Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

1. Introduction:

Sustainable development is significantly enhanced by peace, inclusivity, access to justice and efficient governance. However, conflicts and wars persist in certain regions of the world, threatening the overall global environment of peace and stability and consequently diminishing opportunities for sustainable development. Areas that appear to be peaceful and free from conflict may still be indirect victims of the violence occurring elsewhere. High levels of armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a country's development, affecting economic growth and often resulting in long-standing grievances among communities.

SDG 16 aims to significantly reduce violence, and work with governments and communities to find lasting solutions to conflict and insecurity. This goal has been identified as an outcome and at the same time an enabler of sustainable development. In order to create a peaceful state, effective and inclusive institutions are essential that can deliver human needs, like education, healthcare, employments and environmental protection. The inability to establish peace, justice, inclusion and good governance will adversely affect the attainment of the other SDG Goals like eradicating all forms of poverty, enhancing food security, ensuring health and education and promoting economic growth.

Conversely, the successful attainment of various other Sustainable Development Goals is correlated with the achievement of SDG 16. For instance, climate change can act as a threat multiplier, aggravating additional social, environmental and political stressors, which could possibly lead to violence.Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights are key to this process, as well as the control of illicit arms flow and enhancing the participation of developing countries in the global governance institutions.

2. Context:

Peace, stability, human rights, and effective governance based on the rule of law are important instruments for sustainable development. Homogeneous society, communal harmony, and political stability have shaped it as a conflict-free state. Bangladesh is home to a vast population of nearly 180 million people living within a relatively small land area, resulting in very low per capita land ownership.

In such a land-scarce environment, frequent violent conflicts could be expected. However, the country has successfully managed to keep conflict-related casualties to a remarkably low level. This achievement reflects the resilience of its social structures and governance, which have played a crucial role in mitigating violence. Efficient and proactive initiatives from the government have improved the law-and-order situation. As a result, violent crime rates and human trafficking have been within limits. Given that court case backlogs pose a significant threat to access to justice, there has been a concerted effort to encourage the resolution of cases through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

Women and children, as the most vulnerable segments of society, have been the focus of numerous special initiatives aimed at ensuring their safety and security. The increasing rate of women's participation in elected bodies and civil service is encouraging but still, there is scope of improvement.

Identifying corruption as the main hindrance to development, the government is pledge bound to show zero-tolerance against it. Proper and effective implementation of various governance tools is expected to create a responsive, transparent and accountable public service, which in turn will act as preventive measures against bribery and corruption.

The largest challenge to achieving SDG 16 in South Asia is to address systemic issues. Besides, most of the indicators for SDG 16 are classified as Tier II in South Asia, indicating that regular data on the indicators are not produced by the countries. Therefore, in spite of introducing various governance improvement initiatives, it remains challenging to showcase the actual results due to the non-availability of relevant data of various indicators of Goal-16.

3. Progress against targets:

All forms of violence, absence of rule of law, access to justice, financial and organized crimes, corruption and bribery, limited access to information, and other social constraints act as pivotal constraints in establishing sustainable peace, justice, and strong institutions. As elsewhere, peace, human rights, stability, and effective governance are essential preconditions of sustainable development. The government is working towards upholding the values of peace, justice, and strong institutions which are put forward by SDG16. As a result, several indicators have shown rapid progress such as the number of victims of intentional homicide and human trafficking has declined significantly. Towards building accountable institutions and combating corruption in public services, the government is implementing various initiatives including Annual Performance Agreements (APAs), National Integrity Strategy (NIS), and Grievance Redress System (GRS) etc. The Overall progress against the Targets is given below.

Sl	SDGs Indicators	Baseline figures (source of data)	Latest Available figures (source of data)	Target 2030	Comments (if any)
1	2	3	4	5	6
16.1.1	Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age	1.94 (BP, MoHA, 2015)	1.41 (BP, MoHA, 2022)	1.0	
16.1.2	Conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, by sex, age and cause	0.85 (BP, MoHA, 2015)	0.17 (BP, MoHA, 2018)	-	
16.1.3	Proportion of population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence and (c) sexual violence in the previous 12	Female 57.7% (VAWS 2015, BBS)	-	Female 30%	Violence Against Women (VAW) Survey 2024 report will be available by

