



Nazneen Ahmed, PhD

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SUMMARY PROFILE

Dr Nazneen Ahmed is the Executive Director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), a leading think tank in Bangladesh. She is a development economist with over 26 years of experience in economic research, public policy analysis, institutional leadership, and strategic advisory work across Bangladesh and the Asia-Pacific region. Dr Ahmed brings a strong record of producing rigorous, policy-relevant research on macroeconomic management, trade and industrial development, labour markets, poverty, social protection, SMEs, gender equality, and inclusive growth, and translating evidence into national policy processes, public dialogue, advocacy, and development programming.

Dr Ahmed served as **Policy Advisor at UNDP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific in New York**, where she provided strategic policy advice, regional economic analysis, thought leadership, quality assurance of knowledge products, and support for senior leadership engagements. She worked closely with country offices, regional teams, Permanent Missions, and the Partnerships team to support policy engagement and resource mobilisation efforts, including with core donors, international financial institutions, and other development partners.

Previously, she served as **Country Economist at UNDP Bangladesh**, where she led the Policy and Strategic Advisory Cluster, covering economic analysis, strategic innovation, research, and gender mainstreaming. She also supported resource mobilisation efforts to develop research and capacity development initiatives, including those related to Bangladesh's LDC graduation and smooth transition strategy.

Dr Ahmed brings over two decades of experience from the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), Bangladesh's premier public policy research institute, progressing from **Research Associate to Research Director**. She **designed and led more than 85 policy-oriented research studies** and mobilised research partnerships and project resources with government agencies, UN agencies, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, ILO, UNCTAD, Islamic Development Bank, European Commission, IFPRI, and other development partners. She provided sustained advisory support to the Government of Bangladesh on trade, industry, macroeconomic management, LDC graduation, SME development, labour issues, gender equality, and development strategy, including as a member of the **Panel of Economists for Bangladesh's 7th Five-Year Plan**.

Dr Ahmed has demonstrated institutional, governance, and administrative leadership in public policy and development institutions. At BIDS, she served as Division Chief of the Industry and Physical Infrastructure Division, Chair of the Finance Committee, and Chair of the Administrative Affairs Committee for multiple terms. She also served as a **Director on the Board of Palli Sanchay Bank**, a public bank focused on financial inclusion and poverty reduction; a member of the **General Body of Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)**, a major public institution for rural employment generation and poverty reduction; a General Body member of the **SME Foundation**; and a General Body member of the **Bangladesh NGO Foundation**.

Dr Ahmed combines academic credibility with policy convening, communication, and advocacy experience. She has organised and contributed to high-level policy dialogues, represented institutions in national and international forums, and communicated research findings through peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, research monographs, policy papers, UNDP knowledge products, media articles, and public policy discussions. She has around 50 publications, including articles in internationally recognised journals such as *World Development*, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, *Journal of Developing Areas*, and *Bangladesh Development Studies*, and book chapters with leading academic and development publishers, including Cambridge University Press, Routledge, CABI Publishers, University Press Limited, the World Bank, UNCTAD, ILO, and other development organisations.

Dr Ahmed holds a **PhD in Development Economics** from Wageningen University, the Netherlands, and an **MA in Development Economics** from the University of Sussex, UK, as a British Chevening Scholar. She also completed bachelor's and master's degrees in Economics from the University of Dhaka. Her professional profile combines policy expertise on Bangladesh and the Asia-Pacific region, institutional leadership, research management, partnership-building, resource mobilisation, public communication, and evidence-based advocacy.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**Policy Advisor, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP),
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New York, USA**

2023 – 2026

Country Economist, UNDP, Bangladesh

2021 – 2023

Research Associate to Research Director, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS)

1998 – 2025 (*On lien from July 2021 to August 2025*)

Research Associate, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), Dhaka, Bangladesh

1997 – 1998

RESPONSIBILITIES IN GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT BODIES

Position	Committee/Organisation	Duration
Member	Panel of Economists for the 7th Five-Year Plan for Bangladesh (2016–2020).	2015–2016

Director on the Board of Directors	Palli Sanchay Bank (a public bank in Bangladesh)	2016–January 2021
Member, General Body	Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation (PKSF)	2016–2020
Member, General Body	Bangladesh NGO Foundation	2018–2021
Senate Member (selected from researchers)	Jahangirnagar University (a public university in Bangladesh)	2019–2021
Neutral Board Member	RMG SUSTAINABILITY COUNCIL (RSC)	December 2020–2021
Independent Director	iSocial Ltd. (a private limited company)	2017–2021
Core Committee Member	Advisory Panel to the Ministry of Commerce, Government of Bangladesh, on trade policy and inflation control	2010–2011
Member of the committee	Committee on Non-Tariff Barriers under the WTO Cell, Ministry of Commerce.	2003
Member of the committee	To support preparations for the WTO Ministerial in Cancun, 2003.	2003
Life Member	Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP)	Since 2003
Life Member	Asiatic Society of Bangladesh	Since 2006

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Former Editor, Research Report Series, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies. 2016–2021.
- Former Advisor, Board of Editors, The Apparel News
- Former Editor, the *Bangladesh Unnayan Shomikkha* (Bengali journal published by the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies). 2012–2016.

