# Bangladesh needs a new vision for social protection



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consumption and reduce poverty and inequality, but also spurs growth via raising the aggregate demand. Since independence, Bangladesh's social protection, a key policy instrument in the country, has had a history of innovation evolved around crises (e.g. market failures, floods and droughts, and needs of special geographical areas). The country now spends about three percent of the GDP on social protection programmes covering around 35 percent of its citizens.

Before 2015, the goal was to extend relief to the poor. The year 2015 was thought to be a gamechanger for the social protection system in Bangladesh, with the preparation and approval of the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) – with an overarching goal to move from a poor relief system to a system addressing life cycle risks. The NSSS laid down bold programmatic and institutional reforms, focusing programme consolidation, increased beneficiary coverage along with spending, digitalised social and beneficiary registries, and a resultsbased monitoring system. A roadmap was also prepared to implement the reforms. However, progress with the NSSS reforms has been slow.

approved, our social protection programmes. New risks emerging

OCIAL protection is an important plus programmes, most of which fiscal policy instrument that are small, with exclusion errors not only helps smoothen of about 70 percent, implying the inability of the system to reach the deserving beneficiaries - referring to 50-60 percent of the citizens who are vulnerable but not covered, and large gaps between the supply side (budget allocations) and the demand side (needs by life-cycle-based groups). It reveals a huge coverage gap of 49 percent and resource gap of 29 percent, remaining static as it fails to align with demographic changes and urbanisation of poverty. It also suggests that young children who account for almost one in every eight poor persons receive only 1.6 percent of social protection expenditures, and 18 percent of the urban poor receive 11 percent of social protection expenditures. The overall outcome is low value for money (i.e. estimated cost effectiveness of only 0.6) for investment of around three percent of

Approaches to social protection during Covid-19 also have implications for Bangladesh's social protection system. During Covid, the global system not only witnessed unprecedented horizontal and vertical expansions, but also recorded the emergence of new instruments to tackle new vulnerabilities that could Seven years after the NSSS was not be addressed with traditional system is still composed of 100- out of the Covid crisis relate mostly



Given that Bangladesh aims to attain upper middle-income status in 2030, the future vision of its social protection system should be inclusive, leaving no one out. FILE PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

strongly

to women, children, marginalised child care was experienced most groups, and informal workers. In particular, temporary basic income (TBI) for women has emerged as an innovative social protection programme, which especially targets vulnerable women (mostly from the informal sector) and calls for universal early learning and care for children. TBI for women is a policy instrument

an unconditional cash transfer to identify women beneficiaries for a specific time period that recognises the disproportionate effect of a crisis on a group that faces persistent and cumulative vulnerabilities across several dimensions. This is especially important because of the strong positive correlation between the availability of child care services and women's labour force participation. Research has found that the boost in female labour supply from universal

hearted attempts to reforms. Against these backdrops, future agendas for the social protection system in Bangladesh must be explored. Given that the country aims to attain upper middle-income status in 2030, the future vision of its social protection system should be inclusive, leaving no one out. Bangladesh must take steps to immediately implement the unfinished reforms laid out in the NSSS. However, given the new risks that have emerged out of the Covid crisis (e.g. disproportionate impacts on women, children, marginalised groups, and informal workers), the full implementation of the NSSS may not ensure 100 percent inclusivity. How should the system be

full steam ahead with time-bound

implementation of reforms or

maintaining the status quo of half-

strengthened? It should focus on: (i) A dynamic, digitised data system new approach should be such that powered by social and beneficiary registries; (ii) Improved selection of deserving beneficiaries based on geographical, demographic, and community-based targeting; (iii) Expanding coverage of G2P payments focusing on financial literacy training, financial inclusion and digital equity; (iv) Gender mainstreaming encompassing gender-sensitive, responsive and transformative approaches; and (v) Management

choices to make between moving information system and results-based monitoring and evaluation system using social and beneficiary registries.

The hallmarks of the approach are that (i) It asks for a balanced approach with four pillars; (ii) It paves the way for programmes or instrument diversification through assistance, social insurance and labour market regulations; (iii) It addresses informality and initiates the process of formalisation; (iv) It provides scope to develop care services; (v) It opens up room for private sector participation; and (vi) It ensures fiscal sustainability by allowing public-private partnership in programme development, financing and delivery.

Given the slow progress and the need for new instruments to address new vulnerabilities emerging out of the pandemic, Bangladesh needs to revisit the NSSS to set a new vision or approach to social protection. The no one is left out. Accordingly, a new framework has been advocated based on four pillars of social protection: social assistance, social insurance, labour market policies, and social

The key to any reform is political will. We hope that there will be strong political support for future social protection in Bangladesh - one which will have an all-inclusive system at the

শেখ হাসিনার মূলনীতি

গ্রাম শহরের উরুতি

Date: 04.09.2022

#### Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh



Local Government Engineering Department Office of the Executive Engineer

District: Nilphamari

www.lged.gov.bd

Memo No. 46.02.7300.000.14.003.22-1462;

among lower-income

households - since high-income

households are able to purchase their

own child care services privately,

in the absence of a more accessible

public system. Global studies also

report another important feature -

that child care doesn't cost, it pays

fiscal pressure on governments.

