

CPD

Annual Report 2017



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Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)

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Message from Chairman and Executive Director

In 2017, a number of important issues surfaced at the national and international levels, which can have potential implications for Bangladesh's development in the medium and long terms. CPD researchers generated cutting-edge knowledge on the thematic issues and other important topics in this context. The chosen themes for research by CPD were based on the importance and relevance of the issues. Reducing inequality, social injustice and vulnerability of the poor have received special focus in 2017 that covered issues such as implications of Rohingya crisis, consecutive floods and raising voices of the untouchables.

The flagship programme *Independent Review of Bangladesh's Development (IRBD)* of CPD has been assessing the country's macroeconomic development for more than two decades now. As part of IRBD, the budget analysis in 2017 highlighted the need for creation of adequate jobs and a comprehensive implementation plan for resource mobilisation and realisation of public expenditure targets. This year's pre-budget discussion was held in

Rangpur, a northern district of Bangladesh, to engage local people in the conversation of the national budget.

The new wave of Rohingya influx into Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh, following their brutal killings and torture in Myanmar posed serious challenges for Bangladesh. CPD researchers undertook a study on implications of the problem, which was also presented at a CPD-organised dialogue. The study revealed that the Rohingya crisis is complex in nature and significant in scale; the international community should exert pressure on the Government of Myanmar to resolve the problem. Severe floods in a number of districts in Bangladesh prompted CPD to carry out a study to assess the extent of the damage and suggest necessary actions. CPD organised a dialogue to share the findings of the study among policymakers and broader stakeholders. Under its ongoing programme on *New Dynamics in Bangladesh's Apparels Enterprises*, a study on 'data universe' was undertaken. The objective of this exercise was to fill the gap in real-time and detailed data of RMG factories in the country. Another work on the RMG sector was on social dialogue mechanism in the RMG sector. The study re-examined issues related to industrial unrest in the sector and its linkages with the social dialogue process.

Written by CPD's Chairman, a book titled *Challenging Injustice in South*

Asia: A Work Programme for Promoting Inclusive Development addressed the structural sources of injustice which propel poverty in South Asia. The author has designed a set of concrete project proposals which can help create more equitable opportunities for the poor in South Asia. In another publication titled *Quest for Inclusive Transformation of Bangladesh: Who Not to Be Left Behind – Executive Summary*, an analytical framework has been developed to identify those who are left the 'furthest behind'.

CPD's initiative titled *Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh* has received further momentum in 2017. Launched in June 2016, the objective of this Platform is to contribute to the delivery of the SDGs and enhance accountability in its national implementation process. The Platform undertook several activities this year. These included national-level dialogues and townhall meetings on various goals, and also capacity building workshops. A major activity of the Platform was the organisation of a conference on *Role of NGOs in the Implementation of SDGs in Bangladesh*. The Citizen's Platform was approached by the NGO Affairs Bureau of Bangladesh to co-organise the programme. This event was an example of partnership between government and NGOs. Yet another big event organised by the Platform titled *Citizen's Conference 2017: SDGs in Bangladesh – Leave No One Behind* had set a milestone in terms of its efforts to raise countrywide awareness on SDG-related issues.

Global issues also received attention of CPD researchers. A study on *LDC*

Graduation Challenges: How Bangladesh Should Strategise made forward-looking suggestions to make smooth graduation from the least developed to the developing country status. Moreover, in collaboration with the South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), CPD conducted studies, published blogs and newspaper articles, and organised a trade policy appreciation workshop to contribute to capacity building in Bangladesh. CPD's senior professionals highlighted issues of interests and concerns for LDCs at the Trade & Sustainable Development Symposium held on the sidelines of the Eleventh Ministerial Conference of the WTO, in Argentina. Noted economist Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Professor of International Affairs at the New School, New York, and Vice-Chair of the UN Committee for Development Policy, delivered CPD's Anniversary Lecture 2017 as the Guest Speaker. Her presentation on *Health and Global Trade Regime: Is it Affecting Equal Access to Medicines?* highlighted concerns

regarding access to medicines by the poor people in view of escalating prices of life-saving drugs.

The diverse activities at CPD is due to the unparalleled dedication of each and every member of the CPD family. Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, Distinguished Fellow, CPD has always been a source of constructive and innovative suggestions, realisation of which propelled CPD to a new level of achievements. Professor Mustafizur Rahman, Distinguished Fellow, CPD has been a steady source of support, which helped to consolidate CPD's earlier achievements and sustain our excellence. With her exceptional commitment and sincerity, Ms Anisatul Fatema Yousuf, Director, Dialogue and Communication, CPD has accomplished a large canvas of activities. Dr Khondaker Golam Moazzem, Research Director, CPD has demonstrated his leadership through ensuring high quality of research outputs. Mr M Shafiqul Islam, Director,

Administration and Finance has maintained good governance in the organisation by close monitoring of administrative and financial matters.

CPD has been among the very few think tanks in the country that have demonstrated effective leadership transition in favour of the younger generations. Thus, CPD has experienced a leadership change in 2017. Incidentally, the new Executive Director is the first female executive head of the Centre. CPD is also one of the unique organisations where the former Executive Directors are active in research and other institutional affairs.

Lastly, we would like to remember Mr Nurul Haq, former member of the Board of Trustees of CPD, who passed away this year. He had been a member of the Board of Trustees since the early days of CPD. He had also served CPD as Director of Administration for more than three years. We convey our deepest respect to the memory of Mr Nurul Haq.



Professor Rehman Sobhan
Chairman



Dr Fahmida Khatun
Executive Director

CPD gets new Executive Director

CPD had set yet another milestone in 2017. Dr Fahmida Khatun, who served as the Centre's Research Director, assumed the responsibility of steering the CPD as its Executive Director from 1 March 2017. She took over from Professor Mustafizur Rahman, currently Distinguished Fellow at the CPD. Since its foundation in 1993, this was the third transition of leadership at the CPD. This is indeed a unique feature testifying to CPD's distinctive record of preparing leaders of the future – willing and capable of taking up the challenge of taking CPD to newer heights of excellence and strength.

CPD's Leadership Transition

Professor Rehman Sobhan	16 November 1993	–	9 May 1999
Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya	10 May 1999	–	22 October 2007
Professor Mustafizur Rahman	23 October 2007	–	28 February 2017
Dr Fahmida Khatun	1 March 2017	–	till date

Remembering Mr Nurul Haq

The CPD family expresses its deepest condolences and sorrow at the passing away of Mr Nurul Haq on 5 August 2017, who had been a member of the CPD Board of Trustees for over a decade, from April 2001 to August 2013. A true well-wisher of CPD, Mr Haq also served the Centre as Director of Administration during its early days, from November 1995 to June 1999. We recall with profound gratitude the immensely valuable contribution of Mr Haq to the CPD in his various capacities, who believed in building the foundation of an institute. CPD could always count on his advice, insight, feedback and experience. We shall remember him for his honesty, integrity, simplicity and modesty. Mr Nurul Haq will always be an inspiration to us all.

May his soul rest in peace.



shape and influence
the country's
development prospects

equity, justice,
fairness and good governance

research, dialogue,
dissemination and
policy advocacy

poverty alleviation, trade,
investment, transport

Our Focus

CPD strives to focus on the frontier issues that are critical to the development process of Bangladesh in the present context, and which are expected to shape and influence the country's development prospects over the mid-term horizon.

Our Vision

To contribute to the emergence of an inclusive society in Bangladesh that is based on equity, justice, fairness and good governance.

Our Mission

To service the growing demand of the civil society of Bangladesh for a demand-driven and accountable development process by stimulating informed debate, generating knowledge and influencing policy-making through research, dialogue, dissemination and policy advocacy.

