



UNITED NATIONS  
BANGLADESH  
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# UN Country Team Results Report Bangladesh 2022



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# FOREWORD BY UN RESIDENT COORDINATOR



For Bangladesh, 2022 will be remembered as a challenging year. The overlapping impacts of the war in Ukraine and the persistent effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in increased energy and food prices that have fueled domestic inflation and contributed to the slowdown of development progress in the country. The impact of climate change is an ever-present reality, demonstrated by catastrophic floods, and the country continues to host close to one million Rohingya refugees as the conflict in Myanmar continues for the fifth year.

Despite the challenging environment of 2022, the UN has continued to support the people and the Government of Bangladesh to strengthen institutions, policies and implementation of a wide range of initiatives and services. Efforts to strengthen food security, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, education, child protection, support for survivors of gender-based violence, safe, orderly and regular migration, social protection, and health continue. The UN in Bangladesh worked coherently to mainstream efforts to tackle pressing cross-cutting development challenges, such as helping Bangladesh adapt to the impacts of climate change and pursue gender equality and women's empowerment. In the first year of implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022- 2026, the UN's initiatives in the country touched millions and directly benefited hundreds of thousands of people.

In parallel to advancing support to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UN in Bangladesh also worked to support the government in addressing the impact of climate induced crises in country. In May 2022, the country witnessed severe flash floods in Sylhet and Sunamganj impacting 7.2 million people and leaving millions displaced. Economic damages in the region were estimated at upwards of USD 722 million. To support the immediate emergency response and to assist those worst affected by flash floods, the UN Central Emergency Respond Fund (CERF) allocated USD 5 million to provide lifesaving support to vulnerable communities in the worst-hit districts, with an overall response of USD 20.45 million mobilized by the international community.

For the fifth year, Bangladesh continues to host close to one million Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, and must be commended for generously providing safety to the Rohingya refugees since August 2017. Bangladesh has borne an enormous responsibility both

financially and environmentally for this crisis and sustained efforts are needed to provide essential humanitarian assistance and to work towards voluntary, dignified, safe, and sustainable repatriation of Rohingya refugees to Myanmar. Together with the Government of Bangladesh, the UN and our humanitarian partners have worked to assist the approximately 952,309 Rohingya refugees registered in the country, while continuing to seek a viable durable solution for them. In 2022, the Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis, a prioritised appeal of USD 881 million, received 59% of the requested funding (USD 520.5 million) by the end of the year and succeeded in providing critical humanitarian and basic services. I would like to thank our development partners for their generous contributions and call for their continued support as we enter into what we anticipate will be an even more restrained financial environment in 2023.

The United Nations has successfully worked over many years with the people and the Government of Bangladesh. We look forward to continuing our close partnership and friendship. Renewed efforts are needed to advance and achieve the SDGs by 2030 and to support Bangladesh as it prepares to graduate out of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) category in 2026.

On behalf of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in the People's Republic of Bangladesh, I am pleased to present the 2022 annual UN Country Team Results Report. This report provides an overview of the results achieved by 2022 by the UN in Bangladesh, together with our partners, in supporting the Government of Bangladesh to make progress towards the SDGs. The results the UN in Bangladesh has achieved in 2022 could not have been achieved had the UN not worked in partnership with others. I would like to thank all our partners from civil society, non-governmental organisations, private sector and UN Member States, for their generous contributions and dynamic collaboration. It is my pleasure to acknowledge the UN's numerous partners including civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector, and development partners who made the work of the UN possible.



**Gwyn Lewis**  
Resident Coordinator  
United Nations in Bangladesh

# UN COUNTRY TEAM

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Bangladesh consists of 16 resident agencies and works alongside another 8 non-resident agencies. UN DESA and UN ESCAP also support the Government of Bangladesh and the UNCT on a broad range of programmatic and policy areas. In addition, UNIC is integrated with the Resident Coordinator's Office to provide support on communication.



# KEY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Among the key development partners in 2022 were:

Australia  
Canada  
Denmark  
France  
Germany  
Japan  
Luxembourg  
Netherlands  
Norway  
Qatar  
Republic of Korea  
Saudi Arabia  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
Thailand  
United Arab Emirates  
United Kingdom  
United States of America  
Viet Nam.

Contributions were also received from multilateral organizations including the European Union and the World Bank, private donors, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and the Joint SDG Fund.



Our primary national partners included

Ministry of Agriculture  
Ministry of Cultural Affairs  
Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief  
Ministry of Education  
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change  
Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment  
Ministry of Finance  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Food  
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare  
Ministry of Home Affairs  
Ministry of Industry  
Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs  
Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives  
Ministry of Planning  
Ministry of Primary and Mass Education  
Ministry of Religious Affairs  
Ministry of Social Welfare  
Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

Bangladesh Bank  
Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics  
Bangladesh Investment Development Authority  
Planning Commission  
Public Private Partnership Authority

Bangla Academy  
Bangladesh Folk Art & Crafts Foundation  
Bangladesh National Museum  
Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy

Dhaka University  
The Asia Foundation Bangladesh  
Sesame Workshop Bangladesh  
The National Crafts Council of Bangladesh  
ARTICLE 19  
Bangladesh Community Radio Association  
Bangladesh Betar

UN in Bangladesh worked with a range of workers' organizations, employers' associations, CSOs, stakeholders groups including women's groups, private sector entities, think tanks, and academia among others.





Photo: UNDP Bangladesh

## CHAPTER 1

# KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN BANGLADESH AND THE REGIONAL CONTEXT



The year 2022 was challenging for Bangladesh. The economy was tested by the overlapping impacts of the war in Ukraine, surging global energy and food prices, and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The external shocks—especially the spike in energy and food prices—fueled domestic inflation and weighed on people’s real incomes and economic growth. Buyers from developed countries cancelled orders of readymade garments, growth of remittances by Bangladeshis overseas slowed, and the external balance deteriorated.

For the people of Bangladesh, high inflation remained the biggest concern. After staying below 6% for the past several years, inflation rate increased through the first half of 2022, peaking at 9.5% in August. Fuel prices rose sharply, and gas price surged nearly 200% during the year. The impact on the most vulnerable is a continued cause for concern.

Despite these challenges, the GDP growth rate for 2021-2022 exceeded 7% indicating robust recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Major transport infrastructure projects like the metro rail and the Padma bridge were inaugurated. They will have significant implications for the city of Dhaka and the economy of Bangladesh respectively.

LDC graduation is high among the Government’s priorities. Significant efforts are being made to ensure a smooth transition. However, a key concern is the loss of international support measures including loss of access to concessional terms on loans and tariff and quota-free access to key export markets.

Despite economic growth, there are still challenges in alleviating poverty. Stark inequalities including gender inequality, and high rates of gender-based violence persist. Low tax receipts have constrained public investment in human development, including health, education, and social protection. The current growth model remains resource and pollution intensive, resulting in high levels of air, water and soil pollution.

Bangladesh is highly climate vulnerable, and subject to regular floods and cyclones that result in protracted displacement and loss of livelihoods. With the escalating climate crisis there is a high imperative for climate adaptation for which adequate funding is not available. The year saw flash floods of a magnitude unprecedented in living memory in Sylhet and Sunamganj. This caused some USD 722 million in damages, and affected an estimated 7.2 million people.

