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DFAT Support to UNDP Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme

Annual Report 2022



A Dissemination Workshop on National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) Action Plan Phase-II (2021-2026) was held on 6 October 2022 attended by Cabinet Secretary, Mr. Khandker Anwarul Islam as the Chief Guest.

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Acronyms

ADP	Annual Development Programme
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AWP	Annual Work Plan
CMC	Central Monitoring Committee; Central Management Committee
DC	Deputy Commissioner
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DSS	Department of Social Services
ERD	Economic Relations Division
FD	Finance Division
FID	Financial Institutions Division
FLIP	Five-Year Plan
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GED	General Economics Division
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GRS	Grievance Redressal System
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
LCG	Local Consultative Group
LGD	Local Government Division
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MJF	Manusher Jonno Foundation
MoDMR	Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoF	Ministry of Food
MoLE	Ministry of Labour and Employment
MoSW	Ministry of Social Welfare
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OAA	Old Age Allowance
OPDs	Organisation of Person with Disabilities
NSSS	National Social Security Strategy
NSIS	National Social Insurance System
PIC	Project Implementation Committee
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PWD	Person With Disability
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
SDF	Social Development Framework
SPEC	Special Project Evaluation Committee
SSPS Programme	Social Security Policy Support Programme
TPP	Technical Assistance Project Proposal
ToR	Terms of Reference
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme Bangladesh
VFM	Value for Money

1. Context

This annual report on the UNDP implemented Social Security Policy Support (SPPS) Programme covers the 6-month period from July – December 2022. The Half Yearly Progress Report which covers From January to June 2022 has been submitted. The SSPS Programme is a fully government-owned flagship project, assisted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) under Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) fund of the Australian Government. This flagship project has provided technical assistance to the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) for the first time in developing the Bangladesh Social protection reforms strategy subsequently approved by the Cabinet of the GoB in mid 2015. Since then, SSPS program has been implementing key policy reforms of social protection as guided by National Social Security Strategy (NSSS). This annual report covers the progress in reforms which is linked to the current UNDP-DFAT agreement.

The report briefly narrates the key results-based activities during the reporting period. From the outset, the SSPS Programme has been driving reforms inside the government system, and all interventions are embedded in the national social protection policy reform and plan. Integration of reforms has been reflected in the previous National Budget FY 2021-2022 and current FY 2022-23. As for sustainability, almost 95 percent of the current national social protection programmes are now financed by the government. NSSS is a ten years long social protection strategy for Bangladesh. The successful Implementation of NSSS Action Plan Phase I (2015- 2021) led to the development and official launching of the NSSS Action Plan Phase II (2021-2026) approved by the Central Management Committee (CMC) of Bangladesh Social Security Programs with several rounds of intensive consultations engaging the 39 line ministries related to social protection programs.

The SSPS Programme primarily focuses on rolling out the implementation of the NSSS in two major reform areas, namely 1) a system of universalism in social protection programs, and 2) improved governance the social protection in Bangladesh.

The Cabinet Division and the General Economics Division (GED) of the Planning Commission of the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) are the two key lead and co-lead sponsoring and implementing agencies of this project. SSPS provided reform assistance to other associated ministries that are linked to the Bangladesh Social Protection reforms including key Line Ministries which includes the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Social Welfare, and the Ministry of Labour and Employment and associate ministries, Statistics and Informatics Division, Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and overseas Employment, and Information Communication and Technology (ICT) Division.

The current DFAT support to SSPS Programme built on the progress made during 2017 to 2019 and subsequent COVID-19 pandemic devastation, the government's renewed commitment to the reform agenda outlined in 8th Five Year Plan which incorporated NSSS-guided social protection reforms. The DFAT support to the SSPS Programme is designed for a period of five years in two phases. The first phase from June 2021 to July 2023 and the second phase from July 2023 and will continue up to December 2025.

The goal of the SSPS Programme is to 'build an inclusive social security system for all deserving Bangladeshis that effectively tackles and prevents poverty and inequality and contributes to broader human development, employment, and economic growth, and strengthens the social contract, enhances stability, and builds resilience. The Programme incorporates two outcomes and four outputs and five interventions areas in its 'Theory of Change (ToC)'.

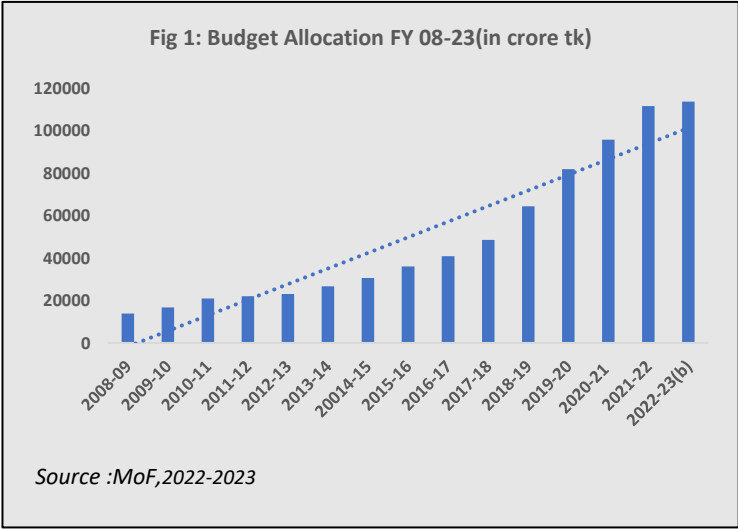
2. Executive Summary

In the area of improved governance, UNDP and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT: Australia) is partnering with the Government of Bangladesh in significant ways, particularly in improved institutional development in social protection and aid effectiveness. Specifically, SSPS, through expert, evidence-based support, is working with the government to reconfigure the current social security system so that economic growth is achieved more inclusively, with economic opportunities reaching the rural and urban poor and the protection of vulnerable groups against shocks. The programme is supporting the government in two areas namely governance of social protection and the strengthening of systems. UNDP, DFAT, and the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) recognize that a coherent and effective social protection system is central to Bangladesh’s future economic and social development. As part of ongoing National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) technical support work, a series of professional, evidence-based research / diagnostic studies have and are being carried out to inform current and future reforms and serve as evidence for policy and decision-makers.

The social protection allocation in the annual budget has consistently increased over the last 14 years. In current fiscal year, MoF published 115 social protection programs and accordingly allocated budget increased from Tk 1114.5 billion in FY 2021-22 to Tk 1135.76 billion in FY 2022-23. The programs are primarily centred around food distribution and cash transfers, support to vulnerable, distressed, and homeless people, cope up from covariate and endemic shocks across the life cycle.

The number of households benefiting from social protection programmes in the country went up two and half times, from 12 percent in 2005 to 30 percent in 2022. The number of programmes has also gone up from 77 in FY 2009-10 to 130 in FY 2019-20. It is believed that the increased level of public funding has contributed substantially to poverty reduction in Bangladesh. However, there are still over 10 percent of people categorised as "extreme poor" in the country. This number has gone up since mid-2020, due to the onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic. But due to paucity of reliable data, it is difficult to estimate the percentage of people living in poverty now. The government undertook cash and food distribution to assist the new poor. These were in addition to the regular social protection programmes which are aimed at reducing the social and economic vulnerabilities of the poor families. Special emphasis was placed in the current budget on programs such as covid vaccination to 100 million people to strengthen health, universalism - Old age Allowance, Deserted and Widowed Women, private pension, pilot social Insurance, and Single registry MIS.

