তারিখ: ০২ জানুয়ারি ২০২২, রবিবার স্থান: বঞ্চাবন্ধু আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন কেন্দ্র

প্রেক্ষাপট

জাতির পিতা বঙ্গবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান-এর স্বপ্লের সোনার বাংলা গড়ার প্রত্যয়ে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা বিচক্ষণ ও সুদূর প্রসারী নীতি ও কৌশল বাস্তবায়ন করে চলেছেন। যার ফলশ্রুতিতে সাম্প্রতিক বছরগুলোতে বাংলাদেশ আর্থ-সামাজিক অগ্রগতির বিভিন্ন সূচকে অভূতপূর্ব সাফল্য অর্জন করেছে। নারী-পুরুষের সমতা, নারীর ক্ষমতায়ন, মাতৃমৃত্যু ও শিশুমৃত্যুর হার হাস, মানুষের গড় আয়ু বৃদ্ধি, টিকাদান এবং বিশুদ্ধ পানি ও পয়ঃনিষ্কাশন নিশ্চিতকরণ প্রভৃতি ক্ষেত্রে বাংলাদেশ অনেক উন্নয়নশীল দেশের থেকে অধিকতর অগ্রগতি সাধন করেছে।

তারই সুবাদে সিডিপি-এর ২০১৮ ও ২০২১ সালের পরপর দুইটি ত্রিবার্ষিক পর্যালোচনায় বাংলাদেশ স্বল্লোন্নত দেশ হতে উত্তরণের সকল মানদন্ড পূরণে সক্ষম হয়েছে। ফলশ্রুতিতে বাংলাদেশ গত ২৬ ফেব্রুয়ারি ২০২১ এ অনুষ্ঠিত সিডিপি-এর ত্রিবার্ষিক পর্যালোচনা সভায় স্বল্লোনত দেশ হতে উত্তরণ বা গ্রাজুয়েশনের মানদন্ড পূরণের মাধ্যমে উত্তরণের সুপারিশ লাভ করেছে। সিডিপি একই সঞ্চো বাংলাদেশকে ২০২১ থেকে ২০২৬ সাল পর্যন্ত পাঁচ বছরব্যাপী প্রস্তুতিকালীন সময় প্রদানের সুপারিশ লাভ করেছে। সিডিপি একই সঞ্চো কুন ২০২১-এ জাতিসংঘের অর্থনৈতিক ও সামাজিক পরিষদ কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত হয়েছে। এরই ধারাবাহিকাতায় গত ২৪ শে নভেম্বর ২০২১ তারিখে অনুষ্ঠিত জাতিসংঘ সাধারণ পরিষদের ৭৬ তম বৈঠকের ৪০তম প্লেনারি সভায় স্বল্লোনত দেশ হতে বাংলাদেশের উত্তরণের সুপারিশ জাতিসংঘ সাধারণ পরিষদের অনুমোদন লাভ করেছে।



স্বল্পোন্নত দেশ হতে বাংলাদেশের উত্তরণ উদযাপন উপলক্ষ্যে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ কর্তৃক গত ২রা জানুয়ারি ২০২২ তারিখ আয়োজিত অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য রাখছেন মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা, এম পি

স্বল্লোন্নত দেশ হতে উত্তরণের সুপারিশ লাভ স্বাধীনতা পরবর্তী বাংলাদেশের উন্নয়নে একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অর্জন এবং জাতির পিতা বঞ্চাবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান-এর সোনার বাংলা ও মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর প্রেক্ষিত পরিকল্পনা ও ভিশন ২০২১ এর সফল বাস্তবায়ন। বিশেষভাবে উল্লেখ্য যে, বাংলাদেশই একমাত্র দেশ যেটি কিনা জাতিসংঘ কর্তৃক নির্ধারিত উত্তরণের তিনটি মানদণ্ডের সবগুলোই পূরণ করে উত্তরণের যোগ্যতা অর্জন করেছে। বাংলাদেশ এমন একটি সময়ে স্বল্লোন্নত দেশ হতে উত্তরণের চূড়ান্তু যোগ্যতা অর্জন করল যখন সমগ্র দেশ স্বাধীনতার সুবর্ণ জয়ন্ত্রী ও জাতির পিতা বঞ্চাবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের জন্মশতবার্ষিকী উদযাপন করছে।

মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনার দূরদর্শী নেতৃত্বে সাম্প্রতিক বছরণুলোতে যে অভাবনীয় আর্থসামাজিক উন্নয়ন সাধিত হয়েছে-স্বল্লোনত দেশ হতে উত্তরণ সেই অর্জনেরই একটি বিশেষ স্বীকৃতি। এমতাবস্থায় ঐতিহাসিক এ অর্জনের রূপকার মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীকে তাঁর দূরদর্শী নেতৃত্ব ও অন্তর্ভূক্তিমূলক উন্নয়নের জন্য কৃতজ্ঞতা জ্ঞাপন এবং অভিনন্দন জানানোর লক্ষ্যে উত্তরণ সংক্রান্ত জাতীয় কমিটির দিকনির্দেশনায় মুজিব শতবর্ষে স্বাধীনতার সুবর্ণজয়ন্তীতে আপামর জনগণকে সম্পৃক্ত করে বিগত ০২ জানুয়ারি ২০২২ তারিখ রাজধানী ঢাকার বঞ্চাবন্ধু আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন কেন্দ্রে একটি স্মারক অনুষ্ঠানের আয়োজন করা হয়।

তারিখ: ০২ জানুয়ারি ২০২২, রবিবার স্থান: বঞ্জাবন্ধ আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন কেন্দ্র

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা, এমপি গণভবন প্রান্ত থেকে ভার্চুয়ালি যুক্ত হয়ে উক্ত অনুষ্ঠানের প্রধান অতিথির আসন অলঞ্চৃত করেন। অনুষ্ঠানে সভাপতিত্ব করেন গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের মাননীয় অর্থমন্ত্রী আ হ ম মুস্তাফা কামাল, এফসিএ, এমপি।

বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় সংসদের মাননীয় স্পীকার, মাননীয় মন্ত্রী, উপদেষ্টাগণ, প্রতিমন্ত্রী, উপমন্ত্রী, সরকারের উচ্চ পর্যায়ের কর্মকর্তাগণ, বীর মুক্তিযোদ্ধাগণ, উন্নয়ন সহযোগী, বেসরকারি খাত ও সুশীল সমাজের প্রতিনিধিবৃন্দ বিআইসিসি প্রান্তে উপস্থিত ছিলেন।

উল্লেখ্য যে উদ্যাপন অনুষ্ঠানটি সফলভাবে আয়োজনের লক্ষ্যে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ (ইআরডি) কর্তৃক একটি কোর-কমিটিসহ ৯ (নয়)টি সাব-কমিটি গঠন করা হয়। সাব-কমিটিগুলোর মতামতের আলোকে বিভিন্ন কার্যক্রম গ্রহণ করা হয়। অনুষ্ঠানটি সফলভাবে আয়োজনের লক্ষ্যে ইআরডি কর্তৃক ইভেন্ট ম্যানেজমেন্ট কোম্পানি গ্রে এ্যাডভারটাইজিং বাংলাদেশ লিমিটেড-এর সাথে চুক্তি স্বাক্ষরিত হয়। এছাড়া ইআরডি-এর সাপোর্ট ট সাস্টেইনেবল গ্র্যাজুয়েশন প্রোজেক্ট (এসএসজিপি) হতে উক্ত অনুষ্ঠান আয়োজনে প্রয়োজনীয় কারিগরি সহায়তা প্রদান করা হয়েছে।



স্বল্পোন্নত দেশ হতে বাংলাদেশের উত্তরণ উদযাপন উপলক্ষ্যে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ কর্তৃক গত ২রা জানুয়ারি ২০২২ তারিখ আয়োজিত অনুষ্ঠানে প্রধান অতিথির আসন অলঙ্ফৃত করেন মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা, এম পি

অনুষ্ঠানসূচী

উল্লিখিত আয়োজনটির বিস্তারিত অনুষ্ঠানসূচীটি নিম্নে উপস্থাপন করা হলঃ

| সময় | অনুষ্ঠান |
|-------|---|
| ০৯:৩০ | অতিথিদের আসন গ্রহণ |
| 50:00 | মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর আগমন |
| 20:02 | সমবেত জাতীয় সঙ্গীত পরিবেশনা (৫০ জন শিশুর মাধ্যমে মঞ্চ থেকে সরাসরি পরিবেশন) |
| 50:08 | পবিত্র ধর্মগ্রন্থসমূহ থেকে পাঠ (কুরআন, গীতা, ত্রিপিটক, বাইবেল) |
| ১০:১২ | Special Appearance 1: মাননীয় প্রতিমন্ত্রী জনাব জুনাইদ আহমেদ পলক-এর মঞ্চে আগমন, বঙ্গবন্ধুকে শ্রদ্ধা জ্ঞাপন এবং অনুষ্ঠানের পরবর্তী অংশটির ('হে বন্ধু, বঙ্গবন্ধু' শীর্ষক গান) উপস্থাপনা |

তারিখ: ০২ জানুয়ারি ২০২২, রবিবার স্থান: বঙ্গবন্ধু আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন কেন্দ্র

| সময় | হান: বঙাবরু আওজা।তক সমেলন কেন্দ্র অনুষ্ঠান | | |
|-----------------|---|--|--|
| - (-1)4 | 42011 | | |
| ১০: ১৫ | 'হে বন্ধু, বঙ্গাবন্ধু' শীর্ষক গানের চিত্রায়নের মাধ্যমে স্বল্লোন্নত দেশ হতে উত্তরণের স্বপ্নদ্রষ্টা জাতির পিতা বঙ্গাবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা জ্ঞাপন | | |
| ১০:১৯ | স্বাগত বক্তব্য: মিজ ফাতিমা ইয়াসমিন, সচিব, অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ | | |
| ১০:২২ | Special Appearance 2: ড. সেঁজুতি সাহার মঞ্চে আগমন, শ্রদ্ধা জ্ঞাপন এবং অনুষ্ঠানের পরবর্তী অংশটির (স্বল্লদৈর্ঘ্য তথ্যচিত্র) উপস্থাপনা | | |
| ১০:২৫ | স্বল্লোন্নত দেশ হতে উত্তরণ বিষয়ক স্বল্পদৈর্ঘ্য তথ্যচিত্র প্রদর্শন | | |
| ১০:২৬ | সাধারণ শ্রেণি ও পেশার মানুষের অভিব্যক্তি-১ (নারীর ক্ষমতায়ন) | | |
| ১০:২৭ | অনূর্ধ্ব ১৯ জাতীয় মহিলা ফুটবল দল এর মঞ্চে আগমন | | |
| ১০:২৯ | বক্তব্যঃ ড. শিরীন শারমিন চৌধুরী, এমপি, মাননীয় স্পীকার, বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় সংসদ | | |
| ১০:৩৪ | উন্নয়ন সহযোগীদের (জাতিসংঘ, বিশ্বব্যাংক, এশীয় উন্নয়ন ব্যাংক, এআইআইবি, জাইকা, ইউএসএআইডি) ভিডিও শুভেচ্ছা বার্তা | | |
| \$0:80 | সাধারণ শ্রেণি ও পেশার মানুষের অভিব্যক্তি-২ | | |
| ১০:৪৩ | সভাপতির বক্তব্যঃ জনাব আ হ ম মুস্তফা কামাল, এফসিএ, এমপি, মাননীয় অর্থমন্ত্রী | | |
| \$0:8 F | সাধারণ শ্রেণি ও পেশার মানুষের অভিব্যক্তি-৩ | | |
| 30: @ 0 | Special Appearance 3: সাদাত রহমান-এর মঞ্চে আগমন, শ্রদ্ধা জ্ঞাপন এবং অনুষ্ঠানের পরবর্তী অংশটির (ডকুড়ামা) উপস্থাপনা | | |
| ১০:৫৩ | উন্নয়ন বিষয়ক ডকুড়ামা | | |
| \$ \$:00 | 'একটি বাংলাদেশ তুমি জাগ্রত জনতার, সারা বিশ্বের বিস্নয়, তুমি আমার অহংকার' গানটির মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশের উন্নয়নে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর দূরদর্শী নেতৃত্বের জন্য কৃতজ্ঞতা ও অভিনন্দন জ্ঞাপন এবং পর্দায় স্থির ও চলচ্চিত্রে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর জীবনালেখ্য চিত্রায়ন | | |
| ১ ১:০৩ | মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীকে শুভেচ্ছা উপহার (painting) প্রদান | | |
| \$ \$:08 | Special Appearance 4: মাননীয় শিক্ষামন্ত্রী ডা. দীপু মনির মঞ্চে আগমন, মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীকে শ্রদ্ধা জ্ঞাপন এবং অনুষ্ঠানের পরবর্তী অংশটির (প্রধান অতিথির বক্তব্য) উপস্থাপনা | | |
| ১১:০৯ | প্রধান অতিথির বক্তব্য: শেখ হাসিনা, এমপি, মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী, গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার | | |
| | সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান | | |
| | ইনস্ট্রুমেন্টাল সঞ্চীত (অর্কেস্ট্রা- পরিচালনা: ফুয়াদ নাসের) | | |
| | সমবেত ঘুঙুর নৃত্য (পরিচালনা: শিবলী ও নীপা) | | |
| | সমবেত সঞ্জীত (Medley) পরিচালনায়: বাপ্পা মজুমদার শিল্পী: বাপ্পা মজুমদার, এ আই রাজু, কণা, রুমন, তাশফি গান: ১. নদীর মাঝি বলে; ২. আমরা নতুন যৌবনের দূত; ৩. ও আমার দেশের মাটি; ৪. ধনধান্যে পুষ্পে ভরা; এবং ৫. শোনো একটি মুজিবুরের অনুষ্ঠানের সমাপ্তি | | |
| | | | |

তারিখ: ০২ জানুয়ারি ২০২২, রবিবার স্থান: বঞ্চাবন্ধু আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন কেন্দ্র

স্মারক অনুষ্ঠানের উল্লেখযোগ্য অংশসমূহ

স্মারক অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য প্রদানকালে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা বলেন যে উন্নয়নশীল দেশে বাংলাদেশের উত্তরণকে মসৃণ ও টেকসই করতে সরকার একটি জাতীয় মসৃণ উত্তরণ কৌশল (Smooth Transition Strategy) প্রণয়নের কাজ শুরু করেছে। মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী আশা প্রকাশ করেন যে প্রণয়নাধীন উক্ত গুরুত্বপূর্ণ জাতীয় দলিলে উত্তরণের সম্ভাবনাগুলোকে কাজে লাগানোর পাশাপাশি ভবিষ্যৎ চ্যালেঞ্জ মোকাবেলায় সব ধরনের দিক-নির্দেশনাসহ কার্যকর কৌশল চিহ্নিত করা হবে। একই সঙ্গে তিনি প্রযোজনীয় গবেষণা ও সমীক্ষা থেকে প্রাপ্ত তথ্য-উপাত্তের উপর ভিত্তি করে একটি প্রমাণ-নির্ভর সমযোপযোগী কার্যকর কৌশল প্রি প্রথায়নাবীন উক্ত গুরুত্বপূর্ণ জাতীয় দলিলে উত্তরণের সম্ভাবনাগুলোকে কাজে লাগানোর পাশাপাশি ভবিষ্যৎ চ্যালেঞ্জ মোকাবেলায় সব ধরনের দিক-নির্দেশনাসহ কার্যকর কৌশল চিহ্নিত করা হবে। একই সঙ্গে তিনি প্রযোজনীয় গবেষণা ও সমীক্ষা থেকে প্রাপ্ত তথ্য-উপাত্তের উপর ভিত্তি করে একটি প্রমাণ-নির্ভর সমযোপযোগী কার্যকর কৌশল প্রেমনে স্বোত্মনে স্বাত্মক প্রচেষ্টা চালাতে সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের প্রতি আল্লান জানান।



স্বল্লোন্নত দেশ হতে বাংলাদেশের উত্তরণ উদযাপন উপলক্ষ্যে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ কর্তৃক গত ২রা জানুয়ারি ২০২২ তারিখ আয়োজিত অনুষ্ঠানে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা, এম পি গণভবন প্রান্ত হতে সংযুক্ত হন

মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী তাঁর ভাষণে তাঁর বলিষ্ঠ নেতৃত্বে গত এক যুগেরও বেশী সময় ধরে আর্থসামাজিক বিভিন্ন ক্ষেত্রে যে বৈপ্লবিক অগ্রগতি সাধিত হয়েছে তাঁর উপ আলোকপাত করেন। তিনি তাঁর বক্তব্যে জাতির পিতা বঞ্চাবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের স্বপ্লের সোনার বাংলা গড়ার লক্ষ্যে দেশকে এগিয়ে নিয়ে যাওয়ার আহবান জানান। একই সঞ্চো ভবিষ্যৎ প্রজন্ম যেন এই অগ্রগতি ধরে রাখতে পারে সেই লক্ষ্য তিনি পরবর্তী প্রজন্মকে প্রস্তুত করবার আহবান জানান।

মাননীয় অর্থমন্ত্রী জনাব আ হ ম মুস্তাফা কামাল, এফসিএ, এমপি তাঁর ভাষণে বলেন যে বাংলাদেশের অর্থনীতির আয়তন ১০০ বিলিয়ন ডলার স্পর্শ করতে স্বাধীনতার প্রথম ৩৮ বছর সময় লেগেছিল। সেখানে মাত্র ১২ বছরে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর দূরদর্শী পরিকল্পনা ও তার সঠিক বাস্তবায়নের কারণে আমাদের অর্থনীতির আকার চার গুণ বৃদ্ধি পেয়ে ১০০ বিলিয়ন ডলার থেকে ৪১১ বিলিয়ন ডলার স্পর্শ করেছে। তিনি আশাবাদ ব্যক্ত করেন যে আসন্ন অর্থবছরেই বাংলাদেশের অর্থনীতির আকার ৫০০ বিলিয়ন ডলার অতিক্রম করবে। তিনি আরও আশা প্রকাশ করেন যে ২০৩০ সালের মধ্যে SDG অর্জনের মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশ ক্ষুধা ও দারিদ্রমুক্ত দেশ এবং ২০৩১ সালের মধ্যে উচ্চ মধ্যম আয়ের দেশে উন্নীত হবে।

বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় সংসদের মাননীয় স্পীকার ড. শিরীন শারমিন চৌধুরী, এমপি তাঁর বক্তব্যে উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণকে বাংলাদেশের উন্নয়ন অগ্রযাত্রার প্রথম মাইলফলক হিসেবে অভিহিত করেন। অনুষ্ঠানে আরও বক্তব্য রাখেন মাননীয় শিক্ষামন্ত্রী ডা. দীপু মনি এবং তথ্য ও যোগাযোগ প্রযুক্তি মন্ত্রণালয়ের মাননীয় প্রতিমন্ত্রী জনাব জুনাইদ আহমেদ পলক। তাঁরা তাঁদের বক্তব্যে অভিমত ব্যক্ত করেন যে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর নেতৃত্বে অন্তর্ভুক্তিমূলক উন্নয়নের মাধ্যমেই এই ঐতিহাসিক অর্জন সম্ভবপর হয়েছে।

অনুষ্ঠানের স্বাগত বক্তব্য প্রদানকালে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগের সচিব মিজ ফাতিমা ইয়াসমিন বলেন যে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর দক্ষ নেতৃত্বের কারণে মাত্র এক দশকের কিছু বেশী সময়ের মধ্যে বাংলাদেশ আর্থ-সামাজিক সব ক'টি সূচকে প্রশংসনীয় অগ্রগতির স্বাক্ষর রেখেছে। তিনি আরও উল্লেখ করেন যে বিশ্ব অর্থনৈতিক মন্দা, প্রাকৃতিক দুর্যোগ এবং কোভিড-১৯ অতিমারি'র মত বড় বাধাগুলো বাংলাদেশ সফলভাবে অতিক্রম করতে পেরেছে। বৈদেশিক সহায়তার ওপর আমাদের নির্ভরতা হাস পেয়েছে। মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর দিক-নির্দেশনায় ২০৪১ সালের মধ্যে বাংলাদেশকে একটি জ্ঞানভিত্তিক প্রযুক্তিনির্ভর উন্নত দেশে পরিণত করার লক্ষ্যে আমরা এগিয়ে যাচ্ছি। আমরা দৃঢ়ভাবে বিশ্বাস করি সকলের সম্মিলিত প্রচেষ্টায় মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর দূরদর্শী নেতৃত্বে সোনার বাংলা বিনির্মাণে আমরা সফল হবই।

তারিখ: ০২ জানুয়ারি ২০২২, রবিবার স্থান: বঙ্গবন্ধু আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন কেন্দ্র



স্মারক অনুষ্ঠানে গণভবন প্রান্ত থেকে ভার্চুয়ালি যুক্ত হয়ে বক্তব্য রাখছেন মাননীয় অর্থমন্ত্রী জনাব আ হ ম মুস্তফা কামাল, এফসিএ, এমপি



স্মারক অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য রাখছেন মাননীয় শিক্ষা মন্ত্রী ডা. দীপু মনি



স্মারক অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য রাখছেন বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় সংসদের মাননীয় স্পীকার ড. শিরীন শারমিন চৌধুরী



স্মারক অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য রাখছেন মাননীয় আইসিটি প্রতিমন্ত্রী জনাব জুনাইদ আহমেদ পলক





অনুষ্ঠানশেষে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীকে একটি চিত্রকর্ম শুভেচ্ছা উপহার হিসেবে প্রদান করা হয়

৫০ জন শিশুশিল্পীদের পরিবেশনায় সমবেত জাতীয় সঞ্জীত পরিবেশনের মাধ্যমে অনুষ্ঠানের সূচনা হয়। মন্ত্রিসভার সম্মানিত সদস্যবৃন্দ ছাড়াও সমাজের বিভিন্ন অংশের ও বিভিন্ন পেশার মানুষের প্রতিনিধিবৃন্দ অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য রাখেন এবং বাংলাদেশের এই অভূতপূর্ব আর্থসামাজিক অগ্রগতির ক্ষেত্রে দূরদর্শী নেতৃত্ব প্রদানের জন্য মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীকে ধন্যবাদ জানান। অনুষ্ঠানে 'হে বন্ধু, বঞ্চাবন্ধু' শীর্ষক গানের চিত্রায়নের মাধ্যমে স্বল্লোন্নত দেশ হতে উত্তরণের স্বপ্নদ্রষ্টা জাতির পিতা বঞ্চাবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমানের প্রতি শ্রদ্ধা জ্ঞাপন করা হয়। একই সাথে 'একটি বাংলাদেশ তুমি জাগ্রত জনতার, সারা বিশ্বের বিস্ময়, তুমি আমার অহংকার' গানটির মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশের উন্নয়নে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর দূরদর্শী নেতৃত্বের জন্য কৃতজ্ঞতা ও অভিনন্দন জ্ঞাপন করা হয়। এছাড়া বিভিন্ন উন্নয়ন সহযোগী সংস্থাসমূহ যেমন জাতিসংঘ, বিশ্বব্যাংক, এশীয় উন্নয়ন ব্যাংক, এআইআইবি, জাইকা ও ইউএসএআইডি-এর প্রধানদের ভিডিও শুভেচ্ছা বার্তা অনুষ্ঠানে প্রচারিত হয়।

তারিখ: ০২ জানুয়ারি ২০২২, রবিবার স্থান: বঞ্চাবন্ধু আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন কেন্দ্র

বাংলাদেশের চলমান উন্নয়ন অগ্রগতি নিয়ে ৬ মিনিটের একটি ডকুড়ামা স্মারক অনুষ্ঠানে প্রদর্শিত হয়। এছাড়া বাংলাদেশের চলমান উন্নয়ন অগ্রযাত্রার ফলশ্রুতিতে সাধারণ শ্রেণি পেশার মানুষের জীবনে যে ইতিবাচক পরিবর্তনসমূহ এসেছে সেই গল্পগুলো নিয়ে সাধারণ শ্রেণি ও পেশার মানুষের অভিব্যক্তির ভিত্তিতে তিন পর্বের একটি স্বল্পদৈর্ঘ্য প্রামাণ্যচিত্র অনুষ্ঠানে উপস্থাপন করা হয়। অনুষ্ঠানের সাংস্কৃতিক পর্বে ফুয়াদ নাসেরের পরিচালনায় যন্ত্র সঞ্চীত পরিবেশিত হয়। এছাড়া নৃত্যশিল্পী শিবলী ও নিপার পরিচালনায় সমবেত ঘুঙুর নৃত্য পরিবেশন করা হয়। সবশেষে বাপ্পা মজুমদারের পরিচালনায় সমবেত সঞ্চীত পরিবেশিত হয়।



অনুষ্ঠানসংক্রান্ত প্রচার প্রচারণাঃ

অনুষ্ঠানের পূর্বের দিন এসএসজিপি প্রকল্পের সহায়তায় ইআরডি-এর উদ্যোগে একটি মিডিয়া ব্রিফিং-এর আয়োজন করা হয়। মাননীয় অর্থমন্ত্রী জনাব আ হ ম মুস্তফা কামাল এফসিএ, এমপি ও ইআরডি-এর সম্মানিত সচিব মিজ ফাতিমা ইয়াসমিন প্রেস ব্রিফিং-কালে উক্ত অনুষ্ঠান বিষয়ে সাংবাদিকদের বিভিন্ন প্রশ্নের জবাব দেন। অনুষ্ঠানটি বিভিন্ন পত্রপত্রিকা, টিভি চ্যানেলসমূহ তথা জাতীয় গণমাধ্যমসমূহে ব্যাপক প্রচার লাভ করে। দুই ঘন্টার মূল অনুষ্ঠানটি বিটিভি, বিটিভি ওয়ার্ল্ড, বাংলাদেশ বেতার এবং অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগের ফেসবুক, টুইটার ও ইউটিউব পেজ থেকে সরাসরি সম্প্রচারিত হয়েছে।

অনুষ্ঠানের দিন বঞ্চাবন্ধু আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন কেন্দ্রের প্রবেশস্থলে, প্রধানমন্ত্রী কার্যালয়ের সম্মুখভাগ থেকে বিজয় সরণী এবং অনুষ্ঠানস্থল পর্যন্ত পোন্টার ও ব্যানার দ্বারা সুসজ্জিত করা হয়। এছাড়াও, ঢাকা শহরের বিভিন্ন স্থান যেমন-- ফুটওভার ব্রিজ, ইলেক্ট্রিক পোল, বিভিন্ন গোলচত্বর এবং মোহাম্মদপুর বাস ডিপোর বিআরটিসি বাসসমূহ তথ্যবহুল পোন্টার, ব্যানার দ্বারা সুসজ্জিত করা হয়। স্বল্লোন্নত দেশ হতে বাংলাদেশের উত্তরণ সম্পর্কে জনমনে সচেতনতা বৃদ্ধির লক্ষ্যে প্রয়োজনীয় তথ্যসম্বলিত একটি টিভিসি প্রস্তুতপূর্বক তা বিভিন্ন টেলিভিশন চ্যানেলে ও এলইডি বিলবোর্ডসমূহে বারংবার সম্প্রচারের করা হয়। এছাড়া শীর্ষস্থানীয় ৪টি জাতীয় দৈনিক পত্রিকায় (২টি বাংলা ও ২টি ইংরেজি) উত্তরণ বিষয়ে তথ্যবহুল ক্রোড়পত্র প্রকাশ করা হয়।

তারিখ: ০২ জানুয়ারি ২০২২, রবিবার স্থান: বঙ্গবন্ধু আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন কেন্দ্র



এ অনুষ্ঠানটির মাধ্যমে স্বল্লোন্নত দেশ হতে বাংলাদেশের উত্তরণ এবং ঐতিহাসিক অর্জন সম্পর্কে জনমনে ব্যাপক সচেতনতা সৃষ্টি হয়েছে যা জাতি হিসেবে অদূর ভবিষ্যতে আমাদের চলার পথে অনুপ্রেরণা হিসেবে কাজ করবে।

বাংলাদেশকে স্বল্পোন্নত দেশ থেকে উত্তরণের স্বীকৃতি উপলক্ষে কক্সবাজার জেলায় গত ৩১ মার্চ ২০২২ তারিখে <u>আনুষ্ঠানিকভাবে উদ্যাপনের প্রতিবেদন</u>

প্রেক্ষাপট:

স্বাধীনতার সুবর্ণজয়ন্তী এবং জাতির পিতার জন্মশতবার্ষিকীতে বাংলাদেশ স্বল্পোনত দেশ হতে উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণের যোগ্যতা অর্জন করেছে। গত ২৪ নভেম্বর ২০২১ তারিখে জাতিসংঘের সাধারণ পরিষদের ৭৬তম অধিবেশনে বাংলাদেশের স্বল্পোনত দেশ হতে উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণের প্রস্তাব পাঁচ বছরের প্রাক-উত্তরণ প্রস্তুতিকালসহ চূড়ান্ত স্বীকৃতি লাভ করে। স্বল্পোনত দেশ হতে উত্তরণের জন্য চূড়ান্ত স্বীকৃতি লাভ স্বাধীনতা পরবর্তী বাংলাদেশের উন্নয়নে একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অর্জন এবং জাতির পিতা বঞ্চাবন্ধু শেখ মুজিবুর রহমান-এর সোনার বাংলা ও মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর প্রেক্ষিত পরিকল্পনা ও ভিশন ২০২১ এর সফল বাস্তবায়ন।

স্বল্লোন্নত দেশ হতে উত্তরণের ঐতিহাসিক অর্জনের পরিপ্রেক্ষিতে বাংলাদেশের সাম্প্রতিক উন্নয়ন সম্পর্কে আপামর জনসাধারণকে অবহিতকরণ এবং উদ্বুদ্ধকরণের উদ্যোগ গ্রহণ করা হয়েছে। এরই অংশ হিসেবে গত ৩১ মার্চ ২০২২ তারিখ কক্সবাজার জেলার লাবণী সৈকতে **'উন্নয়নের নতুন জোয়ার, বদলে যাওয়া কক্সবাজার**' শীর্ষক উত্তরণ উদ্যাপন অনুষ্ঠান অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে। গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা, এমপি গণভবন থেকে এ অনুষ্ঠানে ভার্চুয়ালি সংযুক্ত হয়ে অনুষ্ঠানের প্রধান অতিথির আসন অলংকৃত করেন। এছাড়া মূল অনুষ্ঠানের পূর্বে ২৭-২৯ মার্চ ২০২২ তারিখে জেলার স্কুল পর্যাযের শিক্ষার্থীদের মধ্যে কবিতা আবৃত্তি, চিত্রাংকন ও রচনা প্রতিযোগিতার আয়োজন করা হয়। এ অনুষ্ঠানের মাধ্যমে কক্সবাজারের মাতারবাড়ি তাপ বিদ্যুৎ কেন্দ্র, মাতারবাড়ি এলএনজি টার্মিনাল ও গভীর সমুদ্র বন্দর, দোহাজারী থেকে কক্সবাজার রেলওয়ে সম্প্রসারণ, কক্সবাজার বিমানবন্দর রানওয়ে সম্প্রসারণ, আশ্রয়ণ প্রকল্পসহ বিভিন্ন উন্নয়ন কর্মকান্ড আপামর জনসাধারণের কাছে তুলে ধরা হয়েছে। কক্সবাজারের বিভিন্ন শ্রেণি-পেশার ব্যক্তিবর্গ এবং সুশ্বীল সমাজের প্রতিনিধিদের অংশগ্রহণে স্বাস্থ্যবিধি প্রতিপালনপূর্বক অনুষ্ঠানটি আয়োজন করা হয়েছে।



৩১ মার্চ ২০২২ তারিখ কক্সবাজারে আয়োজিত "উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণ উদ্যাপন" অনুষ্ঠান

মূল অনুষ্ঠান:

মূল অনুষ্ঠানটি দুটি পর্বে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে। তবে ৩০ মার্চ ২০২২ তারিখ আনুমানিক রাত ১০.০০ টায় লাবণী সমুদ্র সৈকতে সমুদের প্রবল জোয়ারে অনুষ্ঠানস্থল কিছুটা প্লাবিত হওয়ায় অনুষ্ঠান করা নিযে সংশযের উদ্রেক হয়। তা সত্ত্বেও জেলা প্রশাসন, স্থানীয় সরকার প্রকৌশল অধিদপ্তর, জেলা পরিষদ ও পানি উন্নয়ন বোর্ডসহ অন্যান্য দপ্তর/সংস্থার সহায়তায় জিও ব্যাগের মাধ্যমে বাঁধ দিয়ে এবং প্যান্ডেলের মধ্যে বালি ভরাট করে সান্ধ্যকালীন অনুষ্ঠানের পূর্বেই অনুষ্ঠানস্থলকে অনুষ্ঠানের উপযোগী ও নিরাপদ করা সম্ভব হয়। তবে সকালে অনুষ্ঠানস্থলে জোয়ারের পানি প্রবেশের আশংকা এবং বাঁধ নির্মাণ ও বালি ভরাটের কাজ চলমান থাকবে এ বিবেচনায় প্রথম পর্বের (সকালের) অনুষ্ঠানটি কক্সবাজার জেলা সাংস্কৃতিক কেন্দ্রে আয়োজনের সিদ্ধান্ত গ্রহণ করা হয়।

সেই অনুযায়ী সকালের ১ম পর্বের অনুষ্ঠানটি "কক্সবাজার জেলা সাংস্কৃতিক কেন্দ্রে" স্থানান্তরিত হয় এবং সেখানে সংশ্লিষ্ট সকলের উপস্থিতিতে অনুষ্ঠানের ১ম পর্বটি সফলভাবে ও ধারাবাহিকভাবে উপস্থাপন করা হয়। উক্ত অনুষ্ঠানে বিভিন্ন ইভেন্টে অংশগ্রহণকারী প্রতিযোগিদের মধ্যে মোট ২৭ জন পৃথকভাবে এবং ২ জন দলগতভাবেসহ মোট ২৯ জন বিজয়ীদের মধ্যে পুরস্কার প্রদান করা হয়। উক্ত অনুষ্ঠানে প্রধান অতিথি হিসেবে ইআরডি'র সচিব মহোদয় উপস্থিত ছিলেন।

অনুষ্ঠানের শুরুতে জাতীয় সঞ্জীত পরিবেশিত হয়। এরপর অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য রাখেন ইআরডি-এর সম্মানিত সচিব মিজ ফাতিমা ইয়াসমিন, পরিকল্পনা কমিশনের সদস্য (সচিব) মিজ শরিফা খান, ভূমি মন্ত্রণালয়ের সচিব জনাব মোঃ মোস্তাফিজুর রহমান পিএএ, কক্সবাজারের জেলা প্রশাসক জনাব মোঃ মামুনুর রশীদ এবং স্থানীয় গণ্যমান্য ব্যক্তিবর্গ। এরপর পর্যায়ক্রমে অনুষ্ঠানে উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণ বিষয়ে ডকুড়ামা, কবি মুহম্মদ নূরুল হুদার কণ্ঠে কবিতা আবৃত্তি, স্থানীয় শিল্পীদের পরিবেশনায় দেশাত্মবোধক গান ও পল্লী সঞ্চীত, বিশিষ্ট সাহিত্যিক জনাব আনিসুল হকের সাথে স্কুল শিক্ষার্থীদের সংলাপ, স্কুল শিক্ষার্থীদের অংশগ্রহণে সাংস্কৃতিক পর্ব এবং স্থানীয় ক্ষুদ্র নৃগোষ্ঠীর প্রতিনিধিদের অংশগ্রহণে সাংস্কৃতিক পর্ব অনুষ্ঠিত হয়। সর্বোপরি অনুষ্ঠানের ১ম পর্বটি শিশু-কিশোর ও অন্যান্যদের উপস্থিতিতে জাঁকজমকপূর্ণ ও উৎসবমুখর পরিবেশে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে।



"উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণ উদ্যাপন" অনুষ্ঠানের প্রথম পর্বে বেলুন উড়ানোর দশ্য

"উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণ উদ্যাপন" অনুষ্ঠানের প্রথম পর্বে পুরস্কারবিজয়ী ছাত্রছাত্রীবৃন্দের সাথে অনুষ্ঠানের সম্মানিত অতিথিবৃন্দ

অনুষ্ঠানের ২য় পর্বটি কক্সবাজারের লাবণী সমুদ্র সৈকতে প্রায় ১০ হাজার মানুষের উপস্থিতিতে অনুষ্ঠিত হয়েছে। আমন্ত্রিত অতিথিদের মধ্যে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর সাথে ভার্চুয়ালি পৃথকভাবে সংযুক্ত ছিলেন মাননীয় অর্থমন্ত্রী জনাব আ হ ম মুস্তফা কামাল, এফসিএ, এমপি। আরও উপস্থিত ছিলেন ভূমি মন্ত্রণালয়ের মাননীয় মন্ত্রী জনাব সাইফুজ্জামান চৌধুরী, এমপি, বিদ্যুৎ, জ্বালানী ও খনিজ সম্পদ মন্ত্রণালয়ের মাননীয় প্রতিমন্ত্রী জনাব নসরুল হামিদ, এমপি এবং নৌ পরিবহন মন্ত্রণালয়ের মাননীয় প্রতিমন্ত্রী জনাব খালিদ মাহমুদ চৌধুরী, এমপি।



কক্সবাজারের লাবণী সমুদ্র সৈকতে আয়োজিত "উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণ উদ্যাপন" অনুষ্ঠানে গণভবন প্রান্ত থেকে ভার্চুয়ালি সংযুক্ত হয়ে বক্তব্য রাখছেন মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা, এম পি

মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী ভার্চুয়ালি সংযুক্ত হওয়ার সাথে সাথে ২৫ জন শিশু-কিশোরদের অংশগ্রহণে সমবেত জাতীয় সঞ্চীত পরিবেশনার মাধ্যমে অনুষ্ঠানের শুভসূচনা হয়। অতঃপর অনুষ্ঠানের স্বাগত বক্তব্য রাখেন ইআরডি-এর সম্মানিত সচিব মিজ ফাতিমা ইয়াসমিন। এরপর কক্সবাজার জেলার সাম্প্রতিক উন্নয়ন অগ্রগতির চালচিত্র তুলে ধরে "জোরসে চলো বাংলাদেশ" শীর্ষক একটি প্রামাণ্যচিত্র প্রদর্শন করা হয়। এর পরপরই দর্শক সারি হতে কেন্দ্রীয় আওয়ামী লীগের ধর্ম বিষয়ক সম্পাদক মঞ্চে উপনীত হয়ে স্থানীয় উন্নয়ন সুবিধাভোগীদের কয়েকজন প্রতিনিধিদের সাথে মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীকে পরিচয় করিয়ে দেন এবং স্থানীয় সুবিধাভোগীগণ মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীকে ধন্যবাদ জ্ঞাপন করেন। উক্ত অনুষ্ঠানে বিভিন্ন মন্ত্রণালয় থেকে আগত মন্ত্রী ও প্রতিমন্ত্রীয়া স্থানীয় উন্নয়নের উপর বক্তব্য প্রদান করেন। মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর মুখ্য সচিব ও উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণ সংক্রান্ত জাতীয় কমিটির সভাপতি জনাব ড. আহমদ কায়কাউস এই পর্বটি সঞ্চালনা করেন। এরপর অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য প্রদান করেন মাননীয় অর্থমন্ত্রী জনাব আ হ ম মুস্তফা কামাল, এফসিএ, এমপি। অতঃপর মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীকে সন্দ্রানানা জানিয়ে "ও জোনাকী" শীর্ষক গানের ভিডিও চিত্রায়ন পরিবেশন করা হয়। এরপর অনুষ্ঠানের প্রধান অতিথি মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শিবলী মোহাম্মদ এবং শামীম আরা নীপার নেতৃত্বে 'একটি বাংলাদেশ তুমি জাগ্রত জনতার' শীর্ষক গানের সাথে দলীয় নৃত্য পরিবেশন করা হয়। এরপর ৫ মিনিট ৩০ সেকেন্ড আতশবাজি প্রদর্শিত হয় যা উপস্থিত সকলে উপভোগ করে। সবশেষে প্রখ্যাত সঙ্গীত দল চিরকুট এবং ফুয়াদ এন্ড ফ্রেন্ডস অনুষ্ঠানে সঙ্গীত পরিবেশন করে।



মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা তাঁর ভাষণে বলেন যে উন্নয়নশীল দেশে উত্তরণের মর্যাদা ধরে রেখে বাংলাদেশকে আরও সামনের দিকে এগিয়ে যেতে হবে। মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী তাঁর বক্তব্যে বলেন "আজ আমরা উন্নয়নশীল দেশের মর্যাদা পেয়েছি। এই মর্যাদা ধরে রেখেই আমাদেরকে সামনের দিকে এগিয়ে যেতে হবে যাতে আমরা উন্নত সমৃদ্ধশালী বাংলাদেশ গড়তে পারি যেটা জাতির পিতার স্বপ্ন ছিল"। তিনি আরও বলেন,"বাংলাদেশকে আর কেউ পিছনে টানতে পারবেনা। বাংলাদেশ এগিয়ে যাবে।" অনুষ্ঠানে বক্তব্য প্রদানকালে মাননীয় অর্থমন্ত্রী আ হ ম মুস্তফা কামাল, এফসিএ, এমপি বলেন,"যে পাকিস্তান শোষণের মাধ্যমে প্রতিটি ক্ষেত্রে আমাদের দাবিয়ে রেখেছিল, মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর সফল রাষ্ট্র পরিচালনায় গত এক যুগে আর্থসামাজিক প্রতিটি ক্ষেত্রে পাকিস্তানকে পিছনে ফেলে বাংলাদেশ আজ বিশ্ব দরবারে মর্যাদার আসন লাভ করেছে"।

উল্লেখ্য, কক্সবাজার জেলার লাবণী সৈকতে দিনব্যাপী আয়োজিত অনুষ্ঠানে ইআরডি'র সচিব মহোদয় ছাড়াও আমন্ত্রিত অতিথিদের মধ্যে i) সিনিয়র সচিব, জ্বালানী ও খনিজ সম্পদ বিভাগ ii) সচিব, সড়ক পরিবহন ও মহাসড়ক বিভাগ iii) সদস্য (সচিব), কৃষি, পানি সম্পদ ও পল্লী প্রতিষ্ঠান বিভাগ, পরিকল্পনা কমিশন iv) সচিব, নৌপরিবহন মন্ত্রণালয় v) সচিব, ভূমি মন্ত্রণালয় vi) সচিব, পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয় vii) সচিব, বিদ্যুৎ বিভাগ viii) সচিব, বেসামরিক বিমান পরিবহন ও পর্যটন মন্ত্রণালয় এবং ix) সভাপতি, এফবিসিসিআই উপস্থিত ছিলেন। এছাড়াও, কক্সবাজারের বিভিন্ন আসনের মাননীয় সংসদ সদস্যবৃন্দ, কক্সবাজার জেলা প্রশাসনসহ জেলা পর্যায়ের সকল দপ্তরের প্রধানগণ অনুষ্ঠানে সক্রিয়ভাবে অংশগ্রহণ করেন। বর্ণিত অনুষ্ঠানে এক আনন্দমুখর পরিবেশে কক্সবাজারের জন্য গৃহীত সকল উন্নয়ন কার্যক্রমের সচিত্র প্রতিবেদন ধারাবাহিকভাবে উপস্থাপন করা হয়েছে। অনুষ্ঠানস্থলে উপস্থিত সকলেই মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর দিক-নির্দেশনামূলক বক্তব্যটি খুবই আগ্রহ সহকারে শুনেছেন এবং গভীরভাবে অনুপ্রাণিত হয়েছেন।

মূল অনুষ্ঠানের আনুষাঙ্গিক আয়োজনসমূহঃ

অনুষ্ঠানস্থলে উপস্থাপিত মুজিব কর্ণারটি সুন্দরভাবে সুসজ্জিত করে প্রদর্শন করা হয় এবং উল্লেখযোগ্য সংখ্যক পরিদর্শনার্থী কর্নারটি পরিদর্শন করেন। এছাড়া, কক্সবাজারের লাবণী সমুদ্র সৈকতে মূল অনুষ্ঠানস্থলে একটি উন্নয়ন মেলা আয়োজন করা হয়। স্থানীয় উন্নয়নের সাথে সম্পৃক্ত বিভিন্ন মন্ত্রণালয় ও বিভাগ যথাঃ জ্বালানী ও খনিজ সম্পদ বিভাগ, বিদ্যুৎ বিভাগ, সড়ক পরিবহন ও মহাসড়ক বিভাগ, নৌপরিবহন মন্ত্রণালয়, বেসামরিক বিমান পরিবহন ও পর্যটন মন্ত্রণালয়, পরিবেশ, বন ও জলবায়ু পরিবর্তন মন্ত্রণালয়, ভূমি মন্ত্রণালয়, মহিলা ও শিশু বিষয়ক মন্ত্রণালয় (মহিলা বিষয়ক অধিদপ্তর), জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়, কক্সবাজার, পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, কক্সবাজার, আশ্রয়ণ প্রকল্প, প্রধানমন্ত্রীর কার্যালয় এবং স্থানীয় এসএমই প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলো এই মেলায় অংশগ্রহণ করে। মোট স্টলের সংখ্যা ছিল ২১ টি। মেলার স্টলগুলোতে সংশ্লিষ্ট মন্ত্রণালয়/সংস্থাগুলো কর্তৃক সুসজ্জিত করা হয় এবং উন্নয়ন সম্পর্কিত বিভিন্ন ছবি, ভিডিও, তথ্য-উপাত্ত সম্বলিত পোস্টার, পুস্তিকা, লিফলেট, 3D Replica, প্রতিবেদন ইত্যাদি প্রদর্শন করা হয়।



এছাড়া অনুষ্ঠানস্থলে অপরাহ্নে ঘুড়ি উড়ানো উৎসবের আযোজন করা হয়। রং বেরংযের ৮০ টি ঘুড়ি আগত দর্শনার্থীদের এবং বিপুল পরিমান দেশী-বিদেশী পর্যটকদের আকৃষ্ট করে। মূল অনুষ্ঠানস্থলের অদূরে বিভিন্ন উন্নয়ন সম্পর্কিত ৬টি বালুর ভাস্কর্য তৈরি করা হয়। বালুর ভাস্কর্যসমূহ দর্শকদের মনোযোগ আকর্ষণে সক্ষম হয়।



এছাড়া, উক্ত অনুষ্ঠান সম্পর্কিত প্রচার প্রচারণার অংশ হিসেবে সমগ্র কক্সবাজার জেলাকে ব্রান্ডিং-এর আওতায় এনে সুসজ্জিত করা হয়। কক্সবাজার শহরের ডলফিন মোড় হতে এয়ারপোর্ট এলাকা এবং লাবণী পয়েন্ট পর্যন্ত বিভিন্ন স্থলে উন্নয়নের তথ্য সম্বলিত সিটি ব্যান্ডিং দ্বারা সুসজ্জিত করা হয়। এছাড়াও লাবণী পয়েন্ট, ডলফিন মোড় এবং বিভিন্ন এলাকার মোড়ে মোড়ে অনুষ্টানের তথ্য সম্বলিত মাইকিং করা হয়। অনুষ্ঠানের বিভিন্ন পর্বে উপস্থিত শিশু-কিশোরসহ অন্যান্যদের মধ্যে অনুষ্ঠানের প্রতিপাদ্য লোগো সম্বলিত টি-শার্ট ও ক্যাপ বিতরণ করা হয়।



অনুষ্ঠান উপলক্ষে কক্সবাজারের বিভিন্ন এলাকা ব্যানারে সুসজ্জিত করা হয়

স্থানীয় ও জাতীয় গণমাধ্যমে উক্ত অনুষ্ঠান সম্পর্কে ব্যাপক প্রচার প্রচারণা লাভের উদ্দেশ্যে মূল অনুষ্ঠানের পূর্বের দিন কক্সবাজার জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়ে একটি প্রেস ব্রিফিং-এর আয়োজন করা হয়। স্থানীয় ও জাতীয় গণমাধ্যম,পত্রপত্রিকা ও টি ভি চ্যানেলের প্রতিনিধিবৃন্দ উক্ত প্রেস ব্রিফিং-এ অংশগ্রহণ করেন। এছাড়া অনুষ্ঠানের পূর্বে ও পরে বিভিন্ন গণমাধ্যমে প্রেস রিলিজ বিতরণ করা হয়। ফলশ্রুতিতে স্থানীয় ও জাতীয় বিভিন্ন গণমাধ্যমে, পত্রপত্রিকা ও টিভি চ্যানেলে অনুষ্ঠানেরি ব্যাপক প্রচারণা প্রচারণা লাভ করে। উক্ত অনুষ্ঠানটি একযোগে বিটিভি ও বিটিভি ওয়ার্ল্ড- ও সামাজিক যোগাযোগ মাধ্যম যেমনঃ ইআরডি-এর ফেসবুক ও ইউটিউবে পেইজে সম্প্রচারিত হয়েছে।



মূল অনুষ্ঠানের আগের দিন ৩০ শে মার্চ ২০২২ তারিখ কক্সবাজার জেলা প্রশাসকের কার্যালয়ে আয়োজিত প্রেস ব্রিফিং-এ বক্তব্য রাখছেন ইআরডি-এর সম্মানিত সচিব মজ ফাতিমা ইয়াসমিন

সারবিকভাবে গত ৩১ মার্চ ২০২২ তারিখ কক্সবাজার জেলার লাবণী সৈকতে আয়োজিত **'উন্নয়নের নতুন জোয়ার, বদলে যাওয়া কক্সবাজার**' শীর্ষক অনুষ্ঠানটি কক্সবাজারের স্থানীয় পর্যায়ের সকল জনগণকে সম্পৃক্ত করে সফলভাবে সম্পাদিত হয়েছে। অনুষ্ঠানে বিভিন্ন মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ/দপ্তর হতে আগত অতিথিবৃন্দ উক্ত অনুষ্ঠানটিকে একটি চমৎকার সময়োপযোগী অনুষ্ঠান হিসেবে চিহ্নিত করেছেন। ভবিষ্যতে স্থানীয় পর্যায়ের জনগণকে সম্পৃক্ত করে এ ধরণের অনুষ্ঠান আয়োজন দেশের উন্নয়ন কার্যক্রমকে ত্বরান্বিত ও টেকসই করতে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা পালন করবে বলে আশা করা যায়।

উক্ত অনুষ্ঠান সংশ্লিষ্ট যাবতীয় কাগজপত্র ও তথ্যচিত্র সম্বলিত একটি অমনিবাস এতদসঙ্গে সংযুক্ত করা হল।









SDG Localization through Development Effectiveness

08 August 2022, 3pm- 6pm (Dhaka)

Documentation & Design: COAST Foundation

Action Dialogue in Bangladesh SDG Localisation through Development Effectiveness





Speaker Ms. Suzanne Mueller Deputy Head of Mission /Head of Cooperation

Speaker Mr. Farid Aziz Iditional Secretary and

Deputy Head of Mission Additional Secretary and /Head of Cooperation Wing Chief (DE Wing) Embassy of Switzerland Economic Relations Division Ministry of Finance



Chief Guest Ms. Zuena Aziz Principal Coordinator (SDG Affairs)

Prime Minister's Office



Ms Sharifa Khan

Secretary

Economic Relations Division

Ministry of Finance

Spea



Speaker Mr. Mohd. Monirul Islam Joint Secretary (SDG Affairs)

Prime Minister's Office



Mr. Sudipto Mukerjee Resident Representative UNDP Bangladesh

0 N D P



Starting a journey with a broken economy and a scattered socio-economic situation, Bangladesh has been able to achieve tremendous successes against various socio-economic indicators. In 1971, the size of the GDP of war-ravaged Bangladesh was only USD 6.2 billion, and in 2018 the GDP grew to USD 286.27 billion, taking the country to the 42nd position in the world economy. The per capita income of Bangladesh in 2020-21 is USD 2,591, which was only USD 135.62 in 1970. Once harshly picturized as a "bottomless basket', Bangladesh is now tagged as a "Role Model for Development".

