

5 GENDER
EQUALITY



Articulation of Gender Equality (SDG 5) in Bangladesh along with Daffodil International University

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1. Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 interlinked goals designed to be a "blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all". The SDGs, set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and intended to be achieved by the year 2030, are part of a UN Resolution called the "2030 Agenda". However, among the 17 SDGs, SDG 5 is about Gender Equality and is one of the 17 SDGs. The official wording of SDG 5 is "Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". The SDGs aim to build on these achievements to ensure that there is an end to discrimination against women and girls everywhere. It is true that there are still huge inequalities in the labor market in some regions, with women systematically denied equal access to jobs. Sexual violence and exploitation, the unequal division of unpaid care and domestic work, and discrimination in public office, all remain huge barriers. Affording women equal rights to economic resources such as land and property are vital targets to realizing this goal. So is ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health. Today there are more women in public office than ever before, but encouraging women leaders will help strengthen policies and legislation for greater gender equality. Gender equality is a way to bring about such a change and establish a conscious, loving, kind and compassionate world. Significant progress was achieved during the 2000-2015 period in achieving gender equality worldwide. Girls' enrolment into schools expanded significantly and many countries achieved gender parity in primary as well as secondary education. Women participation in the labour force outside agriculture increased noticeably. Despite such progress gender inequality persists in various forms depriving women and girls of their basic rights and opportunities. Achieving gender equality and ensuring women's and girl's empowerment are essential to accelerate economic growth and promote social development. Goal 5 emphasizes

elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls, elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls, and elimination of harmful practices affecting child and women. Ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health, and affording women equal rights to economic resources such as land and property are important for attaining the goal. Enhancing use of enabling technology especially ICT and adoption of sound policies and enforceable legislation are also vital for this goal. Above all, a legal framework to promote, enforce and monitor equality and nondiscrimination needs to be in place.

2. SDG 5 and Government of Bangladesh

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics has conducted two surveys –one in 2011 and the other in 2015, to identify incidence of violence against women. In 2011 the percentage of women subjected to any form of violence by her current intimate partner in the last 12 months from the survey period stood at 66.9. In 2015, 54.7 per cent of ever-partnered women and girls were subjected to any form violence by their husbands. There is no corresponding data for violence inflicted on by past intimate partner in 2015. The lower value of the indicator in 2015 implies a reduction in the number of occurrences between the two survey periods indicating an improvement in women's situation. But as BBS (2016) points out the observed difference may be due to methodological differences between the two surveys rather than actual differences.

In Bangladesh, the progresses on SDG 5 are as following:

- The proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 years stood at 10.70 per cent and before age 18 years 47 per cent which registered some decline over time

- About a quarter of women's daily time is spent on such work. The proportion of female members in the Parliament has been slowly increasing over time reaching 20.57 per cent in 2017.
- Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age.
- Bangladesh ranks 48 in global ranking of countries with a score of 0.721 indicating significantly better performance in promoting women empowerment compared to her South Asian neighbors.
- Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments
- Gender Parity Index in tertiary education to be raised from current 0.70 to 1.0.
- The ratio of literate female to male for age group 20-24 to be raised to 100% from the current 86%.
- Increase the share of female officers (Grade-9 and above) in the public sector to 25% by 2020.
- Spending on Social Protection as a share of GDP to be increased to 2.3% of GDP.
- Reduce Income Inequality from 0.458 to downward
- According to recent available data (HIES 2016) income inequality has increased while consumption inequality has remained relatively stable.

3. SGD 5 regarding Daffodil International University:

Daffodil International University (DIU) is recognized in independent government assessments as one of top graded universities in Bangladesh. The university has been founded by Daffodil Group with the approval of the Ministry of Education

under the Private University Act of 1992 and its amendment in 1998 and Daffodil International University came into being on 24th January 2002, the University today combines impressive modern facilities and a dynamic approach to teaching and research with its proud heritage of service and achievement. The queue of achievements regarding SDG 5 of DIU is a significant one from the very beginning. The faculty members are highly qualified with brilliant academic backgrounds and many have vast experiences in teaching and research. Besides, DIU has a very vast employee team. And to appoint the faculty members at different departments as well as to appoint the staff, the DIU authority strictly follows the rules regarding gender equality. Not only that, to admit the students at DIU, the admission authority also follows and ensure the rules related to the gender equality. As a result, a lot of female teachers, staff and female students are serving and studying at DIU besides the male teachers, staff and students and both male and female teachers, staff and students are getting the same facilities at DIU and here there is no gender discrimination.