On the one hand, the government has been pursuing multi-faceted development initiatives aimed at transforming the economy’s structure; on the other hand, the scope of the social protection programs



has been focused particularly on disability programming and through gender lens to continually enlarged to reduce poverty and inequality for inclusive growth.

Disaster-prone areas, poorest areas and population density ratios are currently being considered to cover poor and vulnerable people, marginalised groups and vulnerable sections of society under social safety net programmes.

The government, under the leadership of the cabinet division, has developed the second phase of the Action Plan

(2021-26) of the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) to strengthen the overall efficiency and impact

of social protection programmes. These programmes need to adopt appropriate targeting mechanisms to include the most deserving beneficiaries. Gradually, the government extended the payment of benefits through the Government-to-Person (G2P) system, using mobile financial services, for about 68 percent of total cash transferred. This has cut down corruption and is also cost-effective and time-saving. After making significant progress on the payment aspect, the government is now focusing on the targeting side of social protection programmes. Identifying the most deserving beneficiaries is a challenge that needs to be resolved urgently for better utilisation of public resources. The government's recent decision of a universal cash transfer approach to improve the coverage of certain safety net programmes is a good one in this regard.

During the past two years, three programmes under the Department of Social Services have expanded coverage and introduced an online self-registration system to 112 poverty-stricken upazilas in 2020-21 and to 150 upazilas in 2021-22. The three programmes are Old Age Allowance, Allowances for the Widow, Deserted and Destitute Women, and Allowances for the Financially Insolvent Disabled. The government is planning to cover 100 additional upazilas under this universal approach in FY 2022-23.

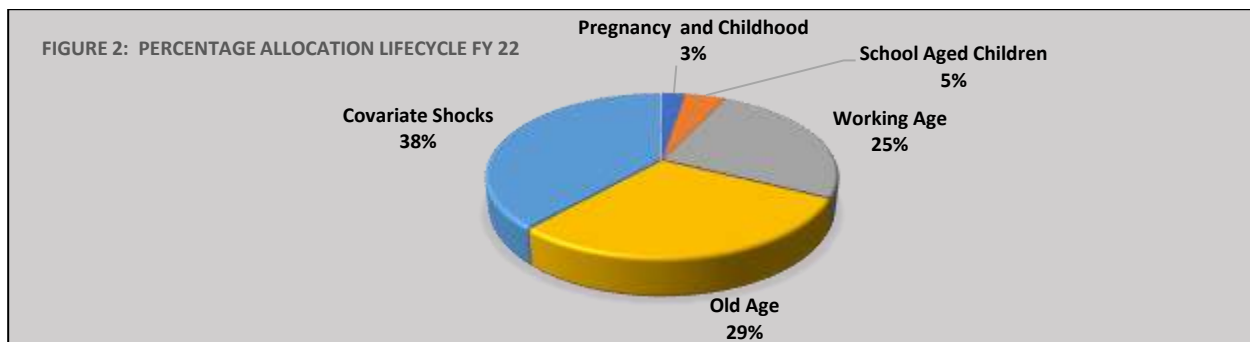
These three programmes truly cover the most vulnerable groups in society and the universalisation of coverage was needed to cover all those who deserve to receive benefits. There are definite financial implications of universalisation and, therefore, the government needs to allocate an increased amount of resources for social protection in the 2022-23 budget to cover newer applicants. Historically, in the 262 upazilas where the universal approach has been introduced during the last two years, the number of beneficiaries has increased substantially. The Old Age Allowance covers 5.7 million beneficiaries now across rural and urban areas, which includes about 50 percent of the elderly population of the country. The number increased rapidly from 4.4 million in 2018. The Allowances for Widow, Deserted and Destitute Women currently benefit 2.47 million women, while about one million persons receive disability allowances.

In the future, other major social protection programmes should also adopt the universal approach, and a digital self-registration system should be introduced for improved targeting of beneficiaries.

During the said period, budget provisions for social protection rose from 12.3 percent to 17.8 percent, while the social protection budget as a percentage of GDP was 2.3 percent to 3.1 percent. One of the early evidences of outcome of SPSS is its critical advocacy and policy support role that saw a significant increase in Government's budget allocation for social security from USD 6.6 billion in FY 2017/18 to USD 11.5 billion in FY 2021/22. The increased budget allocation reflects both enhanced allowance size for a number of life-cycle programmes and extended beneficiary coverage. As was expected by the project rationale and proposed outcome indicator, the total number of programmes has declined from 145 to 115.

Life Cycle Based Allocation

The total allocation for social security has been disaggregated in terms of life cycle stages. It is found that the highest share is allocated for old age people, amounting to 31.58 thousand crores which is equivalent to 29 per cent of the total allocation. In contrast, the lowest allocation amounting to pregnancy and childhood stages constituting 3 per cent in FY 2021-22. Until the present year, the allocation for pregnancy and early childhood is very low, though the NSSS suggests that the allocation for early childhood should be raised considerably. The child benefit scheme as proposed in NSSS will significantly increase the spending on early childhood.



While Bangladesh is advancing towards an ageing society the government is increasingly ramping up social protection support to the old age population. Importantly, the government currently more emphasized on social protection as a basic human right enshrined in the country's constitution. Accordingly, the government made a commitment to bring the country's old age population under universal social protection coverage by 2025.

Addressing the Person with disabilities in social protection

Social protection for disability has shifted from charity or mercy-based focus to that of human rights. Social empowerment of disabled people is one of the main objectives of the social protection system of many countries, and Bangladesh is among them. Bangladesh has enacted the Rights and Protection of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2013 to ensure the social rights of persons with disabilities. Ministry of Social Welfare is to create a system of monitoring the development of children with disabilities and to consolidate complementary programmes for vocational education, enterprise support, and anti-discrimination in the job market.

Programmes for People with Disabilities

Presently more than 20 lakh persons with disabilities receive a monthly disability allowance at a rate of Tk 700 from the Ministry of Social Welfare which has been increased to Tk800 this year. The coverage has increased significantly over the last few years. Some special disability schemes include the Institute for Autistic and Blind Children, Socially Disabled Adolescent Girls, promotional services of opportunities to girls with disabilities. The NSSS stipulates that the disability allowance should be reformed along with the spirit of lifecycle-based social security frameworks. The NSSS suggests a reformed pattern of social protection for people with disabilities like the following table:

Table 1: Programmes for PWD FY 2022	Beneficiaries in lakh	Budget in Crore Taka
Allowances for the Financially insolvent disabled	18.00	1,620.00
Stipend for disabled students	1.00	95.64
Grants for the schools for the disabled	0.37	29.68
Fund for the welfare of acid burnt women and disabled	0.33	1.82
Trust for the protection of the persons with neurodevelopmental disabilities	-	29.15
Welfare trust for physical disabilities	-	15.00
Service and assistance center for disabled	3.99	68.90

Considering budgetary constraints, regular increases in the social protection budget has almost always prioritized with increased coverage (over increases in benefit size or amounts). Very recently, a new base year 2015-16 has been adopted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), where the economic growth rate in recent years were revised downwards, but the size of the economy expanded.