Bangladesh made remarkable achievements regarding Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) even though it did not receive global support committed especially from the rich countries. It was estimated that USD 78.2 billion was required to achieve MDGs in Bangladesh during 2011-15 . Bangladesh needed foreign assistance of USD 5.0 to USD 3.0 billion per year, but from 1990-91 to 2013-14, Bangladesh, on average, received USD 1.74 billion in Official Development Assistance (ODA) per year. Bangladesh also trying to keep up the spirit of realizing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Bangladesh government has established an Inter-Ministerial Committee on SDGs Implementation. The Committee comprising Secretaries from 20 Ministries/ Divisions coordinates SDGs monitoring and implementation. The Principal Coordinator (SDGs Affairs), a newly created high-level position in the Prime Minister's office, heads the Committee. The General Economics Division (GED) of the Ministry of Finance is the secretariat for the committee to coordinate implementation at the policy level along with monitoring and reporting SDGs status. GED has published 'Mapping of Ministries by Targets in the Implementation of SDGs aligning with 7th Five Year Plan', which aims to ensure the effective implementation of SDGs. The report identified lead ministries for all the 169 targets. To collect regular information for proper monitoring and evaluations of SDGs progress, GED has published a book titled 'Data Gap Analysis for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'. Finance or resources is a must to realize the SDGs, GED has published a book titled 'SDG Financing Strategy: Bangladesh Perspective'. It has estimated the resources needed for implementing SDGs.

'National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework of SDGs: Bangladesh Perspective' has been formulated for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of SDGs. GED also has published 'National Action Plan of Ministries/ Divisions by Targets for the Implementation of SDGs'. To present the goal-wise progress of Bangladesh along with challenges, GED has recently published 'Sustainable Development Goals: Bangladesh Progress Report-2020'.

The Action Dialogue in Bangladesh: SDG Localization through Development Effectiveness covered Bangladesh's progress toward achieving the SDGs as well as the path ahead for overcoming current challenges.

Background

for ensuring the effective translation of the SDG results into people's lives, localization is important

Bangladesh is heading to the middle-income country tier through its consecutive growth trends marking satisfactory signs of progress in various social indicators. The pandemic posed a sudden challenge in which the current government demonstrated efficient management skills in handling health emergencies including balancing the life and livelihoods of the citizens. On the top, the Russia-Ukraine war is imposing another challenge amidst the global declining trends of ODA. This demands effective cooperation among development actors ranging from development partners, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the private sector, philanthropies, etc.

Whatever initiatives for achieving SDGs are being taken in Bangladesh are mostly from the central. Government has a high impetus to work on SDGs and all those are from the central government which lacks the quality of the interventions and targeting the actual audiences confirming the LNOB principle. Therefore, localization of SDG, particularly focusing on the lagging districts is critically important. Although Bangladesh is recognized globally as the country performing well in its SDG implementation, there remains issues unattended. One of the key elements hindering the SDG implementation is spatial imbalances in development. To address this issue, the localization approach will be effective and enhance development effectiveness. It requires a convergent approach by bringing all actors together and working together on scanning the challenges, planning, and designing the solutions mapping with interventions. Four principles of effective development cooperation – country ownership, inclusive partnerships, focus on results and transparency and mutual accountability should be taken into consideration in maximizing development results.

To make the ongoing development interventions further effective, particularly the SDG Localization, the Government of Bangladesh, through the Economic Relations Division (ERD) of the Ministry of Finance, in collaboration with the Development **Cooperation Effectiveness Working Group under** the Local Consultative Group (LCG) organized this Action Dialogue. The Action Dialogue stimulates multi-stakeholder discussions and mobilizes all partners to bolster ongoing efforts and actions for effective and efficient use of resources towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. It will help the Bangladesh government and partners build a shared understanding of obstacles and priorities to increase efficient and effective utilization of development cooperation and cultivate stronger partnerships in the current development context.

In SDG implementation, the government is keenly putting its best efforts to track the progress and documenting the achievements. The organization of the regular SDG Implementation Review (SIR) conference helps track every ministry's progress against plans. However, for ensuring the effective translation of the SDG results into people's lives, localization is important. According to the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments, UNDP, and UN-Habitat, 'Localization is the process of taking into account subnational contexts in the achievement of the 2030 agenda, from setting the goals and targets to determining the means of implementation and using indicators to measure and monitor progress.' In doing so, engagement of all the actors is essential for making the results effective and efficient.



event was to pinpoint the steps that must be taken to improve partnerships and cooperation to deliver sustainable development impact through SDG localization

Objective & Modalities

On 8th August 2022 Bangladesh government, through the ERD of the Ministry of Finance and UNDP jointly organized the dialogue titled: SDG Localization through Development Effectiveness. Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GEPDC) Joint Support Team (JST) provided technical support. The major goal of the event was to pinpoint the steps that must be taken to improve partnerships and cooperation to deliver sustainable development impact through SDG localization. In truth, the event covered several distinct issues, including:

- What opportunities exist to increase the effectiveness of cooperation and partnerships to deliver the sustainable development impact at the local?
- What are the main challenges to working through multi-stakeholder partnerships/ working towards shared results/gearing collective development efforts towards SDG localization?
- What can be done to strengthen inclusiveness and effectiveness of engagement with stakeholders such as civil society, private sectors, and policymakers?
- What specific changes in policies, behavior, or systems would make it possible to advance and fully meet the effectiveness commitments?

The virtual dialogue was attended by representatives from the government, development partners, CSOs, private sectors, local government elected representatives, the Cottage, Small and Medium Enterprises (CSMEs), GPEDC JST, etc. The whole event chaired by Ms. Sharifa Khan, Secretary of ERD, Ministry of Finance, was divided into four parts: the welcome and inauguration session, the breakout session, the plenary session, and the closing session.

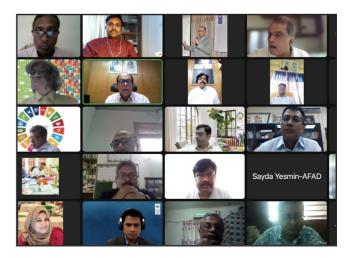
The welcome and inauguration session included remarks by a government representative and presentations on SDG Localization in Bangladesh and SDG Localization through Development Effectiveness. Mr. Farid Aziz, Additional Secretary and Wing Chief (DE Wing) of ERD, Ministry of Finance, delivered a welcome address. While Mr. Mohd. Monirul Islam, Joint Secretary (SDG Affairs), Prime Minister's Office, and Dr. Nazneen Ahmed, Country Economist of UNDP Bangladesh, gave presentations.

After this initial session, there was the Breakout session. Participants were divided in four groups and discussed a particular question. Questions were:

- What opportunities exist to increase the effectiveness of cooperation and partnerships to deliver the sustainable development impact at the local?
- What are the main challenges to working through multi-stakeholder partnerships/working towards shared results/gearing collective development efforts towards SDG localization?
- What can be done to strengthen inclusiveness and effectiveness of engagement with stakeholders such as civil society, private sectors, and policymakers?
- What specific changes in policies, behavior, or systems would make it possible to advance and fully meet the effectiveness commitments?

The key findings were presented by each group moderator in the plenary session.

At the closing session, Ms. Suzanne Mueller, the deputy head of mission and head of cooperation at the Swiss Embassy in Bangladesh made a remark as a co-chair of GPEDC. In addition, Ms. Zuena Aziz, the principal coordinator (SDG Affairs) Prime Minister's Officer presented as the Chief Guest of the event. As the Chair of the Action Dialogue, Ms. Sharifa Khan, Secretary of ERD, Ministry of Finance delivered the closing remarks.



Inauguration_

Mr. Farid Aziz

Additional Secretary, Wing Chief of Development Effectiveness of ERD, Ministry of Finance (MoF)



Welcome Speech

Over the last decade, Bangladesh is steadily maintaining its economic growth and experienced unprecedented success in its socio-economic indicators. Achieving recommendations for graduation from the least developed country status is another milestone of Bangladesh's development journey, which can be considered the most significant achievement since its independence. Bangladesh is now on track of ensuring the successful implementation of the global agenda of sustainable development goals.

The 2030 agenda states the need for an all-inclusive approach to sustainable development goals. Based on this principle, Bangladesh Government is working closely on implementation with local regional authorities, development partners, civil societies, private sectors, academia, volunteer groups, and others.

Bangladesh Government is committed to holding regular action dialogue to foster and reinforce the four principles of the GPEDC. The work of the global partnership is based on four principles of effective development cooperation including country ownership, inclusive partnership, transparency, and mutual accountability. To ensure the effective ongoing development intervention, ERD and UNDP are jointly organizing today's action dialogue on SDG localization through development effectiveness. The primary objective of the action Dialogue is to identify the actions that are needed to progress the SDG localization through the effectiveness of cooperation and partnership to deliver sustainable development impacts.

> Bangladesh Government is committed to holding regular action dialogue to foster and reinforce the four principles of the GPEDC.





Md. Monirul Islam Joint Secretary, SDG affairs

Prime Minister's Office

On 20th September 2021 at the 9th International Conference on Sustainable Development (ICSD) Bangladesh got SDG Progress Award.

Presentation 01: SDG Localization in Bangladesh

In September 2015 at the 70th UNGA, the Heads of states or Governments adopted a set of 17 goals backed up by 169 detailed targets for the world's future through 2030. That was based on the 5Ps-People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnership.

1st 3Ps were social, environmental, economic balanced, and integrated manner. The last 2P is related to rights to development, human rights, living standards across countries, shared responsibilities, and opportunities. SDGs are Comprehensive, far-reaching, people-centered, integrated, and universal.

Transformational agenda is needed for implementation. Leave No One Behind (LNOB) is the beauty of SDGs. For that, there are 3 categories:

- Beyond Income- Multidimensional poverty index
- Beyond average- Disaggregation of data
- Beyond today- Build the future

Initiatives of GOB in mainstreaming SDGs implementation

The Government of Bangladesh took so many steps in different phases for mainstreaming SDGs implementation. In the first phase there was an 8th five-year plan aligned with the SDGs, mapping of ministries/ divisions as lead, co-lead, and associates, SDGs implementation and review committee formed, Data gap analysis, SDGs monitoring, and evaluation framework, Participate 1st voluntary National Reviews of 2017.

For mainstreaming SDGs implementation in the second phase there were SDGs action plan, launched SDGs tracker, an SDGs financing strategy, a National data coordination committee formed, National conference on SDGs implementation review 2018 & 2022, Framework of collaboration between Government and UN agencies, approved 40 priority indicators for localizing SDGs, Committees formed at division, districts and subdistrict levels for SDG implementation, Project on enhancement public administration skills to achieve SDGs, SDGs module included in foundation training of young civil bureaucrats, Inclusion of SDGs in the school curriculum.

In the third phase of mainstreaming SDGs implementation, the Government of Bangladesh followed the whole of the society approach, Involving the private sector, NGOs, and Youths in it. SDGs are included in the annual performance agreement (APA) and Bangladesh participated in the 2nd VNR of the UN in 2020. Bangladesh DELTA Plan 2100 and all the issues of SDGs are included in it.

| Bangladesh: Vision 2041 | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|--|--|
| | By 2031 | By 2041 | | |
| Country Status | Upper MIC | HIC | | |
| Per capita income | The US \$5,600 | US \$12,500 | | |
| GDP growth | 9% | 9.9% | | |
| Extreme Poverty | 2.3% | <1% | | |
| Moderate Poverty | 7% | 3% | | |

8th five years plan (2021- 2025) is based on COVID-19, GDP growth, Inclusiveness, Resilient, Institution, SDG & LDC. In the constitution of Bangladesh Article 59 (Local Government) and Article 60 (Power of Local Government Bodies) is based on Local Government.

National SDGs Implementation Framework is connected from the local level to the central. The three-level integration: Upazila, District and National levels, and horizontal integration touch the five-year plan that is executed for the agenda 2030 and SDGs. The first three level integration is concerned with GED; the five-year plan is with SDGs I&R Committee and then with Cabinet. This is a glance at the National SDGs Implementation Framework.

The government took so many actions for SDGs Localization. Massive awareness programs, Prioritized SDGs indicators, Local level Action plans, and Workshops at the District level are some of those.

Localization of SDGs: How Bangladesh Acts

- Bangladesh has adopted 39+1 SDG National Priority Targets for the localization of SDGs
- To ensure LNOB, interventions should be started from the very local level authorities
- Involvement of Union/ Paurashava level local public representatives and NGOs will enhance prompt actions towards SDGs through the involvement of root-level citizens
- Local government planning should be made based on evidence through disaggregated data

- The district development plan should be aligned with SDGs
- Addressing local needs to prioritize district development

Based on the Natore Model, the SDG localization framework is prepared and focuses on the Identification of problems/Gaps, the Identification of Potential, the Formulation of the Action plan, and the Distribution of responsibilities among Government and NGOs.

Three committees are formed from the cabinet Division (16 May 2019): Divisional Committee-Chair is Divisional Commissioner, District Committee- Chair is Deputy Commissioner and Member of Parliaments (MP) are advisors, Upazila Committee- Chief Advisor is a Member of Parliament (MP) and Advisor is Upazila Chairman.

On 20th September 2021 at the 9th International Conference on Sustainable Development (ICSD) Bangladesh got SDG Progress Award.



Dr. Nazneen Ahmed Country Economist, UNDP Bangladesh Localization requires support for planning and intervention decisions based on evidence.

Presentation 02: SDG Localization in Lagging Districts

There was a proposed framework of collaboration SDGs for enhancing evidence-informed policy analysis & formulation, accelerating the implementation of policies, fostering a whole of society approach, and Securing and prioritizing financing. She said, localization is a way forward to respond to local needs by leveraging local resources and partnerships.

From the Cox's Bazar pilot project, we have learned lessons that significant interdependencies between urban and rural but gains not fully maximized, climate-induced migration would continue to urban areas which are underprepared for the influx, paucity of data and analytical capacities at the local level, averages hide existing spatial imbalances in development and results in lagging areas, the mismatch between people's priorities and authorities perception of people's needs, gaps in service coverage are not equal to infrastructure gaps, institutional complexities and completing mandates, poor targeting of ADP investments, SDG committees exists at districts level but not fully functional.

Localization requires support for planning and intervention decisions based on evidence. Also requires strengthening local information, introducing inclusive and participatory planning approaches, and mobilizing and leveraging untapped local resources. Empowerment ability to decide at the local level and a facility/mechanism to convert priorities into implementable actions are the most important requirement for localization. There must need partnerships between local Governments, Departments- NGOs-The private sector, and development partners.

For going forward on SDG localization there needs to leverage the strength of all UN agencies and address transboundary challenges. The main areas of focus will be, strengthening data and analytics capacities at the local level, community consultations, and participatory planning, mobilization of local resources, the implementation by local entities, national level observatory to identify good practices, more evidence-driven Annual Development Programme (ADP) budgeting, at least one lagging district selected from each division, to strengthen improvement against 39+1 indicators, overall coordination by principal coordination SDGs, lead Ministry is the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives (MoLGRD&C).

Plenary Session with Findings of the <u>Break,Out,Groups</u>

There were breakout sessions and the four groups presented their discussion on specific questions.

Presentation of the Group **Opportunities**



Group one discussed the opportunities that exist to increase the effectiveness of cooperation and partnerships to deliver the sustainable development impact at the local. Principal conclusions from the discussion presented in the plenary were:

- Well-informed on root causes/key reasons for acute problems of the country, like poverty, education
 - A participant from the Hill Tracts area highlighted the importance to understand the local context to identify and address problems at the local level. The intervention should be done based on an analysis of the local context.
- Strong political will at a different level-National and sub-national level
- Presence of the Governance structure at the local level- led by local government representatives.
- Options to strengthen the relationship between the 'Actors'.

- The grassroots level institution would play a more proactive role and further engagement of grassroots level communities is required.
- Integrated local level information into national database BBS, collective effort in data collection
- Public-private partnerships in different areas, for example- support farmers for modern technologies/mechanization, quality seed, better internet facilities.
 - Regarding the quality seeds, there are many small ponds in villages that could be utilized.
 - Better internet facilities and access to the internet with better speeds at the grassroots level, particularly for farmers in villages should be considered for improvement.
 - Disability inclusion- opportunities to integrate entrepreneur development
- Produces (by poor) linked to the markets (better match of market demand, with what is being produced)
 - While there are many training institutes, linkage among them and with the market is weak so this should be improved.

Presentation of the Group Challenges



The discussion focused on the challenges of working through multi-stakeholder partnerships in line with the effective principles of development cooperation: Country Ownership, Focus on Results, Inclusive Partnerships, and Transparency and Mutual Accountability. The group found the following challenges:

- Contextual Analysis for specific areas
 - A participant from the coastal area pointed out that problems are not equal to the ones in the northern areas.
- Interpretation/break down of topic for easy understanding of the local stakeholders
 - Generally, we fail to translate our big agenda into the local language so local communities could not understand it very precisely.
 - We should mention Sectors e.g. Education, Sanitation, Health, etc., not SDG 1, 2, or 3.
- Lack of Coordination & Collaboration
 - Different departments have their own priorities so sometimes priorities don't really allow us to come together collaboratively.
- Local Level Planning
 - Designing the micro-level planning, prioritization and intervention should be required.
- Delegation of Authority
 - Local government institutions need to be more engaged and consulted together with local community people.

- Stakeholder selection is not proper
 - We are not really putting our appropriate attention into selecting the appropriate stakeholders and if we cannot, then it does not really allow us to promote inclusive partnerships.
- Should listen to the participants
 - Particularly listening to the community participants and the beneficiary is very important and that can also promote transparency and mutual accountability.
- Local level coordination among departments/LGIs/CSO/DP
 - If we don't really engage with local government institutions including local government departments or local district administration, our intervention may fall into the crack
- Team building
- Regular follow-up SDG Implementation committee meetings at different levels
 - While there is an existing committee, sometimes proper engagement was not ensured to create synergy in coordination.
- More engagement of the community as well as actors at the local level
- Locals should be given preference in local planning & implementation
 - We need to go for a kind of open scheme selection. We need to go for a kind of local prioritization, and local budget allocation.
- Information sharing and openness
 - We need more open information sharing and openness among the stakeholders.

Local government institutions need to be more engaged and consulted together with local community people We need to go for a kind of local prioritization, and local budget allocation.

Presentation of the Group Inclusive Partnershins

The discussion focused on how to strengthen inclusive partnerships. Findings are:

- Support from the central Govt for the local development is very important.
 - Challenges at the local level: It needs to enhance the skills of local young people, particularly entrepreneurs.
- On-board local representatives, parliament

 local representative; MPs; both way local to central and central to local maximum utilization of resources.
 - The local representative should be on board and involved in the process, especially the parliament members who are taking the key decisions in the local development.
 - Resources should be properly allocated and it needs to ensure maximum utilization of such resources.
- Local Monitoring through meeting and visiting places – a different level of people participate in the planning; 13 Committees of UP (Union Parishad) work for effective, Birth Registration and death Registration; face challenges in implementing projects; people support the work; need to remove corruption; ensure participation.
 - Local monitoring is a very important tool for ensuring inclusive partnerships with the private sector, Civil Society, NGOs, and other key stakeholders who are working at the local level, especially UPs working for Birth Registration and death Registration, and people working on different development agenda.
 - It would be very effective if 13 Committees of UPs could be involved in the localization process.
- UP Chair can make an important role at the local level; drug addiction; child marriage; support needed from all in the society
 - The UP chairman mentioned that the role of local representatives is special for addressing very local problems such as drug addiction, child marriage, etc. if they are involved.

- E-Commerce: Was important in Covid; high employment in this sector; identify challenges – support to e-commerce for SDG implementation; can contribute effectively; job fair and business fair; capacity building; based on needs assessment; Need to implement projects; needed resources.
- A representative from the private sector mentioned that creating employment should be focused on since COVID had serious shocks on this.
- Supporting more entrepreneurs and ICT facilities at the local level should be enhanced.
- Also, job/business fairs and capacity building are highlighted as important elements.
- Development Partners: Participatory Planning; Financing – Local Govt Capacity Building; the whole of Govt and Society approach; still coordination Gap Civil Society – Local Govt – the private sector; include females in the planning process; disadvantaged group.
 - The capacity development of local governments is key for the effective use of resources.
 - Challenges: lack of data for development plans at the local level, involvement of development partners in the process.
- LGD (Local Government Division) Local and Central Govts have good coordination; consider local Govt, capacity development of local Govt; Local economy improvement; Problem identification and solution; we need to consider vulnerable corners; information needed for better planning; resources needed for SDG localization process.
 - A representative of the central government (a joint secretary of the local government division) mentioned that capacity building is obviously an important thing, but, rather than that, involving the other key stakeholders is very important to ensure evidence-based policies or evidence-based programs at the local level.
 - The availability of disaggregated data can ensure such an evidence-based approach.
 - It is important to involve local representatives of the localization committee who are working at the district level is important.

Presentation of the Group Policy Change



The group discussion focused on changes to advance the effectiveness of development.

- Systemic changes in Local government administration and local institutions are required.
- Need coordinated, visualized, and flexible policies for ensuring the engagement of local partners including CSO and NGOs.
- Ensure coordination among local level governments, CSOs Governments, and other stakeholders (Local Communities).
 - A representative from the private sector asked for establishing a mechanism so that private sector entities can access finance.
 - A business actor mentioned the need of establishing a supply chain of agricultural products linking to the market so that they will be able to benefit from local level activities.
 - Another private sector representative highlighted the importance of communication systems and transportation systems which are not well established at the district level.
 - Local specific problems should be addressed in the Upazila administration.
- Ensure accountability at the local level of government.
- SDG and business development should be synchronized.
- Wireless systems should be in full function during a natural disaster.
 - Participants from (Sherpur and Sunamgonj?) asked for ensuring the wireless systems would be in full function for future natural disasters since the systems did not work during the last disaster.
- The local Government should promote

and facilitate entrepreneurship in rural areas.

- Need to focus on agriculture products in terms of supply chain and river navigation/dragging for the implementation of SDGs.
- Local level resource mobilization for enhancing tourism in rural areas.
- Analyze to identify and collate the sectoral problems of rural areas.
- Some policy level adjustments require to address the local specific problem.
- Ensure engagement of all Local organizations/communities with the implementation of the Development projects at the local level.
- Ensure community involvement and prioritize their opinion and leadership at the local level for a better Policy System and effectiveness.
- Strengthen and expand the role of Union Parishads and Upazila level administration and institution.
- The four key things were emphasized in the discussion.
 - Local level ownership: currently local level resource mobilization is neglected (according to a representative from Sherpur?). If resources at the local level are ensured, tourism would contribute to reducing poverty in such areas.
 - Inclusiveness: it is important to include local community participation in every development aspect.
 - Transparency and Mutual Accountability: not only UPs and Upazila but also local communities must be involved in a mechanism to ensure their accountability and transparency.
 - Importance of partnerships development, especially engagement with philanthropies and local communities.



is. Suzanne Mueller

Deputy Head of Mission/Head of Cooperation, Embassy of Switzerland in Bangladesh

Conclusion

For achieving the 2030 Agenda, it is not possible without being committed to and implementing the principles of development effectiveness.

Bangladesh and Switzerland are part of the Co-Chairs of the GPEDC. I've started working with the former secretary of ERD for improving the country's results framework and mutual accountability since around 2014. In this sense, we had a very successful high-level meeting of GPEDC in Nairobi where Bangladesh presented its findings. Bangladesh was one of the first countries to include the SDGs in their national development plan.

Bangladesh conducted the development finance analysis some years ago, but some of the findings are still valid to consider having all financing for implementing the SDGs. In addition, there is a case study of Bangladesh co-funded by the EU on aligning development cooperation to the SDGs in lower-middle-income countries. This was published in April 2022 and it is an interesting document.

For achieving the 2030 Agenda, it is not possible without being committed to and implementing the principles of development effectiveness. I would like to repeat that it needs political will at a higher level. When we said what the challenges are and why they are not working, it's often a lack of political will.

It's really important that the government data are used, not only collected. Also, the government needs to ensure data are accurate and provide data timely. The 2030 Agenda can only be achieved if we have collective actions by the whole of society approach including civil society, the private sector, and Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises as well as trade labor unions at all levels.

It's important to have stronger local resource mobilization. I think Bangladesh is probably by 12.1% of domestic resource mobilization. It should raise at least 18%. Having more private investment is extremely important to reach the 2030 Agenda. We have to look for alternative instruments. Like Impact financing, green bonds, etc. It's very important to attract the private sector because I think we are still a little bit in the gray zone on how to engage with the private sector. After all, the private sector needs incentives.

I think public financial management is essential for good governance for achieving these goals. On accountability, the government should be accountable to the citizens, but the citizens and these groups are also accountable to the government and it needs also at the local level. How to build trust and inform each other is very important to have a space where you talk to each other. The government and the partners including non-state actors need to do joint assessments regularly against targets in terms of mutual accountability. It's very important to make results publicly available timely.



For achieving the 2030 Agenda, it is not possible without being committed to and implementing the principles of development effectiveness. I would like to repeat that it needs political will at a higher level.



Principal Coordinator (SDG Affairs), Prime Minister's Office national SDG targets at the local level. These 39 indicators are for all districts and one indicator is for districts

Bangladesh has succeeded under the leadership of Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina.

39+1 indicators have been settled to achieve national SDG targets at the local level. These 39 indicators are for all districts and one indicator is for districts (to achieve Leave No One Behind according to the circumstances of a specific district or sub-district, meeting the ground reality of that particular geographical area).

I have been informed that the message on multiple indicator clusters by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS). At least one lagging district has been selected from all eight divisions and in total nine lagging districts are considered under the scope of the SDG localization pilot project.

I am happy to know about various sectors and Upazila-wise priorities have been identified through localization workshops in 9 districts and two pilot Upazilas under this ongoing project. Various sector-wise priorities, problems, and solutions have been identified. Considering local issues, considering all these processes of finalizing the outline of district-wise development going on. I and my joint Secretary, Mr. Mohd. Monirul Islam connected the district SDG localization Workshop in Feni. I was really impressed with the clear, curious, and logical proposals with the participation of local stakeholders. Most local problems are difficult to pinpoint precisely from Dhaka. Realizing usefulness and rationale.

In the last 14 years, under the dynamic leadership of the Prime Minister of Sheikh Hasina, Bangladesh has come a long way in the part of development. Bangabandhu's daughter, the Prime Minister now aspires to build the prosperity of Bangladesh by 2041. I do believe the SDG localization efforts of Bangladesh will help assist this process.

Based on the expert opinion received from today's dialogue and group work findings and different districts and Upazila workshops, we would like to formulate the SDG action plan for implementation of the SDGs at the local. In the next Phase, I believe this experience of the SDG localization will be duplicated in each district and selected Upazila. I wish you the success of the ongoing projects.





MS. Sharifa Khan Secretary, Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance

It needs support from the global community to ensure stability so that we can address challenges. And no one goes into poverty again

To achieve that, in 2030, the government of Bangladesh has worked with all stakeholders at the country and regional levels. We have aligned the SDGs with our five-year national development. We're working with all the stakeholders, particularly CSOs, development partners, international organizations, NGOs, academia, and philanthropy to achieve the localization. Bangladesh had progressed under the leadership of the Prime Minister, but recently we found a big shock caused by the pandemic like other countries. But we could successfully provide vaccines to all people immediately.

We also like to express our heartfelt thanks to our development partners who immediately responded to support on response to the pandemic. After overcoming the pandemic, then the geopolitical crisis is happening. That has a significant impact on other countries including Bangladesh and that has an impact on poverty. I believe domestic action is not enough. It needs support from the global community to ensure stability so that we can address challenges. And no one goes into poverty again. Last 14 or 15 years we had remarkable progress in reducing the poverty from 31%, to currently around 13%. So, we don't want to go back to the previous situation. We would like to continue to make efforts toward the target of poverty at zero level by 2030. Local $\bigcirc \bigcirc$ and global initiatives should be synchronized to achieve the goals.

The four effectiveness principles are always on our agenda and we are focusing on all elements systematically. I noted down a number of issues from the presentations today. Some of the issues were already mentioned but the analysis from the local context. It's very important. It is also important to ensure local community engagement, Including CSOs, NGOs, and local representatives. Also, it is important to ensure access to finance. Supporting marketing at the local level is also a very critical issue. You also mentioned utilization of local resources, promoting local businesses including e-commerce, local planning, information sharing, support for local people and manpower, team building, regular coordination with NGOs, etc.

Results from today's dialogue are really helpful to developing our future course of action to work together with you. We would like to java support from Suzanne and other development partners for our local representative to participate. And we will keep in touch with you so that we can work accordingly.

Workshop on Effective Engagement of the Media for Sustainable Graduation 01 September 2022

Outcome Document

A workshop on 'Effective Engagement of the Media for Sustainable Graduation' was organized on 01 September 2022 at the NEC-II Conference Room of Economic Relations Division (ERD). The Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP) of ERD organized the workshop. ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan graced the event as the chief guest, while Wing Chief of the Development Effectiveness Wing of ERD and the Project Director of SSGP Mr. Farid Aziz chaired the event. Members of the Development Journalist Forum of Bangladesh and journalists from various media houses of the country participated in the workshop. Excerpts from the discussions and recommendations of the workshop are furnished below.



Participants of the workshop

Inaugural Session:

Welcome Speech of Mr. Farid Aziz, Additional Secretary and Project Director, SSGP, ERD:

Mr. Farid Aziz, in his welcome speech, highlighted the background and objectives of organizing the event. Focusing on the importance of media in ensuring social progress-- he termed it as the fourth pillar of the state as well as the mirror of the society. He also expressed his hope that Bangladesh's media would play a positive role in ensuring a smooth and sustainable graduation of the country through objective and in-depth analytical reporting on the relevant issues. Mr. Farid urged the participants of the workshop to provide their thoughtful opinions and recommendations as to how the media can be engaged in the process of sustainable graduation.

Remarks from Mr. Hamid Uz Zaman, President, Development Journalist Forum of Bangladesh (DJFB)

President of the Development Journalist Forum of Bangladesh (DJFB) Mr. Hamid Uz Zaman thanked ERD and SSGP for taking the initiative to organize the workshop. He hoped that the event would play an effective role in creating a better understanding of the graduation paradigm among the media personalities. He also hoped that media representatives would be invited to cover various agreement signing ceremonies and other events of ERD on a regular basis.

Inaugural Speech from the Chief Guest: Ms. Sharifa Khan, Secretary, Economic Relations Division:

Ms. Sharifa Khan, in her remarks, observed that Bangladesh, with her huge economic as well as its strong industrial and export base, offers a unique case among the graduating LDCs. She explained that LDC graduation would offer both challenges and opportunities for the country. In this context, she emphasized on taking appropriate measures for reaping the benefits of graduation. In this context, she sought the cooperation of media in creating a positive perception about LDC graduation among the mass people. She also asked the participants of the workshop to provide their insightful opinions and feedbacks on how to take the LDC graduation agenda to wider sections of the society.

Keynote Presentations

<u>Presentation on 'An overview of LDC Graduation: Bangladesh Perspectives' by Dr. Md. Rezaul Bashar</u> <u>Siddique, Component Manager, SSGP:</u>

In the beginning of his presentation, Dr. Md. Rezaul Bashar Siddique, explained, in detail, the background and process of LDC graduation. Later, he reflected on Bangladesh's LDC graduation journey. He explained that Bangladesh, in current trend, is expected to graduate from the LDC category in 2026. Dr. Siddique, in his presentation, provided a detailed overview of the multifarious benefits and challenges posed by LDC graduation. Lastly, he observed that Bangladesh would need to (a) take advantage of its status as an LDC over the next four years; (b) strive to secure a new set of ISMs as a graduating LDC; and (c) take adequate preparation towards Sustainable Graduation by undertaking the needed homework and by implementing the LDC graduation strategy.

<u>Presentation on 'Measures Undertaken by the Government for smooth and sustainable graduation'</u> by Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain, Component Manager, SSGP:

Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain, in his presentation, provided an overview of the national consultative framework devised for preparing the country for smooth and sustainable graduation. He reflected on the roles of the seven thematic subcommittees formed under the national committee on graduation. Mr. Hossain explained the process that the government would follow in preparing the Smooth Transition Strategy (STS). He highlighted on the roadmap and action matrix developed for formulating the STS. He presented the broad areas that would be covered in the planned STS. Lastly, he focused on the priorities for sustainable graduation as well as the next course of action.

Breakout Session

At this stage, the participants of the workshop were divided into three groups. They were asked to identify some key recommendations and prepare group presentations based on the following key questions:

- > How media can support in the awareness program for sustainable graduation
- What measures the government may undertake to engage stakeholders at:
 - grassroots level
 - thinktank, academia, CSOs
 - private sector

Recommendations from Group Presentations

The following major points of recommendations came from the participants through their group presentations:

Engagement of Media:

- Media should provide objective reporting on both the opportunities and challenges posed by the LDC graduation;
- The government should provide regular update on LDC graduation related issues to the media through SSGP and/or other relevant government entities. A senior official from ERD should be designated as a spokesperson;
- A subcommittee could be formed involving the media personalities who would be regularly covering the LDC graduation issues;
- > Training programs for local journalists in collaboration with DJFB could be organized;
- Publishing or broadcasting news items, supplements, TVCs and documentaries on electronic and print media;
- > Offering fellowship programs on LDC graduation and relevant issues for journalists;
- Arranging regular visits for journalists/ media representatives at various development projects;
- Regular and intense consultations on graduation related issues with the high-level media personnel (i.e.- editors or equivalent);
- Media representatives should be incorporated as members of various graduation related national committee and subcommittees;
- Providing regular update on LDC graduation related issues through online and digital platforms like websites and social media; and
- Creating a knowledge hub through accumulating LDC graduation related books, journals, articles, research papers, media reports, multimedia items etc.

At the Grassroot Level:

- Devising and carrying out diversified modes of campaigning programs for the local level stakeholders regularly;
- Holding regular consultation with the local administration, public representatives and media;
- Incorporating the LDC graduation issue into the primary and higher secondary curriculum; and
- Devising a demand driven publicity scheme through involving the younger generation in various publicity schemes in collaboration with DJFB.

Think Tank, Academia, CSO:

- Think tanks should carry out in depth research on the multifarious impacts of LDC graduation and should make them public;
- Think tanks should also provide their feedback and recommendations on government policies and strategies regarding smooth and sustainable graduation;
- Organizing inclusive workshops, seminars and symposiums with participation of stakeholders and involving the media platforms (i.e.- DJFB);
- Think tanks should also be involved in raising the common concerns of LDCs at the global level (i.e.- advocating for the continuation of international support measures for the LDCs); and
- Incorporating representatives from think tanks as members of various sub committees.

Private Sector:

- Media should carry out in depth reporting on potential impact of LDC graduation on private sector as well as the implications of relevant government policies while identifying the areas for reforms and improvement;
- Following an inclusive and participatory approach while ensuring the representation of private sector in LDC graduation related consultations;
- Regular consultation with sectoral business chambers and district-level business chambers. National and local level media should also be involved in such local consultations;
- Arranging tripartite collaboration between government, private sector and the media to raise awareness about the graduation related issues at the local level;
- > Collaborating with the media in identifying new areas of potential impacts of graduation;
- Awareness building about the impacts of LDC graduation among the local business chambers and trade bodies through the national level business chambers;
- Providing private sector with effective incentives for product and market diversification to reap the benefits of LDC graduation; and
- Ensuring active participation of the private sector representatives in LDC gradation related international events and trade negotiations.

Concluding Session

Ms. Sharifa Khan, in her concluding speech, stated that ERD with support from SSGP, would continue to organize stakeholder consultations on various LDC graduation related issues. She also said that senior level representatives from media entities would be regularly invited in such consultations. She observed that think tanks should carry out more in-depth research on LDC graduation relates issues. She called for an active role of media in motivating the think tanks in engaging in such tasks. Underscoring the need for diversification of awareness materials on LDC graduation—she said that relevant video tutorials could be prepared explaining the LDC graduation issues which could later be shared on social media platforms for necessary public sensitization.

The chair of the workshop Mr. Farid Aziz, in his concluding remarks, thanked all the participants of the workshop for their active engagement. He also observed that the recommendations coming from the workshop would be very useful for SSGP in reaching out to a wider array of stakeholders. Lastly, he concluded the workshop by thanking all who were involved in organizing the event.

Workshop on Augmenting Competitiveness by Improving Trade Facilitation 14 September 2022 NEC Conference Room, Planning Commission, Dhaka

OUTCOME DOCUMENT

Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP) of Economic Relations Division (ERD) in collaboration with Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI) organized a workshop on 'Augmenting Competitiveness by Improving Trade Facilitation' on 14 September 2022 at the NEC Conference Room, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka.

Hon'ble Commerce Minister Mr. Tipu Munshi, MP graced the workshop as the Chief Guest. Secretary of the Ministry of Shipping Mr. Md. Mostafa Kamal and the President of MCCI Mr. Md. Saiful Islam attended the event as special guests. ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan chaired the workshop.

Trade facilitation ensures simplification, modernization as well as harmonization of rules, regulations, and procedures relating to trade. It reduces the time and cost of trade transactions, which in turn enhances competitiveness. An improved trade facilitation system is critical for significantly enhancing the overall trade performance.

It has long been observed that Bangladesh needs to undertake all possible trade facilitation measures for augmenting the competitiveness and to overcome the probable negative impacts due to the gradual loss of the Duty Free Quota Free (DFQF) market access after the country's graduation from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category.

It is notable that a comprehensive WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) was concluded at the Ninth WTO Ministerial Conference in 2013 to facilitate global trade. Bangladesh ratified the Agreement in 2016 and TFA became effective in 2017. Bangladesh is now implementing the TFA, which has various flexibilities for LDCs. Under such flexibilities, each LDC has got the opportunity for implementing the TFA in a phased manner. However, such flexibilities will be reduced upon graduation.

In this context, the workshop was organized to discuss that how improved trade facilitation and logistics system can contribute to offsetting the probable impacts due to the loss of the DFQF market access and other International Support Measures (ISMs) after graduation from the LDC category. It also discussed the implications of legal, administrative, and technical/technological matters on trade facilitation measures and suggested necessary reforms thereof.

Senior Customs Specialist of the USAID-funded 'Feed the Future Bangladesh Trade Activity' project Mr. Md. Raich Uddin Khan delivered the keynote presentation of the event.

Member of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) Dr. Abdul Mannan Shikder, Additional Secretary of the Finance Division Dr. Md. Khairuzzaman Mozumder, Director of BGMEA

Mr. Asif Ashraf and Chairman of the Policy Exchange of Bangladesh Dr. M. Masrur Reaz spoke during the event. Stakeholders from the public and private sectors as well as research organizations participated in the workshop.

Mr. Farid Aziz, Additional Secretary of ERD and Project Director of SSGP delivered the welcome address of the event.

Recommendations

Regulatory reforms and enhanced coordination

- Speedy and effective rolling out of the 'single window' scheme would facilitate necessary coordination among the relevant agencies while helping to expedite the whole procedure.
- Interoperability is essential among 39 agencies that are involved in trade-related procedures for cross-border trade. Key agency identification is also important.
- Streamlining of the processes and documentation must be given priority.
- > Regulatory barriers for engaging third party logistical firms should also be removed.
- Small and medium enterprises should be given special care so that they can reap the benefits of improved trade facilitation measures.
- Import General Manifest (IGM) scheme should be introduced and the relevant private sector entities should be encouraged to adopt this scheme.
- Many important issues relating to transportation, port facilities, and trade logistics remain outside the scope of the TFA. Improvements in these areas (TFA+) are also necessary to enhance trade competitiveness, export growth, and diversification as well as to attract more investment.
- Development partners should be encouraged to provide technical support for improving trade facilitation measures. ERD, as the nodal agency for dealing with the development partners (DPs), would continue to play vital role in this regard. Already, a number of projects are being implemented with support from the DPs for bringing necessary regulatory reforms and to build necessary infrastructure for facilitating the trade, while a number of such projects are also in the pipeline.
- > A holistic approach should be followed in the automation of customs procedure.
- National Board of Revenue (NBR) has already been working to brand itself as a business-friendly entity. However, much more should be done to promote it as a business-friendly agency to the private sector.
- The existing process of license renewal is quite a time consuming and cumbersome. In this context, the tenure of a trade license should be increased to five years to lessen the hassle for the private sector entities.

Implementation of the WTO TFA measures

> Elimination of redundant process and documents (available electronically) in trade.

- Implementation of pre-arrival processing including penalty provision for late filing should be introduced to expedite the release of imported goods.
- Activation of Green Channel for low risk as well as Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) cargo.
- Implementation of Automated Risk Management System supported by AEO and Post Clearance Audit (PCA) program.
- > Other Government Agencies (OGAs) are to implement risk management principle.
- > Automation of manual processes of customs and port.
- > Other border agencies should implement e-payment.
- Streamlining of the cargo examination process.

Transport Connectivity

- > Multimodal and integrated transport strategy need to be developed.
- Capacity and quality of highways need to be improved. Currently, roads are inefficiently operated while congestions and delays are frequent. Inland waterways are not properly maintained.
- Accessing the waterways from Dhaka city is quite cumbersome. Railways are also underutilized as there is only one rail-based Inland Container Depot (ICD).