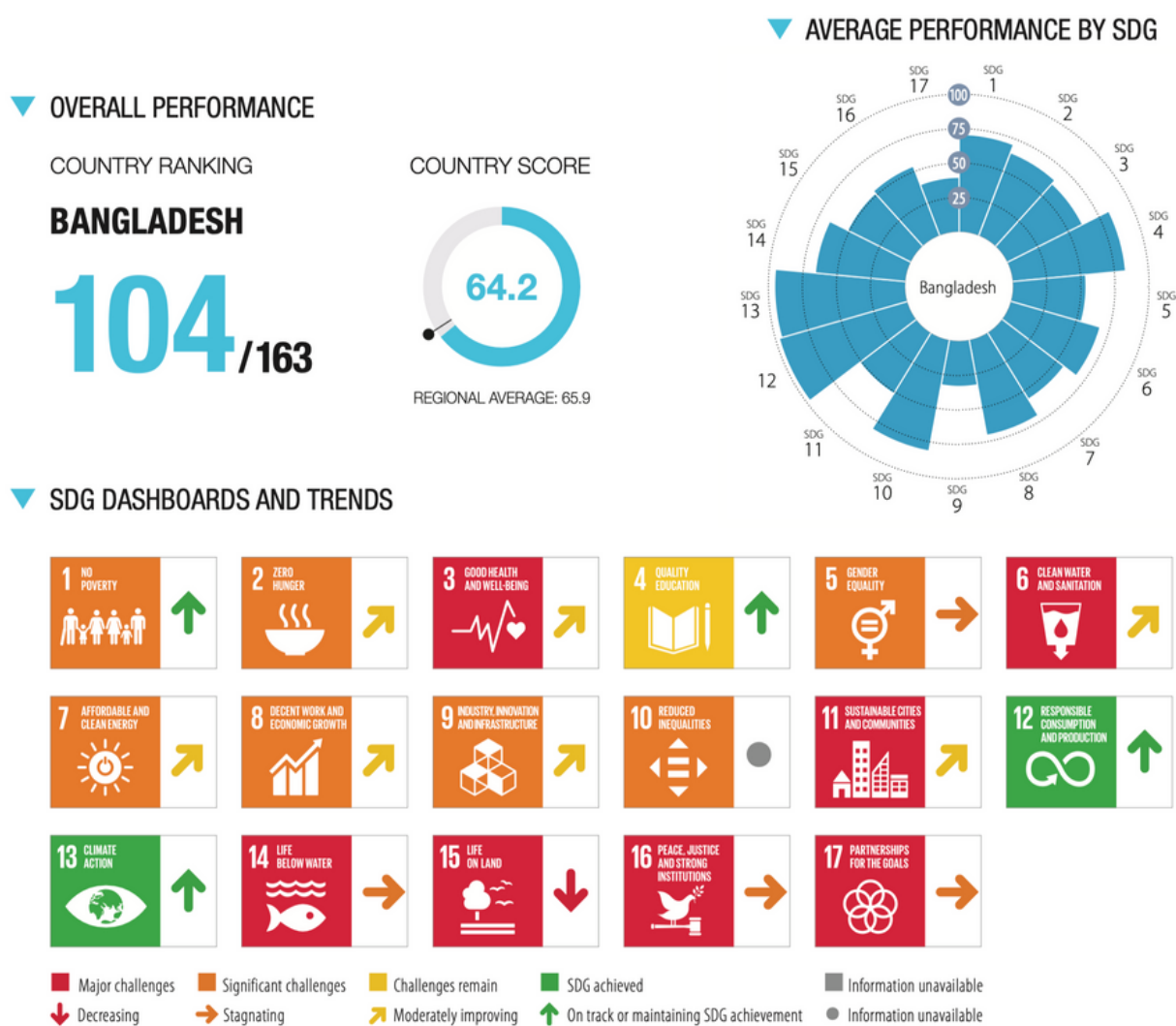


Photo: WHO Bangladesh



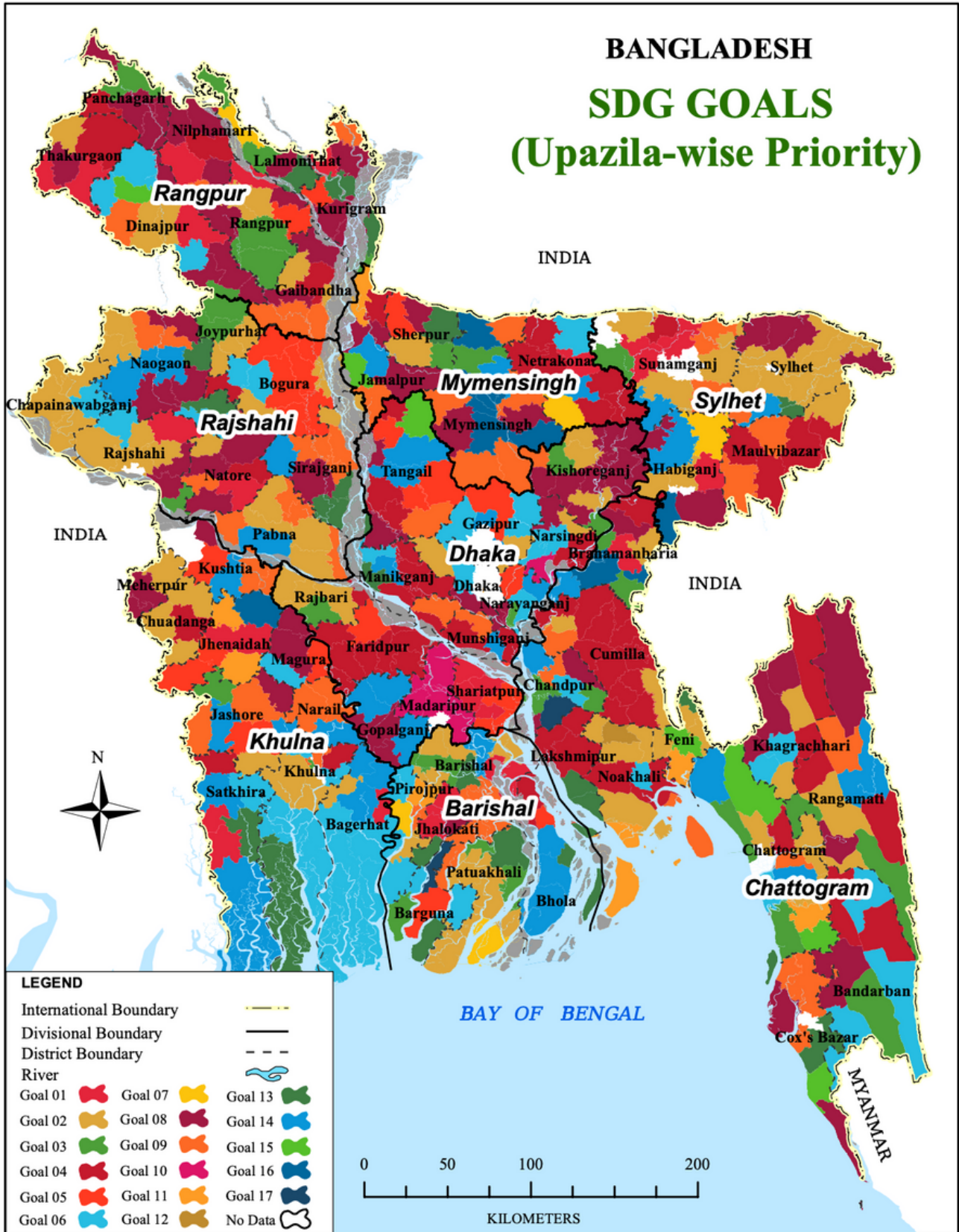
The year marked five years since some 700,000 ethnic Rohingya fled military persecution in Myanmar and into Bangladesh. The exodus into Bangladesh is now considered a protracted crisis. With multiple competing humanitarian crises globally, there were several high level engagements to ensure that the plight of the Rohingya and those hosting them in Bangladesh is not forgotten by the international community. This included a visit to Bangladesh by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees who noted the desire of the Rohingya refugees to return to their homes when conditions permit, and stated that the solutions lie in Myanmar. Despite these efforts, humanitarian funding for the response is on the decline, raising fears of the increased risk that the basic needs of an extremely vulnerable population will not be met. The conditions in Myanmar remain far from conducive for return, with continued violence and allegations of human rights violations since the military coup. During the year the Government of Bangladesh has continued to move refugees to the island of Bhasan Char. Close to 30,000 refugees to have now been relocated (see section 2.2.3 on the Rohingya response).

Figure 1: Bangladesh: Performance on SDGs



Source: [Sustainable Development Report](#)

Figure 2: Bangladesh Sustainable Development Goals (Upazila-wise Priority)



Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics 2022



Photo: ILO Bangladesh

## CHAPTER 2

# UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES THROUGH THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

Against this backdrop, Chapter 2 presents the UN in Bangladesh’s support and contributions to the country in 2022, achieved in close coordination with the Government, civil society, and development partners. The main areas in which the UN has delivered results are outlined along the five strategic priorities of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022-26.

Figure 3: Strategic Priorities of UNSDCF



The chapter also outlines the UN in Bangladesh’s wider humanitarian coordination support, the Rohingya humanitarian response, key partnerships for the 2030 Agenda, and lessons learnt over the course of 2022.

## 2.1. Overview of UNSDCF Results

In the wake of multiple global crises, in 2022 the UN in Bangladesh continued to support a wide range of projects, programmes and policies for Bangladesh's sustainable development. While the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic faded over the course of the year, the war in Ukraine and a major global food and energy crisis complicated Bangladesh's development prospects and access to financing for sustainable development. Despite this challenging global environment, the UN celebrated major achievements which will pave the way for a recovery and progress towards the SDGs.

The UN provided technical assistance to the Government for policy-development and institution-building, programmatic support to stakeholder groups, and engaged in advocacy. UN Bangladesh supported actions including:

- Formulation of the Bangladesh National Qualifications Framework
- Finalization and submission to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) of the National Adaptation Plan
- Launch of monitoring and evaluation framework for National Plan of Action to End Child Marriage 2018-2030
- Integration of commitments made during the Food System Summit, and Nutrition for Growth Summit in 2021 into Government policy
- Support for the formulation of the National Social Security Strategy Action Plan.
- Finalization of the monitoring and evaluation framework for the National Action Plan on Violence against Women (2018-2030)
- Formulation of National Guideline for the Prevention of Son Preference and the Risk of Gender Biased Sex Selection



In addition, the UN's direct support benefited hundreds of thousands of people in Bangladesh.



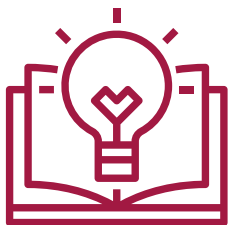
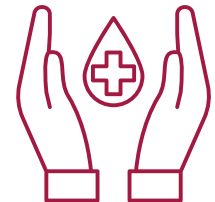
More than **500,000 rural farmers and microenterprises** received training and financial services across multiple value chains

Some **3.1 million people** can access public services online



Over **1.9 million people** in urban low-income settlements accessed socioeconomic services, and around **11 million people** benefitted from increased financial inclusion

Despite the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh maintained **zero polio cases** since 2006, **Rubella elimination** status since 2018, **maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination** status since 2008



**86,450 of the most deprived school-age children** attended learning centres that help them catch-up with learning losses during the pandemic

Some **3 million pre-primary and primary school children** benefitted from school feeding programmes





During the cyclonic storm Sitrang, some **47,000 people (73% women)** took shelter in 70 cyclone shelters constructed with UN support

The UN supported the removal and shipment overseas of **520 metric tons of the banned pesticide** Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane (DDT)



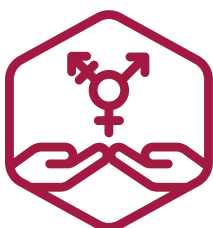
Over **65,000 people** built resilient livelihoods under various initiatives of the UN

Over **21 million people** gained access to village courts



Over **12 million people** were reached through a youth-led campaign for safety in public places

Strengthened protection systems, stopped more than **2,000 child marriages**. Over **570,000 people (59% women)** engaged in efforts on child marriage prevention



Over **500,000 survivors of gender-based violence** accessed multi-sectoral services and support



## 2.2. Results Across Development and Humanitarian Programming

### 2.2.1 UNSDCF priorities, outcomes and outputs

#### Strategic Priority 1

#### Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Development

To foster inclusive and sustainable economic development, UN agencies in Bangladesh have supported a wide range of policies, projects, and initiatives.

