

GOOD PRACTICES INTEGRATING THE SDGS INTO DEVELOPMENT PLANNING



BANGLADESH

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This brief is part of a series produced by UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub, based on case studies commissioned in six Asian countries: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal and the Philippines at the national level and India at the subnational level in Assam state. The briefs illustrate emerging good practices in integrating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs into development planning in these countries. They also highlight innovative practices in development planning that can serve as good examples for other countries and regions for their work in planning for the 2030 Agenda. The content of these briefs will be updated to reflect the evolving experiences of the countries involved. We welcome your comments and updates at: uyanga.gankhuyag@undp.org.

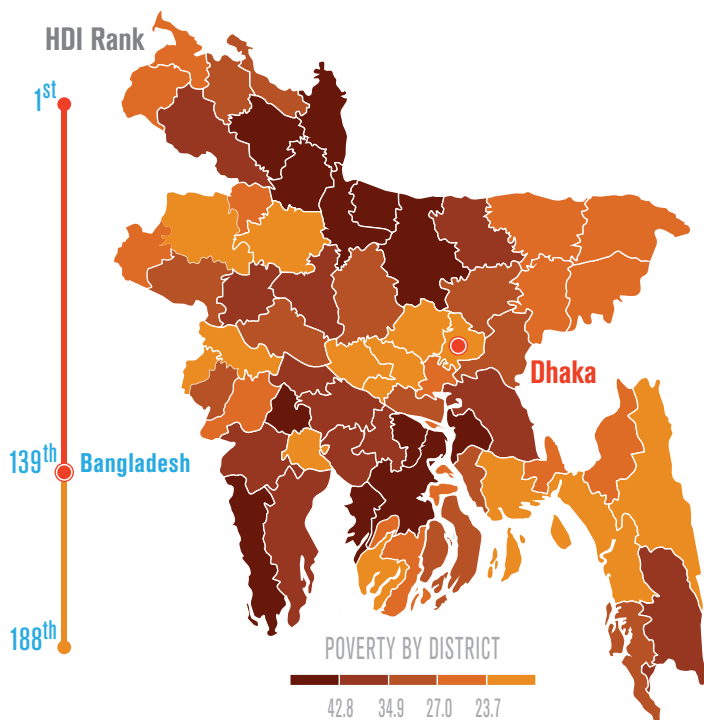
Country context

Bangladesh is regarded as a remarkable example of progress in poverty reduction and human development, maintaining an annual growth rate above 6 percent for almost all of the past decade and reaching the lower-middle income status in 2014. A sustained decline in poverty enabled Bangladesh to halve the proportion of population in poverty between 1992 and 2012. However, development challenges are formidable – there are about 40 million people living in poverty, of which an estimated 21 million live in extreme poverty.

Bangladesh has a population of 160 million people living in an area of 147,570 square kilometres, which makes it one of the most densely populated countries in the world. Much of the country is in low-lying areas. The country is vulnerable to recurring floods and is highly vulnerable to climate change.

POPULATION **162,951,560**

HDI **0.579** Medium Human Development

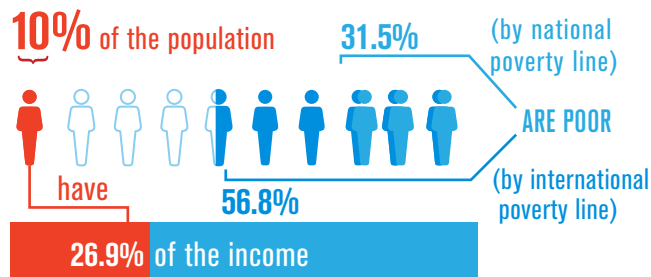


ECONOMY

GDP per capita: **US\$ 1359**

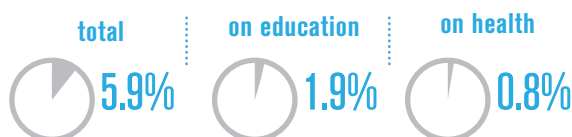
GDP growth: **6.3%** (2010-2016)

POVERTY AND INEQUALITY



GOVERNMENT SYSTEM: Unitary

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES (% of GDP)