Sl	SDGs Indicators	Baseline figures (source of data)	Latest Available figures (source of data)	Target 2030	Comments (if any)
	months				February 2025.
16.1.4	Proportion of population that feel safe walking alone around the area they live	Urban 88.53 Rural 84.67 Always 85.85 Male 87.88 Female 83.71 Sometimes 9.55 Male 8.35 Female 10.82 [CPHS, BBS, 2018]	-	Always 90%	The Citizen Perception Survey (CPS) will be conducted by December 2024.
16.2.1	Proportion of children aged 1-17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month	Total 88.5 Urban 88.9 Rural 88.4 [MICS 2019, BBS]	-	70.0	Next round of Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) has been planned to conduct by January 2025.
16.2.2	Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation	Total 1.78 M-1.14 F-0.64 (BP, MoHA, 2015)	Total 0.72 Male 0.90 Female 0.54 (BP, MoHA, 2022)	0	
16.2.3	Proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18	Female 3.45 (VAWS 2015, BBS)	-	Female:0	Violence Against Women (VAW) Survey 2024 report will be available by February 2025.
16.3.1	Proportion of victims of violence in the previous 12 months who reported their victimization to competent authorities or other officially recognized conflict resolution mechanisms	2.45 (VAWS 2015, BBS)	-	Female:30	Violence Against Women (VAW) Survey 2024 report will be available by February 2025.
16.3.2	Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population	76.5 (DoP, MoHA, 2016)	71.43 (DoP, MoHA, 2024)	40%	
16.3.3	Proportion of the population who have experienced a dispute in the past two years and who accessed a formal or informal dispute resolution	Total 97 Formal 78 Informal 22 [CPHS, BBS, 2018]	-	-	The Citizen Perception Survey (CPS) will be conducted by December 2024.

Sl	SDGs Indicators	Baseline figures (source of data)	Latest Available figures (source of data)	Target 2030	Comments (if any)
	mechanism, by type of mechanism				
16.4.1	Total value of inward and outward illicit financial flows (in current United States dollars	-	-	-	
16.4.2	Proportion of seized, found or surrendered arms whose illicit origin or context has been traced or established by a competent authority in line with international instruments	Recovered arms: 123 Recovered ammunition: (Ammunition: 2808, Cartridge 1014)	-	-	
16.5.1	Proportion of persons who had at least one contact with a public official and who paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months	Total 31.32 Male 28.91 Female 35.02 [CPHS, BBS, 2018]	-	10%	The Citizen Perception Survey (CPS) will be conducted by December 2024.
16.5.2	Proportion of business that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months	41 (Establishment Survey, WB, 2013)	23 (Establishment Survey, WB, 2022)	10%	
16.6.1	Primary government expenditures as a proportion of original approved budget, by sector (or by budget codes or similar)	Education & Technology 92 Health 93 SP 73 Agriculture 84 LGD & D 100 Housing 95 (FD, 2015-16)	Total 80.4 (FD, 2017-18)	Education & Technology 95 Health 95 SP 85 Agriculture 95 LGD & D 100 Housing 95	
16.6.2	Proportion of population satisfied with their last experience of public services	39.69% [CPHS, BBS, 2018]	-	90%	The Citizen Perception Survey (CPS) will be conducted by December 2024.

Sl	SDGs Indicators	Baseline figures (source of data)	Latest Available figures (source of data)	Target 2030	Comments (if any)
16.7.1	Proportion of positions in national and local public institutions, including (a) the legislatures; (b) the public service; and (c) the judiciary, compared to national distributions, by sex, age, persons with disabilities and population groups	a) 19.2 2019 b) 0.53 (Female) (MoPA, 2017) c) 0.56 (Female) (LJD, 2019)	a) – b) 0.67 (Female) (MoPA, 2021) c) 0.56 (Female) (LJD, 2022)	-	
16.7.2	Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group	-	-	-	
16.8.1	Proportion of members and voting rights of developing countries in international organizations	Amount 0.2800 Votes 0.2900 Amount 0.3700 Votes 0.3800 Amount 1.0190 Votes 1.1090 Votes 0.5181 Amount 0.0000 Votes 0.0000 Votes 1.8519 Amount 0.2200 Votes 0.2400 Votes 0.6098 (ERD, 2018)	-	-	
16.9.1	Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age	Total 56.2% Urban 54.0 Rural 56.8 (MICS, 2019, BBS)	Total 39.66 Less than 1 Year11.42 1 Year 39.1 2 Years 45.18 3 Years 48.93 4 Years 55.01 2023	100%	Next round of Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) has been planned to conduct by January 2025.
16.10.1	Number of verified cases of killing, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention and torture of journalists, associated media personnel, trade unionists and human rights advocates in the previous 12 months	1 (NHRC, 2019)	3 (NHRC, 2023)	-	

Sl	SDGs Indicators	Baseline figures (source of data)	Latest Available figures (source of data)	Target 2030	Comments (if any)
16.10.2	Number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and/or policy guarantees for public access to information	9 2015	9 2022	-	
16.a.1	Existence of independent national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles	Ratio B 2020	Ratio B 2022	-	
16.b.1	Proportion of population reporting having personally felt discriminated against or harassed in the previous 12 months on the basis of a ground of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law	Total 35.6 Male 35.09 Female 36.29 [CPHS, BBS, 2018]	-	15%	The Citizen Perception Survey (CPS) will be conducted by December 2024.