4. DIU Policies Related to Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

4.1. Women Access, Participation, Counseling and Mentoring Policy

Daffodil International University (DIU) believes in equality in opportunities and services of the university irrespective of gender, religion, culture, castes etc. DIU is committed to ensure and implement equal treatment and opportunity for its students maintaining an impartial environment and ensuring access, participation and flourishing of women in all academic, administrative and extra-curricular activities.

- I. No barrier or restriction will be imposed on female students' admission in any program at DIU. Female applicants will be allowed for admission if they fulfill minimum admission criteria.

- II. As per admission policy of DIU, female students are encouraged to access and participate in higher education through providing a general 10 percent waiver of tuition fees for all the programs. Additional waiver on tuition fees access or scholarship will be available in case of better semester grades and family crises, for example loss of parents, critical illness of parents, natural disasters etc.
- III. Female students will be assigned with a female faculty member from the respective department who will act as their counselor/adviser (must be a teacher) for the entire study period at DIU. The student will be able to meet the assigned counselor during the scheduled time to discuss and take guidance regarding her personal, financial, academic, psychological problems etc. The counselor will carefully listen to the student and try to guide them to solve the problem. The counselor will arrange psychological treatment for the student from DIU Medical Center or outside hospital.
- IV. Student counseling & Admission department will keep separate records of all male and female applicants who applied for admission and who got admitted. The office of the Controller of Examinations of DIU will track and maintain separate records of male and female students graduated from each program in each semester.
- V. The female students will have equal opportunity and open access to be member of any of the students clubs of the university and participate to any events organized. The female students will take the opportunity of separate toilet facility available to them in each floor of every building of the university.
- VI. The University Administration will ensure childcare facilities for student mother and female faculty. The female faculty members will enjoy the existing maternity leave provision of DIU.
- VII. The Directorate of Students' Affairs (DSA) will guide, motivate and provide assistance to the students, especially the female and disabled for accessing all relevant facilities and services (i.e., transport, child care, library, gymnasium, hostel, club, ramp for disabled person, medical, counseling, lab, laptop etc.) of the university.
- VIII. DSA in collaboration with NGOs, educational institutions, local community will carry out outreach activities to encourage the women to

get admitted in different subjects such as, engineering, mathematics, journalism, real estate etc. where they are underrepresented.

4.2. Anti-Harassment and Non-Discriminatory Policy

Introduction:

Daffodil International University (DIU) is committed to ensure and implement equal treatment and opportunity for its students, faculty members and administrative employees maintaining an impartial environment and ensuring anti-discrimination & anti-harassment and to establish proper procedures for making complaint and allegations involving university students and staff. The University recognizes and values the diversity of experiences and expectations of its students and staff and is committed to treating them both academically, administratively and personally, in a fair and transparent manner.

Objectives:

- To safeguard the interest of students and staff of DIU against discrimination and harassment
- To protect any discrimination due to educational and employment disadvantage
- To ensure non-discrimination for transgender people in campus
- To safeguard the interest of persons with disability in campus
- To ensure an impartial, justified, true, fair and conducive environment for university stakeholders

Policy:

1. The Daffodil International University (DIU) strives to maintain a fair and respectful environment for living, work and study. DIU follows zero tolerance to any indecent activity, discrimination (religion, gender including transgender, ethnicity, age, designation, castes etc.) any kind of harassment (sexually assault against women), violence in the university campuses at any level.
2. This policy applies to all students, faculty members and administrative employees of Daffodil International University (including transgender people in campus) to safeguard their interest against any kind of discrimination, violence and harassment.
3. No one is allowed to make any discrimination and harassment with anyone including person(s) with disability (any kind of indecent behavior, violence, attitude, treatment, indication, mental harassment, ragging,

bullying, fraud, deception, theft, sexual assault which affects the normal movement, education, discussion & activities, receiving university services etc.) inside the campus

