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United Nations Country Results Report

BANGLADESH
2023

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Foreword by the Resident Coordinator

On behalf of the UN Country Team (UNCT), I am pleased to present the 2023 United Nations Country Results Report for Bangladesh, capturing the second year of implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, 2022-2026, and outlining the programmes and initiatives, results and impact of the UN's work to support Bangladesh on the road to 2030.

Bangladesh has much to celebrate in its development journey but remains vulnerable to factors that threaten development gains. The global economic downturn and lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be felt by the people of Bangladesh, notably in high inflation, food and energy prices. Economic growth has slowed, and inequality is increasing. The fragility of the economy is compounded by climate change. Every year, the monsoon season brings wet and dangerous weather to Bangladesh. In 2023, three cyclones crossed the coastline, affecting over 1.7 million people. More than 1.3 million people were caught up in flash flooding in the Chattogram District. Climate change and natural disasters are factors in rising food insecurity and outbreaks of disease; 2023 saw Bangladesh tackle the largest dengue outbreak in its history.

Amid these challenges, Bangladesh continues to tread a promising path towards graduation from Least Development Country status. In 2023, the UNCT provided expertise and advice to support the Government in its preparations for graduation, contributing research, convening partners, and collaborating on policy. Globally, 2023 was an important year for the Sustainable Development Goals, culminating in the SDG Summit where the Government charted a clear course for the 2030 Agenda. With the support of the UN, the Government of Bangladesh held consultations across ministries and stakeholders to develop a set of Country Commitments on the SDGs. At the SDG Summit in September, the Prime Minister presented these 43 commitments on the international stage, the first time that Bangladesh has articulated its priorities around the six key transitions to accelerate the SDGs.

In support of the Government's vision, the UN in Bangladesh worked across the six transition areas in 2023: jobs and social protection; food systems; education; digital connectivity; energy access and affordability; climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. The transitions framework has proven timely for identifying investment pathways and transformative entry points for the UN to align with Government priorities, and the UNCT has refined its prioritization as we shift gears towards more integrated policy support, stronger joint programming, scaled up interventions and innovative financing solutions. In a high-level demonstration of the UN's commitment, we welcomed the Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed to Bangladesh in June. The Deputy Secretary-General took part in consultations on SDG priorities and visited initiatives on jobs and social protection, education, and climate adaptation – key transition areas and some of the critical components of a smooth LDC graduation.

In Khulna, the Deputy Secretary-General saw first-hand the challenges faced by communities in the delta region where rising sea levels and monsoon flooding threaten lives and livelihoods. To strengthen the systems for responding to recurrent disasters, the UN helped to launch initiatives on Anticipatory Action and Early Warning for All. With the Resident Coordinator's Office, a dedicated interagency team works with the Government and partners on preparedness and response to climate events. In partnership with UN agencies and IFIs, the RCO helped the Government to develop a Disaster Risk Reduction Financing Strategy that will move forward in 2024.

In 2023, the UN continued to roll out large-scale training programmes and support to enterprises to create jobs and build skills, with an emphasis on digital transformation. The Rome-based agencies continued to

lend their expertise to the Government to implement a food systems approach, with the International Fund for Agricultural Development investing more than half a billion dollars in 2023 to foster livelihood opportunities for smallholders, grow access to financing and markets and generate rural employment. UN support to education led to higher enrolment rates and stronger curricula to nurture capacities and skills fit for a Smart Bangladesh. New programmes for green and renewable energy transition and access commenced in 2023, aiming to bring more solar and wind power to rural and off-grid Bangladesh. Health remained a major workstream, the most significant in terms of financing? Under the Cooperation Framework. The UN worked with the Government to advocate for establishing Universal Health Care for all Bangladeshis and to integrate health policy and preparedness through the One Health initiative. The UN delivered programmes on access to justice, human rights, labour rights and child labour, maritime security and prevention of trafficking. In 2023, the UN provided ongoing support to the Government's gender-responsive policies and planning while acting to support more than 267,600 survivors of gender-based violence. The UN's policy and programme support has been underwritten by a whole of society partnership approach, with the private sector an important partner, critical to fulfilling the 2030 Agenda. The launch of the Bangladesh Private Sector Working Committee on the SDGs at the end of 2023 was a major milestone.

These are only some of the highlights of the UN's activities from 2023. Ten of the UN agencies that deliver development programming in Bangladesh under the Cooperation Framework also work to support the Government's leadership on the Rohingya Refugee Crisis. In 2023, the crisis entered its sixth year, with one million Rohingya people still living in 33 camps in Cox's Bazar and Basan Char, alongside half a million Bangladeshis in host communities. It was a challenging year for the response. Of the \$876 million required under the 2023 Rohingya Refugee Joint Response Plan, just \$597 million or 68 per cent was raised. Reductions in funding required a cut to food rations in the camps. The UN will continue to work to keep the spotlight on the crisis and to lend its support to the Government.

In 2023, I visited the Chittagong Hill Tracts, Sylhet, Khulna, Barisal and Rangpur. I made frequent trips to Cox's Bazar, both the camps for Rohingya refugees and the surrounding local communities whose lives have been deeply affected by the crisis. Development needs vary widely for the people of this beautiful and diverse country, and climate vulnerability, economic and geographic marginalization present significant challenges.

Overall, the UNCT can report more robustly in 2023 on how it is addressing development needs, thanks to the efforts of the UN team to report comprehensively in UN INFO. Over the five years of the Cooperation Framework, the projected funding requirements stand at \$1.143 billion. With thanks to the generous contributions of donors and partners, \$693 million had been raised or pledged at the close of 2023. This enabled the UN family to deliver \$219 million in development programming in 2023 across the five strategic priorities of the Cooperation Framework. The UNCT also developed a Joint Work Plan (JWP) of 204 activities, a key tool for transparency and coordination, describing the activities that are underway or planned across Bangladesh, detailing implementing agencies and partners, and resources committed and required. The UNCT enhanced the use of the Gender Scorecard in its programming, with over 80 per cent of indicators on the Gender Scorecard now meeting or exceeding requirements. The UNCT also introduced a Disability Scorecard and endorsed a Disability Inclusion Strategy.

Implementation of the Cooperation Framework is tracked through a Results Matrix of 22 indicators. For 2023, data are available for 16 of those indicators, outlined in Chapter 2 of the report. It is encouraging to see progress on key indicators for education and health. The reduction in maternal mortality is a testament to investments in primary and reproductive health care. Elsewhere, progress against selected indicators shows that we have more work to do. A rise in severe malnutrition and wasting, and an increasing trend in

child marriage for girls younger than 18, will require focused efforts and a deeper understanding of the drivers behind these trends.

In 2024, the UN will continue to seek to understand these dynamics to inform a multidimensional planning approach as we move to support the Government's 9th Five-year Plan. On behalf of the United Nations, we are committed to accompanying the Government in the lead-up to 2030 and look forward to continuing our support to accelerate progress towards the SDGs and leave no one behind.

UN Country Team

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Bangladesh consists of 15 resident agencies complemented by an additional nine non-resident agencies. All 24 UN agencies are part of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. This collective effort aims to enhance development and address diverse challenges within the country. Beyond the UNCT, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) also support the Government of Bangladesh and the UNCT across a wide spectrum of programmatic and policy initiatives. The United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) is integrated into the Resident Coordinator's Office to deliver strategic communications on the UN's programmes, partnerships and impact.



Key development partners of the United Nations in Bangladesh

Throughout 2023, the United Nations in Bangladesh received bilateral funding from 15 UN Member States and from many more Member States through multilateral channels.

Australia
Canada
China
Denmark
France
Germany
Japan
Netherlands
Norway
Qatar
Republic of Korea
Sweden
Switzerland
United Kingdom
United States of America

Contributions were also received from multilateral organizations including the European Union and the World Bank, private sector entities, international vertical funds, and UN central funds, including:

United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund
Education Cannot Wait Fund
Elsie Initiative Fund
Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund
Maternal and Newborn Health Thematic Fund
Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund
Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol
Global Programme to End Child Marriage
Adaptation Fund
Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation
Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
Global Environment Facility
Global Partnership for Education
Green Climate Fund
The Power of Nutrition

The UNCT worked with a range of Government ministries and institutions, including:

Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Chattogram Hill Tracts Affairs, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Ministry of Food, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Industries, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Ministry of Labour & Employment, Ministry of Law, Justice and

Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology, Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Road Transport and Bridges, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs and Ministry of Youth and Sports, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Cabinet Division, Economic Relations Division, Finance Division, Financial Institutions Division, General Economics Division, Health Services Division, Bangladesh Investment Development Authority, Statistics and Informative Division, Information & Communication Technology Division, Local Government Division and Law and Justice Division.

CHAPTER 1: KEY DEVELOPMENTS AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

In 2023, the effects of the global economic slowdown, impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing pressures from conflicts in Ukraine, Gaza and elsewhere all featured in the Bangladesh context through the lead-up to national elections in early 2024. A surge in energy and food prices, among other external shocks, contributed to domestic inflation, placing pressure on real incomes and economic growth.

The year 2023 saw Bangladesh record its highest export earnings, but the significant depreciation of the Bangladeshi Taka (BDT) against the US dollar, along with a deceleration in remittances from overseas Bangladeshis and a deteriorating external balance, posed challenges. Although the economy has shown signs of recovery post-pandemic, boasting a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of approximately 6.5 per cent in recent years, there are concerns about escalating inequality, low revenue collection, a mounting debt burden, and fragility in the banking sector. The fragility of the economic situation remains in the spotlight as Bangladesh continues to prepare for its graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status in 2026.

Over 2023, further progress was achieved in human capital investment, particularly in education, healthcare, and women's empowerment. However, persistent challenges include issues of accessibility to and quality of public services, inequality, and the prevalence of child marriage.

Bangladesh remains one of the most disaster-prone and climate-vulnerable countries globally, ranking a concerning seventh in the Global Climate Risk Index 2021. Bangladesh is constantly exposed to a multitude of natural hazards and extreme weather events, including cyclones, floods, storm surges, riverbank erosion, windstorms, landslides, earthquakes, droughts, waterlogging, heavy rains, and lightning. The situation is further compounded by the harsh realities of climate change. Rising temperatures, salinity intrusion, sea level rise, more frequent extreme weather events, and biodiversity loss all threaten Bangladesh's future.

In 2023 alone, Bangladesh witnessed a surge in natural hazards and extreme weather events, including three cyclones - Mocha, Hamoon, and Midhili - and devastating floods and landslides in the Chattogram region. Cyclone Mocha affected 965,461 people, including 536,124 refugees and 429,337 Bangladeshis. Cyclone Hamoon affected 470,000 people and Cyclone Midhili affected 292,419 farmers and their families. In August 2023, heavy monsoon rains lashed the Chattogram Division in Bangladesh, triggering flash floods and landslides that affected over 1.3 million people. Alongside these challenges, pressing environmental concerns such as land degradation, water management, unplanned urbanization, and air pollution compound the crisis.

In 2023, the protracted Rohingya refugee crisis entered its sixth year, affecting approximately one million refugees in 33 camps in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char, and some 500,000 people in host communities. Global funding shortfalls in 2023 saw a reduction in food rations for these vulnerable communities.

Elsewhere on the regional front, Bangladesh contended with challenges related to trade barriers, shared water resources, energy access, terrorism, human trafficking, and drug smuggling.

CHAPTER 2: UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES THROUGH THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

2.1. Overview of Results

The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (Cooperation Framework) serves as a coherence tool guiding UN development effort in Bangladesh, aligning with the Government's 8th Five-year Plan (8FYP) and the 2030 Agenda. Rooted in national priorities and the UN Charter principles, the Cooperation Framework fosters collaboration between the UN Country Team and the Government, ensuring unified action towards shared objectives.

The Cooperation Framework captures the UN development system support to national development priorities across five strategic results:

Strategic Priority 1: Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Development

Strategic Priority 2: Equitable Human Development and Well Being

Strategic Priority 3: Sustainable, Healthy and Resilient Environment

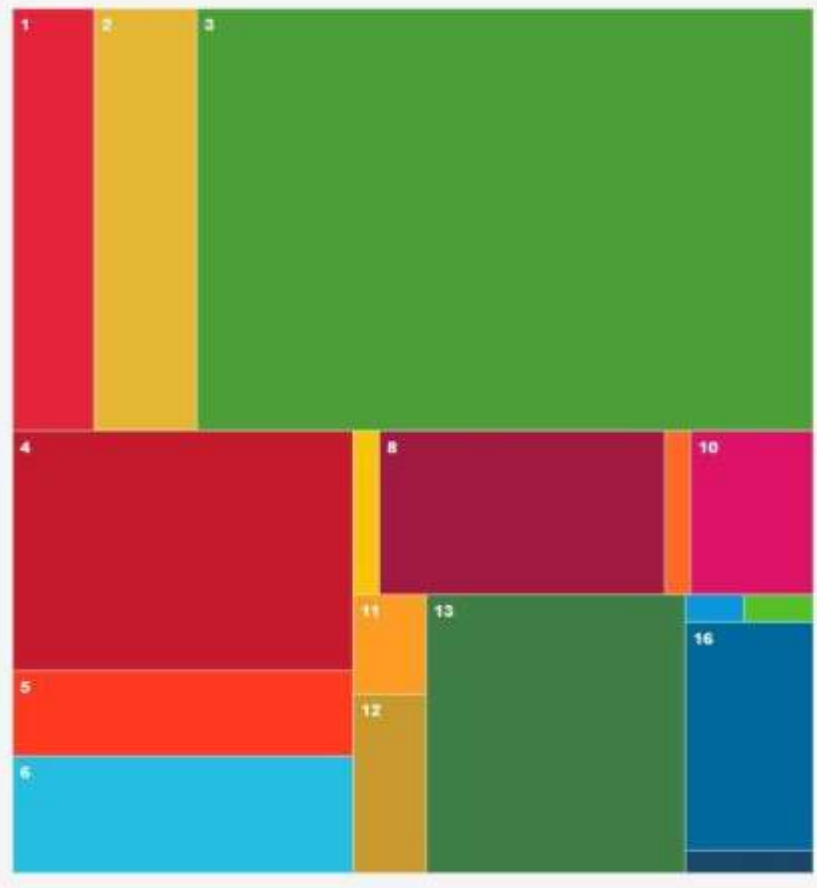
Strategic Priority 4: Transformative, Participatory and Inclusive Governance

Strategic Priority 5: Gender Equality and Eliminating Gender-Based Violence

The Cooperation Framework is articulated in a Joint Work Plan (JWP) developed annually by five Results Groups that are mapped to the strategic priorities. The JWP captures 204 activities coordinated by 19 agencies. The Results Groups serve as platforms for internal coordination to ensure a coherent UN system-wide approach to analysis, planning, implementation, and monitoring, converting outcomes into actionable measures that reflect national priorities.

The development contributions of UN agencies are integrated into the Cooperation Framework results matrix, comprising 22 indicators to capture the UN development system's impact in Bangladesh. In formulating this matrix, the UNCT prioritized indicators outlined in both the Development Results Framework of the Government's 8th Five-Year Plan (8FYP) and the SDG indicator framework. Out of the 22 outcome indicators, 91 per cent align with both the 8FYP and the SDG indicators. In most cases, the UN uses the Government's progress data to reflect change against the indicators. For this report, data was available to report on progress against 16 of the 22 indicators. The baseline, status, and target for these 16 indicators can be found throughout this chapter, under the relevant strategic priority of the Cooperation Framework.

Where is the money going? How the UN contributes to the SDGs

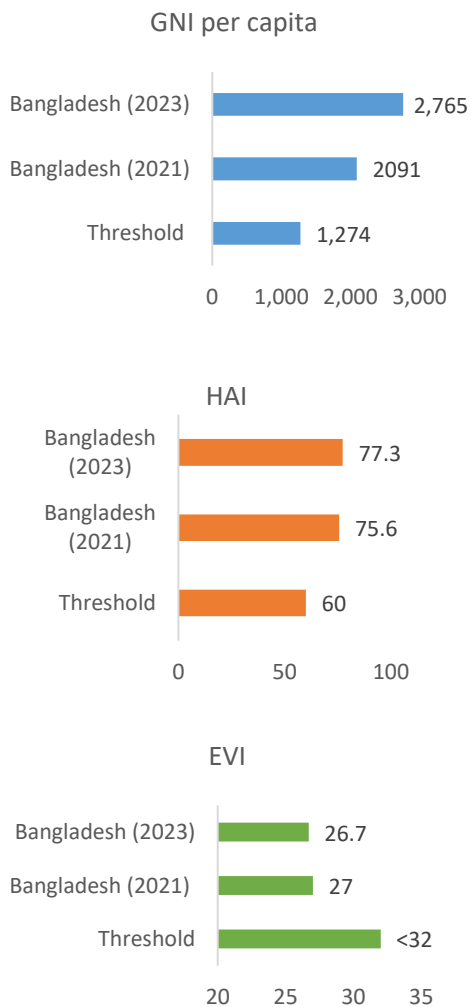


Available Resources \$258.8 million

- 1. No Poverty
5% of total
- 2. Zero Hunger
6.2% of total
- 3. Good Health and Well-being
37.6% of total
- 4. Quality Education
11.8% of total
- 5. Gender Equality
4.2% of total
- 6. Clean Water and Sanitation
5.8% of total
- 7. Affordable and Clean Energy
0.6% of total
- 8. Decent Jobs and Economic Growth
6.8% of total
- 9. Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
0.6% of total
- 10. Reduced Inequalities
2.9% of total
- 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
1% of total
- 12. Responsible Consumption and Production
1.9% of total
- 13. Climate Action
10.4% of total
- 14. Life Below Water
0.2% of total
- 15. Life on Land
0.3% of total
- 16. Peace and Justice - Strong Institutions
4.2% of total
- 17. Partnerships for the Goals
0.4% of total

[Story] Spotlight on UN support to Bangladesh's LDC graduation

In a landmark journey towards sustainable development, Bangladesh is on the cusp of graduating from LDC status, a testament to its robust growth and the continuous support from the UN development system. Central to this progression is the collaboration primarily through the Cooperation Framework, aligning with the nation's goals and the Doha Programme of Action (DPOA).



LDC graduation criteria and status of Bangladesh

As Bangladesh navigates this critical phase, the UN's unwavering support showcases the strength of global partnerships in achieving sustainable development, marking Bangladesh's LDC graduation as a beacon of hope and a model for sustainable growth and resilience.

Support from the UN captures five strategic priorities, largely mirroring the DPOA's core areas. These pillars have driven multifaceted initiatives in 2023, from advancing social security measures like employment injury insurance to fostering lifelong learning and promoting gender-inclusive urban development, all aimed at eradicating poverty and ensuring inclusivity. Key to Bangladesh's advancement is the strategic use of science, technology, and innovation to navigate vulnerabilities and enhance global competitiveness, demonstrated by initiatives such as the UN-Private sector working committee and digital waste management platforms. Efforts to transform labour governance and bolster international trade capacities are also noteworthy, facilitating a smoother transition to circular business models and improved market access. Addressing environmental challenges and climate change resilience, alongside strategic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, underscores the commitment of the UN to sustainable recovery and development. Initiatives like the *Post-Pandemic Strategic Roadmap for the Labour Migration Sector* highlight this focus. The Resident Coordinator's Office has been key in aligning UN agencies, development partners, and the government, fostering south-south cooperation and engaging with international stakeholders, such as World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) on intellectual property rights related issues, to ensure a coordinated and effective smooth transition strategy for LDC graduation.