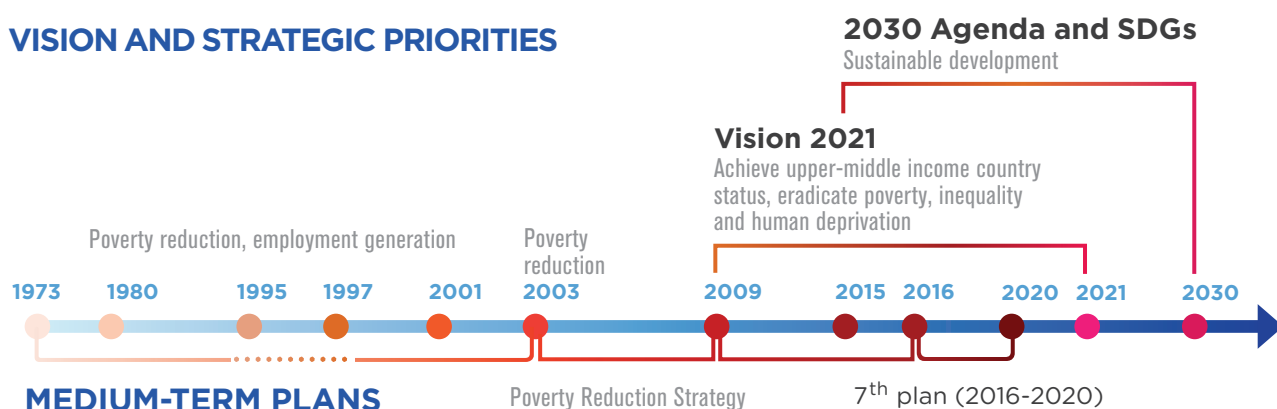


Since its independence in 1971, Bangladesh followed a planned path of development with the key objective of reducing poverty by generating employment. Despite many political changes over the last five decades, with several moves towards and away from democracy and the increasing liberalization of the economy, the emphasis of plans on high growth, poverty eradication and employment generation has persisted. By 2021, the 50th anniversary of its independence, Bangladesh aspires to reach the upper middle-income country status, and eradicate poverty, inequality and human deprivation. The current medium-term plan of Bangladesh, the 7th five-year plan, focuses on pro-poor economic growth, sustainable development and resilience to risks.

Bangladesh was an active participant in formulating the 2030 Agenda and its precursor – the post-2015 development agenda. In this regard, it considered probable goals of the agenda at the time of the preparation of the 7th plan, even before the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

Bangladesh: The planning timeline

VISION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



The “whole of society” approach

In preparing its long-term (10 years) and medium-term (5 years) plans, Bangladesh has an established practice of holding wide-ranging consultations across the government, leading economists and academics of public universities, chambers of commerce and industries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), researchers, practitioners of human rights activities, and development partners. During the plan preparation process, the Planning Commission constitutes the Panel of Economists, comprising eminent economists and development experts to advise the Commission on important policy and technical issues. The Commission also holds consultation meetings and workshops with stakeholders at the national and regional levels.

These consultations are used to inform the plans. For instance, in preparing the current 7th five-year plan, the political leadership had initially set growth rates that were considered ambitious. Upon analysis and recommendation by the Panel of Economists, growth projections were later revised downward. The focus of the plan had also changed from reducing poverty to reducing extreme poverty. Another example is that community-based organizations working with physically challenged people proposed strategies that differed from those initially proposed by the General Economics Division (GED) of the Planning Commission, the planning administrative authority of Bangladesh. Subsequently, their proposal was included in the plan.

The government of Bangladesh adopted a “whole of society” approach in working towards attainment of the SDGs. The already-established practice and culture of consultations for planning in Bangladesh means that multi-stakeholder partnerships can be leveraged in promoting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the SDGs. The consultations on the sustainable development agenda in Bangladesh started even before the adoption of the global agenda, beginning in 2013 under the name “post-2015 development agenda”.

Civil society in Bangladesh has already been an active partner of the government. In recent years, as the role of the private sector in driving economic growth has risen, the government and the private sector increasingly recognize the critical role of the private sector in attaining many SDG targets. In Bangladesh, the private sector is critical for growth and employment, but also for the delivery of essential services such as education, health and sanitation. Therefore, the Planning Commission has identified several areas where it expects the private sector to take an

active and effective role to support attainment of the SDGs.

