

# How Prepared is the Urban Local Government in Bangladesh to Deliver SDGs?

by

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An Exploration of Status, Prospects and Challenges**

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Based on the CPD study titled 'Urban local government as agent in delivering SDGs in Bangladesh: Exploring status, prospects and challenges' by *Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya, Ms. Umme Shefa Rezbana, Mr. Syed M Fuad and Ms. Lumbini Barua*

# 1. Background

- The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the **most ambitious** development agenda in the history of humankind



- Bangladesh is a signatory to the 2030 Agenda (signed in September 2015)

# 1. Background

- Achieving the SDGs requires a **inclusive and disaggregated** approach as well as **holistic and transformative** approach
- The MDGs **heavily relied on the central government** since implementation modalities were **primarily top-down**
- Local governments (LGs) were given a **very small role to play**, which was identified as a major shortcoming of the MDGs experience
- The SDGs are **universal with implications at the local level** and the agenda is also meant for **“localising” (aligning, mainstreaming etc.) the SDGs**



Localisation is “taking into account sub-national contexts, challenges, opportunities and governments at all stages of the Agenda, from the setting of goals and targets, to determining the means of implementation and using indicators to monitor progress (UCLG, n.d).”

- **A number of SDGs and their targets involve the prominent role of LGs in the 2030 Agenda**

# 1. Background

- Urban LGs have to be critical partners in ensuring that the SDGs achieved

Firstly, increasing trend of urbanisation needs special attention

Global urban population was 751 mln in 1950 and 4.2 bln in 2018 (UN DESA)

This growth is expected to continue- from 55 % of global population in 2018 to 68% by 2050 (UN DESA)

Secondly, access to local data and information is critical to track progress

Around 65% of targets and 157 indicators require urban policy responses (UN, 2016)

Of 169 targets, 21% can be implemented with local stakeholders; 24% with local actors; and a further 20% needs orientation towards local urban actors (Dick, 2016)

Thirdly, the SDGs—with the pledge to LNOB—make their implementation a challenging task

