



Citizen's Conference on SDGs in Bangladesh 2017

Concept Note

1. Background and the Context

On 25 September 2015, countries adopted a set of goals to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. These 17 Goals build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, while including new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice, among other priorities. The goals are interconnected – often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another.

The SDGs work in the spirit of partnership and pragmatism to make the right choices now to improve life, in a sustainable way, for future generations. The achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals will require all hands on deck. It will require different sectors and actors working together in an integrated manner by pooling financial resources, knowledge and expertise. Successful implementation of SDGs globally and locally requires both state and non-state actors' participation.

As the new Global Agenda sights on the broader perspective of sustainability, it goes much further than the MDGs by addressing the root causes of poverty and the universal need for development that works for all people. In this backdrop, SDGs will need to gather all implementation concerns and channel thinking about “how” the new agenda can hit unequivocally by distinguishing group-based hindrances that need progress in mainstream development. “*Leaving No One Behind*” theme of addressing SDGs, is thus considering segments of the population who lack effective participation in gaining economic benefits and are left unheard.

In addition to this, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), Civil Society, development partners and private organisations involved in implementing the SDGs nationwide require more comprehensiveness and solidarity in order to make it sustainable

Keeping this in mind and also being encouraged by the two features of the 2030 Agenda for SDGs i.e. transformative and inclusive and remaining committed to implementing SDGs, a group of individual in Bangladesh has taken an initiative to set up the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh with the objective to contribute to the delivery of the SDGs and enhance accountability in its implementation process. With a Core Group and 62 Partner Organizations* the Platform is actively working in implementing SDGs throughout the country since 2016.

The Citizen's Platform provides an opportunity to track the progress of SDG delivery; sensitise policymakers towards challenges in implementation; bring transparency in the implementation process; and, facilitate exchange of information and coordination among all those working on the SDGs in Bangladesh. The Platform also facilitates relevant stakeholders to work for the poor and marginalised e.g. ethnic groups, physically challenged etc., particularly for achieving SDG 16.

* At the time of the Conference the number of Partners is expected to reach about 100.



In order to increase collaboration among different stakeholders that will lead to future partnerships in achieving SDGs the Citizen's Platform strongly felt the need to organize a Conference on SDGs. The

Conference titled "Citizen's Conference on SDGs in Bangladesh" aims to enhance the understanding of SDGs at all levels in the spirit of Leave No One Behind (LNOB) through sharing the report on LNOB which is currently being prepared by the Platform Secretariat.

2. Framework of the Conference

The first ever Citizen's Conference on SDGs in Bangladesh will address *three* broad objectives –

1. Create awareness throughout the country regarding SDGs in the spirit of LNOB.
2. Develop more clarity and cohesion among the NGOs in the implementation process in SDGs
3. Explore further opportunities for GO - NGO partnership in Bangladesh.

These *three* objectives will be achieved through launching and discussion of the LNOB Report, discussion on the SDGs and its implementation plan, organising an SDG Fair to increase networking and bonding among the partners and media involvement to reach out to all levels.

The matrix below will provide a clearer view of the proposed framework.

Objective, Methods and Outcome of the Conference

<i>Rationale and Objectives</i>	<i>Methods</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create awareness throughout the country regarding SDGs in the spirit of LNOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing the draft LNOB Report• Discussion on the report.• Discussion on SDGs and its implementation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhance understanding on SDGs at all levels• Establish future partnerships among GO-NGO and also among NGOs in implementing SDGs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop clarity and cohesion among the NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government officials participation in all the activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase awareness about SDGs at all levels
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore opportunities for GO - NGO partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SDG Fair• Pre / Post Media engagement• Reaching out to 2000 people on the day of the Conference	

3. Content Elements

The day-long Conference will be a public event, the unifying theme of which is "Leave No One Behind". A thematic session on LNOB will be followed by group work and plenary sessions on economic, social and environmental issues that are affecting the development process of Bangladesh. In addition to this, there will be an SDG Fair to share and exhibit the SDG related work of the NGOs. The Conference will end with a cultural programme.