In order to raise awareness about and generate commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, the government organized wide-ranging discussions with civil society organizations, development partners, the private sector, ethnic minorities, professional groups, labour associations, women's networks and the media.

Institutional arrangements for achieving the SDGs

The government established an Inter-Ministerial Committee on SDG Monitoring and Implementation in November 2015. The committee is comprised of 19 senior staff from different ministries and divisions. The General Economics Division acts as the secretariat to coordinate implementation at the policy level. The Committee is responsible for prioritizing and contextualizing the goals and will report to the Prime Minister every six months on SDG implementation. The Prime Minister's office has also created the role of Chief Coordinator for SDG affairs to convene the committee and be responsible for facilitating the overall implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.

Achievement of the SDGs and SDG targets is not the responsibility of a single ministry. Rather, it involves multiple ministries and government agencies. Recognizing that the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs need to be understood and owned widely by all government agencies, the GED organized a workshop in December 2015 with 69 participants representing 31 ministries and government agencies, with support from UNDP.¹ During the workshop, the participants mapped out 1) ministries and government agencies; 2) actions planned in the 7th plan; 3) actions to achieve the SDGs that go beyond the 7th plan (from 2020 to 2030); and 4) existing policy instruments against SDG targets and indicators. This process of intragovernmental consultation was important because it helped the GED gain wide support from across government for SDG implementation.

The mapping that started at this workshop was subsequently completed and published as a handbook.² The handbook serves as a reference to all government ministries and departments to see which SDG targets they are responsible for, and how these SDG targets correspond to the targets of the 7th plan. This mapping covered 41 lead ministries which are directly linked to attainment of the targets, 31 co-lead ministries/divisions which are indirectly linked, and all ministries/divisions which are associated with the targets. For example, for SDG target 1.1, the Cabinet Division is the lead, the General Economics Division is the co-lead, and 19 other ministries/divisions are associated.

In this regard, institutional arrangements for SDG implementation in Bangladesh go beyond the establishment of committees and working groups tasked to "look after" the SDGs. The mapping became the first step to mainstream the SDGs within the government structure. It also uncovered duplication of effort between government agencies and is expected to create strong synergies between ministries and agencies which are jointly responsible for specific targets.

To concretize the accountability for the SDGs and targets, the government of Bangladesh is in the process of integrating SDG targets into the government performance assessment system, so that long-term sustainable development objectives translate into annual work plans of ministries.

The government has a system of linking development results with individual performance – the Annual Performance Agreement (APA). The system seeks to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability of ministries. Under the APA system, the Secretary of each ministry or division signs an agreement with the Cabinet Secretary at the beginning of each financial year. The performance agreements outline goals and targets of each ministry, along with corresponding performance indicators. In this regard, government decision makers are held accountable for the results delivered by their respective ministries.

The Development Results Framework and its alignment with the SDGs

The government of Bangladesh took into due consideration the SDGs and their targets when setting up the priority areas of the 7th five-year plan; as five-year plans are the guiding documents of the country, this demonstrates the government's commitment to aligning national planning with the SDGs.

Together with the 7th plan, the government of Bangladesh also adopted its accompanying results matrix, called the Development Results Framework (DRF) (See Figure 1). This is an important step toward results-based management, since it enables the government to monitor development outcomes, or results. The DRF includes

outcomes and targets on macroeconomics, poverty reduction and specific sectors. Since this is the first time when such a results framework was developed for a medium-term plan in Bangladesh, it is necessary to invest in capacity to ensure that the results framework is used for monitoring and informing development planning.