4. If any student violates the rules of the university, preventive measures will be taken against the offenders(s) to maintain peace and academic environment of the university.
5. If anyone faces any discrimination and harassment in any form as mentioned above or beyond, s/he will have to formally make a written complaint to the Complaint Committee of DIU. The list of designated member(s) of the complaint committee of DIU for different campuses is given below:

For Campus	Name and Designation
Permanent Campus	1. Ms. Liza Sharmin Associate Professor and Associate Head, Department of English, Permanent Campus E-mail: liza.eng@diu.edu.bd
	2. Ms. Sabikunnaher Noni Lecturer, Department of Law & Female House Tutor, Permanent Campus E-mail: sabfkunnaher.law@diu.edu.bd
	3. Professor Dr. Farhana Helal Mehtab Professor and Associate Dean, FHSS and Chairperson, Complaint Committee to Prevent Sexual Harassment, DIU. Email: farhana@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd
City Campus: Daffodil Tower & CSE Building	4. Ms. Nazmun Nessa Moon Assistant Professor, Department of CSE, DIU E-mail: moon@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd
	5. Ms. Irina Ishrat Assistant Professor, Department of English Email: irina@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd
	6. Ms. Sanjida Amin Shila Student Counselor Email: shila@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd
	7. Ms. Fahrni Hasan Administrative Officer, DSA Email: fahmi@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd
City Campus: Main Campus & Daffodil Tower-04	8. Professor Dr. Md. Golam Mowla Choudhury Controller of Examinations and Proctor

For Campus

Name and Designation

E-mail: examcontroller@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd
gmcw9f@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd

- 9. Ms. Kamrun Nahar Aziz
Senior Assistant Registrar, DIU
Email: registraroffice@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd

**City Campus:
Uttara Campus**

- Ms. Tanzina Hossain
Associate Professor, Department of Business Admin. &
Academic Director of Uttara Campus
Email: tanzina_diu@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd

6. The complaint committee, upon receiving the complaint, will make preliminary scrutiny and if the incidence seems fact to them, they will submit the complaint along with their primary comments to the Disciplinary committee of the University for Detail Investigation and solution to the complaint.
7. The Disciplinary Committee, upon receiving the complaint from the Complaint committee, will investigate the issue with due diligence maintaining full care, confidentiality and in a true and fair manner so that justice can be ensured.
8. The Disciplinary committee, after a true and fair investigation and depending on the degree of offence, will submit a report along with their recommendation of taking a measure against the rule violator(s) to DIU Management Committee for final decision. Punishment may be warnings, expulsion for one or more semester or expelled for good from the university depending on the gravity of the offence. Guardians will be involved in this process. The degree of measures to be taken in relation to the degree of offences are given below:

Type	Description of rules violations	Measures Against	
		Students	Staff
Gender Harassment/ Eve Teasing	Sexual harassment or Eve Teasing or transgender harassment is defined as inappropriate, unwanted and unwelcome conduct or behavior of a sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be suspended for one or more semester. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued Warning Letter ○ May be financially

	<p>nature perceived as harassment by the receiver, which has an adverse effect on the dignity of women and men both inside and in certain circumstances outside the University. These cases will be overlooked by the Gender Harassment committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be expelled from the university permanently. 	<p>penalized ranging from 10 days salary to one month salary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be permanently terminated from the job
<p>Discrimination/Harassment for Physical Disability</p>	<p>Discrimination/Harassment for Physical Disability is defined as any kind of indecent behavior, violence, attitude, treatment, indication, mental harassment, sexual assault which affects the normal movement, education, discussion & activities, receiving university services (including disability services) etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued Warning Letter ○ May be suspended for one or more semester. ○ May be expelled from the university 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued Warning Letter ○ May be financially penalized ranging from 10 days salary to one month salary ○ May be permanently terminated