- implying that there is no additional

Bangladesh is at a crossroads with

#### Specific Procurement Notice

Country: Bangladesh Name of Project: "Rangpur Division Agriculture and Rural Development Project" in Bangladesh Procurement of Works

Sector: Agriculture and Rural Development

Mode of Financing: Istisna'a Loan

Financing No. 2BD-0186

Contract Title: "Package W-13(Lot-1): Improvement of Rural Roads and Construction of Drainage Culverts in Nilphamar

### NCB (Re-Bid) Reference No. 05/2022-2023

1. The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received financing from the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) towards the cost of Rangpur mentioned in table below.

2. The Executive Engineer, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), District: Nilphamari, Bangladesh now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the following works under the above project.

SI. Contra No. No.	t Description of works	Price of bidding documents (in BDT)	Amount of bid security in BDT	Contract completion time (days)
LGED/RADARDP/Nilphamari/W-13(Lot-1)	1) Improvement of Teperhat GC - Magura GC road at Ch. 1200-1840m by BC under Kishoregonj Upazila (ID No. 173452012), 2) Improvement of Garagram DC More RHD - Kaimari GC at Bodir Kachari Road at Ch.5650-6620m by BC under Kishoregonj Upazila (ID No. 173452006), 3) Improvement of Magura GC - (Khishoreganj - Taraganj R&H Road) near Bahagili Steel Bridge at H/O Bonkim House Road at Ch.5550-7850m by BC under Kishoregonj Upazila (ID No. 173452016), 4) Improvement of Sonaroy UP Office - Porarhat via Monglu Shah House Road at Ch.00-2910m by BC under Nilphamari Sadar Upazila (ID No. 173643020), 5) Improvement of Dholdhepe on Jaldhaka - Domar Road Mote Danga Road at Ch.00-1500m by BC under Jaldhaka - Domar Road Mote Danga Road at Ch.00-1500m by BC under Jaldhaka Upazila (ID No. 173364020), 6) Improvement of Balagram Momotajer Tepathi - Khejur Tota Regd, Non Govt. Primary School Road at Ch.00-1800m by BC under Jaldhaka Upazila (ID No. 173365058), 7) Improvement of Kazirhat at UZR/2002 Road - Ghunuram Hat RHD Road (IVR) at Ch.00-1400m by BC under Domar Upazila (ID No. 173154019), 8) Improvement of Kabiragar Hat - Obler Bazar Kaimari Pucca Road at Burir Bazar at Ch.00-2680m by BC under Kishoreganj Upazila (ID No. 173455083) 10) Improvement of Garagram Dolapara - Dolapara Mosque Road at Ch.00-1600m by BC under Kishoreganj Upazila (ID No. 173455022), 11) Improvement of Pirer Hat - Garagram Dola R&H Road at Ch. 700-2871m & 4300-5850m by BC under Kishoreganj Upazila (ID No. 173454024), 12) Improvement of Melabor Pathagora Hat - Ranachand Pucca Road at Ch.1000-2250m by BC under Kishoreganj Upazila (ID No. 173454024), 13) Improvement of Magura WDB Canal Bridge - Bangla Bazar via Sha Para Road at Ch.580-1580m by BC under Kishoreganj Upazila (ID No. 173455116), District-Niphahamari.	5,000.00	48,00,000.00	365 days

of Goods and Works under Islamic Development Bank Financing (Current Edition), and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the Guidelines. In addition, please refer to paragraphs 1.18-21 setting forth IsDB's policy on conflict of interest.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents during the office hours 08:00 to 15:00 hours on all working days up to 11 October 2022, to Mr. Sujan Kumar Kar, XEN, Office of the Executive Engineer, LGED, Dakbanglow Road, Nilphamari.

A complete set of bidding documents (in English) may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the Office of the Executive Engineer, LGED, District: Nilphamari, Bangladesh, Telephone: 0551-61485, Email: xen.nilphamari@lged.gov.bd and upon payment of a non-refundable fee as mentioned in table above only during office hours on all working days until 11:00 hours on 11 October 2022. The method of payment will be in the form of Cash, Pay Order/Bank Draft from any scheduled Bank in Bangladesh, drawn in favor of Executive Engineer, LGED, District: Nilphamari. The Document may be sent by air mail or courier or may be collected through authorized representatives of the bidders.

Bid must be delivered to the address below on or before 11:30 hours on 12 October 2022. Electronic Bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened at 11:30 hours on 12 October 2022 in the presence of the bidders' designated representatives and anyone who choose to attend at the address below.