2.2. Cooperation Framework priorities, outcomes and outputs

2.2.1 COOPERATION FRAMEWORK PRIORITIES, OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

Strategic Priority 1: Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Development

Outcome: ‘By 2026, more people in Bangladesh, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalised from all gender and social groups, and those from lagging districts, benefit from sustainable livelihood and decent work opportunities resulting from responsible, inclusive, sustainable, green and equitable economic development’

Progress of Strategic Priority 1 Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator	Indicator Description	Baseline	Reached	Targets
1.1	Gross national income per capita	\$2,064 (2020)	\$2,575 (BBS 2023)	\$3,059
1.2	Proportion of population living below the national poverty line	UPL: 20.5% LPL: 10.5% (2019)	UPL: 18.7% LPL: 5.6% (HIES 2023)	UPL: 15.60% LPL: 7.4%
1.3	Unemployment rate, by sex	Female: 6.7% Male: 3.1% (2017)	Female: 3.06% Male: 3.27% (QLFS: Oct-Dec 2023)	Female: 2.1% Male: 0.8%
1.4	Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work	Female: 23.6% Male: 6.9% (2017)	Female: 24.6% Male: 3.3% (TUS 2022)	Female: 20% Male: 10%
1.5	Gross investment (a) Private investment (b) Public investment (c) Foreign Direct Investment (% of GDP)	31.75% (a) 23.6% (b) 8.1% (c) 0.54% (2019)	31.25% (a) 23.6% (b) 7.6% (c) 0.9% (BBS 2023)	36.59% (a) 27.35% (b) 9.2% (c) 3.0%

In 2023, the UN in Bangladesh continued to support progress under Strategic Priority 1. A review of progress against the outcome indicators selected for the Cooperation Framework shows an increase in Gross National Income (GNI) per capita and a positive trend in poverty reduction. Unemployment of women has reduced significantly, although unemployment rates for men have risen slightly against the baseline. Gross investment has remained static, suggesting that a significant push is still required to make Bangladesh competitive and attractive for private, public and foreign investments.

On the policy side, the technical assistance provided to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for updating the national Population Policy, and to the Ministry of Youth and Sports for revising the National Youth Policy, reflects a strategic approach to addressing the evolving demographic and social needs of the country. Similarly, the creation of the National Skills Development Policy and the National Qualifications Framework, supported by the UN, marks a significant step towards enhancing the quality, accessibility, and

recognition of qualifications, both nationally and internationally.

The UN supported the Government in operationalizing the Research and Analytics Unit (RAU) of the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA), anchored in the Prime Minister's Office, to conduct research on improving the investment climate. The RAU prepared five sector profiles which were published on the BIDA website and produced a policy paper on "Diversifying Investments in Bangladesh: Agricultural Machinery Industry".

The UN continues to focus on promoting inclusive business, enhancing employment opportunities, and building the resilience of cottage, micro, small, and medium enterprises (CMSMEs). The UN's efforts have supported the creation of an enabling policy environment, fostering a skills ecosystem, and empowering CMSMEs to drive inclusive and sustainable growth in Bangladesh, illustrating a comprehensive approach to supporting the nation's socio-economic development and generating jobs.

The employment and skills development sector saw substantial achievements, with 18,356 individuals completing technical training in various occupations. This training facilitated youth participation in National Technical Vocational Qualifications Programmes (NTVQP), achieving 34 per cent female participation. The training also supported the economic reintegration of returnee migrant workers. The establishment of the Instructional Material Development Centre (IMDC) for Technical and Vocational Educational and Training (TVET) institutes (seven partner institutes attained recognition as Model TVET Institutes (MTIs) to date) and the successful pilot of the e-learning course under the e-campus project further exemplify ILO's efforts to modernise and improve the quality of vocational training in Bangladesh. It is estimated that approximately 60 per cent of those who completed the training, which included 38 per cent female trainees, were employed. Sixty-one per cent of young people who benefited from entrepreneurship development support were either engaged in business or in the process of starting their own ventures. Almost half of the participants, or 46 per cent, in the Entrepreneurship Development Training were young women.

In 2023, a collaborative initiative involving the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP), International Labour Organization (ILO), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), alongside other development partners and civil society organizations, provided over 150 CMSMEs with targeted training and coaching. The initiative aimed to prepare these enterprises for Bangladesh's impending graduation from LDC status and to adapt to new trade regimes. In parallel, the Women's Empowerment for Inclusive Growth (WING) programme, a joint effort by UN Women, UNDP, and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), enhanced gender-responsive work environments and women's economic empowerment. The 17 Women's Empowerment Principles signatories adopted and implemented gender-responsive organizational policies, standards, and practices, benefitting 2,200 employees (933 women, 1,267 men) from five districts of Bangladesh. The UN also reached socially marginalized communities with support for economic empowerment. In 2023, 2,000 transgender individuals received training to find employment and operate their own businesses.

[Box text] A key transition for the SDGs: Accelerating economic participation and empowerment through digital transformation

In 2021, Bangladesh launched the 'Smart Vision Bangladesh 2041', envisioning the future of the country as a high-income, poverty-free, developed nation, grounded in innovation and powered by technology. In 2023, in support of this vision, the UN helped to reach 28 million people (13.69 million women and 14.69 million men) with digital financial services and facilitated digital Government to People (G2P) payments,

reaching over 45 million underserved citizens (8.13 million women and 37.22 million men). The launch of the e-commerce marketplace, Anodomela.shop, during the COVID-19 pandemic facilitated the digital inclusion of around 4,000 small entrepreneurs, showcasing the UN's adaptive programming and responsiveness to emerging challenges. In addition to these, a total of 815 CMSMEs, mostly women-led, were issued Digital Business IDs (DBIDs), facilitating streamlined access to finance and business opportunities. Currently around 13,000 CMSMEs are connected to the DBID platform. The UNDP-supported National Intelligence for Skills, Education, Employment and Entrepreneurship platform was recognized on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly as a Digital Public Good (DPG) [E25]. UNDP's ekShop received the SDG Digital Game Changers Award in the 'Prosperity – Promoting Economic Growth' category.

With support from private sector partner Grameenphone, the FutureNation technology platform integrates self-assessment, learning management and a recruiter engine, fostering personalised upskilling, job connections, and AI-driven skills matching. With 20 advanced features and 13 top private sector employers, it provided recruitment with diverse methods for specific skill levels. The innovative use of the FutureNation technology platform enhanced youth skills and provided career guidance, and the launch of ICT-enabled online training modules to strengthen digital competency among literacy educators, are prime examples of leveraging technology to advance education and employment opportunities. In 2023, over 25,000 youth and women entrepreneurs joined the FutureNation platform. 'Muktapaath' - a Bangla language e-learning platform containing content on general, technical, and vocational education now has more than 4.6 million students enrolled in 280 courses. So far, more than 2.87 million students have been awarded certificates for completing their courses. These initiatives have not only reached a significant number of young individuals, including a substantial proportion of women, but have also laid the foundation for a more inclusive and digitally savvy workforce.

Inspired by the Smart Bangladesh initiative and based on the maturity assessment outcomes, the UN has assisted the Local Government & Engineering Department (LGED) to assess its ICT system and create an extensive roadmap encompassing 14 essential interventions. The road map is designed to serve as a guiding framework for LGED as it endeavours to align itself with the government's vision of 'Smart Bangladesh' by 2041. In the textile industry, the UN launched an app-based circularity game to assess the circular capacities of the 250 staff from the private sector and MSMEs of the textile industry.

The 'Strengthening Women's Ability for Productive New Opportunities' (SWAPNO) poverty graduation model lifted 3,564 households from extreme poverty, leading to gainful employment. A recent UNDP survey shows improved income, enhanced savings, and increased use of mobile financial services, indicating potential for sustained income.

FAO Farmer Field Schools have enhanced the capacities of nearly 11,000 smallholder farmers. Women comprise 65 per cent of the participants. The productivity of smallholder farmers has been enhanced, food safety improved, and market connections strengthened. In Dhaka, 2,600 fresh market vendors benefited from specialized training designed to advance safe food handling and effective waste management practices. The work with small holder farmers has also elevated agricultural standards and promoted sustainable practices in Bangladesh's food supply chain.

UNIDO has supported other food and enhanced agricultural practices to strengthen the capacity of government institutions on food safety, inspection protocols, and good animal husbandry practices, laying the groundwork for improving the safety and quality of food products across various supply chains. The 14 training courses carried out this year not only benefited the local population but also enhanced Bangladesh's potential in the global export market. UNIDO also supported the launch of an app-based circularity game

to assess circular capacities of the private sector and MSMEs of the textiles industry in Bangladesh. UNIDO will conduct further training to strengthen the capacity for the circular economy to provide services to local industries.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) invested \$519 million in Bangladesh in 2023, which was distributed across six ongoing projects undertaken by various Government entities, including the Ministry of Agriculture, LGED, Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation, and Bangladesh Water Development Board. This work promoted inclusive and resilient livelihood opportunities for smallholders and micro-entrepreneurs to strengthen climate resilience through infrastructure and climate-smart agriculture and to increase access to financing, technology and markets to diversify the economy and create rural employment.

The achievements in 2023 under Strategic Priority 1 of the Cooperation Framework in Bangladesh showcase a multi-faceted and collaborative approach to development. By focusing on inclusive business, training, employment, and the resilience of MSMEs, the UN and its partners have made significant strides in empowering communities, including women, fostering sustainable economic growth, and paving the way for a more equitable and prosperous Bangladesh.

[STORIES SP1]

[Story 1: IFAD] Technology empowers women growers

In the northernmost part of Bangladesh, on the foothills of the Himalayas, a group of women in brightly coloured headscarves walk along rows of equally vibrant tulips.

Supported by IFAD's Rural Microenterprise Transformation Project, these women are part of a group of farmers who were provided with tulip bulbs and training on how to grow the flowers then market them online. After grading, cutting and packaging the flowers, they are sent to Dhaka for sale. In less than a year, the farmers have made close to one million BDT.

As the tulips bloomed, so did the local economy. Having spotted the tulip fields on social media, tourists began flocking to the picturesque place, generating business for local restaurants and accommodation. As her phone pings with a new order, flower grower Shumi Akter tells us how "the marketing and cashless money transfer system have boosted our confidence."

But today's success did not come easily—it required sacrifice and determination. "Many of our neighbours criticized us for cultivating tulips," says flower farmer Sajeda Begum. The women's success is shifting attitudes around gender norms and inspiring others to invest in this profitable venture. "Now, they are turning to us for advice on how to grow tulips."

Within a few months, tourist numbers grew from 50 to 600 a day. One of these is Awal Hossain, a tourist from Rangpur. "I heard about the tulip garden through social media and several news sources and came to see it with my family and friends. It is outstanding."

Both the entrance fee to the tulip garden and flower orders can be paid using mobile money transfer and mobile banking, with many customers placing orders on WhatsApp and Messenger.

[Story 2: UNDP] Realizing the ‘SMART Bangladesh Vision 2041’: Digital transformation unleashes economic empowerment

The 2041 vision of a SMART Bangladesh is grounded in the pillars of Smart Citizen, Smart Government, Smart Economy, and Smart Society. The goal is to bridge the digital divide in Bangladesh by innovating and scaling sustainable digital solutions that are accessible to all citizens irrespective of their socio-economic status, and to businesses irrespective of their size.

Since 2016, UNDP has been instrumental in supporting the Government to realize the SMART Bangladesh vision. In 2020 UNDP began facilitating digital access to financial services through setting up Government to People (G2P) payments for social safety net transfers for the elderly, widows, persons with disabilities, third gender, and/or other vulnerable groups. This benefitted over 45 million underserved citizens across the whole of Bangladesh, who received through an App (Nagad App) transfer directly to their mobile financial accounts. Nagad is a large Bangladeshi digital financial service operating under the Bangladesh Post Office's authority, attached to the Ministry of Post and Telecommunication.

In 2023, the ripples of digitalization were felt further, as citizens across the country experienced an unprecedented acceleration by way of being able to pay bills through eKpay-services. Through this government app, citizens were able to pay online up to 125 million services, for example water, gas, electricity, internet and phones bills as well as land taxes.

Within the aim of accelerating payments online, UNDP supported setting up a network of 569 strategically placed digital centres within a 4km radius of each Union Parishad. This further revolutionized access for all citizens. Out of the 125 million payment services online, 90 million were done through these digital centres. By being able to pay bills online this reduced the time for each transaction as well as travel time that otherwise each citizen would need to spend to reach the banks or government offices.

Since 2022 UNDP has also been advocating for a Digital Business ID (DBID) system to be introduced. The DBID platform, linking a cumulative total of 1,466 cottages, micro, small and medium enterprises (CMSMEs), is a cornerstone for safer e-commerce, facilitating transparent and accountable digital transactions.

Strategic Priority 2: Equitable Human Development and Well Being

Outcome: “By 2026, more people, in particular the most vulnerable and marginalized, have improved access to and utilization of quality, inclusive, gender- and shock- responsive, universal, and resilient social protection, social safety nets and social services”

In 2023, the UN supported the Government and people of Bangladesh to enhance institutions, policies, and processes, advance the well-being and social protection of all Bangladeshis and to Leave No One Behind across the key areas of health, nutrition, education, WASH, food security, child and youth protection, social protection and migration. Programmes under Strategic Priority 2 represent almost 65 per cent of the total delivery under the Cooperation Framework.

Health

Progress of Strategic Priority Health Outcome Indicator

Outcome Indicator #	Indicator Description	Baseline	Reach	Target
2.3	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	165 (2019)	136 (SVRS 2023)	100 (2025)

During 2023, the UN provided expertise in strengthening health policy, governance, and national capacity, contributed significantly to addressing climate change's effects on health, and assisted in responding to public health concerns and outbreaks of infectious diseases, including tuberculosis, dengue, and Nipah. Maternal mortality, selected as a key indicator for this area of work, has seen a reduction in recent years thanks to sustained Government commitment to strengthening maternal health care and access to family planning, particularly midwifery-led care at primary health care level. In general, however, there is a stagnation in many health indicators. There remains a continued need for sustained advocacy for larger public expenditures on public health, and enhanced monitoring of implementation. Over one third or 38 per cent of the funds for UN support in Bangladesh go to programme delivery linked to SDG 3.

[Box text] [Towards integrated policy support to health](#)

WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and UN Women are lead agencies lending technical and policy advice to support the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW). Public health support from the UN in Bangladesh has an environmental and climate change lens, and in 2023, addressing the impact of pollution in policy support interventions has been central. Some of the most important initiatives supported by the UN in health have been:

- ❖ The UN has worked jointly to promote Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and support to developing Primary Health Care (PHC) has been responsive to the health impacts of climate change, particularly for children.
- ❖ Bangladesh's National Immunization Strategy endorsement is now aligned with the Immunization Agenda 2030, committing to increased domestic financing for vaccines, new vaccine introduction and sustained equitable coverage for all vaccines, including Human papillomavirus (HPV).

- ❖ The UN has provided support to the Directorate General of Drug Administration in institutional and capacity building, aimed at achieving maturity level 3 (ML3) for vaccine regulation.
- ❖ The country's Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) governance is now using a One Health Approach, supported by a technical working group and reinforced by awareness campaigns.
- ❖ The UN has helped to develop a National Students Assessment Report, a National Mental Health Policy and National Mental Health Strategic Plan 2020-2030 as well as to finalize National Standards and Guidelines for WASH in Health Care Facilities and elaborate a National Strategic Plan for HIV.
- ❖ Aiming to ensure universal access to quality family planning services, UN support to the Government led to the endorsement of the third National Strategy to Eliminate Obstetric Fistula, (2023-2030) and Bangladesh National Family Planning Strategy (2023-2030).
- ❖ The National Cervical Cancer Strategy (2023-2030) was revised and updated
- ❖ The work of the UN helped to introduce the Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) into the 5th Health Sector Operational Plan (2024-2029).
- ❖ The National Population Policy was updated with support from UNFPA.
- ❖ The impact of climate change on sexual and reproductive health and rights was integrated into the revised National Health Adaptation Plan with the support of WHO.
- ❖ In partnership with Dhaka University, the UN launched a three-month course on climate change and public health.

In 2023, Bangladesh achieved notable health milestones, becoming the first country to successfully eliminate Kala-azar (Visceral Leishmaniasis) and Lymphatic Filariasis as public health concerns. With the UN's support, the country coordinated timely responses to the largest dengue outbreak in its history, as well as to Nipah outbreaks, mobilizing adequate resources to sustain efforts to contain human immunodeficiency viruses (HIV) prevalence at less than 0.1 per cent and ensure equitable access to life-saving Anti-Retro Viral (ARV) medicines. Efforts are also underway to reduce non-communicable disease-related deaths and communicable diseases, including malaria, tuberculosis, and Neglected Tropical Diseases. UN entities provided technical support to MOHFW in updating the National Strategic Plan for Tuberculosis Control for the period 2024-2030, and to develop immediate, mid- and long-term action plans, as well as for the procurement of medicines, reagents, and equipment, in response to the dengue fever outbreak.

The UN significantly bolstered the capabilities of the Directorate General of Health Service and the Directorate General of Family Planning in the realm of Maternal, Newborn, Child & Adolescent Health, while simultaneously fortifying the health system through the implementation of various innovative health programmes. These programmes included initiatives such as Primary Health Care-centred Reaching Every Mother and Newborn (REM-N), Adolescent Friendly Health Service (AFHS), District Evidence-based Planning and Budgeting (DEPB), HPV vaccine campaigns, Day Care Approach (DCA) for pneumonia, lead poisoning prevention, and the development of an urban primary healthcare model. This concerted effort resulted in tangible outcomes, including 21,490 pregnant women receiving at least one quality antenatal care session through the REMN programme, a notable increase in live births in public health facilities from 4,151 to 6,903 between 2022 and 2023, and the provision of services to 121,875 sick

newborns through SCANU. Moreover, immunization coverage improved, with 3.47 million children receiving the measles vaccine, and 265,279 adolescents benefiting from health services via the AFHS. In urban slum areas, 137,628 individuals registered at six urban primary healthcare centres. General practitioners and paramedics provided consultations to 2,033,198 individuals.

With support from the UN, midwifery education is now available to IMC standard at 62 Government institutions, and over 8,000 midwives have been educated to date. There is a need for an estimated 25,000 midwives by 2030 to achieve SDG targets, and at current levels, this target is achievable. There remains however a continuing need for effective funding of positions and deployment of midwives at union level health facilities, where their life-saving potential is the greatest.

With UN assistance, 50 Officers-in-Charge of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police underwent capacity enhancement, focusing on areas such as drugs, crime, and HIV/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), with a particular emphasis on human rights principles. As a result, law enforcement heightened support for the effective implementation of harm reduction programs, particularly targeting People Who Inject Drugs (PWIDs) and key populations. Additionally, capacity building sessions involving 45 officials from eight civil society organizations (CSO) and two government entities led to an enhancement in the quality of HIV treatment, care, and support among stimulant drug users across both government and non-governmental health facilities.

Mental health was a major priority in 2023. With the support of MOHFW and National Institute of Mental Health, the mental health service centres including Moner Bari, Moner Janala, Ektu Golpo Kori established at the district and sub-district level at Jashore, Chapainawabganj and Sylhet districts provide high-quality, affordable mental health care to all people in the district and help to reduce stigma associated with mental illness, making mental health care more accessible to all. In total, 19 centres have been established with more than 7,000 people receiving services. In a country where the treatment gap for mental health conditions is nearly 92 per cent, this initiative represents a major step forward.