Port and Land Ports

- Bangladesh should look at attracting foreign investment in port management and operations. Relevant regulatory provisions should also be eased accordingly to attract foreign direct investment in this sector.
- The efficiency and capacity of Chattogram port should be enhanced on priority basis. At present, there is no warehouse facility for perishable and temperature sensitive goods (except plug in facility for refrigerated container). Port should be accessible for mother vessels.
- > Warehousing, parking and other facilities at Benapole and port must be enhanced.
- > Cold chain facility should be developed at major ports.
- Potential of Mongla port must be fully realized.
- > More cargo handling equipment for land ports
- > Capacity development for Container based import through land ports.
- > Developing a national strategy to increase logistical efficiency.

Private ICD

- New ICDs are to be established to meet the increasing demand as the export volume is growing at a rate of 15% or more.
- > A rail-based ICD with higher capacity may reduce the costs of export.

Aviation

- Biman Bangladesh Airlines should be equipped with adequate cargo handling equipment.
- Allocation of more spaces at courier and cargo unit at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

Miscellaneous

- Implementation of measures related to advance ruling (i.e.- HS classification) needs to be geared up.
- > Tariff rationalization is an important prerequisite for trade facilitation.
- > The provision of minimum import price should be abolished.
- > Bangladesh Bank should work to regularly update its import data.
- At present, farmers are being compelled to bear higher production cost due to lengthy and cumbersome customs procedure followed during the import of raw materials for agro-chemicals. In this context, One Stop Service (OSS) scheme should be introduced for agrochemical producers of the country.

Conclusion

The workshop has resulted in increased awareness and understanding of the existing trade facilitation and trade logistics situation in Bangladesh. It came up with a number of valuable recommendations for strategies and actions for faster implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and improving trade logistics in order to enhance the overall trade performance. It also provided a number of effective recommendations for formulating strategies and actions for utilizing trade facilitation and logistics system to overcome the probable challenges due to the loss of the DFQF market access and other ISMs after the graduation from the LDC category.







Workshop on Man-Made Fiber for Moving up the Value Chain of RMG in the Context of LDC Graduation

Jointly organized by the Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP), ERD and BGMEA

Tuesday 04 October 2022

Man-Made Fiber for Moving up the Value Chain of RMG in the Context of LDC Graduation

Outcome Document

A workshop on 'Man-Made Fiber for Moving up the Value Chain of RMG in the Context of LDC Graduation' was jointly organized by the Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP) of Economic Relations Division (ERD) and Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) at the NEC Conference Room, Planning Commission, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka on 04 October 2022.

Hon'ble Planning Minister Mr. M. A. Mannan, MP graced the event as the chief guest. Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce Mr. Noor Md. Mahbubul Haq and the President of BGMEA Mr. Faruque Hassan attended the workshop as special guests. ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan chaired the workshop.

Bangladesh's ready-made apparel has made a strong footprint in the global market and emerged as the second largest exporter in the world after China. However, the country would lose all the LDC-specific ISMs, including preferential Rules of Origin (RoO) and Duty-Free and Quota-Free (DFQF) market access soon after the graduation from the LDC category in 2026-- except the Everything But Arms (EBA) scheme of the EU-GSP, which will end in 2029.

Since Bangladesh could make maximum utilization of the DFQF facilities, the loss of such facilities after graduation may create some challenges for our exports, particularly the RMG as the sector alone contributes around 83 percent of our total exports.

Meanwhile, the rapid shift in the global apparel market from cotton to non-cotton based Man-Made Fibre (MMF) may thwart the potential growth of the Bangladesh RMG sector as currently, the overwhelming portion of our RMG exports are still cotton-based. In this context, expanding the production base of non-cotton yarn and fabric, and manufacturing garment items with it has enormous potential for Bangladesh to grab a larger share of the global apparel market. It will also give an extra edge in qualifying for the stringent RoO after graduation.

In this context, the SSGP Project of ERD and the BGMEA jointly organized this workshop to analyze the current situation of MMF usage in the RMG sector of Bangladesh and to discuss how increased use of MMF could help the RMG sector diversify as well as produce high-value-added products.

Chairman of Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID) Dr. M A Razzaque delivered the keynote presentation of the event while Director of BGMEA Mr. Asif Ashraf delivered a presentation on 'Challenges in Production and Use of MMF in RMG and Expectations of the Private Sector.

Executive Director of Bangladesh Bank Mr. Kazi Rafiqul Hassan, Executive President of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) Mr. Mohammad Hatem and Director of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) Mr. Syed Nurul Islam spoke during the event as panelists.

Mr. Farid Aziz, Additional Secretary of ERD and Project Director of SSGP delivered the welcome address of the event. Representatives from the public and private sectors as well as research organizations participated in the workshop.

Tapping the potentials of Man-made Fibre (MMF)

- Bangladesh needs to grab the potential of MMF by expanding its market in the global MMFbased RMG segment while maintaining the current growth in cotton-based apparel to increase our global market share;
- Special policy incentives should be provided to attract more investments in non-cotton textiles and RMG industries;
- Given the burgeoning demand for non-cotton apparel, MMF should be considered the most important thrust sector in all relevant policies of the Government of Bangladesh;
- Providing 10 percent incentives for the initial 5 years on fabrics manufactured from imported MMF yarn and for the next five years on manufactured fabrics from MMF yarn may be considered;
- Bangladesh should pursue to attract foreign investment in MMF textile and apparel sectors;
- Bangladesh should try to turn itself into a regional MMF supply hub;
- Special scheme to promote FDI or Joint Venture, particularly in non-cotton textiles and fabric which will help the country in meeting Double transformation criteria for Rules of Origin in the post-LDC era;
- Improved infrastructure and logistic services (customs, bond, port, etc.) for import of raw materials needed for non-cotton production;
- Tax benefits or incentives should be provided to set up non-cotton yarn and fabric textile plants in economic zones;
- Special budget allocation should be provided for research, development and innovation to explore the potentials of fiber made from indigenous materials like bamboo, jute, cane, and other vegetable fiber, etc.; and
- All sorts of duties on the import of MMF or relevant raw materials may be waived to promote the use of man-made fiber in local RMG industries.

Augmenting the Growth and Diversification of RMG

- Bangladesh should look to take advantage of the falling share of China in the global apparel market;
- Bangladesh should make the most of the LDC privileges for the remaining few years;
- EU is currently working on a new GSP regime. As per the draft proposition of this new GSP regime-- Bangladesh may not get GSP-plus facilities for its RMG exports beyond 2029. Meanwhile, the Rules of Origin (RoO) related flexibilities may not be available under the new Developing Countries Trading Scheme (DCTS) of the United Kingdom. Bangladesh should closely monitor such development in the major markets of Bangladesh's RMG export while negotiating the continuation of International Support Measures (ISMs) beyond graduation;
- Compliance and ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) factors will influence the future export performance of the country. Issues of environmental protection, decent working conditions as well as sustainable production and consumption should be addressed for negotiating the continuation of international support measures with the importing countries;
- Spinning mills should be provided with adequate incentives including access to low-interestrate loans;
- BTMA, as the mother organization, should be involved in policy consultations concerning the textile and apparel industry;
- Productivity of the RMG sector should be increased to enhance the competitiveness of the local apparel industries;
- The increased focus should be given to trade facilitation and other measures for cost reduction to increase the competitiveness of RMG in the global market;
- The loss of efficiency due to trade-related logistics should receive increased focus to enhance the competitiveness of the RMG sector from the domestic front;
- RMG sector should explore the untapped markets of the Middle East as part of its market diversification efforts;
- Lead certified RMGs of Bangladesh should take measures to qualify for the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) to be introduced by the EU in 2023;
- Measures should be taken to diversify the products within the RMG sector as only five types of products comprise 69 percent of Bangladesh's total RMG export;
- Capacity building, awareness creation and appropriate branding should be taken into account for furthering the growth of the local RMG export;
- The competitiveness of local spinning industries should be increased to augment the growth of the local RMG sector. Increased investment is also required in yarn and fabric manufacturing.

Policy Support and Coordination

- There should be a level playing field in providing incentives to ensure fairness among various sectors and sub-sectors;
- Rationalization and repackaging of incentives are required to make sure that the areas which are lagging receive the required support;
- Recommendations coming from the workshop could be incorporated into the national tariff policy currently being formulated by Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission;
- NBR should work to simplify the customs procedure and accelerate the process of consignment clearance;
- Necessary measures should be taken to accelerate the process of installing scanner machines at the Chittagong port for the fast release of the goods;
- Subsidies should be provided on incremental exports to augment the export growth and accelerate competitiveness within the RMG sector;
- Bangladesh needs to invest more in backward linkage industries related to RMG to compete with other major players like Vietnam in the coming years;
- Necessary analysis should be carried out to chalk out ways and means for the continuation of various incentives beyond the country's LDC graduation;
- Policy support including easier access to finance would be required for necessary technological upgradation for the required transformation in the textile and apparel sector;
- Bangladesh Bank would work closely with the Ministry of Commerce to facilitate the continued growth of the textile and RMG sector.

Outcome of the workshop

- The workshop has resulted in an increased understanding of the current situation and the potential for enhanced use of MMF in the RMG sector of Bangladesh. The event was successful in getting stakeholders on the same page to undertake a holistic approach to addressing MMF-related issues.
- Both the private sector and the government committed to working together to tap the
 potential market of the non-cotton-based garment along with continuing the current growth
 of nature-based production. A strong backward linkage has to be developed soon to exploit
 the opportunity of the fast-growing MMF market and all stakeholders offered to support and
 work collaboratively to this end.

Outcome Document

Workshop on Bangladesh Patent Act 2022: Addressing Public Health Organized by the Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP), ERD

A workshop titled **"Bangladesh Patent Act 2022: Addressing Public Health"** was organized by the Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP) of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) on 19 September 2022. Dr. Ahmad Kaikaus, Principal Secretary to the Honorable Prime Minister graced the workshop as the Chief Guest. Ms. Zakia Sultana, Secretary, Ministry of Industries and Mr. Nazmul Hassan, MP, President, Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceutical Industry (BAPI) attended the event as special guests. Secretary, ERD Ms. Sharifa Khan chaired the workshop.

The workshop was started with the welcome remarks by Mr. Farid Aziz, Additional Secretary, Economic Relations Division (ERD) and Project Director, SSGP. He welcomed all to the workshop and expressed hope for the success of the event. He also expressed his thanks and gratitude to the Chief Guest and other dignitaries for their kind presence despite their very busy schedules.

Thereafter, Khondoker Mostafizur Rahman NDC, Registrar, Department of Patent, Design and Trademark (DPDT) made a presentation highlighting salient features of the Bangladesh Patent Law, 2022. After the presentation of the Registrar, DPDT, a presentation was made by a three-member team from the Third World Network (TWN). The presentation highlighted the major public health-related flexibilities available under the TRIPS Agreement of the WTO. They also indicated how the Bangladesh Patent Law, 2022 could be made more pro-public health-oriented and how the Law could avail TRIPS flexibilities with necessary adjustments.

After the TWN presentation, an open floor discussion took place under the moderation of the ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan. Some participants both from the public and private sectors, including BAPI President Mr. Nazmul Hassan, MP took part in the discussions. Participants opined that many of the public health-related flexibilities of the TRIPS Agreement can be considered for incorporation in the patent law of Bangladesh.

At the closing part of the event, two special guests Mr. Nazmul Hassan, MP, President, BAPI and Ms. Zakia Sultana, Secretary, Ministry of Industries delivered their speeches. Finally, the Chief Guest Dr. Ahmad Kaikaus, Principal Secretary to the Honorable Prime Minister delivered his speech. The Chief Guest advised the Ministry of Industries to prepare the proposal for necessary adjustments to the Law in consultation with relevant stakeholders as

well as considering the suggestions put forward by the participants of the workshop. He thanked, among others, the SSGP, ERD for organizing such a timely workshop.

The workshop ended with the concluding remarks from the Chair Ms. Sharifa Khan, Secretary ERD. She thanked all for their presence and active participation in the workshop. She also expresses her sincere gratitude to the Chief guest for his kind presence and guidance for the next course of action.







Outcome of the Seminar on 'Preparedness of Pharmaceutical Sector for LDC Graduation' 10 August 2022 NEC Conference Room, Dhaka

A seminar on 'Preparedness of Pharmaceutical Sector for LDC Graduation' was held on 10 August 2022 at the NEC Conference Room of Dhaka. Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP) of Economic Relations Division (ERD) and Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) jointly organized the seminar.

Hon'ble Adviser to the Prime Minister on Private Industry and Investment Mr. Salman F. Rahman graced the event as the Chief Guest. Secretary of the Ministry of Industries Ms. Zakia Sultana, the Chairperson of BUILD Barrister Nihad Kabir and the President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) Mr. Rizwan Rahman attended the event as special guests. ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan chaired the seminar.

The flourishing pharmaceutical sector of Bangladesh has witnessed exponential growth over the last few decades. The TRIPS waiver for least developed countries (LDCs) under the WTO-TRIPS agreement is one of the key drivers of such impressive growth. The industry has strong potential to accelerate its growth and create a bold footprint in the global market. Appropriate measures following an action-oriented roadmap are critical to tapping these opportunities and shielding against the erosion of waivers under the TRIPS agreement in the wake of the LDC graduation of Bangladesh in November 2026. In this context, the seminar was organized to take stock of the initiatives and preparedness that are planned and already underway to address the challenges of the loss of TRIPS waivers.

Senior Vice President of Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceutical Industries (BAPI) & Managing Director ofIncepta Pharmaceuticals Ltd. Mr. Abdul Muktadir delivered a presentation on 'Opportunities and Challenges of Pharmaceutical Sector in the context of LDC Graduation: Way Forward' during the event. Professor of Law Department of the University of Dhaka Dr Mohammad Towhidul Islam delivered a presentation on 'LDC Graduation: Legal Implications for Pharmaceutical Industry'.

Additional Secretary of ERD and Project Director of SSGP Mr. Farid Aziz delivered thewelcome address in the event, while Ms. Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO, BUILD gave the vote of thanks on the occasion. Representatives from BAPI, high-level officials of leading pharmaceutical companies as well as key stakeholders across the government, private sector, and think-tank participated in the event.

Major recommendations that came from the seminar are furnished below:

- The Bangladesh Patent Law 2022 should be amended in line with the changing scenario for the local pharmaceutical industry after the country's LDC graduation so that Bangladesh can take advantage of all flexibilities provided under the TRIPS Agreement.
- The government should work in close collaboration with the private sector including the pharmaceuticals sector in amending the current patent law of the country at the earliest possible.









- It should be clearly stated in the patent law that only those patentapplications would be eligible for patent protection that have a priority date on or after 24 November 2026.
- The issue of 'affordability and public health' should be taken into consideration while granting a patent under the patent law of the country and this kind of provisionshould be incorporated in the law.
- Bangladesh needs to enhance its legal expertise for effective formulation and implementation of the intellectual property rights related provisions including the patent law.Since the development of local legal expertise would require a time, the country should look to engage international law firms specializing in WTO related rules and regulations in the process on ad hoc basis.
- Bangladesh should negotiatein the WTO for extending the TRIPS transition period relating to pharmaceutical products for Bangladesh until 01 January 2033 even if the country graduates from the LDC status. Ministry of Commerce, through its WTO Cell, should pursue this vigorously.
- Bangladesh shouldlook to engage lobbyist firms in the World Trade Organization (WTO) for the continuation of TRIPS waiver for graduating nations.Bangladesh's PermanentMission in Geneva can provide necessary support in this process.
- The API (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients) Park needs to be operationalized in earnest to reduce Bangladesh's dependency on imported API.
- The API industry will need expert organic synthetic chemists. It is estimated that the API industry would need over 2000 graduates in the next 2 years. Therefore, public and private universities should encourage their students to study organic chemistry.
- Ministry of Industries would take necessary steps to shut down the Mailbox system with immediate effect through an executive order. Existing applications which are still pending in the mailbox must be rejected.
- BAPI needs to prepare a roadmap regarding the patent expiration of individual medicines so that the country can go for market generic as soon as the patent of a particular medicine expires.
- BAPI should also come up with a planned roadmap for the advancement of the local pharmaceutical industry which would also identify the areas where necessary government facilitation would be required.
- The Prime Minister's Office might convene an inter-ministerial meeting to give necessary
 instructions to all concerned in light of the recommendations and observations of this
 seminar.
- An expert committeewould be formed to examinethelist of pharmaceutical products/drugs that have been introduced in last ten years and determine the products that are relevant toour local needs. The list will be continuously updated to include products that will be launched till 2026. The country will register these products in the local market quickly.

Acknowledgment

The Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP) of ERD and Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) express their heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the Hon'ble Chief Guest, Special Guests, Presenters, Panellists and all Participants for their active participation and insightful deliberations in the seminar.









Local Level Stakeholders Consultation on Inclusive, Smooth and Sustainable LDC Graduation

Organized by the Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP), ERD in collaboration with District Administration, Sylhet and The Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Saturday 22 October 2022

Local Level Stakeholders Consultation on Inclusive, Smooth and Sustainable LDC Graduation

Outcome Document

Background:

Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP) of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) organized a workshop on "Local Level Stakeholders Consultation on Inclusive, Smooth and Sustainable LDC Graduation" in collaboration with the district administration of Sylhet as well as the Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industry on 22 October 2022 at the Sylhet Circuit House Conference Room.

ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan graced the occasion as chief guest while the President of the Sylhet Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mr. Tahmin Ahmed attended the event as special guest. Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet Mr. Md. Mozibor Rahman chaired the workshop. Additional Secretary of ERD and the Project Director of SSGP Mr. Farid Aziz delivered the welcome remarks of the event.



ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan speaking during the workshop

The main objectives of the event were:

- to sensitize the local level stakeholders regarding LDC graduation its processes, opportunities and challenges;
- to discuss how the local level stakeholders can be involved in the process of ensuring smooth and sustainable graduation of Bangladesh from the LDC status; and
- to discuss the ways and means to overcome probable challenges and to utilize the opportunities of graduation from the LDC status.

Component Manger of SSGP Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain delivered a presentation on 'Inclusive, Smooth and Sustainable LDC Graduation: Challenges and Way forward' during the workshop. Chief Executive Officer of BUILD Ms. Ferdaus Ara Begum delivered a presentation on Participation of Private Sector and other Stakeholders at Sub-National Levels for Graduation with Momentum: Strategy Going Forward'.

Upazila Chairman of Sylhet Sadar Mr. Alhaj Ashfaque Ahmed, Managing Director of Baraka Power Ltd. Mr. Fahim Ahmed Chowdhury and Associate Professor of the Department of Architecture of Shahjalal Science and Technology University Mr. Subrata Das also spoke during the workshop.

Officials from ERD and SSGP, officials from the district administration as well as representatives from private sector and civil society <u>participated</u> in the workshop.



Participants of the workshop

Major Recommendations:

Taking into consideration the importance of regional participation and contribution in the nation economy during the Post-LDC graduation regime, the workshop pointed out following recommendations (specifically for Sylhet region) to be taken care of:

Incentivizing NRB Investment:

- The government should ensure a welcoming and business-friendly environment for the NRBs to attract investment from the NRBs.
- Measures should be taken to ensure hassle-free travel, immigration and visa processing as well as airport and customs procedures for the NRBs.
- > The process of business registration and land acquisition should also be streamlined to make it easier for the NRBs to start a venture in the country.
- Road shows should be organized in overseas locations with significant NRB community to promote Bangladesh as an attractive investment destination.
- Recently, Bangladesh Bank has made it mandatory for the NRBs to obtain a Bangladeshi national ID card for obtaining CIP status. However, many NRBs might not be in possession of a Bangladeshi national ID card. In this context, the concerned authorities may reconsider this provision.

Implementation of Trade Facilitation Measures:

- Private sector should push for the implementation of trade facilitation measures to enhance its competitiveness. It is estimated that the implementation of Trade Facilitation agreement can reduce the cost of doing business by up to 14 percent.
- The process for acquiring trade license, import and export license, factory establishment license, fire certificate and environmental clearance needs to be simplified and streamlined.

- National Board of Revenue should look to further automate the process of tax, VAT and SD collection to ease the process of tax submission as well as to increase domestic resource mobilization.
- Any regional inequality in terms of the support mechanism needed for private sector needs to be addressed.
- R&D support should also be provided for regulatory simplification for reducing the cost of doing business.

Boosting Agricultural Production and Export

- Enhanced support is required for agriculture related schemes and materials such as fertilizer, irrigation, certification, GAP and modern testing system for increased export of agricultural items from the country.
- Since the Sylhet region experiences heavier rainfall compared to other parts of Bangladesh—local farmers should be encouraged to cultivate crops that are more adaptable to the local climate and ecosystem.
- Innovative technology should be used to boost agricultural production in the region.
- A large portion of Bangladesh's agricultural land is losing its fertility due to over-cultivation. Effective measures should be taken to address this issue with a view to ensure long term food security.
- Packaging and quarantine measures of Bangladesh's agricultural exports (e.g.- vegetables, fishes) need to be improved to gain a greater share of such products in overseas markets.

Effective Utilization of Fallow Lands:

- The government should look to formulate laws encouraging the transformation of fallow lands into arable ones after a certain period.
- NRBs should be provided with financial incentives (including Islamic financing windows) to turn the fallow lands owned by them into arable lands.
- Fallow lands in the Sylhet region can also be used for solar power generation. Financing windows offered through Green Climate Fund (GCF) or Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) can be mobilized for such schemes.
- Water shortage is one of the major causes for the prevalence of fallow lands in Sylhet. Improved access to irrigation and drainage service across the district can help to ease this problem.

Augmenting the Growth of Fisheries:

- The wetland areas of Sylhet including its marshes and swamps (haors) offer immense potentials for the growth of fisheries. Financing windows like the GCF can be mobilized for effective preservation and utilization of such wetland areas.
- Bangladesh should take advantage of the 'Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies' concluded during the recent WTO MC12. It is notable that the reduction in fisheries subsidy resulting from this agreement would be mainly applicable to marine subsidy while aquaculture and inland fisheries are excluded from the scope of this agreement. It is also notable that most of the fishing activities in Bangladesh take place inland.

Tapping the Geographic Advantage:

- Sylhet can be promoted as a transit point among South Asia, South-East Asia and East Asia. The city can be transformed as a regional air hub through utilizing and improving its aviation infrastructure.
- Sylhet can be used as a gateway for increased trade and export with the Seven Sisters region of India.
- Business enterprises from India and Bangladesh may look to form joint venture entities centred in Sylhet—utilizing its geographic proximity to the Seven Sister states of India.
- Bangladeshi products can be promoted in the Seven Sisters states through fair, exposition, exhibition and other promotional events.

Effective Marketing and Promotion of Indigenous Products:

- Export potentials of endemic fruits and vegetables (e.g.- Jaralebu or Citrus Lemon) should be thoroughly utilized through effective branding, packaging and quarantine measures.
- Necessary measures should also be initiated for the GI (Geographical Identification) certification of local products (e.g.- Manipuri Saree).
- Joyeeta Foundation can also play an instrumental role in the marketing and promotion of local handicraft items.

Infrastructure Development and Enhanced Connectivity:

- An 'Export Cargo complex' with dedicated scanner machine, a warehouse for perishable products, packaging facilities & a certification laboratory should be established in the district.
- Roads that have been damaged by the recent flash flood in Sylhet need to be urgently repaired. It is notable that Asian Development Bank (ADB) is providing budget support for the reconstruction of such roads. Meanwhile, a project to construct an 8-lane Dhaka-Sylhet highway has recently been approved by ECNEC.
- Direct road, rail and air routes between Sylhet and Chattogram need to be established to lower the shipment cost of local export items. Cargo service and warehouse facilities should also be operationalized.

Education, Skill Enhancement and Human Resource Development:

- The government should put increased focus on enhancing the quality of tertiary education with a view to enhance the skill and capacity of local human resource.
- A large number of young people from Sylhet are going abroad each year for pursuing higher education—causing a significant draining of money and talent. In this context, overseas universities should be encouraged to open their branches in Sylhet so that local students can obtain overseas degrees without moving abroad.

Better utilization of Tourism Potentials:

- Sylhet has immense potentials in the arena of tourism. However, a diverse range of tourism schemes including natural, historic, cultural and religious tourism should be promoted in unison.
- The capacity of the tourist police needs to be enhanced to ensure the safety of tourists coming to Sylhet.

Regulatory Improvement:

- The One Stop Service scheme currently allows for submission of all the required documents from a single window. However, the scheme should be improved further so that investors can also obtain all the relevant documents from a single window.
- Effective measures should be taken to expand the tax net with a view to lessen the tax burden on the existing taxpayers.

Miscellaneous:

- The local e-commerce sector should take advantage of the e-commerce moratorium which will remain in force until WTO MC13. Although, in case of any delay in MC13, the embargo would be lifted automatically after March 2024.
- Collaboration between industry and academia should also be institutionalized through formal agreements (e.g.- MoU).
- Local female entrepreneurs should be provided with easier access to financing.
- Bangladeshi business entities should look towards the enhancement of productive capacity and the reduction of production cost to offset the loss of various incentives that Bangladesh could offer as an LDC.

Key Policy Recommendations

The workshop has resulted in increased understanding of the local level stakeholders about the graduation process, probable challenges and consequences of the graduation from the LDC status. The event has also come up with several key policy recommendations highlighted below:

- The One Stop Service scheme currently allows for submission of all the required documents from a single window. However, the scheme should be improved further so that investors can also obtain all the relevant documents from a single window.
- Recently, Bangladesh Bank has made it mandatory for the NRBs to obtain a Bangladeshi national ID card for obtaining CIP status. However, many NRBs might not be in possession of a Bangladeshi national ID card. In this context, the concerned authorities may reconsider this provision.
- The government should look to formulate laws encouraging the transformation of fallow lands into arable ones after a certain period. NRBs should be provided with financial incentives (including Islamic financing windows) to turn the fallow lands owned by them into arable lands.
- Export potentials of endemic fruits and vegetables (e.g.- Jaralebu or Citrus Lemon) should be thoroughly utilized through effective branding, packaging and quarantine measures. Necessary measures should also be initiated for the GI (Geographical Identification) certification of local products (e.g.- Manipuri Saree).
- An 'Export Cargo complex' with dedicated scanner machine, a warehouse for perishable products, packaging facilities & a certification laboratory should be established in the district.
- Direct road, rail and air routes between Sylhet and Chattogram need to be established to lower the shipment cost of local export items. Cargo service and warehouse facilities should also be operationalized.





Training of the Trainers (ToT) Program

on

Bangladesh's Graduation from LDC Category

Outcome Document



21- 23 June 2022

Organized by

Support to Sustainable Graduation Project Economic Relations Division Ministry of Finance

In collaboration with Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, Savar

Table of Contents

| SI. No. | Descriptions | Page No. |
|---------|---|----------|
| 1. | Background | 1 |
| | Day 01: | |
| 2. | Welcome remarks by Component Manager, SSGP, ERD and speech of the Chief Guest | 2 |
| 3. | Speech of the Chairperson | 3 |
| 4. | Working session 1: Graduation from Least Development Country (LDC) Category: Bangladesh Perspective | 4 |
| 5. | Feedback from participants | 5 |
| 6. | Working Session 2: Formulation Smooth Transition Strategy (STS) | 6 |
| 7. | Feedback from Participants | 7 |
| | Day 02: | |
| 8. | Feedback Session/Demonstration | 8 |
| 9. | Working session 3: Impacts of LDC Graduation | 9 |
| 10. | Case studies and response | 13 |
| 11. | Working session 4: Strategies for Sustainable Graduation | 16 |
| | Day 03: | |
| 12. | Feedback session | 20 |
| 13. | Working session 5: Sustainable Graduation: Enhancing Productive Capacity | 20 |
| 14. | Working session 6: Graduation Benefits/Opportunities | 27 |
| 15. | Closing Session | 29 |
| | Annexure: Presentations | |
| 16. | Introduction to Graduation from Least Development Country (LDC) Category: Bangladesh Perspective | |
| | ii. Sustainable Graduation: Benefits and Opportunities | |
| | iii. Impact of LDC Graduation and way forward | |
| | iv. Lecture on Strategies for Sustainable Graduation | |
| | v. Sustainable Graduation: Enhancing Productive Capacity | |
| | vi. Formulation of Smooth Transition Strategy (STS) | |
| | | |

Background: A three-day long Training of Trainers (ToT) Program on 'Bangladesh's Graduation from LDC Category' took place at the Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) in Savar from 21 to 23 June 2022. Economic Relations Division (ERD) and BPATC jointly organized this ToT. Officials or trainers from national training institutes like BPATC, Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM), National Academy for Planning and Development (NAPD), Bangladesh Civil Service (Admin.) Academy and ERD participated in the ToT program.



Group Photo of ToT Participants and Relevant Officials



The major objectives of the ToT programme were to:

- (i) develop a group of trainers from renowned national training institutes, like BPATC, BIAM, NAPD, the Bangladesh Civil Service (Admin.) Academy and ERD; and
- (ii) conduct training programmes through trainers developed through this ToT programme to disseminating knowledge and necessary information on the LDC graduation-related issues as well as other development-related issues to the relevant stakeholders, particularly the government officials.

Major discussions, remarks, and feedbacks coming from the three-day long program are furnished below:

Day 01 Inaugural Session

The three-day long program was commenced through a formal inaugural session. Additional Secretary of ERD Mr. Farid Aziz inaugurated the event on behalf of the respected Secretary of ERD Ms. Fatima Yasmin. Member Directing Staff (MDS) of BPATC and Additional Secretary Mr. Abu Momtaz Saaduddin Ahmed chaired the inaugural session. Director (PPR) of BPATC Mr. Hasan Murtaza Masum moderated the session.

Welcome Remarks from Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain, Component Manager 1, SSGP, ERD:

Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain, in his welcome remarks, described the background and objective of the event. He recalled that Bangladesh had made commendable progress in almost all development spheres in recent decades and consequently-- the country had been recommended for graduation from LDC status. He also recalled that to assist the government in making the graduation process smooth and sustainable—ERD had initiated the Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP). Afterward, he explained the main objectives and components of SSGP. Mr. Hossain, also explained that the government officials would play a key role in the formulation of various policies and strategies related to sustainable graduation. In this context, he explained that the ToT program had been organized to enhance the knowledge and capacity of government officials on graduation-related issues.

Speech of the Chief Guest: Mr. Farid Aziz, Wing Chief (Additional Secretary), ERD and Project Director, SSGP:



Mr.Farid Aziz speaking during the inaugural session

Mr. Farid Aziz, in his speech, opined that LDC Graduation would not only offer opportunities but would also invite a bunch of challenges. He also noted that the country had set its targets of achieving the SDGs by 2031, gaining an upper-middle-income status by 2031, and becoming a knowledge-based developed economy by 2041. Against this backdrop, he stressed ensuring that the challenges of graduation do not pose any threat to the country's development trajectory. He also observed that the issue of smooth graduation had become more pertinent in the ongoing context due to the backlash of COVID-19, unprecedented inflation due to the disrupted global supply chain and geopolitical tensions like the Russia and Ukraine war. In this context, he underscored the need for taking every step in a very calculative way so that the country never slips down from its planned development track. He also opined that government officials should take the lead in devising appropriate strategies

and implementation. In this context, he opined that the government officials should have thorough ideas about the graduation process which would be helping them in finding out the most appropriate solutions to the development challenges to be faced by Bangladesh as a non-LDC country.

Recalling that the government is preparing a very comprehensive Smooth Transition Strategy (STS) to avoid any negative consequences of graduation and to navigate the development journey efficiently-- Mr. Aziz said that the government officials would be the front liners in implementing this STS. In this context, he opined that an early understanding of the STS process would help them in discharging their responsibilities successfully. He explained that keeping in line with the above vision-- ERD, with support from BPATC, was conducting the ToT program to prepare a few trainers on LDC graduation from important training institutes in Bangladesh—so that they could train the government officials through different training courses in their respective institutions. In this context, he called upon the training institutes of Bangladesh to include LDC graduation issues in their course curriculum.

Noting that LDC graduation is a new issue for Bangladesh—he said that it might not be possible to cover all the relevant issues in the three-day long course. He expressed his hope that the course content would be further refined with the suggestions and recommendations coming from participants.

He extended his appreciation to the Rector of BPATC and his team for accepting ERD's request to organize this maiden ToT course on LDC graduation. He also extended thanks to the authority of BCS (Admin) Academy, BIAM and NAPD for nominating their officials for this course.



Speech of the Chairperson: Mr. Abu Momtaz Saaduddin Ahmed, Member Directing Staff, BPATC

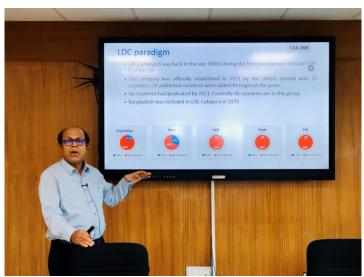
Mr. Abu Momtaz Saaduddin Ahmed speaking during the inaugural session

Mr. Ahmed, in his remarks, termed the ToT program as a critical endeavour that had come at the right time. Noting that LDC graduation is a big milestone in Bangladesh's development journey—he also pointed out that graduation would entail some challenges for the country. In this context, he emphasized formulating appropriate strategies, enhancing competitiveness, as well as developing human and institutional capacities in order to make graduation smooth and sustainable. As a first step, he also underscored the need for making all the stakeholders aware of graduation-related issues, particularly the challenges, to develop inclusive plans and actions.

Against this backdrop, Mr. Ahmed mentioned that ERD, with support from SSGP, had partnered with the BPATC to organize the three-day ToT program to create a pool of trainers from renowned national training institutions such as BPATC, BIAM, NAPD, and BCS (Administration) Academy who could disseminate knowledge and necessary information on graduation-related issues to relevant stakeholders, particularly government officials. He hoped that the initiative would be extremely beneficial to the country's overall preparation for smooth and sustainable graduation. Lastly, he thanked ERD for partnering with BPATC in organizing the ToT program.

Working Session 1: Graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) Category: Bangladesh Perspective

The first working session of the program was themed on 'Graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) Category: Bangladesh Perspective'. Additional Secretary of ERD and Project Director of SSGP was the resource person for the working session.



Mr. Farid Aziz conducting the working session on Graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) Category: Bangladesh Perspective

At the beginning of his presentation, Mr. Farid Aziz provided a background on the formation of the LDC category. He also highlighted the Programs of Action that have been formulated for LDCs over the decades at the global level. He also explained the latest LDC graduation framework as well as the threshold for inclusion into and graduation from the LDC category. He also explained in detail the procedure for graduation from the LDC category. He provided a comparative picture of the graduation status of various countries that are currently in the process of graduating from the LDC category. He explained, in detail, the difference between LDC and 'Middle Income Country' category. He provided a detailed overview of Bangladesh's position in three graduation criteria. Afterwards, he highlighted on Bangladesh's uniqueness among the LDC group as well as the competitive edge the country had in terms of export, finance, consumer market, finance, trading infrastructure etc. Later, he highlighted on the International Support Measures (ISMs) available for LDCs in the areas of trade and development cooperation. He explained the benefits and opportunities that might usher as a result of LDC graduation. He reflected on the flexibilities provided to graduating LDCs during the transition period. While explaining the synergy between LDC graduation, SDG implementation and avoiding Middle Income Trap—he explained the possible causes of the middle-income trap as well as the strategies Bangladesh should follow to avoiding the Middle-Income Trap. In this context, he observed that structural transformation would be the key to avoid the Middle-Income Trap as well as sustaining the graduation momentum. He also underscored the need for smooth and sustainable graduation for achieving SDGs and Vision 2041.

Lastly, Mr. Aziz emphasized the following points for a smooth and sustainable transition:

- A graduating country should prepare in such a way so that LDC graduation doesn't slow down the development momentum.
- The smooth transition is a concept of avoiding negative consequences due to graduation from the LDC category.
- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) calls for integrating a country's preparations for sustainable graduation and its smooth transition beyond graduation into that country's long-term national sustainable development plans and development financing strategies.
- UNGA and experts suggest that the country should prepare a comprehensive Smooth Transition Strategy (STS) through an inclusive process to grab the opportunities and tackle the challenges of graduation efficiently.
- Two main principles should guide the STS process;
 - Country-led, country-owned and using country systems to the extent possible
 - Intl. community support is country-driven, timely and of high quality

In conclusion, Mr. Aziz recalled that Bangladesh had successfully tackled a number of challenges in the past including the phasing out of the quota system in 2005, the Rana Plaza incident and the withdrawal of US GSP in 2013 as well as the COVID-19 crisis in 2020. He also noted that Bangladesh had a history of successfully tackling many natural disasters and economic crises. Against this backdrop, he expressed his optimism that Bangladesh would be able to boldly overcome the graduation-related challenges.

Feedback from Participants:

- Participants observed that higher productivity, innovation, structural transformation and skill enhancement would be crucial to avoiding the middle-income country trap.
- Citing the example of China, it was recalled that the Chinese government had put a lot of emphasis on vocational education for skill enhancement of its workforce. In this context, it was queried whether the Government of Bangladesh had initiated any similar approach. Responding to this query—Mr. Farid Aziz recalled that Bangladesh Technical Education Board had been bestowed with the responsibility to enhance the quality of technical education in the country. He also recalled that the Subcommittee on Investment, Domestic Market and Export Diversification led by the Prime Minister's Office—which is one of the seven subcommittees that had been formed under the National Committee on Graduation, is responsible for suggesting strategy for managerial and other skills enhancement as well as labour productivity to address LDC graduation challenges.
- It was informed that the government had already taken the initiative to incorporate technical education into the curriculum of Class 08, 09 and 10. Under this arrangement, the students would simultaneously receive one certificate for their general education and another one for their vocational education upon passing their SSC examination. It was also informed that the government had been planning to roll out this program initially at a total of 907 schools across the country.

- Participants observed that to move up from the lower middle-income status to the higher middle-income status—Bangladesh would need to change the mode of production of its export items and would require a shift in terms of both origin and scales. They also called for making small and medium enterprises as well as start-ups a part of this transformation.
- Citing the example of other countries—participants informed that South Korea offers its citizens the scope for pursuing higher studies in technical and vocational education.
- Participants also queried how the private sector is being engaged in the overall process of sustainable graduation. In response, it was informed that the private sector bodies are well represented in the National Committee on Graduation as well as the Joint Task Team that had been formed under the Subcommittee on STS. It was also informed that private sector bodies were also taking part in regular dialogues with the government on issues related to LDC graduation through various seminars, workshops and Focused Group Discussions organized by the private sector.

Working Session 2: Formulating Smooth Transition Strategy (STS)

The second working session focused on the modality that Bangladesh is following in the formulation of the Smooth Transition Strategy to prepare the country for LDC graduation. Component Manager of SSGP Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain was the resource person of the session.



Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain conducting the working session on Formulating Smooth Transition Strategy (STS)

Mr. Anwar Hossain, in the beginning of his presentation, explained the context of formulating this STS. He also cited various international reference documents which had provided a guideline for formulating this STS. Later, he highlighted on the key initiatives that had been taken by Bangladesh to ensure smooth and sustainable graduation. While explaining the key features of STS that the government is planning to formulate, he first described the guiding principles of the proposed STS. He also explained the consultative mechanism that had been designed for preparing the Smooth Transition Strategy. In this connection, he highlighted the six Service Offering Lines (SOLs) that were offered by CDP under its Sustainable Graduation Support Facility (SGSF). Afterward, he explained, in detail, the key steps that would be followed during the formulation of STS. Later, he highlighted the broad outline and structure of the aforementioned strategy. He also reflected on the mapping exercise

that had been carried out to identify the sources of information for STS. Later, he explained the timebound action plan that had been developed for formulating the STS. Lastly, he highlighted on the steps that had been taken so far for the formulation of STS.

Feedback from Participants:

- Focusing on the need for skill enhancement in the context of LDC graduation-- it was queried what impact the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) could have on Bangladesh's strategies to enhance the skill of its workforce. Responding to this, Mr. Anwar Hossain observed that 4IR would open new avenues for job creation. He also observed that the local workforce would need to be prepared in line with those new avenues.
- Participants also queried whether the STS would be aligned with the Five-Year Plans of Perspective Plans of the country. In response, SSGP officials said that while the Five-Year Plans or Perspective Plans are mostly driven by some mid- and long-term goals and aspirations, STS would be driven by the need to meet the challenges and exploit the opportunities arising from LDC graduation.
- Participants also suggested formulating a mechanism similar to the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) to track and monitor the progress of the implementation of STS.
- Participants also suggested involving the Local Consultative Groups (LCG) in the formulation of STS to ensure better engagement of relevant stakeholders including development partners.
- It was queried how LDC graduation would result in an increased flow of FDI into the country. In response, Mr. Anwar Hossain said that LDC graduation would enhance the country's image abroad while it would be a testimony to the country's strong socio-economic progress. He said that these factors would help the country to become more attractive to foreign investors.
- Participants observed that government organizations should become much more businessfriendly and should play the role of facilitators when it comes to business and trade. They also called for enhancing the capacity of SMEs, bringing them to the economic mainstream, providing them with better access to market and finance while also bringing them under the tax net.
- Underlining the importance of enhancing the quality of education for skill enhancement across the board—it was also observed that there is an urgent need to uplift the quality of education in schools and colleges at the grass-root level.
- Noting that the share of the social safety net in the country's GDP is still hovering around 2 to 3 percent— the participants also called for proportionately increasing the budget allocation for social safety net programs.

Day 02 Feedback Session/ Demonstration:

The second day of the ToT program commenced with a feedback session where participants were asked to provide their feedback on the presentations and discussions coming from the first day. During this session, the following major feedback came from the participants:

- A separate workshop could be organized involving the trainees or officials from the relevant training institutes to design and further improvise the contents and modality of this ToT program.
- The prime concern of this ToT program should be to develop the management or leadership capacity of government officials which could lead to the enhancement of their service delivery within their domain. This, in turn, could help in sustainable graduation-they opined.
- The presentations could be modified according to the need of individual training institutes.
- Training manuals and teaching notes should also be provided.
- In addition to trade-related challenges-- environmental and other development concerns should also be taken into account while analysing the challenges of LDC graduation.
- It was observed that an LDC tracker-- similar to the SDG tracker that had been developed by the PMO, could be useful to track Bangladesh's progress against various LDC graduation-related criteria and sub-criteria. In response, it was informed that there is a component of SSGP to develop an LDC tracker.
- It was also observed that some gap analysis could be carried out to identify sectors or areas which would be affected due to LDC graduation. In response, it was informed that there is a component within SSGP to carry out the relevant policy gap analyses. It was also informed that currently SSGP, under the guidance of NCG, is providing support in carrying out various studies on the impact of LDC graduation through that component.
- Participants also observed that although the global RMG market is growingly tilted towards man-made fiber—Bangladesh's RMG industry is still mostly dependent on cotton fiber. In this context, they observed that the government should provide incentives to the local RMG industry to enable them to adjust better to the global market dynamics.
- Participants also expressed their concerns over the potential impact of the withdrawal of the TRIPS waiver on the local pharmaceutical industry in the aftermath of graduation. In this regard, SSGP officials informed that around 25 percent of pharmaceutical products manufactured by Bangladeshi companies are still patent protected while the rest of the medicines produced by them had already come off-patent. Against this backdrop, it was observed that the LDC graduation might have an impact on the production and pricing of those patent-protected drugs. In this context, they emphasized enhancing the capacity of smaller drug manufacturers while also calling for quick completion of the construction of API (Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients) Parks.
- Participants also opined that the local RMG manufacturers might strategically opt to move some of their production bases to other Least Developed Countries in Africa after Bangladesh's graduation to avail of the same duty benefits they are receiving now.
- It was also observed that instead of remaining dependent on the export of RMG or cheap manpower—Bangladesh should look for export diversification, higher value addition and skill enhancement of its labour force to prepare itself for the post-graduation dynamics.

Working Session 3: Impacts of LDC Graduation

The third working session of the ToT program was themed on 'Impacts of LDC Graduation'. Member (Secretary) of the Planning Commission Ms. Sharifa Khan was the resource person of the session.

Reflecting on the status of LDCs at the global stage, Ms. Sharifa khan, in her presentation, informed that although LDCs comprise 14% of the global population—they together account for only 1.3% of global GDP, 1.4% of global FDI and less than 1% of global merchandising exports. She also pointed out that almost half of the LDCs are landlocked or small island countries, and highly vulnerable to climate changes. She also observed that the policy response of LDCs is limited due to weak fiscal conditions and poor resilience capacity.

Afterward, she highlighted the benefits enjoyed by LDCs under WTO which included the following:

- Unilateral preferential market access in the WTO. Bangladesh enjoys DFQF in 38 countries including 27 EU countries, the UK, Switzerland, Australia, China (97% tariff lines), India (except 25 products)
- 2. Favourable Rules of origin.
- 3. Exempted from undertaking commitments in agriculture and non-agriculture and
- 4. Longer grace period under trade facilitation and technical support for TFA Category C.
- 5. Enjoys waiver from TRIPS obligation and the services waiver.
- 6. Less frequent notification on their domestic support (every 2 years, while annually for other WTO members).
- 7. LDCs can provide certain agricultural export subsidies until 2030.
- 8. Enjoy longer repayment periods for export financing support and can benefit from the monetization of international food aid.
- 9. Particular consideration should be given to the special situation of LDCs in all stages of a dispute involving an LDC.
- 10. Members should exercise due restraint in raising matters involving an LDC.
- 11. LDCs may request the use of the good offices, conciliation and mediation of the Director-General or the Chairman of the Dispute Settlement Body.
- 12. Free legal service from ACWL.
- 13. Technical assistant under EIF and trade facilitation.
- 14. Technology transfer under TRIPS Agreement
- 15. Lower binding coverage and higher bound rates.



Ms. Sharifa Khan conducting the working session on Impacts of LDC Graduation

Subsequently, she reflected on the trade-related international support measures that would be lost due to graduation. These include:

- Loss of preferential Market Access
- Bangladesh will lose DFQF facilities in other countries and RTA partners in 2026 and in 2029 in the EU.
- More than 70% of our export duty-free market access under the WTO decision of granting unilateral duty-free market access to LDCs.
- Undertake tariff reduction commitment under WTO if Doha Round is completed.
- Remove specific duties, regulatory duties and supplementary duties that will lead to more imports and worsen BOP.
- Ineligible to enjoy preferential "Rules of Origin" (RoO). Double transformation or about 40-50% value addition.
- The minimum market loss prediction for Bangladesh is 6.3 billion (WTO). UNCTAD Estimate: 5-7% of preferential export.
- Bangladesh is no more in Annex 7 list of Subsidies Agreement which allows providing some export subsidies under certain conditions

She also provided an overview of LDC-specific preferential market access schemes available in major markets as well as the schemes that would be applicable in those markets after graduation.

