

Progress of Bangladesh Towards Sustainable Development Goal

(SDG) 13

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Introduction

Climate change has been an ever-increasing concern for all the nations in the world. All across the globe, approximately 500,000 fatalities occurred on account of the 12,000 climate-induced hazards over the last 20 years. Nation states also experienced damages equivalent to US \$ 3.54 trillion during the same time frame. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13 has been developed with the vision to combat climate change. SDG 13 is centred on five principal targets. First target of SDG 13 revolves around resilience and adaptive capacity concerned with any form of natural hazards especially with respect to climate change. Second target focuses on the national policies, steps and planning to combat climate change. Educative measures, raising awareness and capacity building measures aimed towards climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning is concerned with the third target. Fourth target addresses the key issue of raising funds equivalent to US\$100 billion annually by 2020 as pledged by developed member states of United Nations Framework for Convention on Climate Change. The final target stresses on the key factor to promote mechanisms for building capacity to enhance the climate-change related planning and management of least developed countries and small island states. Final target also puts significant emphasis on local and marginalised communities especially women and youth. All the member states of United Nations agreed on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 with the view to achieve them by 2030. SDGs were created with the vision of peace and prosperity for all. SDGs are vital for achieving sustainability in terms of social growth, economic growth and environmental growth.

Importance of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13

All the nations in the world are facing the adverse impacts of the climate change. Greenhouse gas emission soared more than 50% compared to 1990. On account of global warming, our climate system will be significantly affected. Each year the economic losses resulting from climate related hazards amount to approximately hundreds of billions in terms of dollars. Approximately 91% of the geo-physical disasters occur due to climate related concerns. During the period of 1997-2018, these disasters resulted to 1.3 billion deaths and 4.4 billion injuries. Global warming has soared by approximately 1° degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels in 2017. Since 1880 sea level has experienced a dramatic rise by a huge magnitude of 20 centimetres. Rise in sea-level is expected increase ranging from 30 centimetres to 122

centimetres by 2100. In order to restrict the magnitude of global warming to a maximum of 1.5°C, carbon dioxide emissions must be curbed to 45% between 2010 and 2030 which must reach net zero by 2050. Paris Climate Agreement can reduce the carbon dioxide emissions by one-third which will only limit the rise in global warming below 2° degrees Celsius. Effective climate related actions can create notable economic benefits equivalent to US\$ 26 trillion by 2030. Special emphasis on sustainable energy measures can generate additional 18 million jobs by 2030. Hence, the role of SDG 13 is unparalleled to create a better world for the current and upcoming generations.

Bangladesh and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 13

Bangladesh is a country with a low-lying landscape which is going to be hugely impacted for the climate change. Climate related hazards led to 577 deaths and caused losses in property equivalent to US\$ 1,686 million over the past 20 years. According to Global Climate Risk Index 2020 report, Bangladesh stands at number 7. During the period of 1998-2018, Bangladesh faced 191 climate related hazards. Climate change will create major security challenges for Bangladesh. Food security will be at stake owing to the loss of crops due to flood, storm surge, cyclone, drought, salinity and permanent inundation. Shortage of drinking water is likely to occur due to reduced precipitation, drought, prolonged dry season and contamination of freshwater resources. Frequent natural hazards resulting from climate change will damage livelihoods. Climate change can lead to an alarming rise in the sea level leading to displacement of 5.5 million people. Climate change can affect the most vulnerable groups especially women and children. Future of approximately 19 million children in Bangladesh is at stake for climate change. Stepping up the approaches is a must for Bangladesh in order to mitigate the effects of climate change and respond with swift adaptive actions.

SDG 13 is at the forefront of SDGs in case of Bangladesh. Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies of Bangladesh during the period 2016-2020 has been commendable as they are in accord with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Bangladesh has made a considerable progress in terms of disaster management and the set target of 1,500 deaths per 100,000 people by 2030 is achievable. Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 deals with a long-term plan in order to achieve sustainable growth in terms of economy, society and environment while mitigating the climate change adversities. Government has also integrated the five year plan for 2016-2020 with the SDGs. Government has adopted plans with regard to climate change, environment and disaster risk reduction in order to design projects, allocate budgets and take necessary initiatives. Government has also launched initiatives to create a 500 metre wide green belt for protecting the coastal areas. Bangladesh also initiated a Climate Change Action Plan which is a comprehensive 10 year programme in order to work on capacity building and resilience measures to address the challenges concerned with the issue of climate change.

Bangladesh plays a pioneering role in terms of setting up a Climate Change Trust Fund which is worth US\$ 300 million. National resources played a vital role in the process of accumulating such a critical fund. Government has been vocal about the climate actions. At Munich Security

Conference, Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has expressed deep security concerns regarding the climate change and asked developed countries to address the issue with necessary steps. Her Excellency also stressed on the impacts of climate change at World Economic Forum. At the 25th United Nations Climate Change Conference, our Prime Minister put emphasis on building a necessary framework to deal with climate change. Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was also awarded Champions of the Earth by United Nations Environment Programme for her monumental role in dealing with the climate change.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Bangladesh is one of the fastest growing nations in the world when it comes to economy. Sustainability of the economic growth is crucially dependent on the climate-related initiatives from the public sector and the private sector as one-third of Bangladesh is expected to be inundated by 2050. SDG 13 plays a vital role in shaping the sustainable growth for the country.

Authority can introduce strict regulatory measures to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions although most carbon dioxide emissions are done by the developed countries. Efficacious engagement of the private sector in the role of dealing with climate change is a must for Bangladesh. Public private partnerships can also take collaborative approaches to climate driven initiatives. Bangladesh can ask for reparations to the biggest carbon emitters in the world. Concerted climate driven efforts from all the stakeholders of the society can play a critical role to combat climate change.

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