The UN assisted the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) in strengthening the capacity of DGDA's vaccine testing services through provision of equipment and remodelling and upgrading of the infrastructure of the vaccine testing laboratory to get to the Biosafety Level 2 laboratory standard. Around 7 million tablets of anti-TB medicines, 115,000 diagnostic kits and other medical supplies for Cox's Bazar District were supplied. In collaboration with MOHFW, the UN has installed 20 Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) plants for medical-grade oxygen in district hospitals and trained 160 staff in plant installation and maintenance, Health, Safety, Social and Environmental (HSSE) standards in workplace and generator maintenance.

[SP2 Health Stories] [Story box text]

[Story 1:] High-level advocacy for Universal Health Coverage

In May 2023, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare hosted an event in Dhaka with the support of UNICEF and WHO entitled 'Accelerating Universal Health Coverage towards Smart Bangladesh'.

At the event, the Government of Bangladesh reiterated its commitment for Universal Health Coverage and pledged to accelerate its efforts for achieving it by 2030 through expanding services, increasing resources and improving efficiency.

This renewed commitment was made by H.E. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in her address. She stated that ensuring necessary health care to the entire population is the government's constitutional obligation. The Prime Minister committed the government to build on what has already been achieved including the 'public provision of an essential package of healthcare for all' so that the target of UHC could be achieved by 2030. Commitments on the formulation of a proper package of essential services (ESP), filling the vacant position in the health sector, arranging primary health care in the urban areas were also made. Organized by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the event was supported by UNICEF, WHO, World Bank, Suchona Foundation, the Centre for Research and Information, and Chatham House, London.

[Story 2:] Spotlight on One Health

In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the UN has initiated a One Health intervention under the leadership of the Directorate General of Health Services. One Health is an integrated public health approach to emerging and high impact infectious diseases, including pandemic threats. It aims to improve community-level case detection, preparedness and risk mitigation.

One key outcome of the One Health approach in 2023 was the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Multi-partner Trust Fund (MPTF) project, officially launched through an inception workshop in December 2023. The workshop was a collaboration among FAO, WHO, World Organization for Animal Health and UN Environment Programme (UNEP), identifying existing activities being implemented by Government counterparts and discussing the roadmap for expanding AMR containment activities. The workshop focused on activities for expanding antimicrobial stewardship programmes to secondary and tertiary care hospitals, piloting activities at three selected hospitals, and expanding training programmes for veterinarians and human health practitioners. To improve the capacity to design awareness-raising, behaviour change and educational activities, templates will be developed, and awareness programmes will be implemented through the One Health approach. The One Health initiative will help to generate, analyse, and interpret data on resistance and consumption/use patterns that can support development of advocacy messages. A common platform for data collection is also under development.

[Story 3:] Reducing antibiotics in small-scale poultry farms

Mousumi Sarkar is a poultry farmer in Abhaynagar upazila, Jashore district of Khulna division.

She set up her rural enterprise in 2017 with 300 chickens and now has 6,000 layers on her farm.

Mousumi received training from a Upazila Livestock Officer trained by FAO. The training helped her to make changes to her farming methods, reduce the use of antibiotics, improve her business and increase her income.

"I take care of my chicken like my own children. I clean their drinkers, feeders and shed on a regular basis so that my chickens stay healthy. I don't allow anyone from outside to enter the farm. I am so proud that my poultry farm is free from diseases. I practice what I learned in the trainings, so I don't use any medicine or antibiotics for the chicken on my farm," says Mousumi.

As part of the One Health initiative, the FAO Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animals Diseases (ECTAD) programme is supporting farmers in Bangladesh to reduce antibiotics use in small-scale poultry farms by improving biosecurity practices.

[Story WASH – UNICEF:] Community leaders come forward to protect at-risk families against dengue

In September 2023, a major dengue outbreak affected all 64 districts in Bangladesh, resulting in over 750 dengue-related deaths as reported by the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). Cases climbed in children under 15 years old to a staggering 25,000, adding to the urgency of the situation. UNICEF, in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh and other partners, worked to confront this crisis head-on, striving to secure a safer and healthier future for all.

Sheuli Khatun, a devoted field supervisor at the Dhalpur Aalo Clinic, played an integral role in this collective endeavour by spearheading awareness campaigns and community mobilization efforts. Operating within neighbourhoods served by the clinic, which not only offered essential primary healthcare services but also served as a nucleus for health-related community awareness, Sheuli and her team tirelessly advocated for dengue prevention. Supported by UNICEF, their commitment underscored the indispensable role of awareness and community engagement in the battle against dengue.

Venturing even into the spiritual sanctuaries of the community, Sheuli and her team formed alliances with Imams and local religious leaders, urging them to integrate dengue prevention messages into public prayers amplified through mosque loudspeakers. Equipped with pamphlets and handheld microphones, they embarked on door-to-door awareness campaigns and traversed the streets on rickshaws, disseminating vital information.

Their proactive approach extended to local schools, where they distributed dengue awareness materials and educated students on preventive measures. In bustling markets, Sheuli engaged vendors and shoppers alike, stressing the collective responsibility of the community in eradicating dengue.

"In this fight against dengue, every member of our community has a vital role to play," Sheuli emphasized, rallying support for the cause. "We aim to empower them with the knowledge and resources to contribute to the eradication of this menace."

(Photo Caption Sheuli Khatun's arsenal of awareness and messaging stems the spread of the disease in Dhaka)

Nutrition

Progress of Strategic Priority 2 Nutrition Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator	Indicator Description	Baseline	Reach (2023)	Targets (2025)
2.1	Prevalence of malnutrition (wasting) among children under 5 years of age	9.8%* (2019)	11% (BDHS 2022)	7%

**Baseline data from MICS 2019 survey*

Selected indicators for nutrition show that reducing the prevalence of malnutrition remains a high priority for the Government of Bangladesh and its UN partners. In 2023, the establishment of the Scaling-up Nutrition (SUN) Secretariat, improvements in resource allocation, and a commitment to achieving SDG

targets underscored a strategic collaboration in support of this aim. The UN supported the SUN Secretariat, located at the Institute of Public Health, to coordinate SUN platforms and monitor progress on SDG and Nutrition for Growth (N4G) commitments.

[Box text] [Towards integrated policy support to nutrition](#)

In 2023, the UN in Bangladesh supported the following policy, institutional capacity and advocacy initiatives for nutrition, which progressed significantly or were adopted by the Government:

- Development of the Strategic Investment plan (SIP) for 5th Health, Nutrition, Population Sector Plan (HNPSIP), 2024-2029
- Implementation of the 2nd National Plan of Action on Nutrition (NPAN2) as part of support to the SUN initiative. Establishment of the SUN Secretariat office and Mid-term Review of NPAN2.
- Technical support to harmonize food safety standards with CODEX¹.
- Support to the Cabinet Division and Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNNC) to advocate with policy makers from key ministries to strengthen the integration and mainstreaming of nutrition into policies and programmes.
- Orientation of Bangladesh National Nutrition Council Focal Points from 22 ministries to strengthen capacity to develop nutrition focused Annual Work Plan following Minimum Package for Multisectoral Nutrition.
- National Nutrition Week 2023, World Breastfeeding Week, World Food Day, and National Vitamin A campaign.

With the prevalence of malnutrition for children under 5 at 11 per cent, UN agencies continued to support Bangladesh to work towards the SDG targets to reduce child stunting and other forms of malnutrition. The agencies supported the Government in improving the quality of nutrition service delivery for young children, adolescents, and women, strengthening the health system through community-based engagement, and promoting innovation to establish continuum of care and treatment for children with severe wasting through locally produced, ready-to-use therapeutic foods. WHO and UNICEF supported the landscape analysis on overweight and obesity among children 5-19 years. UN agencies worked towards strengthening the governance and capacities of the National Nutrition Services and Bangladesh National Nutrition Council (BNCC), which coordinates nutrition programmes across line ministries, agencies, and partners. As the Government of Bangladesh transitions towards the 5th [Health, Nutrition, Population Sector Plan](#), the agencies provided technical assistance for integrating nutrition components across the plans and budgets of 21 ministries and eleven operational plans under the health system. The budgetary envelope is under review and will be approved in June 2024. Additionally, UNICEF has made strides in strengthening public financing for nutrition at the country level by undertaking public expenditure reviews for nutrition components and financial tracking across the ministries.

The UN also supported the government, specifically the Institute of Public Health Nutrition, in enhancing the monitoring and enforcement of Breast Milk Substitutes (BMS) regulations in Bangladesh through the implementation of a Digital Monitoring tool at the Global and Regional Breast Milk Substitute Conference. WHO, UNICEF, and civil society partners have developed tools to advocate for regulation through the

¹ Codex Alimentarius is a collection of internationally adopted food standards and related texts presented in a uniform manner. These food standards and related texts aim at protecting consumers' health and ensuring fair practices in the food trade.

Code established by WHO, assessing BMS marketing, evaluating laws, establishing monitoring systems, and enhancing enforcement mechanisms.

Furthermore, the UN assisted the Government in enhancing the allocation of resources for nutrition services within the framework of the 5th HNPSP. This support included improvements in community engagement and the procurement of necessary supplies to strengthen the overall nutrition initiatives.

IFAD provided \$43 million in funding in 2023 for a co-financed program entitled Agricultural and Rural Transformation for Nutrition, Entrepreneurship and Resilience (PARTNER), which aims to increase food and nutrition security, promote resilience to climate change, and transform agriculture into high-value crops. This will be done by promoting sustainable and nutritious food production; increasing entrepreneurship and access to services; and modernizing institutions and policies for agriculture transformation.

Food Security

Progress of Strategic Priority 2 Food Security Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator	Indicator Description	Baseline	Reach	Target
2.7	Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population based on FIES	Moderate 30.5%, Severe 10.2%	Moderate: 31.1% Severe: 11% (2022)	Moderate: 24.2% Severe 6% (2025)

Bangladesh has long grappled with the enduring consequences of natural disasters, poverty, and income disparity. These persistent challenges have contributed significantly to the prevalence of hunger and malnutrition. As the outcome indicator report shows, progress has stagnated on the reduction of both moderate and severe food insecurity.

The Rome-based agencies lead on food security for the UNCT and work closely together through a food systems approach.

[Box text]: [Accelerating action on food security and transforming food systems](#)

At the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit, Bangladesh presented its visions and commitments for transforming food systems to foster sustainability and contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Bangladesh committed to co-lead the coalition on Climate Resilience and joined the coalitions on Zero Hunger, Social Protection and School Meals.

In July 2023, the first UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment (FSS+2) took place in Rome, with the objective of reviewing progress, socializing the role of sustainable, equitable, healthy, and resilient food systems as critical SDG accelerators, and advocating for urgent action at scale. The Government of Bangladesh prepared the first Voluntary Progress Report with the support of FAO, IFAD and WFP and the CSO, GAIN, for submission to the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub. The high-level delegation from Bangladesh was led by the Prime Minister, who hosted a side event. At the session on school meals, the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education formally committed Bangladesh to joining the School Meals Coalition, with the support of WFP.

In 2024, FAO, IFAD, and WFP will support the Ministry of Food in developing a plan of action and monitoring framework for national pathways.

On the policy side, FAO provided technical assistance in the development of the Dhaka Food Agenda 2041 (June 2023), which outlines a strategic vision for addressing the challenge of ensuring that the city's residents have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, and sustainably sourced food.

In 2023, WFP enhanced the expertise and capacity of 20 officials from the Ministry of Food (MOF) and Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MOWCA) through learning missions to Thailand, China, and India. These missions focused on bolstering knowledge and skills related to kernel production and the successful commercialization of fortified rice. Within the framework of its initiatives for Bangladeshi communities in Cox's Bazar, WFP collaborated with Nutrition International to extend the coverage of fortified rice distribution in 2023. To further support the Ministry of Food and Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs, WFP covered the additional cost of fortified rice, expanding assistance to 22 additional subdistricts (Food for Peace programme) and 35 subdistricts (Vulnerable Women's Benefit programme), ultimately benefiting 1.2 million Bangladeshis in 2023.

In parallel, FAO provided support to 4,050 urban poor smallholder households by supplying agricultural inputs and tools, including vegetable seeds, vermicompost, silos, spade, watering cans, seedling trays, seed planter trays, and plant support nets. FAO delivered comprehensive capacity-building training on safe vegetable production to enhance the capabilities of these households.

IFAD is investing in technical training and access to finance which contribute significantly to enhancing income and food and nutrition security by assisting smallholder farmers in producing diverse, high-value crops and marketing fresh and processed agricultural products in a more responsive and competitive manner. This intervention is intended to reach 250,000 rural households in southern Bangladesh, where the highest percentage of rural poor resides. Women, youth, and disadvantaged households are targeted.

[Food Security Story: FAO]: **Breaking barriers: Sonia Khatun's journey in fisheries**

Sonia Khatun from Lokkikhola, Dacope Upazila, shares her remarkable journey in fisheries. Being born into a society where gender roles are strictly defined, Sonia and her sister found themselves engaged in various tasks alongside their father, as they lacked a brother.

In their community, traditional norms dictated that women's economic engagement was limited to government or non-government jobs, leaving little room for exploration in other sectors. However, Sonia refused to conform to these limitations and envisioned a different path for herself and her community.

Determined to break free from societal constraints, Sonia, along with 24 other members of her community, established a Community-Based Organization (CBO) to venture into fish farming. With support from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and the Department of Fisheries, they embarked on this journey, overcoming cultural barriers.

Embracing the opportunity, Sonia participated in training programs focused on climate change and its impact on the fisheries and aquaculture sector. These sessions not only equipped her with extensive knowledge but also instilled confidence in her abilities. Additionally, she underwent training in leadership skills and gender dynamics, empowering her to lead effectively in a male-dominated field.

Through perseverance and dedication, Sonia emerged as a confident leader in fish farming, challenging stereotypes and inspiring other women in her community to pursue their aspirations. Today, she stands as a beacon of hope, proving that with determination and support, women can thrive in any field they choose.

WASH

Progress of Strategic Priority 2 WASH Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator	Indicator Description	Baseline	Reach	Target
2.2	Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services	42.6% (2019)	71.22 % (SVRS 2023)	75% (2025)

UN activities in the WASH sector have contributed to significant progress, with more than 71 per cent of the population now using safe drinking water services, up from a baseline of just 42 per cent in 2019. In the push to reach the 75 per cent target, there has been a focus on creating an improved enabling environment through the development and revision of crucial sectoral policies, strategies, and guidelines.

[Box text] [Towards integrated policy support to WASH](#)

The UN supported the Government of Bangladesh with the development of the following national WASH strategies and guidelines:

- ❖ National Menstrual Hygiene Management Strategy
- ❖ Hand Hygiene for All Road Map 2030 and revised National Standards and Guidelines for WASH in Health Care Facilities
- ❖ Adoption of the Guidelines for WASH services.

In terms of direct service provision, the UN has helped to expand water supply services to a substantial population. This includes reaching 226,337 people in rural and urban poor communities, with a particular emphasis on responding to floods in Chittagong and Cox's Bazar. Additionally, sanitation services have been extended to 105,486 individuals, covering both development and humanitarian contexts.

Education

Progress of Strategic Priority 2 Education Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator	Indicator Description	Baseline	Reach	Target in 2025
2.6	Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3 (b) at the end of primary and (c) at the	a) In grade 3 i) Bangla: 47% ii) Mathematics: 34% b) In grade 5 i) Bangla: 44%	(a) (i): National 61.93%; (Male 59.51%; Female 64.59%) (a) (ii): National 61.01%; (Male 60.79%; Female 61.22%)	a) In grade 3 i) Bangla: 60% students performed at grade 3 levels. ii) Mathematics: 50% students performed at grade 3 level. b) In grade

	<p>end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex</p>	<p>ii) Mathematics: 32% c) In grade 8 i) Bangla: 22% English: 7% ii) Mathematics: 6%</p>	<p>(b) (i): National 94.46% (Male 94.04%; Female 94.82%) (b) (ii): National 95.87% (Male 95.50%; Female 96.19%) (c) (i): National 98.52% (Male 98.49%; Female 98.66%) (c) (ii): National 23.63%; (Male 23.38%; Female 23.83%) (LAS,2023) (i) Reading: In grade 2/3: 25.9% [Poorest: 36.4%; Richest: 64.3%] (a) (ii) Math: In grade 2/3: 13.0% [Poorest: 20.1%; Richest: 38.1%] [MICS 2019, BBS] (a)in grades 2/3; Primary Education (i) reading Bangla – Total: 51% (ii) math: 39% (b) at the end of primary (i) reading Bangla –: 50% (ii) math : 30% [NSA, 2023, DPE]</p>	<p>5 i) Bangla: 60% students performed at grade 5 levels. ii) Mathematics: 50% students performed at grade 5 level. c) In grade 8 i) Bangla: 50% students performed at band 6 and above in Bangla. English: 50% students performed at Band 6 and above in English. ii) Mathematics: 50% of students performed at band 6 and above in Mathematics.</p>
<p>Additional statistics –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National literacy rate (15 years+) is 75.6% which increased slightly from 2022 status 74.4%. - Status of student (5-24 age) is 59.28% and not in education is 40.72% and school dropped out rate is 9.36% (SVRS 2023) 				

The UN has been instrumental in nurturing education, helping to expand educational outreach to both rural and urban areas while elevating the standard of education.

Recent interventions by UN agencies have led to significant advancements. The UN has specifically supported the introduction of pre-primary education in over 3,000 schools, benefiting approximately 65,000 children aged four and above, with a notable emphasis on promoting gender parity, especially among girls. Furthermore, extensive curriculum revisions have impacted millions of children.

New curriculum and teaching learning materials were rolled out in grades 6 and 7 in the 2023 academic year, benefiting 4 million children (55 per cent being girls). Curricula and teaching learning materials for grades 8 and 9 were developed in 2023 to be rolled out in the academic year 2024. More than 420,000

teachers were trained to implement the new curriculum, emphasizing Life Skills Education (LSE) and introducing the "Wellbeing" component.

Through the Ability Based Accelerated Learning (ABAL) programme as well as Multi-Grade-Multi-Level (MGML) programmes, more than 250,000 children 8-14 years from the most marginalized groups who are either out of school or dropped out or who are at risk of dropping out were provided with remedial education or catch-up programme or alternative pathways for acquiring foundational learning skills. Through Alternative Learning Pathways, over 20,000 adolescents who were out of school are provided with skills-based literacy programme and apprenticeship. A comprehensive sexuality education curriculum has been developed for out-of-school adolescent girls, including components for married adolescent girls with UNFPA's technical assistance. A trainer pool of 34 staff members from UNFPA, Government and non-government IPs, has been created to support the curriculum's rollout in 2024.

Two-year pre-primary education was piloted in 3000+ schools, benefiting 65,000 children who are 4+ years old, half of whom are girls. In addition, through various Early Childhood Education programmes, more than 55,000 children are benefiting on ECE.

Initiatives such as the dissemination of the National Student Assessment report and the nationwide celebration of World Teacher's Day by over 6,000 teachers have all been supported by the UN. Bangladesh institutionalised the celebration of World Teachers' Day in 2023 as a platform to conduct dialogues with teachers, elevate teachers' social status and promote teacher professionalisation, benefiting over a million teachers across the country.

The UN has helped to strengthen and transform education systems including greening education and data collection on education statistics. Bangladesh has become a founding member of the Greening Education Partnership launched at the Transforming Education Summit. UNESCO supported the capacity strengthening of the National Technical Committee on SDG 4 to transfer national data into internationally comparable data and statistics for global, regional, and national monitoring. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics conducted a Literacy Assessment Survey (LAS) 2023 that enabled publication of the first national report on literacy for 11 years.