The Dissemination and launching of the NSSS Action Plan, phase 2 (2021-2026) was a key monitoring achievement in 2022, which identified detailed key actions that the concerned 39 ministries will consider during the tenure, making progress, and address the challenges of NSSS reforms to date. The NSSS Action Plan has been presented to the various CMC coordination structure committees and findings and

recommendations were reviewed and prepared for action. Critical issues going forward for the CMC coordination structure are reducing beneficiary exclusion errors, adopting, and planning to act on MTR recommendations, national social insurance scheme, child-benefit scheme consolidation, and value of cash transfers in key social protection schemes.

CODI workshop, Roadmap of Single Registry situation assessment, and national social insurance framework that have made progress in 2022, and will feed into critical decision-making processes in the coming years.

Overall, the GoB's position in terms of governance and systems strengthening has continued to improve. The GoB decision to include NSSS Action Plan progress and coordination management in the Annual Performance Agreements (APA) of line ministries will further strengthen the managerial functions of the ministries and will be monitored by the NSSS Action Plan Implementation and Monitoring Committee headed by the Secretary, Coordination and Reforms of the Cabinet Division.

Dialogues were held with the members of Go-NGO platform and Organisation of the Person with disabilities (OPDs), transgender and marginalised communities on engagement of the non-state actors in social protection programming. Mapping of social protection interventions around disabilities, which was attended by the OPDS to participate in social protection decisions in line with the agenda of Leaving No One Behind.

3.This Section will investigate the Key activities and result in the last two quarters of Year 2022.

3.1 Progress Review: Key Activities and Results, July – December2022

Outcome	Indicators	Target 2022	Progress Towards Target Q3+Q4
Outcome 1 Established systems of universal pension, entitlements for persons with disabilities, social insurance and shock-responsive schemes, in line with GoB commitment to human rights and the right to social protection to social protection	By 2025, Government has significantly increased social security coverage of old age persons and persons with disability by adopting a universal approach	Old Age Allowance (OAA) coverage increased by 20% from baseline. Coverage of persons with disabilities increased by 20% from baseline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coverage of old age allowance increased by 29.5 percent from the baseline (2019) Coverage of PwDs had increased to 11.55 % from the baseline (2019) Check Annex
	By 2025, Government has adopted gender and disability inclusive NSIS	Draft NSIS policy is ready for review by NSSS M&E/Sub- Committee (line ministries) and CMC consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSIS Situation Study resulted in Bangladesh (Universal) Private Pension Scheme reflected in FY 2022-23 Budget and placed before the National Parliament as a bill. NSIS is the key reform area of the NSSS Action Plan, Phase – II approved by the CMC and Prime Minister.
	By 2025, NSSS 2026+ adopted a gender and disability responsive universal social security approach	CMC Sub-committee approves a NSSS 2026+ formulation roadmap and overseeing its implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road Map discussion initiated, and Cabinet Secretary approved

Key Activities and Results

The government budget allocation increased in several social security programmes from 2008-09 to 2021-22. Old age programme received the highest budget allocation, followed by working-age livelihood, gender-focused women, and early childhood-related social security programmes. The

government is working to protect the rights of the elderly by implementing long-term and long-lasting programs. The allowances have been extended to all eligible senior citizens and widows of 112 upazilas in FY2020-2021. In FY2021-2022, it has been extended to another 150 upazilas. SSPS program collaborated with ADB Manila office and shared the idea of Mid-term review (MTR) findings and SSPS plan for OAA Universalism. It inspired by the MOSW augmenting universalism which was scheduled in 2025. Old age allowances are being supplied on a larger scale to defend the rights of the poor elderly, with priority given to the elderly women when it comes to widows and deserted and destitute women's allowances. These has been reflected in the FY 2022 National Budget which was declared in June 2022. From the FY2021-2022, an allocation of Tk. 34.34 billion has been provided for 5.7million beneficiaries at the monthly rate of Tk. 500, which will be continued. In the FY2021-2022, allowances are being provided to 2.08million disabled persons at the monthly rate of Tk. 750. The number of beneficiaries is planned to be increased by 0.35 million in the next FY2022-2023 to 2.365 million in place of 2.08 million. The rate of monthly allowance will be increased by Tk. 100, from Tk. 750 to Tk.850. In the budget its proposed to allocate Tk 24.29 billion in FY2022-2023 as disability allowances.

Universal Pension Management Bill, 2022 was placed in the House by Finance Minister on August 29 and passed in January 25th 2023. It was then sent to the parliamentary watchdog on the finance ministry for further examination. The bill says all Bangladeshi nationals aged from 18 to 50 years can participate in this pension scheme. The expatriate Bangladeshis are also eligible to get the benefits. The Finance Division prepared the draft of the bill seeking to bring the growing elderly population under a sustainable social safety net.

This will particularly benefit the elderly population when they become jobless or become afflicted with diseases, paralysis, old age or other similar conditions, or extreme poverty amid high life expectancy rate, according to the bill's statement.

According to the proposed law, there will be a five-member national pension authority headed by a chairman and a 15-member governing body with the finance minister as its chair.

Finance Minister will be the chairman of the governing body where the other members will be the Bangladesh Bank governor, finance secretary, financial institutions division secretary, NBR chairman, social welfare secretary, secretary of woman and child affairs ministry, expatriate welfare and overseas employment secretary, labour and employment secretary, post and telecommunication division secretary, PMO secretary, BSEC chairman, FBCCI president, Bangladesh Employers Federation president, BWCCI president and the executive chairman.

The inclusion in this pension scheme will be voluntarily unless the government issues any gazette for making it compulsory. According to the NSSS, the Financial Institutions Division of the Ministry of Finance was responsible for taking forward this bill to National Parliament. SSPS program conducted the Social Insurance study which contributed to development of the Universal Private Pension Scheme in Bangladesh submitted it to the Ministry of Labour and Employment, and Financial Institutions Division under coordination efforts of the Cabinet Division. The study ToR was approved by the GED. The Finance Minister, in his last budget speech, mentioned the study conducted by the Cabinet Division, The Cabinet Division also played the crucial role of coordination for Cabinet approval of the proposal before placing it in the National Parliament as a bill.

Series of national dialogues has begun on the basis of NSIS from August. The National Budget of the current year FY 2022 mentioned that government is working to launch a National Social Insurance Scheme in the country that was prepared with the help of SSPS. A study has already been conducted on this scheme, at the initiative of the Cabinet Division SSPS Programme, by laying emphasis on the gradual introduction of four types of social insurance in the country. These are Unemployment Insurance, Maternity Insurance, Sickness Insurance, and Employment Injury Insurance. The Ministry of Labour and Employment has already taken steps to launch a pilot of the Employment Injury Scheme to protect workers from injury in the workplace. Given its importance, the (draft) NSSS Action Plan Phase II (2021–2026) has placed a special emphasis on the social insurance front. As per the new Action Plan, the new/revised framework for NSIS is expected to be completed by June 2023, while one branch of the

NSIS – unemployment insurance scheme is supposed to be ready for piloting by July 2024 and rolled out nationally by July 2025. Before making further progress, the NSIS requires a careful review. This is largely since the proposed framework is subject to criticism about falling short of International Social Security Standards.

The workshop on Social Security Research took place on 25 August 2022. Mr MD. Kawser Ahmed, Member (Secretary), GED Planning Commission graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, while it was facilitated by Mr. Aminul Arifeen, National Project Manager, Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme. The objective of the workshop was to select research topics with a view to inform the next phase of NSSS beyond 2026 and promote Bangladesh as a welfare state.