In 2022, the cabinet approved the National Skills Development Policy 2021 and the action plan that accompanies it, both developed with technical assistance from the UN. The Ministry of Education approved the Bangladesh National Qualifications Framework also developed with support from the UN.



Photo: IFAD Bangladesh

Furthermore, ILO invested in the development of various e-learning modalities. Through the National Skills Development Authority, the UN conducted a capacity needs assessment and skills gap analysis of the readymade garment and textile sectors in order to understand the extent of, and eventually help address the shortage of skilled labour in this sector by informing future skills building programmes.

*Technical and vocational education and training has been a priority area of UN support, with targeted training of women, persons with disabilities and returnee migrants resulting in better employability and job offers.*



Photo: UN Women Bangladesh

A key pillar of Bangladesh's development success to date has been women's inclusion in sustainable development with women at the centre of economic development. The UN in Bangladesh in 2022, continued to concretely support gender equality and women's empowerment. UN Women, in collaboration with ILO, carried out a review of existing laws, policies, and practices with a gender lens to inform Bangladesh's forthcoming action plan on women's economic empowerment that is being formulated by the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. More than a dozen cottage, micro, small and medium enterprises that received technical capacity development support on establishing a conducive workplace and market using women's economic empowerment principles from UN Women have committed to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment at their workplace or marketplace by becoming signatories of the Women's Empowerment Principles by UN Women and UN Global Compact.

UNEP, through the EmPower Project, set up financing mechanisms for and installation of renewable energy systems to support women entrepreneurship for climate resilient livelihoods. More than 550 women reported that their livelihoods improved because of the use of renewable energy.

UN agencies supported Bangladesh's young workforce in capturing the opportunities in innovative technologies and the greening of the economy. ILO conducted a study on green jobs in selected economic sectors (electric vehicles and agro-processing) and mapped out interventions to support aspiring youth employees and entrepreneurs to transition towards a greener Bangladesh. As part of the Generation Unlimited Programme, ILO and UNICEF, JAAGO Foundation, Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) Foundation, and Technovation implemented the GenU ImaGen Ventures Youth Social Innovation for Climate Action in Dhaka, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barishal and Chittagong. Over 300 young people between 15-24 were trained on problem identification and analysis, problem solving, critical thinking, design thinking, team work, prototype development and idea pitching.

The young participants presented innovative solutions to local climate change challenges. In 2023, GenU will provide support to the participants through mentoring, investments and business incubation.

The agriculture, forestry and fishing sector accounts for over 11% of Bangladesh's GDP and over 35% of the country's employment. During the year, the UN continued to support important interventions in the sector. The UN supported a major livestock sector assessment, which highlighted challenges that limit growth and hinder progress towards the SDGs.

*FAO organized and mobilized more than 5000 livestock producer groups to engage in Climate-smart Livestock Farmers Field Schools to boost productivity and optimize collective bargaining.*

In addition, FAO supported the Department of Fisheries in the adoption of a cloud-based information system (Calipseo) on coastal and marine fisheries as a potential tool for fishing vessel registration and licensing to allow for better oversight and management. Another area of collaboration has been the support of digital transformation, where FAO, with Sara Bangla Krishak Society (SBKS), a national network of farmers' organizations, spearheaded the rollout of 55 virtual call centres and 60 "digital villages" that enabled farmers to learn and stay connected during the pandemic. To empower rural entrepreneurs, the UN trained SBKS members to use RuralInvest, an investment planning software, and MBWin, an accounting software. The UN continued to support the Government's implementation of the Smallholder Agricultural Competitiveness Project. Interventions focused on providing training of trainers on high value crops production and technology adoption, processing and marketing, business plan development as well as climate-resilient surface water management. In Dhaka Division, the UN supported the improvement of food safety practices to markets vendors, including butchers, and management committees in over 80 markets.

IFAD supported more than 500,000 rural farmers and microenterprises with training and financial services across multiple value chains. To generate alternate and enhance livelihood options, IFAD and the Government co-financed a project that provided vocational and [household methodology](#) trainings to 15,000 people in the north-western part of Bangladesh.



The UN continued to partner with the Government to digitize public service delivery leveraging the Government's signature initiative titled 'Digital Bangladesh'.

*Some 3.1 million people are now able to access public services like certificates, licenses, stipends for students, and other safety net payments online because of this collaboration.*

In a separate initiative, UNDP helped vulnerable women entrepreneurs to conduct their businesses online. The intervention boosted sales made by women entrepreneurs by 30%. UNDP enabled more than 43,000 people to find full-time jobs through nationwide job fairs organized on the National Intelligence for Skills Education Employment and Entrepreneurship platform, training sessions on climate adaptive livelihoods for women, and establishment of rainwater harvesting systems and solar irrigation systems which also created job opportunities. More than 1.9 million people in urban low-income settlements accessed socioeconomic services, and close to 11 million people benefitted from increased financial inclusion as a result of UN support.

The integrated national financing framework for SDGs joint programme came to an end in December 2022. Implemented by UNDP, UNCDF, ILO, and UN Women with coordination support from the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, the joint programme was able to update the development finance assessment, recalculate SDG investment requirements, develop financing roadmaps for SDGs 6, 7, and 13, beta test an investment matchmaking platform, and created a pipeline of bankable projects for SDG-aligned investment. The project was also able to reach agreement on the Government led oversight mechanism to move the financing forward. A set of next steps and possible work streams have also been identified by the project team, which are fully aligned with the UNSDCF and can be taken up by different UN agencies for facilitating finance for SDGs.



## Strategic Priority 2

### Equitable Human Development and Well Being

During 2022, the UN supported the Government in strengthening institutions, policies and processes for delivering a wide range of services to the people of Bangladesh. These included food security, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, health, education, child protection, gender-based violence, migration, and social protection.



Photo: IFAD Bangladesh



#### Food Security

In 2022, FAO and partners facilitated the follow-up workshop on the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 and supported convening inter-ministerial and donor meetings, to develop the monitoring framework for Bangladesh's climate change commitments. FAO and WFP, together with UNICEF and IFAD, started a project funded by the UN Joint SDG Fund to strengthen food security systems in the country. The project seeks to enhance the efficiency of the Government's food support distribution system and reach the last mile.



#### Nutrition

In 2022, commitments made during the Food System Summit, and Nutrition for Growth Summit in 2021 were taken forward into various Government policy initiatives. Impact indicators such as the reduction of stunting, wasting, low birthweight and anemia are broadly supported as outcome indicators for the Government of Bangladesh's Fifth

Health Population Nutrition Sector Programme. Simultaneously, the creation of 64 district-level nutritionist positions is underway to support sub-national planning, monitoring, reporting, and strengthening of nutrition service delivery. Nutrition has thereby been integrated into the new National Social Security Strategy to enable coverage of nutrition sensitive social protection schemes for the most vulnerable. In addition, financial tracking of government expenditure on nutrition is underway in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, and the Ministry of Finance. Food and nutrition security was also strengthened through the UN's support to the school feeding programme (see section on Education).



Photo: UNICEF Bangladesh



### Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene



With the reopening of schools in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN supported the Government in developing the school reopening guidelines, that also covered ensuring the functionality of water sources and cleanliness. More broadly, with the UN's support, the Government launched the hand hygiene for all road map along with a costed implementation plan.



Photo: UNICEF Bangladesh



## Health



In 2022, WHO and UNICEF continued working closely with the Government of Bangladesh to meet the health-related SDGs, by strengthening the health sector of the country and improving the health status of the population.

### *Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic have informed response capacities for other respiratory pathogens.*

These lessons are also being leveraged to strengthen health systems resilience to ensure continuity of essential health services during health emergencies and to sustain progress towards Universal Health Coverage in Bangladesh.

UNICEF worked with the Government to accelerate Universal Health Coverage by strengthening Primary Health Care services at national and local levels, and supported the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in the development of the 5th Health, Population, and Nutrition Sector Program. UNICEF also promoted a systems approach to the quality of care through technical assistance and high-level advocacy.



Photo: WHO Bangladesh

The UN's support has contributed to these outcomes. For example, key progress was made in the areas of control and elimination of communicable diseases, vaccine preventable diseases, promotion of healthy lifestyles and mental well-being, and strengthening the systems for health emergencies preparedness and response, including in disease outbreaks. As a result, despite the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladesh has maintained zero polio cases since 2006, Rubella elimination status since 2018, maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination status since 2008 and hepatitis control goal since 2019.

Routine vaccination coverage is over 90%, maintaining pre-COVID levels. Bangladesh also achieved 70% of COVID-19 vaccination target by mid-2022, and introduced the pediatric COVID vaccination. The Government conducted six rounds of a mega campaign to vaccinate millions, with support from the UN and other partners. Oxygen generation plants were procured for 29 hospitals and specialized laboratories were upgraded to strengthen vaccine testing.



## Education



In 2022, UN's strategic interventions in education sector focused on the adverse impact of the COVID-19-induced school closures on children's learning, systemic reforms aimed at transforming education, and enhancing the conditions to plan, implement and manage evidence-based education programmes.



Photo: UNICEF Bangladesh

The UN, through UNICEF, provided comprehensive, tailored assistance to support children's learning recovery, health and psychosocial wellbeing needs in the post-COVID-19 context. The UN also resumed support of the National Students Assessments at primary education level after a five-year gap. Some 86,450 of the most deprived school-age children are benefiting from UNICEF-supported learning centres that help them catch-up with learning loss.

The UN in Bangladesh supported the Government in organizing national and international consultations related to the Transforming Education Summit (TES) and articulating the National Statement of Commitment with an emphasis on COVID-19 learning recovery, the building of highly skilled and well recognized teaching workforce with adequate funding, digital transformation and blended learning. With the collaboration and support of the UN, Bangladesh spearheaded efforts on TES at the regional and global levels.