Indicators ON Track:

16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 populations, by sex and age:

SL	SDGs Indicators	Baseline figures (source of data)	Latest Available figures (source of data)	Target for 2030	Comments (if any)
16.1.1	Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, by sex and age	1.94 (BP, MoHA, 2015)	1.41 (BP, MoHA, 2022)	1.0	

Analyzing the data for indicator 16.1.1, it can be observed that the number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population, categorized by sex and age, was 1.94 in 2015 and decreased to 1.41 in 2022. This decline indicates a reduction in the number of intentional homicide victims, bringing the achievement closer to the target set for 2030.

16.2.2 Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation

SL	SDGs Indicators	Baseline figures (source of data)	Latest Available figures (source of data)	Target for 2030	Comments (if any)
16.2.2	Number of victims of human trafficking per 100,000 population, by sex, age and form of exploitation	Total 1.78 M-1.14 F-0.64 (BP, MoHA, 2015)	Total 0.72 Male 0.90 Female 0.54 (BP, MoHA, 2022)	0	

The data for indicator 16.1.2 indicates that conflict-related deaths per 100,000 population, categorized by sex, age, and cause, were 0.85 in 2015 and decreased to 0.17 in 2018. This trend demonstrates that both the number of victims of intentional homicide and conflict-related deaths are declining.

16.3.2 Unsentenced Detainees as a Proportion of the overall Prison Population

SL	SDGs Indicators	Baseline figures (source of data)	Latest Available figures (source of data)	Target for 2030	Comments (if any)
	16.3.2 Unsentenced Detainees as a Proportion of the overall Prison Population	**Baseline data** 76.5% (2016)	The number of Un-sentenced detainees or under trial prisoners as a proportion of the overall prison population is 71.43 percent up to June,2024. Data source: the Prisons Directorate	40 % percent by 2030	It is to be mentioned that reduction of un-sentenced detainees is largely depends on the decision of Learned Court

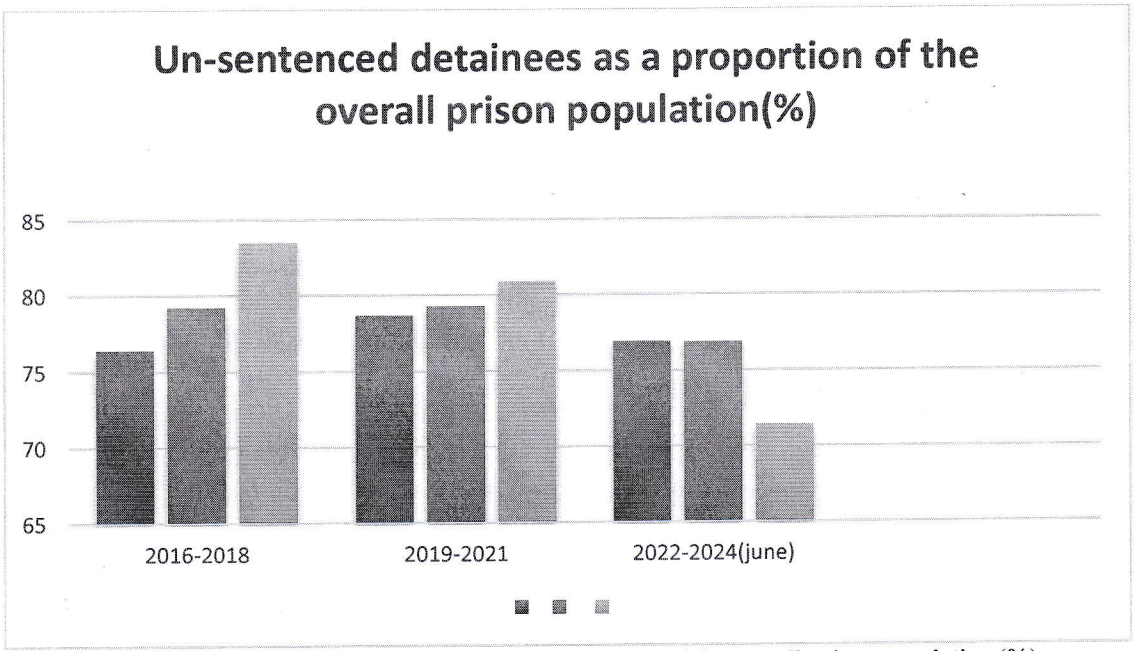


Figure: **Un-sentenced detainees as a proportion of the overall prison population (%)**