3.1 Deliberating on “Leave No One Behind”

A thematic session on LNOB will be organised to deliberate on the importance of LNOB in achieving the SDGs. A draft report titled *Independent Review Report on State of SDGs Implementation: Interpreting “Leave No One Behind” in the context of Bangladesh* in Bangladesh’s context will be shared with the participants for a discussion.

The Report is an independent attempt by the Citizen’s Platform to contribute to the ongoing discourse of interpreting the 2030 Agenda’s pledge to “leave no one behind” in the context of Bangladesh. The report seeks to create knowledge grounded on local and national realities but with relevance to the global debate. The notion of LNOB is conceptualised within the purview of existing literature and stock of knowledge under three streams- identification of concerned groups, assessment of their needs, and the necessary policy and institutional set up to fulfill those needs.

Format of the Thematic Session:

- Presentation of the draft report on LNOB
- Distinguished panelists will be invited to give their observations on the report and also add inputs to further improve the draft.

We are planning to invite key policy makers to be at the head table of this session including the Planning Minister, SDG Coordinators, Head of General Economics Division of the Planning Commission, selected members of the Core and Advisory Groups of the Platform. Apart from Platform members the session will be attended by high level government officials, SDG focal persons in the government, development partners, researchers, representatives from broader civil society and marginalized groups.

3.2 Showcasing Partners’ Activities

An exhibition of SDG related work of NGOs will be organised to showcase Partners’ achievements in the field related to SDGs and also to strengthen the bondage among the Partners

NGOs will be presenting their SDG related reports, pamphlets, CDs, videos etc. in the kiosks and gather better understanding about each other’s work. The exhibition will also be an opportunity for NGOs to exchange their ideas, information and working experiences and thus improve linkages among themselves.

3.3 Exploring SDGs in Bangladesh Context

Group Interaction Sessions will be organised in order to identify and discuss the challenges and developments of different sectors affecting the implementation of SDGs.

These group discussions will be carried out under *three* separate themes such as: a) Economic issues (Businesses, Poverty, Employment and Technology); b) Social issues (e.g. Education, Health, Gender and Youth); and c) Environmental issues (Urbanisation, Climate Change etc.). In all *three* themes participants will explore different issues affecting SDG implementation, provide a new narrative and will come out with alternate suggestions/solutions. Relevant experts will moderate the sessions. Each session will be participated by different NGOs (including Partners), Civil Society representatives, development partners, private organisations, volunteers and other relevant invitees.



Group discussion sessions will be followed by a plenary where rapporteurs report from the three sessions will be presented to discuss the major issues identified under different themes. An interactive discussion among all the groups and panelists will further elaborate those issues.

3.4 Providing Voice to Diversity through Cultural Performance

The Conference will end with a Cultural Programme which will be open for all the Partners, volunteers and guests. This will help increase the bonding among stakeholders further.

4. Pursuing Communication and Outreach of the Conference

One of the major objectives of the Conference is to reach out to all levels – horizontal and vertical. Therefore, the event will be open to media. Communication and outreach activities of the Conference will be undertaken in *three* stages. It will start *two* months prior to the Conference, will be maintained during the Conference and there will be a post-Conference follow up to ensure sustainability of the outcome of the Conference. For maximum outreach both direct and indirect communication materials will be used. These are elaborated below:

Direct Communication – involves two way communications/one on one communication

Indirect Communication – Communication is shared using different tools reaching to the point of contact.

4.1 Before the Conference

This will start 2 months prior to the conference date in order to spread the conference details and reach out at all level

Direct

- Advisory Committee Meeting – An Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the Conference details
- Partners Meeting – Partners meeting to share the Conference idea and receive suggestions
- Communication Focal Meeting – Partner organization's communication focal meeting to share the draft communication plan, invite their suggestions and finalise the plan
- Press Conference

Indirect

- Email – Periodic emails to the partners and other stake holders regarding the conference
- Website information – Website information will be changed as well. A separate page will be published on the Conference and its activities
- Social Media Posts – Use of Platform Partners' social media sites for social media posts. Periodic social media posts are planned to create hype and share information
- Radio Talk Shows - National and local level talk shows will be organised to discuss the SDGs in the spirit of LNOB and also to share information related to the Conference, its objectives and outcomes.
- TV Talk Shows – TV talk shows will be arranged
- Video Documentary –A video documentary will be prepared on LNOB and SDGs and will be shared with the media for wider outreach
- Flyer Distribution in Universities – Platform Flyers will be shared in colleges and universities in order to motivate the youth



- Newspaper - National and local newspapers will share news on the upcoming Citizen's Conference

4.2 During the Conference

One of the major objectives of the conference is to reach at all level. Therefore, the conference is required to be shared live on the day of the conference.