Recalling that a country must ratify and effectively implement 27 international conventions on labour rights, human rights, environmental protection and good governance to avail GSP+ after graduation— Ms. Sharifa khan noted that Bangladesh had already ratified all 27 ILO Conventions including the minimum working age convention on 25 February 2022. However, she observed that ensuring the enforcement of the above international conventions would be a challenge. Noting that safeguard measures would be applicable for import share of more than 6 percent for clothing and leather under Article 29 of the new GSP Scheme -- she pointed out that GSP-covered import from Bangladesh is more than 16 percent of all EU GSP-covered imports. In this context, she pointed out that the import of textile and clothing from Bangladesh to the EU might fall under safeguard measures—as such preventing it from getting GSP plus facilities.

Noting that FTA will be the main tool after LDC graduation to cover the loss of GSP—she, however, pointed out that Bangladesh had little experience in signing FTAs. Explaining other challenges of signing FTA for Bangladesh, she highlighted that:

- Patterns of PTA/FTAs are changed. It now covers trade in goods, services and intellectual property rights. It also includes non-trade issues such labour rights, green financing, environment, good governance, government procurement, etc.
- Signing FTA would require a reduction of import duties. This will reduce government revenue of around 29%. Revenue loss with China is Tk. 25,000 crore, Malaysia Tk 3000 crore, Indonesia 137 crore, etc.
- Domestic industries also are not willing to face more competition and reduce duties for the items they produce.
- USA, Sri Lanka, Nepal, MERCOSUR, Malaysia and many of the African countries may not be willing to sign FTA.
- Indonesia offered to grant DFQF for 45 products under PTA which is not meaningful for Bangladesh.

Reflecting on the enforcement of TRIPS agreement, Ms. Sharifa khan recalled that although the WTO TRIPS Agreement came into force in 1996, one year after the establishment of WTO-- LDCs, in view of the special needs and requirements of LDC, their economic, financial and administrative constraints, and their need for flexibility to create a viable technological base, have been granted two transition periods (after three times extension):

- Extension of the general transition period until 01 July 2034.
- TRIPS extension for the pharmaceuticals until 2033.

In this context, she explained that the TRIPS transition period would be over as soon as Bangladesh graduates from the LDC status in 2026.

Reflecting on the current IP situation in Bangladesh, she observed that the existing poor scenario had created health and safety concerns as well as mistrust among the consumers due to the low quality of products and the loss of trust on brands. She also observed that the prevailing situation had generated consumers' dissatisfaction, loss of sales volume, revenue and profit, loss of trust and reputation as well as legal and fiscal liability for businesses. She also pointed out that the existing situation had discouraged innovation while causing a loss of tax revenue. She also mentioned that such scenario had discouraged investment—especially foreign direct investment while hampering the country's image.

Afterward, she explained the impact of termination of both TRIPS general waiver as well as TRIPS pharmaceutical waiver in various arenas. She also provided a comparative picture of the impact of patent protection on the prices of various pharmaceutical products.

Reflecting on the impact of termination of other flexibilities, she informed that

- Bangladesh grants cash incentives of about 6,600 crores for the export of 38 products.
- Cash incentives are prohibited and subsidies have to be removed.

- Supplementary duty, regulatory duty and development surcharge are not WTO consistent. These have to be withdrawn which would have negative impact on revenue earnings.
- Domestic industries will face fierce competition.
- LDCs including Bangladesh receive free legal supports from ACWL which will be no longer available free of cost.
- Technical support under Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) supports will be available after five years of graduation.

Highlighting the ODA-related ISMs, she recalled that Bangladesh's graduation to Lower Middle-Income Country status, as per the World Bank classification back in 2015, had already resulted in reduced concession in the area of aid and grants as well as reduced grace period while increasing the rate of interest on loans.

Focusing on the recently concluded 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) of WTO, Ms. Khan recalled that the LDC Group had made a submission to WTO during the conference for the continuation of special and differential treatments (S&D) after graduation for 6-9 years. However, she also noted that MC12 did not reach any conclusion on this submission apart from just taking note of it.

Lastly, she recommended that the following measures should be taken at the international level to cope with the post-graduation scenario:

- Lobby for getting GSP+ with European Union is important
- Include Bangladesh's name in the Annex 7 list of WTO Subsidies Agreement to continue some subsidies.
- Take initiatives to sign FTAs/PTAs with potential partners.
- Try to take benefits as LDC and also prepare for negotiations with non-LDC developing countries.

At the same time, she suggested that the following measures should be taken at the domestic level to address the post-graduation challenges:

- A Task Force under the chairmanship of Principal Secretary to Hon'ble Prime Minister and seven sub-committees have been formed which would accelerate the pace of the graduation path.
- Prioritization of issues and Branding of Bangladesh and be careful about middle-income trap.
- Strengthening trade negotiation pools.
- Diversification, improved quality & productivity are the most effective strategies in the postgraduation era.
- Removal of para-tariffs (supplementary duties, regulatory duties, AIT, etc).
- Better enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).
- Identify WTO consistent subsidy measures to support entrepreneurs and farmers.

Lastly, she highlighted the following strengths of Bangladesh which would help the country to overcome the potential post-graduation challenges:

- Bangladesh has a strong domestic market.
- People are hardworking and adaptive to technological changes.
- The economy is highly resilient to natural and economic shocks.

- Successfully faced quota phase out in 2005 and financial-food-fuel-fertilizer crisis and global recession in 2008 and Covid-19 Pandemic.
- Bangladesh will courageously overcome graduation challenges

Feedback from Participants:

- Participants queried whether Bangladesh is legally bound to declare or attain a certain level of binding coverage. Responding to this, Ms. Sharifa Khan informed that there is no such compulsion yet from the WTO side. However, she also observed that WTO encourages its members to have a higher binding coverage. She also observed that increasing the binding coverage could also help to bring more transparency to the system.
- Participants also observed that despite the increased emphasis on export diversification--readymade garments industries are receiving stronger policy support compared to other export-oriented sectors. Responding to this observation—Ms. Sharifa Khan said that the government had been asking for the continuation of 'Duty Free Quota Free (DFQF)' facilities for not only RMG but for all products. She also opined that the importance of RMG in Bangladesh's overall trade scenario cannot be overlooked due to the sector's importance in generating mass employment.
- Participants also queried what were the main barriers for Bangladesh in signing FTAs with potential trade partners. Responding to this, Ms. Sharifa khan cited the issue of reciprocity, potential revenue loss, the willingness of trading partners and the resistance from domestic manufacturers as some of the major barriers to the signing of FTAs.

Case Studies:

At these stages, participants were divided into four groups. They were then provided with four different case studies based on various hypothetical scenarios concerning LDC graduation. They were also asked to prepare their responses or feedback to some specific questions based on those case studies. Those case studies and the responses from the participants are documented below:

Case Study 1

Nina is an LDC. UN-CDP's review in 2021 found that its per capita income is US\$ 1,150, Human Assets Index (HAI) is 70 and Economic Vulnerability Index (HAI) is 29. Present graduation threshold is 1,222 per capita GNI, 66 for HAI and 32 for EVI. UN-CDP generally conduct 2nd review after 03 years later and UNGA-recommend for graduation.

Another country Bena qualified in the first and 2nd reviewed respectively in 2018 and 2021. Bena asked for additional transitional period for graduation due to devastating impact of Covid 19 in its economy. Bena already graduated to lower middle-income country by World Bank in 2018 and paying higher interest with lower grace period for the loan taken.

 Do you think Nina is qualified for graduation from the LDC status in UN first review? When the 2nd review would take plan?

Answer: a. Yes: b. No:.... c. Year for 2nd Review: ...<mark>2024</mark>...

2. Bena is recommended for graduation in 2026. Do you think it is acceptable in the context of existing graduation process?

Answer: <mark>a.</mark> Yes:

b. No:

3. Does Bena ask for additional transition period beyond 2026 for its graduation. If your answer is yes then why? If your answer is no, they explain why?

Answer: a. Yes:

b. No:

Explanation: Due to the impact of COVID-19

4. Will Bena raise complain to UNGA for charging higher interest rate for its loan as it is still an LDC?

Answer: No



Group moderators presenting their case studies during the third working session on Impacts of LDC Graduation

Case Study 2

Bena is an LDC. It is now enjoying duty-free and quota-free market access in EPA under Generalized System of Preference designed for LDCs. This has boosted its clothing and leather exports significantly in EPA Union. But it will be graduated from the LDC status in 2026

Vera is a developing country whose productivity is higher and cost of production is lower than Bena. Vera also produces textile and leather. It is a major competitor of Bena. Vera has recently signed a Free Trade Agreement with EPA. As a result, Vera will also enjoy duty free market access from 2025.

- 1. What do you expect the export prospect of Vera and Bena from 2026?
 - A. The export prospect of Bena looks gloomy beyond 2026. Meanwhile, Vera is likely to continue to enjoy export boom due to the signing of FTA with EPA as well as its higher productivity and lower cost of production.
- 2. What course of actions Bena will take under this context?
 - A. Bena should diversify its export base and should negotiate an FTA with EPA. It should also look to increase its productivity and lowering its cost of production.

Case Study 3

Bena is an LDC which enjoys waiver under the World Trade Organization (WTO)'s TRIPS Agreement. As a result, it is exempted from the protection of intellectual property rights until 2033. Utilizing this facility, Bena has developed capacity to produce and export pharmaceutical products and advanced pharmaceutical products (API) at a cheaper price. After the graduation from the LDC status in 2026, this facility will be terminated. The cost of production of pharmaceuticals will increase after graduation as it now has to pay royalties to the patent holders. What Bena will do now and beyond graduation? Write according to your priority list and find which one is not applicable.

- a. Urge WTO for extension of this facility for the newly graduating LDCs.
- b. Formulate or amend trademarks laws and copyright act.
- c. Formulate data protection act.
- d. Develop capacities for production of Advanced Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API).
- e. Ask UNGA to support newly graduating LDCs for patent waiver.

Response:

The priority should be:

- a. Develop capacities for production of Advanced Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API).
- b. Urge WTO for extension of this facility for the newly graduating LDCs
- c. Formulate data protection act.

Case Study 4

Nina is an LDC which will graduate from the LDC status in 2025. Bena now wants to sign Free Trade Agreements with some of its major partners. High level policy makers of Nina asked its Ministry of Commerce to take initiatives for signing Free Trade Agreement to compensate the market loss due to graduation from the LDC status to a number of countries. What will be the major considerations of Nina in selecting FTA partners? Write according to your priority list and find which one is not applicable.

- 1. Export volume of Bena with the proposed partner country.
- 2. Revenue earnings from import duties.

- 3. Complementarity of production
- 4. Substitutability of production.
- 5. Undertake trade facilitation measures.

Response:

The priority should be:

- 1. Undertake trade facilitation measures.
- 2. Substitutability of production.
- 3. Export volume of Bena with the proposed partner country
- 4. Revenue earnings from import duties.
- 5. Complementarity of production

Working Session 4: Strategies for Sustainable Graduation

The fourth working session of the program was themed on 'Strategies for Sustainable Graduation'. Distinguished Fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Professor Dr. Mustafizur Rahman was the resource person of the session.

Professor Mustafizur Rahman, in his presentation, observed that Bangladesh's Dual Graduation is going to take place at a time when the world is becoming increasingly competitive while there is a rise in mega-regionals. He also noted that Bangladesh's Graduation would take place under the shadow of the pandemic as well as the Ukraine-Russia war.

Focusing on the outcome of the recently concluded MC12-- he said that although the conference had indicated that WTO members might take some measures in support of the graduating LDCs-- the ambition had been set at rather low levels. In this context, he said that Bangladesh would need to put more emphasis on its own efforts to navigate the process towards smooth graduation, graduation with momentum and sustainable graduation.

He also observed that although Bangladesh had made a crucial transition from a predominantly aiddriven economy to a trading economy-- the task before Bangladesh would be to move for the next transition from market access-driven competitiveness to skills and productivity-driven competitiveness through triangulation of trade, investment and transport-logistics connectivity.

Pointing out that Bangladesh will be the first major LDC to graduate-- he said that Bangladesh would be a test case for graduation. Noting that going forward, Bangladesh would need to be guided by three identities namely: an LDC, a graduating LDC and a future developing country—he observed that Bangladesh would need to

(a) take advantage of its status as an LDC over the next four years;

(b) strive to secure a new set of ISMs as a graduating LDC; and

(c) take adequate preparation towards Sustainable Graduation by undertaking the needed homework and by implementing the LDC graduation strategy.



Professor Mustafizur Rahman conducting the working session on Strategies for Sustainable Graduation

Dr. Rahman explained that the impacts on Bangladesh would be felt at both domestic space and global space—which would likely concern four areas: (a) policy-making and policy flexibilities; (b) obligations, compliance and enforcement relating to various WTO Agreements; (c) terms of market access; and (d) degree of reciprocity in dealing with partners.

Dr. Rahman recalled that nothing had been mentioned among the decisions of the MC12 with regard to a concrete timeline for extension of ISMs for graduating LDCs. He also recalled that there was only a recognition of the challenges faced by the graduating LDCs and the need to take supportive actions by WTO members to facilitate sustainable graduation. He expressed his hope that if the discussions and negotiations in the WTO Working Groups and relevant platforms result in some agreed measures, then the MC13 could come up with some concrete actions.

Subsequently, he presented some arguments favouring support to graduating LDCs in view of the upcoming MC13:

- The scores for HAI and EVI (which were moving averages earlier) have been fixed in 2012 (at 66 and above and 32 and below) leading to many LDCs being eligible for graduation, even though all graduating LDCs suffer from embedded structural weaknesses. This fact should guide the decisions concerning graduating LDCs
- It is not that WTO does not recognise differentiation among developing countries. For example, the WTO-SCM (subsidies and countervailing measures) Agreement (Annex VIIb) allows for derogation from obligations on grounds of per capita income (US\$1000 in 1990 terms). Also, the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) offers flexibility to net-food importing developing countries (NFIDCs)
- There is precedence in the WTO as regards support to graduating LDCs: Maldives LDC graduation: Deferment of TRIPS implementation by 3 years
- At the least, currently graduating LDCs should be allowed to enjoy the flexibilities that are already in place, for a time-bound period (e.g., TRIPS patent waiver till 2032; GATS Services Waiver till 2030)

He identified the following elements of a possible Graduation Support Package:

• Extend S&DTs for a time-bound period

- Urge countries to provide preferential market access to LDCs on bilateral basis (EU, India, China, Japan, USA, Canada and others) or as part of regional agreements (e.g., India in SAFTA), to extend the preferences for a time-bound period
- **Design a Debt Relief Initiative** for graduating LDCs to incentivize graduation and release funds to undertake activities in support of sustainable graduation
- Put in place a Graduation Support Fund
- Support the proposal floated to provide preferential access to the extent of Domestic Value Addition in graduating LDCs
- Embed concerns of graduating LDCs in ongoing negotiations where decisions may be taken at MC13, keeping in the purview the perspectives as both graduating LDC and future (non-LDC) developing country

Dr. Rahman also noted that some support measures are already in place within the ambit of the WTO (e.g.- EIF, Technology Bank) which extend support to LDCs following their graduation. He explained that these allow LDCs to enjoy benefits for additional periods (for an additional five years in both the aforesaid cases, following graduation). He said that Bangladesh would need to take full advantage of these built-in measures.

Lastly, he identified the following key areas that need to be addressed for ensuring smooth and sustainable graduation:

- Middle-income graduation and avoiding the Middle-Income Trap
- Raising productivity and competitiveness through triangulation of trade, investment and transport connectivities
- Renewed emphasis on regional cooperation
- Ensuring inclusive Dual Graduation
- Build the Required Negotiating Capacity

Feedback from Participants:

- Reflecting on the areas of LDC graduation impacts in terms of policy space—it was observed that the domestic space often does not receive enough attention despite that being much more within the control of the national policymakers. Responding to this observation, Dr. Mustafizur Rahman said that external factors are also important as it would involve effective negotiations with trading partners as well as enhancement of negotiation skills.
- Participants asked about the prospect of the new development banks from a development financing perspective. Responding to this, Dr. Rahman said that moving forward-- Bangladesh should look to the diversification of its sources when it comes to development financing. Accordingly, he observed that new development banks like AIIB and BRICS Bank are some of the new sources of development financing that Bangladesh should explore.
- Participants also observed that the think tanks should carry out more in-depth research in the areas of governance or public administration. They also proposed that a separate institute could be established to conduct research and dialogue on the issues pertaining to economic diplomacy. Responding to this observation, Dr. Rahman affirmed that efficient economic management would be very crucial for Bangladesh soon. In this context, he observed that there should be more in-depth research in this arena in the context of Bangladesh.

- It was queried whether the government's planning documents had adequately addressed the LDC graduation-related challenges of Bangladesh. Responding to this, Dr. Rahman said that in terms of LDC graduation-- Bangladesh had already made some good progress in terms of policy awareness and preparation. He also observed that the 8th Five Year Plan had extensively highlighted the LDC graduation-related challenges. However, he emphasized on the effective implementation of those plans and strategies.
- Participants also queried whether sufficient emphasis had been put by the policymakers on other areas of LDC graduation impacts apart from market access. Responding to this, Dr. Rahman affirmed that although the issue of market access is paramount in the context of LDC graduation-- the time had come to focus more on other areas of potential challenge like IPR, trade facilitation, logistics facilitation, etc.

Day 03 Feedback Session:

The third day of the ToT program commenced with a feedback session where participants were asked to provide their feedback on the presentations and discussions coming on the second day. During this session, the following major feedback came from the participants:

- Participants observed that local pharmaceutical industries would be particularly affected after graduation due to the withdrawal of TRIPS-related flexibilities. Against this backdrop, they called for enhancing the research capacity of the local drug manufacturers.
- Responding to this, SSGP officials informed that they had conducted a number of Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) with the pharmaceutical industry representatives including the Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceutical Industries (BAPI) to exchange views on issues pertaining to graduation. They also informed that lately, the government had enacted a new patent law which, they hoped, would streamline the patenting process of homemade medicines.
- Participants also queried whether Bangladesh would be able to maintain the current level of GNI per capita in the coming years. Responding to this, SSGP officials observed that Bangladesh is expected to not only maintain the current level of GNI per capita—rather the country is expected to reach the Upper Middle-Income threshold by the year 2028. However, they observed that going forward-- the Middle-Income Trap experienced by many of Bangladesh's Asian peers would be major concern. However, they emphasized on encouraging innovation, structural transformation and enhancing productive capacity to avoid this Middle-Income Trap.
- Participants also queried whether LDC graduation would have a negative impact on Bangladesh's manpower export. Responding to this, SSGP officials informed that there is no evident correlation between LDC graduation and manpower export. They further informed that the STS would outline some tactics for enhancing the productive capacity of the people which, in turn, would help the country to gain a better share of the overseas market for highskilled workforce.
- Participants also queried how Bangladesh could address the 'brain drain' issue. Responding to this, SSGP officials said that Non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) could, in the long term, help in the process of transfer of technology, capital and technical know-how. Citing the example of India, they said that the Bangladeshi diaspora could also help in the branding of the country. It was also informed that ERD is providing various technical support to the government in this regard through its NRB cell.

Working Session 5:

Sustainable Graduation: Enhancing Productive Capacity

The fifth working session of the program was themed on 'Sustainable Graduation: Enhancing Productive Capacity'. Mr. Md. Tofazzel Hossain Miah, Senior Secretary, Prime Minister's Office was the resource person for the session.



Mr. Md. Tofazzel Hossain Miah conducting the working session on Sustainable Graduation: Enhancing Productive Capacity

Mr. Md. Tofazzel Hossain Miah, in his presentation, demonstrated the strong linkage between sustainable graduation and the enhancement of productive capacity. He said that productive capacity development can help to:

- diversify production and export bases, thereby reducing vulnerability to external shocks
- benefit more from greater integration into the global economy
- sustain progress in human and social development
- adapt and build resilience to climate change and other exogenous shocks

In line with the definition of UNCTAD, he explained three basic elements of productive capacities. He explained the linkage between productive capacities and structural transformation. Highlighting the eight core elements of the Productive Capacity Index (PCI), he pointed out that Bangladesh was lagging almost in every core area of PCI against Vietnam in the 2018 dataset. He explained that the enhanced productive capacity can help Bangladesh offset the loss of international support measures. Underlining the need for export diversification, Mr. Md. Tofazzel Hossain Miah noted that the share of RMG in Bangladesh's export had risen from 78% in FY 2011 to 84% in FY 2019-- showing increased export concentration. He pointed out that Bangladesh's export markets are highly concentrated and highly skewed to EU and North American markets.

Afterward, in line with the three criteria of LDC graduation—he outlined some specific sectoral strategies that the country should undertake for enhanced productive capacity. These sectors include export diversification, service sector, digital economy, the fourth industrial revolution, transport and communication, overseas employment and welfare of migrant workers, gender empowerment, education, health, environmental development, avoiding middle income trap.

Strategy for Higher Exports and Diversification

- Pursue export-led industrialization and growth policy
- Enhance productivity and competitiveness
- Ensure safe work environment and bring reforms for congenial labor market

- Streamline the tariff policies
- Improve trade logistics and strengthen trade facilitation
- Improve national, regional and global connectivity
- Enhance technology transfer and market access through FDI
- Improve the investment climate and ease of doing business
- Strengthen the Institutions for Trade and Industry

WTO-Consistent Industrial Policy for Rapid Development

- Make industrial policy consistent WTO framework
- Policies related to infrastructure, human capital formation, innovation, and diffusion of technology are now critical for export competitiveness
- WTO-consistent industrial policy instruments for Bangladesh would include-
 - Tariffs (within bound rates);
 - Subsidies for regional connectivity, R&D, and the environment; and
- The GoB has adopted a policy of signing bilateral PTA, FTA, or CEPA with potential partners to overcome the trade challenges of LDC graduation
 - A Comprehensive study to assess the cost and benefit of forming RTA is critical
 - Rationalizing tariff structure is important for RTA

Strategy for Service Sector to boost Structural Transformation

- Increase public investment in key service sector infrastructure.
- Develop capabilities that strengthen the skills base for the service industry and the industrial sector.
- Strengthen implementation of prudential regulations to boost service quality, increase public safety, improve compliance and ensure accountability of service providers.
- Strengthen public institutions to support the growth of service sector and improve service quality, safety and accountability.
- Support skills development for employment and entrepreneurship
- Create an enabling ecosystem that allows better partnership among government, entrepreneurs, the financial sector and educational institutions for facilitating innovative service offering

Strategy for Digital Economy

- Making IT-related products and services affordable to all
- Establishing cooperation between Industry, Academia, and Government
- Intellectual Asset and Local Market Centric Start-up Success Creation and Youth Empowerment

- Leveraging of Redesign Capability for Creating Success in High-tech Devices and Innovation
- Turning high-tech Parks into Nucleus of Digital, Knowledge and Innovation Economy
- Digital Economy for Leveraging Fourth Industrial Revolution
- ICT for Greater Transparency, Good Governance, and Service Delivery
- Intensifying Effectiveness and Efficiency, and Encouraging Private Investment
- Developing the Culture and National Innovation System for Leveraging Knowledge-Economy

Strategy for Fourth Industrial Revolution

- Deployment of 5G network infrastructure and services to integrate with 4IR and to carry forward the 'Digital Bangladesh'
- Bridging 'Digital Divide' and addressing the changing demands for Digital Skills
- Digital Transformation at Firm-Level
- Partnerships between government and private sector for easier access to finance, investment, skills and infrastructure
- Ensuring Digital Security and Privacy and Bridging the Standardization Gap
- Utilizing the potential of Space Technology
- Creating Internet of Things (IoT) and Machine to Machine (M2M) Communication ecosystem
- Enhance Research and Development and manufacturing of Telecommunications and IT equipment and products

Strategy for Transport and Communication

- Creating balanced inter-modal transport facility
- Ensuring sustainable financing of transport infrastructure
- Developing and implementing key policies for ensuring quality and reliability of transport services
- Consolidation and upgrading of the National Highway Network
- Utilizing the potentials of PPP for private sector participation in infrastructure
- Reconstruction, modernization and extension of missing links for national, regional and global connectivity
- Giving priority to inter-regional river connectivity to facilitate trade, commerce and tourism.
- Upgrading and modernizing all existing airports and build a new international airport.
- Improving productivity of all land and sea ports to bring efficiency in trade and commerce

Overseas Employment and Well-being of Migrant Workers

- Institutional and Legal Reform and Capacity Enhancement
- Market Expansion through development cooperation

- Market demand-based skills development
- Access to improved services for migration; Digitization of the process
- Access to finance
- Ensure Protection, Rights and Well-being
- Private Sector and Stakeholders Engagement
- Lowering Cost of Migration

Strategy for Gender Empowerment

- 1. Increase access to human development opportunities
- 2. Enhance access to and control over diversified economic opportunities and resources
- 3. Increase participation and decision-making at all levels
- 4. Establish a conducive legal and regulatory environment for gender equality
- 5. Provide Infrastructure and communication services for women
- 6. Improve institutional capacity, accountability, and oversight for ensuring women's rights
- 7. Promote positive social norms

Strategies for Education

Primary Education

- Reduce dropouts, and absentees, especially the girl
- Better quality outcomes in education through ensuring updated curriculum and pedagogy, improved physical facilities, teaching professionals
- Strategy to make up for the loss of learning during the COVID pandemic

Secondary Education

- Increase enrolment in science and technology education.
- Improve equity: Generous scholarships to students and financial incentives to parents
- Encourage greater role of ICT-based learning
- Improve the TVET stream and make it easily accessible
- Ensure better industry-academia collaboration.
- Encourage more private sector investment in education

Strategies for Higher Education

- Increase focus on STEAM fields including Agricultural Sciences;
- Reduce the gender gap and provide generous scholarships for women and other funding packages.
- Greater collaboration with internationally reputed universities;

- More focus on research and publication;
- The industry-academia linkage and placement programs;
- Empowering the University Grants Commission (UGC) towards improving educational management;
- Involving the private sector in education investment and curriculum development;
- Devising curricula to match the demand of the market;
- A permanent statutory National Education Commission that anticipated in Education Policy 2010 will be used for guiding, exercising oversight, assessing progress and impact of education reforms.

Strategies for Health

- Addressing challenges of stunting through nutrition and social protection measures
- Bringing efficiency in the service delivery in the public sector health management
- Utilizing the potential of Public-Private Partnership in the health services
- Ensuring improved cost-effective services in the private sector provider through effective rules, regulations and close oversight
- The introduction of universal health care facilities will be the key to ensuring 'health for all'
- Improving the skill and quality of all levels of medical professionals
- Increased allocation for health research and development
- Improving preparedness and resilience for any uncertain situation like the COVID pandemic

Strategies for Environmental Development

- Adoption of Environmental Fiscal Reforms (EFR) for Sustainable Development
- Strengthening Environmental Concerns and Climate Change in Planning and Budgeting
- Increased resources in the management of ecosystem and biodiversity conservation
- Taxation of Emission from Industrial Units
- Reducing Subsidies for Fuel and Adopt Green Tax on Fossil Fuel Consumption
- Administrative Reforms for Implementing Environmental Fiscal Reforms
- Coordinating NAP, BCCSAP, CIP and NDC with BDP 2100
- Improving the Capacity of MoEFCC
- Strengthening economic diplomacy for ensuring greater access to climate finance
- Implementation of the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100

Strategies to avoid MIT

• Structural transformation and high-value-adding activities

- Enhanced productivity and competitiveness
- Innovation conducive policy framework and business environment
- The inclusive and green development path for shared prosperity
- FDI is critical for technology transfer, filling the capital and entrepreneurship gap
- Economic integration for accessing new markets
- Sector-specific evidence-based policy support
- An effective framework for policies and institutions to encourage skills, knowledge, and technology

Strategy to Enhancing Capacity Reflected in the Budget 2022-23

- Credit and other facilities will continue to be provided to the CMSMEs
- Agricultural diversification and ICT dependent initiatives will be the priority
- Diversification of exports and incentives for backward linkage industries
- For new start-ups, a project titled 'My e-commerce, My own business' is initiated
- Lowering corporate tax, deepening financial inclusion and development of insurance services
- National Social Insurance Scheme and Initiative to Introduce a Universal Pension Scheme
- Increasing internal revenue collection (value added tax and income tax) through rationalization of tariff structure
- Consumption and investment to increase the domestic demand and exports to increase the external demand
- Building improved communications, necessary infrastructure and ensure power and energy security through increased public, private and foreign investment
- Increasing the productivity of labor to increase export competitiveness.
- Accelerating the growth of the industry and service sector to achieve high GDP growth and employment.
- Vocational and technical education to build skilled manpower and explore new labor markets to increase remittance income
- Creation of better environment for Ease of doing business and opportunities in Bangladesh for foreign investment

Feedback from Participants:

- Reflecting on the keynote presentation from Mr. Md. Tofazzel Hossain Miah, participants observed that the government should provide appropriate policy support for enhancing the productive capacity of both the public and private sectors. In this context, they underscored the need for increasing the analytical capacity of the civil servants so that they could assist the government in devising the aforesaid policy support.
- Responding to this observation, Mr. Md. Tofazzel Hossain Miah said that the capacity of Bangladesh's bureaucracy—especially the negotiation capacity of the government agencies

like ERD had increased a lot in recent years. He also observed that the incentive packages offered by Bangladesh for foreign investors are also quite attractive. However, he opined that the simplification of the relevant processes would be crucial for attracting more foreign direct investment in the country.

Working Session 6: Graduation Benefits/Opportunities

The sixth working session of the program was themed on 'Graduation Benefits/Opportunities'. Component Manager of SSGP Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain was the resource person of the above working session.

Identifying the benefits of graduation-- Mr. Anwar, in his presentation, noted that LDC graduation might result in better country image and improved credit rating. He also explained that how graduation might provide impetus for increased FDI, priority policy intervention, reinforcement of broader development agenda as well as exploration and innovative financing sources.

Mr. Anwar identified three Graduation Pathways for LDCs. These were:

Pathway I: Rapid economic growth through resource extraction; small progress in HAI and EVI

Pathway II: Economic specialization and investments in human assets

Pathway III: Investment in human assets and (often slow) structural transformation

He cited the example of Angola and Equatorial Guinea as two countries that had followed pathway 1 while Botswana and Bhutan were cited examples of countries that had followed pathway 2. He said that larger economies like Ethiopia and Rwanda should follow pathway 3 defined by 'Economic specialization and investments in human assets.

He identified Bangladesh's uniqueness among the LDCs which included the following:

- Like most LDC countries Bangladesh is not affected by three major vicious cycles- *poverty trap, commodity trap, and weak productive capacity*
- Bangladesh's achieved high but sustained inclusive growth over a longer period
- Bangladesh's export is highly dependent on manufacturing goods
- Strong potential productive base with *large young workforce*
- Bangladesh's *productivity* is on the upward trend
- Population size, economic size and structure, remittance flows, vibrant export led manufacturing growth placed Bangladesh different among LDCs

He also explained how Bangladesh might turn various challenges arising from LDC graduation into opportunities. He also provided a detailed picture of Bangladesh's debt sustainability and debt servicing scenario. Lastly, he identified some priority areas for sustainable graduation of Bangladesh. these included:

- Social development including health, education and increased coverage of the safety net
- Massive skill enhancement program

- Enhancing private sector investment and FDI
- Infrastructural development and export diversification
- Increased access to the local and international financial markets and innovative instruments for increased financing
- Enhancing resilience against exogenous shocks- finance, health, trade or, environmentrelated disasters
- Adapting to climate change
- Prudent debt management

Feedback from Participants:

- Participants queried how LDC graduation would help the country to receive more development financing from the development partners. Responding to this, Mr. Md. Anwar Hossain explained that LDC graduation would result in better country image and better credit rating for the country. Development partners, in turn, would be much more interested to provide increased amount of financing in various development schemes in light of the country's enhanced borrowing capacity.
- Participants also observed that appropriate steps should be taken to divert a greater portion of the country's human resource into service sector. Against this backdrop, they put emphasis on structural transformation and economic diversification.
- Participants observed that appropriate leadership could go a long way in enhancing the productive capacity of an organization. They also opined that organizations should not be used for personal gains. It was also observed that the training institutions should instil greater leadership quality and management capacity among their participants. However, it was also noted that the structure of the relevant organizations should be geared towards that goal.
- Responding to this, ERD Additional Secretary and Project Director of SSGP Mr. Farid Aziz said that the private sector of Bangladesh had experienced dynamic transformation in recent decades. In this context, he observed that the structure of the public sector should also change in line with that transformation. He also opined that the structure of the government sector had already been changing and it is bound to change—albeit at a slower pace than the private sector. He also observed that the government should play the role of facilitator for the private sector.
- Participants observed that fair recruitment and fair placement within the government would be crucial for socio-economic progress.
- Noting that the tax-GDP ratio in Bangladesh is still quite low—participants also called for the expansion of the tax net to boosting the country's tax-GDP ratio. In this context, they called for innovative measures to generate more revenue from property tax while bringing the health establishments under the tax net. Responding to this, SSGP officials affirmed that reviewing the tax holiday schemes provided to multifarious sectors while bringing the SMEs into the economic mainstream would help the government in widening its tax net.

Closing Session

The three-day-long ToT program was wrapped up through a formal closing session. Wing Chief and Additional Secretary of ERD and Project Director of SSGP Mr. Farid Aziz was the chief guest of the session. Member Directing Staff (MDS) of BPATC Mr. Abu Momtaz Saaduddin Ahmed chaired the session. Director (PPR) of BPATC Mr. Hasan Murtaza Masum moderated the session. During the closing session, participants of the ToT program were awarded with certificates. Some of the participants also provided their feedback on the outcome of the ToT. Major remarks of the session are furnished below:

Closing Remarks from the Chief Guest: Mr. Farid Aziz, Wing Chief (Additional Secretary), ERD and Project Director, SSGP:

Mr. Aziz, in his remarks, observed that the three-day ToT program had resulted in fruitful deliberations on various graduation-related issues. He said that it was evident from the discussion that graduation entails a few challenges that cannot be avoided but can be overcome through appropriate strategies. Reflecting on various approaches suggested by the resource persons of the event—Mr. Aziz identified the enhancement of productivity as the most important development discourse in non-LDC regime for remaining competitive. He also explained that such enhancement of productivity should not be resource-driven but should rather be knowledge-driven. He emphasized on a 'factor-driven to productivity-driven' economic transformation. He identified knowledge, skill and innovation as the most important tools to attain a productivity-driven economy. He also observed that the government officials had a vital role in this desired transformation. Calling for an inclusive approach in overcoming the challenges of graduation—he said that the government officials could play the most important role in engaging all stakeholders for smooth transition.

Mr. Aziz said that the program had come up with some good suggestions on various issues including the modality of ToT. He expressed his hope that those suggestions would help in designing future ToT courses on LDC graduation issues. He hoped that the participants and organizers would meet again soon to devise the appropriate approach of bringing the LDC graduation agenda to the forefront of different capacity development initiatives.





Feedback from Participants:

Ms. Jannatul Ferdous, Deputy Director (Training), B.C.S. Administration Academy:

Ms. Jannatul Ferdous, in her remarks, said that although LDC graduation had been merely a concept to her before this ToT program-- she had realized by the end of it that graduation from LDC status would not only be a matter of honour and pride but also a matter of great concern and responsibility. She also appreciated ERD's effort to engage some of the leading government training institutes in this process—as these institutes usually train civil servants from different levels who are ultimately responsible for formulating strategies related to the country's socioeconomic pathways. She suggested arranging a workshop engaging all the relevant training institutes to develop unified training content for future ToT programs.

Mr. Nur Ahmed, Joint Secretary, ERD:

He observed that the ToT program had been a learning process for SSGP, which would result in a better-designed program in the future. He proposed to increase the duration of the program to 8-10 days so that the relevant topics could be covered more extensively. He proposed to create a Facebook Group and also called for using the Zoom platform for better sharing of knowledge, ideas as well as course materials. He also observed that the aim of this ToT program should be the creation of knowledge hub so that the predictability and continuity of this process could be ensured. He also opined that participants of this ToT program should assemble quarterly for regular sharing and dissemination of relevant knowledge and information.

Speech of the Chairperson: Mr. Abu Momtaz Saaduddin Ahmed, Member Directing Staff, BPATC

The chairperson, in his closing remarks, termed LDC graduation as a big milestone in Bangladesh's development journey. However, he emphasized on preparing appropriate strategies, improving competitiveness as well as developing human and institutional capacities for facing the challenges associated with graduation. He said that the program had increased the morale and knowledge of the trainers to a great extent. He also noted that the trainees had taken the training seriously to gain full advantage of the contents of this ToT. He observed that the program had been designed in such a way that the participants could get an overall understanding of the diverse spectrum of LDC graduation and the ways of undertaking pragmatic measures to achieve its mission. He also noted that apart from enhancing the professional knowledge of the participants-- it had also intended to enrich

the behaviour and character of the trainers to enable them to perform their role in this regard with due sincerity, commitment, fairness, and objectiveness. The chair also opined that the program had provided an opportunity for the trainers to familiarize themselves with various dimensions of history, culture, and socioeconomic development of the country. He also said that the program was intended to develop the trainers as innovative, proactive, and well-groomed individuals who would be committed to the wellbeing and development of the nation in an ever changing national and global context.

Major Observations/ Feedbacks Coming from the ToT Program:

The three-day-long ToT program has come up with the following major feedback/ observations:

- Enhancement of productivity is the most important development discourse in non-LDC regime for remaining competitive. Such enhancement of productivity should not be resource-driven but should rather be knowledge-driven.
- A factor-driven to productivity-driven economic transformation would be crucial for coping with the challenges of LDC graduation. Knowledge, skill and innovation will be the most important tools to attain a productivity-driven economy. Government officials will need to play a vital role in this desired transformation.
- Government officials can also play the most important role in engaging all stakeholders to ensure an inclusive approach in overcoming the challenges of graduation
- This ToT program has been a learning process for SSGP which would result in a betterdesigned program in the future.
- A workshop can be organized engaging all the relevant training institutes to design and further improvise the contents and modality of this ToT program and to develop a unified training content for future ToT programs on LDC graduation issues.
- The prime concern of such ToT programs should be to develop management or leadership capacity of the government officials which could lead to the enhancement of their service delivery within their domain. This, in turn, could help in sustainable graduation.
- The presentations could be modified according to the need of individual training institutes.
- Training manuals and teaching notes should also be provided.
- The aim of the ToT program should be the creation of knowledge hub so that the predictability and continuity of this process could be ensured.
- The participants of this ToT program should assemble quarterly for regular sharing and dissemination of relevant knowledge and information.

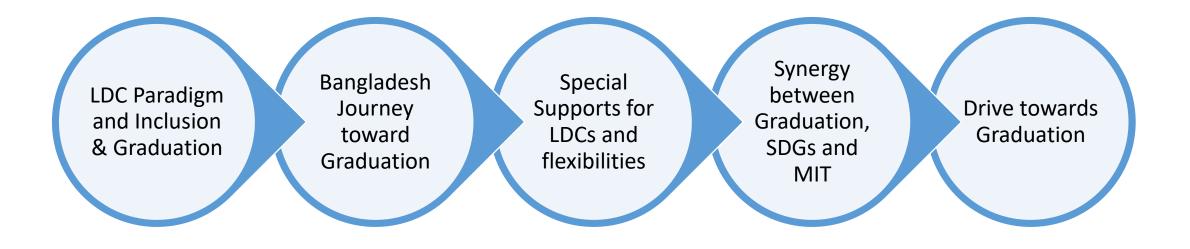


INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATION FROM LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRY (LDC) CATEGORY: BANGLADESH PERSPECTIVE

FARID AZIZ Additional Secretary

Economic Relations Division Ministry of Finance 21 June 2022

Presentation outline



Definition of LDC

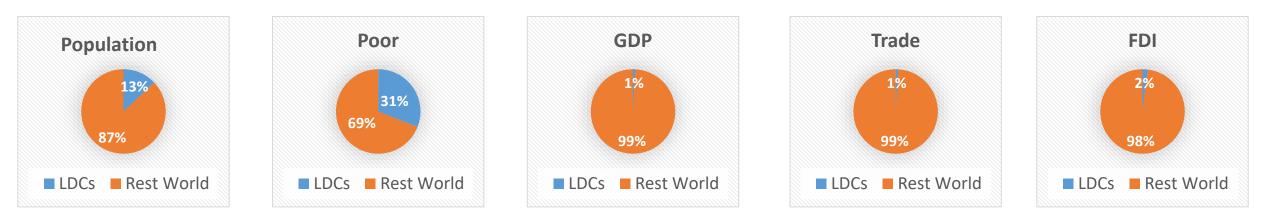
- The Least Developed Country (LDC) category comprises the most disadvantaged of the developing countries. The UN defines LDCs as the countries that have low levels of income and face severe structural impediments to sustainable development.
- Least developed countries (LDCs) are those which have low incomes, low levels of human assets and are vulnerable to economic and environmental shocks.
- The Least Developed Countries (LDCs) is a list of developing countries that, according to the United Nations, exhibit the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development, with the lowest Human Development Index ratings of all countries in the world.

Why LDC category was created?

To provide special support from the international community in the form of **International Support Measures (ISMs), especially for trade-related engagement.**

LDC paradigm

- LDCs emerged way back in the late 1960s during the first Development Decade (IDS-I) of the UN
- The category was officially established in 1971 by the UNGA; started with 25 countries; 28 additional countries were added throughout the years.
- Six countries had graduated by 2021. Currently 46 countries are in this group.
- Bangladesh was included in LDC Category in 1975

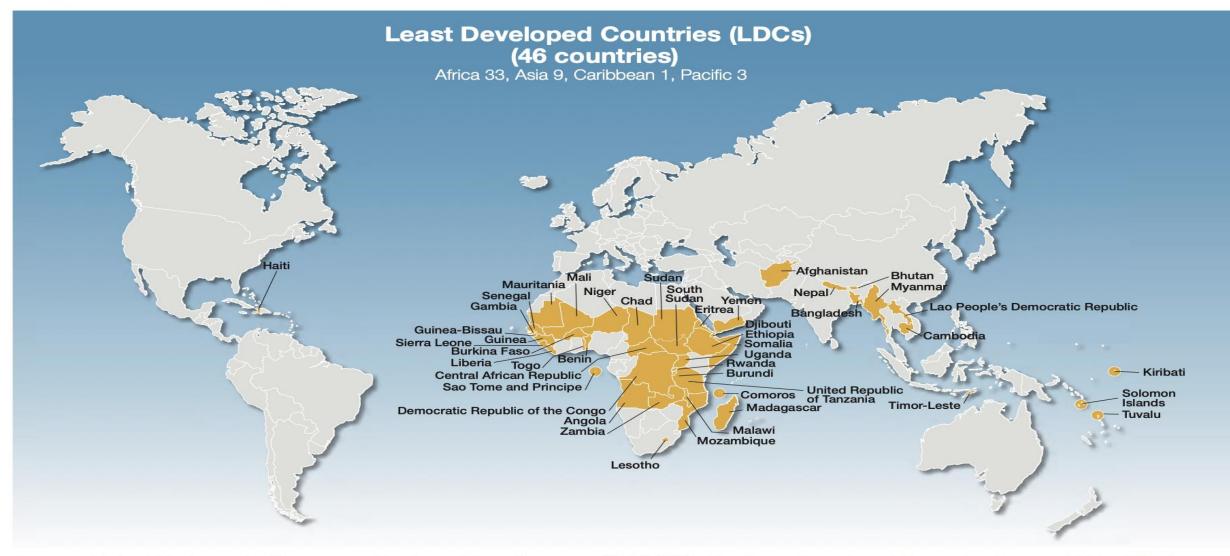


MILESTONE IN THE CREATION OF LDC CATEGORY UNCTAD-I RECOMMENDED SPECIAL SUPPORT FOR THE LESS DEVELOPED AMONG DEVELOPING **COUNTRIES** 1964 UNGA CALLED FOR THE ACTION TO PROVIDE SPECIAL MEASURES FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED AMONG **DEVELOPING COUNTRIES** 1969 COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ISSUED REPORT ON SPECIAL SUPPORT MEASURES AND 1970 PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING LDCS UNGA REITERATED URGENT NEED FOR FORMAL IDENTIFICATION OF LDCS 1970 COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ESTABLISHED TENTATIVE LIST OF 25 LDCS 1971 • UNGA FORMALLY ENDORSED THE LIST OF 25 LDCS AND REQUESTED INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO FORMULATE PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES FOR LDCS 1971

Program of Action for the LDCs

| 1980s | The Substantial New Program of Action for the 1980s for the LDCs adopted in 1 st UN Conference on the LDCs (LDC-I) |
|---------|---|
| LDC-I | Aim: transform LDC economies and enable them to provide minimum standard of nutrition, health, |
| | housing and education |
| 1990s | The Paris Declaration and Programme of Action |
| LDC-II | Macroeconomic policy; human resources development; reversing the trend towards environmental |
| | degradation and reinforcing action to address disasters |
| 2001- | The Brussels Programme of Action for LDCs |
| 2010 | Overarching goal: substantially reducing the proportion of people living in extreme poverty |
| LDC-III | Priority areas: developing human and institutional resources; removing supply-side constraints and |
| | enhancing productive capacity; accelerating growth |
| 2011- | The Istanbul Programme of Action (2011–2020) adopted at LDC-IV |
| 2020 | Overarching objective: enable half of the LDCs to meet the graduation criteria |
| LDC-IV | Priority areas: productive capacity; agriculture, food security and rural development; trade; commodities; |
| | human and social development; multiple crises and other emerging challenges; mobilizing financial |
| | resources for development and capacity-building; and good governance at all levels |
| 2022- | The Doha Programme of Action (2022-2032) adopted at 1 st Part of LDC-V |
| 2031 | Overarching goal: achieving rapid, sustainable and inclusive recovery for COVID-19, building resilience |
| LDC-V | against future shock |
| | Focus areas: investing in people, leveraging power of STI, supporting structural transformation, addressing |
| | climate change and reinvigorating global partnership |

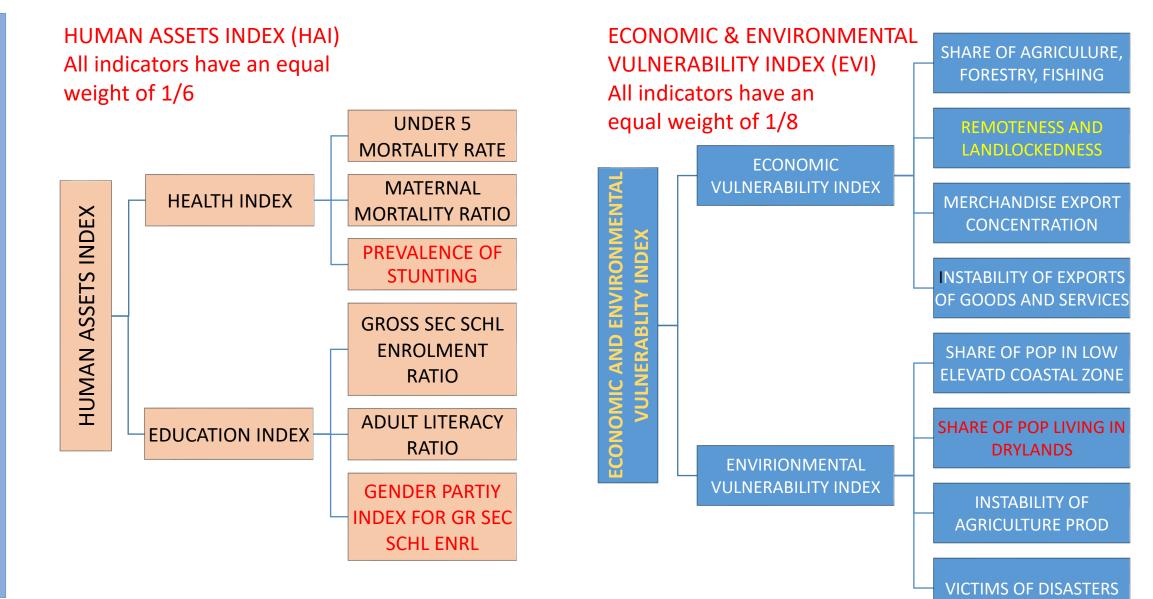
Map of least developed countries in 2021



Source: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), *The Least Developed Countries Report 2021 – The least developed countries in the post-COVID world: Learning from 50 years of experience* (United Nations publication, 2021).