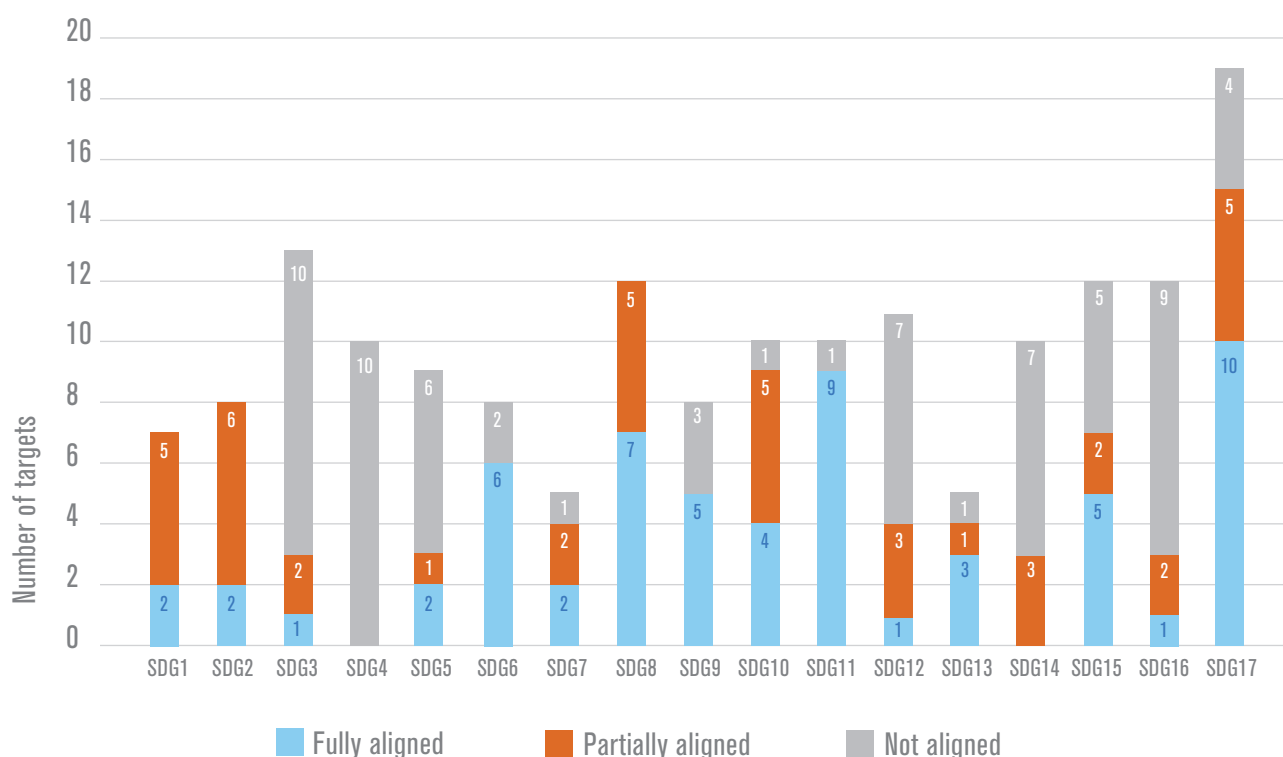
Figure 1. The template of the 7th five-year plan Development Results Framework

Performance Indicators	Data Source (Names of Institutions & Reports)	Lead Ministry/ Division	Baseline (year)	Target (2017)	Target (2017)	Target (2019)	Target (2020)
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The handbook mentioned above is not limited to mapping government agencies; it also included mapping of the 7th plan targets (or DRF targets) against relevant SDG targets. This mapping showed that the DRF targets of the 7th plan have a high degree of consistency with the SDGs. With the exception of SDG 12 (sustainable production and consumption), SDG 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies, justice, institutions) and SDG 17 (global partnership), other SDGs are thematically aligned with the plan document, which means that the plan contains objectives, targets, strategies or actions that address the theme of that particular SDG. At the level of targets, 58 of the SDG targets are aligned with the plan and 38 targets are partially aligned.

Although the goal of such mapping exercises is not to ensure that the medium-term plan includes *all* SDG targets, it does allow seeing clearly those areas in which the plan is consistent or not consistent with the SDGs.

Figure 2. Alignment of SDG targets with the 7th five-year plan



Source: SSIP and GED, Planning Commission (2016). *Integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the 7th five-year plan and mapping of ministries to goals and targets. Workshop outcome document.* Available from www.plancom.gov.bd/integration-of-sdgs-into-the-7th-fyp

Integrating the SDGs into programming

Since plans translate to reality through the implementation of programmes, the General Economics Division is extending the mapping exercise by enumerating all ongoing projects and programmes which contribute to achieving the SDGs and the 7th plan goals and targets. Each programme has a budget; therefore, mapping programmes against the SDGs also allows seeing how many resources are allocated to which SDG.