Our Objectives

CPD aims to enhance national capacity for economy-wide policy analysis; foster regional cooperation in poverty alleviation, trade, investment, transport and other key areas; address issues which concern Bangladesh's effective integration into the process of globalisation.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2017

Humanitarian and Social Protection

Development-oriented policy research has always been a core strength of CPD in its overall activities; 2017 has not been an exception. The research portfolio in this year was rich and diverse as always. While the research programmes continued to deal with issues of national, regional and global interests, new and emerging issues such as Bangladesh's LDC graduation, floods and Rohingya crisis were also included in CPD's research work.

Indeed, the overarching theme of **tackling vulnerability** received special priority in CPD's activities in 2017.

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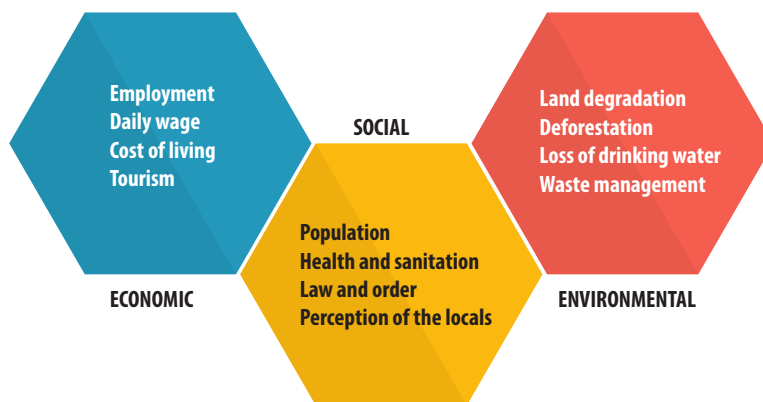
Injustice

ROHINGYA Catastrophe

Bangladesh would require USD 882 million (Tk. 7,126 crores) for Rohingya upkeep for the period of September 2017–June 2018. This is equivalent to 1.8 per cent of Bangladesh's national budget for FY2017-18 and 0.3 per cent of its GDP



With 821,000 Rohingyas entering Cox's Bazar between 25 August and 5 November 2017, the country is currently faced with multifarious challenges, which are of economic, social and environmental in nature.



As Bangladesh continues to experience a massive influx of Rohingyas which was exacerbated by outbreaks of violence in Myanmar's Rakhine state in August 2017, the country has come to be known as the largest refugee camp across the globe.

CPD conducted a quick study to investigate related challenges, involving field investigation and focus group discussions in and around Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar.

In order to foreground this issue and generate discussion with key stakeholders of the Rohingya crisis, CPD also organised a dialogue titled **"Addressing Rohingya Crisis: Options for Bangladesh,"** where findings of the aforesaid study were shared. Speakers at the dialogue highlighted the situation's long-term multidimensional implications. They also emphasised that the ultimate solution of the problem lies with the Government of Myanmar.

The moderator of the session, Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya concluded the dialogue by stressing that the upcoming budget should not give any signal contradicting the objective of the Rohingya repatriation to their own country.



The Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh shared his views on the Rohingya situation at the CPD dialogue.

Bangladesh Flood 2017

Estimating damage and seeking solutions

In 2017, CPD researchers conducted a study to assess the extent of the damage caused by two successive floods. The analysis was done through field visits to seven hard-hit districts and examining data of 32 flood-affected districts. Findings of the study were shared at a dialogue on **Flood 2017: Current Situation and Necessary Actions**, organised by CPD on 19 October 2017.

Estimated cost of flood 2017

Loss of crops in the haor flash flood is equivalent to 3.7 per cent of crop sector GDP in FY2016-17 and damages from the monsoon flood is likely to be about 0.35 to 0.44 per cent of the projected GDP for FY2017-18.

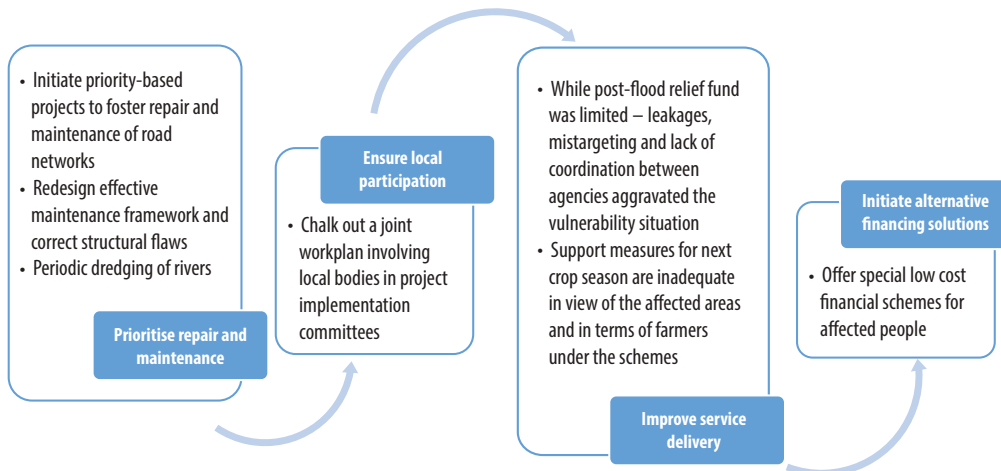


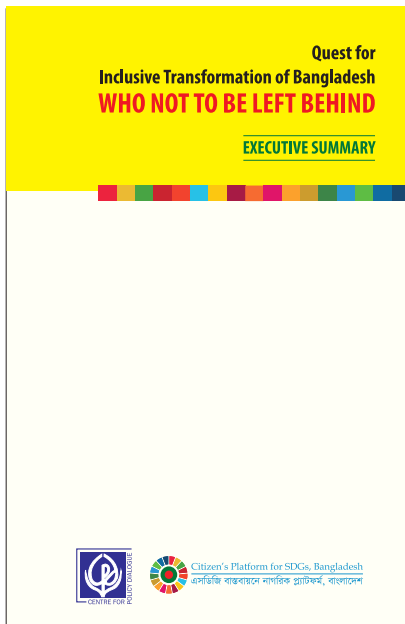
Barrister Anisul Islam Mahmud, MP, Hon'ble Minister for Water Resources and Dharendra Debnath Shambhu, MP, Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief were among the dignitaries at the CPD dialogue on flood assessment.

The study also showed that

- Economic loss or damage of floods may not be significant in monetary terms, but macroeconomic implications are manifold. These include rise in inflation, disrupted connectivity, higher cost of repair and maintenance of infrastructure, increased import of rice, and additional pressure on the balance of payments.
- The poorest segment of flood-affected people are trapped in a vicious cycle of vulnerability as the fund for post-flood management may not have reached the hardest-hit, and they may become more vulnerable.

MITIGATING FLOOD EFFECTS





A **vulnerability index** was prepared to indicate the criteria contributing towards overall vulnerability. The research initiative, undertaken in partnership with the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh attempted to fill some of the aforesaid gaps by unpacking the commitment to leave no one behind through a country lens.



Download Information

You can download the book from CPD website



www.cpd.org.bd

A NEW TOOL FOR MEASURING THOSE LEFT FURTHEST BEHIND

“The present piece of research is a pioneering one of its kind—not only in the context of the country, but also globally.”

Debapriya Bhattacharya
Distinguished Fellow, CPD

The central pledge of the UN's 2030 Agenda to “leave no one behind” in the development process is at the heart of delivering the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, the criteria for identifying marginalised groups have only been loosely specified.