LDC Graduation Framework, February 2020

Α



THRESHOLDS FOR INCLUSION AND GRADUATION (2021)

| | GNI Per Capita | HAI | EVI |
|------------|--|---------------|---------------|
| Inclusion | \$ 1,018 or below | 62.0 or below | 36.0 or above |
| Graduation | \$ 1,222 or above \$ 2,444 or above (Income-only) | 66.0 or above | 32.0 or below |

Eligibility rules

Inclusion

- Country meets inclusion thresholds **for all three criteria** Country must agree to its inclusion For the first time, no country was found eligible for inclusion in 2021
- Country passes graduation thresholds of any 2 criteria or
- Alternatively, GNI per capita is at least twice the graduation threshold ('Income-only' rule)
- Country must meet criteria at two consecutive reviews

No automatism: additional information is taken into account



Graduation

Procedures for Graduation from LDC Category

First Year Triennial Review (year 0)

- CDP reviews the preliminary data for the LDC criteria and identifies those that meet the criteria for the first time.
- CDP Plenary, during TR, reviews the findings. If the country is found to meet criteria CDP:,
 - (a) notifies the Govt. in writing;
 - (b) includes the findings in its report to ECOSOC; and
 - (c) requests UNCTAD to prepare Vulnerability Profile and UNDESA to ex-ante Impact Assessment

Information gathering (years 0 to 3)

- UNCTAD prepares Vulnerability Profile, UNDESA prepares ex-ante Impact Assessment and CDP may conduct special research
- UNGA suggests to initiate early preparation and UNDP encourages to build knowledge and awareness of the graduation process and impacts
- CDP shares data with the country before 2nd TR to resolve data discrepancies

Procedures for Graduation from LDC Category (contd..)

Decision on graduation (year 3)

- At preparatory meeting of TR, CDP Subgroup reviews the preliminary data against LDC criteria, graduation assessment and supplementary garduation indicators
- CDP invites Govt. to share its views on possible graduation at prep. Meeting
- The Govt. is invited to submit its views and any additional information in writing
- At the Plenary of TR, if the country meets the graduation criteria for 2nd time, CDP recommends graduation based on subgroup reports and country submission
- The CDP reports to ECOSOC with recommendation for graduation and duration of preparatory period
- ECOSOC endorses the recommendation in its annual resolution. ECOSOC may defer the consideration to a later session if it unable to finds consensus.
- The UNGA takes note of the recommendation by the CDP to graduate a country
- The preparatory period starts from the date the resolution of UNGA is adopted

Preparing for graduation (years 3 to 6)

- Graduating country is invited to prepare and start implementing a smooth transition strategy (STS)
- Graduating country establishes a consultative mechanism in cooperation with development and trading partners

Procedures for Graduation from LDC Category (contd..)

Preparing for graduation (years 3 to 6)

- The UN system led by UNRC and IATF stands ready to provide assistance in the preparation of STS
- DPs and TPs participate in consultative mechanism and support STS. UNGA invites them to extend ISMs beyond graduation
- CDP monitors country's development progress and STS preparation
- The standard preparatory period is 3 years. The GA may, however, grant a longer period even during the preparatory period.

Effective graduation (year 6)

- The begins its journey as non-ldc LDC from the date of its effective graduation, but there is no obligation for any action by the country itself.
- The country is no longer on the official list of LDCs maintained by UN DESA

Procedures for Graduation from LDC Category (contd..) Transition (years 6+)

- The country implements its STS
- The DPs and TPs extend or phase out their LDC-specific ISMs and provide specific support for graduation in line with established procedures.
- The continues to monitor country's development progress and implementation of STS annually for three years after graduation and then triennially for two TR. The monitoring for CDP lasts between seven to nine years, depending on the date of geaduation
- Certain LDC-specific ISMs have a fixed transition period. In other case, the length
 of an extension or provision of specific graduation support, if any, is determined
 by the provider of support on an ad hoc basis

Effective graduation (year 6)

- The begins its journey as non-ldc LDC from the date of its effective graduation, but there is no obligation for any action by the country itself.
- The country is no longer on the official list of LDCs maintained by UN DESA

Overview of graduation process

| Meeting of the graduation critera for the first time Year 0 | CDP establishes at triennial review that country has met the graduation criteria for the first time |
|---|--|
| Information gathering Year 0 to 3 | Country initiates preparations for possible graduation with international community support |
| Decision on graduation Year 3 | CDP recommends country for graduation, ECOSOC endorses and General Assembly takes note of the recommendation |
| Preparatory period Years 3 to 6 | Country prepares for graduation and smooth transition with international community support |
| | Effective graduation date Year 6 |
| Transition period Years 6+ | Country implements smooth transition strategy; phasing out of LDC-specific measures |

Key asymmetries between the inclusion and graduation process

| | Inclusion | Graduation |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Number of criteria to be met | 3 | 2 |
| Criteria threshold | Established at each review | Established at each review but set at a higher level than inclusion |
| Eligibility | Determined once | Determined twice (over consecutive reviews) |
| Timing | Effective immediately | Preparatory period (3 years) |
| Approval by country | Required | Not required |

What does Graduation Mean?

- Graduation from LDC Category inherently means that a country has reached a level of development that no longer requires LDC-specific support from the international community.
- Graduation marks a shift from dependence primarily on ISMs to dependence on markets – that is, from dependency to a greater degree of self-reliance
- Graduation is milestone, not the winning post in a race to escape LDC status. It marks the end of a political and administrative process, but not the completion of an economic or development process.

• What is Preparatory Period?

The period between the date of the General Assembly's resolution and actual graduation is known as the "preparatory period". During this period, countries are encouraged to elaborate:

✓ a "Smooth Transition Strategy (STS)"

✓ ensure that they make the most of the remaining eligibility periods ISMs,

✓ prepare to mitigate any impacts of graduation;

✓ negotiate alternative support with development and trading partners; and

✓ engage actively with the international processes relevant for graduation, including at the WTO, LDC V and similar opportunities.

• What is Transition Period?

Transition period is from the date the country's graduation becomes effective to the date all international support measures are phased out or transitionary periods have concluded.

CDP'S TRIENNIAL REVIEW 2021

Country-specific information

+CDP country rapporteurs



+Analytical documents

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Graduation assessment Impact assessment Vulnerability profile

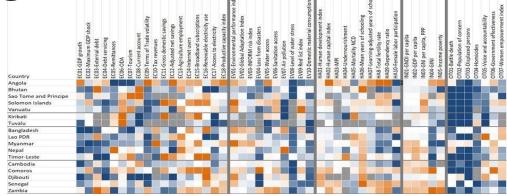
+Country consultations



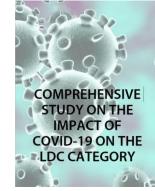
Country-level meetings UN RC and UNCT at EGM Country at EGM

+Written country statement to Plenary

Other additional information+ *Supplementary* graduation indicators



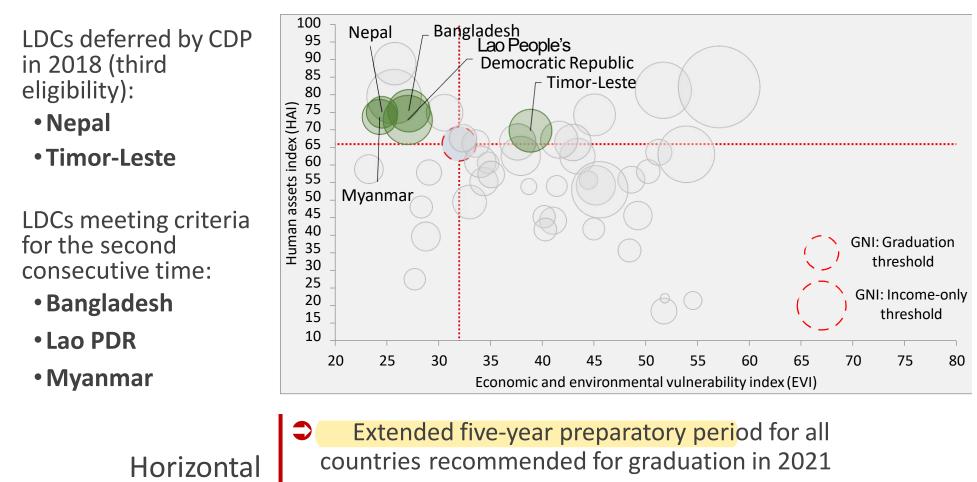
+Covid-19 study



The way forward

CDP will continue piloting rapporteurs, graduation assessment statement and country-level meeting, in addition to the established procedures

Graduation – Countries considered by CDP for graduation recommendation in 2021



recommendations

due to Covid-19

- Analyze at 2024 triennial review if extension is needed
- Improve monitoring system; pay special attention to COVID-19 impacts; alert ECOSOC if action is needed

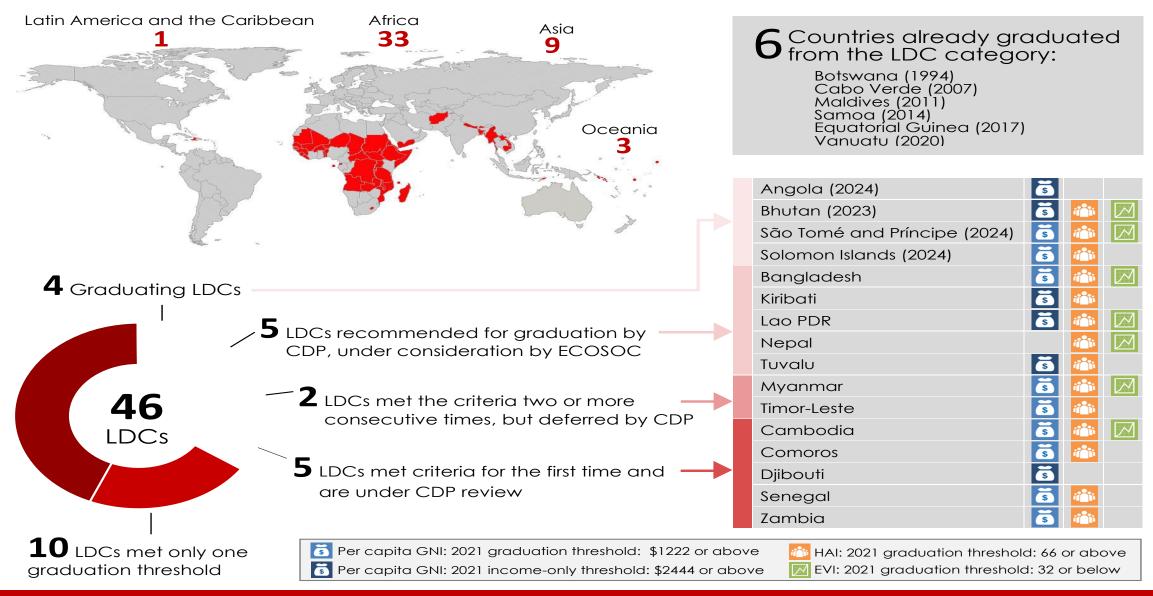
Graduation – 2021 CDP recommendations

- Bangladesh
 Graduate all three countries from the list of LDCs in line With General Assembly resolutions 59/209 and 67/221.
 Support to graduating countries by development and trade partners more important than ever
 Extending access to relevant ISMs for an appropriate period; support to address challenges arising from Covid-19; capacity-building;...

Timor-Leste Continued concerns about the sustainability of the country's development progress.

Myanmar Defer the decision to the 2024 triennial review, due to concerns on negative impacts of the state of emergency declared by the military on Myanmar's development trajectory and graduation preparation; inability to review at this time

The LDC category after the 2021 triennial review



Source: CDP Secretariat, website: http://cdp.un.org

BANGLADESH HAS CROSSED TWO GLOBALLY RECOGNIZED MILESTONES

- I. GRADUATION TO LOWER MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRY FROM LOW INCOME COUNTRY (2015)
- II. LEAVING THE LDC CATEGORY (Recommendation: 2021; Effective: 2026)

LDC and Middle Income Country (MIC) Categories

| Issues | LDC | MIC |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| Classification authority | UN Classification Single Category | World Bank Classification Four Categories: LIC, LMIC, UMIC, HIC |
| Purpose | To provide eligible countries with LDC- specific ISMs | Make lending decisions; benefits provided in terms of lower interest rates; debt relief; etc. |
| Basis for taxonomy | 3 criteria- GNI per capita, Human Assets Index, Economic and Environmental Vulnerability Index | Income in WB Atlas method: LIC: <=\$1,045; LMIC: \$1,046- \$4,095; UMIC: \$4,096-\$12,695; HIC> \$12,695 |
| Cap on Population | Additional criteria included in 1991; Population must be less than 75 million Now no cap | No cap |
| Process of exit | Long. Minimum 6 years from meeting the criteria | Short. Changes every year |

Bangladesh Journey Towards Graduation with Strong Commitment

Graduation- a strong political commitment, IPoA 2011



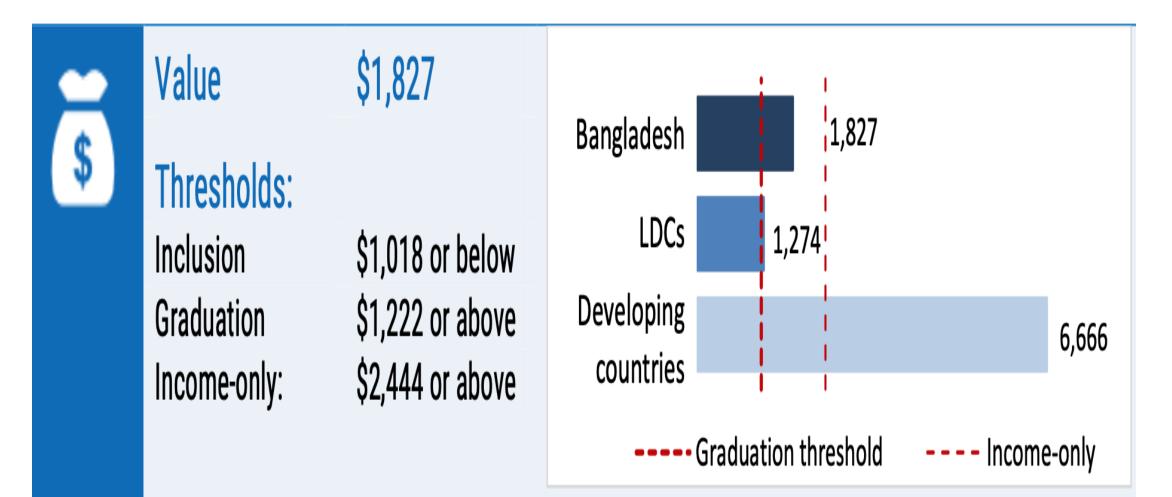
LDC related 4th UN Conference, 9-13 May 2011

• A critical goal was set to halving the numbers of LDCs by 2020

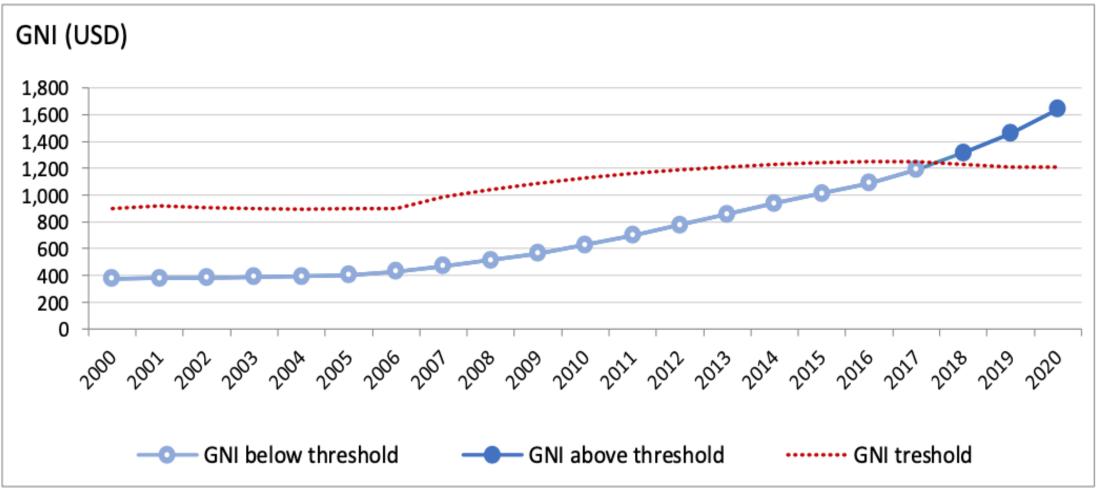


- Hon. Prime Minister participated in LDC IV Conference in 2011 and expressed her firm commitment to implement IPoA (Istanbul Program of Action) for achieving the goal of halving LDCs
- Bangladesh made remarkable progress during last 13 years that helped it to graduate from LIC to LMIC in 2015 and to fulfill the graduation criteria in two consecutive reviews of 2018 and 2021

Gross national income (GNI) per capita (2021 Review)



Bangladesh's per capita GNI, US Dollar using Atlas conversion, 2000-2020



Human assets index (HAI) (2021 Review)



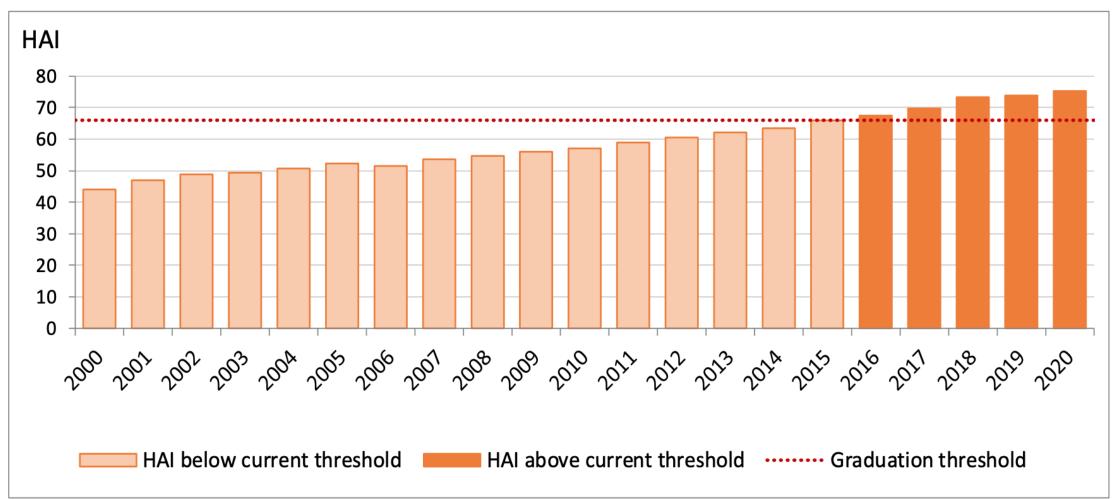
HAI indicators*

| ve mortality | / rate | Gross sec | condary scho | ool enrolment |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Value: Index: Source: | 30.8 87.4 UN IAG for Child Mortality Estimation | | Value: Index: Source: | 72.6 69.5 UNESCO |
| Prevalence of stunting | | Adult literacy rate | | |
| Value: | 31.0 | | Value: | 74.7 |
| Index: | 43.0 | | Index: | 66.2 |
| Source: | UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates | | Source: | UNESCO |
| mortality | rate | Gender pa | arity index fo | or gross seco |
| Value: | 173 | • • | Value: | 1.17 |
| Index: | 85.9 | M= | Index: | 100.0 |
| Source: | UN IAG for Maternal Mortality | | Source: | UNESCO |
| | Value: Index: Source: ce of stunt Value: Index: Source: mortality Value: Index: | Index: 87.4 Source: UN IAG for Child Mortality Estimation ce of stunting Value: 31.0 Index: 43.0 Source: UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimates mortality rate Value: 173 Index: 85.9 | Value:30.8Index:87.4Source:UN IAG for Child Mortality Estimationce of stuntingAdult literValue:31.0Index:43.0Source:UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition Estimatesmortality rateGender paValue:173Index:85.9 | Value:30.8Value:Index:87.4Index:Index:Source:UN IAG for Child Mortality EstimationSource:Adult literacy rateValue:31.0Value:Index:Index:43.0Index:Value:Source:UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Joint Child Malnutrition EstimatesIndex:mortality rateGender parity index for Value:Value:173 Index:Value:Index:85.9Value: |

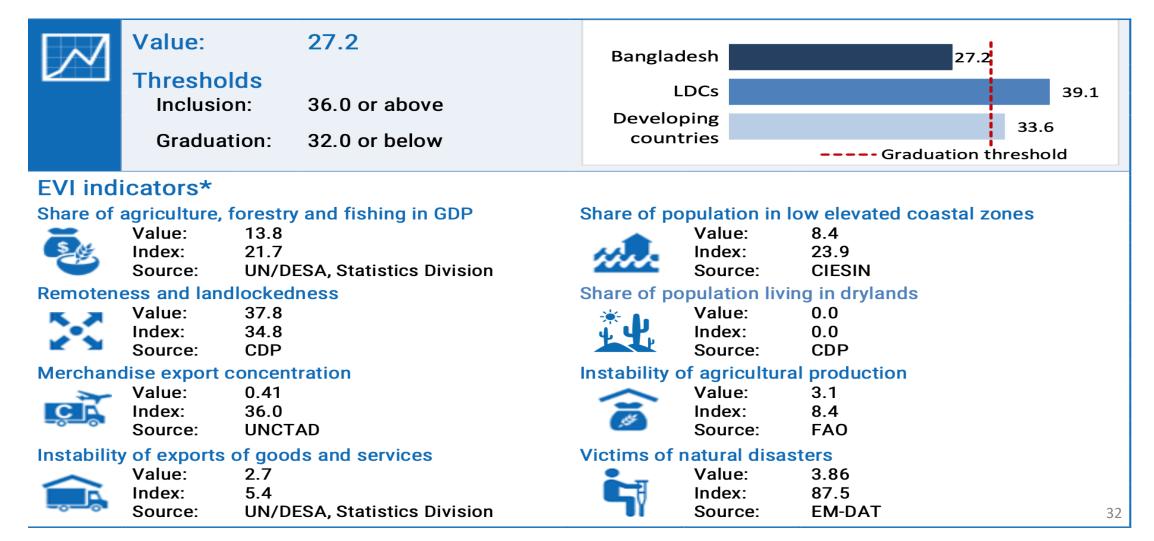
nt ratio

| Gender pa | arity index f | or gross secondary s | chool enrolment |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| | Value: | 1.17 | |
| ∱ = ∱ | Index: | 100.0 | |
| | Source: | UNESCO | 30 |

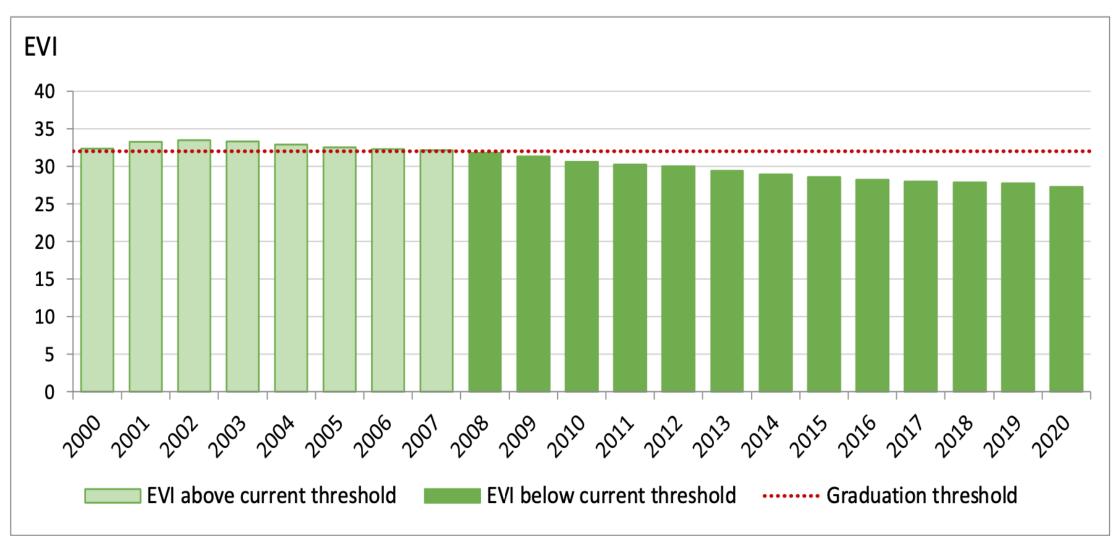
Bangladesh's HAI, 2000-2020



Economic and environmental vulnerability index (EVI) (2021 Review)



Bangladesh's EVI, 2000-2020



ACHIEVEMENTS TOWARDS GRADUATION

- Bangladesh meets all three thresholds for LDC Graduation
- Bangladesh has been recommended for graduation in the last triennial review of UNCDP in February 2021
- ECSOC endorsed the recommendation on 08 June 2021 and 76th Session of UNGA finally took note of recommendation on 24 November 2021
- Bangladesh's graduation from LDC category will be effective on 23 November 2026
- Bangladesh journey towards graduation is a milestone, not a winning post

| | Country | Graduation Year | GNI per capita | ΗΑΙ | EVI |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----|-----|
| | Graduated Countries | | | | |
| No country graduated | Botswana | 1994 | YES | YES | NO |
| | Cabo Verde | 2007 | YES | YES | NO |
| meeting all three criteria | Maldives | 2011 | YES | YES | NO |
| thee thena | Samoa | 2014 | YES | YES | NO |
| | Equatorial Guinea | 2017 | YES | NO | NO |
| | Vanuatu | 2020 | YES | YES | NO |

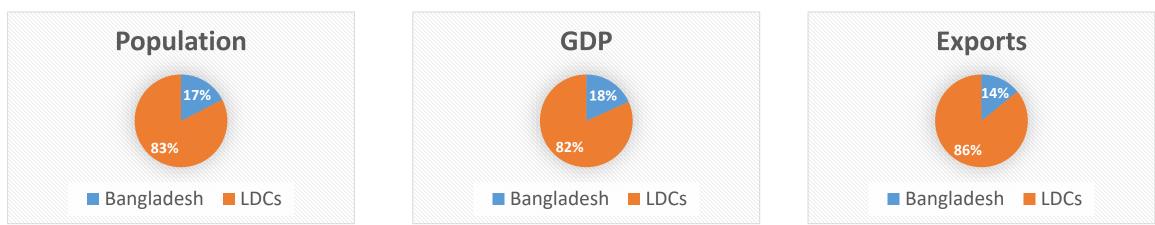
Source: https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/least-developed-country-category/ldcs-at-a-glance.html

Hon'ble Finance Minister handed over the UN-CDP's Recommend ation Letter of LDC Graduation to Hon'ble Prime Minister

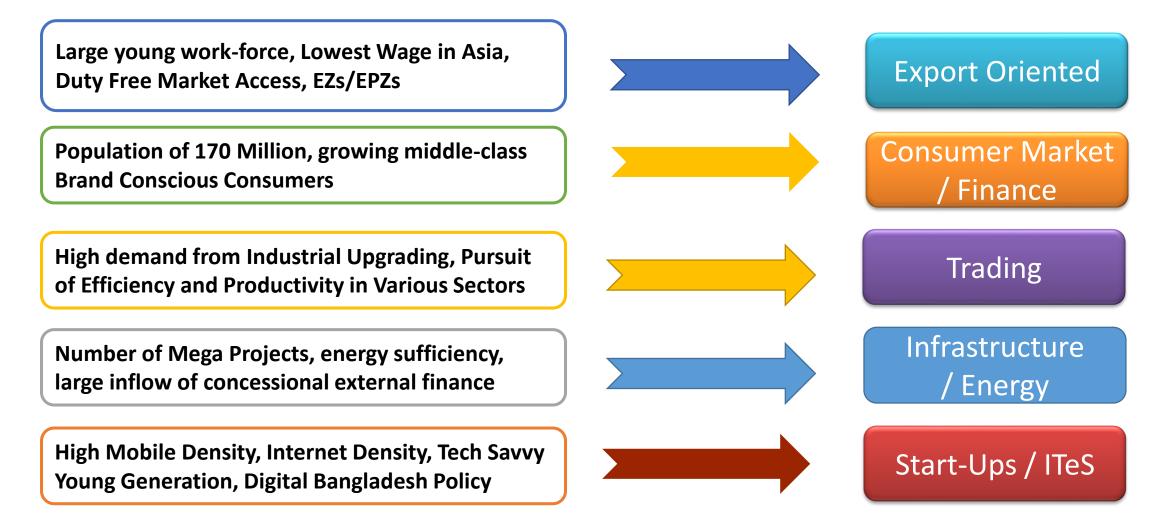


Bangladesh is unique among the LDC group

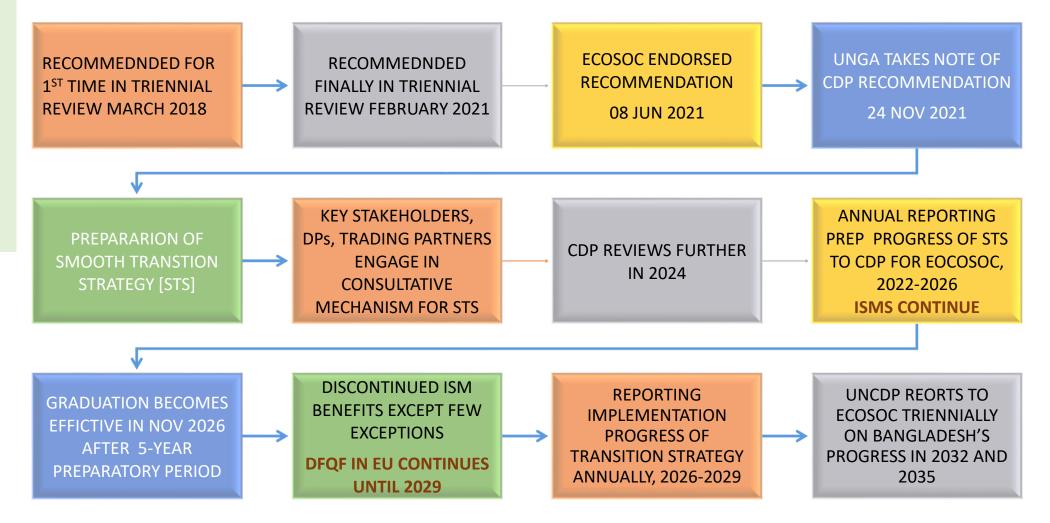
- Like most LDCs Bangladesh is not affected by vicious cycles- *poverty trap, and weak productive capacity*
- Bangladesh achieved *high but sustained inclusive growth*
- Bangladesh's export is highly dependent on manufacturing goods
- Strong potential productive base with *large young workforce*
- Bangladesh's productivity is on upward trend
- Population size, economic size and structure, remittance flows, vibrant export led manufacturing growth placed Bangladesh different among LDCs



Bangladesh's Competitive Edge



BANGLADESH GRADUATION TIMELINE



Special Supports for LDCs and Flexibilities during Transition Period

International support measures (ISMs)



Trade-related support measures

- Preferential market access for goods
- Preferential treatment for services and service suppliers
- Special treatment regarding obligations and flexibilities under WTO rules
- Special treatment regarding obligations and flexibilities under regional agreements
- Trade-related technical assistance and capacity-building

Development cooperation

- Bilateral and multilateral partners
- International and regional financial institutions
- Support by UN system organizations
- EIF, LDC Fund, UNCDF, Technology Bank, Investment support program for the LDCs
- The LDCs in South-South cooperation
- Scholarship & other financial support for education & research



Supports of United Nations and other international forums

- Caps (0.01%) and discounts on the contribution to the budget of UN system
 Support for travel
- •Capacity building for participation in negotiations
- •Other forms of support for participation in intl. forums: flexibility in reporting and support for costs of diplomatic representation

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT MEASURES (ISMs)

DFQF Access Rules of Origin TRIPS Exemptions Export Subsidies LDC Services Waiver

ODA

Bangladesh made the best use of ISMs among the LDCs...

DFQF Access According to Trade Impacts of LDC Graduation, WTO 2020

- Bangladesh is the highest utilizer of DFQF- 71%
- Average tariffs increase by 8.9% after graduation

Preferential Rules of Origin Bangladesh enjoys the most flexible rule, e.g. singlestage transformation for RMG in EU

LDC Services Waiver No significant impact due to graduation (CDP Impact Assessment, Mar 2020)

TRIPS Flexibilities no need of patent protection in Pharma Production

- Bangladesh Pharmaceuticals meets around 98% of local demand and exports to more than 100 countries
- 25% pharmaceutical products will require patent licenses after graduation

The cost of **ODA** will increase due to rise in per capita GNI

Benefits of LDC Graduation

- An important development milestone enhance country image and self-esteem
- Provide unquantifiable boost to national and international sentiment.
- LDC government may target graduation as a gauge of development progress and therefore benefit from a perception of success.
- Foreign investment may increase as outside perceptions improve.
- Credit ratings agencies do not take the LDC category into account when deciding sovereign bond ratings, although they do use some of the subsidiary indicators.
- Some institutions and countries provide <u>'smooth transition</u>' support in line with relevant UN resolutions.

Graduation offers opportuniti es

- Graduation plus strategy for graduation with momentum
- Enhanced urge for export diversification and moving up global value chain
- Impulse for enhancing productive capacity and continuing structural transformation
- Big push for increasing productivity
- Exploring for non-traditional financing sources
- Facilitating FDI by improving business climate- EoDB
- Enhanced use of STI and leveraging 4IR
- calculated steps to avoid risk of uncertainty (e.g. Pandemic, climate change, external shocks)
- Greater impetus for greener economy

Flexibilities during transition period

- In developed country markets, countries graduated from LDC will normally become benficiaries of standard GSP schemes.
- In developing country markets, graduated countries may continue to have preferential market access only if they are member of regional or bilateral trade agreements but no longer access to non-reciprocal pref. mkt. access.
- EU grants additional 3-year period of eligibility for graduated countries under EBA initiative
- The EU, UK and Norway have non-reciprocal preferential market access schemes that lie, in terms of coverage, in between LDC-specific ones and and the standard GSP.
- The special arrangement for sustainable development and good governance (GSP+) in the EU grants duty free access to most of the products covered by standard GSP. However, it requires the ratification and implementation of 27 conventions on human rights, labour rights, env. protection, good governance, etc.
- The UK's enhanced framework within its GSPhas similar terms
- All LMIC with population less than 75 mill and LIC are eligible for GSP+
- Norway's GSP+ scheme grants duty free access for all industrial goods and higher preference on a number of agricultural goods in comparison with standard GSP

Flexibilities during transition period (contd..)

 A draft proposal by the LDC Group for a ministerial decision to establish a smooth transition mechanism for graduating LDCs under the WTO system is now under consideration

Smooth transition provision in selected LDC-specific market access arrangment

| Markets | Smooth transition clauses |
|---|--|
| EU and Turkey | Smooth transition period of 3 years after entering into force of a delgated act adopted by the Commission after the date of graduation |
| Australia, Canada, China, India, New Zealand, Norway, RoK, Switzerland, USA | No formal smooth transition provision. Some graduates have been able to maintain the GSP for LDCs for a period past the date of graduation |
| Chile, Eurasian Economic Union, Japan, Thailand | No formal smooth transition provision and no record of flexibility in extending eligibility beyond graduation |

Flexibilities during transition period (contd..)

- The SAFTA contains a special provision for Maldives, which graduated in 2011, granting LDC equivalent treatment in the Agreement and in any subsequent contractual undertakings.
- Graduated countries continue to have access to Technology Bank for 5 yrs.
- Graduated countries continue to have access to selected EIF benefits for 5 years
- Graduated countries remain eligible to apply for assistance under investment support programme for LDC by Intl. Dev. Law Organization and OHRLLS for 5 yrs.
- Benefits from UNCDF can be continued for 3 years after graduation

Synergy between LDC Graduation, SDGs Implementation and Avoiding Middle Income Trap

Does graduation mean a country has achieved SDGs?

- Graduation signifies partial progress toward the SDGs, since some of the LDC indicators can be found in the goals.
- Graduated countries continue to face challenges in pursuing the objectives outlined in Agenda 2030.
- Progress towards these broader objectives requires improved domestic policy choices as well as international support within a reinvigorated multilateral system.

Middle Income Trap

What is middle income trap?

The middle-income trap refers to a situation whereby a middle-income country is failing to transition to a high-income economy due to rising costs and declining competitiveness. (Breda Griffith, 2011)

Homi Kharas and Harinder Kohli (2011) elaborated on the concept, specifying that when a country escapes the poverty trap in the low-income development stage and enters into the middle-income development phase, the country may face growth stagnation and inability to further move up the ladder into the high-income range.

Evidence to support the middle-income trap indicates a levelling-off of income per capita and a decline or stagnation in an economy's competitiveness.

Possible causes of the middle-income trap

Rising wages / unit labour costs

- The surplus supply of labour dwindles
- Labour migration can run dry including rural-urban movement
- Demographic transition model falling natural population growth
- Gains in productivity growth slow down

Possible failure to invest in human capital

- Countries may start to age before they get rich
- Early growth tends to be input-driven rather than productivity-driven
- Technology needs to become more sophisticated

Possible causes of the middle-income trap

Can the private sector generate sufficient innovation?

- Innovation creates goods and services that get higher prices in world markets
- Innovation is harder than simply copying what wealthier countries already do

Institutional failures and social capital weaknesses

- Institutions may not support an adaptive and creative economy and society
- Social capital may not support sustained growth especially in knowledge sectors

Problems in maintaining macro-economic stability

- Fast growing countries suffer from high inflation
- Credit bubbles can develop as speculative investments take hold

MIDDLE INCOME TRAP

Preparedness for a timely transition from resource-driven growth to knowledge & innovation-driven growth

Potential Challenges of MIT Bangladesh's development vision of achieving knowledgebased developed economy by 2041 may be hampered due to stuck in the MIT

Strategies to avoid MIT

- Appropriate growth strategy to lift per capita income
- Structural upgradation and high value adding activities
- Innovation conducive policy framework and business environment
- Inclusive and green development path for shared prosperity
- Improving productivity and competitiveness
- FDI is important for technology transfer, filling capital and entrepreneurship gap
- Sector-specific evidence based policy support
- An effective framework for policies and institutions to encourage skills, knowledge and technology

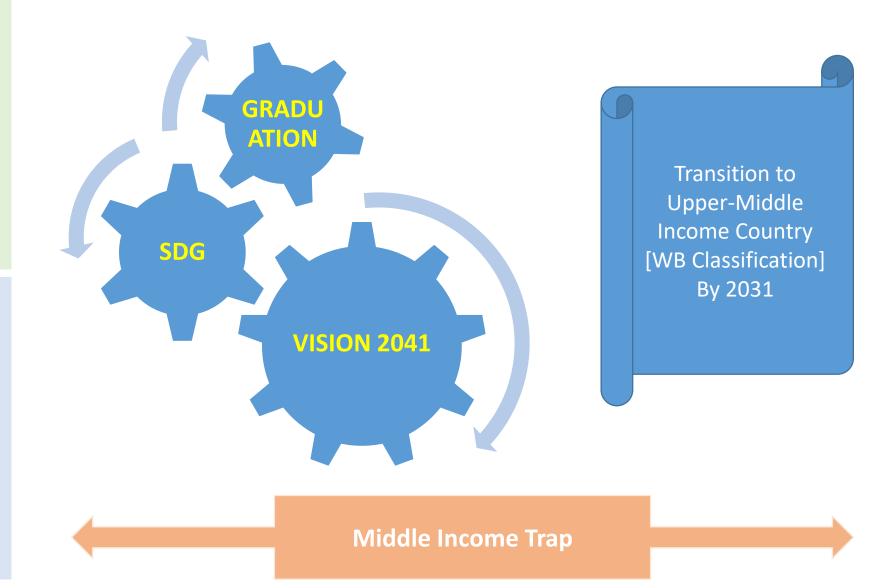
Structural Transformation is the Key

| Stage | Product Specialization | Growth Driver | Development Outcome |
|-------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Primary Products | Abundant Land and Cheap Labour | Low Income Trap |
| 2 | Labour Intensive Simple Manufacturing | Low Labour Cost led Simple Manufacturing Products/Exports | Graduation from Low to Lower-Middle Income |
| 3 | Hi-Tech Manufacturing | Capital Intensive & Productivity led Technically Sophisticated Products/Exports | Graduation from Lower- Middle Income to Higher- Middle Income |
| 4 | Services (High-Level) | Innovation-led Knowledge based Economy | Graduation from Upper- Middle to High-Income |

GRADUATION IN LARGER DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE

BANGLADESH REQUIRES SMART GRADUATION

A SMOOTH AND SUSTAINABLE GRADUATION WITH GREAT MOMENTUM



Journey Towards Smart Graduation

Preparing for graduation and smooth transition

- Graduating Country should prepare in such a way so that the graduation doesn't slow down the development momentum.
- Smooth transition is a concept of avoiding negative consequences due to graduation from LDC category.
- The GA calls for integrating a country's preparations for sustainable graduation and its smooth transition beyond graduation into that country's long term national sustainable development plans and development financing strategies.
- UNGA and experts suggest that the country should prepare a comprehensive Smooth Trnasition Strategy (STS) through an inclusive process to grab the opportunities and tackle the challenges of graduation efficently.
- Two main priciples guide the STS process;
- i. Country-led, country-owned and using country systems to the extent possible
- ii. Intl. community support is country-driven, timely and of high quality

Conclusion

- There is no explicit theoretical framework for smooth LDC graduation
- Bangladesh will have to develop its own country strategies
- Bangladesh passed a number of challenges in the past:
 - Quota phase out on 2005
 - Rana plaza
 - US withdrawal of GSP in 2013
 - COVID-19 crisis in 2020
- Bangladesh also has lots of success stories in managing natural disaster economic crisis.
- Bangladesh will boldly face the graduation challenges.

Together we will make it happen!!!

Reference:

- Handbook on LDC Category: Inclusion, Graduation, and Special Support Measures
- STS Guidance Note



Sustainable Graduation: Benefits and Opportunities

Farid Aziz, Additional Secretary, DEW & PD, SSGP Md. Anwar Hossain, SSGP 23 June 2022 BPATC

Presentation content

- Graduation Benefits/Opportunities:
 - Country image
 - Commercial loans from the international market
 - Improved creditworthiness—higher FDI
 - Others
- Lessons learned from other graduated / Graduating countries
- Development Pathways

Why is LDC category developed?