The keynote presentation on the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) and its link to the Welfare State 2026+, was given by Mr. Mohammad Khaled Hasan, Joint Secretary, Civil Registration and Social Security Branch, Cabinet Division. The presentation was followed by group discussion and group reporting. Participants included senior-level officials of social security implementing ministries, development partners, academicians of Dhaka University and IT specialists. The workshop was hosted by GED and the Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme of Cabinet Division and General Economics Division (GED), funded by DFAT & UNDP.



Objectives of the workshop:

1. To outline the gaps in knowledge and understanding through diagnostics in terms of social protection in Bangladesh as acknowledged directly or indirectly in, or relevant to, developing or updating the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) of Bangladesh.
2. To present possible areas of research support that would address the feasibility and allow as background evidence for developing NSSS 2026 onwards, where more inclusivity comprehensive better coordination governance and improved social protection system strengthened the bondage of social contract between the state and its citizens. The consultation workshops with the social protection implementing and coordinating ministries.

and division was a key to strengthen inter-ministerial coordination and better comprehension of the Implementation of National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) phase 2 (2021-2026). This workshop also plays a key role in creating the footprint in developing consensus on social protection reforms and kick off preparing the NSSS 2026+. The NSSS Action Plan Phase II incorporated to develop the NSSS 2026+. The blue economy and link to social protection, urban and climate inducive shock-responsive social protection addressing Leave NO One Behind (LNOB) lifecycle approach now opened a new chapter for 2026+ social protection. It was approved by the Cabinet Secretary.

Output	Indicators	Target 2022	Progress Towards Target Q3+Q4
<p>Output 1: By 2024, 4 policy proposals (OAA, Persons with Disabilities, NSIS, COVID-19) and draft NSSS 2026+ tabled for Govt. approval</p>	<p>By 2024, Govt. has gender responsive universal old age and persons with disability policy proposals</p>	<p>A framework outlining suitable model and policy and financial options for the proposal undertaken by MoSW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concept notes on OAA and PWD approved and shared with the Cabinet Division and GED. • NSSS M E committees approves the report of research needs of social protection for the period 2022 to 2025. Universilim approved. • Mosw is one the important part of the committee. • Further consultation on Universal Model development under process to be done before June 2023with MOSW. NSSS Action Plan approved the framework of the model and file approved by HPM.
	<p>By 2024, existence of gender and disability responsive National Social Insurance Scheme (NSIS) proposal</p>	<p>Technical support to MoLE and MoF to start developing the draft policy proposal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSSS Action plan phase 2 well captured NSIS . • MOLE in collaboration with ILO, GIZ and EU collaborating to implement EIS. • MOH implementing a pilot on Maternal Insurance.
	<p>Existence of COVID-19 social protection policy responses focusing on disabled individuals and marginalized groups including urban poor, and climate change responsive social protection</p>	<p>Shock-responsive (COVID-19) specific social protection strategy and Urban Social Protection Delivery Model and Climate Adaptive Social Protection proposal completed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate-induced shock-responsive situation study progressing and urban-focused shock-responsive models drafted and review are under progress.

Key Activities and Results

The Government, for the first time, declared to introduce the Universal Pension system in Bangladesh. This was the political commitment of the current government to bring the old aged population in a

sustainable social protection system to ensure their old age security. The National Social Security Strategy also mentioned that the government to introduce a comprehensive, inclusive pension system in Bangladesh. the Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Finance, prioritized the government's breakthrough step in launching the universal private pension scheme, the social insurance and pension research paper prepared by the General Economics Department (GED) and the Cabinet Department has helped in every way, and emphasized the importance of taking initiative in implementing the social insurance program described in the Social Security Strategy assisted by SSPS.

In the 10th Meeting of the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Committee, conducted by SSPS the representative of the Ministry of Health informed the meeting about the maternity insurance pilot implemented by the Ministry of Health. The President emphasized on unemployment social insurance pilot study and mentioned that according to the direction of NSIS, apart from this study, ILO and GIZ are working on an incident insurance pilot study, and the Ministry of Health is working on maternity insurance.

Standard Letter Of Agreement has been signed between The United Nations Development Programme And Department Of Disaster Science And Climate Resilience On The Implementation Of Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme . The expected result/outcome of the partnership is: to conduct a study on Climate-induced Shock Responsive Disaster Resilience Mapping for Adaptive Social Protection Programming of the at-Risk Population in the Sylhet Division of Bangladesh.

The main objective of the study

- Inference on possible repeatable frequency of shocks in the region in future and determine possible climate inducive disaster-related shock responsive local resilience-focused social protection model(s)/programming to protect the people in disaster period.
- Develop an adaptive social protection programming to integrate into the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) 2026 in support to address the Bangladesh's graduation towards Middle Income Country (MIC), and to attend the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1, 2, 5, 8, 10 and 13, and vision 2041 of Bangladesh.

The Urban Focused draft study is under progress and the evidence is build up using WFP and NUPRP(UNDP's National Urban Poverty Reduction Programme) urban interventions.

The strategic direction of urban social protection will be to import programmes from the rural aeras to the urban areas, to introduce social insurance and to devise programmes measures to tackle the challenges of urban poor living in slum like situation. The broader goal of the urban strategy is to integrate and merge the system into the overall national social protection system of the country. The document provides specific action plans for different ministries having direct or indirect involvement in urban social protection.

The Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme of the Cabinet Division and GED under UNDP assisted DFAT (Government of Australia) Fund support has been providing policy support in social protection governance and reform outlined in the NSSS and roll out articulated in NSSS Action Plans Phase – I and Phase II. Strengthening delivery of the protection programmes through a Single Registry is one of key activities to bring synergetic change in Bangladesh social protection system.

The SSPS Programme provided technical and logistics support in organizing a national level consultative dialogue includes development of a Single Registry MISs implementation road map including develop a platform and capacity building of concerned officials both national and sub-national level.



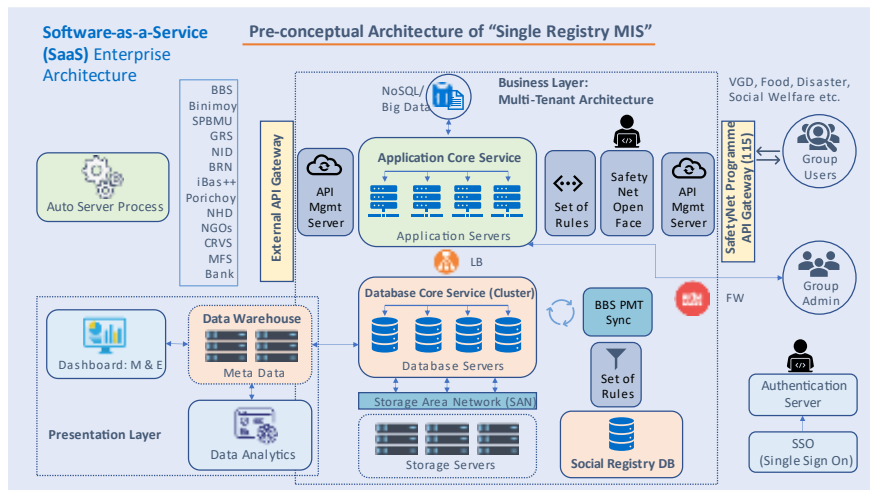
A day-long consultative workshop was held on 18 July 2022 under the Chair of the Senior Secretary of the ICT Division. Several key Secretaries of the concerned ministries and divisions co-chaired the consultative workshop.

Expected Outcome: Policy guidance on implementation road map with roles and responsibility for ensuring better governance and strengthened social protection system in Bangladesh.