**The 2030 Agenda also includes a standalone goal for cities**

**11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES**

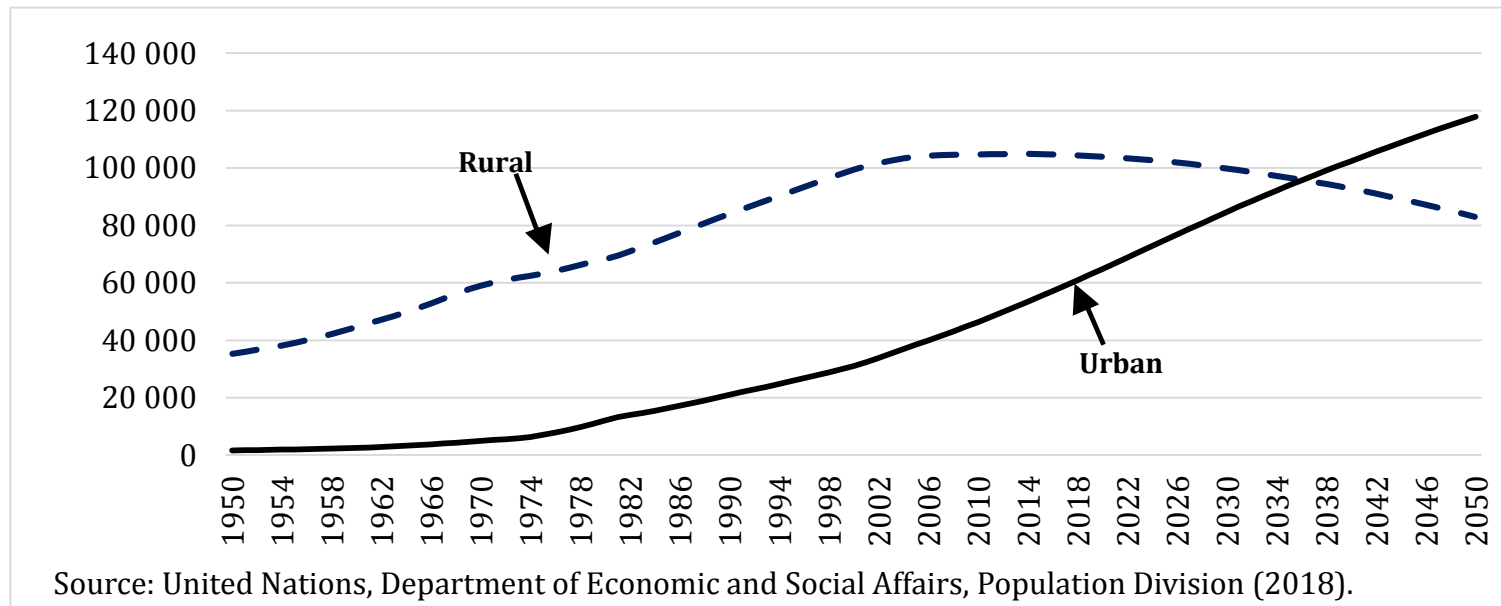


# 1. Background

## Rationale of the Study in the context of Bangladesh

- Similar to the global trend, Bangladesh's urban areas have continued to increase and become rampantly inhabited (currently, Tokyo the largest city has 37 mln inhabitants, Dhaka nearly 20 mln)
- Bangladesh is set to become more urbanised during the SDG period (2016-2030) and urban population to cross the rural around 2037 (Figure 1)
- Two ways of expansion: urban areas expanded and rural declared urban
- One of the regretful features of the so called 'middle income trap' is unplanned urbanisation

**Figure 1: Annual rural and urban population at mid-year, 1950-2050 (thousands) in Bangladesh**



# 1. Background

## Rationale of the Study in the context of Bangladesh

- Urban LGs often struggles to accommodate the growing population with basic facilities e.g. housing, public transport, water supply and waste management
- A significant proportion of the population are forced to live in squalid urban slums

- urban poverty rate remains at 18.9% while urban extreme poverty rate at 7.6% (HIES 2016)
- The air quality (Dhaka Tribune, 2018) and safety in Dhaka (The Daily Star, 2017) is ranked among the worst in the world

Urban LGs  
in  
Bangladesh

- Among all SDGs, Bangladesh's average performance towards achieving SDG11 compared to other SDGs is the **second lowest** as well as in a stagnating trend (Sachs et al., 2018).

- Lack of integrated authority of the urban LGs is likely to hamper sustainable development for cities in Bangladesh

Taking cognisance of these realities in Bangladesh, this study focuses on urban LGs in the context of the SDGs.

# 1. Background

## Rationale of the Study in the context of Bangladesh

- Structure of LG in Bangladesh is multi-tiered and based on Local Government Institutions (LGIs)
- These LGIs are organised into three broad streams: **Rural LGIs, Urban LGIs and local government for special areas** (e.g., the Chittagong Hill Tracts)
- Urban LGIs are divided into city corporations and municipalities (*Pourashava*) governed by their respective acts, which are: **Local Government (Municipality) Act, 2009 and Local Government (City Corporation) Act 2009**
- Municipalities are classified based on the minimum of annual revenues collected locally over the last three years.

### **Class of Municipality**

Class A: Annual own source revenue  $\geq$  BDT 10 Million

Class B: Annual own source revenue  $\geq$  BDT 6 Million

Class C: Annual own source revenue  $>$  BDT 2 Million

- City corporations are usually bigger than municipalities and capable of generating more revenue through taxes





# 1. Background

## Research questions

Considering the above-mentioned circumstances, this study focuses on the following questions in the context of Bangladesh.

- How urban LGs can contribute to deliver SDGs in Bangladesh from the perspective of 2030 Agenda?

- How prepared are urban LGs in Bangladesh for delivering SDGs based on current status?

- How can urban LGs be made more effective for achieving SDGs?