Core areas of LDC graduation:

- 1. GNI per capita
- 2. Human Asset Index
- 3. Economic and Environmental Index

- Due to have weak productive capacity and vulnerability- LDC category is introduced in 1971 to support through International Support Measures (ISMs) in 3 broad areas:
 - Trade-related support measures
 - ODA financing for development
 - concessional subscriptions, supports for technology, trade and climate

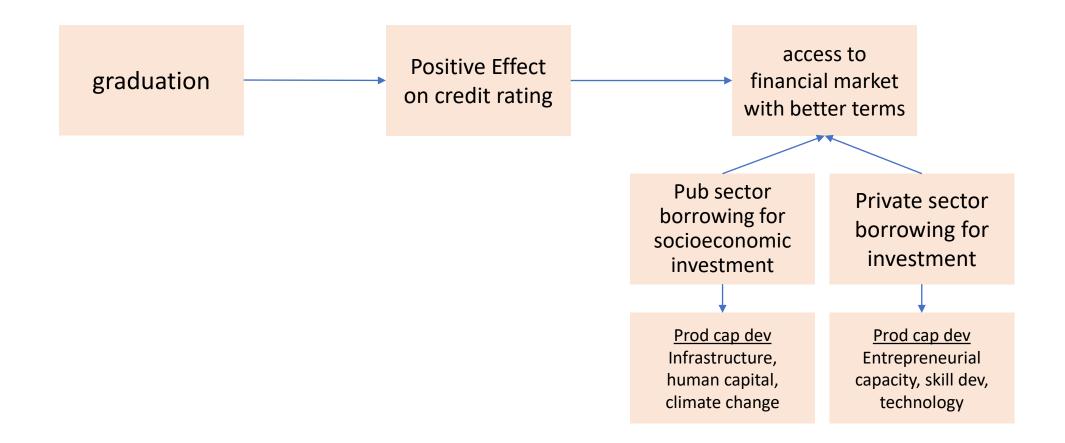
So, graduation from LDC category means-

- improved economic condition
- Better human capital
- Less vulnerability in the economy, trade, environment and improved resilience

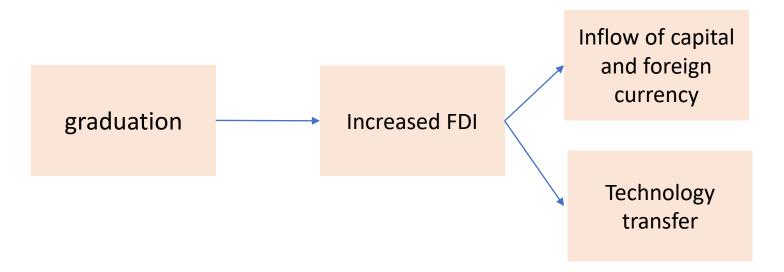
Graduation Benefit- improved country image



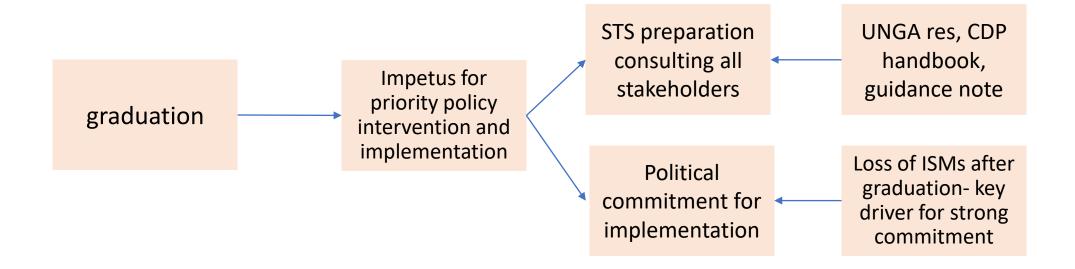
Graduation Benefit and opportunities- improved country credit rating



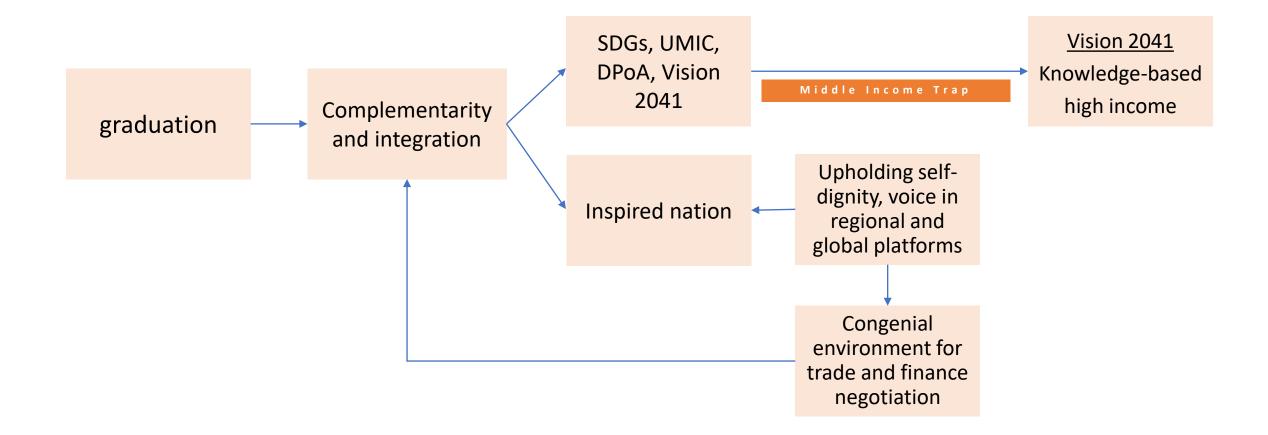
Graduation opportunity-increased FDI



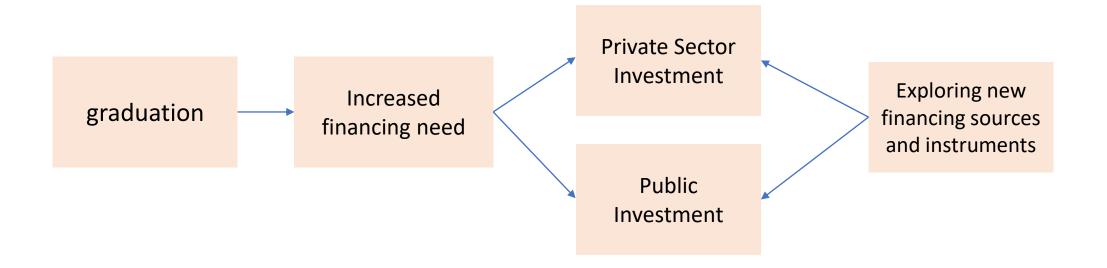
Graduation opportunity- impetus for priority policy intervention



Graduation opportunity- reinforcing broader development agenda



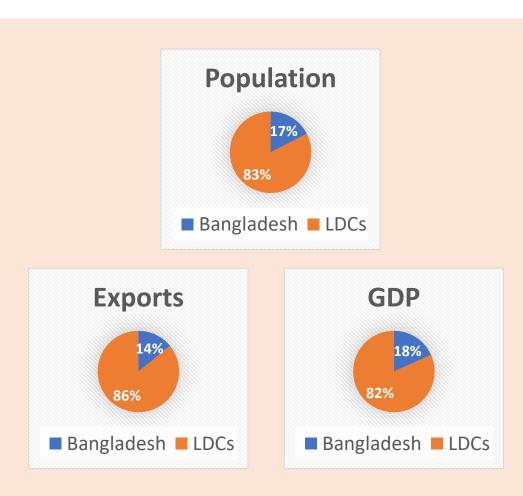
Graduation opportunity- exploring innovative financing sources



EXPERIENCE OF GRADUATED AND GRADUATING COUNTRIES

| Country | Grad | Рор | GDP (Bill | Per Capita | Types of | Primary Export |
|----------------------|------|--------|-----------|------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Year | (mill) | USD) | GNI (USD) | Country | |
| Botswana | 1994 | 2.35 | 15.91 | 7,304 | Land locked | Agriculture |
| Cape Verde | 2007 | 0.56 | 1.75 | 3,371 | Small Island | Tourism |
| Maldives | 2011 | 0.54 | 4.6 | 9,189 | Small Island | Fishing & tourism |
| Samoa | 2014 | 0.2 | 0.804 | 4,118 | Small Island | Agriculture |
| Equatorial Guinea | 2017 | 1.41 | 9.52 | 7,617 | Small Island | Oil |
| Vanuatu | 2020 | 0.3 | 0.864 | 2,991 | Small Island | Agriculture, fishing, tourism |
| Nepal | 2026 | 29.13 | 33.67 | 1,027 | Land locked | RMG, carper, pulses, handicrafts |
| Lao PDR | 2026 | 7.28 | 19.13 | 2,449 | Land locked | Power and minerals |
| Bangladesh | 2026 | 170 | 416.26 | 2,591 | Connected with land and sea route | Manufacturing & large economy |

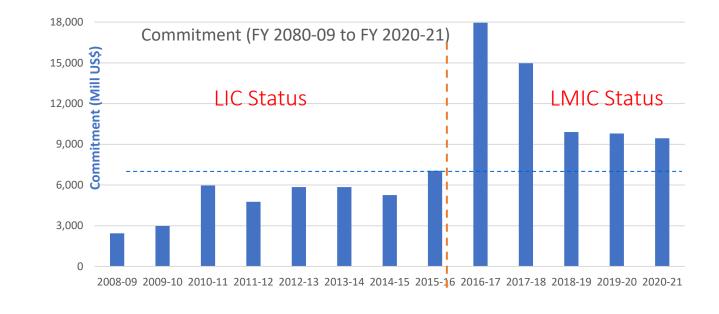
Bangladesh is unique among LDCs

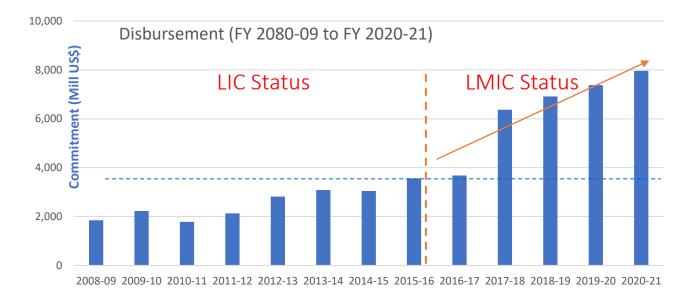


- Like most LDC countries Bangladesh is not affected by three major vicious cycles- *poverty trap, commodity trap, and weak productive capacity*
- Bangladesh's achieved high but sustained inclusive growth over a longer period
- Bangladesh's export is highly dependent on manufacturing goods
- Strong potential productive base with *large young* workforce
- Bangladesh's *productivity* is on upward trend
- Population size, economic size and structure, remittance flows, vibrant export led manufacturing growth placed Bangladesh different among LDCs

IMPLICATION OF GRADUATION FROM LOW TO LOWER INCOME COUNTRY STATUS ON EXTERNAL FINANCING

IMPACT ON ODA CDP- NO IMPACT GED- NO IMPACT





INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT MEASURES (ISMs)

DFQF Access Rules of Origin TRIPS Exemptions Export Subsidies LDC Services Waiver

ODA

Bangladesh made the best use of ISMs among the LDCs...

DFQF Access According to Trade Impacts of LDC Graduation, WTO 2020

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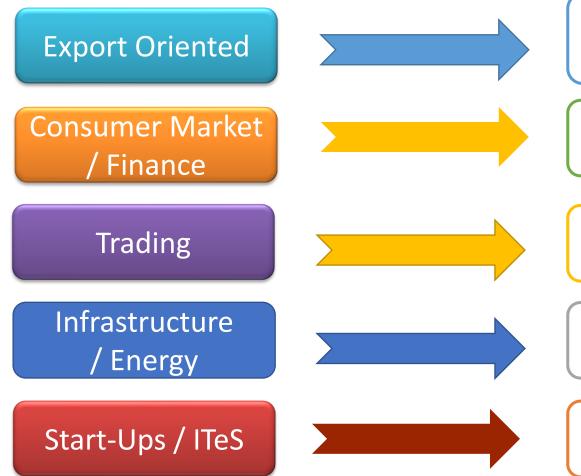
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TRIPS Flexibilities no need of patent protection in Pharma Production

- Bangladesh Pharmaceuticals meets around 98% of local demand and exports to more than 100 countries
- 25% pharmaceutical products will require patent licenses after graduation

ODA the cost of ODA will increase due to rise in per capita GNI

Competitive edge of Bangladesh in investment segments



Large young work-force, Lowest Wage in Asia, Duty Free Market Access, EZs/EPZs

Population of 165 Million, growing middle-class Brand Conscious Consumers

High demand from Industrial Upgrading, Pursuit of Efficiency and Productivity in Various Sectors

Number of Mega Projects, energy sufficiency, large inflow of concessional external finance

High Mobile Density, Internet Density, Tech Savvy Young Generation, Digital Bangladesh Policy

GRADUATION OFFERS TURNING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES

Strengthening multilateralism will be the key driver

| CHALLENGE | OPPORUTNITY |
|---|--|
| COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing regional conflict | building back better; enhancing resilience & green dev |
| Loss of International Support Measures | becoming competitive in the global market |
| Middle Income Trap | graduating with momentum to avoid the trap |
| Technology | Catching up/ leap-frogging |
| Climate change | Green, eco-friendly and sustainable development trajectory |

GRADUATION REINFORCES DEVELOPMENT

- Graduation requires generating income, building human assets and reducing economic and environmental vulnerability
- Graduation reinforces for building productive capacity for sustainable development

Three Graduation Pathways for LDCs...

Pathway I: Rapid economic growth through resource extraction; small progress in HAI and EVI

Pathway II: Economic specialization and investments in human assets

Pathway III: Investment in human assets and (often slow) structural transformation

Main lessons - Pathway I: Rapid economic growth through resource extraction. Small progress in HAI and EVI

Angola, Equatorial Guinea

- Oil drives rapid economic growth
- Human assets remain very low, vulnerability high
- Weak development governance is key constraint
- Vicious cycles: Resource dependence feeds weak governance and reduces urgency for diversification away from resources
- Scope for industrial and sectoral policy limited

Main lessons - Pathway II: Economic specialization and investments in human assets

Landlocked: Botswana, Bhutan

SIDS: Cabo Verde, Maldives, Samoa, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands

- Income channeled into building human assets
- Vulnerability remains high; exogenous
- Absence or restoration of conflict critical
- Economic specialization: natural resources or services (tourism)
- Policies for harnessing external sources of finance- FDI, ODA, bilateral agreements, remittances

Main lessons - Pathway III: Investment in human assets and (often slow) structural transformation

Larger economies: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Rwanda

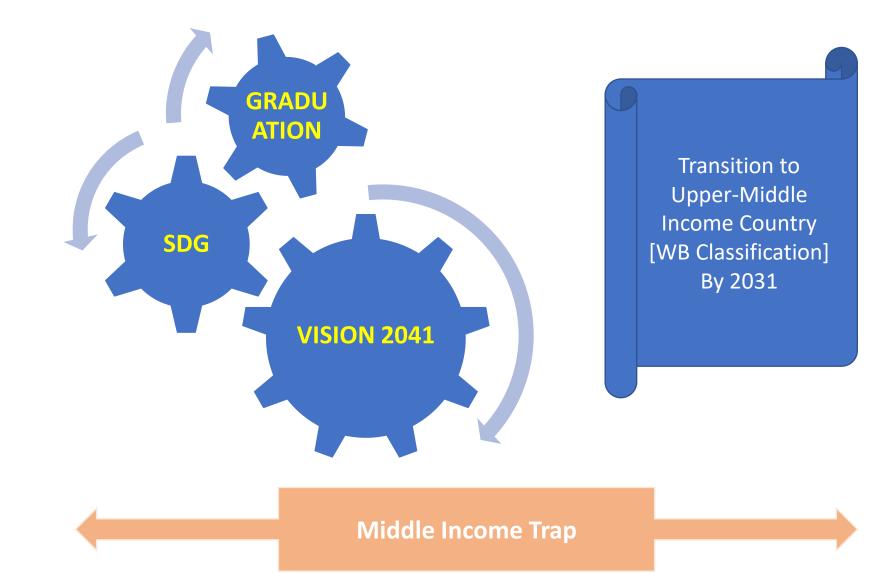
- Slow structural transformation
- Development governance built after war and conflict
 - Active State, ensuring coordination of economic activities
 - National ownership of the process of development
 - Creates room for 'unorthodox' policies
- Increase agricultural productivity first
- Innovative social services delivery
- Appropriate industrial policies is important

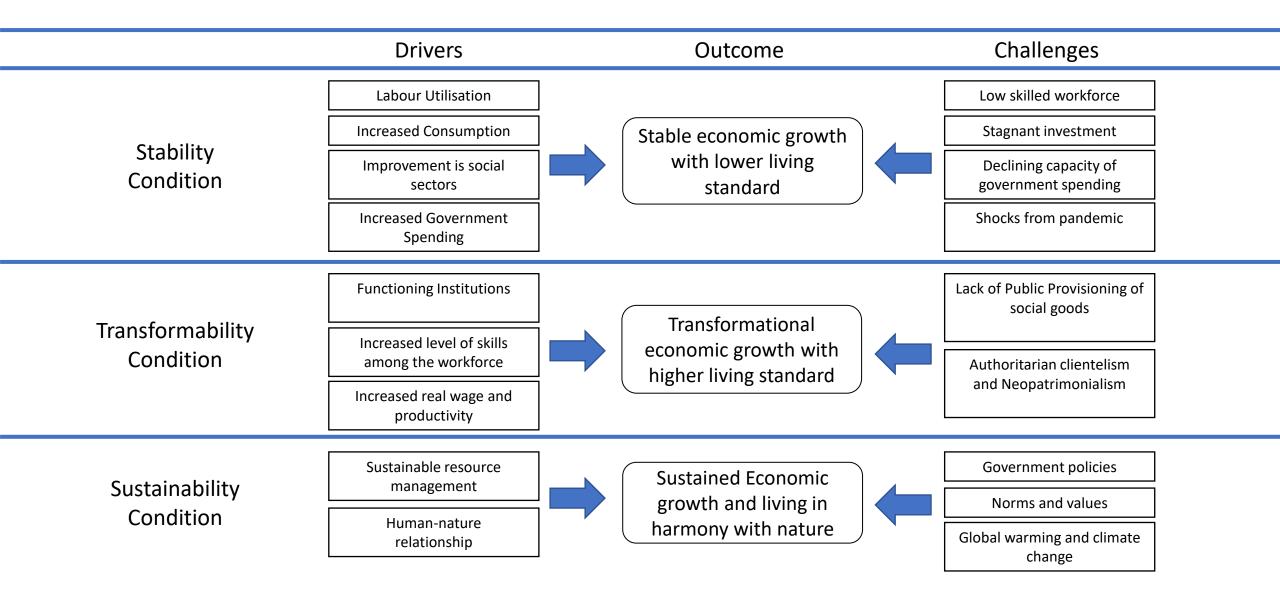
Trade preferences can work, but require basic capacities, 'right' market conditions and domestic policies

GRADUATION IN LARGER DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE

SMART GRADUATION

A SMOOTH AND SUSTAINABLE GRADUATION WITH GREAT MOMENTUM





Source: Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir, Numbers and Narratives in Bangladesh's Economic Development

PRIORITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE GRADUATION OF BANGLADESH

improving human capital and quality

deepening structural transformation

- Social development including health, education and increased coverage of safety net
- Massive skill enhancement program
- Enhancing private sector investment and FDI
- Infrastructural development and export diversification
- Increased access to local and international financial market and innovative instruments for increased financing
- Enhancing resilience against exogenous shocks- finance, health, trade or environment related disasters
- Adapting to climate change
- Prudent debt management

Debt Sustainability Assessment

| Indicators | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | *Threshold level |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------------|
| Debt Stock | | | | | |
| Debt to GDP | 13.95% | 14.71% | 15.49% | 14.33% | 55% |
| Debt to export plus remittance | 68.61% | 69.78% | 88.45% | 85.87% | 150% |
| Debt Service Liability (DSL) | | | | | |
| DSL to export plus remittance | 3.94% | 4.43% | 5.47% | 4.71% | 15% |
| DSL to Revenue | 8.33% | 9.41% | 10.19% | 8.44% | 18% |

Debt Service Scenario

| FY | Principal | Interest | Total |
|------------------|-----------|----------|---------|
| 2016-2017 | 894.10 | 229.17 | 1123.27 |
| 2017-2018 | 1110.43 | 298.76 | 1409.19 |
| 2018-2019 | 1202.31 | 391.47 | 1593.78 |
| 2019-2020 | 1256.55 | 477.44 | 1733.99 |
| 2020-2021 | 1418.63 | 496.19 | 1914.82 |
| 2021-2022(Budgt) | 1770.00 | 820.00 | 2590.00 |
| 2022-2023(Pro.) | 1955.00 | 820.00 | 2775.00 |
| 2023-2024(Pro.) | 2300.00 | 1000.00 | 3300.00 |

Factor to Consider at Present-

Present Situation-

- LIC to LMIC
- LDC to Developing Country
- Decreasing ODA
- Increasing Non-Concessional Borrowing(Interest Rate, Floating Rate, others cost, Maturity)
- Mega Projects
- LIBOR Transition
- COVID-19, World Economic Growth
- Increasing Debt Service
- Increased Pipeline amount

Ref documents:

- 1. Ex-ante Impact Assessment of Bangladesh, CDP, 2021
- 2. Expanding Productive Capacity: Lessons Learned from Graduating Least Developed Countries, CDP Policy Note 2017

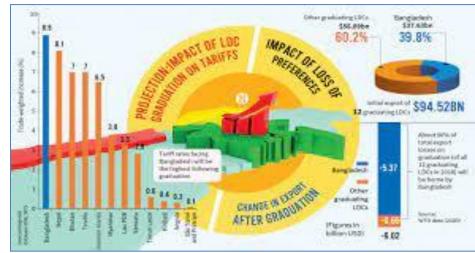
THANK YOU ALL

RELEVANT THEORIES FOR GRADUATION

- DUALISM- LEWIS THEORY
- STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT THEORIES- Rostow's five stages
- TRADE THEORIES



TOT Program on IMPACT OF LDC GRADUATION AND WAY FORWARD



Sharifa Khan Member (Secretary) Planning Commission Mobile: 01752723646 Email: sharifanaser@gmail.com LDCS IN THE CURRENT STATUS



LDCs comprising 14% of the global population. Receive only 1.3% of global GDP, 1.4% of global FDI and less than 1% of global merchandising exports



Almost half of the LDCs are landlocked or small island countries, and highly vulnerable to climate changes.

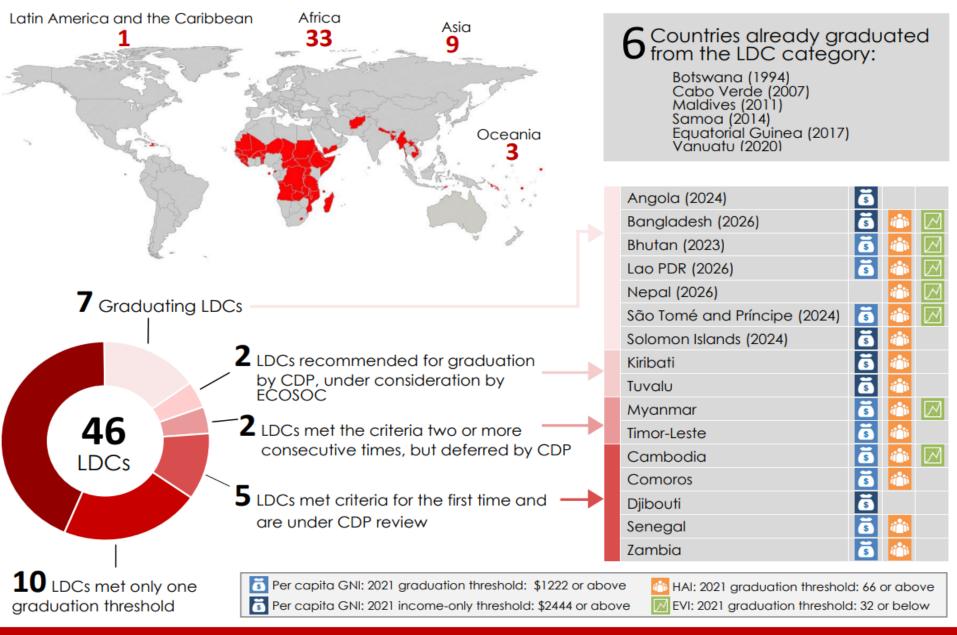


LDCs policy response is limited due to weak fiscal conditions and poor resilience capacity



Underinvestment in health sector, weak social protection systems and lack of institutional capacity

The LDC category after the 2021 triennial review



Source: CDP Secretariat, website: http://cdp.un.org

Benefits Enjoy by LDCs Under WTO

- Unilateral preferential market access in the WTO. Bangladesh enjoys DFQF in 38 countries including 27 EU countries, UK, Switzerland, Australia, China (97% tariff lines), India (except 25 products)
- 2. Favourable Rules of origin.
- 3. Exempted from undertaking commitments in agriculture and nonagriculture and
- 4. Longer grace period under trade facilitations and technical supports for TFA Category C.
- 5. Enjoys waiver from TRIPS obligation and the services waiver.
- 6. Less frequent notification on their domestic support (every 2 years, while annually for other WTO members).
- 7. LDCs can provide certain agricultural export subsidies until 2030.

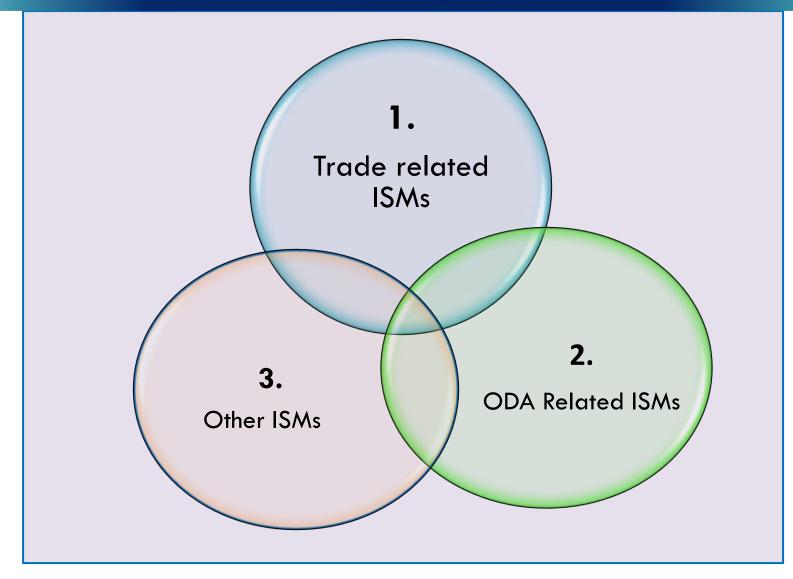
Benefits Enjoy by LDCs Under WTO

- 8. Enjoy longer repayment periods for export financing support and can benefit from the monetization of international food aid.
- 9. Particular consideration should be given to the special situation of LDCs in all stages of a dispute involving an LDC.
- 10. Members should exercise due restraint in raising matters involving an LDC.
- 11. LDCs may request use of the good offices, conciliation and mediation of the Director-General or the Chairman of the Dispute Settlement Body.
- 12. Free legal service from ACWL.
- 13. Technical assistant under EIF and trade facilitations.
- 14. Technology transfer under TRIPS Agreement
- 15. Lower binding coverage and higher bound rates.

BOUND AND APPLIED TARIFFS

| Tariff Commitments and Applied Most-Favoured Nation (MFN) Rates Developed Status (%) | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|------------|-------------|--|--|
| Group | Binding Coverage | Bound Duty | Applied MFN | | |
| All WTO Members | 80.1 | 38.3 | 9.0 | | |
| Developed Country Members | 99.0 | 10.2 | 4.3 | | |
| Developing Country Members | 85.0 | 33.7 | 8.4 | | |
| LDC Members | 63.1 | 57.0 | 11.7 | | |
| Graduating LDC Members | 76.4 | 65.8 | 9.9 | | |
| Other LDC Members | 59.9 | 54.9 | 12.1 | | |
| Bangladesh | 17.0 | 154 | 11.3* | | |
| MFN Applied tariffs do not include other duties and charges Source: WTO Tariff Profiles | | | | | |

Impact of Graduation: Loss of International Support Measures (ISMs)



Loss of Trade Related ISMs

- Loss of preferential Market Access
- Bangladesh will loss DFQF facilities in other countries and RTA partners in 2026 and in 2029 in EU.
- More than 70% of our export duty free market access under the WTO decision of granting unilateral duty free market access to LDCs.
- Undertake tariff reduction commitment under WTO if Doha Round is completed.
- Remove specific duties, regulatory duties and supplementary duties that will lead to more import and worsen BOP.
- Ineligible to enjoy preferential "Rules of Origin" (RoO). Double transformation or about 40-50% value addition.
- Minimum market loss prediction for Bangladesh is 6.3 billion (WTO). UNTAD Estimate: 5-7% of preferential export.
- Bangladesh is no more in Annex 7 list of Subsidies Agreement which allows to provide some export subsidies under certain conditions

Preferential Market Access

| Countries | LDC-Specific Schemes | Applicable schemes after graduation <u>*</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| European Union including UK | Everything But Arms (DFQF) | No EBA after 2029, Standard GSP or GSP+ (after 3-year smooth transition). 9-12% duty |
| Turkey | Everything But Arms (DFQF) | Standard GSP or GSP+, 9-12% duty (after 3-year smooth transition) |
| USA | GSP for LDCs | Standard GSP; AGOA for African states. Bangladesh currently receives no preference |
| China | Preferential tariffs for LDCs | MFN for WTO members, grants DFQF to 97% of Tariff Lines to Bangladesh |
| Japan | GSP for LDCs | No transition support |
| Canada | GSP for LDCs | No transition support. MFN duty about 16-18% |
| South Korea | Preferential tariffs for LDCs | MFN, no transition period |
| India | Preferential tariffs for LDCs | MFN, no transition period Bangladesh enjoys DFQF for all except 25 items |
| Switzerland | GSP for LDCs | Standard GSP, 9-12% |
| Russia | GSP for LDCs | Standard GSP |
| Australia | GSP for LDCs | Standard GSP/ MFN tariff |

Possibility of Getting GSP+ in EU after Graduation

| No | EU Criteria | Current status of | Comments |
|----|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| | | Bangladesh | |
| 1 | Must ratify and effectively | Bangladesh ratified all 27 ILO | However, ensuring |
| | implement 27 international | Conventions including | enforcement is |
| | conventions on labour rights, | minimum working age | difficult |
| | human rights, environmental | convention on 25 February | |
| | protection and good | 2022. | |
| | governance. | | |
| 2 | Safeguard measures of the | GSP-covered imports from | Textile and clothing |
| | newly GSP Scheme under | Bangladesh is more than 16 | may fall under |
| | Article 29 for clothing and | percent of all EU GSP- | safeguard measures |
| | leather for import share | covered imports. | |
| | more than 6% | | |
| 3 | At least 75 per cent of its | Bangladesh fulfills this | No problem |
| | total GSP imports coming | criterion without facing any | |
| | from the seven largest | problem. | |
| | sections of GSP-covered | | |
| | imports. | | |

FTA Opportunities for Bangladesh

- Bangladesh did not gain much from BIMSTEC and TPS-OIC. SAFTA gain has S&DT, but limited benefits.
- Signed only bilateral FTA with Bhutan for limited products.
- Bangladesh enjoys duty-free market access in India except 25 items in India under SAFTA. Achieved limited gain.
- Duty free market access under FTA benefited will be terminated once Bangladesh will graduate from the LDC status in 2026.
- Most of the countries are moving towards to FTA due to deadlock in the WTO Negotiations.
- Competing countries are signing bilateral FTAs with big players, Bangladesh needs to adopt and adjust with the trend.
- However, FTA will be the main tool after LDC graduation to cover the loss of GSP.
- FTA however, is reciprocal, i.e. both parties have to commitment and make concessions.

Huge Sensitive List for SAFTA

| Member | Number of Products in the | Number of Products in the |
|-------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| State | original Sensitive Lists | Revised Sensitive Lists |
| | | (Phase-II) |
| (1) | (2) | (3) |
| Afghanistan | 1072 | 850 |
| Bangladesh | 1233 (LDCs) | 987 (LDCs) |
| | 1241 (NLDCs) | 993 (NLDCs) |
| Bhutan | 150 | 156 |
| India | 480 (LDCs) | 25 (LDCs) |
| | 868 (NLDCs) | 614 (NLDCs) |
| Maldives | 681 | 154 |
| Nepal | 1257 (LDCs) | 998 (LDCs) |
| | 1295 (NLDCs) | 1036 (NLDCs) |
| Pakistan | 1169 | 936 |
| Sri Lanka | 1042 | 837 (LDCs) |
| | | 963 (NLDCs) |

• However, negotiations could not move as expected. SAFTA has huge sensitive list

FTA Challenges for Bangladesh

| 1. | Patterns of PTA/FTAs are changed. It now covers trade in goods, services and intellectual property rights. It also includes non-trade issues such labour rights, green financing, environment, good governance, government procurement etc. |
|----|---|
| 2. | Signing FTA would require reduction of import duties. This will reduce government revenue of around 29%. Revenue loss with China is Tk. 25,000 crore, Malaysia Tk 3000 crore, Indonesia 137 crore etc. |
| 3. | Domestic industry also are not willing to face more competition and reduce duties for the items they produces. |
| 4. | USA, Sri Lanka, Nepal, MERCOSUR, Malaysia and many of the African countries may not be willing |
| 5. | Indonesia offered to grant DFQF for 45 products under PTA which is not meaningful for Bangladesh. |

Enforcement of the TRIPS Agreement

- WTO TRIPS Agreement came into force in 1996, one year after the establishment of WTO.
- In view of the special needs and requirements of LDC, their economic, financial and administrative constraints, and their need for flexibility to create a viable technological base,
- LDCs have been granted <u>two</u> transition periods (after three times extension):
 - Extension of **general transition** period until 01 July 2034.
 - TRIPS extension for the **pharmaceuticals until 2033**.
- Moreover, Article 66.2 allows technology transfer to the LDCs.
- The two extension mentions: until, or **until such a date on** which they cease to be a least-developed country Member, whichever date is earlier.
- TRIPS Transition period will be over as soon as Bangladesh graduate from the LDC status in 2026.

Existing IP Situation in Bangladesh

- Bangladesh's ranking in IPR score (125th/129th in the world) and Global Innovation Index116/131
- Trademark's violation is frequently reported by local and foreign companies.
- World Trademarks Review 2020, reported Bangladesh as the hotspots of counterfeit products.
- Consumers: Health & Safety concerns, get low quality product and loss trust on Brand.
- BUSINESSES: Consumers' dissatisfaction, loss of sales volume, revenue and profit, loss of Trust and Reputation, legal and fiscal liability.
- Creators and innovators are morally discouraged.
- Loss of Tax Revenue: 4.2% to 6% annually
- Investment, especially Foreign Direct Investment discouraged.
- Country image hampered.

Existing IP Situation in Bangladesh







Impact of Termination of the TRIPS Transition Period

TRIPS General Waiver

- No TRIPS waiver will available after graduation in 2026.
- Copyright protection has to be ensured.
- Books and software will be expensive.
- Trademarks violation has to be stopped and other IP protection must be ensured.
- Technology Transfer under Article 66.2 is yet to bring desired benefit

TRIPS Pharmaceutical Waiver

- Patent protection pharmaceuticals will be terminated after graduation in 2026.
- Pay royalties to the patent holders. API and medicines will be expensive.
- Remove export subsidies (5% pharmaceutical and 20% API).
- Test data protection is to be ensured

| Name of the Drugs | Bangladesh Price (US\$) | Price in Countries with Patent Protection (US\$) | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---|--|
| sofosbuvir | 6 | 1000 | |
| harvoni | 12 | 1130 | |
| rosuvastatin | 0.25 | 7.25 | |
| sitagliptin | 0.25 | 11.25 | |
| Source: South Center, Geneva | | | |

Termination of Other Flexibilities

- Bangladesh grants cash incentives about 6,600 crore for export of 38 products.
- Cash incentives are prohibited subsidies and has to be removed.
- Supplementary duty, regulatory duty and development surcharge are not WTO consistent. These have to be withdrawn which would have negative impact on revenue earnings.
- Domestic industries will face fierce competition.
- LDCs including Bangladesh receive free legal supports from ACWL which will be no longer available at free of cost.
- Technical support under Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) supports will be available after five years of graduation.

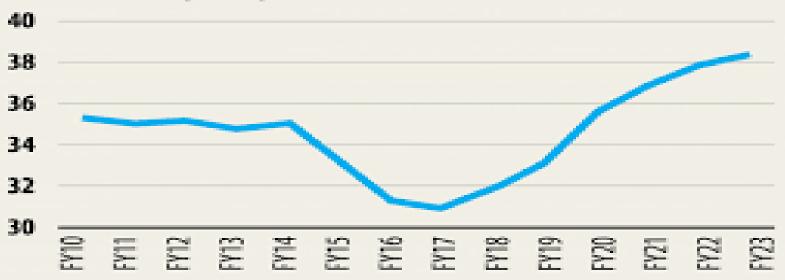
ODA Related ISMs

Bangladesh became a lower middle income country from low income country by World Bank in 2015.

WB graduation to lower middle income countries have already reduced concession aid and grant, increased loan, reduced grace period. All DFQF benefits will be end if Bangladesh moved to uppermiddle income country.

Bangladesh's debt-GDP ratio

(in %); SOURCE: FINANCE DIVISION

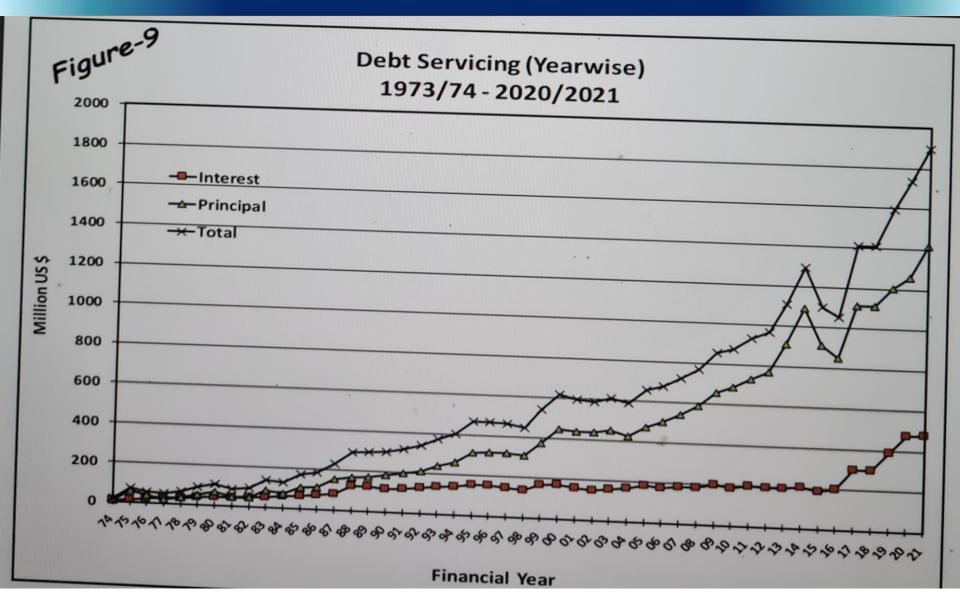


ODA Related ISMs: High Loan

1971/1972 - 2020/2021



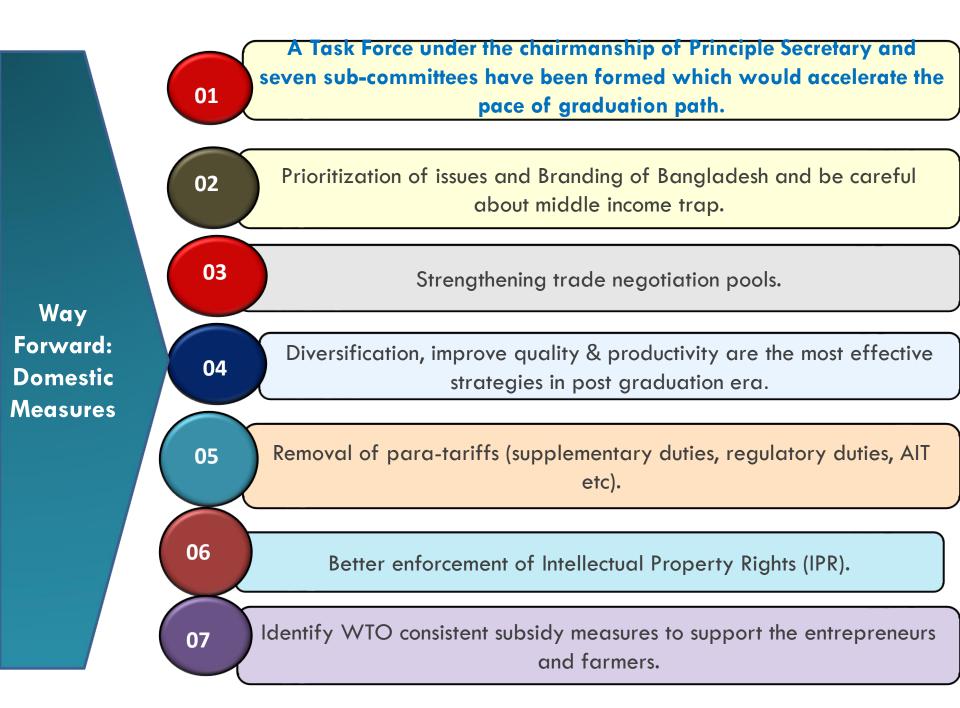
ODA Related ISMs: High Debt Servicing

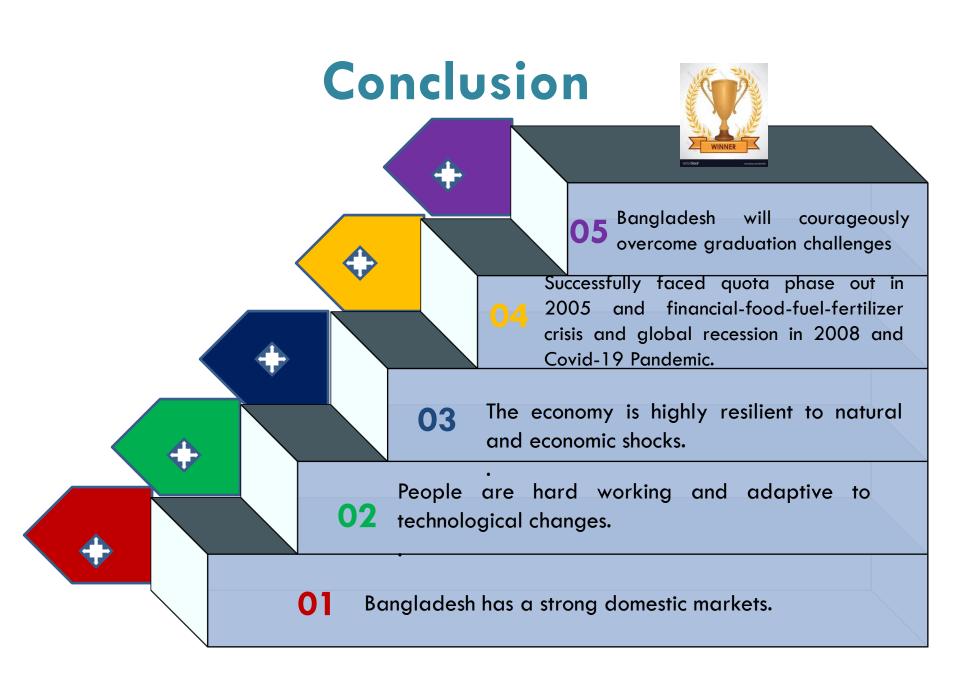


Some Challenges During Post Graduation Era

| Policy Issue | Concerns | Impact |
|---|--|--|
| High export concentration | 84% of export earnings are generated from RMG. US, UK and EU comprises 77% export market | High risk due to current geo political conditions |
| Low Productivity Index | Productivity index = 0.44 Product concentration index = 0.40 Structural transformation index =0.68 Transport index =0.17 ICT index = 0.25. | Hold back Bangladesh's potential growth potentials |
| Dramatic increase of trade imbalance | Currency has devalued significantly due to higher increase of import Export demand could not catch up with import demand. | Increase poverty |

LDC group made a submission to WTO for continuation of S&D after graduation for 6-9 years. 12 WTO Ministerial Conference did not reach any conclusion on this. Just took note of this. Lobby for getting GSP+ with European Way Forward: Union is important International Level Include Bangladesh's name at the Annex 7 list of WTO Subsidies Agreement to continue some subsidies. Take initiatives to sign FTAs/PTAs with potential partners. Try to take benefits as an LDCs and also prepare for negotiations as non-LDC developing countries.





Thank you all

Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme on Bangladesh's graduation from LDC category

Lecture on

Strategies for Sustainable Graduation

Organised by Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre (BPATC) and Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP)

> **Presentation by Mustafizur Rahman Distinguished Fellow**

Centre For Policy Dialogue (CPD)

Wednesday, June 22, 2022

Contents

Strategies for Sustainable Graduation

- 1. Section 1: Context of Bangladesh's LDC Graduation
- 2. Section 2: Strategies Towards Sustainable Graduation
 - 2.1: Bangladesh's Triple Identities
 - 2.2: Four Areas of Impacts: Four Elements of Strategies
 - 2.3: Strategies in View of WTO: MC12 Decision and Graduating LDCs
 - 2.4: Strategies to take advantage of built-in measures
- 3. Section 3: Realising the Strategies Towards Sustainable Graduation
 - 3.1: Middle income graduation and avoiding the MIT

3.2: Raising productivity and competitiveness through triangulation of trade, investment and transport connectivities

- 3.3: Renewed emphasis on regional cooperation
- **3.4:** Ensuring inclusive Dual Graduation
- 3.5: Build the Required Negotiating Capacity

Section 1: Context of Bangladesh's LDC Graduation

- ❑ LDC graduation of Bangladesh testifies to our country's socio-economic progress in terms of per capita income (as indicated by the GNI per capita), enhancement of Human Resources (as indicated by the HAI) and capacity to deal with economic vulnerabilities (as indicated by the EVI)
- Bangladesh is one of only seven LDCs out of the current 46 LDCs which have a firm timeline for graduation
- Graduation has positive implications for Bangladesh's branding and image (improved), economic benefits (e.g., an attractive destination for FDI) and favourable borrowing terms (e.g., better credit rating). But there will be formidable challenges as Bangladesh goes forward

- Bangladesh will need to face the impacts of dual graduation simultaneously: Middle income graduation and LDC graduation
- Bangladesh's Dual Graduation is going to take place at a time when the world is becoming increasingly competitive and there is a rise of mega-regionals. Graduation will take place under the shadow of the pandemic and Ukraine-Russia war and their implications on the economy
- Outcome of MC12 indicates that while WTO members may take some measures in support of the graduating LDCs, the ambition has been set at rather low levels
- Consequently, Bangladesh will need to put more emphasis on its own efforts to navigate the process towards smooth graduation, graduation with momentum and sustainable graduation

Getting Ready for Sustainable LDC Graduation

- The GED has prepared an LDC Graduation Strategy early on
- The 8th FYP of Bangladesh has been designed as a graduation preparedness document and has incorporated many graduation-related strategies
- A high level committee has been constituted at the initiative of the PMO to monitor implementation of the LDC graduation strategy, setting up a number of sub-committees and ensuring participation of representatives of major trade bodies and non-state actors

Bangladesh: The Next Transition

- Bangladesh has made a crucial transition from a predominantly aid-driven economy to a trading economy
- The task before Bangladesh is to make the next transition: From market access driven competitiveness to skills and productivity driven competitiveness through triangulation of trade, investment and transport-logistics connectivities
- UN resolutions have rightly stated: Graduation is not a destination, but a milestone in the journey of the LDCs

Table: Selected data on Bangladesh and other graduating LDCs (billion USD)

| Countries | GDP | Total export of | Total export of | Total import of | Total import of |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | goods | services | goods | services |
| World | 84705.43 | 17347.77 | 5041.74 | 16995.23 | 4706.09 |
| All LDCs* | 1108.69 | 170.55 | 41.86 | 237.73 | 60.14 |
| (including 16 graduating | | | | | |
| LDCs) | | | | | |
| LDCs recommended for | 443.77 (100%) | 61.15 (100%) | 8.68 (100%) | 75.74 (100%) | 16.74 (100%) |
| graduation (7) | | | | | |
| Bangladesh | 324.24 (73.1%) | 32.47 (53.1%) | 6.31 (71.2%) | 48.85 (64.5%) | 8.41 (50.2%) |
| Bhutan | 2.41 | 0.65 | 0.13 | 0.96 | 0.23 |
| Nepal | 33.66 | 0.89 | 0.90 | 9.59 | 1.09 |
| Angola | 62.31 | 20.94 | 0.07 | 9.54 | 5.58 |
| Lao PDR | 19.14 | 5.81 | 1.18 | 6.27 | 1.25 |
| São Tomé and Principe | 0.47 | 0.01 | 0.04 | 0.12 | 0.04 |
| Solomon Islands | 1.55 | 0.38 | 0.05 | 0.40 | 0.15 |
| Other graduating LDCs (9) | 152.38 | 44.24 | 11.92 | 51.84 | 9.73 |
| Other LDCs (26) | 512.53 | 65.16 | 21.26 | 110.16 | 33.66 |

Source: World Development Indicators (WDI), World Bank (2019)

Note: Respective shares of seven LDCs in the LDC group in view of the five indicators are: 40.1 per cent, 35.9 per cent, 20.7 per cent, 31.9 per cent and 27.8 per cent.