UNICEF supported the development of some 9,000 digital learning materials (video lessons for television, online media, radio lessons as well as printed learning materials),







Photo: UNICEF Bangladesh

*The UN's technical support has resulted in development of a competency-based and gender-transformative secondary curriculum, which will benefit **12 million pupils** when it is rolled out this year.*

Meanwhile, UNESCO provided key support to strengthen the capacity of key policy makers, planners and managers at the national and subnational levels in implementing, monitoring and reporting on SDG 4. Furthermore, some 280 (80% female) teachers of 15 general secondary schools received training on the concept of Global Citizenship Education and Education for Sustainable Development and developed school level action plans that focus on empathy, solidarity, and respect to diversity as well as greening school environment, among others.

WFP provided technical support to the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and the Directorate of Primary Education to implement the School Feeding Programme. The support directly benefited some 3 million pre-primary and primary children. WFP also provided fortified rice, lentils and vegetable oil to some 60,000 school children in Ukhiya, Kutubdia and Teknaf in Cox's Bazaar district.

WFP trained teachers, school management committee members, parents, and students on nutrition, health and WASH. Vegetable gardens were set up in 37 schools and WFP and its partners demonstrated how to prepare healthy and nutritious meals using locally produced vegetables. Together with its partners, the UN developed online training courses for the Teachers Capacity Development on Literacy Programme. Over 800 schoolteachers in Ukhiya and Kutubdia completed the online training courses. In these two upazilas, WFP also provided high-quality education and reading materials to the school children to develop the reading habit of primary schoolchildren.





Photo: IOM Bangladesh

## Migration



Given Bangladesh's high external migration and significant levels of climate-related internal migration, issues affecting migrants are a major focus of the UN's work in Bangladesh. UN Women, along with ILO and IOM, supported the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment in developing a gender-responsive national reintegration draft policy for migrants, with a focus on the needs of women migrant workers. To equip women migrant domestic workers with a reference tool to hold stakeholders accountable, UN Women, as part of the "Governance of Labour Migration in South and South-East Asia" (GOALS) project, translated the "Gender-Responsive Guidance on Employment Contracts" into Bangla.



## Social Protection



The Government's National Social Security Strategy aims to streamline the social security system and reduce poverty, inequality and marginalization. The UN has long supported this process and, in 2022, UNDP facilitated an orientation for relevant stakeholders, reviewed the elements of the social protection system, and supported work on the development of a monitoring and evaluation dashboard. The dashboard will capture gender-sensitive social protection data, and the universal social insurance

situation, with a focus on unemployment, maternity, and injury-related disability issues. The UN also conducted a study of the National Social Insurance Scheme (NSIS) Framework to gauge the preconditions, legal framework, and institutional capacities to replace current disparate social protection programmes with the NSIS.

The UN assisted the Government in the implementation of the National Social Security Strategy, with 39 line ministries developing action plans for the next the five years. The action plans are part of a fundamental reform of the social security system. The key features of the reformed Strategy will be superior coverage, a single registry-based Management Information System, the use of a grievance redressal system, online-based cash government to persons transfers, and improved monitoring and evaluation. The UN supported the Government in improving fire, electrical and structural safety in factories in the readymade garment sector. The project also provided technical support for effective implementation and monitoring of the remediation works.



International  
Labour  
Organization



World Food  
Programme



Photo: WFP Bangladesh



## Strategic Priority 3

### Sustainable, Healthy and Resilient Environment

#### Preparing the most vulnerable to adapt and respond to climate change, shocks, and disasters

Bangladesh is among the most climate-vulnerable countries in the world. The UN, in 2022, continued to provide policy and programmatic support to the Government and people affected by disasters and build resilience through preventative and adaptive measures. UN agencies mounted a response to major flash floods in June in the north-eastern Haor region, which left millions of people homeless and without food (see section 2.2.2 on flood response). The UN's work on disaster risk reduction spanned the humanitarian-development nexus leveraging work on disaster preparedness and prevention, and resilience building.

The IFAD-supported Flash Flood Early Warning System has proven effective. Nearly two years after its launch, it now reaches some 30,000 households. Meanwhile, the UN, through WFP, supported 130,000 households affected by the annual floods in the Jamuna-Brahmaputra basin and tested two climate risk insurance products designed to protect households from flood risks and extreme weather fluctuations.



Photo: IFAD Bangladesh

In 2022, the IFAD-co-funded Char Settlement and Development Project established more cyclone shelters in coastal chars. During the cyclonic storm Sitrang, which hit in October, some 47,000 people (73% of them women) took shelter in 70 cyclone shelters—around half of them were constructed in the ongoing phase. The UN developed an early warning system for landslides, which gives people five days advance notice (FAO). A prototype was uploaded to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department website for Cox’s Bazaar, in southern Bangladesh, an area that is especially prone to landslides during the monsoon season.

Another key area of UN support in 2022 was climate resilience. This included training more than 3,200 fisherfolk on climate resilient aquaculture and fisheries management, dissemination of environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient technologies and practices to 1,225 households. Under the project for Climate Resilient Housing for Coastal Communities, UNEP worked with BRAC and the Government to identify sites for climate resilient houses in Assasuni in Satkhira, and Maheshkhali in Cox’s Bazaar. UNDP provided financial support to 35,000 people (mostly women) who are implementing Climate Adaptive Livelihoods; around three quarters of beneficiaries reported positive economic benefits. The training and support will help ensure that vulnerable households are better protected against future shocks and disasters.

The UN, working in collaboration with the Global Center for Adaptation, the Center for Environmental and Geographic Information Services and University of Oxford, assessed the potential impacts of climate change on Bangladesh’s infrastructure systems, including transportation, power, communications, and health, to develop strategies and interventions to mitigate the identified impacts. Further, to improve the resilience of infrastructure, an Asset Management System, improved design standards for rural roads, a gender marker for infrastructure projects, capacity building and institutional development were also implemented.

### **Strengthening institutions and systems to manage dynamic risks with more foresight, innovation, and evidence**

An important part of UN Bangladesh’s work in 2022 centered on the strengthening of institutions and managing risks through evidence-based policymaking. A key area of support was the formulation of Bangladesh’s National Adaptation Plan (NAP) (2023-2050) which was launched by the Government at COP27. This was the culmination of over a year of consultative and technical work. The NAP considered 8 vulnerable sectors and 11 climate stress areas in devising 113 adaptation interventions based on adaptation pathways and sectoral adaptation requirements. These interventions, aligned with the SDGs and 52 climate adaptation projects of the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100, require a total investment of US \$230 billion for 27 years (2023-2050).

Several UN agencies came together to support the Government in its participation at COP27. FAO and IOM, together with the Government, the Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research of BRAC University, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) and other partners organized a side event on promoting private sector investment (including diaspora remittances) in climate adaptation and mitigation with a focus on the agriculture, forestry and other land use. Building on the Green Climate Fund Private Investments for climate conference held in September 2022 the side event explored innovative ways of mobilising finance at scale for climate action in developing countries. At another side event, UNCDF and UNDP's Local Government Initiative on Climate Change Project was discussed showcasing the UN's support to local governments on financing climate adaptive infrastructure. IOM, together with the Climate Vulnerable Forum and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh, hosted a side event on climate-related migration.

*Bangladesh was among the five countries that received the Local Adaptation Champions Awards at COP27. The award was given to the Rangamati Hill District Council initiative across five villages where the residents were combatting worsening droughts, landslides, and flash floods. With support from UNDP's project titled Strengthening Inclusive Development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, and Danida, the community set up solar power-based safe water supply facilities and the provision of safe drinking water during crises*

UNEP supported the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Development Authority, a government agency, in developing the Bangladesh National Action Plan on Women's Entrepreneurship for Renewable Energy—an innovative scheme that fosters investment in women-led energy enterprises. The support of FAO contributed to building stronger institutions in the fishery and livestock sectors, with climate resilient approaches becoming more integrated at the national and grassroots levels. FAO trained more 100 government officials and over 1,000 people from community-based organizations in these areas.

Managing dynamic risks to food, water and human settlements remained at the forefront of efforts by UN agencies in Bangladesh. IFAD implemented an initiative by the Foresight4Food network that aims to enable evidence-based foresight and scenario analyses as a basis for improved food system policies and strategies. The UN, through IFAD, also finalized a hydro-morphological study—a major achievement in sustainable climate-resilient infrastructure design and planning. It provides the basis for strategic planning for land development, settlement, and water infrastructure in the Meghna estuary.



Photo: UNDP Bangladesh

Climate change and climate migration are already being acutely felt in Bangladesh and the UN remained committed to supporting the Government's climate actions. FAO strengthened systems capacity to access climate finance. Several national dialogues and the COP27 side event mentioned above were organized to identify barriers in private sector engagement in climate action. One of the most important findings was a lack of awareness among private sector actors about opportunities for accessing climate finance and of feasible business cases to attract them. In addition, support was provided to the Economic Relations Division to update the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Country Programme, as well as introduce measures that make the process to access GCF resources more transparent and inclusive. To help the country meet its Paris Agreement commitments, more than 150 stakeholders from the Government, universities, and NGOs were trained on Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of greenhouse gas emissions, climate finance flows, and climate actions. A roadmap was co-developed with the Department of Environment outlining steps towards preparing the country to submit its Biennial Transparency Report in 2024. In coordination with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, IOM started work on an online capacity building package on climate migration.



### Supporting green development strategies that better manage natural resources, ecosystems, and pollution

The UN in Bangladesh in 2022 supported actions to strengthen green development vital to ensuring peoples' health and healthier ecosystems.

Under the Nationally Determined Contribution climate action plan, UNEP developed a partnership with the Bangladesh Economic Zone Authority (BEZA) to explore the use of renewable energy in industrial zones. BEZA is developing 97 industrial zones. The use of green energy in the country's foremost manufacturing industries will have a powerful demonstration effect for other sectors.