[Box text]: Transforming Education

The UN Secretary-General convened the Transforming Education Summit (TES) in September 2022, aiming at mobilizing action to transform education by 2030 and addressing the dual challenges posed by the global learning crisis exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the inadequacies of traditional education systems in meeting modern demands. Bangladesh, a proactive member of the global SDG 4 High-Level Steering Committee (HLSC) representing Asia and the Pacific, showcased its dedication through active engagement in the TES and its follow-up throughout 2023. UNESCO and UNICEF supported the Government to implement the national commitments from the TES, which concentrate on curriculum reform, digital transformation in education, teacher professional development, greening education, and SDG 4 mid-term review and benchmarking in Bangladesh. Notably, Bangladesh became a founding member of the global flagship initiative "Greening Education Partnership" launched at the TES, spearheading efforts and directing resources to green schools, learning, capacities and communities. UNESCO and UNICEF also assisted the government in monitoring and reporting the progress to the National Inter-ministerial Steering Committee for TES follow-up and SDG 4 coordination and to the TES Secretariat at the global level.

[Box text] [Towards integrated policy support to education](#)

In 2023, the UN in Bangladesh lent its technical, policy advice, support and institutional capacity building initiatives for education, including the launch of key studies by UNESCO and UNICEF:

- ❖ Dissemination of the National Students Assessment 2022 Report was completed (2023).
- ❖ Development of a Special Education Needs and Disability Framework and a Training Manual for building capacity of education officials and stakeholders at various levels.
- ❖ Establishment of Integrated Primary Education Management Information System, an online system for data collection and improved services has been strengthened with 22 modules, including HR management, education management and governance.
- ❖ Development of Teachers' Social-Emotional Well-Being Guidebook (2023) to support teachers in self-care.
- ❖ Core values of Global Citizenship Education integrated into the training curriculum of the (National Academy for Educational Management) (NAEM) and roll-out of training for secondary and higher secondary school teachers including education managers,
- ❖ Following mapping of the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) initiatives, the National Committee prepared a Country Initiative on ESD for Bangladesh in 2023.
- ❖ Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) was recognized as the first ever UNESCO Chair² on Industry Integration in Higher Education Systems in Bangladesh.

[Story – Education – UNICEF]: Getting more girls into STEM: With a bold new curriculum, 13-year-old Ayesha is making a mark in science

At just 13 years old, Ayesha can change an electric switch board, repair a fan, fix a blown-up fuse on an LED bulb and rewire a toy car to make it rechargeable and save on batteries.

“My dad teaches me how electric gadgets work. I like fixing broken appliances, putting things together and watching them light up,” says Ayesha.

Ayesha’s father used to run a repair shop for TV sets, fans and other small electrical appliances in his hometown. He teaches Ayesha practical skills to complement what she is learning in her science projects at school.

There is a new way of teaching Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in Bangladeshi schools and the new curriculum makes core science subjects compulsory for children until they complete grade 10. Students like Ayesha now get to pursue their passion in science and showcase the skills they are learning through the practical science projects under the new secondary school curriculum.

“The new curriculum takes a more hands-on approach, and students are more engaged in class, whereas the previous one was about memorizing things. Today they made a solar cooker with two students leading while others observed and chipped in,” explains Ayesha’s science teacher Nanda Rani Das.

Ayesha’s teacher says these changes will promote science education, particularly among girls. Ms. Das, who has been teaching for 22 years, says it is not just the curriculum that has changed. “In the past, fewer girls completed school and even those who stayed in school did not want to take science subjects. The

² *A network of universities around the world supports UNESCO’s work in education, the natural and social sciences, culture and communication, to help address pressing challenges and contribute to the development of their societies.*

perception was that girls are made for marriage and therefore it is not important for them to study too much,” explains Ms. Das.

Gender stereotypes can limit girls’ motivation and participation in STEM. Curriculum and learning materials can also reinforce gender stereotypes and unequal gender norms in science and technology fields. If STEM subjects are made interesting and interactive, it will also attract more children to progress to secondary education and reduce dropout rates after primary school.

“Fortunately, attitudes are changing. It’s easier for girls to venture into science fields today than it was in my time. Girls have more support from their families and their communities to pursue their education goals,” reflects Ms. Das.

[Link for sourcing photos: [With a supportive father and a bold new curriculum, 13-year-old Ayesha is making a mark in science | UNICEF](#)]

Child & Youth Protection

Progress of Strategic Priority 2 Child & Youth Protection Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator	Indicator Description	Baseline	Reach	Target
2.4A	Percentage of women aged 20-24 years who were married before age 18	51.4%* (2019)	41.6% (SVRS 2023)	30%

**Baseline data from MICS 2019 survey*

UN agencies in Bangladesh are actively striving to advance child protection. Ending child marriage is one of the top priorities. According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the percentage of marriages among under-18 girls rose to 41.6 per cent in 2023, up from 40.9 per cent in 2022 and 32.4 per cent in 2021³ highlighting an urgent need for action.

To this end, UN agencies are guiding the development and implementation of the National Action Plan to End Child Marriage, while strengthening child protection services through strategic advocacy, judicial reforms, and expanded social work efforts, impacting millions. Through the National Action Plan, the Government hopes to establish a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework featuring a development dashboard.

The Child Protection Programme, supported by UNICEF and its partners, has consistently championed the creation of a comprehensive child protection system. This initiative has significantly enhanced the availability and coverage of child protection services.

Dedicated child protection service hubs established by the Department of Social Services (DSS) in three cities have provided holistic support to 2,688 street children, including psychosocial aid, recreational activities, food, health care, and education. Additionally, 52 social workers conducted outreach efforts, engaging with over 5,000 children in high-risk areas of Dhaka, Barisal, and Rangpur.

³ *Sample Vital and Registration Statistics 2023 published on 24 March 2024*

The DSS Child Helpline witnessed a remarkable 58 per cent surge in outreach, connecting with over 190,000 children. Furthermore, it played a crucial role in the rescue of 17,670 children from severe violence, abuse, and exploitation.

Support to judicial services has seen the Children’s Court manage to divert 23 per cent of cases, redirecting over one-fifth of children involved to community-based alternatives such as bail, instead of detention.

Social Protection

Progress of SP 2 Social Protection Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator	Indicator Description	Baseline	Reach	Target
2.5	Proportion of population covered by social protection	27.8% (HIES, 2016)	37.6% (HIES, 2022)	35% (2025)

In 2023, significant progress was made in the domain of social protection through collaborative endeavours between the UN and relevant ministries, culminating in the establishment of three key roadmaps. These include the implementation of the single registry Management Information System (MIS), the formulation of a comprehensive Unemployment Insurance spanning the years 2023- 2026, and the development of a National Social Insurance Scheme (NSIS). Additionally, the launch of a pilot program for the Employment Injury Scheme marked a notable advancement within the broader social protection framework by providing income protection and a payment scheme for occupational injuries, disabilities, and deaths for work-related injuries in the RMG industry. The UN will continue to provide technical assistance to the Government and industry partners, to improve income protection and help strengthen public administration capacity for sustainable results.

With this support, as the progress indicator illustrates, Bangladesh has already surpassed its target to reach 35 per cent of its population with social protection.

Recognizing the unique needs of marginalized groups, particularly female sex workers, the UN in 2023 conducted an assessment to identify social protection requirements. Subsequent advocacy efforts aimed to address gaps in social protection for this vulnerable demographic. The assessment revealed that approximately 80 percent of female sex workers lacked awareness about the Department of Social Services' Social Safety Net program, and less than 20 per cent had attempted to access its services, underscoring significant gaps in inclusion and access. Moreover, those who attempted to access services encountered delays and challenges, with some unable to receive support despite their efforts.

[\[Box text\] Towards integrated policy support to social protection](#)

In 2023, the UN in Bangladesh supported the Government with policy development and technical capacities across a range of initiatives that were completed in 2023:

- Support to the Ministry of Labour & Employment (MOLE) in developing priority actions for the implementation of National Social Insurance Scheme (NSIS), with a focus on maternity, sickness, unemployment, and work injury protection.
- Development of a prototype M&E dashboard for Social Protection and National Social Security Strategy to enhance monitoring of social protection reforms in collaboration with the Cabinet Division.

- Support to the Cabinet Division to bolster the capacity of divisional and district-level officials (515 officials, comprising 350 males and 165 females) on child-sensitive social protection.
- Development of a disability inclusion module and integration into the National Labour Force Survey.
- Establishment of a data-sharing mechanism for the Mother and Child Benefit Programme (MCBP) within the MOWCA, integrating health, nutrition, and birth registration data to track service uptake through interoperable MIS.
- Offering technical support to the government in developing a national measure for multidimensional poverty, currently undergoing the approval process.

[Story Box Text: UNCDF/UNAIDS]: **Social investments empower entrepreneurs from the transgender community**

In the town of Manikganj, Anonnya Banik emerges as a powerful force for change within the transgender community. Through her courageous initiative, Uttoron Gents Parlour, she transformed a simple gents parlour into a sanctuary of empowerment. Anonnya's vision extended beyond mere entrepreneurship; it aimed to challenge societal norms and provide sustainable opportunities for transgender individuals who face discrimination and marginalization in Bangladesh.

Despite the long-standing challenges and prejudices faced by the transgender community, Anonnya Banik's determination remained unyielding. She recognized the untapped potential within her community and sought to reintegrate transgender individuals into society as entrepreneurs, breaking down barriers of discrimination and bias. Anonnya's commitment was not just lip service. As her business has grown, she actively engaged transgender individuals as employees, providing them with jobs, training and a platform to showcase their talents and capabilities. Anonnya's pioneering efforts ignited conversations on inclusion and acceptance, serving as a model of empowerment for the broader community.

The UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) is proud to be a part of this inspiring journey of empowerment. Working with UNAIDS to reach a network of transgender and retired sex workers, UNCDF put out a call for proposals for small-scale investments to promote local businesses. Anonnya's initiative was one of seven selected for support. UNCDF helped Anonnya to develop a comprehensive business plan and capital budget, which included a business financial model capturing details such as sales, growth, revenue, operational and capital costs, assets, and equity. The financing included an equity contribution of \$14,440, \$1,000 in bank financing and \$2,980 in investment grant funding from UNCDF, for a total project cost of \$18,420. The financing enabled the renovation and modernization of the parlour, which enhanced its appeal to a wider customer base. Uttoron Gents Parlour was then able to grow its clientele, which expanded the business and allowed Anonnya to hire three transgender people as staff.

Migration

In 2023, the UN supported the Government of Bangladesh in the formulation and execution of comprehensive, inclusive, and gender-responsive policies and legal frameworks related to migration. This involved technical contributions to significant enactments such as the Overseas Employment and Migrant Act 2023 Amendment, National Reintegration Policy, National Diaspora Policy, Wage Earners' Welfare Board Rule 2023, and Gender-Responsive Guidance on Employment Contracts. In tandem with these

policy efforts, the UN worked to enhance the capacity of various stakeholders involved in migration, including the Government of Bangladesh, CSOs, trade unions, and social workers. This was achieved through the development of capacity-building frameworks, action plans, and specific training curricula. Pre-departure training programmes for migrant workers were designed, and a specialized curriculum for the judiciary was developed to enable the identification and prosecution of human trafficking cases.

To address the post-migration phase, the UN collaborated with the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment to decentralize reintegration and welfare services. This involved the establishment of Migrant Workers' Welfare Centres (MWWCs) in 30 selected districts, and the recruitment and training of MWWC staff. The objective was to create a holistic and needs-based reintegration service delivery mechanism, with a focus on the well-being of returning migrants and their families.

[Box text] [Towards integrated policy support on migration](#)

In 2023, the UN continued to support the Government with regulations and policies related to migration:

- ❖ Amendment of Overseas Employment and Migrant Act 2023 and adoption by the Parliament. The amended Act addresses responsibilities as well as rights for migrant workers and emphasizes reintegration services, skill development and certification services. To ensure dignity, protections and rights of the migrant workers the provision of special financial and welfare services have also been added.
- ❖ Formulation of National Reintegration Policy with support from ILO, IOM and UN Women. The policy covers overarching directives for reintegration (including returnee database and one stop centres), social reintegration of returnee migrants (including universal social protection), economic reintegration of returnee migrants (including active labour market policies), physical and psychosocial well-being of returnees and their family members and effective coordination and management of the reintegration process.
- ❖ Formulation of National Diaspora Policy with support of IOM. The policy covers engagement of the diaspora into national and local development for enhancing developmental impacts and harnessing the Bangladeshi diaspora potentials for national development.
- ❖ Formulation of Wage Earners' Welfare Board Rule 2023 with the support of ILO as member secretary of the Technical Committee. The UN supported the development of this rule for strengthening reintegration services and access to justice for returning migrant workers.
- ❖ Development of Gender-Responsive Guidance on Employment Contracts, and translation into Bangla. An advocacy event was organized on this tool and shared with the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment.
- ❖ Development of capacity building frameworks, action plans, pre-departure trainings curriculum, training curriculum for judiciary to identify and prosecute human trafficking cases.

Strategic Priority 3: Sustainable, Healthy and Resilient Environment

Outcome: “By 2026, ecosystems are healthier, and all people, in particular the most vulnerable and marginalized in both rural and urban settings, benefit from and contribute to, in a gender-responsive manner, a cleaner and more resilient environment, an enriched natural resources base, low carbon development and are more prosperous and resilient to climate change, shocks and disasters”

Progress of Strategic Priority 3 Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator	Indicator Description	Baseline	Reach	Target
3.1	Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population	Directly affected persons: 12,881 Deaths: 0.2045	Directly affected 3578.03 Deaths: 0.85* Missing: 0.03, (BDRHS 2021)	Directly affected persons: 2,000 Deaths:0
3.2	Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption	3.25% (2019)	4.59% (2023)	8.5% (2025)

**In 2023, the HCTT reported that 51 people were killed in monsoon flash floods in Chattogram Division. Available Government data is from 2021 and does not yet reflect these fatalities.*

In 2023, the UN system in Bangladesh worked to aid the Government and affected communities by implementing preventative and adaptive measures, focusing on disaster risk reduction. The UN's efforts bridged the humanitarian-development nexus, incorporating work on disaster preparedness, prevention, and resilience building. At the same time, the UN supported a range of initiatives to adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change and environmental degradation. Stepping up support for climate financing is a significant priority for the UN.

To this end, the UN continued to support the implementation of Bangladesh's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which outlines Bangladesh's actions and commitments to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change, as well as the National Adaptation Plan (NAP, 2023-2050). For NDC implementation, the UN assisted the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MOEFCC) in formulating an investment plan, prioritizing green investments for a gender-responsive circular economy, green hydrogen, and achieving net-zero emissions. The plan aims to secure financing solutions aligned with the SDGs on a significant scale. As part of support to implementation of the NAP 2023-2050, a Performance-Based Climate Resilience Grant Investment Menu was crafted at the Upazila Parishad level, with tailored strategies to meet the distinct needs of four climate-vulnerable zones in Bangladesh. This strategic approach addresses climate vulnerabilities effectively, adapting investments to diverse regional challenges and communities.

Strong multi-stakeholder partnerships remain the foundation of climate change action in Bangladesh. The UN has established a robust network with key agencies and organizations like the Bangladesh Institute of Planners, Municipality Association of Bangladesh, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), and LGED, affirming its commitment to equipping vulnerable urban populations, particularly women, to tackle climate change challenges. The Municipalities and City Corporations, supported by the UN, embraced climate-resilient models for planning and services. This shift led to a significant allocation in 2023 for inclusive urban development, showcasing a tangible commitment to sustainable and resilient

urbanization practices. This helped inform an allocation of over \$5.5 million for climate-resilient urban development and promoting social inclusivity.

UNDP and UNCDF have played an important role in providing technical assistance for local initiatives addressing climate change, such as the Local Government Initiatives on Climate Change (LoGIC), which received the *Local Adaptation Champion Award* from the Global Centre on Adaptation during COP28, in the category of 'Innovation in Developing Climate Finance.' LoGIC boosted locally-led resilience planning and community access to climate finance, practically furthering commitments under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The locally led adaptation model of LoGIC is a proven business case for the Local Government Division (LGD) to scale up nationally and showcase as a global best practice model. Since the project started, 1.97 million of the most climate vulnerable people, including 56 per cent women from 329,986 households in 94 Unions of 9 Districts directly benefit from grants and capacity-building support. In 2023, LoGIC provided grants to 32,256 climate-vulnerable people from 7,500 households in Rangamati and Bandarban Districts to create a climate-resilient pathway, and to Local Government Institutions to implement community-level Climate Change Adaptation schemes. LoGIC promotes market linkages and the financial inclusion of climate vulnerable households. 35,000 CRF beneficiaries, including 99 per cent women, opened individual and group bank accounts. In 2023, LoGIC also supported 144,878 people in vulnerable communities with grants to reduce their climate change vulnerabilities through 64 community-level climate-resilient schemes. Women beneficiaries are leading their own group businesses, empowering them financially and socially.

Through strategic investment and collaboration, UNCDF has spearheaded transformative change in climate adaptation efforts. Across seven climate-vulnerable districts, UNCDF's initiative has resulted in the establishment of 56 resilient infrastructures across 19 upazilas. This concerted effort has directly impacted the lives of 144,878 individuals, with 75,900 men and 68,978 women benefiting directly. Notably, these infrastructural developments were meticulously planned by the respective upazilas, showcasing the successful integration of the NAP sectors into local planning frameworks.

The UN provided technical support to update the Climate Change and Gender Action Plan (CCGAP), which aims to bolster the resilience of women and vulnerable groups against climate change, shocks, and disasters. The Plan is owned by the Government, which plays a central role in its implementation, coordination, and monitoring. The adoption by the MOEFCC of a 'Gender Guideline', developed with the technical support of the UN, demonstrates a recognition by the Government of the gender-specific impact of climate change and the need for a gendered lens when developing mitigation strategies. In 2023, the UN significantly contributed to sustainability and environmental conservation efforts in Bangladesh, particularly through the establishment of a National Climate Change Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system. This initiative reflects a commitment to enhancing the country's capability to monitor and respond effectively to climate change, thereby contributing to global climate goals.

It is now well established that climate change and disasters intensify existing drivers of migration and influence human mobility. IOM is providing support to the Government with capacity building on climate-related data and methodology and coordination mechanisms for disaster displacement. Other support includes the incorporation of displacement in national plans, introduction of new displacement tracking technologies, and support to climate-driven in-country resettlement and relocation. Another significant environmental initiative supported by the UN involves the expansive afforestation project in Cox's Bazar. More than 75,000 native tree species have been planted, covering an extensive area exceeding 70 hectares.

This afforestation initiative is designed to rehabilitate and restore ecosystems in Cox's Bazar, addressing issues of land degradation and promoting biodiversity.

The UN conducted training for the healthcare service providers of hospitals and clinics and their key management staff on plastic waste management in Sirajganj district. Eighty-five healthcare service providers and their key management staff attended the training. Besides, a Training of Trainers was conducted to develop 20 master trainers, who will provide 2,500 ground-level health workers in Sirajganj district by 2025.

