

# Inclusive growth and climate resilient development

DR. A. ATIQ RAHMAN

Emerging sustainable development and Bangladesh: From the mid-1980s, the concept of sustainable development has dominated the global and national development discourse. Sustainable development for Bangladesh or similar poor and rapidly transforming societies can be defined as rapid economic growth, which is environmentally sound and socially just, focusing on poverty reduction. 2015 saw the culmination of three interacting and reinforcing global processes including the emergence of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

The SDG declaration emphasises a plan of action for the people, the planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. The 17 sustainable development goals and 169 targets build on the MDGs where Bangladesh has performed reasonably well. The above three processes and the development path of Bangladesh have much in common as two of the greatest challenges in Bangladesh's journey towards sustainable development are the threat of climate change impacts and the burden of poverty.

in economic development in the recent years. Better macro-economic management; transition to a democratic system; contributions from the garments, textile and agriculture sectors; and foreign remittance lead to continuous and higher GDP growth (over 6% in the last two decades) and per capita income (USD 1,314 in 2015). Bangladesh is moving towards middle-income status in or before 2021. This will require further investment, employment and good governance. Vision 2021 and the perspective plan of Bangladesh provide a road map for accelerated growth in eradication of poverty as well as addressing inequity and human deprivation at all levels. Hence, the rapid economic growth should benefit the poorest and marginal sections of the society. The country will need inclusive economic growth with distributive justice and equity for a sustained and resilient society. Economic growth may improve quality of life and enhance human development and in return, better and planned investment in human resources may contribute to higher economic growth in the long run. If the economic growth has contributed to outcomes in terms of quality of life, skill and better human resources, it may also enhance the

urbanisation.

- Climate change threats must not be allowed to undermine growth and stability and enhancing resilience of ecosystems and communities.

- These challenges have enormous contributions in achieving sustainable development of Bangladesh in the next two decades. Facing these would be crucial and most essential in achieving sustainable development of Bangladesh.

### SDGs and inclusive social development

Bangladesh made laudable progress in achieving MDGs in relation to poverty alleviation, tackling hunger, spreading education, health services and reducing gender gap. In 2015, new development goals for 2030 called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), have been set globally by the UN and the member states including Bangladesh, to end poverty, hunger and inequity worldwide. SDGs further aims to take concerted actions on climate change and environmental management, improving access to health and education, building strong institutions and partnership worldwide. The SDGs have a more ambitious agenda, seeking to eliminate rather than reduce poverty and include more demanding targets on health, education, food and nutri-

reducing risks and build resilience to disasters and climate change. The development priorities included in the vision 2021 are: broad-based growth for reducing poverty, ensuring effective governance and institutional integration for creating a caring and enduring society, addressing globalisation and enhancing regional cooperation, providing energy security for all, building sound infrastructure and managing urban challenges, mitigating the impacts of climate change and promoting science and innovation for a knowledge based society.

All the key goals including poverty eradication, reducing hunger and malnutrition, sustainable consumption, energy, water, health, sanitation and gender equity are to be included in national and sectoral policies as well as in the seventh five year plan (7FYP). Further for inclusive economic growth the key challenges are: increase public and private investment; ensure enabling environment for investment and entrepreneurship; revenue generation and investment for social development. The country should diversify the agro-production, industrial activities (100 special economic zones would be a good move), ICT and service sector and explore new export market in East Asia, China, South America and Africa

sive social development could be harnessed effectively.

Bangladesh made sustained progress in improving drinking water supply and sanitation, still over 40% people lack improved sanitation in rural areas and urban slums. Climate change impacts and natural disaster hinder the progress and achievements in WATSAN every year. More investment from government, non-government organisations, development partners, and private sectors would be required in WATSAN facilities and hygiene practices. Empowering women and promoting gender role in economy, family and society is crucial for gender equity and accelerating inclusive development. Ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is not only a basic human right, but it also has multiplier positive effects on society, institutions and development. Bangladesh must take further actions in this regard based on the earlier achievements.

### Climate change threats, actions and institutionalisation

Bangladesh attaches' formulated the National Adaptation Programme of Actions (NAPA -2005) and Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP - 2009) as urgent and immediate actions. Funds have been created to implement adaptation and mitigation (low carbon economy) actions charted in the climate strategy and action plan. Now, the needs to address the key challenges of institutionalisation of climate change and planning and actions have become vital and urgent. Climate change is too extensive to be a part of the environmental institutions only as it is now central to most key development activities. There is a case for creating a powerful ministry or commission to integrate and coordinate national and international climate actions, resource mobilisation, capacity building, negotiations and confronting the challenge of achieving transformative resilience. Strengthening the resilience and adaptive capacity of the vulnerable sections of people, development sectors (such as water, agriculture and food, health, transport, housing, infrastructure etc.) and ecosystems would be most crucial in the coming years. Implementation with effectiveness by targeting the most vulnerable people and ecosystems are the key concerns. Climate adaptation fund and green climate funds under the UNFCCC are the immediate opportunities for the country, but the government has to prove its capacity, transparency and accountability to access the global funds. Hence, rapid urgent and appropriate institutionalisation is the main task in the post Paris Agreement agenda for Bangladesh.