CPD researchers have creatively developed a conceptual and analytical framework to identify those who are left the ‘furthest behind’ in a country, through the conceptual prism of ‘vulnerability’.



State of Dalits in light of 2030

Agenda: Raising voice for the 'Untouchables'

CPD was part of the consortium which organised a dialogue to explore the state of Dalits in Bangladesh in the light of the SDGs. The other organising partners in the consortium were Avijan, HEKS/EPER, Nagorik Uddyog, Research Initiatives Bangladesh (RIB) and the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh.

The presentations and consequent discussions underscored the paradox of Bangladesh advancing towards LDC graduation, while leaving behind its vulnerable populations such as Dalits to face severe and persistent violence and discrimination at home and the workplace.

The Dalit community's low socio-economic and political status restricts them to live under precarious conditions, with limited or no access to drinking water and sanitation.

Socially excluded

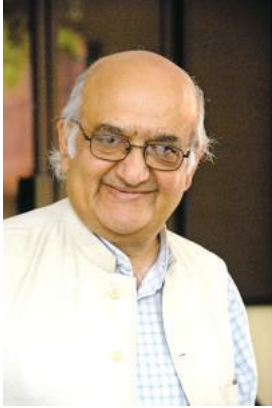
Dalit, Rishi, Harijan, Rabidas, Shobdakar, Kaiputro, etc.

Statistics

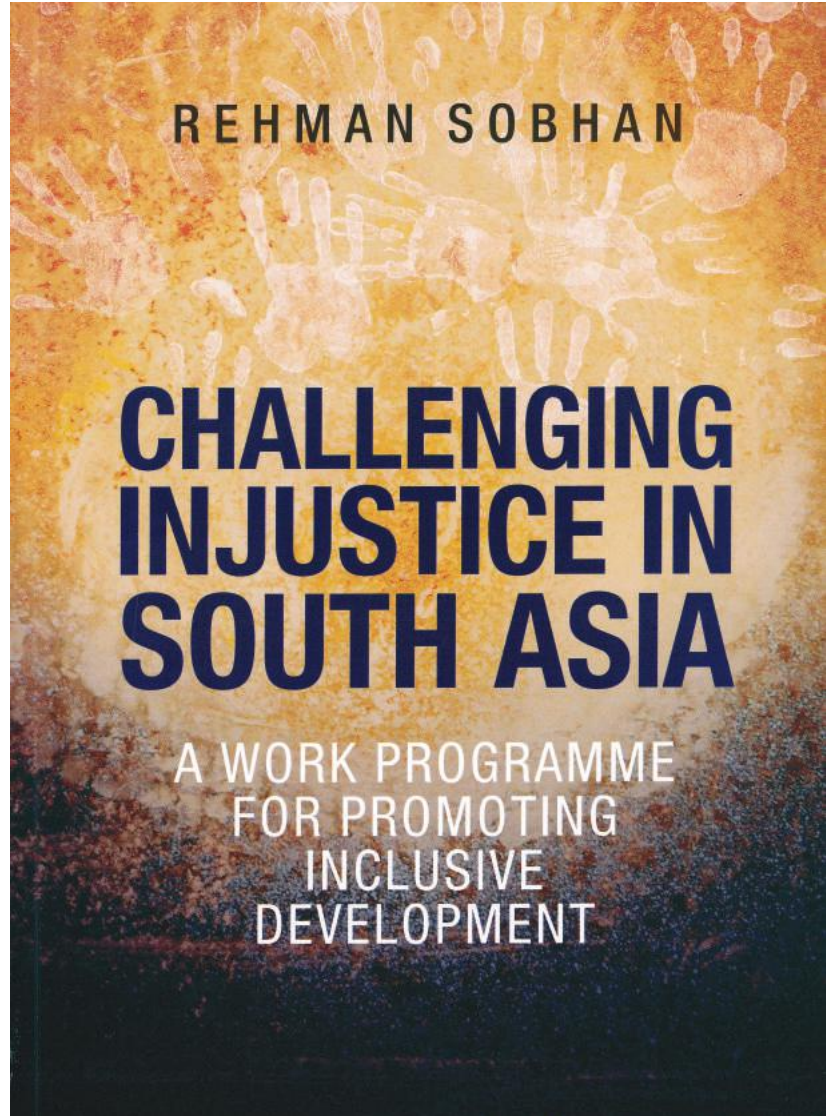
There is no consensus on the number of Dalits living in Bangladesh – the official statistics is understated.



Information Minister of Bangladesh Mr Hsanul Haq Inu, MP was the Chief Guest at the event that focused on Dalit community's predicaments.



Challenging Injustice in South Asia: A Work Programme for Promoting Inclusive Development is based on an earlier work, which attempted to identify roots of injustice driving poverty in the South Asian region, and sought appropriate solutions through democratisation of opportunities for the marginalised groups in society. The publication presents 65 project proposals developed through consultations with experts in six South Asian countries. The proposals focus on the areas of agrarian reform, integration of primary producers into value chains and markets, and institutions for collective action by the excluded. The book provides several ways for the state and the non-state actors looking to achieve poverty reduction and distributive justice in South Asia.



Macroeconomic Policy Analysis

The *Independent Review of Bangladesh's Development (IRBD)*, CPD's flagship programme, has been assessing the country's macroeconomic development since 1995. Under this programme, CPD conducts periodic reviews of the state of the Bangladesh economy by scrutinising the macroeconomic indicators, puts forward recommendations for the upcoming national budget, and provides objective analysis of the proposed national budget presented by the Finance Minister of the country. The programme also includes pre- and post-budget dialogues at local and national levels, participated by top-level policymakers and key stakeholders.

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Local-level Dialogue

In 2017, three readings of the State of the Economy for FY2016-17 were released in January, April and May. The third reading examined the pre-budget status of the macroeconomic parameters, based on the latest available data. In June, CPD presented its immediate reaction on the proposed national budget the day after the Hon'ble Finance Minister presented the budget at the National Parliament. CPD also presented a quick assessment of the finally-approved national budget this year, in early-July. Also, as part of its effort to bring the local-level views in the discussion of the national budget, CPD went to Rangpur, a northern district of the country, for a pre-budget dialogue in April.



Highlights from various readings of the State of the Economy report in 2017

First Reading

Comfortable macro signals

- Robust GDP growth and rebounded investment in FY2015-16
- Low inflationary pressure and declining interest rates

Mixed performance

- Challenging budgetary targets
- Recovery of private investment raises some questions

Areas of concerns

- Weak governance in banking sector
- Lower remittance inflow

Key recommendation

- Institutional and policy reforms in the areas of revenue mobilisation, public expenditure management, financial sector and private investment will need to be rigorously pursued by taking bold steps

Second Reading

CPD's Budget Recommendations for FY2017-18

- Improve on the actual implementation of the budget – *turning the so called 'big budget' myth into reality*
- Increase budgetary allocations for education and health sectors
- Raise the budget implementation capacity of key government agencies
- Bring the reform agenda up in front of policy attention



Third Reading

Comfortable indicators

- Strong economic growth projected by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
- Strong revenue mobilisation needs to sustain by the National Board of Revenue
- ADP implementation pace has recovered

Areas of concerns

- Banking sector has become a growing malignancy in the economy
- Pressure on the balance of external sector

Key recommendations

- Strengthen quality of public investment
- Improve resource mobilisation
- Address weakness in the external sector

CPD's Immediate Reactions to Proposed National Budget

Core observations were

- Absence of a comprehensive implementation plan threatens the attainment of resource mobilisation and public expenditure targets.
- Budget proposals do not outline which groups are likely to bear the tax-incidence of the proposed VAT and SD Act.
- Implementation of the proposed budget is likely to hurt people in the middle and lower-middle income groups.