Furthermore, the government is modifying the formats required for development project proposals. These formats will require ministries and agencies to indicate how each proposed programme and project contributes to the SDGs. This information can be used by the government to decide which of the SDGs will receive higher priority and a greater resource allocation.

GED is currently coordinating the preparation of action plans for SDG implementation for two sectors, education and governance. As part of this exercise, ministries and divisions are requested to prepare their respective action plans. This exercise requires the ministries and divisions to:

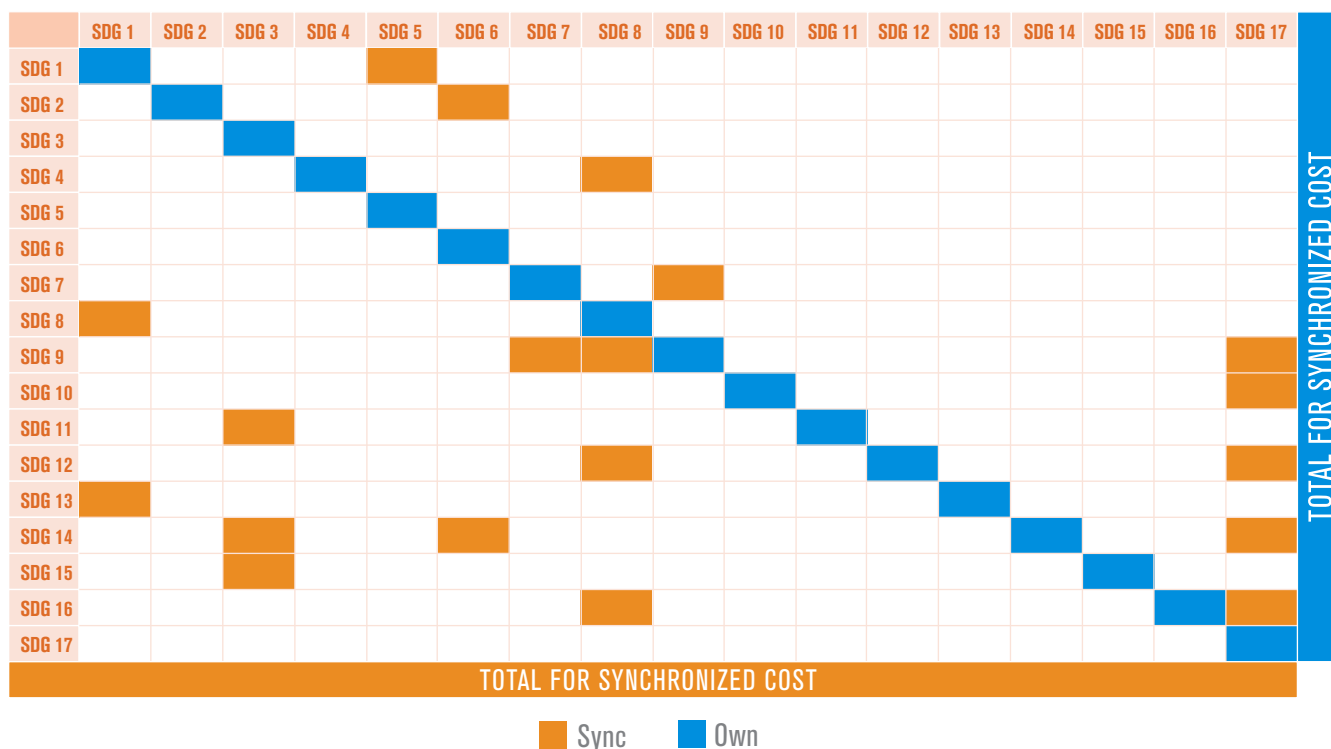
- Enumerate ongoing programmes, specifying to which goals and targets of the 7th plan (and SDG targets) do these programmes contribute
- Identify new programmes required to achieve the relevant targets during the 7th plan (until 2020)
- Identify new programmes to be implemented beyond the 7th plan (after 2020)
- Identify policies and strategies needed to implement these programmes.