Category	Description	Penalties	Additional Penalties
Ragging and Bullying	Ragging/Bullying can include: intimidation, humiliation, ridicule or offence; physical threats; exercise of power over another through negative behavior; insulting, abusing, disparaging or intimidating behavior or words'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued Warning Letter ○ May be suspended for one or more semester. ○ May be expelled from the university 	<p>from the job</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued Warning Letter ○ May be financially penalized ranging from 10 days salary to one month salary ○ May be permanently terminated from the job
Intolerance/Racism	All members of the University are expected to be tolerant and respectful towards others irrespective of race, religion, class, gender creed or status in the University or with the community at large. Any attitude or conduct of an individual or group of individuals failing to be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued Warning Letter ○ May be suspended for one or more semester. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued Warning Letter ○ May be financially penalized ranging from 10 days

	so respectful and tolerant and disrespect to others is an act of intolerance.		salary to one month salary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be permanently terminated from the job
Fraud/ Deception/Theft	Providing false information in order to derive benefit by forging of documents, records, etc. is an act of fraud. Fraud includes, but not limited to: knowingly reporting a false emergency; misuse or falsification of university or related documents by actions such as forgery, alteration, or improper transfer; submission of information known by the submitter to be false to a university official. Theft is defined as stealing any resources/devices/instruments which are not owned by him/her or s/he is not allowed to use those resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued Warning Letter ○ May be suspended for one or more semester. ○ May be expelled from the university 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued Warning Letter ○ May be financially penalized ranging from 10 days salary to one month salary ○ May be permanently terminated from the job
Unauthorized Recording	Recording, storage, sharing, distribution of images, videos or	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May be issued Warning

	<p>sound by any means without consent is unauthorized recording and is strictly prohibited in the University.</p>	<p>Warning Letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ May be suspended for one or more semester.	<p>g Letter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ May be financially penalized ranging from 10 days salary to one month salary○ May be permanently terminated from the job
<p>Cyber-Crime</p>	<p>Misbehavior and crimes committed through email, blogs, social networking sites, DIU network or DIU Web Portal, or mobile phones such as: fraud, cheating, identity theft, harassment, pornography, subversive activities, indecent behavior, software and media piracy, web-site vandalism, release of viruses or worms, spam, advertising,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ May be issued Warning Letter○ May be suspended for one or more semester.○ May be expelled from the university	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ May be issued Warning Letter○ May be financially penalized ranging from 10 days salary to one month salary○ May be perma

spying, hacking and
cyber- bullying.

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the job

9. The respective committee will make a case based report as well as a yearly report and submit the reports to the Vice Chancellor of the university. The office of the Registrar will take necessary measures as directed by the Vice Chancellor.

The policy will be widely circulated among all stakeholders of by the Public Relations Section of Daffodil International University.

4.3. Maternity Leave Policy

Maternity Leave Policy

1. Female employees shall be entitled to avail Maternity Leave up to two births during her entire service career with the university according to the following provisions. In case of more than two births, Maternity Leave can be taken on without pay basis upon approval of the authority.
2. Employee should inform her supervisor regarding her pregnancy stage at least 2 months before the date she expects to apply for ML.
3. Paid Maternity Leave shall be granted for a period of maximum 12 weeks (3 months); if extended beyond this period, will be counted on without pay.
4. Paid Maternity Leave shall only be granted after one year of employment and completion of probation period.
5. A female employee must not be dismissed or terminated during the period mentioned herein, unless fraud or other gross offense of moral turpitude or misconduct is observed.
6. All Maternity Leave must be approved by the Vice Chancellor or any other person authorized by him.
7. ML can be extended for additional one month on without pay with the approval of the authority.

4.4. Policy for Managing Women's Career Counseling Services

Women's Counseling Program at Daffodil International University has been developed for ensuring women's participation and easy access to relevant institutions/ organizations.