Journalists at the media briefing session.



CPD went live on Channel i with its observations on the proposed national budget.

BUDGET DIALOGUE 2017

Views from different stances

“Instead of continuous recapitalisation, most of the government banks should have been privatised long ago”

Akbar Ali Khan

Former Advisor to the Caretaker Government

“Bangladesh needs to invest in its human resources; we have already wasted ten years of demographic dividend which is reflected in our stagnant growth”

Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury

Former Minister of Commerce

“Banks have overcome the troubled period; the Government has taken a calculated risk in recapitalising the banks”

M A Mannan, MP

Hon’ble State Minister for Finance and Planning

“VAT should not be imposed in a way that makes people suffer. It will not be wise to impose VAT on items that would affect the general people”

A H M Mustafa Kamal, MP

Hon’ble Minister for Planning

“The size of the budget and how much of it has to be implemented are just numbers; the key is how much people benefit from the budget”

Rehman Sobhan

Chairman, CPD



POST-APPROVAL OBSERVATIONS

In addition to its regular interventions on the national budget, CPD in 2017 organised a media briefing on July 10, to disseminate its post-approval recommendations on the national budget:

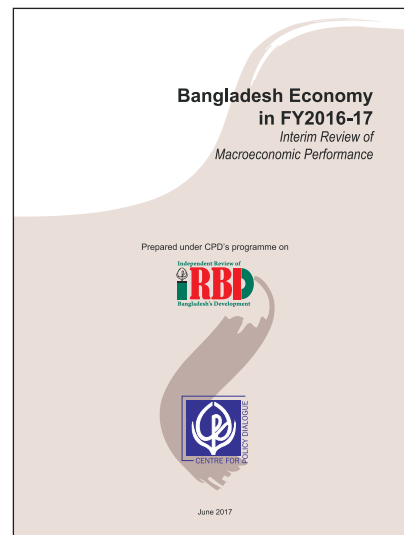
- Conduct independent assessment of possible economic and social impact of VAT and SD Act
- Exempt import tariff on rice to maintain commodity price stability
- Ensure budgetary and other measures to prepare for possible flood
- Make realistic revenue targets; the revenue shortfall from the national budget is estimated to be between Tk. 43,000 and Tk. 55,000 crore
- Undertake reforms in the areas of banking sector, local government and public investment

99 media coverage
of the briefing

Exclusive Headlines

No political will to clean up banking sector: CPD

CPD forewarns Tk. 550 bil. revenue shortfall in FY18



Bangladesh Economy in FY2016-17: Interim Review of Macroeconomic Performance

The book analyses major macroeconomic performance indicators of Bangladesh's economy for FY2016-17 and includes recommendations for the national budget for FY2017-18. It consists of two chapters: a) State of the Bangladesh Economy in FY2016-17 (Third Reading); and b) State of the Bangladesh Economy in FY2016-17 (Second Reading): CPD's Recommendations for the Upcoming Budget.

Each year, this publication is brought out in June with the intention to provide useful information and analysis that feed into the ongoing countrywide debate on the proposed national budget.

TAKING BUDGET DISCUSSION TO LOCAL LEVEL

Rangpur Dialogue

The Rangpur dialogue discussed how the national budget addresses the concerns of marginalised groups. The particular focus was on social protection issues.

At the dialogue, CPD made a presentation which revealed that:

- Non-developmental social protection allocations, like pension, took up about 50 per cent of the total social protection allocation in FY2016-17.
- Rangpur division has a high labour force participation, but the unemployment is also low. Yet, 46.2 per cent people in Rangpur region are below upper poverty line, and 30.1 per cent live below lower poverty line.
- The number of people receiving remittances in Rangpur division is low, and a major share of the received remittances is spent for repaying debt.



Mayor of Rangpur City Corporation and Deputy Commissioner (in-charge) of Rangpur District attended CPD's dialogue on social protection; RDRS Bangladesh was the local partner for the event.

Participants of the dialogue demanded a special budget for backward regions like Rangpur in order to bring them into the mainstream development and improve their lives and livelihoods.

The pursuit of attaining the SDGs will critically hinge upon inclusive approach of resource allocation and proper monitoring of the implementation process. SDG 1.3 refers to implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all to achieve sustainable coverage of poor and the vulnerable.

Bangladesh's LDC Graduation

Immediately after its independence, Bangladesh was listed as a least developed country (LDC) by the United Nations. As an LDC, Bangladesh has been receiving several support measures from the international development community. The prospect of graduating from the LDC group was first felt by CPD in 2016; the UN made official announcement in March 2018 on Bangladesh's graduation. In 2017, CPD as part of its IRBD programme, undertook a number of activities including a research programme on the issue of challenges associated with LDC graduation and possible strategies to mitigate those.

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LDC Graduation: Pitfalls and Promises



Md Shahriar Alam, MP, Hon'ble State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh was the Chief Guest at CPD's dialogue on LDC graduation challenges.

LDC GRADUATION CHALLENGES

How Bangladesh should strategise?

As Bangladesh enters into the process of graduation in 2018, it is expected that the country will come out of the LDC group by 2024. However, it will also come with costs, and may pose formidable challenges for future sustainable development of the country.

CPD's research findings on the issue were presented at a dialogue captioned "Bangladesh and the LDC Graduation Challenges," held on 16 March 2017, with a set of recommendations on forward-looking strategies towards achieving this historical transformation.

Facing new realities. . . .

- Concessional loans will decline further
- Borrowing costs of loans will significantly rise
- Additional tariff rates on its exports
- Loss of preferential market access
- Non-eligibility for support measures, e.g. duty-free quota-free market access, Enhanced Integrated Framework fund, concessional finance for science, technology and innovation
- Difficulty in export of pharmaceutical products due to stringent application of intellectual property rights regime

We have highlighted the needs for. . .

- Moving towards a highly competitive, productivity-driven economy
- Strategically deepening economic ties through bilateral-regional agreements, especially through South-South cooperation
- Improving policies and infrastructure, diversifying products and markets, and exploring trade agreements with market access

Discussion on LDC Graduation Strategies with Key Stakeholders

Realising the high priority of the issue on government's agenda right now, CPD organised a discussion with the government officials on possible strategies for Bangladesh's smooth

graduation from the LDC category. A total of 27 senior- and mid-level government officials from the key ministries, agencies and training institutes participated at the event.

A similar interactive meeting was also held with the development partners. This was an attempt to ensure understanding of the key stakeholders on the graduation process.

These meetings were held in Dhaka on 22 and 23 January 2017 respectively.



Bangladesh's Graduation from the LDC Group: Pitfalls and Promises

Bangladesh's graduation from the group of LDCs in 2024 is going to be anything but ordinary. The country is one of the largest in terms of the size of its economy and population to graduate out of the group, in its (the group's) history of 47 years.

To help the country prepare for a sustainable graduation and smooth transition, CPD in 2017, initiated a research programme with the above title. A set of research studies on thematic areas relevant to Bangladesh's graduation prospects and possible strategies were to be carried out under this programme till April 2018. These include:

- key analytical issues of the LDC graduation paradigm;
- smooth transition and structural transformation;
- post-graduation challenges and opportunities;
- synergies and trade-offs between LDC graduation and implementation of SDGs; and
- challenges posed by the global and regional environment within which Bangladesh's graduation is to take place.