# 1. Background

## Methodology Followed

- The study includes three methods

### 1. Literature review

To conceptualise the study, global and national studies, relevant national legal documents, plans and policies, and articles from journals and newspapers are reviewed

### 2. Key informant interviews

Academics and practitioners with professional experience in urban local governance and the SDGs have been interviewed to better understand and validate realities. A current municipality mayor have also been consulted

### 3. Dialogue with relevant stakeholders at the sub-national level

Feedback from relevant stakeholders from a subnational dialogue (held at Madaripur) have been included to enrich the study

### 4. Draw on other parallel activities of CPD Gaibandha Dialogue of CPD-OXFAM project

- The final report of the study will be prepared based on a feedback and validation dialogue at the national level in presence of the relevant policymakers and other stakeholders

# 1. Background

## Scope and limitations of the Study

- In achieving the SDGs, participation and contribution of rural LGs are also equally important; however, this study **focuses only on the urban LGs** due to the growing concerns regarding urbanisation in Bangladesh
- Hopefully, this study is expected to **provide impetus for further research in rural LGs** with regard to SDG implementation and add value regarding data need of the rural LGs
- The **linkages between the SDGs and urban LGs go beyond SDG11**. This study **may not fully cover all the associated SDGs**, but aims to discuss the most relevant goals and targets in the context of urban LGs
- **Availability of quality data** regarding tracking the SDGs is a major concern for most of the countries including Bangladesh. Therefore, analysing the actual SDG progress status, particularly at the subnational level remains a challenge for the researchers

## 2. Relevance of urban local government in the SDG paradigm

- Review of the 2030 Agenda reveals that, it
  - recognises **sustainable urban development and management** as a crucial element for people's quality of life (Declaration, para 34)
  - proposes to work with the **local authorities and communities** in this regard (Declaration, para 45, para 52)
  - assures to reduce **negative impacts of urban activities** and chemicals on both human health and environment as well as minimising the **impact of cities on the global climate system** (para 34)

## 2. Relevance of urban local government in the SDG paradigm

### 2.1 Examination at the 2030 Agenda Document

- Terms mentioned directly in



- A total of 39 targets of the 17 SDGs mentions terms such as 'for all', 'at all levels', 'all women and girls', 'everywhere', 'universal access', 'all women and men'
- Cities have been given critical significance in a separate goal (SDG 11 consisting 10 targets including 3 MoI targets and 15 indicators)



## 2. Relevance of urban local government in the SDG paradigm

### 2.1 Examination at the 2030 Agenda Document

- Targets that directly mention local/urban issues are
  - 8.9 (promotion of local culture and products)
  - 11.3 (enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanisation)
  - 11.6 (special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management), and
  - 15.9 (integration of ecosystem and biodiversity values into local planning).
- A total of 14 means of implementation (MoI) targets contain the terms that refer direct or indirect involvement of urban LGs
- For the 'follow-up and review', the document commits and encourages Member States to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and subnational levels which are country-led and country-driven (paragraphs 77 and 79, UN, 2015)

Therefore, the achievement of these goals and targets and their follow-up and review at the national level would require the direct or indirect involvement of urban LGs to ensure the central pledge of 'leave no one behind'.

## 2. Relevance of urban local government in the SDG paradigm

### 2.2 Interlinkage between SDGs and urban local government

- Urban LGs can have potential contributions to achieve almost all the SDGs directly or indirectly.
- Urban LGs can directly or indirectly play critical roles in 11 goals (SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 6, SDG 8, SDG 10, SDG 11, SDG 13 and SDG 16 )

**SDG1**

#### **No Poverty**

Urban LGs: implement social protection systems and measures, deal with land and other property, natural resources etc.

**SDG2**

#### **Zero hunger**

Urban LGs: Control local markets and producers, hereby contribute to peoples' access to food

**SDG3**

#### **Good health and well-being**

Urban LGs: prevent communicable disease such as HIV/AIDS, malaria through campaigns and supporting affected population

**SDG4**

#### **Quality education**

Urban LGs: primary education services and required infrastructural development for that

**SDG5**

#### **Gender equality**

Urban LGs: promote women empowerment. There are now provisions for female elected representatives at the Urban LG structure

**SDG6**

#### **Clean water and sanitation**

Urban LGs: these services are directly linked with Urban LG activities



## 2. Relevance of urban local government in the SDG paradigm

### 2.2 Interlinkage between SDGs and urban local government

**SDG8**

#### **Decent work and economic growth**

Urban LGs: Many of the targets are directly linked, since economic development is one of their core responsibilities