- I. The women's mentoring service will provide guidance for planning their future career path, and improving skills and broaden their networks with the relevant industries.
- II. The female students both undergraduate and masters who are at their final year will be eligible to apply for participating in the Women's Mentoring Program.
- III. Directorate of Students' Affairs of DIU will be responsible for maintaining the mentoring program targeting career development of women students. At least two events will be arranged each year where all participants of the program will get opportunity to hear from the successful women and industry experts (government high official, higher corporate executive, entrepreneur, etc.).
- IV. The mentors and mentees should preferably meet once in every three months or as required, with a minimum of at least two face-to-face meetings during the year along with regular email communication.
- V. The program is not intended to guarantee a job placement but support them to be able to design their future career path and secure a job in their area of expertise.
- VI. The Directorate of Students' Affairs of DIU will keep record of the counseling services and make a bi-annual report to the Vice Chancellor of the university

5. Support Initiatives and Events of DIU

5.1. Mentoring Scheme/Policy:

<http://dsa.daffodilvarsity.edu.bd/index.php/introduction>

5.2. Scholarship Policy:

<https://daffodilvarsity.edu.bd/photos/other/waiver-policy.pdf>

5.3. Existing Scholarship Opportunity:

- i) [Professor Dr. M. Lutfar Rahman Scholarship](#)
- ii) [Professor Dr. Aminul Islam Memorial Scholarship](#)
- iii) [Talent Scholarship](#)
- iv) [Peer Scholarship](#)
- v) [Freedom Fighters Ward](#)
- vi) [Shenyang Aerospace University Scholarship](#)
- vii) [Akij Group Scholarship](#)
- viii) [Razia Begum Scholarship](#)

5.4. Targeted Supports for Women:

- DIU Medical Center Facility Link:
<https://daffodilvarsity.edu.bd/medical/diu-medical-center>
- Daffodil Angel's Day Care (Child-care facility):
<https://daffodilvarsity.edu.bd/daycare/>

5.5. Psychological Service Center, Daffodil International University organized a workshop on "Mindfulness"



The Psychological Service Center, Daffodil International University organized a workshop on "Mindfulness" held at Permanent Campus of the University, Ashulia, Savar, Dhaka. The aim of the workshop was to inform the participants regarding the psychological counseling program of DIU. It also helped participants to gain attentional

control, cultivate a nonjudgmental perspective of emotions, thoughts and body sensations and increase the ability to live in the present moment fully rather than focusing on the past or future.

The workshop has been conducted by Ms. Bilkis Khanam, Psychologist of Daffodil International University. In this workshop, DIU psychological service has been introduced to the students and briefed how students can get this service. 30 students from the Department of Software Engineering attended this workshop.

5.6. DIU organized a College level awareness building seminar on "Innovation & Entrepreneurship" at Begum Badrunnesa Govt. Girls' College, Dhaka

The Department of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (DIE) of School of Entrepreneurship (SoE), Daffodil International University (DIU) and Begum Badrunnesa Govt. Girls' College, Dhaka jointly organized a seminar on "Innovation and Entrepreneurship" recently at the Sultana Kamal Seminar Hall of Begum Badrunnesa Govt. Girls' College. More than 150 students and five faculty members of Begum Badrunnesa Govt. Girls' College and faculty members & officials of Daffodil International University attended the seminar.



Mohammad Shibli Shahriar, Head, Department of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Sayad Nurullah Azad, Adjunct Faculty, Department of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Mrittika Shill, Lecturer of Department of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Daffodil International University highlighted the entrepreneurial activities of DIU by providing a vivid picture of the activities



under the School of Entrepreneurship.

5.7. Community Outreach program held at “Gyaner Pathsala (School of knowledge)”- a voluntary initiative of the students of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering of Daffodil International University



Gyaner Pathsala (School of knowledge), a voluntary initiative of the students of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering of Daffodil International University has been providing free outreach educational facilities to the destitute

children of the society. The initiative has been supporting by the Daffodil Institute of Social Sciences (DISS). Through this initiatives, the underprivileged and destitute children are encouraged to become good citizen of the country through proper access to education. The bright, prospective and meritorious students are supported from DISS to develop their life and career. Some events are also arranged with these children for their motivation and entertainment. Very recently, a festive event was organized on the occasion of Holy Eid (largest religious festival of Muslims) as the following picture shows.

5.8. Community Educational Services beyond Campus by the Change Together Association of DIU:



There is no alternative to education and education through game is an effective way to encourage the underprivileged children to education. Keeping this in

mind, the Change Together Club of Daffodil International University initiated education through game for the destitute and underprivileged street children of Dhaka city as part of community schooling outreach program.

