



Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh

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## Concept Note

After the adoption of The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015, debates and discussions across the world centred around issues related to implementation of the SDGs. With 17 goals and 169 targets and the distinguishing features of SDGs from Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that include being universal, integrated, transformative and inclusive, the agenda was termed as ambitious. In order to achieve these ambitious targets, discussions also focused on taking lessons from MDGs. Two important lessons from MDGs suggested that 'participation of all stakeholders (public representative, government, private sector, civil society, knowledge community and development partners) in the implementation process' and 'follow-up and review of progress' will be critically important for attainment of the SDGs.

Being particularly encouraged by the last two features i.e. transformative and inclusive nature of SDGs and remaining committed to implementation of Agenda 2030, a group of individuals in Bangladesh has taken an initiative to set up a **Citizen's Platform for SDGs** with the objective to contribute to the delivery of the SDGs and enhance accountability in the process.

### I. Rationale and Objectives of the Platform

The proposed initiative will provide an opportunity to do the following in the context of implementation of the SDGs:

- Track implementation of SDGs in Bangladesh
- Sensitise policymakers towards challenges in implementation and allocative efficiency in resource deployment
- Bring more transparency in the implementation process (social accountability)
- Facilitate exchange of information and coordination with all those working on the SDGs

The Platform will also provide an opportunity to all concerned to work for the poor and marginalised (e.g. ethnic groups, physically challenged etc.), particularly for achieving SDG16.

### II. Scope of Work of the Platform

Scope of work of the Platform will include:

- Prioritisation of goals/targets/indicators to be addressed by Bangladesh
- Tracking progress of the SDG delivery in the country
- Provide feedback to the implementing agencies (both government and NGOs)

### III. Programme Modalities of the Platform

The Platform will cover *five* following areas of activities

- (i) Research and analysis: Provide analytical inputs towards prioritisation of the goals/targets.
  - To identify quantitative and qualitative indicators of those goals/targets.
  - To examine how SDGs are aligned in the national context, with 7FYP, sectoral plans and other policies.
  - To analyse the appropriateness and effectiveness of new policies, programmes and reforms put in place by the government in order to address SDG implementation and also to ensure monitoring and accountability.
- (ii) Expert Group Meetings: Organising EGM where research findings will be discussed further for validation.
- (iii) Public Dialogues: Sharing the research findings at Public Dialogues (Townhall meetings) in Dhaka and outside Dhaka in order to build awareness among people and also to bring transparency and strengthen accountability of the process.
- (iv) Policy Consultation: Consultations with the government and lobbying with policymakers for policy influencing.
- (v) Media Engagement: Media may strategically be engaged to scale-up the influence of the initiative.

### IV. Governance of the Platform and partnership building:

- The Platform will have a *Core Group* which will be the lead-body of the initiative consisting initially of six-eight individuals with experience of working in a diverse set of organisations including think tanks; network and grassroot platforms, trade and business bodies and have expertise in dealing with SDG related issues (e.g. production and employment, education, health, human rights, accountability etc.).
- Private sector representatives will be included in order to broaden the Platform's activities and making it more inclusive.
- The *Core Group* will be guided by an *Advisory Group* which will include eminent citizens of the country with track record in public service. Representatives from religious and ethnic minority groups will also be included in this group.
- Partnership with other like-minded organisations will be considered.
- A media partnership team will also be constituted duly.
- The *Core Group* will select a *Convenor* who will steer the activities of the Citizen's Platform for the SDGs. The Core Group will also share responsibilities in terms of carrying out specific activities.
- Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) will be the Secretariat of the Platform.

## **V. Timeframe**

Initially the proposed Platform will plan its activities for five years (2016-2021).

## **VI. Financing the Platform**

Primarily the *Core Group* and the partner organisations will provide financial and organisational support to carry out the activities of the Platform. Funds will be raised from various national and global sources. Discussion is ongoing with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as regards support for a few selected activities the Platform.

## **VII. Some of the initial tasks of the Platform will include:**

- Liaise with relevant people in the government (PM Office, Planning Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance) regarding the idea of the initiative. The Core Group will then meet some relevant policymakers.
- Invite a select group of civil society organisations (CSOs) who can be potential partners in this initiative and organise a meeting to introduce the Platform to them.
- Organise a meeting with the Local Consultative Group (LCG) of the international development partners to inform about the initiative.
- Organise a press briefing to inform broader community about its rationale and activities.

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