To pave the way for a cleaner environment, FAO successfully supported the removal and shipment overseas for incineration of **520 metric tons of the banned pesticide DDT**, which had been stored in the port city of Chittagong for nearly four decades. DDT is a persistent organic pollutant that is extremely harmful to humans and the environment. The hazardous site was cleaned and decontaminated to ensure the safety of people living near the site. In the area of environmental protection, the UN worked with the Government to ensure that accreted land is protected by mangroves. In 2022, three kilometres of embankment was reinforced with roadside plantations. In the south of the country, UNDP contributed to systematically reducing the environmental and health hazards of the solid waste generated in the Rohingya refugee camps and host communities in Teknaf and Ukhia upazila. The new waste collection, transportation, and disposal services in more than dozen markets had direct positive impact on the lives of some **29,000 people**.

To improve waste management, in 2022 UNIDO conducted a survey of biomedical wastes management in healthcare centres in the district of Sirajganj. The survey identified key challenges, such as the improper segregation of medical waste, as well as a lack of rules, investment for cleantech and sustainable biomedical waste management, among others. The study resulted in concrete steps by the district management committee to address some of the limitations. In a separate initiative, to fulfil the Government's commitment to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the UN supported the drafting and approval of roles and responsibilities at seven power sector entities on environmentally sound management of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB). The intervention will help reduce the serious health risks of highly carcinogenic PCBs, including risks to fetuses, babies, and children.

UNIDO also worked with the leather industry to create greater awareness through trainings covering material and chemical testing, among others. The work will help reduce factory accidents and clean up production processes in one of country's fastest growing and most polluting industries. The UN also engaged with the Bangladesh Plastic Goods Manufacturers and Exporters Association to make the plastic industries more efficient and less polluting.





## Strategic Priority 4

### Transformative, Participatory and Inclusive Governance

In 2022, UN agencies in Bangladesh continued to provide support in the area of governance. More than 21 million people experiencing poverty can now access village courts, as a consequence of UNDP's support of the Government's steps to make justice fairer and more accessible at the grassroots level. The UN has also been working with the selected Upazila Parishads and Union Parishads to strengthen efficient and accountable local governance. People's satisfaction with the local government services were found to be much higher in project areas than in control areas. With UNDP support, the counter-terrorism police and Bangladesh Islamic Foundation promoted counter-narratives to extremist interpretations of religion through a book project involving leading Islamic scholars and bolstered social cohesion through a project focused on reducing social media-instigated communal violence.

Strengthening women's voice, participation, and effective influence in society remained at the forefront of the UN support in Bangladesh. Over 12 million people in ten districts were reached through a youth-led campaign to ensure women's safety in public places. The implementation of the country's first-ever National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security (2019 – 2022), supported by UN Women, was extended until 2025. **Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina reiterated its importance for building a peaceful and cohesive society.**



Photo: UNDP Bangladesh

Efforts to bring about change of poor working conditions and protect children’s rights continued to bear fruit in 2022. Following UN technical support, the Government in March 2022 ratified the International Labour Organisation’s Minimum Age Convention – a vital step that mandates state parties to introduce domestic policies that specify a minimum age of work. ILO also supported a child labour survey carried out by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. To support the role of trade unions, the Government, with the support of ILO, launched a publicly accessible database on trade union registrations.

Support for drug and crime prevention and enhancing justice remained a priority for UN support in Bangladesh. UNODC, in 2022, jointly with the Public Security Division, under the Ministry of Home Affairs, published the “First Bangladesh National Study on Trafficking in Persons”. UNODC also supported the Government in developing standard operating procedures on investigating trafficking in persons cases. The work will help provide greater protections for victims of trafficking and vulnerable migrants, including children. The UN also supported Bangladesh’s engagement in the South Asian Network on Preventing Violent Extremism and assisted Bangladesh Police to strengthen community policing mechanisms to counter violent extremism and terrorism, and worked with the Government to counter the challenge of synthetic drugs.

Alongside policy formulation, better implementation of existing policies was an area of support by the UN to the Government. During 2022, UNICEF provided technical support to the Government to streamline the Rules of the Children Act 2013. Hundreds of police officers and judicial officers across Bangladesh were trained on applying the provisions of the legislation. As a direct consequence, some 4,454 children were released on bail and other non-custodial measures through police stations, children’s courts and child development centres and safe homes. In 2022, the diversion rate (alternatives to detention measures for children) at police stations increased from under 10% to around 23%.

As part of efforts to support sustainable, equitable and resilient food systems, FAO, for the fourth year running, strengthened urban food systems in the four City Corporations of the Dhaka Division by bringing together public officials, professional associations, CSOs, town federations, and NGOs to analyse food system challenges, identify and priorities actions at city level and develop joint plans and policy recommendations. The work is key to reducing food consumption emissions and making the food system of Dhaka—one of the world’s fastest growing cities – more resilient.



## Strategic Priority 5

### Gender Equality and Eliminating Gender-Based Violence

Achieving gender equality remains challenging, however, noticeable steps were taken to address the institutional, social, economic, and political barriers that prevent women and girls from exercising their human rights. In collaboration with the Government, public and private sector partners, the UN continued to support the implementation of the gender equality commitments, guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's principle of Leaving No One Behind, and ratified international conventions.



#### Strengthened laws, policies, and plans

To strengthen legislative adherence with international conventions ratified on human rights and gender equality, the UN supported the Government and civil society advocates to strengthen legal protections to prevent violence against women and girls by reviewing and amending laws. Via the Rape Law Reform Coalition, the UN supported CSO's advocacy to reform the discriminatory legal framework on gender-based violence in Bangladesh.

Following these combined efforts, the Evidence (Amendment) Act 2022 now stipulates that a survivor's character or sexual history can no longer be questioned during cross-examination. Provision helps safeguard survivors from re-victimization, traumatization, and discrimination when pursuing legal recourse.

In support of the implementation of national gender equality commitments, the UN continued to provide technical assistance to the government to develop and implement National Action Plans. This includes the monitoring and evaluation framework for the national action plan on Violence against Women (2018-2030) and the action plan to End Child Marriage, using a collaborative and consultative approach. In addition, with the support of UNFPA, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare developed a National Guideline for the Prevention of Son Preference and the Risk of Gender Biased Sex Selection (GBSS), to guide service providers and relevant stakeholders. The Parliamentary Standing Committee of the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, with the support from the UN, also submitted recommendations to the ministry for the amendments of the Domestic Violence Rules to criminalize domestic violence.



## Data, knowledge, and awareness

Several key evidence pieces were generated in 2022 to shed light on challenges and solutions to gender equality in Bangladesh. The UN supported the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics to publish the first Time Use Survey. The TUS is critical in translating the Government's five-year plan commitments into action as it brings visibility to the burden of women's unpaid work and an analysis to inform the design and adoption of necessary laws, policies, programme to promote women's empowerment within the households, workplace, and society. Furthermore, the UN conducted a study on childcare centers in workplaces in Bangladesh to draw recommendations for factories and establishments in Bangladesh. The UN-led advocacy dialogues with the Government to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and careers for adolescent girls and young women.



Photo: UNDP Bangladesh

## Capacity strengthening

The UN supported the capacity and accountability of institutions across sectors, at national and local levels, to address barriers to gender equality. Strengthened protection systems, in locations with high prevalence of child marriage, stopped more than 2,000 child marriages and reached more than 570,000 (59% female) persons with awareness

raising on child marriage prevention. Five education institutions and the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Bogura, Cumilla and Potuakhali adopted a Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment Policy. With the support of UN Women, these institutions have strengthened capacity to prevent sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence on campus and in workplaces. In collaboration with government entities, institutions, and networks, the UN also developed and conducted tailored capacity strengthening initiatives on survivor-centered service provision with the police, midwives, community-based health workers, and other health care professionals. Furthermore, the UN improved the capacity of over 1,100 practitioners by developing a training module on the UN rules for treatment of women prisoners and non-custodial measures to institutionalize non-custodial measures in the prison system.



Photo: UNFPA Bangladesh

### Gender-based violence (GBV) response

Throughout 2022, with the assistance of the UN, more than 500,000 survivors accessed multi-sectoral services and support. Survivors, including in climate affected and vulnerable areas, received protection, family, and reintegration kits to meet physical and protection needs and provide life-saving information about multi-sectoral GBV response services. In collaboration with the Government and relevant CSOs, the UN supported the establishment and maintenance of crisis centers, safe spaces, shelters, and hotlines, to improve survivors' access to support, services, and information. More than 13,000 survivors were rescued from extreme forms of violence, abuse and exploitation supported by government frontline workers. The UN also supported programs that help

women and girls access economic opportunities. As a result, many more women and girls are now able to access good-paying jobs and to support themselves and their families.

To regularize quality reporting on violence against women, UNFPA, with the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, has supported the compilation of the forthcoming Violence Against Women survey (2022-2023). In addition, the UN, in collaboration with the Sex Workers Network and community based organizations, has continued efforts to develop a robust GBV case reporting and record keeping system within sex workers and transgender networks, to strengthen their capacity to record and report GBV incidents and seek essential support

### Prevention of gender-based violence

More than 1.8 million people were reached via gender-based violence prevention efforts in 2022, this included working with school, college, and university students to raise awareness against GBV and promoting gender equality. For the first time, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, with support from the UN, developed and finalized a Social Behavior Change Communication Plan for prevention of gender based violence, and rolled it out to 190 government organisation/NGO (GO-NGO) stakeholders in two selected districts. CSOs, with support from the UN, continued to carry out community mobilization to prevent gender based violence, especially intimate partner violence through challenging harmful social norms and practices. A study on sexual harassment in public transport was also completed and disseminated among relevant stakeholders.

In another key initiative, UNFPA has been working with the Bangladesh Parliament Secretariat to prevent gender-based violence and end child marriage and help create mass awareness about the consequences of child marriage. To strengthen understanding at the grassroots level, UNFPA, with the Power and Participation Research Centre, an NGO, conducted roundtable discussions engaging local administration, CSOs, local leaders, and NGOs in Dhaka, Rangpur, and Sylhet districts on unmet need for family planning, ending early marriage, and reducing maternal mortality, among others.