The UN also actively engaged with industries to mitigate the environmental impact of hydrochlorofluorocarbon-22 (HCFC-22), a potent greenhouse gas commonly used in Refrigeration and Air Conditioning (RAC) systems. In a noteworthy accomplishment, over 17 ozone-depleting potential (ODP) tons of HCFC-22 have been successfully phased out from six RAC industries. This achievement not only contributes to the global effort to protect the ozone layer but also aligns with sustainable development goals by mitigating the adverse effects of climate change.

The phased-out HCFC-22 initiative exemplifies the UN's commitment to fostering sustainable practices in key sectors, emphasizing the importance of transitioning to environmentally friendly alternatives. By collaborating with industries, the UN has demonstrated its ability to facilitate concrete actions that have positive implications for both local environmental quality and global climate objectives.

[Box text] Gender-responsive climate change solutions

During COP28, Bangladeshi women leaders shared their climate action experiences, stressing the importance of gender-responsive support. In the Chittagong Hill Tract region, the UN enhanced the capacities of 39,733 individuals across diverse sectors, benefiting various demographic groups. Support for women in 63 Unions, fostering climate-adaptive livelihoods, resulted in significant savings at the household level, showcasing the UN's success in promoting sustainable economic opportunities and addressing gender equality.

UN agencies have helped to promote inclusive, gender-responsive, and climate-resilient urbanization across 19 cities. Notably, they have supported climate-resilient infrastructure, education, livelihoods, and protection against gender-based violence, benefiting 3.8 million urban poor individuals, with 1.8 million receiving targeted assistance for climate resilience. Despite socio-economic challenges, 15,000 urban poor received skills training, and 40,549 women received seed capital.

[Box text] Early Warning for All

The Government's adoption of Early Warning for All (EW4All) in 2023 was a major milestone. Led by the Resident Coordinator, the collaboration with the Government, WFP, International Federation of the Red Cross and Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, has undertaken significant efforts toward advancing Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS) through EW4ALL. A national consultative workshop held in November 2023 marked a collective effort to launch the initiative and formulate the national roadmap for EW4All (2023-2027). The roadmap is expected to be finalized in mid-2024, aiming to further facilitate international collaboration and funding to enhance Bangladesh's early warning capabilities.

[Box Text Story:] Bangladesh a pioneer for Anticipatory Action

Assistance before a disaster helps people in climate-vulnerable areas to disaster-proof homes and businesses, secure assets, supplement livelihoods and access essential health care. It can save lives by providing financial support for people to move out of the way of impending floods and cyclones.

Delivering assistance before disaster hits is known as Anticipatory Action (AA). With its long and challenging experience with climate-related natural disasters, Bangladesh is at the forefront of innovation on AA. Since 2020, the Government of Bangladesh and the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) have dedicated significant resources to bolstering nationwide disaster preparedness and risk management. The country has accumulated valuable experience in anticipatory action, particularly regarding monsoonal river floods.

In 2015, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) pioneered a new approach, creating activation thresholds and an Early Action Protocol, later tested in 2015, 2017, and 2019 with a focus on cash assistance. BDRCS played a vital role in implementing Cash-Based Anticipatory Action, while WFP worked on institutionalizing early actions.

In 2020, the HCTT developed a pilot for a new AA framework. Amid the highest flood levels in years, affecting one million households and 5.5 million people, and causing 257 deaths, the pilot programme was rolled out. Despite the devastating toll of the floods, over 220,000 people received \$2.8 million in assistance from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) before the floods peaked.

In 2023, the AA framework was enhanced and expanded to additional geographic areas. More significantly, Bangladesh became the first country to have a multi-hazard AA framework covering both floods and cyclones. The UN and partners have developed a common beneficiary database of 200,000 households vulnerable to disaster in 15 climate hotspots. Before Cyclone Mocha and flash floods, 45,000 people received timely AA cash payments. An initial AA investment of \$7.5 million from CERF is now complemented by other funds, which help to reach more people to mitigate flood impact.

UN agencies mobilized resources and delivered emergency assistance following two natural disasters in 2023. For Cyclone Mocha, \$12.7 million was raised against an appeal of \$35.5 million. Over 17,000 people benefited from emergency shelter provided in the aftermath of the cyclone.

In response to the Chattogram floods, the UN appealed for \$34 million and mobilized \$9.7 million for assistance to the communities and refugee populations affected. The UN worked in close collaboration with local, regional and national officials, NGOs and community organizations to coordinate immediate support for shelter and other basic needs, reaching over 300,000 people.

[Story box text - WFP]: Pumpkin power: how Bangladeshi women fight the climate crisis

Life on the sand islands is particularly hard. Communication and transportation routes are complicated, and health care is limited. Children often take arduous journeys on empty stomachs to reach the nearest sandbank with a school. In the monsoon season, these daily journeys can be deadly.

“During the floods, we suffered in many ways,” says 33-year-old Bilkis Begum, another pumpkin grower on the island, looking back on the last rainy season. “There was no way to communicate. I was stuck in the house and my husband could not work, so we had no money left. We couldn't afford three meals a day.”

Her story could have ended there. Then came WFP's pilot project in Kurigram, aimed to ensure families like Bilkis' could better prepare and respond to the floods. The initiative trains islanders in disaster management, with WFP and trained volunteers also providing early warning information about looming disasters. Based on flood forecasts, families receive cash so they can move to safety in time.

“Those 4,500 taka felt like 40,000 taka,” says Bilkis of the cash payments she received ahead of the last floods, amounting to about \$42. “With that money, we could prepare (for the floods). We could buy food and invest in our houses.” After extreme weather hits, WFP climate risk insurance kicks in. The payout helps families to recover.

So do the entrepreneurship training and start-up capital the project provides to its female participants, to diversify and grow their businesses. That, in turn, helps to strengthen their resilience to climate shocks.

Pumpkin farmer Asha learned to sew within ten days. She bought a sewing machine with her WFP start-up funds. Now, she earns money mending clothes - and selling the nutrient-packed squash that she grows.

Beyond being an ideal plant for barren sandbanks, pumpkin can be harvested ahead of monsoon rains. It also protects the soil, by binding carbon dioxide from the air and creating biomass with it. Because pumpkins can be stored for up to six months, growers like Asha have time to sell them at a good price.

She also knows how to protect the plant's seeds from wind and sand. She is grateful, too, for the other windfalls from her WFP training.

“Before this project, we had to ask our husbands for money,” Asha says. “Now we earn our own money and can support our families. We can send our children to school and spend our cash on different things.”

Strategic Priority 4: Transformative, Participatory and Inclusive Governance

Outcome: “By 2026, more people, especially the most vulnerable, benefit from more equitable, non-discriminatory, gender-responsive, participatory, accountable governance and justice, in a peaceful and tolerant society governed by the rule of law.”

The support of the UN in Bangladesh to governance and justice includes initiatives on gender equality and women’s empowerment, access to justice, human rights, labour rights and child labour, maritime security and prevention of trafficking. Bangladesh emphasizes gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) in national development plans. In 2023, the Prime Minister reaffirmed this commitment at the SDG Summit, including reiterating the extension of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security (NAP WPS) until 2025 and its commitment to “fulfilling the WPS agenda”.

In 2023, UNDP's decades-long technical assistance on access to information, innovation and digitalization of public services in Bangladesh, witnessed a significant structural transformation milestone. The approval of the Agency to Innovate (a2i) Bill in Parliament laid the foundation for the formation of a dedicated agency embedded in the government machinery to catalyse the government’s Smart Bangladesh Vision 2041. This vision is built on the four pillars of Smart Citizen, Smart Government, Smart Economy and Smart Society, and looks to “bridging the digital divide by innovating and scaling sustainable digital solutions that all citizens, regardless of their socio-economic background, [and] all businesses, regardless of their size, can benefit from”. In 2023, citizens experienced access to 215 million services through inclusive online, mobile and voice platforms facilitated through UNDP technical and implementation assistance. The establishment of 569 digital centres nationwide within a 4km walking distance, enabled citizens to access over 90 million digital services provided by microenterprises located at grassroots-level government offices.

The UN has made substantial strides in advancing access to justice for the poor and the most marginalized, with a specific focus on women and children. Building on two previous phases of UNDP programming, the Activating Village Courts in Bangladesh programme launched its third phase with a significant expansion to provide alternative dispute resolution services to approximately 61 million rural Bangladeshis. With technical assistance for drafting, the Cabinet also submitted amendments to the Village Courts Act 2006 for Parliamentary approval, providing for improved access to justice for rural populations, especially women, ethnic minorities, and disadvantaged groups.

Linked to the efforts on child protection, the UN has made notable contributions through the empowerment of Child Affairs Police Officers, Probation/Social Service Officers and the promotion of non-custodial measures within Children’s Courts. This strategic approach has resulted in a 33 per cent increase in the use of non-custodial measures, benefiting 1,585 out of 4,855 (32 per cent) of children in conflict with the law in 2023. Also, eleven children’s courts in nine Districts have been renovated to establish a child friendly environment as per the provision stipulated in the children’s act 2013 including equipped with the digital facilities to operate a village court system. By prioritizing non-custodial measures to the law enforcement agencies, probation services, and transforming the Courts, the UN aims to ensure the well-being and rehabilitation of children in conflict and contact with the law, aligning with international standards for juvenile justice.

The UN in collaboration with justice and human rights institutions including the Bangladesh Police, ICT Division, Ministry of Law, National Legal Aid Services Organization has successfully advocated for upholding rights and promoting gender equality in cyberspace. Achievements include awareness campaigns, global recognition for cybersecurity awareness, national-level initiatives, and community

advocacy for youth, women, and marginalized communities. In addition, the UN has improved access to justice, supporting the digital legal aid system for case management. UNDP promoted civic education through the *Amio Shunagorik* Campaign raising awareness of civic engagement, gender equality, and sustainable consumption among one million individuals through online and offline platforms. Hosted in the ICT Division, the Civic Education Course reached 3,630 individuals (3,074 male, 489 female). Additionally, the UN has taken proactive steps in addressing labour-related grievances by training and supporting trade union leaders as paralegals. This initiative has proven effective, leading to the successful resolution of 2,066 cases since 2019. By empowering trade union leaders with legal knowledge, the UN has facilitated the resolution of labour disputes, contributing to improved working conditions and fair treatment for labourers.

Addressing the critical issue of child labour, the UN has actively supported the conduct, quality assurance and publication of the National Child Labour Survey. This survey generated crucial data that will help in preparing evidence-based policies and interventions geared towards eradicating child labour and safeguarding the rights of vulnerable children. The UN also supported the Government for the periodic progress review of the National Plan of Action (NPA) on elimination of child labour from 2021-2025. A total of 80 officials from different ministries including the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE) were capacitated on their roles and responsibilities in implementing the NPA and to ensure an improved oversight role in monitoring NPA implementation.

The Partnership with Bangladesh Supreme Court Special Committee on Child Rights continued to oversee the implementation of laws related to children and enforcement of their rights by the relevant stakeholders. This partnership added significant values in advocating and influencing in the process of amendment and expediting the enactment of different laws related to Children, operationalization of Virtual Children's Court System and amendment of Probation Act including Children Act and its Rules.

The UN has continued to work to strengthen the National Human Rights System, demonstrating a holistic commitment to promoting and safeguarding fundamental rights and liberties through diverse initiatives, including technical assistance, collaborative partnerships, and strategic assessments. The UN was instrumental in aiding the preparation of the State Party review report for the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights as well as the 9th cycle state party report on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), finalised by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs in November 2023. Additionally, MOWCA, with support from the UN, prepared the SDG Indicator 5.1.1 which examines whether legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex.

In the realm of labour rights, the UN has forged collaborative alliances with the Ministry of Labour and Expatriates (MOLE) and social partners. Since exercising labour rights in the workplace helps workers to enjoy a broad range of other rights, the collaborative effort by the UN aims at providing robust support for the implementation of Conventions, harmonized national laws with international labour standards and facilitating active participation in the normative cycle of the ILO.

In crime prevention and drug control, the UN has helped to address human trafficking, maritime crime, wildlife and forest crime, border management, counterterrorism, and anti-corruption in Bangladesh. In 2023, the UN enhanced the capacity of 495 criminal justice actors and stakeholders, ensuring evidence-based policymaking, open-source intelligence investigation, and addressing human trafficking and migrant smuggling. Emphasis was placed on mainstreaming human rights and ensuring gender equality in implementation. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched its 2022 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons in January 2023 in Bangladesh.

The UN has contributed to maritime security through the conduct of comprehensive assessments at three major ports: Chattogram, Mongla, and Payra. These assessments have been pivotal in identifying potential threats and crimes in waterside and anchorage areas, thereby contributing significantly to the enhancement of security measures, ensuring the safeguarding of maritime activities, and securing the well-being of communities that are intricately connected to these vital ports. Over 350 maritime law enforcement officials were trained to investigate maritime crimes, assist in fair trials, and enhance detention facilities. Additionally, 65 officials were trained to improve prosecutorial and law enforcement measures.

[Box text: UNDP story on justice]:

Transforming Access to Justice through Village Courts

The formal court system in Bangladesh is marked by a high volume of cases and weighed down by procedural requirements. This situation significantly affects Bangladeshis, especially the poor, limiting their access to legal redress. Currently, approximately 1,900 judges are responsible for serving a population of 170 million across various tiers of the court system. A backlog of 4.2 million cases nationwide awaits resolution with the Appellate and High Court Divisions of the Supreme Court. Additionally, the District Courts are grappling with a backlog of almost 800,000 cases that have been pending for over five years.

Acknowledging the pressing issue of case backlog, the government in 2003 amended the country's Code of Civil Procedure 1908, to introduce a mandatory provision for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). This amendment was designed to reduce case backlogs and streamline the judicial process. In 2009, in line with the government's vision, UNDP made a significant step towards supporting inclusivity in the justice system by partnering with the Local Government Division (LGD) to support the Activation of Village Courts in Bangladesh (AVCB) programme.

The programme uses ADR to address legal issues at the local level. During the first two phases, a cumulative total of 324,092 cases (227,001 male and 97,091 female) were filed, and 268,491 cases (186,973 male and 81,518 female) were resolved through the Village Courts, with compensation totalling \$26.46 million. In addition, 17,887 cases were transferred from the District Courts to Village Courts, reducing the case backlog at District Court level.

In 2023, a government allocation of \$18 million in parallel financing along with significant donor funding of \$28.3 million enabled a third phase, leading to the expansion of the Village Courts to a total of 3,041 Union Parishads (the lowest administrative tier of government). This expansion will provide alternative dispute resolution services to an estimated 61 million rural Bangladeshis. By 2023, 95 percent of the districts in Bangladesh (61 of the total 64) benefited from village courts; the remaining 3 districts located in the Chittagong Hill Tracts have their own traditional informal dispute resolution system, which UNDP has also been strengthening through its programming.

Strategic Priority 5: Gender Equality and Eliminating Gender-Based Violence

Outcome: "By 2026, more women, girls and sexual minorities benefit from an environment in which they are empowered to exercise their rights, agency and decision-making power over all aspects of their lives, towards a life free from all forms of discrimination, violence and harmful norms and practices."

Progress of Strategic Priority 5 Outcome Indicators

Outcome Indicator	Indicator Description	Baseline	Reach	Target
5.1	Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination based on sex. a) overarching legal frameworks and public life b) violence against women c) employment and economic benefits d) marriage and family	a) 61.5% b) 20% C) 75% d) 63.6%	a) 63.6% b) 20% c) 75% d) 75% (2023)	Target not yet set by the Government
5.4	Gender budget percentage of total budget	30.82% (2019 FD, MoWCA)	33.84% (2023)	35% (2025)

United Nations agencies, funds and programmes continue to play a crucial role in advancing gender equality and combating gender-based violence in the country, with many outcome indicators showing good progress towards the targets. Significant strides have been made in confronting the institutional, social, economic, and political barriers that hinder the realization of the human rights of women and girls. Through collaborative efforts with the Government and partners from both the public and private sectors, the UN has persistently supported initiatives to fulfil gender equality commitments, guided by the overarching principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly the imperative to Leave No One Behind, in line with ratified international conventions.

A pivotal aspect of the UN's involvement is its dedication to strengthening gender-responsive policies, plans, guidelines, and budgets, coupled with support to their implementation and monitoring. This includes the updating and enhancement of national action plans (NAP) such as the NAP on the implementation of the National Women's Development Policy 2021-2030 (NAP-NWDP) and the NAP for the prevention of Violence Against Women and Children 2018–2030 (NAP-VAWC). National guidelines and manuals developed with the UN support have further strengthened the implementation of key policy objectives for gender equality, such as the national guidelines to address son preference and gender-biased sex selection risks developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Daycare Operational Manual, and a Monitoring Manual developed in partnership with the Bangladesh Shishu Academy. The UN's efforts in fortifying these policy frameworks underscore its commitment to creating a conducive environment for the prevention and response to gender-based violence. Spearheaded by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, the UN supported the multi-stakeholder dialogue on legislation pertaining to domestic violence and sexual harassment, complemented with comprehensive recommendations arising from a consolidated analysis on legislation related to gender-based violence (GBV) prevention.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, guidelines for gender-responsive planning and budgeting (GRP) for local government institutions were developed and piloted, and 209 officials at the national and local levels strengthened their knowledge and understanding of the application of GRP. In the area of gender-responsive law enforcement, the UN supported the enhancement of

knowledge and capacity on key front-line agencies and services providers. In collaboration with the Bangladesh Police, an e-course on gender equality and GBV prevention and response for in-service training was developed, facilitating the implementation of the Bangladesh Police Women Network Strategic Plan 2021-2024, strengthening, to date, more than 60,700 women and men police officials.

In 2023, the UN engaged with educational institutions and workplaces to address sexual harassment and gender stereotypes. This includes initiatives such as a pilot intervention with play-based activities to address gender stereotypes in classrooms, reaching 5,000 students, teachers, and parents, an assessment and validation of sexual harassment prevention and redressal mechanisms in technical and vocational education and training institutions.

The UN's interventions, in collaboration with the Government and civil society partners, have supported more than 267,600 survivors of GBV, ensuring their access to a wide range of multi-sectoral services and support. Emphasis was placed on ensuring access of services to marginalized groups, including persons living HIV and persons engaged in sex work with the introduction of a data-driven innovative virtual platforms developed based on a prior assessment conducted by the UN to understand the extent of online violence and its mitigation means.

Acknowledging the importance of quality data, the UN spearheaded initiatives for data and evidence generation, in partnership with the Government and civil society partners. The third round of the Violence Against Women (VAW) Prevalence Survey was initiated in October 2023, marking a milestone commitment to the generation of critical data on the state of VAW in Bangladesh. The survey, which will be completed by the end of 2024, has a sample size of nearly 30,000, the largest ever such survey globally. In the lead-up to the development of the 9th Five Year Plan, LDC graduation, and the 30th-year review of the implementation of the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#), evidence generation on financing for gender equality was centre-stage. Highlighting the need for stronger complementarity between fiscal and monetary policy instruments, a study commissioned by the UN, in partnership with the Centre for Policy Dialogue, alongside an analytical piece with the International Monetary Fund under Article IV of the Fund's Articles of Agreement presented to the Government in October 2023, outlined critical fiscal recommendations for gender-responsive macroeconomic outcomes in Bangladesh. The evidence-base on financing for gender equality complements the Government's commitment to gender-responsive budgeting, including their aspiration to increase the gender budget allocation to a minimum of 35 per cent of the national budget by 2025 as highlighted in the [National Statement of Commitment](#) presented at the Sustainable Development Goal Summit in September 2023.