PUBLICATIONS

Journal articles

1. “The Impact of Rural Electrification on Life-line Consumers: Empirical Evidence from Bangladesh”, *Journal of Developing Areas*, Tennessee State University, Nashville, USA. (Volume 55, Number 4, Fall 2021, pp. 355–375). (with Zabid Iqbal).
2. “Sustaining ready-made garment exports from Bangladesh”, *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, Vol. 39, No. 4, November 2009, pp. 597–618.
3. “Addressing workers’ rights in the textile and apparel industry - consequences for the Bangladesh economy”, *World Development*, Vol. 37, No. 3, 2009, pp. 661–675. (with Jack Peerlings)

4. "The Ready-Made Garment Industry of Bangladesh: Sustainability in the Post-MFA World", *Dialogue + Cooperation Occasional Papers South East Asia, Europe*, 2/2006, Publisher: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Singapore (2006).
5. "The Pharmaceutical Industry of Bangladesh: Prospects and Challenges", Bangladesh Unnayan Shomikkha (Bangla Journal of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies), 2021. (with Rizwana Islam and Nahid Ferdous Pabon)
6. "Role of Social Safety-net Programmes in Eliminating Child Labour: The Bangladesh Perspective", *Bangladesh Unnayan Shomikkha (Bangla Journal of BIDS)*, February 2020. (with Kasfi Rayan and Zabid Iqbal).
7. "Benefits of Improved Cook Stoves: Evidence from Rural Bangladesh," ***Bangladesh Development Studies***, December 2018, Vol. XLI. (with Zabid Iqbal).
8. "Gender dimension in Jute farming: Understanding the possibilities to improve livelihoods of rural households in jute farming", *Bangladesh Unnayan Shomikkha (Bangla Journal of BIDS)*, 2015.
9. "Quality of Bangladesh's Development in Forty years of Independence", *Bangladesh Unnayan Shomikkha (Bangla Journal of BIDS)*, 2012. (with Iqbal Hossain)
10. "Prospects of textile and clothing sectors in the least developed countries", *Bangladesh Unnayan Shomikkha (Bangla Journal of BIDS)*, 2004. (with Sharif Mosharaf Hossain).
11. "Liberalisation and Growth: Observation of Some Theoretical and Empirical Evidences", *Bangladesh Unnayan Shomikkha (Bangla Journal of BIDS)*, 2003.
12. "Inequality and Growth: Role of Education in this Context - New growth Theories and Bangladesh", *Bangladesh Unnayan Shomikkha (Bangla Journal of BIDS)*, 2000.
13. 'A Re-Examination of Domestic Saving -Foreign Aid Relationship in the Context of Bangladesh', ***Bangladesh Development Studies***, vol. XXVI, December 2000. (with M A Razzaque)

Book Chapters

14. "Food security implications of rice value chain management in Bangladesh", a chapter in *Securing Food for All in Bangladesh*, by Akhter Ahmed, Nurul Islam, and Mustafa K. Mujeri (Eds.). (peer-reviewed chapter co-authored with Mustafa K. Mujeri, and M. I. Hossain), **The University Press Limited**, Dhaka, 2021.
15. "Dreams of Adolescents for Future", a chapter in Selim Jahan (ed.), *Advancing Human Development in Bangladesh: Looking Ahead*, National Human Development Report 2021, Bangladesh. The University Press Limited, Dhaka. (peer-reviewed chapter with Ayesha Banu), December 2021.
16. "Policy Space towards Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialization: The Case of Bangladesh", a chapter in Syed Munir Khasru (eds.) *Towards Sustainable Development: Lessons from MDGs & Pathway for SDGs*, Publisher: Institute for Policy, Advocacy, and Governance (IPAG), IBA, Dhaka 2017. (Single Author)