**SDG10**

#### **Reduced inequalities**

Urban LGs: provide services including social safety net to the poor, vulnerable, and marginalised

**SDG11**

#### **Sustainable cities and communities**

Urban LGs: responsible for ensuring successful delivery of this goal

**SDG13**

#### **Climate action**

Urban LGs: can concentrate on emissions generated by urban inhabitants

**SDG16**

#### **Peace, justice and strong institutions**

A cross-cutting goal, essential for achieving all other SDGs. The goal along with its targets refers implicitly to the rural and urban governance (German Development Institute, 2016)

- Other goals such as SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy), SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), SDG 12 (Responsible production and consumption), SDG 14 (Life below water) and SDG 15 (Life on Land) also include one or more targets where Urban LGs have the opportunity to contribute

## 2. Relevance of urban local government in the SDG paradigm

### 2.3 Interlinkage between SDG11 and other SDGs

- **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities** is also strongly linked to other SDGs, such as the end of poverty (1), health and well-being (3), education (4), gender equality (5), water and sanitation (6), reduction of inequalities (10), responsible consumption (12), climate action (13), peaceful society (16) among others.
- Most of the 234 SDG indicators have a direct connection to urban policies and a clear impact on cities and human settlements



# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

- Election Manifesto 2018 of current government
  - “LGIs have been strengthened by decentralising the power structures, delegated more financial and administrative power”
    - However, in practice, LGIs still remains largely dependent on intergovernmental transfer and grants for financing development activities and resource mobilisation
  - Pledges “the government’s support and initiatives will continue on improving and expanding education, health, electricity and other citizen facilities of urban LGs”
  - Includes further consideration for the formulation of district-wise budgets and formulation of LG budget at different levels
    - How the urban LG budgets will be incorporated with district budget and what will be the institutional mechanism and coordination in formulating LG budget needs clarification

# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

- Election Manifesto 2018 of current government
  - Pledges to ensure greater participation of people in urban management
  - “Voluntary activities of NGOs will be coordinated with those of government and local governments”
    - How this will be done needs clarification
  - “33 percent of local government members to be women, elected directly”
    - Previous research reveals, voices of the female councillors of municipalities are generally not heard, discrepancy remains between VGF cards received by female and male councillors, responsibility and decision making power (CPD 2013; CPD 2018b)

# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

- 'A Handbook: Mapping of Ministries by Targets in the Implementation of the SDGs aligned with the 7FYP (2016-20) published by GED in 2016
- LGs are specifically appointed of leading the implementation process of **SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation)** and **SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities)**
- LGD and the RDCD are associated with **several targets and indicators of 16 SDGs**
- Notably, **an association of the LGD/RDCD with SDG 7 (affordable and clean energy) is absent in the mapping**
- **A proper explanation behind listing the SDGs as aligned could not be found in the document. For instance, SDG on education is declared as aligned whereas all 10 targets are enlisted under the 'not aligned' category**

LGD is Associate Division for 47 targets

LGD is Lead Division for all indicators of 10 targets and some for 3 targets

Both LGD and RDCD are associated with several targets of SDG 1 (end poverty)

## 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

### 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

- According to the mapping (GED 2016), Some of the major areas of responsibilities for LGD are—

SDG Targets	Targets entails
6.1	equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water
6.2	adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene
6.3	improving water quality by reducing various sorts of pollution
6.4	increasing water use efficiency
6.b	strengthening the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management
11.6	air quality, municipal and other waste management
11.7	access to safe, inclusive public spaces
11.a	economic, social and environmental links between urban, pre-urban and rural areas
16.9	legal identity for all

# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

### ■ Comparison among the Mapping of Ministry, (Urban) Local government Acts, and SDG Targets requires LG involvement

- This study has identified 41 targets of the SDGs which would require the direct or indirect involvement of the local government.