[Story box text] Story: [Source UNFPA website:](#)

[Empowering Girls in Bangladesh: Marija's Journey Towards Gender Equality and Safety](#)

In Bangladesh, millions of girls face daily risks, from child marriage and gender-based violence to adolescent pregnancy, restrictions on education, and difficult living conditions. On Marija's way to school, she began experiencing harassment from a group of boys. The verbal and physical bullying was mostly unnoticed by others and kept escalating as days passed.

Photo: UNFPA Bangladesh/Samantha Reinders

Determined to reclaim her right to safety, Marija found the UNFPA-supported Kishori Resource Centre (KRC), a safe space where she openly discussed her fears and frustrations. She regained her mental strength

by having her friends by her side and the support she received from the KRC members, which created an environment to voice her concerns. Marija was referred to the Anti Sexual Harassment Committee in her School to raise her concerns. The committee took her concern seriously and promptly assigned a teacher to address it. They also ensured that the group was made aware of the importance of equal rights and values, as well as the legal consequences of sexual harassment.

In Bangladesh, young girls are often forced into early marriages due to concerns about their safety when commuting to school or going outside, as parents perceive marriage as a safer alternative. To address this issue, the Accelerating Actions to End Child Marriage project, supported by UNFPA and UNICEF and implemented by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, has established critical safe spaces across the country, known as Kishori Resource Centres (KRCs).

These KRCs have played a pivotal role in providing growth and development opportunities to over 20,000 adolescent girls, offering them gender-transformative life skills education in both rural areas and urban slums. The structured sessions within these centres cover essential topics such as sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, bodily autonomy, menstrual health, family planning, sexually transmitted infections, and gender-based violence. UNFPA remains unwavering in its commitment to ensuring that every girl in Bangladesh can grow up in a secure environment where she can fully realize her potential.

2.2.2 ROHINGYA HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Under the leadership of the Government of Bangladesh, the humanitarian community in 2023 continued to provide protection and assistance to Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, while also supporting vulnerable households in the host community.

As of the end of 2023, approximately 971,904 Rohingya refugees^[1] are registered in Bangladesh under the Government-UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) joint registration exercise. Refugees were residing in thirty-three camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas^[2] of Cox's Bazar District, as well as on the island of Bhasan Char in the Bay of Bengal. Six years after the large-scale arrival of refugees from Myanmar in August 2017, the Rohingya crisis in Bangladesh is now considered to be a protracted situation and can no longer rely solely on short-term humanitarian funding in addition to the generosity of the Government and people of Bangladesh, while the refugees remain almost entirely dependent on humanitarian assistance.

The 2023 Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis was a prioritized appeal of \$876 million for 116 partners, including 10 UN agencies, 57 Bangladeshi NGOs, and 38 international NGOs. For 2023, the appeal received \$597 million, representing 68 per cent of the total requirement. This is the first time that the JRP received less than \$600 million in funding.

Five strategic objectives guide the humanitarian response in line with the Government of Bangladesh's priorities:

- 1) Work towards the sustainable and voluntary repatriation of Rohingya refugees to Myanmar.
- 2) Strengthen the protection of Rohingya refugee women, men, girls, and boys.
- 3) Deliver life-saving assistance to populations in need.
- 4) Foster the well-being of host communities in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas.
- 5) Strengthen disaster risk management and combat the effects of climate change.

In addition, there were a number of important strategic partners working in the Rohingya response whose contribution is not reflected in the JRP, such as International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and Turkish Government Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), as well as development partners focusing on host communities close to the refugee camps.

As of December 2023, the Government of Bangladesh had relocated some 32,000 Rohingya refugees on a voluntary basis from the camps in Cox's Bazar to the island of Bhasan Char. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR (on behalf of the UN) in October 2021 established a common protection and policy framework for the Rohingya response on Bhasan Char that guides cooperation in the provision of critical assistance to refugees on the island.

Cox's Bazar District has a population of approximately 2.8 million Bangladeshis, of whom 537,900 reside in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas and have been directly affected by the presence of the Rohingya refugees. In close coordination with the Government, the humanitarian response increased targeted support to the Bangladeshi communities that generously host Rohingya refugees. The response seeks to address the most urgent needs and assist vulnerable households including in the areas of health, livelihoods, nutrition and education, while seeking to mitigate potential tensions between the host communities and Rohingya refugees.

In 2023, significant achievements were made across the humanitarian response with the continued centrality of protection and a refugee-centred approach guiding all activities. The rollout of the Volunteer Guidance and Skills Development Framework from 1 January 2023 provided important clarity on the use of refugee volunteers, ensuring equitable recruitment processes and standardized stipend rates for refugees engaged in supporting their communities. The Myanmar Education Curriculum was successfully rolled out from kindergarten to Grade 10 for the 2023-2024 academic year, increasing school attendance and facilitating the potential for reintegration of the Rohingya refugees in Myanmar upon their eventual return. For the first time in the Rohingya response, a General Health Card was introduced to all refugees providing ready access to individual medical records and facilitating health care communication between service providers. A mass drug administration (MDA) campaign against scabies was rolled-out towards the end of 2023 to cover the entire refugee population in the camps, contributing to the public health of all refugees.

In 2023, the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) established a development coordination team, which is engaging with development partners and international financial institutions (IFIs) in relation to funds allocated to activities both inside and outside the camps, with a view to enhance coordination and complementarity to humanitarian efforts. The team is also working with UNDP on a development mapping exercise to provide analysis of the response and funding provided to host communities outside the camps since 2017.

On Bhasan Char, close collaboration with the authorities continued to reinforce services and activities to meet the humanitarian and protection needs of over 32,000 refugees on the island. The Government ensured that relocations to the island remain voluntary and based on informed decisions by the refugees. While the movement to and from Bhasan Char needs further scale-up, the Government also enhanced family visits to foster family linkage. In 2023, significant improvements were made in quality of services in protection, site management, education, WASH, health, and food. Furthermore, under the strong leadership of and collaboration with the Government, Bhasan Char withstood four cyclones without major damage.

Despite these achievements, multiple challenges persist and the security situation in the camps has deteriorated significantly. People living in the camps and host communities also remain highly vulnerable to weather-related hazards, as was witnessed during the Camp 11 fire in March 2023 and Cyclone Mocha

in May 2023. The lessons learned from such incidents continue to inform the preparedness activities while highlighting the importance of advocacy on building back safer and better to improve the safety of refugees and reduce maintenance costs. In partnership with the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, the UN supported the development and dissemination of weather forecasting as part of early warning systems for the Rohingya camps. The support also extended to training 206 government and humanitarian stakeholders for better forecast interpretation. A CERF-funded Anticipatory Action mechanism was expanded to incorporate cyclones and new sectors such as education, social behaviour change, and social protection, targeting 300,000 vulnerable people in three of the most cyclone-prone divisions in Bangladesh. The UN supported the government in addressing a severe outbreak of dengue, with 276,495 test kits (adequate for up to 2,764,950 tests) and the capacity of dengue case management strengthened for 1,500 medical practitioners.

^[1] Joint Government of Bangladesh - UNHCR Population Factsheet, as of 31 December 2023.

^[2] Upazilas are administrative units in Bangladesh. Districts are divided into Upazilas (or sub-Districts), then Unions, then wards, and then villages.

2.3. SUPPORT TO PARTNERSHIPS AND FINANCING THE 2030 AGENDA

Under the framework of the 2030 Agenda and across the six key transition areas to accelerate the SDGs, the UN in Bangladesh embraces a whole of society approach to partnerships. The UN works hand in hand with the Government of Bangladesh to engage development partners, international financial institutions, private sector, academia, civil society, women's and youth groups, marginalized and vulnerable communities, urban and rural Bangladeshis.

Data from UN INFO, the online data and results transparency portal to which all UNCT members contribute, shows that in 2023 the UN in Bangladesh worked with over 30 public ministries and at least 30 more public institutions. The UN also worked with over 200 civil society organizations. Bilateral funding was received from 15 UN Member States. Multilateral channels provided access to an even broader range of donors, including eight vertical funds and financing platforms and ten global UN pooled funds. The UN deepened its engagement with the private sector with the launch of a new national Bangladesh Private Sector Working Committee on the SDGs. Joint UN partner visits to districts such as the Chittagong Hill Tracts and Sundarbans helped to raise awareness among development partners of the needs in rural and geographically marginalized areas and gave a platform to diverse Bangladeshis living in remote regions.

In 2023, the UN continued to lead or co-lead development partner forums and has leveraged engagement of IFIs and development partners to provide strategic support on priority areas of work, including climate action, social protection, health, and aid effectiveness.

The humanitarian coordination architecture continued to be co-led by the UN and the Ministry of Disaster Management and response for early warning, emergency preparedness, and disaster risk response in Bangladesh. On financing, the UN supported the Government to advance several initiatives to facilitate the financing of the SDGs in Bangladesh, including the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF), Disaster Risk Reduction Financing Strategy (DRRFS) and the SDG financing needs assessment for

MSMEs. These broad engagements, outlined in more detail below, support the efforts of the Government to deliver on the promise to Leave No One Behind as the year 2030 approaches.

Supporting the Government to advance the SDGs

In addition to the wide-ranging support provided in 2023 to the Government on strategies, policies, national planning and capacity building for sustainable development, the UN Country Team worked to support a national dialogue on SDG priorities. In the lead-up to the SDG Summit in September 2023, the UN supported the Principal SDG Coordinator, a key role within the Office of the Prime Minister, to shape SDG acceleration commitments for Bangladesh. This included a consultation with key stakeholders, attended by representatives from all relevant government ministries, private sector, civil society, and UN agencies. The United Nations in Bangladesh provided technical support for a series of inter-ministerial meetings that collectively defined 43 country commitments across the six key transition areas, with additional commitments on gender equality, poverty reduction, addressing inequality, SDG data and financing. The Prime Minister presented this national statement of ‘Bangladesh Country Commitments’ at the SDG Summit.

Bangladesh is an established leader on the aid effectiveness agenda, having co-chaired the High-Level Committee of the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) in recent years. Bangladesh has taken part in every previous global monitoring round and is preparing for the Fourth Global Monitoring Round with the support of the RCO and UNDP. In 2023, in line with the GPEDC agenda and 2005 Paris Declaration,⁴ the UN worked with development partners to harmonize payments to participants of events, meetings, workshops, seminars and trainings, establishing a protocol for the harmonization of honoraria, allowances and other expenses to promote transparency and consistency.

The Local Consultative Group (LCG), co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Ministry of Finance Economic Relations Division (ERD) Secretary, continued to be the principal forum for coordination of development cooperation in Bangladesh. In 2023, the Resident Coordinator co-chaired two plenary meetings of the LCG, which brought together ministries and development partners to discuss sustainable development cooperation challenges and opportunities. The Plenary oversaw the 14 working groups of the LCG,⁵ and discussed broader efforts around cross-cutting issues such as LDC graduation and the Doha Programme of Action (DPoA), climate and environment, and climate financing. The working group on governance and social protection has focused on key issues for Bangladesh, including addressing IMF loan conditions on social protection to unlock resources for sustainable social and climate spending, enhancing domestic resource mobilization and stimulating progress on contributory reforms for social insurance, and linking good governance to sustainable business.

The Resident Coordinator continued to co-chair the Executive Committee of the LCG each month, with the Embassy of Switzerland until August 2023, and subsequently with the Embassy of Sweden, providing a space for development partner information-sharing and coordination. In 2023, the Executive Committee held dialogues with IFIs and Multilateral Development Banks including the International Monetary Fund on its loan programme and the Asian Development Bank and New Development Bank on their programmes

⁴ OECD, ‘Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness: five principles for smart aid’

⁵ 1) Agriculture, Rural Development and Food Security, 2) Climate Change & Environment, 3) Development Cooperation Effectiveness, 4) Disaster & Emergency Relief, 5) Education, 6) Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality [WAGE], 7) Governance and Social Protection, 8) Health, Nutrition and Population, 9) Power and Energy, 10) Skill Development, Youth, Migration and ICT, 11) Trade & Private Sector Development, 12) Transport and Communication, 13) Water Resource and Delta Management, 14) Water Supply and Sanitation & Urban

of support to Bangladesh. Other key agenda items included national budget planning and changing trends in international funding to civil society. In the fourth quarter of 2023, the Resident Coordinator and Embassy of Sweden co-chaired a dedicated workshop to examine how to strengthen the LCG Executive Committee and continue to enhance the wider LCG mechanism, in the service of effective development cooperation in Bangladesh.

Supporting preparedness and response

The UN Resident Coordinator continued to co-chair the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MODMR) to enhance the collective capacity of government, national, and international actors to deliver effective humanitarian preparedness and response in Bangladesh. The Resident Coordinator also leads the Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG), a network of humanitarian organizations that supports and advises the HCTT. During disasters, the HAG supports the Resident Coordinator to enable the delivery of fast, effective and principled humanitarian response under the leadership of the Government of Bangladesh and in collaboration with UN agencies, non-government organizations and donors. When the HCTT conducts meetings annually, the HAG holds bi-monthly meetings, and the Inter-cluster Coordination Group (ICCG), serving as the technical arm of the HAG, conducts regular monthly and emergency meetings to effectively support the ten national humanitarian clusters and six working groups. In 2023, the HCTT responded to Cyclone Mocha in May and Cyclone Hamoon in October. The clusters provided support in cash, non-food items and health. In August 2023, Chattogram Division experienced devastating flash floods that left thousands without essential provisions and services such as food, clean water and functional latrines, affecting over 1.3 million people. The HCTT developed a humanitarian response plan and disbursed a \$4 million CERF grant.

Private sector engagement

Innovation, collaboration and financial support from private sector is essential to support the government in achieving the SDGs in Bangladesh by 2030. The private sector has a crucial role to play across the six key transition areas, with huge potential to contribute knowledge and expertise, networks and capacities on food systems, energy, climate change, advancing education, digitalization, social protection and jobs. A costing exercise conducted by the Government in 2022 and supported by the UN projected that \$457 billion, or 44 per cent of Bangladesh's projected \$1.04 trillion in SDG 2030 financing would need to come from the private sector.⁶ As Bangladesh moves to transition from LDC status, the private sector will also need to meet established legal, social and environmental standards to enable Bangladesh to secure favourable conditions from international trading partners.

In 2023, the UN formalized partnerships with national private sector actors to empower female pharmacists to set up their own pharmacies and signed an agreement to transmit sexual and reproductive health information and services for women and girls in the ready-made garment (RMG) industry through advocacy, data gathering, and capacity training of both RMG owners and buyers.

During the Bangladesh Business and Human Rights Week, organized by UN agencies and key development partners, representatives of various stakeholders joined a national dialogue on strategies to promote responsible business conduct. Responsible business conduct is taking on new economic significance as

⁶ National SDG costing exercise (2022) predicted that achieving the SDGs in Bangladesh would cost an estimated \$1,039 trillion by 2030 at constant prices – almost a quarter of projected GDP until 2030. Of this, the private sector would need to contribute \$457 billion by 2030.

Bangladesh moves towards LDC graduation, which will bring new human rights compliance requirements for businesses. As part of this support, the UN continues to promote the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs).

The UN forged a strategic partnership with SSL Wireless and Coca-Cola to improve plastic waste management, seeking to take a market-driven, decentralized approach and introduce technological innovation sustainably. On climate change and environment, the UN led two joint missions with international development partners and civil society actors to engage local private sector Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs) on national policies and plans on climate change adaptation and potential environmental compliance requirements that businesses may face following LDC graduation.

With technical support from the UN and its partners, the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE) continued its pilot 'Employment Injury Scheme' (EIS) for the ready-made garment (RMG) sector, which provides income protection and medical care following work-related injuries. This first social insurance scheme in Bangladesh is overseen by a tripartite governance board including Government, workers and employers, and chaired by the Secretary of MOLE. The private sector has helped to fund this initiative, with 42 international brands making financial contributions and generating awareness within their supply chains alongside contributions from traditional development partners.

To help leverage private sector engagement on the SDGs, the UN convened the Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) and the Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) to create a Bangladesh Private Sector Working Committee on the SDGs. Under the government's leadership, the Committee's five working groups, that mirror the Cooperation Framework's Strategic Priorities, met for the first time in December 2023, and resolved to advance collective action in 2024 on issues including job creation, youth employment and the fostering of a decent work environment, crucial preconditions for achieving the SDGs.

Fostering multistakeholder partnerships for scale and impact

In 2023, the UN forged multistakeholder partnerships to multiply impact for stronger and better programming. To help sustain the HIV response, the UN Joint Team for HIV partnered with Government and civil society stakeholders to mobilize \$25 million from the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis and Malaria for 2024 to 2026. Through this grant, HIV prevention will gradually be integrated into the public health system with a human rights approach to support more than 300,000 people, key populations for HIV in Bangladesh, to access the services they need.

The UN's community engagement, social and behaviour change efforts continued to operate through a wide range of innovative Government, civil society and private partnerships. In support of dengue fever prevention, the UN brought together a coalition including the National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine, Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, key NGOs and CSOs to work with Google on developing and disseminating key public health messages to help Bangladesh tackle significant outbreaks of the disease in 2023.

Civil society and academic partnerships enabling a Leave No One Behind approach

Civil society has played a pivotal role in Bangladesh's sustainable development, and civil society have been central to national life since the UN first began supporting Bangladesh's development following the nation's independence. The UN in Bangladesh continued to work with over two hundred CSOs and NGOs to advance and localize the SDGs and progress the Cooperation Framework's strategic priorities, with a focus on Leaving No One Behind.

This included work on equitable human development and wellbeing, transformative, participatory and inclusive governance, gender equality, and eliminating gender-based violence. UN agencies worked with CSOs in the areas of legal aid for the most marginalized, health and rights of minority populations, discriminatory legal frameworks, land disputes, inter-communal tensions, unequal access to essential public services, homelessness, child labour, disabilities, rural poverty and marginal agricultural livelihoods.

In collaboration with East West University, UNDP and UNESCO commemorated Global Media Information and Literacy Week 2023, focusing on combating fake news and hate speech. Activities included an online speech competition and a workshop with 400 students from various universities, emphasizing digital literacy and critical thinking.

Partnerships for gender advocacy

The UN also focused on advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and tackling Gender-Based Violence through partnerships, actively engaging with Bangladesh's gender equality movement and hosting a high-level roundtable with prominent women leaders. The roundtable on 'The Role of Women in Bangladesh' brought together women across sectors and spheres of public life and in so doing, provided an opportunity to reflect upon existing barriers to further advance gender equality and address discriminatory inter-generational norms and practices hindering women's leadership and decision-making in public spaces. Implementation of the recommendations from the roundtable are underway under the leadership of the Speaker of the Bangladeshi Parliament, Dr. Shirin Sharmin. The UN also helped to launch the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence in Dhaka and in Cox's Bazar, showcasing a collective commitment to preventing violence against women and fostering a safer, empowered society.

Advancing the youth agenda through partnership

In 2023, the UN in Bangladesh accelerated its collective engagement with adolescents and youth, guided by the new interagency Youth and Adolescents Theme Working Group.

Together this group established a UN Youth Advisory Group (UN-YAG) of representatives from a range of youth networks and regions and organized the first of a series of ‘UN in Bangladesh Youth Dialogues’ to drive action with youth under the Cooperation Framework. These dialogues identified priorities for UN action and support, including setting up a youth network on education, exploring a joint initiative around mental health, and creating a forum for youth voices via UN online platforms.

UNDP and UNESCO jointly organized the Second Festival of Tolerance in Chattogram, featuring an inclusive agenda led by youth groups representing various minorities and disabilities. A pivotal youth tolerance dialogue engaged 300 participants, providing an open platform for discussions. Local organization Peacemakers Studio played a key role as the festival’s host.