Bangladesh being one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change must develop a resilience strategy to withstand the increasing shocks of disasters and climate impacts. In fact Bangladesh must confront the climate threat and take the opportunities of developing transformative climate resilience. Resilience framework is increasingly becoming central to the climate change strategies. Bangladesh is in a position to lead the world in this, as it is doing in adaptation. It needs the convergence of efforts of all the actors, government, NGOs, CBOs, communities, private sectors and development partners. **Climate resilient development framework and responses** Resilience is a perceived global comprehensive approach or concept to address climate change, disasters and development simultaneously. Most recent global policy and strategic documents including Sendai Framework (Priority 3), Paris Climate Agreement (article 7) and SDG (Goal-13, Target 13.1) specifically talk about strengthening resilience at global and national levels. In Bangladesh, the final draft of the Seventh Five Year Plan (7FYP) and Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) also refer resilience for overall disaster management and sustainable development. The BCCSAP indicated the need to build capacity and resilience to address climate change in Bangladesh in 2009. The 7FYP states "the overall objective of disaster management during



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Governance processes, society, communities and ecosystems must become resilient to absorb the shocks and transform into a more sustainable world when climate change and extreme events threaten Bangladesh's development. The whole population of Bangladesh must be incorporated into an inclusive growth paradigm where all communities, sectors, ecosystems and locales, particularly the climate vulnerable regions, become integrated into sustainable development discourses and actions. Thus, inclusive growth and climate resilient development must encompass all aspects of Bangladesh and its development efforts. The coincidence of these global processes and Bangladesh's own journey towards sustainable development in the next two to three decades offer tremendous opportunities despite many challenges. Bangladesh aims to become a developed country in the early 2040s. Sustainable development pathways through incorporation of SDG successes, inclusive growth and climate resilient development offer the way forward.

**Growth and development challenges** Bangladesh has made much progress

inclusive social and economic development for prosperous and enduring society. Focus on poverty reduction and access of the poor to goods and services as well as good governance and different freedoms, (information, movement, justice etc.) and securities (food, water, energy, health and livelihoods) are essential.

However, the growth and development potentials are again constrained by political instability, lack of investment, poor governance, destruction of natural resource base, degradation of environment and elite capture of many common property resources. The natural resources and ecosystem services can provide a basis for production, consumption and quality of life. Global climate is threatening the economic development, poverty alleviation and securities of the common people in Bangladesh.

Hence the four interconnected steps have to be ensured:

- Increasing GDP growth or per capita income must not be at the expense growing inequity
- Destruction of the natural base and environmental degradation must be contained as priority and cannot be at the cost of rapid industrialisation or

tion, water and sanitation and gender equity. In Bangladesh, it is argued that the country made good progress in MDGs in relation to poverty alleviation (halving the poverty ratio within the given time), education, health (wider coverage of water supply, sanitation and controlling vector born diseases), empowering women and reducing gender disparity, but attention has to be given in areas like energy for all, combating climate change, inclusive growth and development, sustainable consumption, natural resources and ecosystem conservation, infrastructure and sustainable city while implementing SDGs.

The Government of Bangladesh is committed to achieve SDGs through inclusive social and economic development, which would be environmentally sound and resilient to climate change, disasters and other externality like market failure. Bangladesh has prioritised 13 goals from the SDGs and put emphasis on securing economic growth that is inclusive, reduce poverty and enhanced equity and improve living conditions of the common people. Emphasis is also given on environmental governance, stopping corruption,

besides Europe and North America, and enhance foreign sector. The country must pursue growth with equity in the post 2015 development regime. Growth and development outcomes should benefit the poor and all sections of society, reduce gender gap, reduce development deficit and inequity among the regions, generations and social groups.

### SDG priorities and targets in Bangladesh

End poverty in all its forms everywhere is the main goal of SDGs. Bangladesh has made good progress in poverty alleviation. The poverty ratio has come down to 24% in 2015 from 48% in 2000. But the absolute number of poor people is huge and millions are living in extreme poverty in hard to reach areas (offshore islands, riverine chars, haors and in the hilly area) and in the urban slums. The government, NGOs and development actors must redirect their efforts toward the extremely poor through resources transfers, human resources development, healthcare, education and ensure their basic security for food, nutrition, drinking water, sanitation and energy. In this way poor's potential in growth and inclu-