Objectives:

- Briefing the concerned officials on Single Registry MIS and its current status including some recent sub-national level development, use of NHD, Population Register, and Geographical Code including an outline of next course of implementation road map development;
- Sharing key potential challenges including provision of pilot at the sub-national level; and
- Opinion sharing and receive guidance from policy for single registry implementation road map development.

Figure 3: Architecture of Single Registry MIS



Decisions from the workshop

- The draft roadmap for implementation of Single Registry MIS for Social Security Scheme will be prepared by the Security Team of the Information and Technology Department as soon as possible.
- Draft Roadmap of Single Registry MIS for Social Security Program to be submitted to the Cabinet Secretary as soon as possible.

- If the data of the National Household Database (NHD) is not ready for use, the design of Data Single Registry MIS will be made without that data. However, if the NHD data is captured, it should be linked to the single registry database to maintain its scope.
- With regard to the 115 social security programs, a Single Registry MIS trial /pilot program can be run in a particular upazila. It can be reproduced across the nation based on the outcomes found there.

Output	Indicators	Target 2022	Progress Towards Target Q3+Q4
Output 2: Research and pilot generated evidences available to and utilized by policymakers and other stakeholders	Incorporation of research recommendations into social protection policy (PWDs accessing social protection, targeting and selection, examination of options for expanding the fiscal space for universal allowances for old age, persons with disabilities, and social insurance, NID documentation)	4 research papers finalized (Persons with Disabilities accessing social protection, targeting and selection, examination of options for expanding the fiscal space for universal allowances for old age, persons with disabilities, and social insurance, NID documentation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal development of Pilot Design of OAA and PWD under process. • Blue economy strategy plan and social protection report finalised and appraised by HPM. • Creation of Single Registry MIS meeting held.
	Availability, incorporation into policy, and dissemination of case study for developing an evidence base for universal allowances for old age and persons with disability social protection policies in Bangladesh	CMC sub-committee approves pilot plan and plans for implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ME sub committee approves the pilot design.

Key Activities and Results

The SPPS Programme is commissioning an international comparative assessment of OAA and PWD practices and a comprehensive, fully actionable pilot design proposal for universal OAA and PWD. The pilot design proposal output will be framed from an impact evaluation perspective, include all methodological components, ensure statistical validity, detail sustainability plans for targeted areas. The concept note has been drafted and is placed. Anchored in a solid analytical framework, the studies are expected to prepare a report containing high-quality research outputs on the design and implementation issues of introducing a robust and inclusive social protection programme for the PWDs. In addition to using secondary data, the study will undertake a carefully designed survey to collect data and information to design/localize a universal social protection model for universal allowance for the elderly and person with disabilities in Bangladesh. The Institute of Social Welfare was selected to try for the development of the proposal, but it was not up to the mark and could not match to be country specific. SPPS project had to bid out the proposals again and is under process of selection.

The Blue Economy consultative policy dialogue called for an institutionalized coordination structure for the 25 ministries. The dialogue gave an opportunity for in-depth explanations and analyzes on how the potential of Blue Economy in Bangladesh can be institutionalized for national progress. SSPS project assisted GED in developing the strategy paper and the report is being appraised and finalised by the Honourable Prime Minister.



Some recommendations from the paper

- Shipping might help the Bangladesh government to earn huge revenues that will be contributed to the national GDP and protect the social security of the dependent people.
- Food security means not only staple food rice or other issues, but nutrition would also increase, there would be a sustainable livelihood, and the issue of employment and pension would come forward because as labour employment increases, these formal things would come forward.
- Investment in ports is expected to play a key role in the future of its ocean economy, based on the expansion of the country's role as a hub of global trade flows, including container transshipment, re-export of petroleum products, and transshipment of fish.
- **Livelihoods:** FAO estimates that the number of fishers, fish farmers, and those people indirectly involved in fishery-related activities is 660–820 million worldwide. In addition, women play a critical role in fishery supply chains – it is estimated that women account for 15% of people directly engaged in fisheries and up to 90% of jobs in secondary activities (particularly in fish processing, whether in the formal or informal sector). Oceans and coasts also form the foundation for extensive employment in tourism - one of the top five industries in most small island states.

Mitigation of climate change: Oceans constitute a major sink for anthropogenic emissions, absorbing 25% of the extra CO₂ added to Earth's atmosphere by burning fossil fuels. 'Blue carbon' sinks like mangrove forests, sea grass beds, and other vegetated ocean habitats are up to five times as effective as tropical forests at sequestering carbon.

A high level meeting was held on the creation of single registry MIS. Additional Secretary, (Co-ordination) Cabinet Division said that a committee had been constituted to examine, audit, and review whether the data of the National Household Database (NHD) of BBS is ready for use in Single Registry MIS, National Household Database (NHD)- The Committee may submit a report to the Cabinet after examining and reviewing whether the data is ready for use in the Single Registry MIS. He informed the meeting that High-Quality Single Registry had been recommended in the National Social Security Strategy and its implementation is under process. The National Social Security Strategy 2015 states that the government

will establish a national single registry system that will serve as a database for the national identity card system. It will be established on the basis of scheme-wise MIS establishment and it will maintain communication from one MIS to another MIS. Also, through this, it will be possible to exchange comprehensive information between various government agencies.

After a detailed discussion the following decisions were taken:

- A committee will be set up to examine, audit and review whether the data of National Household Database (NHD) of BBS is ready for use in Single Registry MIS;
- The Committee shall submit a report to the Cabinet to examine and review whether the National Household Database (NHD) data is ready for use in the Single Registry MIS;
- The draft Roadmap of Single Registry MIS for the Social Security Program as per the report prepared by the Committee shall be submitted to the Cabinet Secretary as soon as possible.

Outcome	Indicators	Target 2022	Progress Towards Target Q3+Q4
<p>Outcome 2: Governance systems strengthened and made inclusive to build the case for and manage universal lifecycle-based social security</p>	<p>Dedicated NSSS CMC sub-committee activated with fit for purpose composition and scope for efficient implementation of reform plans</p>	<p>Integration of social protection reforms plans in the Annual Performance Agreement (APA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with Districts Level Officials on Annual Performance Agreement (APA) and National Integration Strategy (NIS) held. • CODI Workshop held with focal points of ministries. (Annex 1) • 2nd LCG Governance and Social Protection meeting ensured better engagement of DPs in social protection for accountability (Annex 1)
	<p>Percentage of Old Age Allowance and Persons with Disability Allowance expenditure against GDP</p>	<p>OAA: 10% increase from 2019 Persons with Disabilities: 30% increase from 2019</p>	<p>0.866% increase of OAA from 2019 baseline. 0.195% increase of PWD allowance from 2019 baseline against GDP expenditure</p> <p>It was assumed in 2019 that govt will substantially increase the allowance amount and no of beneficiaries which was hampered by the pandemic. Also process of digitisation of beneficiary inclusion resulted in low financial increase and error correction.</p>

Key Activities and Results

The Government of Bangladesh has recently introduced Annual Performance Agreement (APA) across the public sectors to establish a culture of enhanced productivity and accountability. The APA is based on the broader framework of Management by Objective (MBO) model of results-based performance management system. The APA has a mechanism of identifying the low performing sectors and programmes which are incompatible with national goals. Such poorly performing programmes will either be reformed for optimal output and impacts or will be replaced by better ones or will be simply discontinued.