[1.1 to 1.5, 2.1, 3.7, 3.8, 4.1 to 4.7, 5.1, 5.2, 5.5, 5.6, 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 7.1, 8.5, 8.8 to 8.10, 10.2, 11.1, 11.2, 11.6, 12.8, 14.3, 15.9, 16.1 to 16.3, 16.6, 16.7, 16.9]

- Ministry mapping assigned LGD as the Lead Division for 5 targets and Associate Division for 20 targets out of the 41 targets mentioned above
- In some cases, urban LGs already have responsibilities assigned by the Urban LG Acts
- Assignment of LGD in some critical targets is missing in the ministry mapping. For instance,
  - SDG 4.3 Equal access to quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university
  - SDG 4.4 Increase number of youth and adults for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
  - SDG 4.5, Eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education for the vulnerable

# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

- Comparison among the Mapping of Ministry, (Urban) Local government Acts, and SDG Targets requires LG involvement
  - SDG 4.6 Ensure all youth and a substantial proportion of adults achieve literacy and numeracy
  - SDG 4.7 ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development
  - SDG 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girl
  - SDG 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
  
- **Emphasis on some important targets is absent** in the urban LG Acts. For instance,
  - Relevant duties regarding SDG 8.9 (promotes local culture and products)
  - Issues related to SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth), specifically SDG 8.5 on full and productive employment and decent work for all and 8.8 to protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments
  - Forming standing committee or additional standing committee on **education and social welfare in the municipalities** and on **sanitation and public security** for the city corporations



# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

### ■ Seventh Five Year Plan (7FYP)

- The plan has put significant focus on the SDGs and associated LG sector with the implementation of several targets in the 7FYP
- Financing for achieving the 7FYP targets are not satisfactory. For instance, budget allocation for the education sector was 2.09% of GDP in BFY19 which is below the standard set by 7FYP (2.84% of GDP). Similarly, Health sector received 0.92% of GDP which was 0.89% in RBFY18 while 7FYP targeted spending 1.04% of GDP in BFY19 (CPD, 2018c)

## 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

### 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

#### ■ Voluntary National Review (VNR)

- VNR of Bangladesh (2017) has acknowledged the local government sector **to a very limited extent**
- **Regrettably, very few specific strategies or initiatives for localising the SDGs have been mentioned in the report**
- The establishment of union digital centres (UDCs) in all the union **councils—is the only initiative mentioned in the VNR**
- In addition, data regarding the LGD is absent from the data tables presented on the status of data availability of the SDGs. As the VNR focused on SDGs 1 (end poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger), 3 (Good Health and Well-being), 5 (Gender Equality), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 14 (Life below water) and 17 (Partnership), **not much could be found on SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).**

## 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

### 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

#### ■ Cost Assessment for SDGs done by the GoB (Table 1)

- LGD was given the lead responsibility for implementing 13 targets under five SDGs
- The cost estimation, based on the Bangladesh government's 'SDG Financing Strategy: Bangladesh Perspective', of the present study considers 10 targets under three SDGs to avoid overestimation
- The government's strategy document identifies five potential sources of financing, viz., public financing, private sector financing, public-private partnership, external sources and NGOs
- Since the present study focuses on the role of the LG, only estimates of public financing have been used; for SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), public financing is 60% of total costs, and for SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) and SDG 12 (Responsible consumption and production), it is 20%
- When the actual budget is compared with the additional synchronised cost, it is seen that the total additional synchronised cost is approximately 31.94% and 28.86% of the budget of the LGD for FY2017 and FY2018 respectively
- LGD would need significant additional funding for it to be able to implement the targets

## 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

### 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

- Cost Assessment for SDGs

Table 1: Total additional synchronised costs (in current bln BDT)

Target/Goal	Total Cost (FY17-20)	Share (%)
Target 6.1: safe and affordable drinking water	200.3	22.1
Target 6.2: sanitation and hygiene	365.3	40.2
Target 6.3: improve water quality	191.2	21.1
Target 6.b: participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation	19.0	2.1
SDG 11: sustainable cities and communities	128.1	14.1
Target 12.4: management of wastes & Target 12.5: reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse	5.4	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>908.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>

# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

### ■ Cost Assessment in National Action Plan

- National Action Plan of 43 Lead Ministries/Divisions by targets in the implementation of the SDGs aligning with 7<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan and beyond
- Among the 16 indicators for which the LGD is the lead division, the Action Plan outlines projects that cover 10 of the indicators
- Apparently, government has initially focused more on solid waste recycling, open spaces and water safety, with a particular emphasis on cities and urban areas
- The issues of the local government's health emergency capacity preparedness (indicator 3.d.1), recycling capacity (indicator 12.5.1), hazardous waste generated per capita (indicator 12.4.2) and participation of local communities in water and sanitation management (indicator 6.b.1) remained unaddressed in the Action Plan

## 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

### 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

#### ■ Data Disaggregation

- The GED also prepared a review report on the status of data availability related to SDGs, titled 'Data Gap Analysis for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Bangladesh perspective' (GED, 2017)
- The report shows that **data for 32 indicators of 10 SDGs is available at the local government level**
- **Data is available for 3 indicators** (Indicators 6.1.1(drinking water services), 6.2.1 (sanitation & hygiene), 16.9.1(birth registration for children<5 years)) for which, **the LGD is the lead division and for 11 indicators** (Indicators 1.3.1(social protection floors/systems), 1.4.1(household access to basic services), 3.1.1 (maternal mortality ratio), 3.1.2 (births by skilled health personnel), 3.2.2 (Neonatal mortality rate), 3.7.1 (modern methods of family planning), 3.7.2 (Adolescent birth rate), 4.1.1(proportion of primary level students), 4.2.2(participation in organized learning), 4.a.1 (schools with 7 basic facilities), 13.1.1(number of people directly affected by disasters) for **which, the LGD is the associate division.**

# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

### ■ Data Disaggregation

- Division-wise data is available for all of the indicators; district-wise data is available for 24 indicators, and sub-district-wise data are available for only one indicator.
- Important data for indicators such as Proportion of population covered by social protection systems (1.3.1), living in households with access to basic services (1.4.1); and women and girls subjected to sexual violence (5.2.2) are only available at division level
- However, union-wise data is not reported in any official government document
- Data on other disaggregated criteria within the local government level, e.g., by age, sex, income, race and ethnicity, should also be reported.

# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.1 Interpreting Government SDG initiatives

### ■ Data Disaggregation

- Another government initiative is the development of the **monitoring and evaluation framework of SDGs**, based on the latest available indicators identified by the IAEG-SDGs
- Review of this exercise reveals, **LGD is to be held responsible for generating data for only 18 indicators (LGD-17, LGED-1) out of a total of 232 indicators of the SDGs**
- **The majority of these 18 indicators are for SDG 6 on safe drinking water and sanitation (four indicators) and SDG 11 on sustainable cities (five indicators)**
- **However, out of these 18 indicators, data for only two indicators 5.5.1 (proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments and local governments) and 16.9.1 (Proportion of Children (under 5) whose Births have been Registered ) is readily available**
- **Moreover, according to analysis, data for one indicator (16.9.1) is available at the locally disaggregated level, implying that the LGD has to make renewed efforts to collect disaggregated data for the vast majority of the indicators.**



# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.2 Interpreting Local Government SDG initiatives

- Instance of specific SDG relevant initiatives from the local government level could not be traced
- However, a large number of urban LGs are engaged in several development projects funded by GoB and international development partners that may directly or indirectly foster the achievement of some of the SDGs. For instance,
  - Municipal Governance and Services Project (MGSP) aims to address the operation and maintenance of the existing basic urban service system
  - The Local Government Initiative on Climate Change (LoGIC) project aims to address the impacts of climate change in Bangladesh
  - The Coastal Towns Environmental Improvement Project (CTEIP, 2014-2020) designed for 10 municipalities of Barisal-Khulna region to improve climate-resilient infrastructure and strengthen institutional capacity and governance.
  - Apart from these, 100 small-scale drainage improvement projects have been undertaken by different municipalities with support from the Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund (BCCTF).
  - The Northern Bangladesh Infrastructure Development Project (NOBIDEP), supported by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), covers 18 municipalities (BDF, 2018).

# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.2 Interpreting Local Government SDG initiatives

- Multiple sectoral plans, strategies and action plans are in place for addressing the challenges of urban development by the urban LGIs. Examples include the Sectoral Sector Development Plan (2011–2025) for water supply and sanitation, Urban Health Strategy 2014, National Strategy for Pouroshava Governance Improvement 2016, and Institutional and Regulatory Framework for Fecal Sludge Management. (BDF, 2018)
- In the case of achieving the targets under SDG 1 on end poverty, the Urban Partnerships for Poverty Reduction (UPPR) is the largest poverty reduction initiative in Bangladesh
- A partnership has been created between UNICEF and five city corporations with a view to ensuring the basic service deliveries to the urban poor communities, UNICEF will develop a work plan with LGD in this purpose (BDF, 2018)

# 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

## 3.3 Other Stakeholder SDG initiatives

- Many of the NGO activities or programmes are directly or indirectly relatable to specific targets of the SDGs. For example,
  - World Vision Bangladesh has aligned its technical programmes with SDG targets, such as for livelihood development, health, nutrition, water and sanitation, functional literacy and life skills development, child protection and participation, and climate change adaptation
  - The Hunger Project is coordinating two movements at the national level, National Girl Child Advocacy Forum (NGCAF) and Shujan (Citizens for Good Governance) for addressing the issues of corruption and gender discrimination
  - A consortium named Bangladesh WASH Alliance (BWA) has been established by 14 NGOs for ensuring sustainable access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and hygienic living conditions
  - Aside from this alliance, BRAC, WaterAid, SNV Netherlands Bangladesh and some other national and international NGOs have individual and ongoing WASH programmes at the local level
  - Another one is a Disability Alliance on SDGs, Bangladesh, which has been formed by eight NGOs, targeting persons with disabilities, and thus contributing towards attaining SDG 10 in Bangladesh

## 3. Preparedness of urban LG in delivering SDGs in BD

### 3.3 Other Stakeholder SDG initiatives

- In the case of CSOs, the *Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh* is one of the biggest platforms created in Bangladesh, which has established as a partnership among CSOs, NGOs and the private sector. This Platform aimed at monitoring the SDG implementation process in Bangladesh and sensitising the policymakers through the multi-stakeholder approach. Under the platform dialogues are organised at the district level (e.g., Rangpur, Chittagong, Sylhet, Madaripur etc.) on the SSNPs in high poverty areas, strengthening local government initiatives for sustainable cities, promoting good governance and other SDG related issues. The Platform was launched in June 2016 and currently has 104 NGOs and CSOs as Partner organisations and CPD works as the Secretariat.

# 4. Challenges for urban LGs in Implementing SDGs

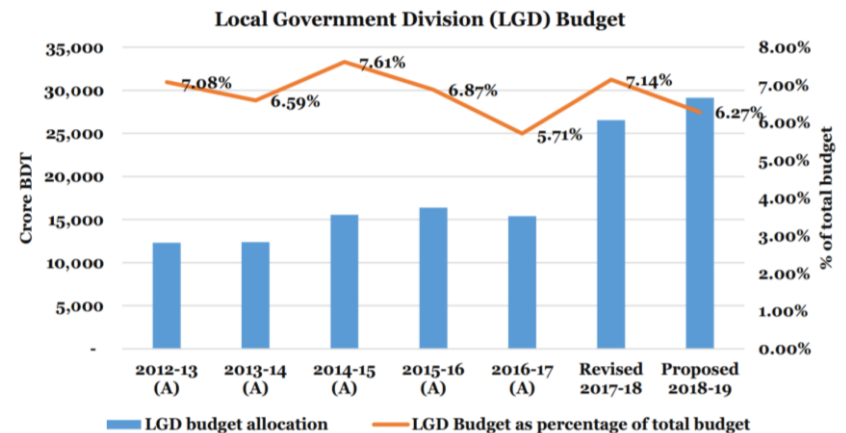
## 4.1 General observations

- The colonial legacy of dominant bureaucracy and a centralised governance mechanism, and the political attitude of the government
  - Mayors who represent the ruling party get hold of the 'special block grants' through political leaning (Bhattacharya et. al. 2014).
- Lack of devolution of power and absence of LGI's autonomy
- Low resource generation and a 'culture of dependence' on the central government
  - The national budget allocation for the **LG has remained inadequate** for LGIs to function properly.
  - The MDG experience of Bangladesh reveals that LGs had to rely on the directives and central government for the resources required for taking any step
  - Inadequate system (no agreed rational) of budgetary allocation to the various classes of municipality
- Over-focus on visible development initiatives