17. "Rice Milling Technology in Bangladesh: Characteristics and Productivity", a chapter in M. A. Sattar Mandal, Stephen D. Biggs and Scott E. Justice (eds.) *Rural Mechanization; A Driver in Agricultural Change and Rural Development* Publisher: Institute for Inclusive Finance and Development (InM), Dhaka. 2017. (with M Asaduzzaman).
18. "Improving wage and working conditions in the Bangladesh RMG sector: the role of horizontal and vertical relations" in Dev Nathan, Meenu Tewari and Sandip Sarkar (eds.) *Labour in Global Value Chains in Asia*, **Cambridge University Press, Cambridge**. (with Dev Nathan). **2016**.
19. "Economic Cost of Gender-based Violence", a chapter in Ranjan Karmaker (ed.), "Attitudes Towards Women: Gender-based Violence". A book published by Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio & Communication (BNNRC), Dhaka. December 2015. (Bangla publication)
20. "Size-Structure of Manufacturing Industry in Bangladesh and Implications for Growth and Poverty" a chapter in D. Mazumdar and S. Sarker (eds.) *Manufacturing Enterprise in Asia, Size Structure and Economic Growth*, published by **Routledge**. (2012) (with Zaid Bakht and M Yunus).
21. "A Review of Fiscal and Other Macro Incentive in the Manufacturing Sector: Implications for Future Policies", in "*Sixth Five-year Plan of Bangladesh 2011-2015, Background Papers*", vol. 1, by M. K. Mujeri and S. Alam (eds.), published by BIDS and Planning Commission. (2011). (with Zaid Bakht).
22. "Global Trade Liberalization: Implications from Some Alternative Scenarios" in *Global Rice and Agricultural Trade Liberalization poverty and Welfare Implications for South Asia*, by Mohammad A Razzaque and Edwin Laurent (Eds.), **Commonwealth Secretariat, UK and Academic Foundation, New Delhi, India**. (2008) (with M. A. Razzaque and S. Raihan).
23. "Market Imperfections" in *Sustainable poverty reduction in less-favoured areas*, by R. Ruben, J. Pender and A. Kuyvenhoven (eds.), **CABI Publishers: Wallingford, UK**. (2007) (with J. Peerlings and A. van Tilburg).
24. "Consequences of abolition of the Multi-Fibre Arrangement Quotas on the Apparel Industry of Bangladesh – a Computable General Equilibrium Analysis" in *Sustainable poverty reduction in less-favoured areas*, by R. Ruben, J. Pender and A. Kuyvenhoven (eds.), **CABI Publishers: Wallingford, UK**. (2007) (with J. Peerlings).
25. "**Rural Women of Bangladesh: from Home to Market**", in "*Rural Women in South Asia*", by J. Arunachalam and U. Kalpagam (eds.), **Rawat Publication: Jaipur, India**. (2007). (Single Author)
26. The chapter on Bangladesh in K. Andarson and W. Martin (eds) *Distortions to Agricultural Incentives in Asia*, **the World Bank**, 2009, pp. 305–338. (with Z. Bakht, P. A. Dorosh, and Q. Shahabuddin).
27. "Impact of MFA Expiry on Bangladesh", in Saman Kelegama (ed.), "*South Asia After the Quota System: Impact of the MFA Phase Out*", published by **Institute of Policy Studies, Sri Lanka in association with Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, Colombo**. (October 2005). (Single Author).

Research Monograph

28. “Bangladesh Food Market Performance: Instability, Integration and Institutions”, *Research Monograph 23*, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), August 2013. (with K.A.S. Murshid, M. Yunus and S.M.Z. Ali).

Research Report

29. “Trade Diversion Due to European Agreement: Should Bangladesh Care?” *Research Report*, No. 171, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies. (2001). (Single Author)

Working Papers

30. “Improving wages and working conditions in the Bangladeshi garment sector: the role of horizontal and vertical relations”, Working Paper No. 40, *Capturing the Gains*, University of Manchester. (2014). (with Dev Nathan)
31. “Promoting Employment-Intensive Growth in Bangladesh: Policy Analysis of the Manufacturing and Service Sectors”, Working Paper, **ILO, Geneva**, 2009. (with M. Yunus and M. H. R. Bhuyan).
32. “Distortions to Agricultural Incentives in Bangladesh”, *Agricultural Distortions Working Paper 32*, **The World Bank**, Washington, DC. (2007) (with Z. Bakht, P. Dorosh and Q. Shahabuddin).