## 2.2.2 Humanitarian Response to Climate-Related Disasters

### Responding to floods through humanitarian coordination



Photo: WFP Bangladesh

In May 2022, nine northeastern districts of the Sylhet division were inundated by flash floods. An estimated 7.2 million people were affected by flooding and water congestion. The Surma river recorded its highest ever water level—surpassing a record set in 1958. The situation called for a major and swift humanitarian response. The Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT), with the continuous engagement of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and the support of local, national and international NGOs, mounted an effective response.

A rapid impact assessment of the situation, conducted in collaboration with national authorities and partners, gauged immediate needs in the areas of food insecurity, threatened livelihoods, disrupted essential water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, and protection concerns. The HCTT supported the Government in drawing up a USD 58.4 million Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) to meet the emergency needs of the hardest-hit communities.

*The United Nations Central Response Fund (CERF) released USD 5 million to help support life-saving, humanitarian activities targeting 1.5 million people, especially the most vulnerable, including women, children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities.*

The interventions also included the protection of the most vulnerable from gender-based violence. At the end of the humanitarian operation, over USD 20 million were raised and nearly half a million people were reached with other direct funding from donors through national and international NGOs.



To ensure a rapid transition from early recovery and to rehabilitation, as well as preparedness in the event of devastating future flooding in northern Bangladesh, UN humanitarian agencies and local NGOs shared lessons learned with the Government and local authorities such as the Disaster Management Committees.

### **Bangladesh's Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT)**

Bangladesh adopted the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT), a humanitarian system, in 2012 following a consultation process between the humanitarian community and the Government. Through the cluster system, the international community agrees on arrangements and complements the government's emergency and disaster response in a coordinated way. As of 2022, the HCTT comprised 11 clusters co-led by UN and Government delegates, one Inter-cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) led by the Resident Coordination Office (RCO), eight working groups co-led by agencies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), three International Non-Governmental Organization (INGOs), three National Non-Governmental Organisation (NNGOs) and three donor representatives.

In line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement, and other relevant agreements, the Resident Coordinator Office in Bangladesh is committed to strengthening the leadership of the HCTT heads of agencies (UN and NGO) to improve collaboration with the Government, enable the implementation of the Sendai Framework, ensure robust leadership of the current preparedness and responses of the clusters, strengthen partnership for the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) work, and reinforce collaboration between HCTT and development actors by prioritizing programming that falls within the nexus. The HCTT Nexus Strategy (2021-25) identifies four transformative actions to support preparedness and response efforts and has delivered progress in the following areas:

- SO1- Risk and Impact Analysis (Transformative change on Early Warning System)
- SO2- Priority Preparedness Action (Transformative change on Anticipatory Action)
- SO3- Partnership and Institutional Capacity (Transformative change on Durable Solution for IDP)
- SO4- Action Plan for Response (Transformative change on Eco-Disaster Risk Reduction)



### 2.2.3. Rohingya Humanitarian Response

Under the leadership of the Government of Bangladesh, the humanitarian community continued providing protection and seeking solutions for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, while also providing support to vulnerable households in the host community.

As of the end of 2022, approximately 952,309 Rohingya refugees<sup>[2]</sup> were registered in Bangladesh as part of the Government-UNHCR joint registration exercise, residing in 33 camps in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas of<sup>3</sup>Cox's Bazar District, and on the island of Bhasan Char in the Bay of Bengal. In the sixth year of the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh, the response has transitioned from an emergency to a protracted crisis and finding a viable durable solution for the Rohingya refugees remains the most significant challenge for both the Government and the international community.

The 2022 Joint Response Plan (JRP) for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis was a prioritized appeal of USD 881 million for 136 partners, including 10 UN agencies, 74 Bangladeshi NGOs, and 52 international NGOs. Donors generously provided significant resources, with 59% of the requested funding (USD 520.5 million) received as of the end of the year. Five strategic objectives guided the humanitarian response:

- Work towards the sustainable repatriation of Rohingya refugees to Myanmar
- Strengthen the protection of Rohingya refugee women, men, girls, and boys
- Deliver life-saving assistance to populations in need
- Foster the well-being of host communities in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas
- Strengthen disaster risk management and combat the effects of climate change.

As of December 2022, the Government had relocated some 30,000 Rohingya refugees on a voluntary basis from the camps in Cox's Bazar to the island of Bhasan Char. The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR (on behalf of the UN) in October 2021 put in place a common protection and policy framework for the Rohingya response on Bhasan Char, allowing cooperation in providing critical assistance to refugees on the island.

Cox's Bazar District has a population of approximately 2.8 million Bangladeshis, of whom approximately 537,900 reside in Ukhiya and Teknaf Upazilas and have been the most directly affected by the presence of the Rohingya refugees. In close coordination with the Government, the humanitarian response continued to scale up targeted support to the Bangladeshi communities that generously host Rohingya refugees, seeking to address the most urgent evidence-based needs, including needs in health, livelihoods, nutrition, education, and case management services to support the most vulnerable, while seeking to mitigate potential tensions between the host communities and Rohingya refugees.

[2] Government of Bangladesh-UNHCR Registration Figures, as of 31 December 2022.

[3] Upazilas are administrative units in Bangladesh. Districts are divided into Upazilas (or sub-Districts), then Unions, then wards, and then villages.



In 2022, significant achievements were made across the humanitarian response with the continued centrality of protection and a refugee-centered approach guiding all activities. Considerable progress continued in greening the camps. Regular distribution of liquid petroleum gas (LPG) to all Rohingya households since 2018 has provided cleaner cooking energy, and reduced respiratory health concerns. Health facilities not only provided critical services but assisted the Government in successfully countering COVID-19, acute diarrhea, and dengue. In the camps, 94% of eligible refugees (12+ years) also received two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine by the end of the year. The Myanmar curriculum was scaled up in 2022, reaching over 250,000 learners by the end of the year. Pre-monsoon shelter reinforcement contributed to 50% fewer shelters being reported as damaged after the monsoon. Some 85% of refugees also reported having enough water to meet their household needs. Food assistance through 21 e-voucher facilities continued to allow over 904,000 refugees to make decisions on their food consumption, whilst also supporting the local economy.

The Upazilas hosting the Rohingya refugee population are extremely vulnerable to a variety of natural hazards. The Multi-Hazard Response Plan (MHRP) and Disaster Management Committee Guideline adopted in 2022 ensure a more coordinated and effective preparedness and response system in the coming years. Protection remained central to the multi-hazard response with the training of refugee-supported Protection Emergency Response Units and the development of Rapid Protection Assessment tools.



Photo: UNHCR Bangladesh



Photo: UNHCR Bangladesh

A multi-year family planning strategy 2022-2025 was approved by the Government at the end of 2022 and will be operationalized to meet the needs of Rohingya and Bangladeshi host communities. The Government-endorsed Skills Development Framework was also adopted in 2022 to ensure that refugees and Bangladeshi communities have access to a broader range of opportunities to build their skills and support their families. Together with the Government, a new Volunteer Guidance was issued, allowing thousands of refugees to participate in the response and support their community while benefitting from equitable engagement processes and standardized stipend rates.

To increase transparency, cost effectiveness and agility of the response, the donor community, NGOs, and the UN collaborated and finalized the Principles of Rationalization in 2022 to ensure that refugees receive equitable services and improve efficiencies. A reform of the coordination system has also created greater accountability across all sectors and agencies. This should help the response to be more agile, fit-for purpose, and cost-effective.

Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) remained a priority: the Standard Operating Procedures on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Complaint Referral were endorsed and are now applicable to all actors in the refugee response; the number of PSEA Network member organizations has more than doubled over the course of 2022; and over 10,000 humanitarian staff and 15,000 Rohingya refugee volunteers were trained on PSEA principles and reporting mechanisms in 2022.

Despite these achievements, multiple challenges impacting refugees persist and the security situation in the camps remains a long-standing concern. With no durable solutions in sight, it is critical to ensure that funding levels are maintained so that Rohingya refugees are not placed in an even more precarious situation, as well as scale up self-reliance opportunities for the community to become less dependent on humanitarian aid.



Photo: UNHCR Bangladesh



ARTOLUTION



## 2.3. Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda

*Using its convening role, the UN forged new partnerships and strengthened actions across its programmatic and advocacy work.*

With the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic fading, 2022 saw UN agencies redouble efforts on partnerships to advance the implementation of the SDGs, reclaim lost momentum and use both virtual and in-person forums to engage with various stakeholders. Using its convening role, the UN forged new partnerships and strengthened actions across its programmatic and advocacy work.

The **UN facilitated South-South Collaboration between Bangladesh, Nepal, and Lao PDR** - the three countries to be graduating from the least developed countries (LDCs) in 2026. Graduation from LDC status is an important milestone in the development path of all three countries. Though marked by differences in terms of their economies, geographies, and histories, they are set to graduate out of the LDC category in the aftermath of the worst global pandemic in living memory, amid a war in Ukraine and a global climate crisis. The three countries are formulating nationally owned and action-oriented Smooth Transition Strategies to ensure the transition is smooth and sustainable despite the economic headwinds and the phasing out of international support measures associated with LDC status. To facilitate coordination, cross country learning and collective advocacy, the Resident Coordinators of the three countries and their offices collaborated in regular discussions. Subsequently, the three RCOs, with support from UN DESA and in collaboration with UN-OHRLLS and ESCAP, organized a joint South-South Exchange on formulating smooth transition strategies in Bangkok in August 2022. This was followed by multiple exchanges between the governments and a joint three-country side event with the Heads of the governments at LDC5 Conference in Doha in March 2023.