Assessing financing needs to achieve the SDGs³

The government of Bangladesh commissioned an assessment of financing needs for the SDGs. The assessment was conducted by engaging experts from various sectors, both within and outside the government. Methodologies were selected based on experts' recommendations to estimate costs to achieve each goal and target. Methods used include multiplicative factor analysis, analyses of the poverty gap, and the incremental capital output ratio. For some sectors, information on investment requirements, block grants and ongoing programme costs was used for costing.

The important part of the methodology was how the assessment addressed the interconnected nature of the SDGs. It used a so-called synchronization process between specific goals and targets, specifically, SDGs 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 17, where synchronization essentially means avoiding double-counting costs needed to finance interrelated SDGs. Major synchronization was done between SDG 7 (energy access), SDG 8 (economic growth) and SDG 9 (infrastructure).

In simplified terms, the synchronization process can be described as follows: first, the analysts identified SDGs that are synchronized with each other, i.e. those goals where actions taken would contribute to making progress on two SDGs (See Figure 3); then, they estimated the costs to achieve each SDG separately. After that, the costs were summed up, subtracting the duplicated part of the cost.

Figure 3. Conceptual framework in synchronization of additional costing of different SDGs

Source: General Economics Division, Planning Commission (2017). SDGs financing strategy: Bangladesh perspective, p. 21

The result of the needs assessment showed that Bangladesh will need additional financing to meet SDG costs of US\$928.5 billion over the period 2017–2030, which translates to US\$66.3 billion per year. This is equivalent to about 18.5 to 20 percent of GDP per year.⁴

The needs assessment looks at possible sources of financing and identifies that about 85 percent of financing would come from domestic sources, while 15 percent would be needed from external sources – both official development assistance (ODA) and foreign direct investment (FDI).

Figure 4: Financing strategy for implementation of the SDGs (US\$ billion)

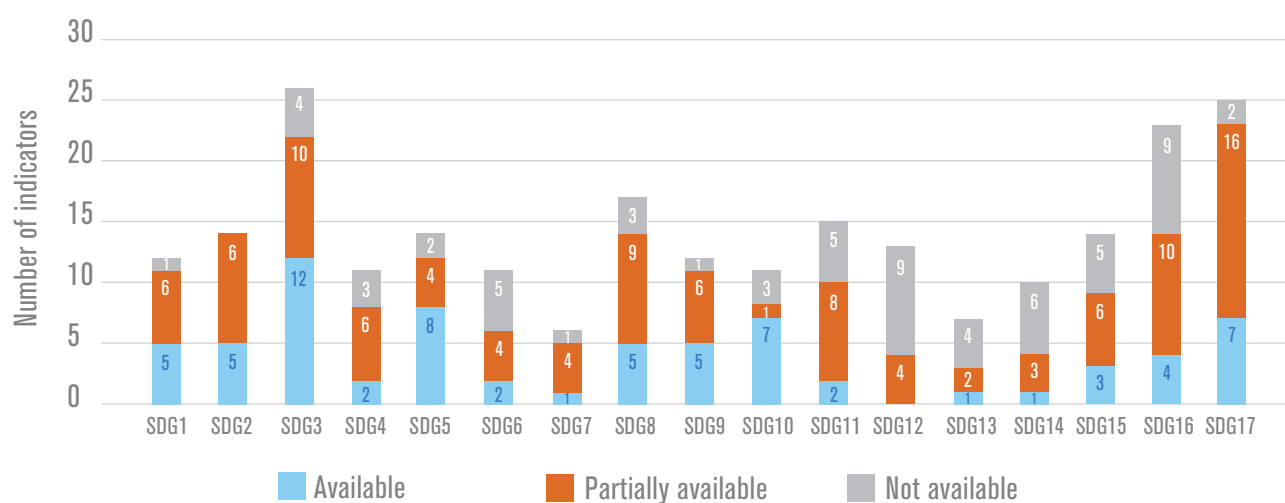
	FY17-FY20	FY21-FY25	FY26-FY30	FY17-FY30 (The entire period from now till 2030)
Total additional amount from domestic sources (85.11 percent of total)	107.72	257.49	430.87	796.09
Total additional amount from external sources (14.89 percent of total)	22.07	43.15	67.17	132.39
Total additional amount from both domestic and external sources (100 percent)	129.79	300.65	498.04	928.48
Annual average additional amount from domestic sources	26.93	51.50	86.17	56.86
Annual average additional amount from external sources	5.52	8.63	13.43	9.46
of which: FDI	2.73	6.45	10.70	6.91
Grants and aid	2.79	2.17	2.74	2.55