Event highlights and outreach initiatives

In October 2023, the UN organized a UN Day celebration in Dhaka. The UN Knowledge fair aimed to put a spotlight on the important partnership between the people and government of Bangladesh and the UN and showcase the UN’s work across the country. It featured 16 stalls showcasing knowledge products of UN agencies, and a series of panel discussions on priority issues such as climate change, women’s leadership, food security and energy efficiency. The event was attended by representatives of foreign missions, NGO partners, private sector, youth activists, Speaker of the Parliament, Government officials from line ministries, media and UN staff members.

[Pull out quote] "[Strong partnerships and social cooperation will lead to the success of Bangladesh.](#)" - H.E. Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, MP

The UN in Bangladesh once again joined the Government of Bangladesh to mark the International Day of UN Peacekeepers. As the second-largest contributor of uniformed personnel to UN Peacekeeping Operations worldwide, Bangladesh commemorates its peacekeepers on 29 May every year. In 2023, the Resident Coordinator opened the ceremony, presided over by the Prime Minister. More than 120 UN staff participated in a ‘Peacekeepers Run’ in Dhaka and major cities, along with officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, armed forces and foreign missions.

[Box text] Joint efforts for financing the SDGs

The UN continues to use its convening powers to join up efforts for financing the SDGs in Bangladesh. In 2022, the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) project concluded with a revised integrated financing strategy for the SDGs and a range of supporting documents for the Government to take forward. In 2023, the Resident Coordinator continued to lead the UNCT in consultations with the Government to promote the INFF and streamline the governance architecture for SDG financing. An agreement was reached within the Government for the Principal Coordinator for SDG Affairs in the Office of the Prime Minister to lead the restructured INFF oversight committee.

The RCO coordinated the development of the Disaster Risk Reduction Financing Strategy (DRRFS) with the Ministry of Finance and under the technical guidance of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UN DRR-ROAP). The strategy, mandatory for complying with the current loan conditions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), aims to enhance financial resilience against disasters through strategic financial protection mechanisms. The RCO facilitated

consultations across UN agencies including FAO, UNDP, UNICEF and WFP, international financial institutions, and the Government, contributing significantly to drafting the strategy and ensuring its alignment with IMF requirements. This coordination effort not only meets a key condition for international financial aid but supports Bangladesh's transition towards a green economy and climate-resilient future by focusing on locally developed solutions and inclusive policies. The UN's support extends to finalizing the strategy with the Government by June 2024 and conducting capacity building for its effective implementation.

Other key UN support on SDG financing includes a needs assessment for MSMEs working on SDG6, SDG7, and SDG13 to identify the scope and any bottlenecks to financing the SDGs, and a policy paper on 'Financing Sustainable Development Goal 8 and Labor Market Implications for Bangladesh'. Significant work has been done to generate evidence for financing gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), culminating in a partnership with the IMF for an analytical study on gender budgeting and climate change intersections, and a study with the Centre for Policy Dialogue on innovative financing models for GEWE post-COVID-19 recovery. These studies highlighted the macro-criticality of gender equality and informed the upcoming phase of the gender-responsive budgeting initiative with the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. In collaboration with the National Parliament, the UN developed a Climate Finance Handbook for Parliamentarians, aiming to empower lawmakers with tools for effective engagement in climate finance, and offering insights into Bangladesh's climate challenges, budget scrutiny, and the vital role of parliamentary oversight in climate action.

2.4. RESULTS OF THE UN WORKING MORE AND BETTER TOGETHER: UN COHERENCE, EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

Advancing the SDGs through joint programming

In 2023, the Joint Work Plan under the Cooperation Framework captured 22 joint programmes valued at approximately \$200 million and implemented by 11 UN agencies. UN joint programmes in Bangladesh are focused on integrated policy advice, good governance, disaster risk reduction, climate change, gender equality and women's empowerment, decent work and social protection, good health and well-being.

The UN in Bangladesh continues to have a relatively large number of joint programmes designed to respond to climate change. These include the 'Local Government Initiatives on Climate Change (LoGIC) programme valued at \$45 million, involving UNDP, UNCDF and multiple stakeholders. The programme looks to enhance the capacity of vulnerable communities, local government institutions and civil society organizations in planning and financing climate change adaptation solutions in the climate-vulnerable locations, and particularly for vulnerable women who comprise 63 per cent of those directly benefiting.

Another priority for joint programming is gender equality and eliminating gender-based violence. Eight of the joint programmes currently underway are directly targeted at advancing Strategic Priority 5. One example is the collaborative work between the ILO and UN Women to promote gender responsive enterprise and skills systems. A dedicated programme worth over \$15 million got underway in 2023, seeking to promote women's access to the labour market, and a focus on green growth sectors and digital access in targeted regions where the needs are greatest.

Joint field missions for enhanced coherence

As part of the localization agenda and in support of area-based coordination and programming coherence, the UN in Bangladesh conducted eight joint field visits in 2023.

Highlights included an inter-agency visit to the Sundarbans mangrove forest area, seeking to identify needs and priorities for collaboration in one of Bangladesh's most geographically marginalized regions. Consultations with Government are now taking forward the next steps. A UNCT visit with development partners to Khulna and Barisal divisions in south-central Bangladesh revealed pervasive social and economic barriers to gender equality and women's empowerment exacerbated by climate change. A joint UN team conducted a visit to the flash flood-affected areas in Sunamganj District, Sylhet Division in July, focusing on food security, livelihoods, water supply, sanitation, and the protection of displaced women and children. The RCO initiated two interagency visits to Rangpur to help build links between local private sector Cottage, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (CMSMEs) and national plans, particularly around climate action and preparations for Bangladesh's expected graduation from LDC status. The RCO, UNDRR, WFP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and UNDP travelled to Rangpur with the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction to see DRR and climate-related programming in the district.

Advancing Disability Inclusion in Bangladesh

In 2023, the UNCT prioritized disability inclusion and integration for better implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN Disability Inclusion Strategy and disability-inclusive SDGs. The UNCT completed the second year of the United Nations joint project, which includes

joint work of the government and organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), United Nations agencies and civil societies under UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) Fund. The UNCT formed the United Nations Disability Inclusion Task Team (UNDIT) with an adopted Terms of Reference.

The UNCT designated ILO as the Disability Inclusion Champion to lead initiatives to ensure programme interventions and monitoring systems established by UN agencies are more inclusive of persons with disabilities (PWDs). The Champion oversees efforts to achieve disability-inclusive results from the Cooperation Framework.

The UNCT supported the Ministry of Social Welfare to conduct a functional analysis to identify challenges faced by the committees established under the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act 2013. A Standard Operating Procedure was drafted to help facilitate the functioning of these Committees. It provided technical support to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) to enhance its capacity to collect and analyse disability data, with a specific focus on disaggregating data by sex and disability status. The UNCT also supported OPDs to conduct Organizational Capacity Gap Analysis.

Five knowledge products were produced by the UNCT in 2023: (1) organizational capacity assessment of OPDs; (2) research on root causes of discrimination, violence and stigma faced by PWD, especially women with disabilities; (3) gender responsive analysis of existing legal framework; (4) training module on advocacy, gender and monitoring and evaluation; and (5) policy brief on ‘Social Protection for Persons With Disabilities in Bangladesh: Current State, Gaps and Way Forward’ organizational capacity assessment of the OPDs.

Empowering Change: UNCT Initiatives in Gender Parity and Gender Capacity Development

In 2023, the UN in Bangladesh embraced two frameworks: the UNCT Gender Parity Strategy (GPS) and the Gender Capacity Building Plan (GCBP), to mainstream Gender Equality (GE) priorities throughout the UNCT’s work. During the inaugural year of implementing these frameworks, 15 agencies participated through five interagency groups: the Gender Equality Theme Group (GETG), Operations Management Team (OMT), the OMT Human Resources Working Group (HRWG), OMT Procurement Working Group (PWG), and the UN Communication Group (UNCG).

Currently, women constitute 32 per cent of the UN workforce in Bangladesh. The endorsement and subsequent implementation of the GPS underscored the UNCT’s commitment to increase the representation of women in the UN team. The GPS sets an ambitious yet achievable target of achieving gender parity by 2028 through special measures and targeted initiatives.

Under the GPS, GETG initiated a UN Mentorship Programme in 2023, supporting the retention and advancement of female personnel within the UN system. The programme provided 73 female personnel from 13 agencies with the opportunity to find a mentor or mentee from a sister UN agency, fostering reflection on career advancement, gaining new insights, perspectives, and expanding networks. The gender parity agenda was advanced through a workshop organized by HRWG, with support from the GETG Secretariat assured by UN Women. Twenty-nine representatives from HRWG, OMT, and GETG were equipped with the knowledge, tools, and strategies to actively campaign for and implement special measures for gender parity. The UN in Bangladesh also organized a Human Resources Open Day for Gender Equality which sought to encourage and inform Bangladeshi women interested in pursuing a career with the UN.

Following the endorsement of the GCBP, which aims to enhance role-specific capacities of personnel, 91 colleagues (44 women, 47 men) participated in capacity-building initiatives in 2023. Eighteen gender focal points from 13 agencies increased their capacities to conduct gender analyses through a training developed

and facilitated by UN Women, UNFPA, and UNICEF. Moreover, 46 colleagues (23 women, 23 men) joined a cross-thematic learning session hosted by FAO, providing an opportunity to learn about best practices for achieving gender equality in food systems through case studies presented by FAO, WFP, and UNDP.

Demonstrating the UNCT's commitment to gender-responsive procurement, the OMT Procurement Working Group, with support from the GETG Secretariat, organized a training on gender-responsive procurement. Building on the momentum from a 2022 workshop that oriented women-owned businesses (WOB) on becoming UN suppliers and the subsequent establishment of a roster of pre-qualified WOBs, the training enhanced the capacities of 43 colleagues to implement a harmonized gender-responsive procurement system.

Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)

The UNCT is committed to a zero-tolerance approach to incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse. Every allegation is treated seriously and addressed with appropriate action. Operating through two dynamic PSEA networks in Cox's Bazar and Dhaka, the UNCT is actively engaged in implementing comprehensive prevention measures, establishing secure reporting channels, upholding the rights of victims, providing necessary assistance, conducting thorough investigations, and promoting accountability.

In a collective effort, UN agencies have agreed to jointly fund the appointment of a dedicated PSEA Coordinator based in Dhaka, responsible for overseeing operations across the entire country for a duration of two years. Recruitment for this pivotal role is currently in its final stages. PSEA in Cox's Bazar will continue to be managed by a dedicated, on-site focal point.

Through these collaborative partnerships and proactive initiatives, UNCT aims to establish a robust and harmonized framework for PSEA endeavours at the national level, thereby fostering a safer and more secure environment for all individuals.

Efficiency gains in operations: a stronger Operations Management Team (OMT) delivers almost \$1 million in savings

The OMT coordinates the UN system's operational management efforts at the country level, aiming to streamline the administrative functions and operational support to agencies, funds and programmes with operations in Bangladesh. In 2023, a review of the UNCT's Business Operations Strategy (BOS) led by the OMT, recorded cost efficiencies for the year totalling \$972,678, with projected savings over the next five years of \$9.3million. This efficiency gain underscores the successful integration of the BOS system into the UN INFO platform, with 21 essential common service solutions now encapsulated within the BOS framework. Throughout 2023, the OMT spearheaded a series of initiatives aimed at enhancing operational efficiency and knowledge sharing. This included the organization of an OMT retreat, which served as a strategic platform for collective reflection and planning.

The OMT's Finance Working Group fortified ties with the National Board of Revenue, culminating in the smooth reimbursement of value-added tax for UN agency's purchases—a longstanding issue that was effectively addressed. Furthermore, the Administration working group achieved notable progress in establishing long-term agreements for services crucial to UN operations, while the ICT group streamlined mobile service rates for employees resulting in effective cost efficiency. These concerted efforts by the OMT and its working groups exemplify the UNCT's strategic approach to enhancing operational efficiency and fostering a collaborative, inclusive environment.

2.5. EVALUATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

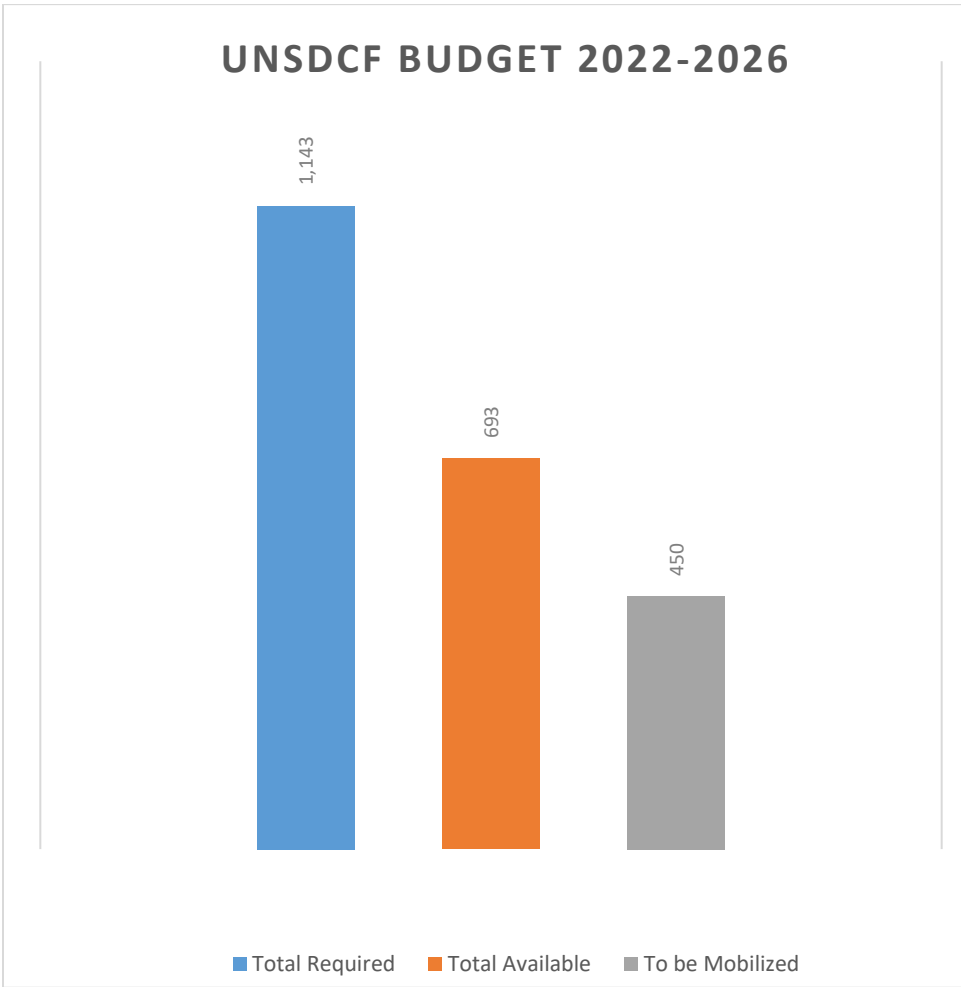
The Cooperation Framework serves as a fundamental accountability mechanism between the UNCT and the Bangladesh Government, as well as among UNCT members, for achieving jointly owned development outcomes. It is underpinned by compulsory, high-calibre evaluation, and responsive management strategies. Cooperation Framework results groups and joint workplans are mechanisms for adaptive programming and are supported by the M&E group. The Cooperation Framework Results Groups jointly review outputs, activities, and budgets in response to new information, lessons and risks emerging from continuous analysis, monitoring (including real-time) and evaluation. To support this adaptive programming, the UNCT developed a multi-year joint monitoring and evaluation plan for the full Cooperation Framework period. In early 2025, at the end of the current Cooperation Framework cycle, an independent evaluation is planned in close collaboration with the Government. The UN will align the evaluation with the national five-year planning process, and the outcomes of the evaluation will inform the next Cooperation Framework cycle. Recognizing the paramount importance of accountability, the upcoming Cooperation Framework evaluation will adhere rigorously to international best practices, including the norms and standards established by the UN Evaluation Group.

2.6. Financial Overview and Resource Mobilization

2.6.1. Financial Overview for Cooperation Framework

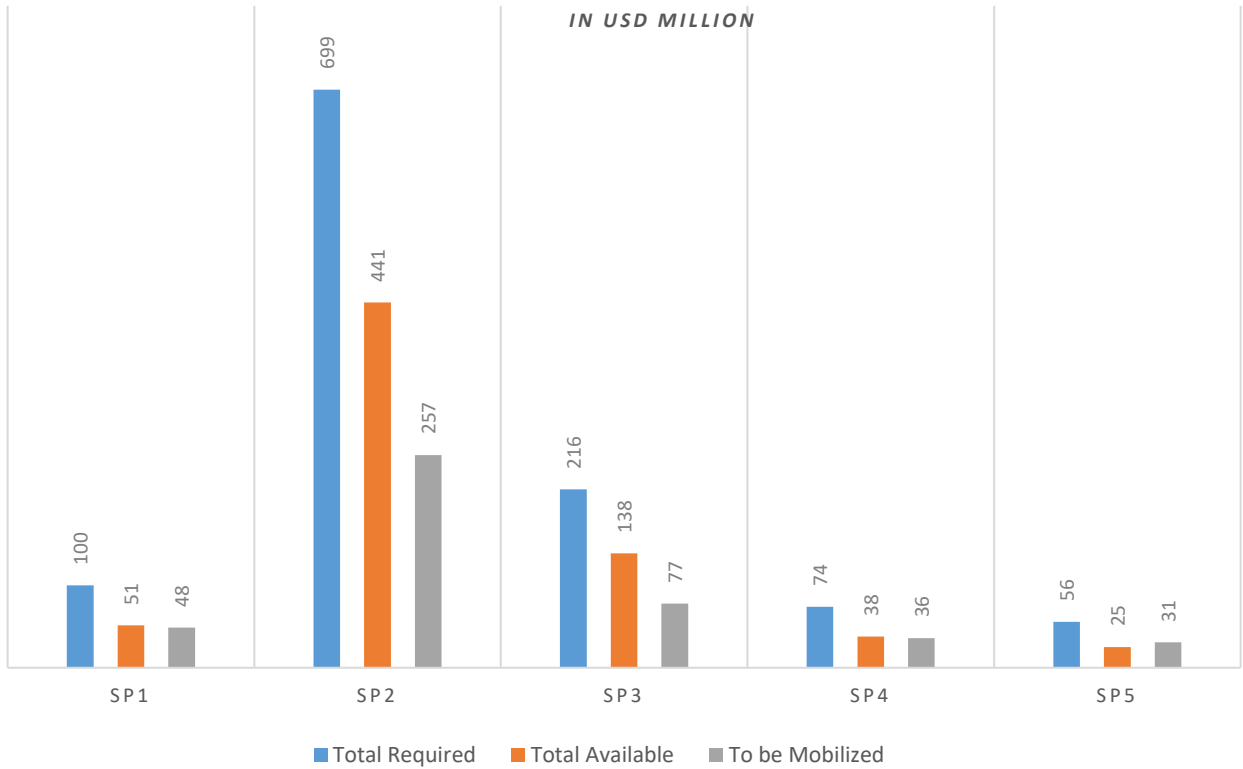
Over the five years of the Cooperation Framework, the projected funding requirements currently stand at \$1.143 billion. To date, \$693 million has been raised or pledged, leaving a gap of \$450 million to be mobilized. On gaps against needs, 2023 data from UN INFO showed that Strategic Priorities 1 to 4 are all at least 50 per cent funded, with Strategic Priority 2 at 63 per cent and Strategic Priority 3 at 64 per cent. Available funding for Strategic Priority 5 is lower at 45 per cent.