Trade and Investment

In 2017, two major activities were undertaken under trade and investment theme. The assessment of the readymade garments (RMG) sector is an area where CPD has been working for more than two decades. In recent period, CPD's RMG-related activities put more focus on restructuring and compliance in the sector, particularly in view of the post-Rana Plaza circumstances.

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LDC Interests in the WTO



CPD-RMG programme on New Dynamics in Bangladesh's Apparels Enterprises

A major activity under this programme in 2017 was preparation of a 'data universe' on the RMG sector of Bangladesh. The lack of real-time and more detailed data of RMG industries in Bangladesh has prompted CPD to undertake a study to prepare a comprehensive database that will better

address the need for data requirement of this growing sector. The study aimed to create a harmonised dataset for the RMG sector, based on the enterprises which are currently in operation.

The data universe comprises 3,856 factories with 3.6 million workers located in four districts of Bangladesh.

Based on the data universe, CPD:

- identified 226 sample enterprises in Dhaka and Chittagong and carried out a baseline survey
- initiated a high frequency data survey in the selected factories
- organised stakeholders' discussions in Dhaka and Chittagong with entrepreneurs and workers to identify the key challenges facing the industry

98% of the total RMG factories in Bangladesh are situated in four districts

58% of the workers in RMG factories are women; far more than estimated earlier

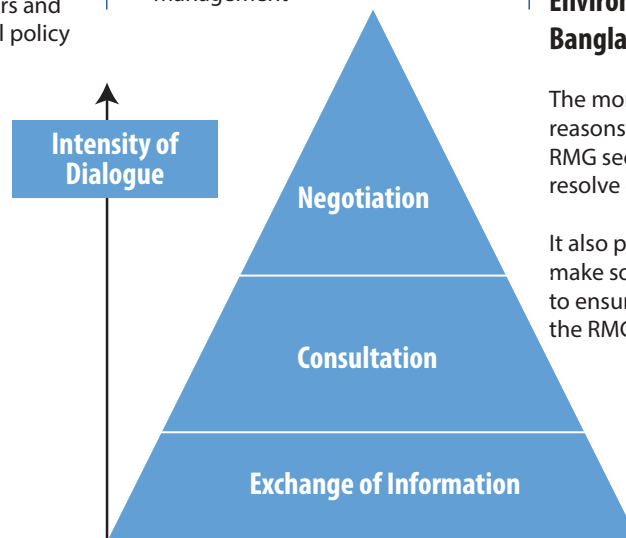
CPD organised a dialogue titled **Catalysing Social Dialogue in the RMG Sector of Bangladesh**

CPD researchers teamed up with the ILO Dhaka office to conduct a special study on social dialogue mechanism in the RMG sector. The objective was to re-examine issues related to industrial unrest in the sector and its linkages with the social dialogue process.

Social dialogue includes negotiations, consultations, exchange of information between government, employers and workers on economic and social policy issues.

In order to strengthen the social dialogue process in the RMG sector, we recommended to

- raise awareness among employers and workers about social dialogue
- ensure improved financial and human resource management at the factory level
- make distinction between 'factory-level' and 'sectoral-level' issues for discussion and negotiations
- ensure active role of buyers and retailers for better factory management



Strengthening Social Dialogue Process within a Weak Enabling Environment: The Case of Bangladesh's RMG Industry

The monograph presents an analysis of reasons behind industrial unrest in the RMG sector and the process followed to resolve conflicts.

It also puts forward suggestions to make social dialogue effective in order to ensure better industrial relations in the RMG sector of Bangladesh.

Advancing LDCs' Interests in the WTO

CPD partnered with the South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE) to initiate the above mentioned two-year programme in 2016.

Major activities conducted under this programme in 2017 by CPD included four ongoing studies on aspects of

trade-related interests of LDCs, and a trade policy appreciation workshop to contribute to trade-related capacity building in Bangladesh.

The workshop, held on 29 August 2017, highlighted the need for more informed understanding about Bangladesh's key interests during the then upcoming Eleventh WTO Ministerial Conference (WTO MC-11), and emphasised on undertaking adequate preparation in that context.

As part of one of the studies, an expert group meeting (EGM) was held with the pharmaceutical executives in Bangladesh.

Four research studies under this programme were

- The Emerging New Trade Alliance Scenario: Why the LDCs Should be Concerned?
- WTO Decision on TRIPS and Public Health: A Window of Opportunity for Bangladesh's Pharmaceutical Industry
- Upcoming WTO MC11 and Interests of Bangladesh as an LDC
- Value Chains in BIMSTEC Region: Current Status, Possibilities and Challenges



Twenty-six professionals who included government officials, development practitioners, academicians, researchers and journalists took part in the trade policy appreciation workshop.

Regional Cooperation

In 2017, two of CPD's notable efforts concerning Bangladesh's integration into the regional economy included the Centre's participation in the third meeting of the BIMSTEC Network of Policy Think Tanks (BNPTT), and the co-hosting of the Tenth South Asia Economic Summit (SAES X) in Kathmandu, Nepal. A special publication captioned "Reimagining South Asia in 2030," which captures all the unique and rich ideas emerging from the SAES IX, held earlier in 2016 in Dhaka, was launched during the SAES X.

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2030**

Deepening cooperation among BIMSTEC countries

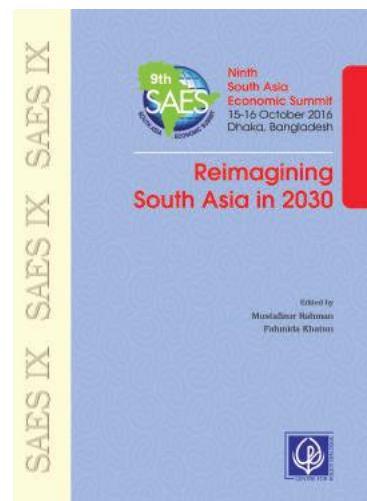
Researchers from focal think tanks of the seven BIMSTEC member countries met at the third meeting of the BIMSTEC Network of Policy Think Tanks (BNPTT) in April this year.

CPD partnered with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh and the BIMSTEC Secretariat in Dhaka in organising this event during 22-23 April 2017. The meeting discussed issues and modalities of deepening cooperation



among BIMSTEC member countries in various areas. Participants underscored the need for a platform such as the BIMSTEC in view of the decreasing effectiveness of other associations for regional cooperation.

The Inaugural Session of the event was attended by Professor Dr Gowher Rizvi, International Affairs Adviser to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh as the Chief Guest, and addressed by Professor Rehman Sobhan, Chairman, CPD as the Guest of Honour.



Reimagining South Asia in 2030

The Ninth South Asia Economic Summit (SAES IX), which explored the overarching theme of *Reimagining South Asia in 2030*, was hosted by the CPD in Dhaka, in October 2016. The Summit explored possible pathways to reimage and reimagine South Asia in light of the SDGs and taking into cognisance that South Asian cooperation is at cross-roads. The event was addressed by the Hon'ble President of Bangladesh and the Hon'ble Speaker of the National Parliament of Bangladesh in the Inaugural and Closing sessions respectively.

This publication, put together by CPD, captures all the unique and rich ideas emerging from the Summit and crystallises them in the form of a volume presenting the major messages from the Summit, on possible pathways towards closer cooperation in a peacefully rising South Asia.

Sustainable Development Goals

In September 2015, Bangladesh committed to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, along with 193 other countries of the world. In 2016, Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh was initiated to provide an opportunity to the non-state actors to contribute in the national SDG delivery process; sensitise policymakers towards challenges in implementation; bring transparency in the implementation process; and, facilitate the exchange of information and coordination among all those working on the SDGs in Bangladesh. As the Secretariat of the Platform, CPD along with its partners organised various events in 2017.

