

## **ERD's Inputs for Voluntary National Review (VNR)**

Bangladesh is implementing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve its core objectives like empowering people, ensuring prosperity, advancing peace, strengthening partnership, protecting the planet. Most of these objectives have been envisaged in its 7th Five Year Plan. Economic Relations Division (ERD) is the lead Division of the Government for mobilizing external resources in the form of development cooperation from different sources. According to "Handbook on Mapping of Ministries by Targets in the implementation of SDGs aligning with 7th Five Year Plan (2016-20)" published by General Economic Division, ERD has been nominated as lead ministry for 15 different targets, similarly Co-lead for 2 targets and Associate Ministry for another 29 targets.

ERD has undertaken several actions to finalize 'Action Plan' for ERD-lead targets. Along with co-lead and associates ministries ERD has identified strategic institutional and policy measures to harness resources to support Bangladesh's SDGs implementation. ERD is also helping other Ministries/Divisions, specifically where its playing role either as co-lead or as associate to set their Action Plan for SDG implementation.

Goal specific activities taken by ERD, as of date, is attached as "Annex-A".

### **Economic Relations Division's (ERD's) role in implementing SDGs**

ERD has undertaken several strategic institutional and policy measures to harness resources to support Bangladesh's SDGs implementation. It has strengthened its collaboration with different line Ministries/Divisions to speed up the process of resource mobilization and project implementation. Challenges relating to fund disbursement are addressed through joint or tripartite meetings between line Ministries/Divisions and development partners. ERD plays the role of main negotiator between parties.

ERD is finalizing a national policy on development cooperation to ensure predictable and beneficial development cooperation. It is expected that NPDC shall be a consolidated policy framework for mobilizing and managing foreign assistance in Bangladesh. On the other hand, ERD plays key role on the international front where it argued for enhanced global support for SDGs implementation.

ERD often sits with development partners through its dialogue and partnership mechanisms and discusses major challenges of development cooperation and explores solutions to challenges. Broadly, ERD has bolstered its commitment and means of doing business to ensure effective contribution of development aid in Bangladesh's SDGs implementation. **ERD is a key ally of the GED and PMO in advancing a coherent and forward looking policy approach towards achieving Bangladesh's middle-income country status.**

### **Development Partnership**

Ensuring effective utilization of resources conforming the norms and principles of development effectiveness is the prerequisite of sustainable development. Bangladesh participated in 2016 Global Partnership Monitoring exercise conducted by the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC). The exercise revealed some critical findings (listed below) on partnership, which need greater attention and these findings could also be reflected in the VNR.

- In 2015, eighty-nine percent of all development co-operations were aligned to national priorities outlined in the national development plan. However, only 58% of these cooperation used country-led results and 50% recurred to national monitoring systems. Although most of the providers align to at least some of the national development objectives but still a few major development partners plan and implement out-side the country-led results framework.
- Seventy-five percent of all development cooperation reported in 2015 was recorded in the government budget, manifesting a decrease from 84% in 2013 and 80% in 2010. Generally, Bangladesh faces important delays in ODA disbursement. Both the development partners and the government should work together as to how the disbursements can be accelerated.
- Despite recent progress in aligning development planning to medium-term budget allocations, only 23% of development cooperation is using national budget execution, a substantial drop from 2013 (62%). The use of national systems for financial reporting and auditing decreases slightly, from 92% to 89% and from 91% to 87%, respectively. Extended use of country procurement remains a pending task, with only 21% ODA recurring to this system (42% in 2013). Enhanced public financial management and extended use of country systems are essential for ensuring effective and sustainable development.