Analyzing the graph, it is evident that the proportion of un-sentenced detainees within the overall prison population increased during the periods of 2016-2018 and 2019-2021, with a slight decrease observed in 2022 up to June. The shortage of investigation officers has resulted in significant delays in investigating cases involving prison inmates, consequently hindering the courts' ability to dispose of cases promptly.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Prisons Directorate implemented a Virtual Court system to facilitate hearings for inmates, which helped mitigate the impact on achieving judicial targets.

Additionally, the Prisons Directorate issued instructions to all prisons across the country to assist distressed and vulnerable inmates in accessing legal aid services for the resolution of their cases.

16.5.2 Proportion of business that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months

Sl	SDGs Indicators	Baseline figures (source of data)	Latest Available figures (source of data)	Target 2030	Comments (if any)
16.5.2	Proportion of business that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months	41 (Establishment Survey, WB, 2013)	23 (Establishment Survey, WB, 2022)	10	

Also analyzing the data of indicator 16.5.2 it is observed that proportion of business that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months was 41 in 2013 & now it is 23 in 2022.

4. Challenges:

There are several key challenges in implementing SDG 16 especially since the Covid-19 pandemic has increased violence and reversed steps for several of the SDGs. The international community is weakened and focusing more on hard security than on human security in peace processes. Although several actions have been implemented, there still exist some factors that impede success in these areas.

- Non-availability of baseline data of some indicators stands as one of the main challenges in achieving this goal. Available data will have to be updated regularly by the line ministries to undertake appropriate actions are also challenging. To determine the current situation and track the progress, producing relevant and quality data consistently is a prime need.
- Although there are laws to address most of the legal issues, lack of proper implementation is constraining success in crime reduction.
- Though various governance tools have been implemented, their effectiveness has not yet proven in creating accountable and responsive public service.
- Without citizen's engagement and participation, these governance initiatives will not add more value. Citizens are not conscious about their rights regarding RTI, CC and GRS etc. So, it is very much challenging to engage and aware citizens with these governance initiatives.
- Proper representation of local government/community level in decision-making process.

5. Way forward

- It is necessary to generate relevant and quality data on regular basis. An efficient monitoring mechanism supported by a credible database can contribute to positive change in achieving SDGs targets.
- Capacity building of the government officials along with proper functioning accountability mechanisms can be a catalyst in shaping our governance context. Research and study should be done to find out ways to make our governance tools more effective. Meaningful participation and engagement of the citizen in the governance process should be ensured to bring out the desired outcome.
- Proactive initiatives should be taken to detect discriminatory provisions in various laws so that justice can be ensured irrespective of sex, religion, caste, race and social status. More judicial officers should be deployed with proper training so that backlog of court cases can be minimized.
- Strong political commitment, productive people's involvement and raising ethics and morality will be a catalyst in preventing corruption and bribery in all forms. The parliamentarians/local representatives can participate in creating an enabling environment, raising the voice of the poor people, and making SDG implementation more socially inclusive and people oriented.
- Enhancing and improving public administration, public institutions, and overall governance are vital for attaining the SDGs. Therefore, an effective coordination mechanism, continued strong political leadership, a forward-looking attitude among government employees, and a practical, transparent, and accountable legal framework that guides governance within the public administration is crucial for ensuring economic prosperity and achieving SDGs.
- To maintain solid momentum towards implementing Agenda 2030, not only an enabling and effective public administration and institutions are required, but also an environment with order, public safety, and the rule of law to ensure investments within the sphere to enjoy predictable, effective, and equitable legal framework are urgently needed. This considerable and adequate investment in institutional reforms and strengthening will ensure that they are guided by the most relevant laws, infrastructure, and human capital.

6. Effects of COVID-19 in implementing the goal in Bangladesh and how the challenges are resolved/tackled can be used in a box

Facing Covid-19 was a new challenge in implementing development project. The total shutdown of every single work, people under lockdown and health issues were alarming for the whole world. Enquiry and investigation were delayed along with the prosecution of cases. Work from home using mobile, laptop, internet, and other technological equipment advents the new journey of ICT based digital offices. The challenges of covid-19 were tackled by using ICT in office works, advancement of technological support, digitalization of the office environment.