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Citizen's Conference

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Inclusive Societies

GO-NGO Partnership is Critical for SDG Implementation

Recognising the power of effective partnerships between government and non-government organisations (NGOs) to ensure the successful implementation of SDGs, the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh partnered with the NGO Affairs Bureau of the Prime Minister's Office of Bangladesh to organise the conference on "Role of NGOs in Implementation of SDGs in Bangladesh" on 18 May 2017.

CPD authored the keynote paper of the conference. Khandakar Rakibur Rahman, Director General, NGO Affairs Bureau chaired the introductory session, where Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, Citizen's Platform Convenor and Distinguished Fellow, CPD elaborated on the possible nature of GO-NGO partnership. Md Abul Kalam Azad, Principal Coordinator, SDG Affairs, Prime Minister's Office and Dr Shamsul Alam, Member, GED, Planning Commission spoke as Chief Guest and Special Guest, respectively. Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad, Chairman, PKSF attended the event as the Guest of Honour.



Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh
এসডিজি বাস্তবায়নে নাগরিক প্ল্যাটফর্ম, বাংলাদেশ

Messages from the conference included.....

"GO-NGO partnership is critical to ensure social, economic and environmental development of the country. NGOs should participate in voluntary reporting to track the progress of SDG implementation"

— **Md Abul Kalam Azad**
Principal Coordinator, SDG Affairs,
Prime Minister's Office

"There are 2,533 registered NGOs in Bangladesh. Role of this large group in SDG implementation is critical"

— **Khandakar Rakibur Rahman**
Director General, NGO Affairs Bureau

"Government should build an SDG Trust Fund allocating Tk. 100 crore. This fund will be used by NGOs under a set of guidelines for development of the country. This fund will be operated under a structure for accountability and inclusivity"

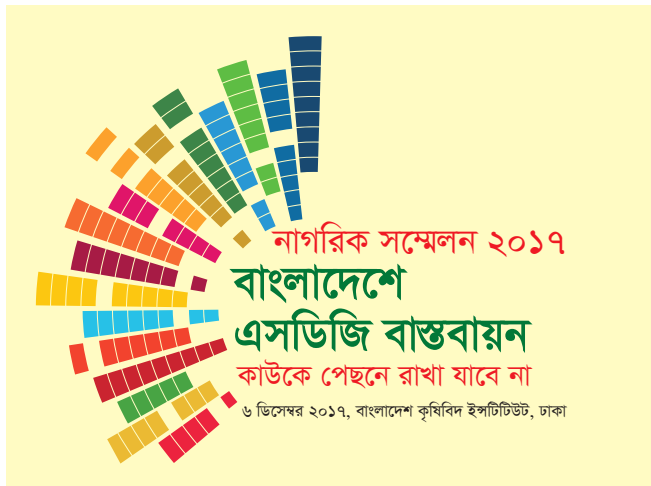
— **Debapriya Bhattacharya**
Distinguished Fellow, CPD and
Convenor, Citizen's Platform for SDGs,
Bangladesh

Citizen's Conference on

SDGs focused on

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND





On 6 December 2017, CPD as the Secretariat of the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh organised Citizen's Conference on SDGs in Bangladesh in order to deliver on the pledge of "Leave No One Behind."

Speakers stressed on the need to formulate appropriate policies and plans to include marginalised and

vulnerable groups in the development process. The critical role of partnership and coordination among the government, the private sector, and NGOs was also reiterated.



Participants

1,500 participants from across Bangladesh, including vulnerable groups of the society and youth were present at the day-long conference.

Sessions

Four parallel sessions were conducted on economic, social, environmental and good governance themes.

Citizen's Declaration 2017

The conference also adopted a 'Citizen's Declaration 2017' putting forward suggestions and a 12-point charter of demands.

Promoting Peaceful and Inclusive Societies at District Level

This year, the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh put a deliberate effort to take the SDG discourse outside the capital – to the district-level platforms – in partnership with local partnering organisations. Community Development Centre (CODEC), Chittagong; Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA); Sacheton Nagorik Committee (SANAC), Chittagong Chapter of the Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB); and The Hunger Project partnered the Platform in organising events in Chittagong, Madaripur and Khulna.

Dialogues held in Chittagong and Madaripur focused on SDG 16—peace, justice and strong institutions. These dialogues aimed to increase citizen's awareness, strengthen local administrative capacities and make political commitments visible.

The Khulna dialogue explored on the role of community-level interventions in delivering the SDGs.



Discussions at the Chittagong dialogue highlighted the importance of good governance and the role of active citizens in addressing challenges in SDG implementation.



At the Madaripur dialogue, particular emphasis was given on accountability and transparency of the political parties through strong law and order situation.



Global Programmes

CPD functions as the host organisation of Southern Voice on Post-MDG International Development Goals—a network of think tanks from Africa, Asia and Latin America contributing to the global dialogue on the 2030 Development Agenda. It also serves as the Secretariat of LDC IV Monitor—a partnership of think tanks and international organisations that contributes towards effective implementation of the commitments envisaged under the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA).

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Southern Voice

2015 On Post-MDG International Development Goals

In 2017, Southern Voice expanded its reach in global development communication. Researchers participated in multiple global platforms, to bring perspectives on how SDGs are being implemented in different contexts of the world, and to highlight the importance of a supportive global partnership to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

After being in operation for more than three years, the network also took the next step for its institutional development. In October 2017, Southern Voice rolled out its medium-term organisational strategy titled, "Strategic Framework, Governance and Operational Modality."

Southern Voice launches the state of global SDGs (SVSS) initiative

Under Southern Voice's flagship initiative on the State of SDGs (SVSS), several meetings/workshops were held. An Approach Paper to prepare the report was drafted. The network partnered with the UN Foundation to organise various events across the globe, such as the methodology workshop on SVSS, workshop on SVSS during the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), and lunchtime roundtable on lessons from the voluntary national reviews.



What is Southern Voice?

Southern Voice is a network of 50 think tanks from Africa, Asia and Latin America that serves as an open platform to contribute to the global dialogue on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the following areas:

- Agenda shaping
- Data assessment
- Implementation challenges
- Financing requirements
- Progress monitoring

Southern Voice reassesses metrics of Development Effectiveness

Southern Voice has also undertaken another research-outreach initiative that seeks to contribute to aid effectiveness (in a broader sense) by developing an impact-centric framework that will take into consideration levels, size and time dimensions of aid flows.

Strengthening networking and partnerships

Among others, the network engaged with the Canadian development community on the new role their country can play in shaping the 2030 Agenda—and leveraged the power of partnerships, through involvement with South-South Global Thinkers, PCSD Partnership, and Berlin T20 Conference's Young Global Changer Scholarship Programme (YGC).



LDC IV Monitor

The LDC IV Monitor is an independent partnership of seven globally reputed think tanks and international organisations, which seeks to contribute to an improved delivery of commitments made to the LDCs at the Fourth UN Conference for Least Developed Countries (UN LDC IV) in 2011. CPD currently functions as the Secretariat of this initiative.

Towards Eleventh Ministerial of the WTO: Reclaiming the Development Agenda

LDC IV Monitor was in partnership with the CPD, Commonwealth Secretariat, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Bangladesh Office and the Think Tank Initiative (TTI), in organising a Dhaka Retreat, captioned “Towards Eleventh Ministerial of the WTO: Reclaiming the Development Agenda,” followed by a public dialogue of the same title.

The Dhaka Retreat was a two-day workshop focusing on critical issues around the Eleventh Ministerial of the WTO (MC11), such as

- MC11 in the emerging global landscape
- progress of MC10 outcomes
- unfinished business of Doha Round
- emerging issues like e-commerce and fisheries.