• Figures in parentheses show Bangladesh's share in graduating LDC group

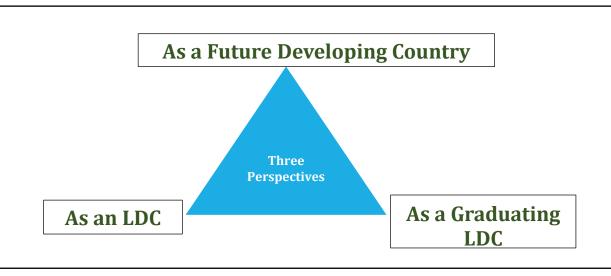
Bangladesh is the first major LDC to graduate. The six previously graduated LDCs are mostly small island economies

Bangladesh's graduation journey will be watched closely by the global community

Section 2: Strategies Towards Sustainable Graduation

2.1: Bangladesh's Triple Identities

Going Forward: Bangladesh will need to be guided by Three Identities



Source: Rahman (2021)

Bangladesh will need to (a) take advantage of its status as an LDC over the next four years; (b) strive to secure a new set of ISMs as a graduating LDC; and (c) most critically important of all, she must take adequate preparation towards Sustainable Graduation by undertaking the needed homework and by implementing the LDC graduation strategy

2.2: Four Areas of Impacts: Four Elements of Strategies

It is reckoned that the impacts on Bangladesh– will be felt at both Domestic Space and Global Space, as depicted in Figure 2. These will likely concern four areas: (a) policy-making and policy flexibilities; (b) obligations, compliance and enforcement relating to various WTO Agreements; (c) terms of market access; and (d) degree of reciprocity in dealing with partners.

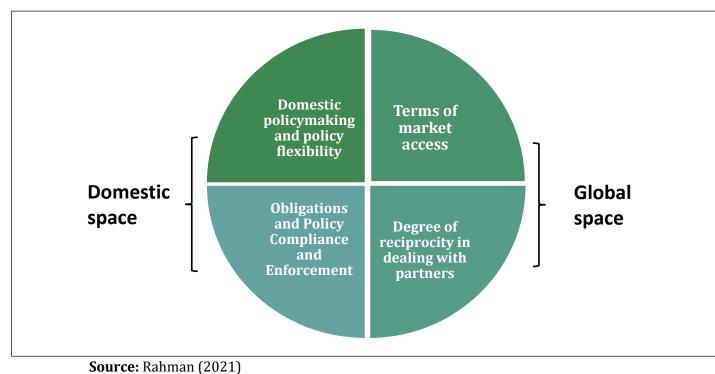
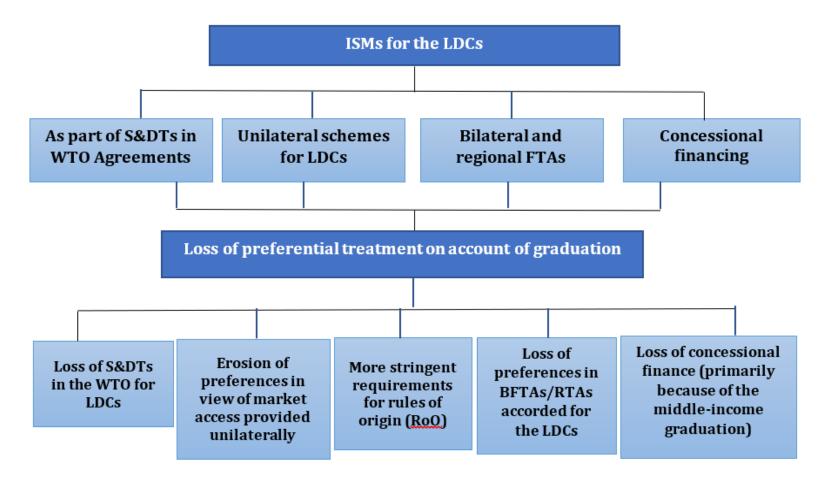


Figure: Impact of LDC graduation on policy space

Graduation and Loss of International Support Measures (ISMs)



Source: Rahman (2021)

As an LDC Bangladesh also enjoys preferential market access under autonomous initiatives operated by preference-providing WTO member countries. For example, as part of LDCspecific preferential market access schemes

- > These preferences are allowed and codified under the WTO Enabling Clause of 1979
- These are offered: Multilaterally as part of various WTO Agreements (e.g. NAMA, AOA, TRIPS, SPS-TBT, TFA; GATS; 183 S&DTs in 16 Agreements, 25 exclusively for the LDCs).
 Bilaterally (e.g. EU-EBA, LDC- specific GSP Schemes). And also as part of RTAs (e.g. in SAFTA, India offers DF-QF marker access to all SAARC LDCs)
- **Together the above constitutes international support measures (ISMs)** for the LDCs
- On graduation, LDC-specific ISMs will no more be available to Bangladesh and other LDCs, with consequent impacts for both national and global spaces

2.3: Strategies in View of WTO: MC12 Decision and Graduating LDCs

- During the run up to MC12, LDCs as a group fought hard to have some concrete measures agreed at the Ministerial (extension of ISMs for a timebound period, extension of DF-QF MA by 6-9 years, extension of S&DT in fisheries subsidies for graduated LDCs by 7 years and others)
- There is no mention in the MC12 Decision as regards any concrete timeline for extension of ISMs for graduating LDCs
- There is only a recognition of the challenges facing graduating LDCs and the need to take supportive actions by WTO members to facilitate sustainable graduation (Para 5)
- If the discussions and negotiations in the WTO Working Groups and relevant platforms can result in some agreed measures, then MC13 (may be held in 2023 or 2024) could come up with some concrete actions

Arguments Favouring Support to Graduating LDCs in view of Upcoming MC13

- The scores for HAI and EVI (which were moving averages earlier) have been fixed in 2012 (at 66 and above and 32 and below) leading to many LDCs being eligible for graduation, in spite of the fact that all graduating LDCs suffer from embedded structural weaknesses. This fact should guide the decisions concerning graduating LDCs
- It is not that WTO does not recognise differentiation among the developing countries. For example, the WTO-SCM (subsidies and countervailing measures) Agreement (Annex VIIb) allows for derogation from obligations on grounds of per capita income (US\$1000 in 1990 terms). Also the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) offers flexibility to net-food importing developing countries (NFIDCs)
- There is precedence in the WTO as regards support to graduating LDCs: Maldives LDC graduation: Deferment of TRIPS implementation by 3 years
- At the least, currently graduating LDCs should be allowed to enjoy the flexibilities that are already in place, for a time-bound period (e.g., TRIPS patent waiver till 2032; GATS Services Waiver till 2030)

Elements of a Possible Graduation Support Package

- Extend S&DTs for a time-bound period
- Urge countries providing preferential market access to LDCs on bilateral basis (EU, India, China, Japan, USA, Canada and others) or as part of regional agreements (e.g. India in SAFTA), to extend the preferences for a time-bound period
- Design a Debt Relief Initiative for graduating LDCs to incentivise graduation and release funds to undertake activities in support of sustainable graduation
- Put in place a Graduation Support Fund
- Support the proposal floated to provide preferential access to the extent of Domestic Value Addition in graduating LDCs
- Embed concerns of graduating LDCs in ongoing negotiations where decisions may be taken at MC13, keeping in the purview the perspectives as both graduating LDC and future (non-LDC) developing country

2.4: Strategies to take advantage of built-in measures

There is already support measures in place within the ambit of the WTO (EIF, Technology Bank) which extend support to LDCs following their graduation. These allow LDCs to enjoy benefits for additional periods (for an additional five years in both the aforesaid cases, following graduation). Bangladesh will need to take full advantage of these built-in measures

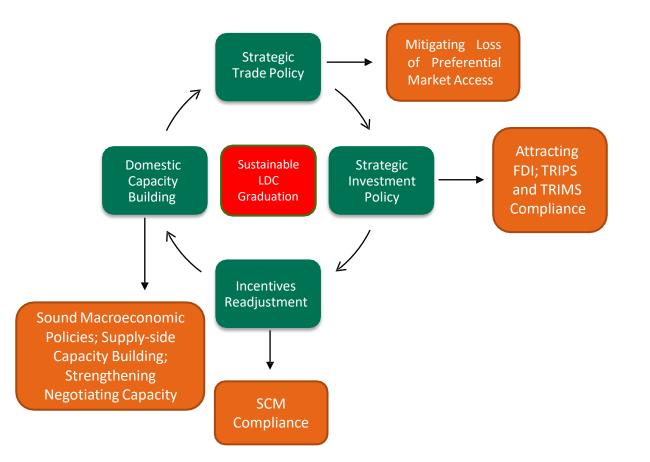
Support for Graduating LDCs in Various Trade-related Areas

| Programme | Area of support and the provider | Extension period after graduation |
|--|---|---|
| EU's Everything but Arms scheme (EBA) | Trade related LDC-specific market access support by the European Union | 3 years |
| Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) | Trade related capacity building multi-donor support managed by United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) | 5 years |
| UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) | Finance related support for the LDCs | 3 years + 2 years on an equal cost sharing basis |
| Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) | Climate fund operated by Global Environment Facility (GEF) | Projects approved before graduation would be funded |
| UN Technology Bank for LDCs | ICT and knowledge sharing platform | 5 years |
| International Development Law Organization (IDLO) pro-bono legal support | On-demand legal and professional assistance to LDC governments | 5 years |
| UN travel support for GA sessions | Travel support fund extended by UN agencies | 3 years |
| | | |

Source: UNOHRLS, (n.d.)

Section 3: Realising the Strategies Towards Sustainable Graduation

Proposed Action Agendas in Going Forward



3.1: Middle income graduation and avoiding the MIT

- Bangladesh will soon graduate from a 'gap country' to a 'blend country' to a 'non-blend' country (exclusively WB-IBRD) which will result in more stringent aid conditionalities and non-concessional loans at a time when it will require more foreign resources to prepare for LDC graduation
- A renewed effort will be needed to ensure best use of aid money to avoid debt distress and the dreaded debt trap. Bangladesh should be cognisant of the middle income trap (MIT) and avoid it by pursuing appropriate macro-economic and fiscal-monetary policies by ensuring good value for money in implementing development programmes
- Move towards (partial) convertibility of BDT may become a necessity
- New sources of funding such as AIIB and NDB (to which Bangladesh has been invited), issuance of sovereign bonds, should be more actively explored

Section 3: Continued

3.2: Raising productivity and competitiveness through triangulation of trade, investment and transport connectivities

- Technological preparedness hierarchy (WEF): Leading; High potential; Legacy, Nascent --> Implications for emerging demands in the job market and for the education sector
- > More reliance on New economy as against Traditional economy
- Transition from factor-driven to productivity-driven economy
- Avoid jobless growth
- Undertake trade and investment reforms
- Triangulation of the various connectivities

Section 3: Continued

3.3: Renewed emphasis on regional cooperation

- Regionalism versus Regionalisation
- > Go for market and product diversification within and outside of RMG
- Integration with Southern Asian markets
- Deepen six connectivities to deepen regional cooperation
- Build regional production networks and RVCs
- Pursue regional integration as a strategy towards strengthened global integration

Section 3: Continued

3.4: Ensuring inclusive Dual Graduation

- Rising consumption, income and wealth inequality in Bangladesh
- Nature of inequality: Sectional and Spatial
- Rising inequality as a drag on future growth
- Leverage the implementation of LDC graduation strategy with SDG implementation
- Triangulation of the three pillars of Economic growth, Social inclusiveness and Environmental sustainability as per the aspirations articulated in Vision 2041

3.5: Build the Required Negotiating Capacity

Section 3: Continued

- In trade negotiations countries get not what they deserve but what they negotiate
- Capacity to carry out tough negotiations to go for CEPA type of Agreement based on:
 - Reciprocity: Providing access to our own market
 - Preparedness to deal with complex issues: tariff and trade liberalisation; opening of sectors for foreign investment; labour compliance; environment compliance
- Bangladesh can go for negotiations bilaterally, or as a groups (SAFTA; BIMSTEC) with single country or with group of countries
- India and China, ASEAN and RCEP are possible regional countries and groupings with most potential benefits, but also most challenging
- Key strategy: Attracting investment to build value-chains and production networks to take advantage of preferential market access
- Approach to negotiation: Argue for Two-track liberalisation (similar to the ones for the CMLV in the ASEAN)
- Develop legal capacities to deal with cases in the WTO-DSB
- Needed A Negotiation Cell (Like the WTO Cell in the Ministry of Commerce), which should be equipped with adequate human-analytical-technical-financial resources and capacities

Thank You

Sustainable Graduation: Enhancing Productive Capacity

M. Tofazzel Hossain Miah Senior Secretary Prime Minister's Office

> 23 June 2022 BPATC

Session content

Sustainable Graduation: Enhancing Productive Capacity

- Concept of productive capacity
- Skill Enhancement
- Technology Development
- Entrepreneurship development
- Capital Market Development and Financial Sector Reform
- Ensuring quality education and healthcare
- Gender Empowerment
- Prudent adoption of 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR)

Presentation flow

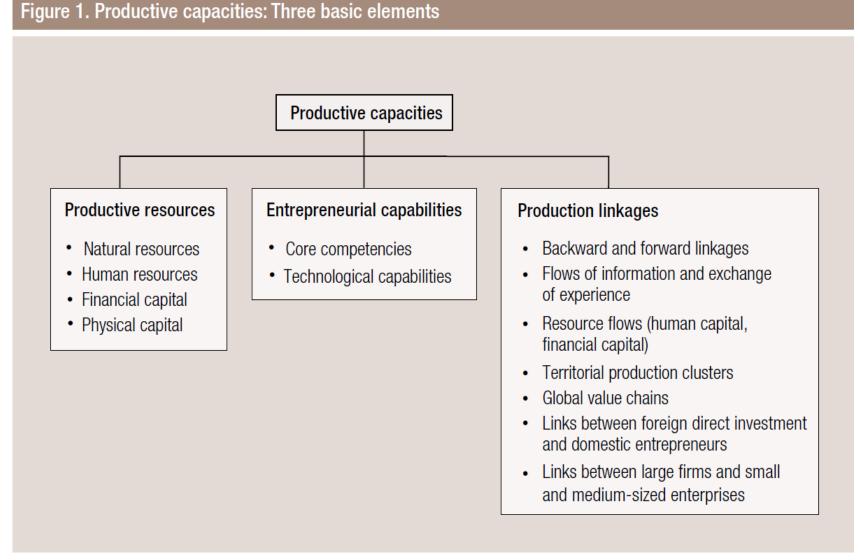
Productive capacity Structural transformation, growth Sectoral strategy for enhanced productive capacity

Why does Productive Capacity Analysis Matter?

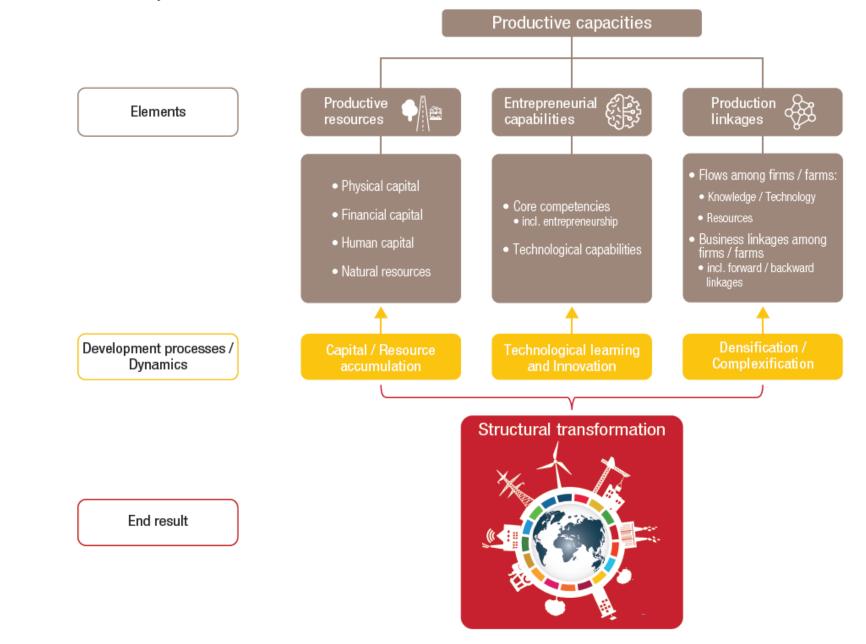
Productive capacity development can help to:

- diversify production and export bases, thereby reducing vulnerability to external shocks
- benefit more from greater integration into the global economy
- sustain progress in human and social development
- adapt and build resilience to climate change and other exogenous shocks

UNCTAD defines productive capacities as the productive resources, entrepreneurial capabilities and production linkages that together determine a country's ability to produce goods and services that will help it grow and develop



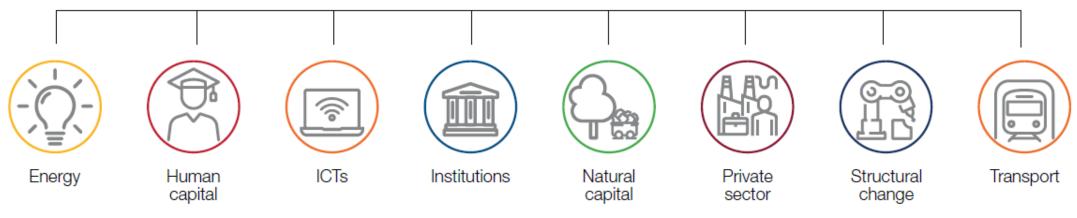
Productive capacities and structural transformation



Productive capacities and structural transformation

The Productive Capacities Index (PCI)

- eight domains or categories; 46 indicators
- scores ranging from 0 to 100
- data for 193 economies for the period from 2000 to 2018



Productive Capacities Index

Ref: Placing productive capacities at the heart of least developed countries' development policy and strategy: A call for change ahead of UNCTAD XV, UNLDC V and beyond, Policy brief No. 86 2021

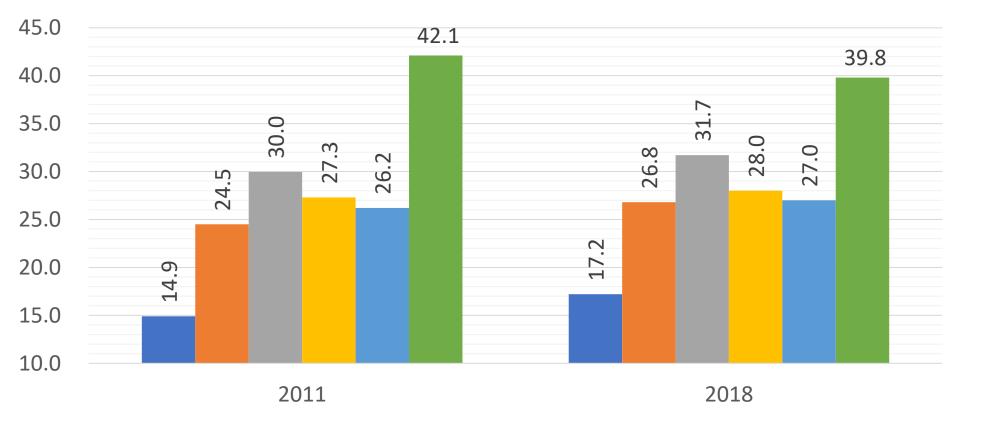
| | Energy | sustainability and efficiency of power sources |
|--|-------------------|--|
| Productive Capacity Index: Eight Core Elements | Human capital | education, skills and health conditions |
| | ICTs | accessibility and integration of communication systems within the population |
| | Institutions | regulatory quality, effectiveness, success in fighting criminality, corruption and terrorism |
| | Natural capital | extractive and agricultural resources |
| Scale 0 to 100 | Private sector | ease of cross-border trade, access to credit, business climate |
| Higher the better | Structural change | movement from low-productivity to high-productivity economic activities |
| | Transport | roads and railways network, and air connectivity |

Productive capacity index (PCI)



A snapshot of PCI, 2011-2018

Bangladesh needs to do a lot to be competitive

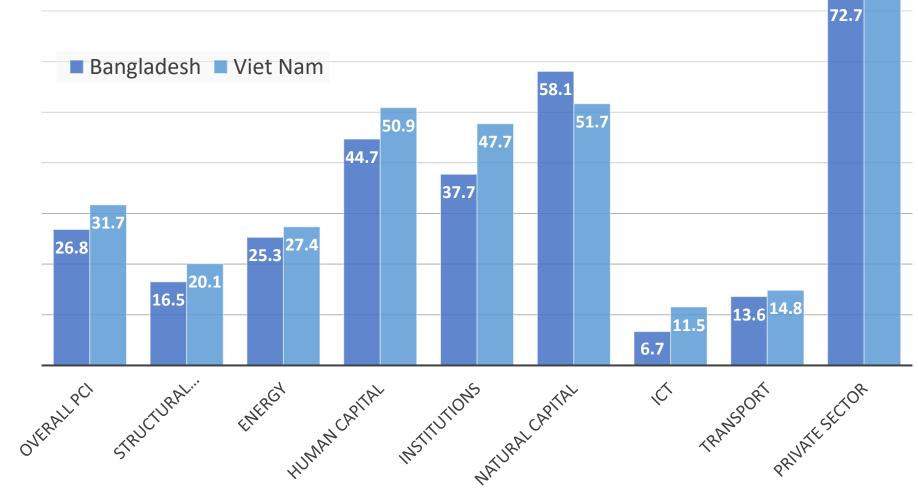


Data source: UNCTAD datastat <u>UNCTADstat - Productive Capacities Index</u>

Categories of PCI: Bangladesh and Vietnam

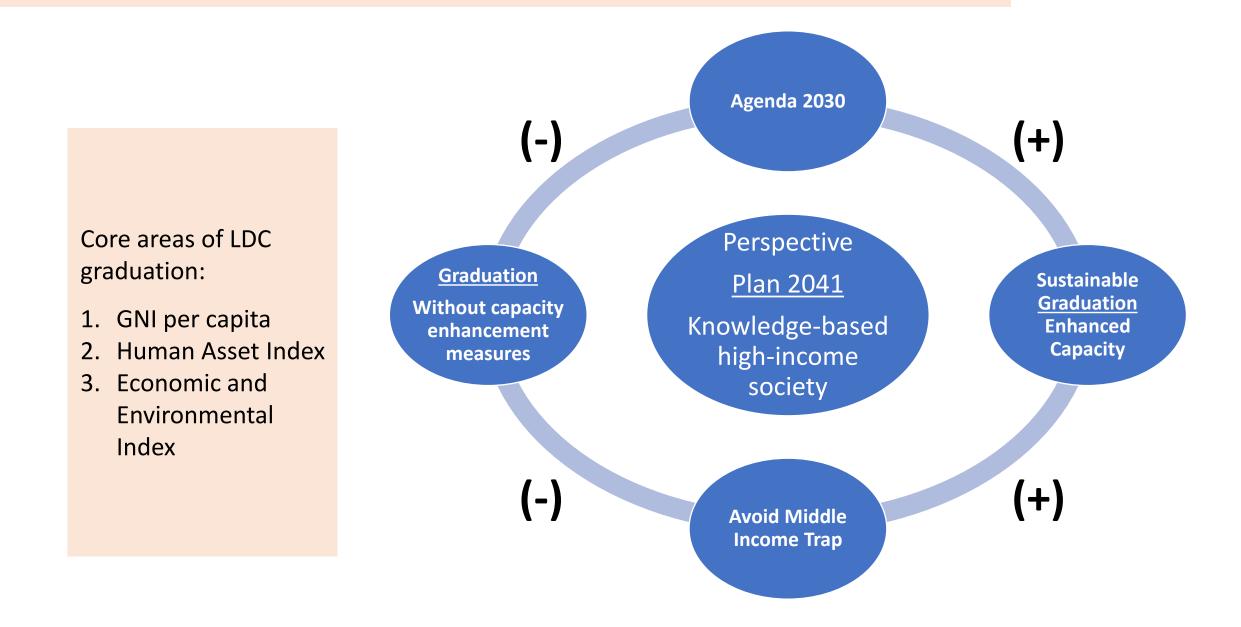
86.7

Bangladesh lagging almost in every core area of PCI against Vietnam in the 2018 dataset

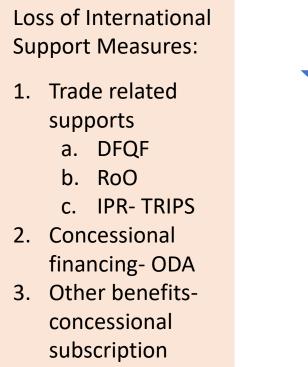


Data source: UNCTAD datastat UNCTADstat - Productive Capacities Index

RELEVANCE OF PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY TO GRADUATION WITH MOMENTUM



COMPENSATING LOSS OF ISMS WITH PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT



Enhanced Productive Capacity Loss of **ISMs**

Improvement in:

- 1. Energy
- 2. Human capital
- 3. ICTs
- 4. Institutions
- 5. Natural capital
- 6. Private sector
- 7. Structural change
- 8. Transport

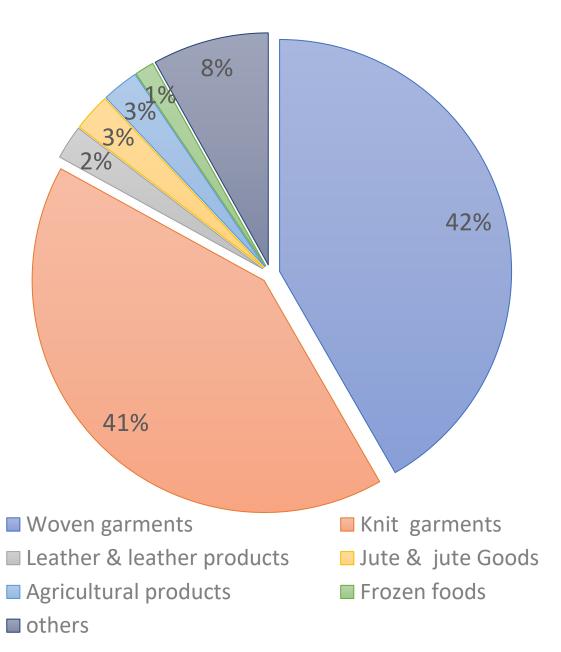
Export Earning From Goods

| FY | Export | Growth |
|---------|-------------|--------|
| | (mill US\$) | (%) |
| 2012-13 | 27,027 | |
| 2013-14 | 30,187 | 11.57 |
| 2014-15 | 31,209 | 2.96 |
| 2015-16 | 34,257 | 9.68 |
| 2016-17 | 34,847 | 1.98 |
| 2017-18 | 36,668 | 7.15 |
| 2018-19 | 40,535 | 13.51 |
| 2019-20 | 33,674 | -15.36 |
| 2020-21 | 38,758 | 15.10 |

Exports of Goods Export (mill US\$) •••••Linear (Export (mill US\$)) 2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17 2017-18 2018-19 2019-20 2020-21

Six items share 92% of the total export basket

| 01. | Woven garments | 41.70% |
|-----|----------------------------|--------|
| 02. | Knit garments | 41.30% |
| 03. | Leather & leather products | 2.37% |
| 04. | Jute & jute Goods | 2.62% |
| 05. | Agricultural products | 2.56% |
| 06. | Frozen foods | 1.35% |
| | Total: | 91.90% |



BANGLADESH EXPORT PRODUCT PROFILE

FY 2010-2011 FY 2018-2019 RMG RMG Leather & Fro. Leather & Jute & Jute & Jute Frozen & Agricultural Agricult.. Other Live Fish Other Products Fish

RMG share in exports rose from 78% in FY 2011 to 84% in FY 2019showing increased export concentration...

BANGLADESH EXPORT DESTINATION PROFILE

Export markets are also highly concentrated; highly skewed to EU and North American markets...

| Destination | % of total | |
|-------------|------------|--|
| Destination | exports | |
| EU | 58% | |
| USA | 14% | |
| Canada | 3% | |
| Japan | 3% | |
| Australia | 3% | |
| China | 2% | |
| India | 2% | |
| Others | 15% | |
| total | 100% | |

EXPORT DESTINATION

| F 11 | | | |
|-------------|-----|----------------|----------------|
| EU | | | |
| EU | | Canada | lanan |
| EU | | Canada | Japan |
| EU | | Canada | Japan |
| EU | | Canada | |
| EU | | Canada | Japan China |
| EU | USA | Canada Aust | China |

Strategy for Higher Exports and Diversification

- Pursue export-led industrialization and growth policy
- Enhance productivity and competitiveness
- Ensure safe work environment and bring reforms for congenial labor market
- Streamline the tariff policies
- Improve trade logistics and strengthen trade facilitation
- Improve national, regional and global connectivity
- Enhance technology transfer and market access through FDI
- Improve the investment climate and ease of doing business
- Strengthen the Institutions for Trade and Industry

WTO-Consistent Industrial Policy for Rapid Development

- Make industrial policy consistent WTO framework
- Policies related to infrastructure, human capital formation, innovation, and diffusion of technology are now critical for export competitiveness
- WTO-consistent industrial policy instruments for Bangladesh would include-
 - Tariffs (within bound rates);
 - Subsidies for regional connectivity, R&D, and the environment; and
- The GoB has adopted a policy of signing bilateral PTA, FTA, or CEPA with potential partners to overcome the trade challenges of LDC graduation
 - Comprehensive study to assess the cost and benefit of forming RTA is critical
 - Rationalizing tariff structure is important for RTA

Strategy for Service Sector to Boost Structural Transformation

- Increase public investment in key service sector infrastructure.
- Develop capabilities that strengthen the skills base for the service industry and the industrial sector.
- Strengthen implementation of prudential regulations to boost service quality, increase public safety, improve compliance and ensure accountability of service providers.
- Strengthen public institutions to support the growth of service sector and improve service quality, safety and accountability.
- Support skills development for employment and entrepreneurship
- Create an enabling ecosystem that allow better partnership among government, entrepreneurs, financial sector and educational institutions for facilitating innovative service offering

Strategy for Digital Economy

- Making IT-related products and services affordable to all
- Establishing cooperation between Industry, Academia, and Government
- Intellectual Asset and Local Market Centric Start-up Success Creation and Youth Empowerment
- Leveraging of Redesign Capability for Creating Success in High-tech Devices and Innovation
- Turning high-tech Parks into Nucleus of Digital, Knowledge and Innovation Economy
- Digital Economy for Leveraging Fourth Industrial Revolution
- ICT for Greater Transparency, Good Governance, and Service Delivery
- Intensifying Effectiveness and Efficiency, and Encouraging Private Investment
- Developing the Culture and National Innovation System for Leveraging Knowledge-Economy

Strategy for Fourth Industrial Revolution

- Deployment of 5G network infrastructure and services to integrate with 4IR and to carry forward the 'Digital Bangladesh'
- Bridging 'Digital Divide' and addressing the changing demands for Digital Skills
- Digital Transformation at Firm-Level
- Partnerships between government and private sector for easier access to finance, investment, skills and infrastructure
- Ensuring Digital Security and Privacy and Bridging the Standardization Gap
- Utilizing the potential of Space Technology
- Creating Internet of Things (IoT) and Machine to Machine (M2M) Communication ecosystem
- Enhance Research and Development and manufacturing of Telecommunications and IT equipment and products

Strategy for Transport and Communication

- Creating balanced inter-modal transport facility
- Ensuring sustainable financing of transport infrastructure
- Developing and implementing key policies for ensuring quality and reliability of transport services
- Consolidation and upgrading of the National Highway Network
- Utilizing the potentials of PPP for private sector participation in infrastructure
- Reconstruction, modernization and extension of missing links for national, regional and global connectivity
- Giving priority to inter-regional river connectivity to facilitate trade, commerce and tourism.
- Upgrading and modernizing all existing airports and build a new international airport.
- Improving productivity of all land and sea ports to bring efficiency in trade and commerce

Overseas Employment and Well-being of Migrant Workers

| Remittances Inflows [mill US\$] | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Countries | FY 2019- 20 | FY 2020- 21 | Growth (%) |
| Saudi Arabia | 4,015 | 5,721 | 42.5 |
| USA | 2,403 | 3,462 | 44.0 |
| UAE | 2,473 | 2,440 | - 1.3 |
| UK | 1,365 | 2,024 | 48.3 |
| Malaysia | 1,231 | 2,002 | 62.6 |
| Kuwait | 1,372 | 1,887 | 37.5 |
| Oman | 1,241 | 1,536 | 23.8 |
| Qatar | 1,020 | 1,450 | 42.2 |
| Italy | 699 | 811 | 16.0 |
| Singapore | 457 | 625 | 36.6 |
| Others | 1,929 | 2,821 | 46.2 |
| Total | 18,205 | 24,778 | 36.1 |

- Institutional and Legal Reform and Capacity Enhancement
- Market Expansion through development cooperation
- Market demand-based skills development
- Access to improved services for migration; Digitization of the process
- Access to finance
- Ensure Protection, Rights and Well-being
- Private Sector and Stakeholders Engagement
- Lowering Cost of Migration

Strategy for Gender Empowerment

The Total Fertility Rate came down from 6.38 in 1980 to 1.99 in 2020

Bangladesh ranks 50th in the **Global Gender Gap Index, WEF** and is the only South Asian country in the top 100;

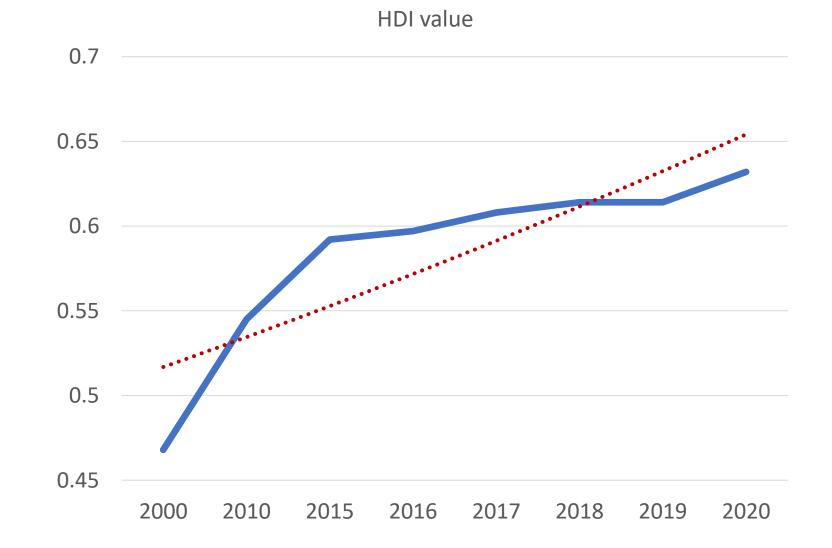
it ranks 7th on Political Empowerment

- 1. Increase access to human development opportunities
- 2. Enhance access to and control over diversified economic opportunities and resources
- 3. Increase participation and decision-making at all levels
- 4. Establish a conducive legal and regulatory environment for gender equality
- 5. Provide Infrastructure and communication services for women
- 6. Improve institutional capacity, accountability, and oversight for ensuring women's rights
- 7. Promote positive social norms

Human Development Index Trend

HDI score is consistently demonstrating an upward trend...

| Year | HDI value |
|------|-----------|
| 2000 | 0.468 |
| 2010 | 0.545 |
| 2015 | 0.592 |
| 2016 | 0.597 |
| 2017 | 0.608 |
| 2018 | 0.614 |
| 2019 | 0.614 |
| 2020 | 0.632 |



Strategies for Education

Primary Education

- Reduce dropout, absenteeism, especially the girl
- Better quality outcome in education through ensuring updated curriculum and pedagogy, improved physical facilities, teaching professionals
- Strategy to make up for the loss of learning during the COVID pandemic Secondary Education
- Increase enrolment in science and technology education.
- Improve equity: Generous scholarships to students and financial incentives to parents
- Encourage greater role of ICT-based learning
- Improve the TVET stream and make it easily accessible
- Ensure better industry-academia collaboration.
- Encourage more private sector investment in education

Strategies for Higher Education

- Increase focus on STEAM fields including Agricultural Sciences;
- Reduce the gender-gap and provide generous scholarships for women and other funding packages.
- Greater collaboration with internationally reputed universities;
- More focus on research and publication;
- The industry-academia linkage and placement programs;
- Empowering the University Grants Commission (UGC) towards improving educational management;
- Involving private sector in education investment and curriculum development;
- Devising curricula to match the demand of the market;
- A permanent statutory National Education Commission that anticipated in Education Policy 2010 will be used for guiding, exercising oversight, assessing progress and impact of education reforms.

Health sector progress card

Both infant and under 5 mortality rates are declining with a significant converging trend between urban and rural

The life expectancy at birth has converged with the global average- demonstrating great improvement in access to health facilities

Infant Mortality Rate (<1 year) per 1000 live births National Urban Rural

2016

2017

2018

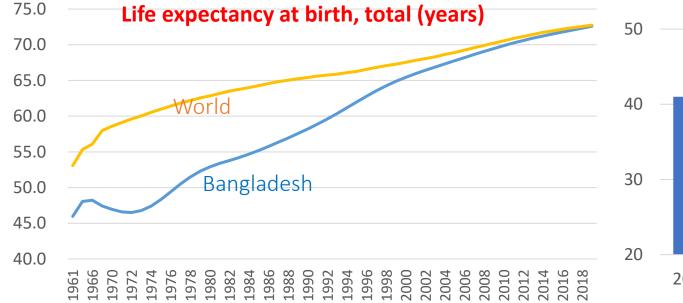
2019

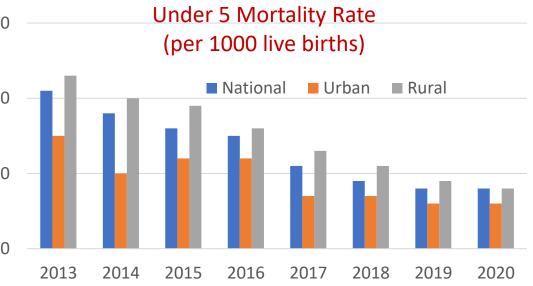
2020

2013

2014

2015





Strategies for Health

- Addressing challenges of stunting through nutrition and social protection measures
- Bringing efficiency in the service delivery in the public sector health management
- Utilizing the potential of Public-Private Partnership in the health services
- Ensuring improved cost-effective services in the private sector provider through effective rules, regulations and close oversight
- Introduction of universal health care facilities will be the key to ensuring 'health for all'
- Improving the skill and quality of all levels of medical professionals
- Increased allocation for health research and development
- Improving preparedness and resilience for any uncertain situation like the COVID pandemic

CLIMATE CHANGE

Bangladesh is the 8th worst-hit country by natural disasters, World Disasters Report 2018

COMMON FEATURES

- frequent flood
- tropical cyclone
- salinity intrusion
- damage of infrastructure
- agricultural losses

Measures Undertaken

- Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, 2009
- Climate Change Trust Fund, 2009
- National Sustainable Development Strategy, 2010-2021
- National Environment Policy 2018
- Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100

Policy Outlined in 8FYP

- Allocating more resources for green
 development
- Planning of taxing industrial units for air and water pollution
- Reducing subsidies for fuel and adopting green tax on fossil fuel consumption

Delta Plan 2100

- long-term integrated technical and economic mega plan
- integrates all delta-related sector plans and policies, enveloping a Delta Vision and strategies
- the Delta Vision plan aims to achieve a safe, climate-resilient and prosperous delta.

Global Climate Financing

- Fulfilling committed resources to flow to LDCs
- Due supports to compensate noncontributing but victim nations

Strategies for Environmental Development

- Adoption of Environmental Fiscal Reforms (EFR) for Sustainable Development
 - Strengthening Environmental Concerns and Climate Change in Planning and Budgeting
 - Increased resources in the management of ecosystem and biodiversity conservation
 - Taxation of Emission from Industrial Units
 - Reducing Subsidies for Fuel and Adopt Green Tax on Fossil Fuel Consumption
- Administrative Reforms for Implementing Environmental Fiscal Reforms
 - Coordinating NAP, BCCSAP, CIP and NDC with BDP 2100
 - Improving the Capacity of MoEFCC
- Strengthening economic diplomacy for ensuring greater access to climate finance
- Implementation of the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100

MIDDLE-INCOME TRAP (MIT)

Structural transformation through enhancing productive capacity is crucial for avoiding MIT

Potential Challenges of MIT

Bangladesh's development vision of achieving a knowledge-based developed economy by 2041 may be hampered due to being stuck in the MIT

Strategies to avoid MIT

- Structural transformation and high-value-adding activities
- Enhanced productivity and competitiveness
- Innovation conducive policy framework and business environment
- Inclusive and green development path for shared prosperity
- FDI is critical for technology transfer, filling capital and entrepreneurship gap
- Economic integration for accessing new markets
- Sector-specifevidence-based policy support
- An effective framework for policies and institutions to encourage skills, knowledge, and technology

Strategy to Enhancing Capacity Reflected in the Budget 2022-23

- Credit and other facilities will continue to be provided to the CMSMEs
- Agricultural diversification and ICT dependent initiatives will be priority
- Diversification of exports and incentives for backward linkage industries
- For new start-ups, a project titled 'My e-commerce, My own business' is initiated
- Lowering corporate tax, Deepening Financial Inclusion and Development of Insurance Services
- National Social Insurance Scheme and Initiative to Introduce a Universal Pension Scheme
- Increasing internal revenue collection (value added tax and income tax) through rationalization of tariff structure

Strategy to Enhancing Capacity Reflected in the Budget 2022-23

- Consumption and investment to increase the domestic demand and exports to increase the external demand
- Building improved communications, necessary infrastructure and ensure power and energy security through increased public, private and foreign investment
- Increasing the productivity of labor to increase export competitiveness.
- Accelerating the growth of the industry and service sector to achieve high GDP growth and employment.
- Vocational and technical education to build skilled manpower and explore new labor markets to increase remittance income
- Creation of better environment for Ease of doing business and opportunities in Bangladesh for foreign investment

Productive Capacity:

a critical driver for employment generation and faster economic growth Productivity Growth

> Productive Capacities



Investment in Productive capital



Knowledge acquisition



Entrepreneurship

Sustainable Graduation

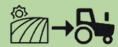
Employment creation

Structural transformation





Industrialization



Upgrading

Ref documents:

- 1. LDC Report 2020: Productive Capacities for the New Decade, UNCTAD
- 2. Eighth Five Year Plan (2021-2025)
- *3. Budget speech 2022-2023*

THANK YOU ALL

Formulation of Smooth Transition Strategy (STS)

Anwar Hossain, Component Manager (Joint Secretary) Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP), ERD

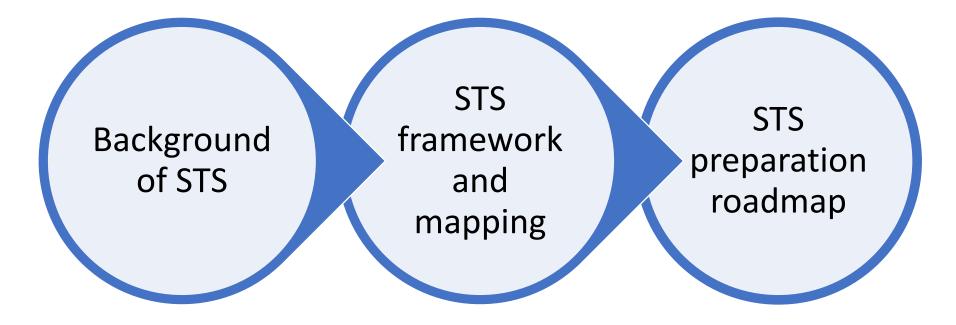
> 21 June 2022 BPATC

Session Content

Formulating Smooth Transition Strategy (STS)

- Government Initiatives
 - Formation of National Committee on Graduation
 - Formation of seven sub-committees and working groups, etc.
- Establishing Consultative Mechanism involving all the stakeholders including development and trading partners
- Process of STS formulation
- Roadmap

Presentation flow



Background of STS Preparation

- Bangladesh achieved double graduation under the prudent statesmanship of HPM since 2009:
 - Graduated to LMIC in 2015
 - UNGA resolution on LDC graduation on 24 November 2021 with 5-year preparatory period
- UNGA resolution, CDP chair's note, Handbook and guidance note of CDP highlight preparation of Smooth Transition Strategy (STS) during the preparatory period (2021-2026)
- Smooth transition is a concept of avoiding negative consequences and enhancing capacity for sustainable graduation.