5.9. DIU Hosted and Facilitated National Girls' Programming Contest-2019



To acquire the ability to deliver results under pressure and gain the skill of Higher-quality work, there is no alternative to attend in the competitive programming contest for the students who have a dream to contribute in the IT sectors of the country. However, it is observed that, the female participation in the competitive

programming contest of Bangladesh is not that remarkable. This is why National Girls Programming Contest born and play an important role in motivating the young female programmers of Bangladesh.

The “National Girls' Programming Contest 2019” is organized recently by Daffodil International University in collaboration with Department of Computer Science and Engineering , DIU Girls' Computer Programming Club (DIU GCPC), Bangladesh Computer Council and the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology.

Parents' Day- Creating Bonding among Parents, Students and Teachers, Organize by Daffodil International University



To strengthen the triangular relationship of parents, students and teachers, Daffodil International University (DIU) organized a program under its Art of Living course titled “Parents' Day” in each semester. The Directorate of Students’

Affairs of the university arranges this Parent’s Day where students and parents can participate and express thoughts which helps to create a strong bonding among them. Parents appreciate the DIU authority for organizing such a great event regularly where everyone can share their feelings and got the opportunity to meet the people of DIU and spend time with them in an intimate environment.

6. Bangladesh Government initiatives for gender equality (SGD 5):

Bangladesh has been working relentlessly to ensure women’s overall development by ensuring their equal and active participation in the mainstream socio-economic activities and removing the various impediments to their empowerment. Government efforts to achieve SDG 5 Bangladesh was cognizant of the existence of gender differences in the nation and the importance of addressing this issue for women development since independence of the country. The commitment of the nation to address this issue was enshrined in the country’s Constitution.

6.1. Government’s participation in global initiatives

Bangladesh has been a signatory to several important international conventions and agreements on women’s and girls’ rights and development. It ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1984, endorsed the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) in 1995, and

committed itself to the MDGs in 2000 and SDGs in 2015. Regarding policy and legal framework, the Government has adopted several legal and policy measures to uphold the rights of women in the country. Laws formulated include the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010, and the Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Rules 2013, Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act 2012, Hindu Marriage Registration Act 2012 National Acid Crime Prevention Act (amended) 2010, and the Pornography Control Act 2012, National Children Policy 2011, Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017, DNA Act, 2014 and Dowry Prohibition Bill 2018. Other laws addressing national and sectoral issues also paid sufficient attention to women's rights wherever relevant. A notable action of the Government was the adoption of National Women Development Policy 2011 and the Action Plan to implement the policy.

6.2. Policy and legal framework

The Government has adopted several legal and policy measures to uphold the rights of women in the country. Laws formulated include the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010, and the Domestic Violence Prevention and Protection Rules 2013, Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act 2012, Hindu Marriage Registration Act 2012 National Acid Crime Prevention Act (amended) 2010, and the Pornography Control Act 2012, National Children Policy 2011, Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017, DNA Act, 2014 and Dowry Prohibition Bill 2018 (placed to the Parliament). Other laws addressing national and sectoral issues also paid sufficient attention to women's rights wherever relevant. A notable action of the Government was the adoption of National Women Development Policy 2011 and the Action Plan to implement the policy.

6.3. Improve women's human capabilities:

This area deals with women's and girls' access to health care, life expectancy, nutrition, reproductive health, education, information, training, and other services that enable women to achieve better health and educational outcomes. This also includes women's freedom from violence and coercion.

6.4. Increase women's economic benefits

This area relates to women's access to or control over productive assets, resources, services, skills, property, employment, income, information, technology, financial services, and other economic opportunities including community resources such as land, water and forest.

6.5. Creating an enabling environment for women's advancement

The socio-political environment, legal and policy support, and congenial social norms are key in this area. Oversight, enforcement of laws, regular collection of sex-disaggregated data, gender and social analysis skills including the capacity to develop, implement, and monitor gender strategies, understanding of gender issues in the sector are the key areas.