International trade experts from the LDC IV Monitor and beyond, from countries including India, Nepal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Switzerland and the UK, participated at the event.

Keynote presentation at the public dialogue, that followed the Dhaka Retreat, was informed by the inputs and insights shared by the experts at the Retreat. Relevant officials from the government, private sector, civil society, knowledge community and development partners in Bangladesh were also present at the dialogue.



Commerce Secretary of Bangladesh spoke at the public event organised in Dhaka, prior to the Eleventh Ministerial Conference of the WTO, as part of the two-day Retreat held on 29-30 November 2017.



Trade & Sustainable Development Symposium in Argentina

CPD's senior professionals, Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya and Professor Mustafizur

Rahman, addressed the Trade & Sustainable Development Symposium (TSDS), held on the sidelines of the Eleventh Ministerial Conference of the WTO (MC11) on 10-13 December 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. CPD professionals in their deliberations highlighted the issues of interests and concerns for LDCs. Since CPD hosts the LDC IV Monitor and Southern Voice on Post-MDGs, the symposium provided CPD professionals with an opportunity to stress on the multilateral trading system to work in achieving the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) targets and the SDGs.

Special Events

Celebrations are woven tightly into CPD's work culture. 2017 saw many celebratory events, both big and small – from team-building and institution-strengthening exercises and icebreakers, to grand public events for marking major milestones.

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CPD Anniversary Lecture 2017

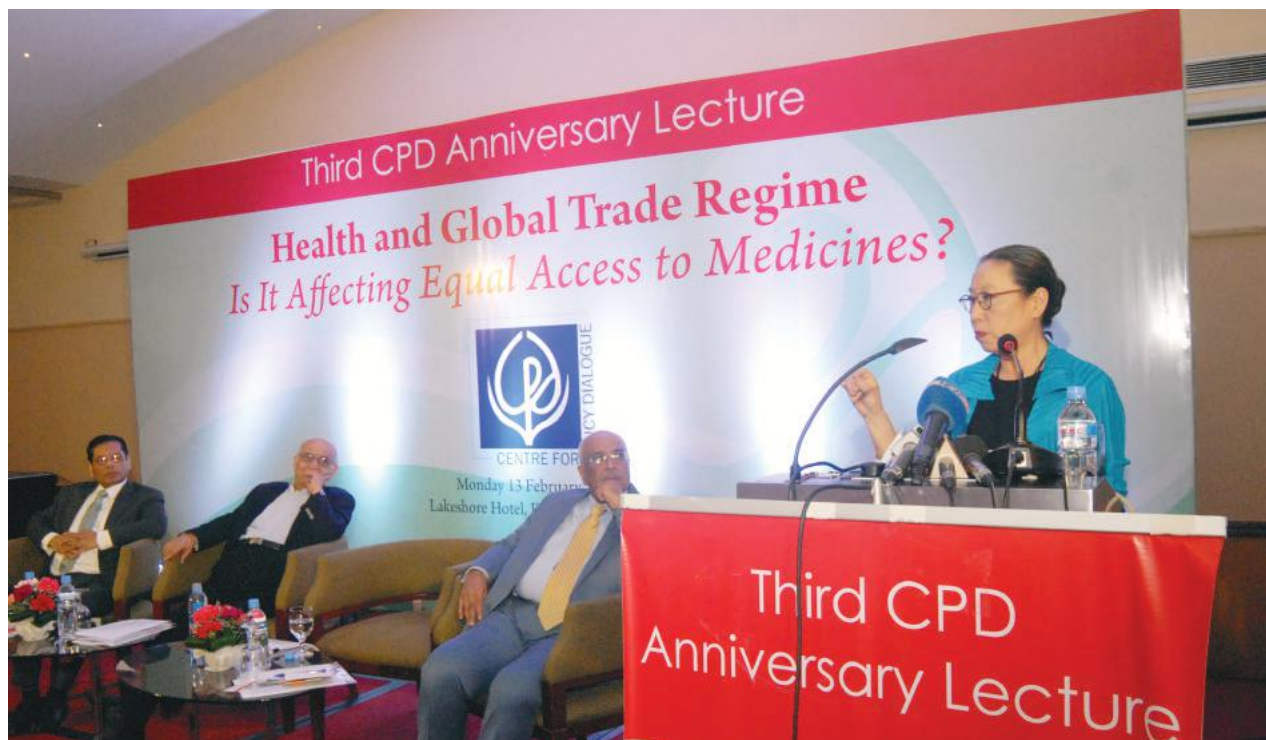
CPD invited noted economist Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, Professor of International Affairs at the New School, New York, and Vice-Chair of the UN Committee for Development Policy (CDP), to deliver its Anniversary Lecture 2017 as the Guest Speaker.

Professor Fukuda-Parr observed –

- Prices of life-saving drugs are escalating.
- Trade agreements are making access to healthcare more difficult for millions worldwide, particularly those in developing countries.
- Due to the inclusion of tough provisions in Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) in trade agreements, governments cannot control prices of imported medicines.

Third CPD Anniversary Lecture

Health and Global Trade Regime *Is It Affecting Equal Access to Medicines?*



CPD Retreat 2017

CPD's annual retreat, held on 24-26 January 2017 at BRAC CDM, Savar, provided unique team-building opportunities to the organisation's staff. CPD's personnel were accompanied by their family members, for whom the Retreat offered an opportunity to get to know the colleagues, and interact in a casual and relaxed environment. The packed two-day programme contained

indoor and outdoor events simultaneously, including cricket and football matches, badminton and table tennis tournaments, cultural events with performance of the CPD-ians and family members, raffle draw, games for children, open deck event with karaoke, and more.

The Retreat included an institutional Strategic Planning Meeting, in which all staff participated. As part of the meeting, a Committee for Evaluation and Planning (CEP) was convened by Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, which facilitated a survey on staffs' perceptions on issues such as

organisational profile and future outlook, career prospects and benefits, governance and management system, and other related matters.

The survey outcomes were discussed at a meeting held on 24 January, where further exercise was carried out on some specific issues. Concrete recommendations emanating from these exercises not only helped inform the new institutional strategy, but also provided insights on various issues of the organisation that need to be dealt with, in order to strengthen the institution in the days to come.



Capacity Building

CPD places critical importance on the capacity building of its staff, as this contributes to institutional strengthening. CPD takes active interest in mentoring the juniors – not only researchers, but professionals of other divisions as well. In this respect, junior staff members are given opportunities to participate in training programmes, seminars and courses that would enhance their knowledge and professional capacities. Also they are sent to various events to participate and contribute in the discussions and to encourage them to build professional network.

In 2017, **15** junior CPD officials took part in **46** engagements that were deliberated to enhance their competencies in their respective professional sectors and diversify their skills. Among these, **16** were overseas assignments and **14** were research trainings.

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Building Capacities in Think-Tanks

This is a Think Tank Initiative (TTI)-initiated two-year capacity building programme, implemented by the Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSSTEP), Bangalore, India. Six regional network organisations of TTI participated at this programme. Participants received training on research methodologies, project proposal writing, project management, strategic leadership, writing and presentation skills, and policy-relevant communications. The inception workshop of this programme was held in May 2017, in New Delhi, India, where a four-member team of CPD participated.