Direct

Each element of the Conference will communicate on the SDGs and reach out to all the participants from different sectors.

Indirect

- Live Streaming – The Conference will be live streamed in order to share the information globally
- Social Media Involvement – Social media posts will be shared during the events and participants will be encouraged to share their views.

4.3 After the Conference

It is important to follow up on the commitments made during the Conference. Platform will take the initiative and follow those up to ensure sustainability.

Direct

- Partners Meeting- Periodic Partner Meeting to follow up on their activities and maintain the bondage

Indirect

- Newsletter – Periodic newsletter from the Platform will publish news on the details of the activities
- Newspaper – Immediately after the Conference articles will be published in different media
- Radio Talk Shows - National and Local

5. Expected Outcomes

Citizen's Conference on SDGs in Bangladesh will be the first ever organised conference on SDGs since the 2030 Agenda has been adopted. The major outcome following this conference is to expand the idea of SDGs and help making implementation smooth both at national and local levels along with achieving long term partnership among different state and non-state stakeholders. Followings are the two expected outcomes of the Conference:

- Enhanced understanding on SDGs at all levels in the spirit of LNOB and identify ways to go forward in implementing the SDGs
- Future partnerships developed among governments, non-government, civil society, private organizations and development partners to work together towards achieving SDGs in Bangladesh
- Increase awareness on SDGs among people at all levels



6. Participants

Citizen's Conference on SDGs in Bangladesh will be a public event. It will be attended by government and non-government officials of different levels, representatives of broader civil society, development partners, private organisations, volunteers and or promoters of SDGs in the society and media. The Conference will particularly encourage participation of the vulnerable groups such as – women, youth, and marginalised groups.

Number of participants expected at –

The thematic session on LNOB – Five Hundred
SDG Fair – Two Thousand
Issue specific group discussion – Three Hundred
Cultural Programme– Five Hundred

Media Presence– Two Hundred

7. Delivery Modalities

The Conference will be organised by the Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh, in consultation with the Core Group Members and under the guidance of and the Advisory Body of the Platform. Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), the Secretariat of the Platform, will be responsible for execution of the planned Conference. Representatives of UN system such as UNDP will be one of the alliances. Last but not the least Partners of the Citizen's Platform will play important role in bringing the Conference to its successful completion.

As the Platform already has an established policy and guideline for volunteers, this Conference will encourage more volunteers to join the Platform.

- Lead Institution – Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh
- Secretariat – Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)
- Partner – 63 Partners (as of today) of Citizen's Platform for SDGs, Bangladesh
- Alliances – UNDP will be the strap on partner of the Conference
- Volunteers – Around 30 volunteers will be involved as part of the organising team.

8. Budget

Necessary cost for the conference will be shared among the platform partners. Secretariat of the Platform. CPD will make an effort to raise funds from external sources as appropriate.

9. Timeline

The Conference is planned to be held in early December 2017.

A tentative timeline for activities has been prepared keeping in view the preparation of the research documents, designing and preparing the communication materials and other required steps to be taken. The tentative timeline is as follows:

A. Conceptualisation, mobilisation and fund raising for the Conference: September and October 2017



- B. Curtain Raising and Meeting with the Partners: October 2017
- C. Preparation of the Conference Contents: October – November 2017
These will include:
 - LNOB Report
 - Interactive Session Guidelines
 - SDG Fair Guidelines
 - Cultural Programme Guidelines
 - Communication and Outreach Plan: October 2017
- D. Pre-event Communication and Outreach activities: October – November 2017
- E. Follow Up: 2018 and onwards

10. Contact

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