6.6. Gender responsive budget

The Government has taken steps to incorporate gender dimensions in the formal budgeting process. In 2005, the GoB introduced Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in an effort to mainstream gender issues in all policies and decision making. A set of guidelines has also been issued to ensure development projects are prepared and reviewed in a gender sensitive way. The number of Ministries undergoing GRB has increased to 43 in FY 2019 from 4 in FY 2010. The share of expenditure on women development as proportion of total budget increased to 29.65 per cent in FY 2019 which constitutes 5.43 per cent of GDP from 24.65 per cent in FY 2010.

7. Achievements on the SDGs 5 in Bangladesh context:

The Government of Bangladesh has been standing in good stead for its outstanding progress in the areas of gender equality (SDG 5) along with other SDGs. Buoyed by the successes of the MDGs, Bangladesh became one of the forerunners in embracing the SDGs and Bangladesh takes pride as one of the early starters by completing all groundworks for implementing the SDGs. Significant progress was achieved during the 2000-2015 period in achieving gender equality worldwide. Girls' enrolment into schools expanded significantly and many countries achieved gender parity in primary as well as secondary education. Women participation in the labor force outside agriculture increased noticeably. Despite such progress gender inequality persists in various forms

depriving women and girls of their basic rights and opportunities. Achieving gender equality and ensuring women's and girl's empowerment are essential to accelerate economic growth and promote social development. Goal 5 emphasizes elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and girls, elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls, and elimination of harmful practices affecting child and women. Ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health, and affording women equal rights to economic resources such as land and property are important for attaining the goal. Enhancing use of enabling technology especially ICT and adoption of sound policies and enforceable legislation are also vital for this goal. Above all, a legal framework to promote, enforce and monitor equality and nondiscrimination needs to be in place. Rising inequality shows government policies have been inadequate to offset the forces that create inequality in the economy. Increasing inequality has dampened the effect of growth on poverty reduction; the incidence of poverty would have been lower by certain percentage points if inequality did not rise. The trend in rising inequality is also evident from the Palma ratio, which measures the ratio of incomes of the richest 10 per cent and the poorest 40 per cent of the population. The Palma ratio has gradually increased from 1.7 in the 1980s to 2.1 in the 1990s and further to 2.5 in the 2000s. Remarkably, consumption Gini has been lower than income Gini and has remained relatively stable around 0.32 during the 2010-2016 period. This implies that the consumption expenditure of the poorer segments of the population has grown closely in line with average growth with positive impact on poverty reduction.

Women and girls aged 15 years and over are subjected to different types of violence by their current or former intimate partner as well as by persons who are not intimate partners, and they are significantly more vulnerable to violence by their intimate partners. In 2015, 2.5 per cent of women and girls aged 15 years

and older were subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months. Women bear significantly greater burden of unpaid domestic and care work in the family than men. The proportion of female members in the Parliament has been slowly increasing over time reaching 20.57 per cent in 2017. The commitment of the Nation to address the issue of gender differences is enshrined in the country's Constitution. The Government's efforts to address gender differences pertain to participation in global initiatives, providing policy and legal framework, improving women's human capabilities, increasing their economic benefits, creating enabling environment for women's advancement and implementing Gender Responsive Budget. Some of the key challenges to achieving gender equality in the country are: eradication of violence against women, prevention of child marriage and addressing gender digital divide. In this connection it may be interesting to present the position of Bangladesh in comparison with other South Asian countries in terms of women empowerment.

Comparative Picture of Women Empowerment in South Asia

Total	Bangladesh	Maldives	India	Sri Lanka	Nepal	Bhutan	Pakistan
Ranking	48	113	108	100	105	122	148
Score	0.721	0.662	0.665	0.676	0.671	0.638	0.550

Source: World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report 2018

Bangladesh ranks 48 in global ranking of countries with a score of 0.721 indicating significantly better performance in promoting women empowerment compared to her South Asian neighbors.