A total of \$460 million has been delivered in the first two years of the Cooperation Framework, with over \$219 million delivered in 2023. Delivery was highest against Strategic Priority 2 at \$160 million, followed by \$28.5 million for Strategic Priority 3 and \$12.8 million for Strategic Priority 1. For Strategic Priority 4, \$11.3 million was delivered, and programming under Strategic Priority 5 totalled \$6.4 million.

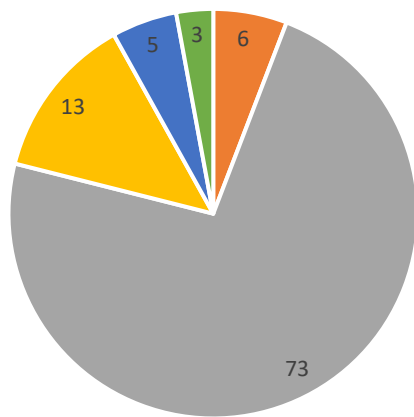


FUNDING STAUST BY STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2022-2026

IN USD MILLION



2023 Delivery (%) under Cooperation Framework by Strategic Priority



SP1 SP2 SP3 SP4 SP5

2.6.2. Resource mobilization and quality of funding

Delivery on the Cooperation Framework depends on strong engagement with traditional bilateral development partners and multilateral partners. The UN in Bangladesh is grateful to funding partners for their active collaboration and generous financial contributions, critical to achieving the results described in this report.

The UN in Bangladesh remains predominantly funded by traditional donors. Data from the 2023 Multiyear Funding Framework (MYFF) showed that three quarters of the UN's available funding came from traditional bilateral partners or UN sources, 11 per cent from global vertical funds, eight per cent from national government, four per cent from IFIs and just one per cent from the private sector.

Based on UN INFO data, 87 per cent of currently available funding for the Cooperation Framework cycle is multi-year, and therefore more predictable and long-term. Although UN INFO data does not currently allow for breakdowns by style and degree of earmarking, 2023 data showed that 22 per cent of the Cooperation Framework's funding came from UN sources, which are either entirely unearmarked (core regular resources) or more loosely earmarked.

As Bangladesh moves into a major economic transition with the LDC Graduation, and global crises stretch existing resources, the UNCT recognizes the need to innovate and expand its resource mobilization approach and increase the quality, quantity, diversity and predictability of its funding in support of the Cooperation Framework. Underfunded areas of the Framework, in particular the work on gender and gender-based violence, will require targeted advocacy and funding champions to come forward.

In 2023, the UN strengthened its systematic engagement of traditional and emerging donors and developed a Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Strategy to bring coherence to these efforts. The UN has sought to leverage resources from key public actors in Bangladesh and forged new private sector funding partnerships, including with the local private sector. In 2024, The UN in Bangladesh will need to work proactively to deepen engagement with non-traditional partners and seek out prioritized pooled and thematic joint funding mechanisms.

CHAPTER 3: UNCT KEY FOCUS FOR 2024

In 2024, the priorities for the UN in Bangladesh will continue to be guided by the priorities of the Government. Under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, the UN will work together to offer coherent policy advice, technical support and capacity building alongside programming that makes an impact on the lives of the people of Bangladesh, particularly the most vulnerable and those at risk of being left behind. “UN 2.0” is the Secretary-General’s vision of a modern UN family, rejuvenated by a forward-thinking culture and empowered by cutting-edge skills for the 21st century – to turbocharge our support to people and planet. The UN in Bangladesh will strive towards this vision, building on innovation, data, digital, foresight and behavioural science. The UNCT aims to continue efforts to be more agile and creative. By accelerating the Cooperation Framework, our goal is to provide fit-for-purpose policy advice, programming at scale, innovative financing solutions and strong multistakeholder partnerships. Local solutions and area-based coordination and programming will be strengthened to reach the geographically and economically marginalized and to enhance SDG localization. With 2030 just over the horizon, the UNCT’s programming and prioritization in 2024 will channel efforts around the framework of the six key transitions and investment pathways to accelerate the SDGs. Health and the advancement of the Universal Health Care agenda, gender equality and combating gender-based violence and child marriage will also continue to be major workstreams.

In 2024, UN system support to LDC Graduation will be a priority. The UNCT will support the Government as it develops a Smooth Transition Strategy (STS) for LDC Graduation. The UN will lend its resources, expertise, and programming capabilities to the implementation of the strategy as it gets underway from mid-year of 2024. This includes inter-ministerial coordination to initiate a National Action Plan on Responsible Business Conduct, research on labour administration challenges, and contributions to evidence-based policy and regulatory framework development. The UN will provide technical support to the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority and its strategy for three priority sectors, with the target of investment diversification in the post-LDC scenario. The UN will also work with the Ministry of Commerce on trade policy and negotiation capacity for trade transformation in the context of LDC graduation. The evolving global legislative landscape on human rights and environmental due diligence will have a bearing on LDC graduation for Bangladesh, and the UN will support the alignment of national policy frameworks with international standards. ILO will also work with the government to advance efforts on decent work by improving the labour law in line with international labour standards, enhance labour administration institutions, improve social dialogue, support sustainable and competitive enterprises and work to combat child labour.

As part of the wider agenda for the Doha Programme of Action, the UN in Bangladesh will work with UN teams at the global and regional levels, including UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) , DESA and ESCAP, to provide policy support and technical advice. With Nepal and Laos PDR also set to graduate in 2026, the UN will continue to promote knowledge exchanges among the three regional neighbours and help the Government to draw on graduation experiences from Vietnam and South Korea.

Concurrently, substantial investments in education, healthcare, and skills development promise to bolster workforce capabilities and drive sustainable economic growth. The UN will support Bangladesh through technical assistance, capacity-building programmes and knowledge-sharing in these areas, leveraging regional expertise to enhance the country's development efforts. This will be enhanced through accelerating Jobs and Social Protection.

Proactive measures in climate change adaptation, such as sustainable land management and urban and rural resilience initiatives position Bangladesh to lead on environmental sustainability. The UNCT will provide support through funding, technology transfer, and collaborative projects aimed at building climate resilience and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment remains a priority, and the UN will continue to provide technical expertise, advocacy support, and funding for initiatives aimed at addressing gender disparities and combating gender-based violence in Bangladesh. Moreover, the United Nations agencies will coordinate efforts to maximize impact and ensure a coherent approach towards achieving gender equality goals.

These efforts will fall in behind the Government's strategic planning timeframe and development of the 9th Five-Year (9FYP) Plan for 2025-2029. In support of this process, the UNCT will continue to work closely with the Government and a wide group of stakeholders, while aligning its own planning frameworks. In 2024, the UN in Bangladesh will develop a new Common Country Analysis and launch the strategic planning process for the next Cooperation Framework to mirror the timeframe of the 9FYP.

In these processes, the UN in Bangladesh will promote and enhance stronger data for tracking progress on the Global Goals. Several key initiatives will advance, including preparations for the Voluntary National Review in 2025, and the strengthening of the Government's SDG Tracker.

The Rohingya Refugee Response will continue in 2024 with a new appeal seeking \$852.4 million in funding. Fundraising will be a major priority for the UN to sustain the contribution to the Government-led response and meet the needs of 1.35 million Rohingya people and host communities. International solidarity with Bangladesh and refugee protection will be needed more than ever as the conflict in Myanmar continues to escalate. The international community must continue to fund life-saving and life-sustaining assistance to refugees in the camps, investing in education, skills training and livelihood opportunities.

The UN has a unique comparative advantage in Bangladesh, with a wide footprint across the country and a diverse network of partners. In 2024, multistakeholder partnerships, particularly with the private sector and international financial institutions, will need to rise to the next level to support the Government's efforts to seek financing and identify pipelines of bankable projects for the SDGs. At the same time, the UN will continue to advocate for marginalized groups and provide a platform for diverse voices to speak on the development, human rights and governance issues that affect them at the national, district and community levels,

In September 2024, Bangladesh will celebrate 50 years of membership of the United Nations. The anniversary will coincide with the Summit of the Future, when Bangladesh will join the collective international effort to renew the multilateral system, accelerate the implementation of existing commitments, fill gaps in global governance and strengthen global solidarity. The UN family looks forward to building on its work to support the Government and people of Bangladesh in this important year for the country, and for the world.

[\[INFOGRAPHIC on 6 Transitions\]](#)

SIX KEY TRANSITIONS & INVESTMENT PATHWAYS FOR ACCELERATING THE SDGs

Food systems

During the 2021 Food Systems Summit, Bangladesh presented its visions and commitments for transforming food systems to foster sustainability and contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda

and the SDGs. Since then, progress has been evident at national, regional, and global levels, marked by several milestones attained during the inaugural biennium post-Summit. The UN Food Systems Coordination Hub will continue to support the Government of Bangladesh with its Plan of Action and monitoring framework on pathway commitments in the lead-up to the 2025 stocktaking exercise. IFAD, in partnership with the Rome-based agencies, will continue to leverage co-financing for large-scale food systems efforts and programmes to support agriculture, climate resilience and access to markets.

Energy access and affordability

The UN will continue to support green and renewable energy transition and access in Bangladesh, efforts that will remain closely aligned with the complementary objective of tackling climate change. Committed to a low-carbon development path, Bangladesh is increasingly focusing on renewable energy and energy efficiency, stepping up installation of solar and wind power plants. This includes over six million solar home systems in off-grid areas, and 4.5 million improved cook stoves in rural regions across the country. UNCT programmes will support a range of initiatives to extend these efforts and close the energy gap while promoting opportunities for renewable energy to generate livelihoods, particularly in rural areas and for women entrepreneurs.

Digital connectivity

In line with the Government's 2041 Smart Vision and A2i initiative, the UN will work to support the digital transformation, including online entrepreneurialism, mobile money and digital social protection mechanisms that support livelihoods and job creation. The UN will also continue to support the Government with digital policies and regulatory frameworks on emerging issues such as artificial intelligence and digital rights, misinformation and disinformation and internet access for all. The UNCT will contribute to multi-stakeholder consultations on the Global Digital Compact as an annex to the Summit of the Future outcome document.

Education

The UN will continue to lend its support to the Government to follow through on its commitments at the 2022 Transforming Education Summit. At the programmatic level, the UN will contribute to curricula revision, teacher professional development and comprehensive reforms to elevate education quality. Efforts in 2024 will extend to securing a grant from the Global Partnership for Education System Transformation, focusing on system capacity strengthening and data-driven enhancements.

Jobs and social protection

The UNCT will foster integrated policy approaches and financing for employment growth and social protection by supporting Bangladesh as a pathfinder country of the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions. The UN will prioritize market-driven skills training, productive employment, and decent work opportunities, including green employment. Enhancing the resilience and sustainability of CMSMEs, especially women and youth, through initiatives such as mobilizing and training producer organizations, updating the SME Policy, and promoting sustainable business growth through various measures like export market linkages and digital finance to foster sustainable development and jobs in Bangladesh. On social protection, the UNCT will support collaborative efforts for the 2nd National Social Protection Policy/Strategy, evidence generation for inclusive social protection, and ongoing technical support for programme implementation to continue to support the increase of social protection coverage with a focus on reaching marginalized groups.

Climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution

Climate change adaptation and mitigation and climate financing are key priorities. The UNCT will step up integrated policy approaches across the climate and environment portfolio and enhance the climate lens on all programming, particularly initiatives on health, food security, gender, youth and governance. The private sector and IFIs will be key partners for climate financing. The UN in Bangladesh will step up innovative gender-responsive climate financing in collaboration with entities like GEF and the Adaptation Fund. The UN will play a strategic and technical role in the new Bangladesh Climate and Development Partnership to be launched in 2024 by the Government and the Asian Development Bank.

On the policy level, the UN will continue to support the Government's development of the Net-Zero Strategy 2060 and the Nationally Determined Contributions investment plan, including implementation of the Early Warning for All National Road Map. The UN will continue to assist the Government in taking anticipatory action through social protection and response systems, along with the implementation of Climate Risk Insurance. On ecosystem and biodiversity conservation, the UN will provide support to shaping the National Circular Economy Strategy, support integrated collaborative management of over 500,000 hectares of forest, and help to update the National Land Cover Map and Forest Reference Emission Level. Tackling land and water pollution will remain a priority. The UN will also explore innovative ways of linking the challenges of waste and pollution with private sector solutions.

Annex I List of Joint Programmes in 2023

	Joint Programme name	Sector/Thematic areas of the Joint Programme	Participating UN Entities	Budget \$
1	Local Government Initiatives on Climate Change	Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Governance, SDG 6 - Clean water and sanitation, SDG 13 - Climate action, Youth,	United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Capital Development Fund,	45,327,972
2	Improving Skills and Economic Opportunities for Women and Youth in Cox's Bazar	Integrated policy, Private Sector, SDG 1 - No poverty, SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth, Youth, Indigenous peoples,	International Labour Organization, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Development Programme, International Organization for Migration,	32,250,000
3	Better Health in Bangladesh: Technical Assistance for Strengthening Health Systems	SDG 3 - Good health and well-being,	World Health Organization, United Nations Population Fund	32,104,589
4	SAFE ACCESS TO FUEL AND ENERGY (SAFE+2)	Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Development Finance, Gender, Private Sector, SDG 1 - No poverty, SDG 2 - Zero hunger, SDG 3 - Good health and well-being,	United Nations World Food Programme, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Organization for Migration,	31,118,528
5	Promoting Gender response enterprise and skills systems in Bangladesh	Gender, LNOB, Integrated policy, Private Sector, SDG 5 - Gender equality, SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth,	International Labour Organization, UN Women,	15,200,000
6	Education for Rohingya Refugee and Host Community Children in Bangladesh	LNOB, SDG 4 - Quality education,	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Children's Fund,	6,499,993
7	Governance of Labour Migration in South and South-East Asia	Gender, Governance,	International Labour Organization, UN Women, International Organization for Migration,	5,165,289

	Joint Programme name	Sector/Thematic areas of the Joint Programme	Participating UN Entities	Budget \$
8	Governance of Labour Migration in South and South-East Asia	Gender, Governance, Integrated policy, SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth,	International Labour Organization, UN Women, International Organization for Migration,	5,165,289
9	Diversified Resilient Agriculture for Improved Food and Nutrition Security	Gender, Private Sector, Other, SDG 2 - Zero hunger, SDG 3 - Good health and well-being, Youth,	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Fund for Agricultural Development,	4,000,000
10	Reintegration of Returnee Migrant Workers	Economic Policy Support, SDG 4 - Quality education, SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth,	International Labour Organization, UN Women, International Organization for Migration,	3,797,000
11	Accelerating Economic and Social Inclusion of Smallholder Farmers in Climatic Hotspots through Strong Producers` Organizations	Development Finance, SDG 1 - No poverty, SDG 2 - Zero hunger, SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth, SDG 13 - Climate action,	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Fund for Agricultural Development,	3,260,000
12	Women`s Empowerment for Inclusive Growth	Economic Policy Support, Gender, Private Sector, SDG 5 - Gender equality, SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth,	United Nations Development Programme, UN Women, United Nations Capital Development Fund,	2,499,666
13	Strengthening Skills and Entrepreneurship in Agro-Food Systems for the Host Communities and Rohingya People in Cox`s Bazar	Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Development Finance, Gender, Private Sector, SDG 1 - No poverty, SDG 2 - Zero hunger, SDG 8 - Decent work and economic growth, Youth,	International Labour Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,	2,380,000
14	Food security for households most affected by COVID-19 crisis in at-risk low-income urban areas	Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), SDG 2 - Zero hunger, SDG 13 - Climate action,	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Population Fund,	1,748,668
15	Women for Climate Resilient Societies Phase II in Asia and the Pacific Region	Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Gender, SDG 13 - Climate action,	UN Women, United Nations Environment Programme,	1,385,869
16	UN joint collaboration to accelerate implementation of CRPD and disability inclusive SDGs	Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Disability Inclusion, LNOB, SDG 10 - Reduce inequalities,	International Labour Organization, United Nations Children's Fund, UN Women,	1,299,744

	Joint Programme name	Sector/Thematic areas of the Joint Programme	Participating UN Entities	Budget \$
17	Bangladesh Quadripartite Response to Combat AMR	SDG 3 - Good health and well-being,	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, World Health Organization, United Nations Environment Programme,	990,000
18	Integrated Agricultural Practice, Establishing Market Linkages, Nutrition Training and Related Inputs for the smallholder farmers in Ukhiya and Kutubdia sub-districts of Cox's Bazar district	Private Sector, SDG 2 - Zero hunger, SDG 5 - Gender equality,	United Nations World Food Programme, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,	300,000
19	Provision of Community-led Sustainable and Integrated SRHR and HIV prevention programme for Female Sex Workers around 8 brothels in Bangladesh	HIV/AIDS, LNOB, SDG 3 - Good health and well-being, Youth,	United Nations Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS Secretariat, United Nations Population Fund,	227,500
20	Support the Department of Social Services and MoWCA to build the capacities and establish the mechanism for community engagement to end AIDS	HIV/AIDS, LNOB, SDG 3 - Good health and well-being,	United Nations Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS Secretariat, United Nations Children's Fund,	50,000
21	National advocacy and training on comprehensive harm reduction and legal issues	HIV/AIDS, LNOB, SDG 3 - Good health and well-being,	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS Secretariat,	35,000
22	Enhance access to sexual and reproductive health services and information in Cox's Bazar	Data, Gender, HIV/AIDS, LNOB, SDG 3 - Good health and well-being,	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS Secretariat, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Population Fund,	0

Annex II 2023 Financial data – Development programme delivery under the Cooperation Framework in 2023

Development Programme Delivery under CF JWP in 2023 (\$)						
Agencies	SP1	SP2	SP3	SP4	SP5	Total
FAO	2,098,771.00	3,732,125.00	1,295,692.00		730,161.00	7,856,749.00
ILO	4,330,650.00	1,065,000.00	25,650.00	3,230,450.00	23,200.00	5,395,650.00
IOM		4,043,135.00				4,043,135.00
UN WOMEN	489,528.00	337,799.00	473,002.00	311,596.00	1,053,902.00	2,665,827.00
UNCDF	253,153.00		981,454.00			1,234,607.00
UNICEF		83,826,920.00	125,300.00	378,944.00	894,358.00	85,225,522.00
UNDP	5,067,016.00	1,614,982.00	21,421,060.00	8,416,055.00	67,249.00	36,586,362.00
UNESCO	37,000.00	296,261.00			10,130.00	343,391.00
UNEP			2,520,223.00			2,520,223.00
UNIDO	80,000.00		191,468.00			271,468.00
UNAIDS		48,521.00			8,000.00	56,521.00
UNOPS	50,000.00	12,450,000.00				12,500,000.00
UNODC		35,000.00		2,205,281.00	336,800.00	2,577,081.00
UNFPA	382,137.00	16,621,727.00			3,292,017.00	20,295,881.00
UNV	1,785.00					1,785.00
WFP		7,407,911.00	1,484,587.00			8,892,498.00
WHO		28,858,709.00				28,858,709.00
Total	12,790,040.00	160,338,090.00	28,492,786.00	11,311,876.00	6,392,617.00	219,325,409.00