7. Best practices/best cases

1. NIS: The National Integrity Strategy provides a comprehensive framework aimed at improving governance across sectors. Under the direction and Guidance of Cabinet Division Ethics Committees have been formed at Ministries/Divisions, attached bodies/Departments and field level offices to promote integrity. Ministries/Divisions also formulating and implementing NIS Work-plan since 2015. Ministries/Divisions have been instructed to undertake at least 3 activities according to their respective types of work to promote integrity and prevent corruption in the process of those activities. Implemented NISWPs by Ministries/Divisions have been started to evaluate since FY 2018-19. Integrity Award (amendment) Policy, 2021 has been introduced to encourage practicing integrity among the public servants.
2. After5thAugust, to increase public ownership, accountability and welfare the new Interim government has formulated six commissions to reform the judiciary, election system, public administration, police, Anti-Corruption Commission, and the constitution.
3. In terms of improving access to basic services and governance, Bangladesh has implemented several effective mechanisms. The establishment of Citizen Charters enhances transparency and accountability in public services, while Grievance Redress Systems ensure that citizens can voice their concerns and receive prompt responses. The Right to Information (RTI) Act further empowers citizens by promoting access to information, fostering a culture of openness within government institutions. Additionally, the adoption of e-governance solutions has streamlined service delivery and increased efficiency, ultimately enhancing the overall governance landscape. Together, these practices contribute to a more responsive and inclusive system that prioritizes the needs of the population, ensuring that social protection efforts are effectively implemented and accessible to all.

8. Innovative cases

Bangladesh has made significant progress in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) through innovative initiatives that promote peace, justice, and inclusive governance. A prime example of this is the Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC), which has leveraged community radio stations to empower marginalized communities. BNNRC implemented a groundbreaking fellowship program aimed at reducing social discrimination and increasing the participation of disadvantaged youth in community media. This initiative not only provided young people with valuable training in journalism and broadcasting but also empowered them to become catalysts for change within their communities.

The impact of BNNRC's program extends far beyond skill development. By fostering dialogue and creating a platform for local voices, the initiative has enabled communities to exercise their rights more effectively, influence local governance, and share critical information. This has resulted in a more informed and engaged citizenry, contributing significantly to the goals of SDG 16.

9. **Business cases**

The business case for Bangladesh in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) emphasizes that pursuing peace, justice, and effective governance will significantly enhance economic activities and drive GDP growth. By embedding the SDGs into various national frameworks, including the Five-Year Plans and the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS), Bangladesh demonstrates its commitment to sustainable development. This strategic alignment is expected to attract both foreign and domestic investments, ultimately leading to poverty reduction and increased prosperity.

Furthermore, fostering a peaceful and inclusive society not only contributes to economic stability but also creates a more favorable environment for businesses to thrive. The initiatives aimed at strengthening governance and promoting justice are crucial for building investor confidence and ensuring long-term economic sustainability. As a result, the implementation of SDG 16 is not just a moral imperative but a strategic opportunity for Bangladesh to enhance its socio-economic landscape while contributing to global peace and inclusivity.

10. **Collaborative cases**

In Bangladesh, collaborative efforts to attain Sustainable Development Goal 16 (SDG 16) are exemplified by organizations like Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) and the Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC). ASK plays a crucial role in promoting human rights and access to justice by providing legal aid and advocacy for marginalized communities. Through its community-based programs, ASK empowers individuals to understand their rights and navigate the legal system, thereby fostering a culture of accountability and transparency. This initiative not only enhances social justice but also contributes to building strong institutions that are essential for sustainable development.

Similarly, BNNRC has implemented programs aimed at reducing social discrimination and increasing the participation of marginalized youth in community media. By equipping these individuals with skills in journalism and broadcasting, BNNRC empowers them to become active participants in their communities, sharing vital information and influencing local governance. These collaborative efforts highlight the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement in realizing the ambitious targets set forth by SDG 16.

11. **Ensure Leave No One Behind**

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in terms of institutionalizing the SDGs implementation mechanism and developing the integrated policy framework for Agenda 2030. Leave no one behind (LNOB) is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Cabinet division works to ensure everyone's participation in preventing and eradicating corruption. It also arranges seminars, workshop etc. among the local communities to ensure public participation and mass awareness among the nation.

12. Annex

a. Indicators' baseline figures and latest available figures with source of data

b. list of participants attending the consultation meetings/workshops

c. Pictures showing the participants of the consultation meetings/workshop