The workshop on Implementation of National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) was organized on 30 September to 1 October 2022 at Sreemangal, Moulvibazar. The Cabinet Division with assistance from the Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme UNDP Bangladesh with the support from DFAT Australia organized the workshop where the Cabinet Secretary Mr. Khandker Anwarul Islam was the Chief Guest. The workshop was also anchored by the presence of the Senior Secretary, ICT Division, Secretary, SID, Secretary, MoDMR and Member (Secretary), GED and other Secretaries of the ministries and division.

The consultation workshops with the social protection implementing and coordinating ministries and division was a key to strengthen inter-ministerial coordination and better comprehension of the Implementation of National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) phase 2 (2021-2026).

The objective of the workshop is to brief the officials on:

1. Annual Performance Agreement (APA) and National Integrity Strategy (NIS) relating to Social Protection
2. National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) and Single Registry MIS - Progress and Implementation Roadmap
3. Integrating National Household Database (NHD) with Single Registry MIS Readiness of the Data
4. Key implementation progress of NSSS social protection reforms.

Mr. Mir Nahid Ahsan, Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate, Moulvibazar facilitated the Inauguration session of the workshop. He stated that the main objective of workshop is to discuss the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) and National Integrity Strategy (NIS) relating to Social Protection,

The Cabinet Secretary then discussed on the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) National Integrity Strategy (NIS). He mentioned that Bangladesh is an emerging, developing, progressive and democratic country. The cherished goal of the nation – ‘Vision 2042 – envisages that within the next decade the country will be free from hunger, illiteracy, unemployment, deprivation and poverty: consequently, peace, prosperity and harmony will prevail in the society.

He said that the Government believes that it is the prime obligation of the State to promote good governance, prevent corruption and ensure the highest integrity in all affairs of the state and society. Different institutions, laws, rules, regulations, policies, and a number of organizations established by the present Government, and different measures taken by it, are in operation to achieve these objectives. But enforcement of law and punishment may not suffice to eradicate corruption.

For promotion of integrity, strictness in observing the proprieties at individual level is of critical importance; it is equally true about organizations, as they are the manifestation of the overall goal of the individuals. The Bangladeshi society is promoting integrity in its different sectors – state, business, civil society and NGOs – by following multifarious laws, regulations, tradition and culture and reforming and developing them in the contexts of changed circumstances.

To explain APA he mentioned that the Government of Bangladesh envisages materialization of Vision 2021, and ensuring good governance is one of the most important agenda in this regard. It has been rightly identified by the government that an effective, efficient and dynamic administrative system is absolutely essential to ascertain better governance. Keeping this in mind, with a view

to ensuring institutional transparency, accountability, proper utilization of resources and above all enhancing institutional efficiency the Government has taken an initiative to introduce a Performance Management System (PMS) in public sector organizations.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has pioneered this process by signing Performance Contracts (in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding) with each of the organizations working under the purview of the PMO.

He explained that with the objective of introducing PMS across the Government it has been decided to have the Annual Performance Agreements (APAs) between the Cabinet Division as the 1st party and all other ministries/divisions as the 2nd parties. Main purposes of introducing Annual Performance Agreement are: (a) moving the focus of the ministry from process-orientation to result-orientation, and (b) providing an objective and fair basis to evaluate overall performance of the ministry/division at the end of the year.

The NSSS action plans have also been aligned with the Annual Agreements of line ministries. Therefore, the social security programmes are routinely monitored and evaluated under the APA framework.

The workshop on 'Core Diagnostic Instrument (CODI) for evaluation of Bangladesh's Social Security Programmes,' took place with Mr Md. Shamsul Arefin, Secretary, Coordination and Reforms, Cabinet Division graced the occasion as Chief Guest, while it was chaired by Ms. Sanjida Sobhan, ndc, Additional Secretary (Reforms), Cabinet Division. The participants included the senior level officials of social security implementing ministries, development partners, academicians of Dhaka University and IT specialists.

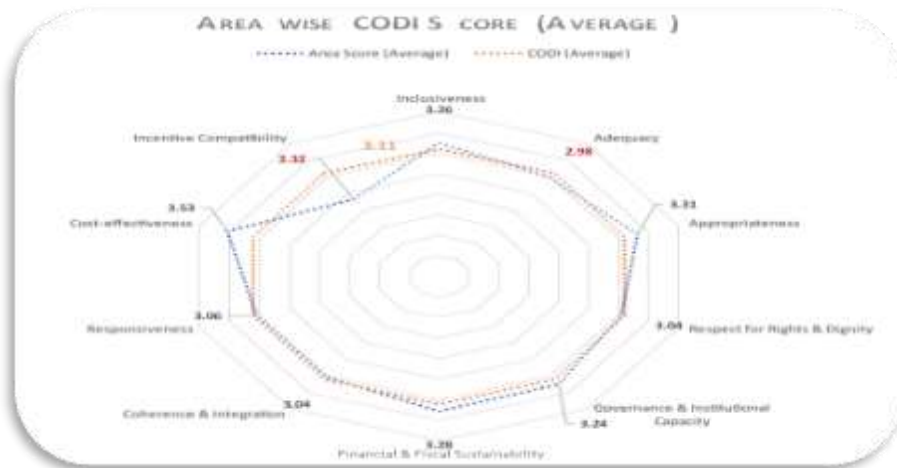


The objective of the workshop was to.

1. Orient the Senior Government Officials on Core Diagnostics Instrument (CODI) for evaluating social security programmes.
2. Evaluate Bangladesh social protection programmes on the scale of CODI as baseline study. There are ten broader area or criteria for assessing the progress of social protection programmes. Each area has several fields with a specific question. The number of total fields or questions are 37 under 10 broader areas e.gadequacy,inclusiveness,responsiveness,etc.(Pls check Annex 1 for full report)

The Codi evaluation exercise has been done by all focal points and the cumulated score stood at 3.11 or 77.63%. on a scale of 4 which is rated as decent.

Figure 4: CODI Scored by Attributes



The CODI workshop report will be part of the Bangladesh Social Protection Monitoring Report in 2023, and part of the mid-term review of NSSS Action Plan Phase – II.

The 2nd Revised Meeting of the Local Consultative Working Group (LCG) on Governance and Social Protection took place in the last quarter of 2022 with assistance of SPPS chaired by Secretary, Coordination and Reforms, Cabinet Division and cochaired by Head of Cooperation EU. The co-chair Mr. Maurizio Cian, Head of Delegation, European Union, Bangladesh pointed out that the main objective of the meeting is to discuss the Governance in Bangladesh with focus on the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) by World Bank. He mentioned that this working group has two components including social protection and governance. He explained that it has been more than a decade since the Government of Bangladesh has set up a strong organizational mechanism Local Consultative Groups (LCG) to coordinate its developmental and sectoral goals, policies, and strategies with Development Partners (DPs) for enhancing the effectiveness of development cooperation. Meanwhile, the formulation of the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) and National Integrity Strategy (NIS) added new dimension to governance by way of reform agenda of social protection and good governance. Mr. Robert Yungu, Sr. Public Sector Specialist to World Bank Bangladesh then shared a power point presentation in the meeting:

Mr. Cian shared that Bangladesh has been doing excellent in governance indicators and we have very well documented evidence, achievements, and strategies for governance in place. But still, middle income countries have some common areas for working together on governance like; inter-ministerial coordination and multistakeholder corporation that are some of the issues that play very important role in governance as well. He explained that governance indicators are some of good entries point for our group to work together and we can focus on the governance indicators of world bank. He added that Bangladesh has brilliantly touches upon all the indicators and have bright achievements in many sectors. But there are some areas where it should show better performance in terms of governance issues where we can work together. It was decided to dedicate the next meeting to governance indicators and collect issues from the development partners to discuss in the forum regarding information and discussion on policy guidance.