Young Scholars' Seminar Series (YSSS)

YSSS is a platform for CPD's young professionals to hone their analytical skills, and improve their articulation and presentation. Young members of CPD's research, dialogue and administration divisions present their ongoing research, and share their acquired knowledge through participation in capacity building programmes. Six YSSS presentations were made in 2017 on issues such as

- socio-scientific issues behind designing national curriculum
- sharing of experience from Commonwealth Youth Leadership Programme
- perception of the UN's Agenda 2030 and transformative politics
- prospect of LDCs in the era of SDGs
- monitoring and evaluation of impact and organisational accountability and learning
- data universe for Bangladesh's RMG sector





19

Completed research



33

Ongoing research



84

Deliberations at overseas events



121

Deliberations at national fora

CPD's
Research and
Policy Activism
in 2017



70

Publications



17

Memberships in policymaking and advisory bodies



103

Events



2553
Press coverage



6735
E-alert subscribers



1864
Electronic media
appearances

**CPD's
Outreach
in
2017**



58674
YouTube views



337412
Website visits



24661
Facebook followers



2011
Twitter followers

Institutional Structure

CPD's governance framework is one of its key strengths, ensuring the independence of its research and dialogue activities, and relevance of the CPD initiatives to diverse stakeholders. The three divisions of the Centre – Research, Dialogue & Communication and Administration & Finance – function in an interconnected manner to serve the institutional work plan.

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Staff Strength

Governance and Internal Management

Board of Trustees (BoT)

The highest body in CPD's governance structure is the Board of Trustees. The Board, with the aid of an Executive Committee (comprising of the BoT's Member-Secretary and the Treasurer), is entasked to provide the overall guidance to the activities of CPD.

The CPD-BoT and the BoT-EC met twice in 2017, in February and August. Board members, in 2017, were:

Chair of the Board
Professor Rehman Sobhan
Chairman, CPD

Sir Fazle Hasan Abed
Founder and Chairperson, BRAC

Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya
Distinguished Fellow, CPD

Ms Khushi Kabir
Coordinator, Nijera Kori

Ms Rasheda K Chowdhury
Executive Director, CAMPE

Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus
Chairman, Yunus Centre

Dr Shadheen Malik
Advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh

Mr M Syeduzzam
Former Finance Minister

Professor Dr Syed Manzoorul Islam
Formerly with Department of English, University of Dhaka

Mr Syed Manzur Elahi
Chairman, Apex Group

Professor Mustafizur Rahman
Distinguished Fellow, CPD
(Member-Secretary: CPD-BoT)
[till February 2017]

Dr Anisuzzaman
Professor Emeritus, University of Dhaka
Chairman, Bangla Academy

Advocate Sultana Kamal
Former Member (Minister), Advisory Council of Caretaker Government

Dr Fahmida Khatun
Executive Director, CPD
(Member-Secretary: CPD-BoT)
[from March 2017]

Management and Implementation Committee (MIC)

The MIC is mandated with the task of overall supervision, monitoring and decision-making of the day-to-day work and administrative issues. A total of 32 MIC meetings were held in 2017. The MIC members' list in 2017 included:

Dr Fahmida Khatun
Executive Director

Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya
Distinguished Fellow

Professor Mustafizur Rahman
Distinguished Fellow

Ms Anisatul Fatema Yousuf
Director, Dialogue & Communication

Mr M Shafiqul Islam
Director, Administration & Finance
(Member-Secretary: CPD-MIC)

Dr Khondaker Golam Moazzem
Research Director

The other institutional bodies that contribute towards governing the CPD are:

Research Management Committee (RMC)

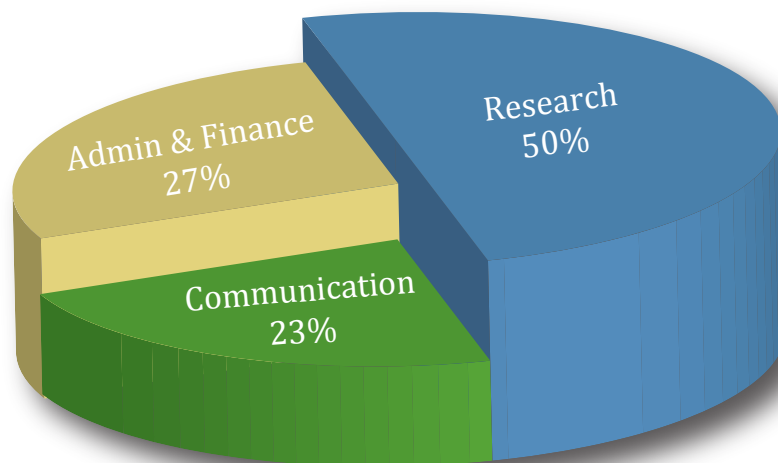
The committee that takes stock of progress in research works, designs and implements strategic coordination among various research programmes/activisms, and discusses research proposals of the CPD. RMC is chaired by the CPD Research Director, and participated by all senior- to mid-level researchers.

Three meetings of the RMC were held in 2017.

Review, Coordination and Planning (ReCAP)

A discussion platform of all CPD staff on issues pertaining to any institutional activity and/or matter.

In 2017, three ReCAP meetings were held.



CPD's Staff Strength in 2017

Financial Affairs

CPD is committed to maintain the highest possible standards with regards to its financial management by following stipulated rules and regulations and best accounting practices, through internal auditing and independent external auditing, which are conducted on a regular basis. On financial matters, CPD remains accountable to its Board of Trustees, NGO Affairs Bureau, National Board of Revenue (NBR) and its supporting agencies and institutions.

Financial Statement of CPD

Hoda Vasi Chowdhury & Co., Chartered Accountants has carried out the audit of the financial statements of CPD for the calender year 2017.

The Auditor has reported that the financial statements, prepared in accordance with Bangladesh Financial Reporting Standards/Bangladesh Accounting Standards, give a true and fair view of the state of the CPD and its projects' affairs as of 31 December 2017, and of the results of its consolidated operations and its consolidated cash flows for the year then ended, and comply with the requirements of applicable laws and regulations.

The summary of the Statement of Income & Expenses for the year ended on 31 December 2017 and the Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) as on 31 December 2017 are provided below. These extracts provide an overview of the state of financial affairs of the Centre.

Statement of Income & Expenses for the Year Ended on 31 December 2017

	Amount in Taka ('000)	
	Year ended 31 Dec 2017	Year ended 31 Dec 2016
Incoming Resources		
Fund and grants	149,687	129,929
Other receipts	5,533	6,910
Total resources	155,220	136,839
Resources Expended		
Administrative & management expenditure	84,477	80,164
Project/programme expenditure	76,482	63,807
Total expenditure	160,959	143,970
Reserve/(Deficit)	(5,739)	(7,132)

Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet) as on 31 December 2017

	Amount in Taka ('000)	
	As on 31 Dec 2017	As on 31 Dec 2016
Assets		
Non-current assets	137,885	132,586
Current assets	146,781	167,934
Less: Current liabilities	(14,238)	(25,874)
Net Assets	270,428	274,646
Represented by		
Unrestricted funds	189,032	199,170
Restricted funds	81,396	75,476
	270,428	274,646

Statement of Cash Flow as on 31 December 2017

	Amount in Taka ('000)	
	As on 31 Dec 2017	As on 31 Dec 2016
Cash flows from operating activities	3,838	7,289
<i>Deficit for the year 2017</i>	<i>(5,739)</i>	<i>(7,132)</i>
<i>Adjustment for non-cash items</i>	<i>9,577</i>	<i>14,421</i>
Cash flows from investing activities	(10,315)	(12,097)
Cash flows from financing activities	-	-
Net increase decrease in cash & cash equivalents	(6,477)	(4,808)
Opening cash and cash equivalents	113,849	118,657
Closing cash and cash equivalents	107,372	113,849



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CPDBangladesh

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