Photo: IFAD Bangladesh

In the country, led by the RC, a high-level delegation of the United Nations in Bangladesh and key development partners undertook a **joint visit to the Chittagong Hill Tracts** to see first-hand the development initiatives and priorities in this remote region. Despite significant progress, Sustainable Development in the Chittagong Hill Tracts still lags behind compared to other parts of the country. This is due to various factors, including environmental challenges and high vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, as well as sociopolitical marginalization of the area.

The mission was an opportunity for the delegation to consult and listen to diverse authorities and community members on their needs and challenges as well as on their existing resources, capacities and aspirations. The mission also provided valuable insights into the role and work of the UN in contributing to sustainable and inclusive development in the Hill Tracts.

The Government and the humanitarian actors in Bangladesh have adopted an area-based approach to **support the leadership of local disaster management committees** (DMCs). The Humanitarian Country Task Team and cluster leads have identified practical steps to enhance the participation, representation and leadership role of DMCs and other relevant local and national actors. The work focuses on five areas: preparedness and contingency/action planning, risk analysis and early warning, information management and communication, impact analysis and needs assessment, and emergency services and prepositioning. An example of the area-based approach is a USAID-funded pilot project, which features partnerships with CARE for monsoon flood and World Vision for cyclones.



Photo: FAO Bangladesh

The focus of the project is to develop robust coordination of DMCs at the local level that is integrated into the national cluster coordination. The partnerships are vital to the humanitarian coordination efforts co-led by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief.

To bring **UN Day celebrations** closer to the people we work for, the UN in Bangladesh organized several events. Partnering with the Bangladesh Scouts, City Corporation cleaners, and government officials, the UN celebrated UN Day on 24 October 2022 with clean-up campaigns in multiple locations in Dhaka and Sylhet. The campaign was launched at the South Plaza of the National Parliament in Dhaka by the honorable Minister Tajul Islam, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, in the presence of Dr. Md Mozammel Haque Khan, Chief National Commissioner of Bangladesh Scouts, UN Resident Coordinator Gwyn Lewis, UN officials, scouts, rover scouts, city cooperation cleaners. The day saw an unseasonal depression over the Bay of Bengal move into Bangladesh. Braving the pouring rain some 200 scouts, city cleaners and UN personnel joined the event in a spirit of solidarity and celebration.



Photo: UNRCO Bangladesh

## 2.4. Results of the UN working more and better together: UN coherence, effectiveness and efficiency

The results of the UN working more and better together showed across its programmatic work and advocacy, especially those that spanned across multiple sectors.

### Sustaining Peace and Social Cohesion

The UN in Bangladesh continued to regularly engage with the UN in Myanmar to strengthen the collective understanding of the Rohingya crisis, and respective approaches, priorities, and challenges. This culminated in Joint Scenarios forecasting best and worst-case developments over the next 12 months both in Bangladesh and Myanmar. The scenarios have informed joint UNCT discussions on possible joint and in-country prevention and advocacy efforts.

The UN also led a Joint UN-Development Partners' visit to the Chittagong Hill Tracts to get an up-to-date understanding of most pressing development challenges, particularly related to inclusion and climate change/environmental degradation. This visit has laid foundations for a stronger One UN strategy on the Chittagong Hill Tracts (see section 2.3 on Partnerships).

The UN continued to facilitate coordination, dialogue and knowledge platforms on conflict prevention, prevention of violent extremism and hate speech. Coordination with development partners on prevention of violent extremism, hate speech, and social cohesion was strengthened through the regular convening of the inter-agency prevention of violent extremism and hate speech Working Group.



### Coming together for SDG Data

In 2022, the UN interagency Data Group contributed significantly the mapping and updating of SDG data. The Group supported an initiative of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics in area-wise poverty estimation using big data and GIS mapping. The Group also provided technical assistance for quality assurance for the Government's decadal census.



## Joint work to strengthen food security systems in Bangladesh



The impact of the war against Ukraine was felt in the Bangladesh economy within weeks of the beginning of the war. The food and fuel price increases came on top of already increasing food prices globally in the fourth quarter of 2021, before the pandemic recovery was complete. Increased import prices was exacerbated by hoarding of food items by local traders.

In this context, a Joint Programme of FAO, WFP, UNICEF and IFAD funded by the Joint SDG Fund through its development emergency modality was initiated to strengthen systems of food distribution under the Government's social safety net with a specific focus on the needs of women, and to inform policy through a macroeconomic assessment and data generation on the impact of the Ukraine war. Among the four participating UN agencies, WFP and FAO received a total allocation of USD 250,000 from the Joint SDG Fund, UNICEF is providing USD 160,000 of its own for activities that will go beyond the project duration, while IFAD is providing technical advice without any fund allocation. The key objective of the Programme is to ensure the food security and food consumption status of the under-served urban poor population. The Programme is directly addressing Strategic Priority 2: Equitable human development and well-being of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and SDGs 1, 2 and 5. The joint programme, which will be completed in 2023 leverages the breadth of expertise across four UN agencies and two sources of funding combined with the Government's own allocation of foodgrains to pilot an improved system of open market sales of subsidized food to the most vulnerable households.

## Working together for gender equality



Photo: ILO Bangladesh



In 2022, the Gender Equality Theme Group (GETG) of the UNCT worked closely with the different inter-agency groups to enhance coordination, dialogue, and knowledge to promote gender equality.

With the use of the Gender Scorecard accountability tool, the UNCT advanced its commitments to mainstreaming gender equality across the UN Business Operations Strategy and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022- 2026. The UN has improved gender mainstreaming across its joint programmes. In 2022, seven out of nine operational UN joint programmes visibly mainstreamed gender with sex-disaggregated and gender-sensitive indicators and data and gender analysis. The GETG, in coordination with RCO and in consultation with other relevant stakeholders, led the development of a Gender Capacity-Building Plan. The UNCT also invested in strengthening staff and personnel capacity on UNCT Gender Equality Marker (GEM) to effectively track and analyze system-wide gender expenditure. In addition, GETG members actively contributed to the regional pilot programme of the GETG Standards and Procedures.

The [Gender Responsive Procurement \(GRP\) Workshop](#), in August 2022, was the first of its kind that modeled UN's commitment to increase women participation in the supply chain. The initiative built the capacity of women-owned businesses to respond to UN procurement requirements and introduced them to the business opportunities of the UN general marketplace (UNGM), the official procurement portal of the UN system. The initiative aims to contribute to economic empowerment of women and girls in Bangladesh through the UN Procurement system. Furthermore, the UNCT initiated the development of the Gender Parity Strategy. The UN in Bangladesh currently has a female representation of 35% across different roles. The strategy, to be finalized and rolled out in 2023, sets targets to improve women's representation at all contract levels, and achieve gender parity.

Moreover, to improve accessibility, efficiency, and knowledge management of gender equality and women's empowerment resources, GETG developed an inventory of knowledge products and roster of national gender equality experts that are accessible through the UN in Bangladesh website. As part of its commitment to Leave No One Behind, the UN, jointly with the development partners working on gender issues in Bangladesh, developed a pledge for inclusion. The pledge showcases a commitment to equal participation of all women in all aspects of life, and to improving the representation and leadership of women and marginalized groups in public dialogue.



## Operations Management Team (OMT)



Photo: UNV Bangladesh

The 2021 review of the Business Operations Strategy undertaken by the OMT recorded cost avoidance of USD 55,000. The OMT Finance working group contributed to strengthening the relationship with the National Board of Revenue, which led to smooth reimbursement of the value added tax for purchases by UN agencies, which had been pending for some time. The OMT Human Resource working group actively participated in developing the UNCT Gender Parity Strategy. The OMT Administration working group developed long term agreements for vehicle rentals and cleaning services, and streamlined hotel rates for all UN agencies. The Procurement working group initiated a workshop on gender-responsive procurement in partnership with the Gender Equality Thematic Group (see above).

## 2.5. Financial Overview and Resource Mobilization

During a difficult year when the crisis in Ukraine made additional demands on donor funding, UN agencies in Bangladesh sought to diversify their resource bases and leverage seed funding to provide first respondent support, and to combine funds from different sources in joint efforts.

In 2022, UN agencies collectively delivered USD 241.2 million in development programming under the five Strategic Priorities of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2026 (Table 1):

- Strategic Priority 1: Inclusive and Sustainable Growth
- Strategic Priority 2: Social Protection and Basic Services
- Strategic Priority 3: Healthy and Resilient Environment
- Strategic Priority 4: Transformative and Participatory Governance
- Strategic Priority 5: Gender Equality and Eliminating Gender-Based Violence