Contribution to Reports Published by Different Organisations

33. “Transparency Assessment: Examining the transparency journey for the Bangladesh apparel sector”, Report published by the **Laudes Foundation**, 2020. (with Doug Kahn). (Available at <https://www.laudesfoundation.org/media/hfqbywdo/transparency-assessment-examining-the-transparency-journey.pdf>).
34. “Understanding the Gender Composition and Experience of Ready-Made Garment (RMG) Workers in Bangladesh”, Issue Brief, International Labour Organization (**ILO**), 2020. (Team Leader of the research study on which this report is based; with Md. Iqbal Hossain).
35. “Border Haats on Bangladesh – Myanmar Border: Opportunities and Challenges”, Briefing Paper, published as part of ‘India-Bangladesh Border Haats’ project of CUTs International and Unnayan Shammannay. 4/2020. (2020). Single Author.
36. “Women Entrepreneurs in SMEs: Bangladesh Perspective 2017”, Report published by the SME Foundation, Bangladesh, 2019. (with Monzur Hossain, Md. Iqbal Hossain).
37. “Entangled: Localized Effects of Exports on Earnings and Employment in South Asia”. **The World Bank**, Washington. (2018). (developed the case study on Bangladesh for this report, single author).
38. “Service Policy Review: Bangladesh”. UNCTAD, United Nations (2016), UNCTAD/DITC/TNCD/2015/2. (Coordinated the study and the publication as the lead national expert and authored two chapters: (i) Overview of Service Sector in Bangladesh (single author) and (ii) Professional Services (with Mahfuz Kabir)).

39. "Inclusive Market Development in the Agriculture Sector of Bangladesh: Challenges and Opportunities". Lead author of the study and the report, supported by SwissContact Katalyst. 2016. (with Harunur Rashid Bhuyan and Abul Basher). (Available at <http://katalyst.com.bd/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Inclusive-Market-Development-in-the-Agriculture-Sector-of-Bangladesh-Challenges-and-Opportunities.pdf>)
40. "**Cross-Cutting Issues: Governance and Gender**", Policy Paper, Bangladesh Food Security Investment Forum, May 2010. Supported by USAID, DFID, EC. (<https://bangladeshfoodsecurity.files.wordpress.com/2010/05/cross-cutting.pdf>). (with Regina Birner, Agnes R. Quisumbing).
41. "Mid-term Review of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010: A Case Study on Bangladesh", Report, **UNCTAD**, available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/575812?ln=en>. (2006).
42. "Bangladesh Growth and Export Competitiveness" Report of the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Sector Unit, South Asia Region, **The World Bank**. Report no. 31394-BD, May 2005. Available at <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/8569>. (Conducted the value chain analysis of textile, ceramic and shrimp sectors and wrote the case studies included in that report, together with Abdul Bayes and Ferdous Ara Begum).
43. "Economic Empowerment through Entrepreneurship Development among Women: Experience from last 50 Years", *AmCham journal*, Bangladesh Vol. 15, no. 1, January-March 2021
44. "COVID-19 hit Ready Made Garment Sector of Bangladesh and the Bangladesh Economy: Surviving the Odds", *AmCham journal*, Bangladesh, Vol. 14, no. 2, April-June 2020.

Publications in UNDP

45. Contributed to the paper "Disruption, Diversification and Divergence: Adapting Development Strategy to a Shifting Trade Landscape in Asia and the Pacific", UNDP, 2025. <https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/publications/shifting-trade-landscape-in-asiapacific>.
46. Contributed to the paper "Reimagining Industrial Policy for Sustainable Development: A Framework for The 21st Century", Policy Paper, United Nations Economist Network, 2025. (Available at https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2025/02/unen_policy_brief_feb_2025.pdf)
47. "Universal Basic Income in ASIA and the Pacific: A Pragmatic Policy Choice or Unattainable Utopia?" Policy Paper, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP. (Available at <https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/publications/ubi-in-asia-and-the-pacific>).
48. "A Turbulent Future: How Climate Change Impacts Young People in the Pacific", Policy Paper, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP. Available at <https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/publications/turbulent-future-how-climate-change-impacts-young-people-pacific>.

49. “SDG Push through Social Protection Programmes: Reflecting on UNDP’s Strengthening Women’s Ability for Productive New Opportunities Project in Bangladesh”, Policy Paper, The Development Futures Series, UNDP Global Policy Network Brief, April 2024. (Available at <https://www.undp.org/publications/dfs-sdg-push-through-social-protection-programmes-reflecting-undps-strengthening-womens-ability-productive-new-opportunities-project>).
- Several blogs are available on the UNDP corporate and UNDP Bangladesh websites.
 - Google Scholar profile: <https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=W6v9DVMAAAAJ&hl=en>