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid security of amount BDT 48,00,000.00. Address referred to the above is: Office of the Executive Engineer, LGED, Dakbanglow Road, Nilphamari.

> Sujan Kumar Kar **Executive Engineer** LGED District: Nilphamari, Bangladesh Telephone: 0551-61485 Email: xen.nilphamari@lged.gov.bd Website: www.lged.gov.bd

## The bill for climate change impacts should be shared



Mostafiz Uddin and CEO of Bangladesh Denim Expo and Bangladesh Apparel Exchange (BAE).

#### **MOSTAFIZ UDDIN**

upon us. Recently, devastating floods in neighbouring Pakistan have killed more than 1,000 people, leaving many more homeless.

This tragedy followed the deadly floods that hit north-eastern India and Bangladesh earlier in May. More than nine million people in both countries were affected, and around 300 were killed. Millions of people across the affected areas were left in urgent need of food and medicine.

Climate change is also impacting business and industry. This was brought into sharp focus in my own industry, garment production, with the Pakistan floods. Recent news reports show these floods severely damaged the country's cotton crop. Local dispatches indicate that around 40-45 percent of the cotton crop is submerged (at the time of writing this article) in the major cotton production areas of Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan.

This could potentially lead to a sizeable reduction in cotton output, placing further supply pressures on the global market and raising prices. This will, in theory, affect Bangladeshi garment makers if the global price of cotton increases. Meanwhile, a drought in the US has also reduced the cotton crop there this year, impacting global cotton prices and hitting garment makers in Bangladesh and other southeast Asian countries.

In the wake of the Pakistan floods, the country's minister for planning and development, Ahsan Iqbal, said Pakistan was a victim of climate change caused by the "irresponsible development of the developed world." "Our carbon footprint is the

lowest in the world," Iqbal said. "The international community has a responsibility to help us, upgrade our infrastructure, to make our infrastructure more climate resilient, so that we don't have such losses every three, four, five years."

This got me thinking about the nature of climate change, what causes and who is left to foot the bill. It's hard roughly triple that of North America

HEimpacts of climate change are to avoid the feeling right now that countries such as Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan are getting a raw deal where these issues are concerned.

If one looks at typical carbon footprints by country, as a general rule, the highest emissions come from the most developed countries and from oil producers. Among high emitters are the US (around 15 tonnes of CO2 emissions per capita), Canada (14.9 tonnes), Japan and Germany (both around nine tonnes), and the UK

For context, figures for Bangladesh and Pakistan are 0.47 and 0.87 metric tonnes per capita, respectively. Many

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other garment production hubs, which in several cases are lesser developed countries (LDCs), have relatively low CO2 emissions.

There is an irony here, however. While the likes of Bangladesh might be relatively low in emitting CO2, there is no doubt we are disproportionately impacted by climate change. Earlier this year, a study by the World Economic Forum found lower- and middle-income countries are most likely to face GDP losses due to climate change, with South Asia most at risk.

The study said Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka's exposure to wildfires, floods, major storms and also water shortages mean South it, where it has the biggest impacts Asia has 10-18 percent of GDP at risk,

RMG NOTES and 10 times more than the leastaffected region, Europe.

I believe Bangladesh should stand is the managing director of Denim on its own two feet as an economy wherever possible and ensure that we are not constantly asking for handouts from the global community. At the same time, it seems unfair that poor countries such as ours should have to foot the bill for a problem which is not necessarily of our making. To this end, I think Pakistan's planning and development minister is correct when he says that his country is a victim of climate change caused by the "irresponsible development of the developed world." His frustration is perfectly understandable.

I have no doubt that many Western countries are now attempting to reduce their CO2 emissions and associated climate impacts via netzero strategies. Some are having considerable success with this and emissions are falling.

But, as we have already seen in recent years, the damage is – to some extent – already done and countries such as ours are witnessing the climate impacts of rapid industrial development in the West (and, of course, China in the past two decades).

As far as my own industry goes, if fashion brands want to continue sourcing cheap clothing from Bangladesh (which I sincerely hope they do), they may wish to consider supporting us with infrastructure and related challenges in the coming years as climate change impacts become more real. I have no doubt extreme weather will impact all our lives, as well as industries such as garment production.

If we want to maintain consistent production, we may need support with industrial upgrading, investment and other measures to ensure our industry is climate-change-proof.

Likewise, there will be years when raw materials' prices go through the roof (as they have done this year) and, again, climate change could well be a reason why. Will fashion brands be prepared to pay higher prices for products to support the extra cost of these inputs for suppliers? Again, I hope they will conclude that this is the fair and right thing to do.

Climate change is a problem which was (largely) made in the West, but we are feeling its impacts in countries like ours more than ever. We can't bear the financial burden of these impacts on our own. Sharing them with global value chains seems the fairest and most sensible way forward.