# 4. Challenges for urban LGs in Implementing SDGs

## 4.1 General observations

- The national budget allocation for the LG has remained inadequate for LGIs to function properly.
- Decline in LGD budget as a share of total budget, low Annual Development Programme expenditure, pose an even greater threat for the financial autonomy of the LG. For instance, LGD allocation as share of total budget decreased in ABFY14, ABFY16, ABFY17 and FY19 from respective prior FYs (CPD 2018a)
- There is also a lack of political commitment in raising own-source revenue through proper mobilisation of local resources in LGIs (Bhattacharya et al. 2013)
- The insufficient financial incentives also have an impact on attracting skilled employees at LGIs (Bhattacharya et al. 2014)
- LGs therefore tend to depend heavily on central government financial transfers, which, to an extent, forces the LGIs to compromise on their financial and functional autonomy (Bhattacharya et al. 2013)



# 4. Challenges for urban LGs in Implementing SDGs

## 4.1 General observations

- Conflict of interest
- Lack of Capacity at the LG level
  - Newly transformed/updated urban LGs capacity and efficiency deficit
  - The poorest and most marginalised communities were found to be worst affected
- Shortcomings in MDG implementation
- Lack of coordination and communication
- Lack of accountability and transparency
- No proper structured platform for interaction between the policymaker and people representatives of the urban LG

# 4. Challenges for urban LGs in Implementing SDGs

## 4.2 Gaps found from the Government reports

- Limited role of LGIs in some critical SDGs (for instance, SDG4 on quality education and SDG 16 on inclusive and peaceful society) for Bangladesh as envisaged in the policy documents
- Promises on ensuring the financial autonomy of the local government also remain in the pages
- Insufficient finance for SDG implementation
  - The additional synchronised cost of implementing the targets for which the LGD is the lead ministry is found to be significantly higher than the existing LGD budget
- The dearth of data at the local level is one of the major challenges that impede the tracking of SDGs progress



## 5. Way Forward

- Inclusion of the SDGs in plans and commitments, revise the current ones addressing the gaps
  - Engage LG in several SDG targets e.g., SDG 2.1 (end hunger & ensure food security), 4.3–4.7 (ensure access to quality education including literacy & numeracy and increase skilled youth esp. skills for sustainable development among both sexes), 5.1 (end discrimination against women), 5.2 (end violence against women), 5.6 (access to sexual & reproductive health & rights), 7.1 (access to modern energy services), 8.5 (full and productive employment and decent works), 8.8 (protected labour rights), 8.10 (strengthen capacity of domestic financial institutions), 12.8 (access to relevant information & awareness for sustainable development), 14.3 (minimise impacts on Ocean), 16.2 (end violence against children) and 16.6 (develop effective, accountable & transparent institutions) in the Ministry Mapping by the Planning Commission
- For sustainable development, cities should be developed and managed in a planned way led by the urban LGs. There should be
  - an urban plan or city plan for each urban area
  - individual economic plans
  - legal scope to include local and international partners for the money making projects and initiatives.
  - authority over industrial planning

# 5. Way Forward

- Eradicate the tendency of avoiding power devolution
- Efficient resource generation, mobilisation, and management
  - **Proper central budget allocation criteria**
  - **Forming a Local Government Commission**
  - In order to fulfil the promises set by the 7FYP, a critical rethinking is due to the budget allocation is needed in the development sectors
- Ensure effective intra and inter-government coordination
- **Establish a platform** to ensure communication between the local actors and the central government
- Increasing institutional capacity, accountability and transparency
- Awareness building in the LG Units as well as among the general people

**THANK YOU**