8. Achievements in international perspectives on the SDG 5:

The Government's efforts to address gender differences pertain to participation in global initiatives, providing policy and legal framework, improving women's human capabilities, increasing their economic benefits, creating enabling environment for women's advancement and implementing Gender Responsive Budget. Some of the key challenges to achieving gender equality in the country are: eradication of violence against women, prevention of child marriage and addressing gender digital divide. In this connection it may be interesting to present the position of Bangladesh in comparison with other South Asian countries in terms of women empowerment. Bangladesh ranks 48 in global ranking of countries with a score of 0.721 indicating significantly better performance in promoting women empowerment compared to her South Asian neighbors. The Government has been following a pro-poor development strategy which combines promotion of economic growth and reduction of poverty and inequality. The policies that aimed to reduce inequality include employment generation and enhancing labor productivity and wages, development of human capital- education and training, health and nutrition, with greater access to poor, development of lagging regions, increased spending on social protection and improving its effectiveness, expansion of micro-credits and loans to SMEs, emphasis on agriculture and rural development, undertaking tax reforms focusing on progressive personal income taxation. It may be pointed out that the proportion of government expenditure on social protection has increased to 15.25 per cent in FY2017 from a paltry 2.54 per cent in FY 2011. In the following two years the proportion declined and reached 13.92 per cent in FY2019 despite large increases in absolute level of social protection expenditure (32.7 per cent in FY2018 and 19.3 per cent in FY2019).

However, the following awards have been received by the Bangladesh government for the contribution on SGD 5:

- Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina awarded with “Gold Medal” in 2011 by the Dauphin University, Paris for her contribution to the women empowerment.
- Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina received a memento of “Tree of Peace” from UNESCO for promotion of girls' and women's education in 2014.
- World Economic Forum’s Gender Gap Index 2015 report indicates continued progress of Bangladesh in tackling gender disparity in economic participation, education, health and political empowerment and ranked 64 out of 145 countries.

9. Conclusion:

A recent government SDG progress report showed that although some goals are on track to be achieved by 2030, the progress in making a dent in inequalities is far from satisfactory. The General Economics Division (GED) has recently published the SDG Bangladesh Progress Report 2020. Analysts say the rich have gained most from Bangladesh's development for the past few decades and this has triggered inequality in the country. The report said, "Although Bangladesh is richer than ever before today, about 40 million people still live in poverty." It added that the inequalities in education, health and other basic services are related to income and wealth. For example, the percentage of under-5 child malnutrition rate among the poorest quintile is 45 while among the richest is 17.4. The infant mortality rate among the poorest quintile is 43 per cent, under-5 child mortality rate 53, total fertility rate 2.8, percent of teenage mothers 41.1, women receiving antenatal care from medically trained providers 35.6 per cent while that among the richest are 24, 30, 2.0, 22.9, and 90 respectively. Besides, the

percentage of women delivered in a health facility among the poorest quintile is only 14.9, educational attainment of the male household population (more than secondary) 2.0, and educational attainment of the female household population (more than secondary) is 1.1 while that among the richest population are 70.2, 31, and 21.2. From the financial soundness indicators perspective, the SDG progress report showed a poor achievement too in Bangladesh. Among the indicators, it showed that the non-performing loan to total gross loan rose to 9.89 in 2018 from that of the 8.40 in the base year 2015. Economist Dr. Ahsan H Mansur told the FE that the state of Bangladesh's inequality was so bad that the SDG 10 achievement by 2030 is difficult. Bangladesh's productivity has decreased, the source of income becomes uneven, un-earned cash flow has risen, budgetary investment to total social protection minus public servant pension has fallen, and faulty tax policy kept the rich people out of taxes. Under this circumstance, reduced inequality is not possible here. The present government's policies and actions are helping the rich people become the richest and the poor people to fall into the perpetual poverty trap. Since Bangladesh's progress was not so good in this category, it needs to take some special measures in the upcoming 8th five-year plan (FYP) for reducing the inequality. In achieving SDGs, financing in developing countries is a big challenge. There are also a lot of challenges in the development process which needs assistance from the development partners. Bangladesh's SDG financing strategy requires additional US\$928.48 billion which is around 19.75 per cent of the accumulated gross domestic product (GDP) of the country. For SDGs 1-4, 14, 16 and 17, public sector has a major responsibility. On the other hand, for SDG-5, 7, 8, 9, 12 Public-Private Partnership can play an effective role. Furthermore, external sources can play important role in achieving the remaining goals.

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