Recommendations from the meeting:

1. To improve governance across the six dimensions, GoB needs to take appropriate reforms and build capacity to address existing roadblocks and inefficiencies.
2. Citizen engagement to increase efficiency and transparency through improved access to information and robust management system.
3. Local governments to allow service delivery tailored to the varying needs of individual regions, districts, and municipalities.

4. Domestic resource mobilization to strengthen the government's ability to expand its service delivery and investments in public goods and create fiscal buffer at the time of economic shocks.
5. Public financial management (PFM), including internal and external audit, public investment management, procurement, and reporting to ensure financial sustainability and service delivery; and
6. Judiciary and regulatory reforms to enhance rule of law and support market contestability.

The increase of 0.866% increase of OAA expenditure from 2019 baseline against GDP and 0.195% increase of PWD allowance from 2019 baseline against GDP expenditure signifies a positive look because Bangladesh GDP is volatile and in calculating the GDP in the fiscal year 2022-23, FY2015-16 has been set as the new base year and the amount of GDP has increased as compared to the fiscal year 2021-22. As a result, the allocation for social security in FY2022-23 is 2.55 percent of GDP, which is slightly less than in FY2021-22, as a result the individual programs increase is also less than anticipated.

Output	Indicators	Target 2022	Progress Towards Target Q3+Q4
Output 3: Gender responsive policy advice and accountability tools are made available to the line ministries to demonstrate their accountability for social protection reforms	Functional and utilized web-based social protection dashboard for improved monitoring of social protection reforms incorporated in the Annual Performance Agreement (APA)	Dashboard is trialled for 2022 and populated with sex, and age disaggregated data, including M&E Framework data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSSS Reform and Programme M&E Dashboard Design developed and dashboard under preparation. • The ToR of the firm for the M&E dashboard has been bid and firm finalised.
	Strengthened key line ministries/ divisions (Cabinet Division, GED, MoSW, MoF, MoLE) capacity for gender responsive social protection decision making	Key line ministry decision-makers have enhanced knowledge of and capability to design and implement gender responsive social protection policy and social security programmes as a result of targeted capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSSS Action Plan Phase 2 Dissemination and Baseline workshops incorporates gender related social Protection. • All the focal points of 39 ministries presented the baseline which will help ministries to assess their respective progress.
	Increased knowledge about reform priorities of 5 key line ministries/ divisions (Cabinet Division, GED, MoSW, MoF, MoLE) with evidence of support from senior	Line ministries are regularly updating reform progress data on dashboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is expected that a prototype dashboard will be in place on a trial basis by be fully

Output	Indicators	Target 2022	Progress Towards Target Q3+Q4
	leadership to implement them		functional in mid-2023.

Key Activities and Results

The SSPS assisted in developing the ToR for **Development of a Web-based National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) Monitoring & Evaluation Dashboard**. The objective of the assignment is for the GoB to have a fully developed NSSS reform tracking dashboard. The tracking template will mirror the NSSS Action Plans, with users having the ability to update the status, upload evidence, search reforms by tags and categories, and generate dynamic reports. At the end of the assignment, the GoB will have the ability to populate the dashboard from a baseline starting position, have administrative control, and create user accounts for line ministry personnel.

A request for a proposal has been floated for interested vendors. Proposals have been received from multiple vendors. Technical evaluation of those proposals has already been completed. The financial evaluation is being completed. Based on these evaluations, a firm has been hired.

It is expected that a prototype dashboard will be in place on a trial basis and be fully functional by mid-2023. Additionally, based on the previous phase feasibility study on Single Registry integrated MISs, a master plan will support ministries to initiate the necessary steps for operational readiness from the other databases and to follow up their actions.

The Cabinet Division, as the coordinating authority for implementation of the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS) of Bangladesh, organized a flagship event titled as 'Dissemination workshop on NSSS Action Plan, Phase - II (2021-26) Baseline Assessment and Way Forward on 06-13 October 2022 at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre, Dhaka. With support from DFAT from the Government of Australia, and UNDP, the Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme of the Cabinet Division and the General Economics Division (GED) of Planning Commission provided technical assistance in organizing the Dissemination workshop on NSSS Action Plan, Phase - II (2021-26) Baseline Assessment.

The main objective of Dissemination workshop on NSSS Action Plan, Phase - II (2021-26) Baseline Assessment and Way Forward was to disseminate the NSSS Action Plan, Phase - II (2021-26) and discuss the scopes along with:

- Evaluate/assess the baseline of the NSSS action plan implementation towards its agreed concrete action plans implementation status to drive forward as a welfare nation.
- Accelerate capacity building of the social protection stakeholders' particularly of the field level agencies and departments in the social protection sector in Bangladesh.
- Increase awareness and understanding of the social protection stakeholders on the NSSS and the NSSS Action Plan Phase-II
- Continue the reform momentum for an effective social protection system that aligns with emerging needs with focus on gender equality.
- Set further reform agendas, which would mark a significant move towards achieving permanent graduation for middle-income country status, 8th Five Year Plan (July 2020 – June 2025), SDGs 2030, and Bangladesh as a welfare state by 2041, where all citizens will be guaranteed with a minimum level of economic security and wellbeing.
- Harness and share experiences on implementation including innovative financing of social protection programmes and promoting the exchange of best practices among national and

international partners.

- Initiate discussions around the agencies and institutions for agreed social security reforms at both programmatic and institution levels.



It was a wider consultative process paving the way for further reforms in social protection portfolio of Bangladesh in line with national social development goals of the country.

The five-day long programme was divided into several sessions which included the inaugural ceremony, five working sessions and a dialogue followed by a short wrap up session. The inaugural ceremony featured a keynote presentation on ‘Implementation NSSS Action Plan, Phase - II (2021-26) ‘by Mr. Md Shamsul Arefin, Secretary, Coordination and Reforms, Cabinet Division.

Specific thematic areas of social protection were deliberated upon during the working sessions, each of which featuring several presentations and discussions by renowned scholars and practitioners. The conference came up with recommendations that some of the NSSS agenda like consolidation of smaller programmes, single registry Management Information System (MIS), Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) mechanism and Government to Person (G2P) direct payment system should be meaningfully implemented without delay as timeline for those have already exceeded.

Output	Indicators	Target 2022	Progress Towards Target Q3+Q4
<p>Output 4: Broadened knowledge base and influence of NGOs working for marginalized and excluded groups, including persons with disabilities in social protection decision-making</p>	<p>Influence of non-state actors working for marginalized and excluded groups, including persons with disabilities in the social protection decision-making</p>	<p>Non-state actors and Disabled Persons' Organizations produce a citizens' report on social protection and needs of marginalized and excluded groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dialogue on theme of innovation and transformative solutions for inclusive development held with the OPDs Platform. ▪ Series of workshops held with youth, transgender, marginalized group. (See Annex A) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report is under preparation phase.

