditing system can be useful in maintaining a database of participants and their training records, which can help facilitate targeted job placement. Simultaneously, donors need to assess market demand for which model of training, philanthropic or cost recovery, and also deduce which model will work best in a particular geographic location. A

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

Ensuring decent work: The Decent Work Agenda in Bangladesh is led by the ILO and the tripartite constituents (the government, workers’ organizations and employers’ organizations) under the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2017-2020. Both employers and worker representatives have critical roles in ensuring that workers’ rights are respected and advanced. Further, in conjunction with advancing rights, the workplace has the potential to improve workers’ wellbeing, both in the workplace and beyond. According to the civil society and private sector consultations, major economic sectors with highest concentration of female workers, especially the RMG sector, need to be brought under stricter supervision regarding the provision of reproductive health services.

Customizing and mainstreaming financial instruments to increase financial inclusion: Although the indicators related to SDG Target 8.10 show advances in the number of bank branches and ATMs, there needs to be a more comprehensive understanding of how these services are reaching the different socio-economic segments of the country. While this makes traditional banking a challenge, it also encourages all actors to explore some innovative financial services, such as intelligent microfinance products and

service providers (such as bKash). There needs to be a greater focus on how to further mainstream such financial instruments through innovative policies.

Developing an supplementary indicator framework: There remains scope for discussions on how to improve the reporting and attribution of civil society and private sector activities to the advancement of the Global Goals, including SDG 8. It is worth to invest time in creating linkages and developing frameworks to present how the non-state actors are contributing to the SDGs.

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

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

Protection of intellectual property rights is necessary for innovation: Effort towards innovations and technological advancements will be endangered if intellectual property rights are not rightly protected. It might also be necessary to incentivize setting up of new industries, like recycling plants for plastic resin and polymers, to improve overall competitiveness of businesses. Entrepreneurs and employees need to be trained while thinking about sustainable, compliant, and environment friendly methods.

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