**Table 1: UN Agencies Development Programme Delivery in 2022, USD (figures in USD)**

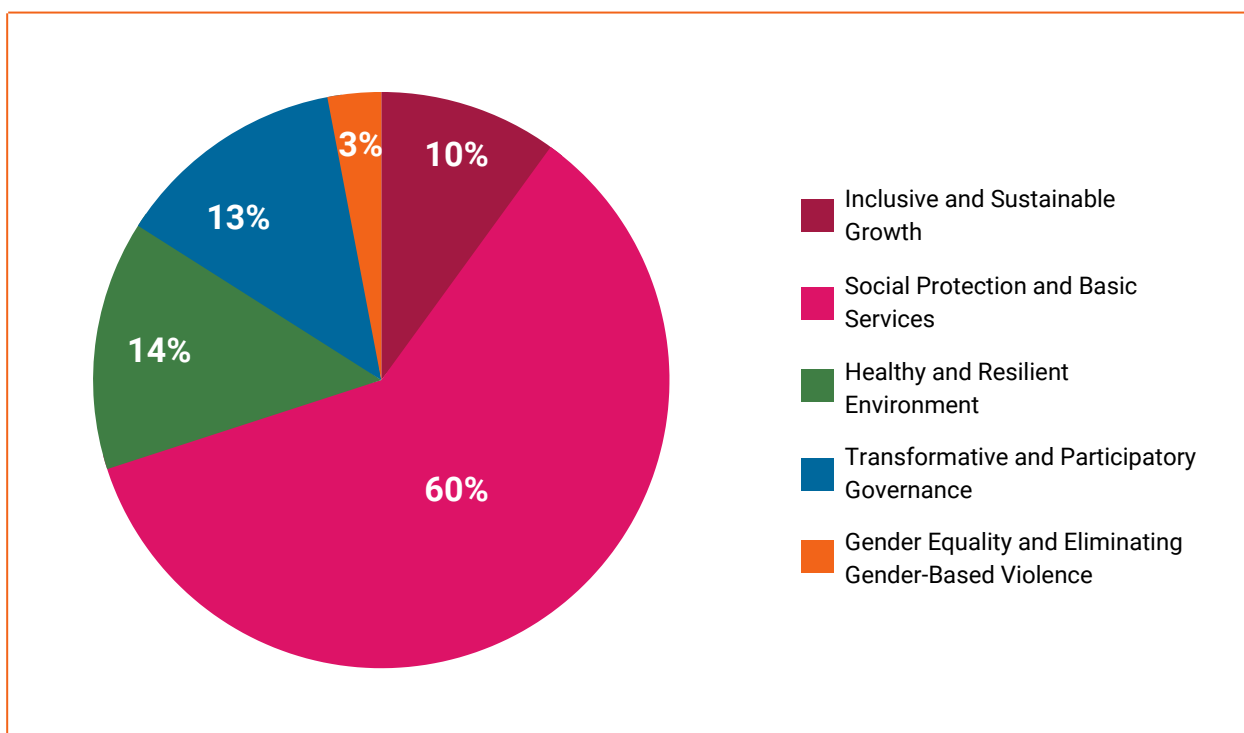
	<b>Strategic Priority 1</b>	<b>Strategic Priority 2</b>	<b>Strategic Priority 3</b>	<b>Strategic Priority 4</b>	<b>Strategic Priority 5</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
<b>FAO</b>	2,987,017	4,704,028	2,339,099	-	1,336,586	<b>11,366,730</b>
<b>IFAD*</b>	957,879	957,879	957,879	957,879	-	<b>3,831,516</b>
<b>ILO</b>	8,485,457	4,224,271	35,000	4,676,456	32,564	<b>17,453,748</b>
<b>IOM</b>	1,973,741	4,084,028	62,265	-	-	<b>6,120,034</b>
<b>UNAIDS</b>	-	53,450	-	-	2,700	<b>56,150</b>
<b>UNCDF</b>	76,572	-	2,109,864	-	387,837	<b>2,574,273</b>
<b>UNDP</b>	7,693,787	9,322,762	22,610,355	21,157,166	319,677	<b>61,103,747</b>
<b>UNEP</b>	-	-	1,320,000	-	-	<b>1,320,000</b>
<b>UNESCO</b>	93,500	255,000	71,859	40,500	530	<b>461,389</b>
<b>UNFPA</b>	312,277	18,328,062	-	-	3,182,639	<b>21,822,978</b>
<b>UNHCR</b>	-	-	-	-	-	<b>-</b>
<b>UNICEF</b>	573,990	46,682,740	1,675,676	1,129,165	1,209,820	<b>51,271,391</b>
<b>UNIDO</b>	38,885	261,938	206,837	-	-	<b>507,660</b>
<b>UNODC</b>	-	150,000	-	2,088,210	86,150	<b>2,324,360</b>
<b>UNOPS</b>	-	2,700,000	1,062,000	-	-	<b>3,762,000</b>
<b>UN WOMEN</b>	876,463	-	881,339	391,091	1,326,086	<b>3,474,979</b>
<b>WFP</b>	-	35,001,787	651,520	-	-	<b>35,653,307</b>
<b>WHO</b>	-	18,142,737	-	-	-	<b>18,142,737</b>
<b>Total UN</b>	<b>24,069,568</b>	<b>144,868,682</b>	<b>33,983,693</b>	<b>30,440,467</b>	<b>7,884,589</b>	<b>241,246,999</b>

\*Grant funding only

IFAD using its co-financing approach leveraged USD 475.9 million of its own funding (loans and grants) to generate a project portfolio of USD 1.25 billion that is 2.6 times its own funding. This funding is deployed across seven projects and includes co-financing from the Government as well as bilateral and multilateral development partners.

Some 60% of this funding went to social protection and basic services, followed by 14% to a healthy and resilient environment (Chart 1).

**Chart 1: Distribution of UN Agencies' Development Programme Delivery by UNSDCF Strategic Priorities in 2022**



In a year of unprecedented flash floods, the humanitarian programme delivery, not including the Rohingya response, amounted to USD 73.3 million (Table 2). In face of the immediate needs for life saving support after the devastating floods in Sylhet and Sunamganj in May-June 2022, two allocations from the Central Emergency Response Fund of USD 5 million enabled immediate life-saving support (see section 2.2.2 on Flood and Cyclone Response). Even before the funds were disbursed, UNICEF temporarily repurposed USD 2.8 million of its development funding to deliver humanitarian support. At the end of the humanitarian response, USD 20.45 million had been mobilized from multiple development partners to enable coordinated support to the flood affected people. This funding was delivered by several implementing partners in addition to the UN.

Subsequently following a discussion among development partners, at the request of the UN Resident Coordinator, the Asian Development Bank agreed on a USD230 million loan to the Government of Bangladesh to support early recovery.

**Table 2: UN Agencies' Humanitarian Programme Delivery (excluding JRP) USD**

<b>Agencies</b>	<b>2022</b>
FAO	42,00,514
IOM	146,000
UNFPA	1,619,548
UNICEF	49,117,521
UN WOMEN	1,432,515
WFP	1,800,000
WHO	14,984,322
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>73,300,420</b>

Around USD 520.5 million (Table 3) were delivered in the Rohingya response under the Joint Response Plan for the Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis.

**Table 3: Amount Delivered Under the Joint Response Plan (USD)**

<b>Agencies</b>	<b>2022</b>
FAO	1,465,110
IOM	46,343,702
UN WOMEN	200,012
UNICEF	44,377,135
UNDP	1,650,000
UNESCO	85,400
UNHCR	144,239,713
UNFPA	7,130,488
WFP	272,138,844
WHO	2,923,280
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>520,526,684</b>



Photo: UNFPA Bangladesh

## CHAPTER 3

UNCT KEY FOCUS FOR  
NEXT YEAR



Photo: UNV Bangladesh



Photo: UNDP Bangladesh

The year 2023 brings major challenges and some opportunities. Against the backdrop of global recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, competing demands for development and humanitarian assistance, and a worsening climate crisis, Bangladesh will seek to stabilize and strengthen its economy, recover from the devastating floods of 2022, implement the reform programme associated with recent IMF loans, and prepare for a general election, among other things. At the same time, as Bangladesh approaches the graduation from Least Developed Country in 2026, the Government, with support of UN agencies and other partners, will work on a strategy to facilitate this key milestone in the country's sustainable development progress. In light of these priorities for the Government, the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Bangladesh will focus its support in the areas outlined below.

After the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5) in Doha in March 2023, the Government will work on formulating its Smooth Transition Strategy for LDC graduation. This process involves close consultations between the Government, the private sector, civil society and development partners about necessary changes as international support measures associated with LDCs status are phased out. The UNCT, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator and in consultation with global and regional UN entities, will support the Government in this endeavour. A marker of success will be a Smooth Transition Strategy that is inclusive and enables the benefits of development to reach the most disadvantaged people. The UNCT will also work with development partners in supporting the private sector's preparations for compliance with the environmental, labour and human rights standards of major trading partners in order to retain preferential access to the relevant markets.





In 2023 the Government will be managing an acute cost-of-living crisis that continues to affect affordable food and energy out of reach for millions of people. Livelihoods support, and food security will, therefore, be key priorities of the UNCT during the year. Ongoing initiatives to develop capacity of households, connect smallholders to markets to make their livelihoods more sustainable and resilient will continue. Efforts will proceed to formalize parts of Bangladesh's large informal sector, alongside actions to strengthen the public food distribution system, making the social safety net more efficient, and supporting the most vulnerable groups. Concurrently, initiatives to integrate improved nutrition security into the social protection system will continue.

As part of bringing progress on the Sustainable Development Goals back on track after the global upheavals, the UNCT will continue to support children who lost months of schooling, strengthen the system of blended education in preparation for the next pandemic, and strengthen health systems as part of pandemic prevention. Gender equality and preventing gender-based violence will continue to be priorities of the UNCT with a special focus on behavioural change.

The UNCT has resolved to strengthen its climate-related work through a more integrated programmatic approach. Noting that a fragmented and project-based approach to climate action will not enable the UN in Bangladesh to achieve impact at scale, the the UN in Bangladesh will explore the establishment of a climate-focused pool fund to enhance strategic coordination across its climate programming. The Government has launched its National Adaptation Plan, published its Nationally Determined Contributions outlining climate actions to cut emissions and adapt to climate impacts and recently adopted the Mujib Climate and Prosperity Plan. The UNCT will work closely with the Government and development partners to support the implementation of these plans.

The year 2023 has started with a deterioration of the situation for the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The Rohingya in Cox's Bazar have been affected by a funding shortfall that forced a cut in food assistance by 17%, and a devastating fire that damaged or destroyed over 2,800 shelters, and affected close to 16,000 people. Given the high humanitarian needs, under the leadership of the Government of Bangladesh, the humanitarian community will continue to provide support to the refugees and reduce the impact on the host communities that have sheltered them. The prioritized 2023 Joint Response Plan was launched on 7 March 2023. It seeks around USD 876 million to respond to the critical needs of Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char, as well as to mitigate impacts on the host communities in Ukhiya and Teknaf upazilas. Considering competing humanitarian needs worldwide, funding the plan is expected to get more difficult. Mobilizing sufficient funds to provide life-saving support will be a key priority for the UNCT, alongside continuing advocacy for the Rohingya refugees' safe, dignified and voluntary return to Myanmar.



Photo: ILO Bangladesh



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