STS will be prepared in the preparatory period (2021-2026)



STS Reference

- CDP Chair's letter
- Guidance Note
- CDP Handbook
- UNGA Resolution

and Nepal from the least developed country category

SMOOTH TRANSITION STRATEGY (STS)

- Smooth Transition Strategy (STS) is a compact development agenda encompassing all areas of the economy, human capital, environment, technology, and governance.
- The essence of graduation from the LDC status is to uplift a country to a new development trajectory through increasing productive capacity and structural transformation.
- Improving **business and investment climate** through policy support, infrastructure facilities, trade facilitation
- Massive skill enhancement programs for leveraging demographic dividend
- Mainstreaming MSMEs in the economy for quality job creation
- Narrowing the digital divide for enhancing competitiveness and productivity
- STS is the **agreement with the main bilateral and multilateral** development and trading partners on smooth transition measures

DEVELOPING STS THROUGH A CONSULTATIVE MECHANISM AS PER CDP GUIDELINES

- All relevant Ministries/ Divisions/ Agencies
- Private Sector
- UNRC and other DPs, Trading Partners
- CSOs, think tanks

Global & Local Initiatives for Sustainable Graduation

Global Initiatives

- DFQF access should continue for a reasonable time after graduation
- Relaxing the accessibility to TRIPs and technology bank for graduated nations
- Allowing easy and affordable access to knowledge product for graduating and graduated nations
- Scaling up concessional supports to enhance productive capacity for LDCs in the pre and post graduation phase
- Pressing global community to materialize their committed support for climate change for which many LDCs are innocent victims

Domestic Policy Intervention

- Enhancing Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM)
- Diversification and expansion of the base of industries and export
- Exploring market access through negotiation
- More private sector investment and more FDI in high-value industries (job creation)
- Ensuring inclusiveness and increased coverage of the social safety net
- Investment in Human capital to lift productivity and Investment in Health Sector
- Adapting to climate change to reduce vulnerability; shift to clean and sustainable energy
- Prudent debt management

Preparations for Smooth and Sustainable Graduation

Key stakeholders engagement

- **A 22-member National Committee on LDC Graduation** under the leadership of the Principal Secretary to HPM and 7 Subcommittees have been formed
- **A Working Group** is working to provide technical support
- A **Joint Task Team (JTT)** has been formed to guide the formulation of the Smooth Transition Strategy through the Consultative Mechanism
- Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP) is being implemented by ERD to support graduation
 processes and activities

Campaign for the continuation of ISMs beyond graduation

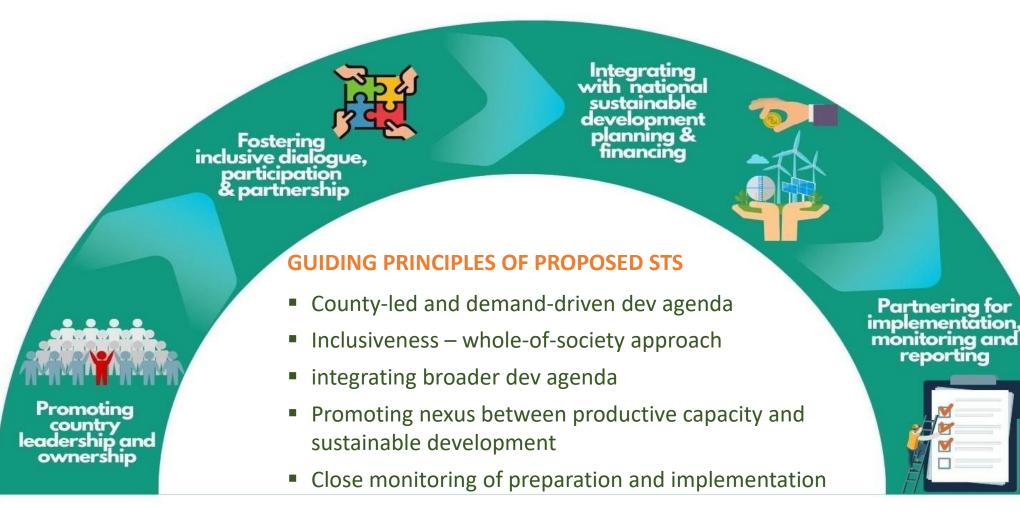
Extension of General Transition under the TRIPS Agreement

- WTO members agreed to extend until 1 July 2034

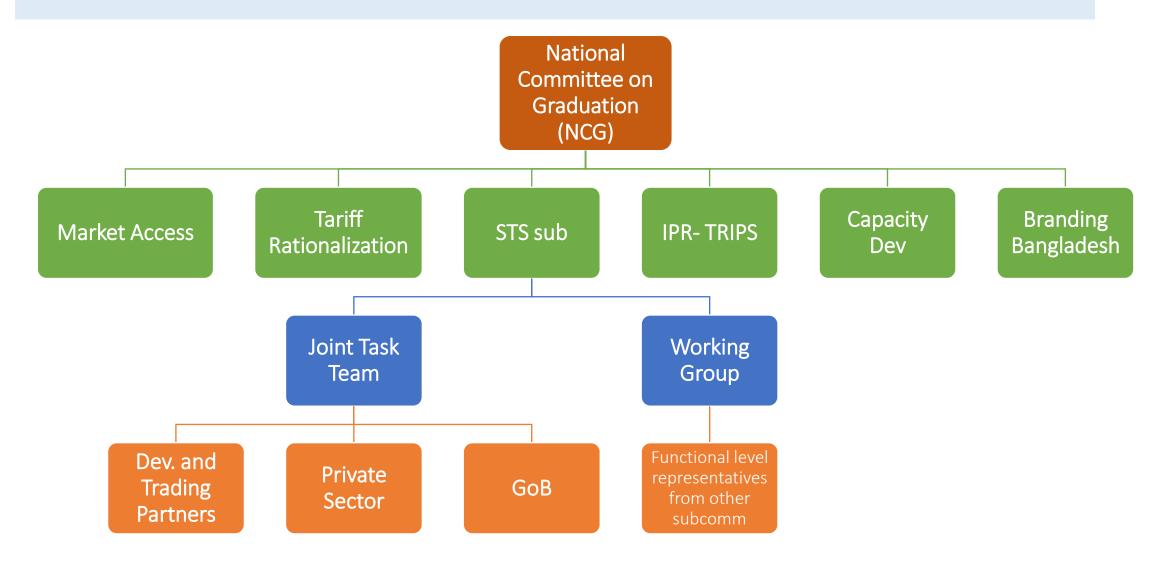
Draft proposal for WTO Ministerial Conference

To extend current and future ISMs at least **for twelve years** after graduation [DFQF, TRIPS pharma transition, cash incentives etc.]

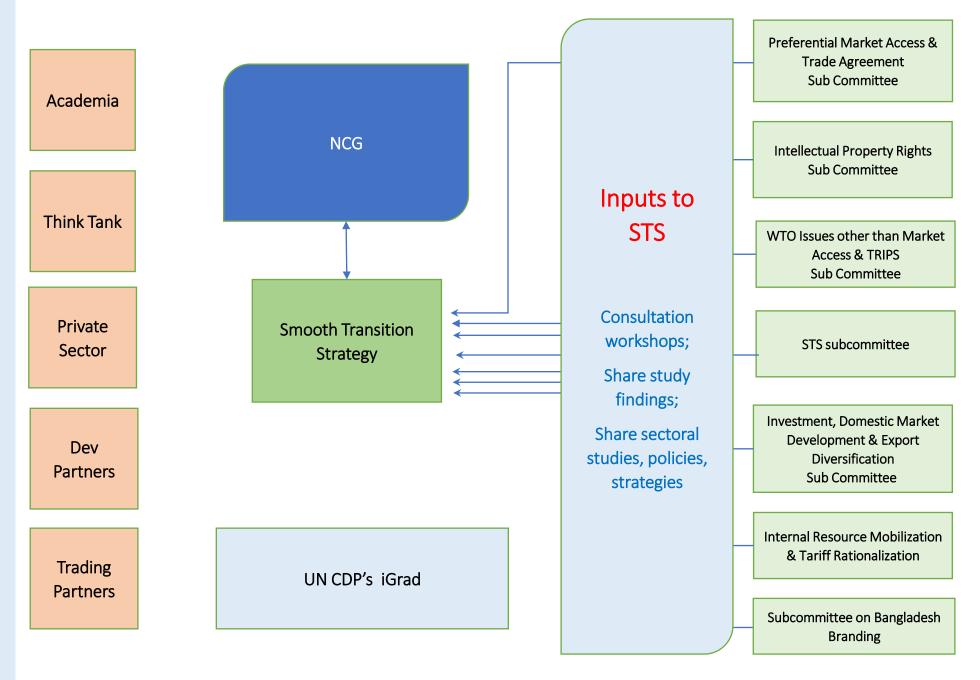
KEY FEATURES OF BANGLADESH STS



BANGLADESH SMOOTH TRANSITION STRATEGY FRAMEWORK



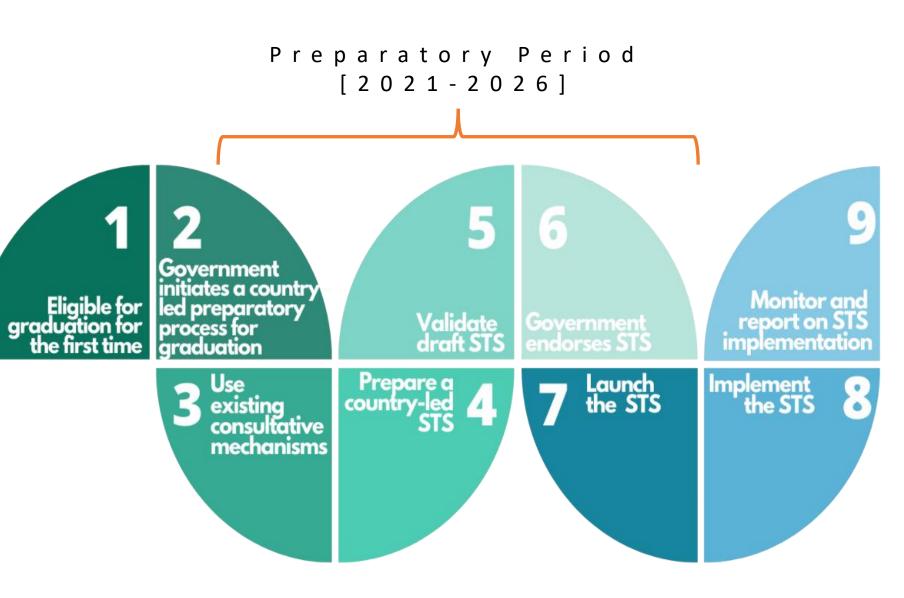
Consultative Mechanism designed for preparing Smooth Transition Strategy



| | SOL-1: Addressing the loss of existing ISMs | a) Support for existing ISMs b) Strengthen negotiating capacity c) technical assistance for LDC-specific SDTs |
|--|--|---|
| SUSTAINABLE GRADUATION SUPPORT FACILITY (iGrad) | SOL-2: Improving the ability of graduating and graduated LDCs to access non-LDC-specific support | a) Support assessment of climate funding b) Assist in accessing non LDC-specific Aid for Trade c) Technology transfer and transfer of know-how d) Innovative disaster-risk reduction solutions |
| | SOL-3: Preparing and implementing a smooth transition strategy (STS) | a) preparation and implementation of a STSb) Connect countries to partners |
| | SOL-4: Assistance in Accessing Financing Transition and Beyond | a) Support to INFF b) Facilitate access to finance c) Support to strengthen revenue generation capacities |
| SIX SERVICE OFFERING LINE (SOL) | SOL-5: Facilitating South-South Cooperation, dialogue and sharing country as well as region-specific knowledge and experience | a) Support south-south dialogue |
| | SOL-6: Ensuring effective participation in the monitoring process of the CDP | a) Facilitate inputs to CDP b) Facilitate communication channel between CDP and Govt c) Assist participation of the country in CPD's effort |

STS Process during Preparatory Period [2021-2026]

- Country prepares the STS during the Preparatory Period
- Country may start implementing the STS with the support of development and trading partners
- Country reports annually on the progress of STS to CDP
- Bangladesh undergoes another Triennial Review in 2024
- CDP monitors development and STS progresses and alerts the ECOSOC of any setback



Nine key steps of STS process

Step-1: Country meets the graduation criteria for the first time

- The country takes ownership and leadership of whole process in terms of its readiness to prepare and mange graduation and smooth transition.
- Organize awareness at local, subnational and national levels in order to have as wide as possible an understanding of what it means to sustainably graduate from LDC category

Step-2: Govt. initiates a country-led preparatory process for graduation

- Govt.-led dialogue (based on whole-of-govt. policy leadership with key partners from private sector and NGOs) aimed at how best to integrate graduation into its existing plans, policies, and MTBF and associated process.
- Strategic engagement with intl. community at the outset to clearly outline it will need throughout the graduation process.

Nine key steps of STS process (contd..)

Step-3: Use consultative mechanism to facilitate the preparation of strategy

- Existing or new mechanism should be integrated with other relevant consultative processes & initiatives between the country and its DPs and TPs. Two key components of the consultative mechanism:
 - (a) National and local stakeholders- govt., think tank, pvt. Sector, CSOs and other
 - (b) Intl. partners- bilateral, multilateral & regional partners, pvt sector, philanthropies, INGOs
- Having a component dedicated to national and local consultations allows the voices and interests to be heard and considered in preparing the STS & implementing the process.
- Intl. community facilitate identifying and negotiating graduation support prior to preparing STS

Step-4: Prepare country-led STS

 The GA recommends that the STS should include a comprehensive and coherent set of specific and predictable measures that are in accordance with the priorities of the graduating country, while taking into account its structural challenges and vulnerabilities as well as its strength, and should be implemented as part of the overall development strategy.

Nine key steps of STS process (contd..)

Step-4: Prepare country-led STS

- The approach of developing & implementing STS should be through inclusive and participatory engagement process.
- Sufficient time should be spent on thorough analysis of impacts and identification of mitigation measures for smooth transition beyond graduation.
- The draft should be shared with stakeholders well ahead of a validation workshop and the revised strategy is prepared based on the comments received

Step-5: Validate the draft strategy

• A whole-of-govt, country-led validation workshop should be organized and facilated through consultative mechanism

Step-6: Government endorses the STS

- Govt. endorsement gives the legitimacy of STS for implementation and garner support from DPs
- Responsibility of implementing actions or measures of STS should be assigned within the govt. with specific timeframe
- The STS should be endorsed by the Govt well ahead of graduation becomes effective

Nine key steps of STS process (contd..)

Step-7: Launch the STS

• An opportunity to promote key messages underpinning the importance of smooth transition beyond graduation that requires commitment by all.

Step-8: Implement the STS

- Country implements the STS as part of their overall development policy
- Linkages can be identified with VNR, diagnostic trade integration study, trade policy review, poverty reduction and growth strategy
- The resource required for implementing the STS should be reflected in MTBF, INFF, dev. Fin. strategy

Step-9: Monitor and report on the implementation of STS

- STS should be embedded in country's monitoring and evaluation framework
- Annual monitoring and reporting should form part of existing sectoral momnitoring and reporting and integral reporting requirements to CDP
- Develop a brief advocacy and communication strategy as a tool for higher level in raising awareness, garnering support across the country and strengthening key partnership

BANGLADESH: SMOOTH TRANSITION STRATEGY AND PRIORITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE GRADUATION

BROAD STS OUTLINE

Executive summary

Chapter 1. Socioeconomic Transformation and Graduation from LDC Status

Chapter 2. Pathways towards Graduation: Tapping Opportunities and Addressing the Loss of ISMs

Chapter 3. Priorities for Inclusive Graduation with Momentum

Chapter 4. Preparing for an Uncertain World and Building Resilience

Chapter 5. Best Utilization of Strategies for Sustainable Graduation and Development

Table of Graphs

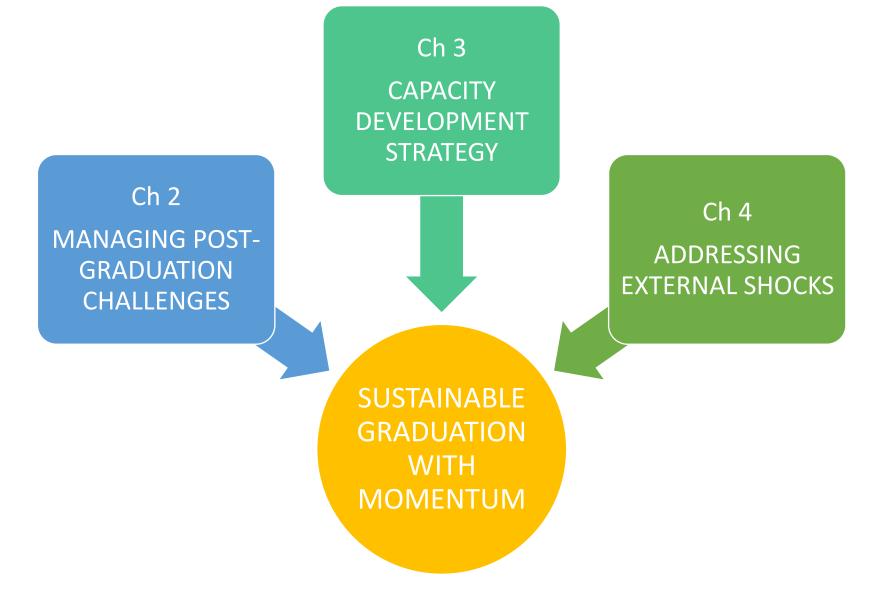
Table of Tables

Table of Annexures Annexure: Policy Matrix Annexure: Implementation Matrix

BROADER STRUCTURE OF STS

Key components of LDC graduation:

- 1. Per capita income
- 2. Human Assets
- Economic and environmental vulnerability



Mapping sources of information for STS

| Probable content | Brief annotation | Internal Sources | UNRC- IATF | UNDESA's iGrad |
|--|---|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Executive summary | | | | |
| Chapter 1. Socioeconomic Transformation and Grac | luation from LDC Status | | | |
| 1.1. LDC graduation context | Context of graduation journey- 2018 through now | GED FD | | |
| 1.2. Graduation support framework | Institutional framework to support sustainable graduation- NCG/ subcommittees/ JTT/ WG | STS led subcommittee | | |
| 1.3. Approach to developing the smooth transition strategy | Consultative mechanism/ linkages among 7 thematic subcommittees/ measures taken for STS so far | STS led subcommittee | | |

* sub stands for subcommittee in the matrix

| Probable content | Brief annotation | Internal Sources | UNRC- IATF | UNDESA's iGrad |
|--|--|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Chapter 2. Pathways towards Graduation: Tapping Opportunities and Addressing the Loss of ISMs | | | | |
| 2.1. Opportunities created by the LDC Graduation and its implications for Bangladesh 2.1.1. Strategy for best utilization of ISMs during the preparatory period 2.1.2. Promoting foreign and local investment 2.1.3. Harnessing enabling environment for business and trade 1.1.4. Promoting country branding for finance and business 2.2. Addressing loss of preference in international trade 2.2.1. Preferential market access in the European Union 2.2.2. Preferential market access in other major markets 2.2.3. Tariff implications on overall trade dynamics 2.2.4. Preferential Rules of Origin and implications | Opportunities offered by the graduation- Image- Confidence- InvestmentBranding Bangladesh StrategyStrategies to address the challenges in various markets- EU/ North America/ India/ ChinaStrategies to address tariff implications on import and local market | MoC led subcommittee STS led subcommittee PMO led subcommittee BIDA led subcommittee MoC led subcommittee | | |
| 2.2.5. Strategies to mitigate implications | | | | 21 |

| Probable content | Brief annotation | Internal Sources | UNRC- IATF | UNDESA's iGrad |
|---|---|--|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 2.3. Policy intervention for other trade-related supports 2.3.1. Special and Differential Treatment 2.3.2. Intellectual Property (IP) issues 2.3.3. Export subsidies 2.3.4. Others 2.3.5. Strategies and roadmap to comply WTO obligations | Loss of special and differential treatment - Subsidies - IPR - TRIPS -strategy to comply WTO obligations | MoC led subcommittee study report on WTO issue FD led subcommittee - study on tariff rationalization MoI- study on IPR and TRIPS flexibility | | |
| 2.4. Development and Transition Financing | -strategy for securing transition financing and maintaining debt sustainability | STS led subcommittee - study report on Transition Financing; | UNDP- DFA and INFF | |
| 2.5. Redressing climate vulnerability for sustainable graduation | -strategy for addressing regional and global climate change -strategy for securing climate financing gap | MoEnvt FD ERD | | |

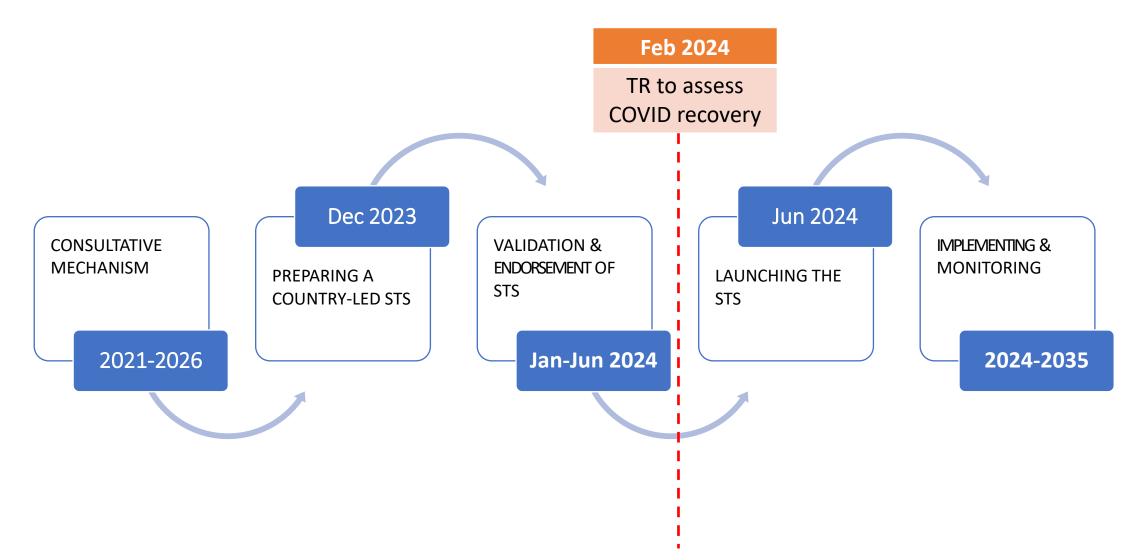
| Probable content | Brief annotation | Internal Sources | UNRC- IATF | UNDESA's iGrad |
|--|--|---|---------------|-------------------|
| Chapter 3. Priorities for Inclusive Graduation with Mo | omentum | | | |
| 3.1. Human development and matching policy gaps 3.1.1. Education 3.1.2. Health 3.1.3. Social Protection System | | M/O Edu- studies on addressing loss of learning/ ICT- skill gap and strategies for 4IR M/O Health- national policies ERD- Bangladesh HDR Report | UNRC | SOL |
| 3.2. Unlocking development potentials 3.2.1. Demographic dividend and strategy to exploit 3.2.2. Massive skill development drive 3.2.3. Ensuring safe work environment for all 3.2.4. Migration of workforce and strategies for maximum utilization 3.2.5. Fourth industrial revolution | -roadmap for exploiting demographic dividend -action plan for reskilling and upskilling -strategy to meeting infrastructure and logistics gaps -preparedness for taking advantage of automation and digitization of the economy | NSDA's | UNRC | SOL |

| Probable content | Brief annotation | Internal Sources | UNRC- IATF | UNDESA's iGrad |
|---|--|--|---------------|-------------------|
| 3.3. Promote productive capacity and structural transformation 3.3.1. Measures for productivity enhancement 3.3.2. Private sector capacity development 3.3.3. Building and improving trade infrastructures and logistics 3.3.4. Participating in Global Value Chain | -shifting towards agriculture to manufacturing/ industry -food security and mechanization of agriculture sector -entrepreneurships' capacity development and creating enabling environment - drives for moving up in the GVC | PMO led subcommittee reports MoC- National strategies | UNRC | SOL |
| 3.4. Adapting to globalization trends and challenges in the fast-changing dynamic world 3.4.1. Tailoring existing and devising new support mechanism 3.4.2. Strengthening institutional capacity | -assess the likely scenario of globalization trend- trade, technology, knowledge and migration -how existing mechanism and framework could be made sensitive to exploit the existing support system and offer new one for quick adaption -development of institutional capacity and governance | | UNRC | SOL |
| 3.5. Development cooperation framework between graduating LDCs and South-South Cooperation | -knowledge sharing mechanism among LDCs, collaboration with LDC group for new ISMs- -best practices and experiences | | UNRC | SOL |
| 3.6. Enhancing resilience against potential challenges/ threats | -building resilience against potential health or environmental challenges/ threats in future | | UNRC | SOL |

| Probable content | Brief annotation | Internal Sources | UNRC- IATF | UNDESA's iGrad |
|--|---|-------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| 3.7. Synergizing LDC graduation with broader development agenda: SDGs, DPoA and vision 2041 | Strong linkages between LDC graduation, 2030 Agenda, 2031 UMIC drive, 2041 vision sustainable graduation is reinforced through implementing DPoA, SDGs and vision 2041 | subcomm ERD- DPoA action plan | | |
| 3.8. Strategies to avoid Middle Income Trap | -strategies to address impending middle-income trap | | UNRC | SOL |
| Chapter 4. Preparing for Uncertain World and Building | g Resilience | | | |
| 4.1. COVID-19 implications and addressing challenges | Changes in international trade and development landscape due to COVID; Medium- and long- term measures to address COVID | | | |
| 4.2. Strategies to address the impact of geopolitical crises | Trade and macroeconomic strategies -improvement of social protection measures | protection | UNRC | SOL |
| 4.3. Preparation for a new normal world | Strategy for enhancing resilience and building forward better | | UNRC | SOL |

| Probable content | Brief annotation | Internal Sources | UNRC- IATF | UNDESA's iGrad |
|--|--|--|---------------|-------------------|
| Chapter 5. Best Utilization of Strategies for Sustainabl | | IAIT | IOTau | |
| 5.1. Best utilization of opportunities and building capacity | -wrapping up broadly how we planned to build capacity to exploit the opportunities | MoC- study reports MoI- study reports | UNRC | SOL |
| 5.2. Engaging in the global negotiations to generate more opportunities and address transboundary challenges | -active engagement in negotiations in trade, FDMN crisis, climate change, geopolitical crises | MoC- study reports MoI- study reports | UNRC | SOL |
| 5.3. Leveraging global support to build forward better | -strategy for strengthening multilateralism and engaging in the process | | UNRC | SOL |
| Endnotes/ References | | | | |
| TableTable: Risk assessment of strategy/ policy | Policies/ Strategies will be assessed based on risks and opportunities and presented in tables for relevant cases | | | |
| Annexures Annexure: Policy Matrix Annexure: Implementation Matrix | Policy matrix will be developed based on the policy/ strategy mapping with the national policy/ strategy regime and relevant stakeholders Implementation Matrix may be developed based on the policy/ strategy suggested in the document with specific actions, the role of stakeholders and resources required | | | |

SMOOTH TRANSITION STRATEGY: TIMEBOUND ACTION PLAN



PREPARATION OF SMOOTH TRANSITION STRATEGY: WHERE WE STAND?

| Steps | Key actions undertaken | Time-line | Status/ Remarks |
|---|---|---------------------------|--|
| CONSULTATIVE MECHANISM AND PREPARATION OF STS | Pvt sector, Dev & Trading Partners involved; Consultative Mechanism is designed; support from DPs is committed; SOLs are offered | 2021-2026 | NCG is guiding and the consultation process will continue until 2026 |
| PREPARATION FOR CDP TR, 2024 | Data reconciliation, consultations, position papers, report preparation Mainly COVID recovery will be assessed; however the implication of recent Ukraine war is likely to be come in the forefront of discussion | Oct 2023- Feb 2024 | A rigorous preparation will be undertaken |
| PREPARING A COUNTRY-LED STS | STS will be prepared by drawing the strategies, national policies, research and background studies | Dec 2022- Dec 2023 | 1 st draft will be available by Jun 2023 |
| VALIDATING DRAFT STS | Massive consultations among stakeholders | Jan 2024 | rigorous consultation govt's firm commitment |
| ENDORSING AND LAUNCHING THE STS BY GOVT | Official launching across the Government system; Highest level endorsement through a process | Jun 2024 | Formal launching of STS to inspire all |
| IMPLEMENTING THE STS | Implementation across the systems in collaboration with Pvt. Sector, DPs and Trading Partners | 2024-2035 | 9 th and 10 th FYP critical for sustainable graduation |
| MONITORING AND REPORTING ON THE STS IMPLEMENTATION | Implementation of STS will be reported annually for 3 years 2 triennial reporting will follow | 2027- 2029 2032 & 2035 | Strong coordination with UN agencies- OHRLLS, CDP, ECOSOC |

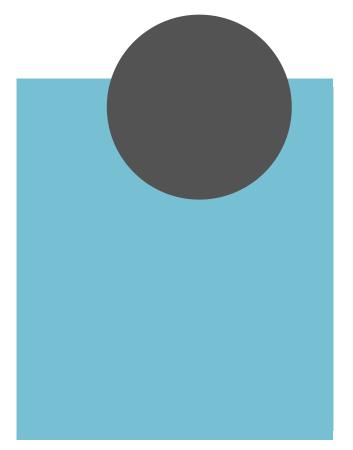
Thank you all





OUTCOME DOCUMENT

Seminar on WTO MC-12: Implications for Graduating LDCs



Organized by Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP) Economic Relations Division Ministry of Finance

Tuesday 26 July 2022 BIAM Foundation, Dhaka

Background

A seminar on **WTO MC-12: Implications for Graduating LDCs** was held on 26 July 2022 at the BIAM Foundation of the capital. **Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP)** under Economic Relations Division (ERD) organized the seminar. Senior Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce Mr. Tapan Kanti Ghosh was the chief guest of the inaugural session of the seminar, while ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan chaired the session. Director General (Additional Secretary) of the WTO Cell of the Ministry of Commerce Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman made the keynote presentation at the seminar. Key stakeholders of the LDC graduation process across the government, private sector, and think-tanks participated in the event.

Due to the widespread COVID-19 pandemic, the 12th Ministerial Conference of the WTO being deferred a couple of times took place on 12-16 June 2022, in nearly a five-year time. The MC12 of WTO was expected to have significant implications for LDCs including Bangladesh on two grounds. First, it took place at a time when Bangladesh is preparing for LDC graduation, which is going to be effective in November 2026. Secondly, Bangladesh and other LDCs were expecting an optimistic agreement among the WTO members to support the submission of the LDC (Least Developed Country) Group for extending concessions to graduating nations beyond graduation for a certain period.



The seminar aimed at analysing the decisions of the WTO MC12 outcome package in the bigger picture- how developed, developing, and LDCs are impacted. It had a particular interest in the takeaways for LDCs from the MC12 and what measures and preparation are required in the runup to the MC13.

This outcome document covers the inaugural remarks, keynote presentation, and remarks of the three distinguished panelists who participated in the business session and the valuable feedback from the participants.

Inaugural Session

Inaugural Speech by the Chief Guest: Mr. Tapan Kanti Ghosh, Senior Secretary, Ministry of Commerce

Mr. Tapan Kanti Ghosh, in his speech, observed that there are differences in terms of concerns, interests and level of development of the LDCs. He also opined that the issues related to the political economy also come into play in the international trade regime. Reflecting on the outcome document of the WTO—he opined that although it had fallen short of the expectations of the LDCs, it still recognized the need for certain measures for their smooth and sustainable graduation. In this context, he underlined the need to actively negotiate at the bilateral and multilateral levels to secure the continuation of ISMs beyond graduation. He put special emphasis on stronger bilateral engagement with the major actors of WTO like the US, China, and the European Union.



Mr. Tapan Kanti Ghosh delivering his inaugural remarks

Mr. Ghosh also emphasized proper marketing, innovation, and the establishment of necessary market linkage for diversification of export items and markets. He observed that equitable opportunities should be provided to all sectors for the diversification of export items. Mr. Ghosh underlined the need for enhancement of skills and regulatory reforms for attracting more Foreign Direct investment (FDI). He also observed that a study should be carried out to assess the impacts of the loss of subsidies upon LDC graduation. At the same time, he observed that there are scopes for expanding the scope of the WTO cell and greater engagement of it with various stakeholders.

Remarks by the Chair: Ms. Sharifa Khan, Secretary, Economic Relations Division

Ms. Sharifa Khan, in her speech, said that utmost importance should be given to domestic capacity building to prepare the country for the post-graduation phase. Noting that Bangladesh is currently in a transitional phase between LDC and developing countries—she said that the country needs to strike a balance when it comes to chalking out its strategy to deal with its trade partners. Pointing out that the subsidies currently provided to the non-agricultural products

would have to be discontinued once Bangladesh graduates from the LDC status— she emphasized enhancing the competitiveness of local products without the support of subsidies.



Ms. Sharifa Khan making Chair's remarks

Citing the example of India, she said that a study should be carried out to analyse how Bangladesh can continue to provide indirect subsidies following various mechanisms in the aftermath of graduation. She also underscored the need of enhancing productivity, competitiveness, and quality to prepare the country for the post-graduation challenges. She also observed that Bangladesh should look on to engaging in various plurilateral negotiations in the WTO from the beginning to enjoy an advantageous position —especially in areas like e-commerce and investment facilitation. Lastly, she called for carrying out systematic planning in collaboration with the private sector to overcome the challenges of LDC graduation. She also said that the SSGP project stands ready to provide any technical support to carry out research, studies, and stakeholder consultations to address graduation-related issues.

Welcome Remarks from Mr. Farid Aziz, Additional Secretary & Wing Chief, DE Wing, ERD and Project Director, SSGP

Mr. Farid Aziz, in his welcome speech, recalled that the recently held Twelfth Ministerial Conference (MC12) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) was expected to have significant implications for LDCs including Bangladesh on two grounds. Firstly, it took place at a time when Bangladesh is preparing for graduation from the LDC category, which is scheduled to be effective in November 2026. Secondly, Bangladesh and other LDCs were expecting an optimistic agreement among the WTO members to support the submission of the LDC (Least Developed Country) Group for extending International Support Measures (ISMs) to the graduating nations for a certain period beyond graduation. He opined that although the MC12 had fallen short of the expectations of the LDCs, it had still recognized the need for certain measures by the WTO for their smooth and sustainable graduation.



Mr. Farid Aziz delivering welcome remarks

Against this backdrop, he explained that the seminar had been organized to analyse the key takeaways of Bangladesh from MC12 and also to discuss how the country should get prepared in the run-up to the next Ministerial Conference (MC-13) in the context of Bangladesh's scheduled graduation in November 2026. He expressed his hope that the seminar would allow the participants to learn first-hand experience from the key members of the Bangladesh Delegation.

Presentation on "WTO MC-12: Implications for Graduating LDCs" by Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman, Director General (Additional Secretary), WTO Cell, Ministry of Commerce

At the beginning of his presentation, Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman highlighted that the MC12 had taken place amid multiple crisis situations like global health crisis (COVID-19), looming economic recession, food and fuel price hikes, moribund DDA, expanding mega regionals like RCEP and CPTPP as well as Russia-Ukraine War. Mr. Rahman noted that there had been some inherent crises in the WTO like the failure of MC11, unusual delay in organizing the MC (almost 5 Years) as well as defunct Dispute Settlement System. He informed that Bangladesh's approach for the MC12 in the context of LDC graduation was to get a package deal for graduating LDCs or at least to keep the agenda alive for the next ministerial. He, however, observed that what the country had received from the MC12 is something in between these two. He pointed out that the 'Graduating LDC' Issue was completely new in the WTO system. Therefore, Bangladesh had to convince other WTO members-- especially other LDCs that the countries which are in the process of LDC graduation require special support and attention.

Reflecting on the outcome document of MC12, he cited the 5th paragraph of the document:

"In this difficult context, we note with satisfaction the progress achieved by LDC Members who have met or who are about to meet the graduation criteria set by the United Nations Committee for Development Policy (CDP) and acknowledge the particular challenges that graduation presents, including the loss of trade-related international support measures, as they leave the LDC category.



Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman delivering the keynote presentation

We recognize the role that certain measures in the WTO can play in facilitating the smooth and sustainable transition for these Members after graduation from the LDC Category."

Reflecting on this particular paragraph—he observed that the paragraph had recognized the role WTO can play in facilitating smooth and sustainable transition for these members after graduation. He termed it as a major success of this conference which had created a baseline for raising the demand for continuation of international support measures for graduating LDCs at the global level.

He also noted that the second paragraph of the outcome document had called for considering the level of development of a country while providing them with Special and Differential Treatments (S&DTs) facilities. He said that this particular provision would be a major concern for Bangladesh which should be subject to further active negotiation.

He also highlighted the eighth paragraph of the outcome document which addressed the operationalization of services waiver in the following manner:

"We reaffirm our decision at the Tenth Ministerial Conference in Nairobi on implementation of preferential treatment in favour of services and service suppliers of least-developed countries and increasing LDC participation in services trade, and instruct the Council for Trade in Services to review and promote the operationalization of the waiver including to explore improvements in LDC services export data; to review information on LDC services suppliers and consumers of LDC services in preference providing Member markets, and to assess best practices in facilitating the use of the preferences. On this matter, we instruct the General Council to report to our next session on progress."

With regard to TRIPS agreement reated decision in MC12, Mr. Rahman said that the decision mentions:

"3. (a) An eligible Member need not require the proposed user of the subject matter of a patent to make efforts to obtain an authorization from the right holder as set out in Article 31(b).

(b) An eligible Member may waive the requirement of Article 31(f) that authorized use under Article 31 be predominantly to supply its domestic market and may allow any proportion of the products manufactured under the authorization in accordance with this Decision to be exported to eligible Members, including through international or regional joint initiatives that aim to ensure the equitable access of eligible Members to the COVID-19 vaccine covered by the authorization."

However, he observed that when it comes to TRIPS related issues, the MC12 outcomes had brought nothing significant that could benefit the developing countries.

Mr. Rahman observed that although the MC12 had fallen short of the expectation of the LDCs in this conference. However, he believes there are scopes in the next MC and Bangladesh should engage in bilateral and multilateral negotiations for the continuation of ISMs for an extended period. In this context, he observed that we should adopt the following measures to prepare itself for the next ministerial conference of the WTO:

- Revise the original submission and resubmit it immediately after the first General Council (GC) Meeting after the MC-12
- Conduct studies on graduation issues to support the negotiators
- Engage in bilateral negotiations with obstructing Members
- Apprise constantly the representative in Dhaka
- Apprise the relevant Government bodies of other potential countries to get support for the proposal.
- Keep developing countries on board to support the proposal
- Send a high-level delegation to potential countries to convince the governments in favour of the proposal

Business Session

The inaugural session of the seminar was followed by a business session. Former Member of Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission (BTTC) Dr. Mostafa Abid Khan, Chief Executive Officer of Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD) Ms. Ferdaus Ara Begum, and International Trade Expert of SSGP Mr. Nesar Ahmed took part in the panel discussion. ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan moderated the session.



ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan moderating the business session

Remarks from Mr. Nesar Ahmed, International Trade Expert, Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP):

Mr. Nesar Ahmed, in his remarks, said that although Bangladesh should remain engaged with the process of resubmitting the proposals of the LDC group to the WTO for the continuation of ISMs—the greater emphasis should now be put on the reform process of the WTO and other broader issues given Bangladesh would, sooner than later, become a graduated country. He observed that chances are limited that the proposals of the LDC group for the continuation of ISMs for an extended period would receive the WTO nod.



Explaining the reason- he opined that since only Bangladesh, among the LDCs, had been able to make the best utilization of the DFQF measures and other ISMs-- no other LDCs is interested in this issue. Noting that it is high time for the reform of the WTO—he said that Bangladesh should take an active role in that reform process so that the concerns of the country receive adequate global attention in the future. Echoing the opinion of the moderator, He affirmed that Bangladesh should actively patriciate in various plurilateral negotiations in the WTO. While affirming that there would be some challenges in engaging in various plurilateral negotiations—he opined that becoming a party to plurilateral agreements may create compulsion for necessary reforms and capacity developments.

Remarks from Ms. Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO, BUILD

Ms. Ferdaus Ara Begum, in her remarks, said that Bangladesh should actively negotiate both at bilateral and multilateral levels for the continuation of ISMs beyond LDC graduation. Noting that the latest national budget had imposed a supplementary duty on 90 more products-- she observed that such para-tariffs would have to be withdrawn following the country's graduation. She also called for more simplification of trade facilitation-related issues. She underscored the need for amending the existing patent law to address the issue of compulsory licensing in the country's trade interest in the global arena, she called for enhancing the capacity of the WTO cell by engaging experts on WTO-related issues.

Remarks from Dr. Mostafa Abid Khan, Former Member, Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission (BTTC)

Mr. Mustafa Abid Khan, in his remarks, identified the continuation of ISMs as the major challenge for the country in the context of LDC graduation. In this context, he emphasized enhancing the country's internal capacity to decrease its dependency on ISMs. He also said that although Bangladesh should remain engaged with the process of resubmitting the proposals of the LDC group for continuing ISMs to the WTO—the country should lower its expectation in this regard.

Open Floor Discussions

At this stage, the floor was opened for feedback from participants. During this phase, the following observations and recommendations came from the participants.

Mr. Mustafizur Rahman from the Bangladesh Association of Pharmaceutical Industries (BAPI) queried what sort of policy reforms would be taken by the government to address the challenges to be faced by the pharmaceuticals sector after the country becomes graduated. Also pointing out that the country is overwhelmingly import-dependent when it comes to agriculture-related products like fertilizer, seeds, and pesticides—he called for policy support to increase self-sufficiency in such items.



Participants providing feedback during the open floor discussion

Addressing these observations, Ms. Sharifa khan said that the pharmaceuticals sector should put forward specific proposals about the type of policy support they would require to address the LDC graduation-related challenges. She also informed that ERD, with support from SSGP, is planning to organize a consultation with the pharmaceuticals sector to exclusively discuss the graduation-related challenges of the pharmaceuticals sector. With regard to the concerns raised about the agricultural products—Ms. Khan informed that as per the WTO rules, a developing country can provide domestic subsidies for up to 10 percent of the total agricultural production. She pointed out that Bangladesh's current domestic support is around 1.5 percent of the total production and the country will be able to continue such support even after LDC graduation.

Reflecting on the issues of the pharmaceuticals sector-- Ms. Ferdaus Ara Begum, citing recent research, pointed out that the Bangladeshi pharmaceutical companies had produced around 16 thousand formulations of their own which are yet to be patented. In this context, she observed that the pharmaceutical industry should give serious thought to how to address this issue in the context of the expiry of TRIPS-related flexibilities after graduation. Pointing out that the demand for biological drugs had increased significantly in the global market in recent years—she opined that Bangladesh should look to tap this market. Ms. Ferdaus Ara Begum observed that although Bangladesh imports a significant portion of agricultural materials like fertilizers and seeds from abroad—domestic manufacturers of these products had also created a niche in recent years.

Head of Research and Development of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI) Mr. AKM Asaduzzaman Patwary said that the government should formulate specific measures to promote local manufacturing and export. He also emphasized sector-specific action plans to tackle the challenges of LDC graduation. He also said that a study should be carried out to evaluate whether CEPA (Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement) would be beneficial for Bangladesh or not. He also observed that currently there is no focused area in the national budget for the sector-specific direction of the policy that supplements the LDC graduationrelated preparation of the country. Citing a recent study from DCCI, he said that the withdrawal of cash incentives is unlikely to have any impact on Bangladesh's exports after LDC graduation. Citing the same study, he said that the private sector would rather require technological support, easier access to finance, skills, and research development plan to offset the withdrawal of cash incentives.

Noting that the importation of mother ships for frozen fish is currently subject to 55 percent import duty—Mr. Shaikh Sohel Pervez from Bangladesh Frozen Foods Exporters Association said that withdrawal of this import duty would be beneficial for the frozen fish sector. He also observed that tax incentives should be provided for importing relevant materials to bring much more diversity to this sector. He said that the next generation of farmers or entrepreneurs should be encouraged and incentivized to engage in this sector. Noting that Vietnam had recently signed a special agreement with the EU to gain easier access to its frozen fish products in the EU market—he said that Bangladesh should explore the possibility of reaching such deals with the EU.

Ms. Rehana Akter from Bangladesh Tanners Association said that the issues pertaining to the domestic leather sector should receive increased focus in Bangladesh's negotiations with the WTO. Participants also said that there should be a comprehensive assessment of how the already graduated countries had promoted their private sector.

Responding to these observations, Ms. Sharifa Khan said that Bangladesh, with its huge population, large GDP, and strong manufacturing base—provides a unique case among the LDCs. In this context, she observed that analysing the experience of other graduated LDCs would not be worth it for Bangladesh. However, she also pointed out that other graduated LDCs had witnessed an uplift in their flow of FDI after their graduation due to reforms in their IP regime as well as other rules and regulations brought forth by LDC graduation. Ms. Ferdaus Ara Begum said that Bangladesh would be able to continue to provide duty drawback facilities after graduation. She observed that duty drawback facilities will be a crucial requirement for the leather and RMG sector in the coming years.

Responding to the feedback coming from the participants, Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman affirmed that there are scopes for boosting the size of manpower of his cell with a view to enhance its capacity. He also informed that the Ministry of Commerce is closely examining the FTA recently signed between the EU and Vietnam as a lesson learning process. He informed that during the recently concluded trade talks between the EU and Bangladesh—the EU had queried whether Bangladesh is interested in signing an FTA with the EU. He, however, observed that Bangladesh will need to

address various issues like labour rights, Intellectual Property Rights, and environmental compliance issues for signing an FTA with the EU. Noting that around 25 percent of the pharmaceutical products currently being manufactured in the country would be subject to patent protection after graduation—he called for taking necessary steps for overcoming post-LDC challenges in this regard. He informed that the Ministry of Commerce is looking for ways to continue the TRIPS-related flexibilities up until 2033 even if the country graduates by the end of 2026. Noting that the challenges and vulnerabilities of a particular LDC should be taken into account while considering its level of development—he informed that the WTO cell is working on how to properly accentuate it in the future high-level meetings of WTO as well as the future MC outcome documents.

Wrap up by the Chair and Moderator

ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan, in her concluding remarks, recalled that Bangladesh had successfully tackled a number of similar challenges in the past including the phasing out of the quota system in 2005. She expressed her hope that Bangladesh would similarly be able to tackle the challenges posed by LDC graduation and would emerge as a stronger nation in the post-graduation phase. She informed that ERD, with support from SSGP, would organize sector-specific consultations in the near future to have a detailed discussion on how to address the graduation-related challenges. She asked the private sector representatives to formally send their issues relating to sectoral development that supports sustainable graduation to ERD so that those could be placed before the National Committee on LDC graduation. Finally, she thanked all the participants for their active participation and for making a valuable contribution to the policy discussion.

Key Takeaways

- The outcome of the MC12 of the WTO had fallen short of the expectations of the LDCs, however, it has recognized the need for certain support measures for their smooth and sustainable graduation. The outcome is regarded as a great success for the graduating nations as it has kept the agenda alive for future discussion;
- The submission of the LDC group for continuing ISMs needs to be revised in the context of the new global scenario and should be resubmitted immediately after the first General Council Meeting after the MC-12;
- Bangladesh should actively negotiate at the bilateral and multilateral levels to secure the continuation of ISMs beyond graduation. Stronger bilateral engagement with the major actors of WTO like the US, China, and the European Union would be required in this context;
- Bangladesh should look on to engage in various plurilateral negotiations going on in the WTO —especially in areas like e-commerce and investment facilitation;
- Utmost importance should be provided to domestic capacity building to prepare the country for the post-graduation phase; Proper marketing, innovation, and establishment of necessary market linkage are essential for the diversification of export items and markets;

- Simplification of trade facilitation-related issues is required in the context of Bangladesh's upcoming LDC graduation;
- Policy support is required to increase Bangladesh's self-sufficiency in agricultural items like fertilizer, seeds, and pesticides;
- The pharmaceutical industry should give serious thought to how to patent its products which would require patenting in the context of the expiry of TRIPS-related flexibilities after LDC graduation; Local pharmaceutical industries should look to tap the rising demand for biological drugs in the global market;
- A study should be carried out to analyse whether CEPA would be beneficial for Bangladesh or not;
- The government should formulate sector-specific action plans to tackle the challenges of LDC graduation; and
- ERD, with support from SSGP, would organize sector-specific consultations in the coming months to have a detailed discussion on how to address the graduation-related challenges.