Source: General Economics Division, Planning Commission (2017). SDGs financing strategy: Bangladesh perspective, p. 17

Data gaps for the SDGs

The government also conducted an assessment of data gaps,⁵ in order to come up with a plan to collect new data, disaggregate existing data and, where necessary, clarify or come up with new definitions of indicators. The data gap assessment looks in detail at data required for each SDG indicator, and classifies the indicators into three categories – those for which data is available, partially available and not available. The assessment shows that data is available for 70 indicators (29 percent of all needed indicators), partially available for 108 indicators (45 percent) and not available for 63 indicators (26 percent). Most of the gaps exist in data to construct environmental and governance indicators (See Figure 5).

Figure 5. Availability of data for SDG indicators, Bangladesh



Source: SSIP and GED, Planning Commission (2017). *Data Gap Analysis for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Bangladesh Perspective*

The government also designed and developed the SDG Tracker, an innovative web-based data repository. The SDG Tracker will be used to:

- Create a data repository system for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs and other national development goals
- Facilitate tracking of progress towards each goal and target through multiple visualization schemes
- Improve situational analysis and performance monitoring of various development initiatives of the government
- Enable predictive analysis for achieving the goals within the set time-frame.

Notes:

Data specifications and sources:

- Data on population, GDP, poverty, inequality and government expenditures is from the World Development Indicators, World Bank: <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx> .
- Data on human development is from the Human Development Data website, UNDP: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/data>
- The map shows poverty by district (2012). The data is from the World Bank, Poverty map of Bangladesh. Available from: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/data/interactive/2016/11/10/bangladesh-poverty-map>

Data specifications and years:

- Population (2016), GDP per capita - current US\$ (2016), GDP growth - average for 2010-2016, poverty rate according to the national poverty line (2010), poverty rate according to the international poverty line - \$PPP 3.90 a day (2010), share of income of the richest 10 percent of the population (2010), total government expenditures - percentage of GDP (2016), government expenditures on education - percentage of GDP (2016), government expenditures on health - percentage of GDP (2014).

Disclaimer: Boundaries shown on the map do not imply official endorsement by the United Nations

¹ The support was provided through the UNDP Bangladesh project “Support to Sustainable and Inclusive Planning” (SSIP). See SSIP and GED, Planning Commission (2016). Integration of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into the 7th five-year plan and mapping of ministries to goals and targets. Workshop outcome document.

² General Economics Division, Planning Commission (2016). A Handbook: Mapping of Ministries by Targets in the implementation of SDGs aligning with 7th Five Year Plan (2016–20). Available from http://www.plancomm.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/A-Handbook-Mapping-of-Ministries_-targets_-SDG_-7-FYP_2016.pdf

³ This section is based on Government of Bangladesh (2017). SDG Financing Strategy: Bangladesh Perspective.

⁴ The higher financing need in the case of the “business as usual” economic growth scenario, and the lower financing need in the case of the extended economic growth scenario (a higher but still realistic growth scenario).

⁵ SSIP and GED, Planning Commission (2017). Data Gap Analysis for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Bangladesh Perspective. Available from <http://www.plancomm.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/SDG-DATA-Gap-Final-Draft.pdf>

This summary is based on Hossain, Ismail M (forthcoming). Bangladesh case study: Integrating Sustainable Development Goals in Development Planning. Paper commissioned by UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub.

It also benefited from inputs by Fakrul Ahsan, Adviser, UNDP Bangladesh project “Engaging with Institutions” and Naquib bin Mahbub, Division Chief of the General Economics Division (GED), Bangladesh Planning Commission.