Key Activities and Results

Disability Alliance on SDGs, Bangladesh is a platform of 27 prominent international and national organizations of and for people with disabilities working for the rights of people with disabilities in Bangladesh in alignment with the SDGs. The Alliance aims to contribute to the development initiatives of the Government of Bangladesh and other actors in implementing the SDGs targets and indicators. December 3rd, every year, marks the International Day for Person with Disabilities (IDPD) Marking the celebration of this international day, Disability Alliance on SDGs, Bangladesh, and the SSPS Programme of UNDP organised a national seminar on the theme for IDPD 2022 “Transformative solutions for inclusive development: the role of innovation in fuelling an accessible and equitable world” This time, the seminar was enriched with participation of other UN organisations (UNICEF, UNFPA, UNWOMAN) and UNRC’s human rights advisor where they presented their respective findings and emphasised on the implementation of UNCRPD. UNCRPD is a global partnership where governments, civil society, people with disabilities, and organisations of people with disabilities, UN agencies, work together to define nationally how to make progress in each sector and accelerate the CRPD, which is the sole purpose of UNPRPD—UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It was attended by the Principal Coordinator of SDGs and GED Member Secretary Kawser Ahmed and other Development Partners who showed keen interest and further talks were initiated on future collaborations. (Report link attached in Annex A)



Key Recommendations

- The Government of Bangladesh should take an initiative to revisit the National Plan of Action on Disability 2019 in a concerted manner considering the wider policy context (e.g., 8th Five-Year Plan; SDG commitments) and the impact of COVID-19.
- Implement appropriate initiatives involving concerned stakeholders like BBS, MoWCA, JPUF, Civil Society Organizations, OPDs and to standardize the disability prevalence data and make them easily available in open domain.
- Work towards development and approval of the National Data Standardization policy.
- Accelerate efforts for advocacy.
- Increase budgetary allocation for social protection for PWDs.
- Prepare a multistakeholder accountability framework that will clearly lay down the roles and responsibilities of each of the stakeholders.

Series of workshops were conducted with non-state actors in Dhaka and also outside Dhaka with diverse group of people which included transgenders, youth, marginalized and PWDs. The workshops included presentations on their activities to present commitments and plans to further progress in the field of inclusive social protection, and address lessons from the pandemic social protection response all over Bangladesh. The objective of the workshop was to find the major gaps and engagement of all stakeholders

to further strengthen activities to Leave No One Behind. A non-state actors citizen report is under progress which will further provide government in identifying the challenges and aid in taking the necessary social protection policies.

3.2 (a) What worked well

- Dissemination workshop on NSSS Action Plan, Phase - II (2021-26) and Baseline Assessment and Way Forward was organized with an aim to disseminate the newly formulated NSSS Action Plan, Phase-II (2021-2026) within the social protection implementing ministries, departments, and relevant agencies along with the baseline assessment of the Action Plan. This workshop was a wider consultative workshop that would pave the way to implement the NSSS Action Phase-II which is already in implementation for further reform in the social protection portfolio of Bangladesh in line with national social development goals and set targets for SDGs 2030. Through the workshop, a Baseline Assessment of the NSSS Action Plan, Phase-II has been developed that will help evaluate the implementation status and progress of the action plan. The HPM approves the whole plan, meaning now mandatory for all to implement. No need for higher approval, rather inform the progress of the reform and take guidance.
- The 2nd Project Implementation Committee (PIC) of the Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme was held on 3rd November 2022, in person and via the zoom platform. The meeting was jointly chaired by the Secretary, Coordination and Reforms, Cabinet Division and Member, General Economics Division (GED) of Planning Commission. Agenda of the project implementation committee meeting was a brief on the Implementation Progress of the project and its' milestones and the Annual Work Plan (AWP) 2023 of the project. The project will regularly organize meetings, workshops, dialogues, communication activities for the visibilities of social protection reforms. It will also conduct review meetings for monitoring the progress of the NSSS Action Plan, 2021-26 and sharing experiences of NSSS implementation with relevant ministries and divisions.

3.2 (b) What did not work well

Delay in policy approval

Most public officials perceived working for social strategy and plan development as additional responsibilities, beyond their regular assignments. On the other hand, many policy-level officials were overburdened and had trouble with time management and meeting the accomplishment deadline. Due to the overburdened nature, the policy always redistributes or shortly gives assignments related to social protection to different officials and to attend different policy meetings. This heterogeneous nature impact reform coordination within the ministries as well as inter-ministerial coordination and decision-making. Regular postings, re-postings, transfers, attending departmental and project-based different training programmes, tours, and retirements from the public services associated with lack of decisions and progress of reform work sharing system and practice (both individual and formal) for the successor official(s) and understanding of the complex nature of social protection and capacity of implementing reform (individual, organizational, and fund) slower the reform efforts against the set target(s). This has been evident, in preparing the NSSS Action Plan, Phase – II, which was supposed to be approved before June 2021, but actual approval happened in February 2022 and launched in October 2022, developing the road map of single registry MIS finalization decision-making happened in September 2022; Grievance Redress System (GRS) in social protection using the hotline '333' piloting started

in 2020 under EU supported Platform for Dialogue (P4D) Project of Reform Wing of the Cabinet Division implementing by British Council, and the result is unknown.

- There is possibility to improve the coordination mechanism to further enhance the thematic clusters -some are working well and some clusters are not updated. Also need to enhance the coordination of social operation in field level. The focal points are continuously changing, an induction toolkit has been developed and social protection module has been developed. More focus should be given on the usage of the toolkit and a process in place for whoever comes in is kind of briefed.

4.a Progress in implementing strategies to promote gender equality and women's empowerment

One of the ten priorities identified by Bangladesh's Honourable Prime Minister is Gender Equality. According to the National Women's Development Policy 2011, one of the key areas for reducing women's poverty is social security. The budget and coverage for social protection have been increased as part of the Eighth Five-Year Plan (8FYP July 2020- June 2025). Targeted food security, social empowerment, and livelihood programmes that promote gender equality and women's empowerment are examples of social security programs.

SSPS supported the development of the National Social Security Strategy (NSSS), Gender Policy and Strategy and the Action Plan for the implementing ministries. The NSSS gender policy, strategy and action plan has been reflected in the NSSS Action Plan 2021-26 (2nd phase). As a part of the Social Development Framework (SDF), the NSSS puts much emphasis on the issue of women and gender empowerment to achieve better equity and social justice. Therefore, it recommends comprehensive measures to be taken for tackling all gender-related socio-economic discrimination. Around two dozen of social security programmes in the budget of FY 2021-22 have a primary focus on women, directly or indirectly. There has been an increasing trend in both gender budget and beneficiary over the years as mentioned in NSSS.. It currently stands at 10 percent of the total SP budget which is a significant rise . The specific needs of women and girls at various ages have been considered in the NSSS and women have been identified as a group with specific needs. Old allowance covered a higher percentage of women due to age definition (women at 62, Male 65). The NSSS encourages transformative social security by promoting the social empowerment of disadvantaged groups including women. Due to women's lower level of participation in formal employment, they tend to have less access than men to contributory social protection systems. Therefore, all these hard realities and predicaments of women were kept in consideration while designing NSSS Action Plan Phase 2. The action plan suggests actions to integrate gender perspectives and address strategic gender interests by utilising the transformative potentials of the programmes.

The areas for focus include the following addressing gender perspectives: strengthening support for vulnerable women; introducing Child Benefit Programme and Vulnerable Women's Benefits programmes; workplace childcare services; Maternal Health Care; Maternity Insurance; empowering workfare programmes; addressing social norms; expanding social allowance; skills enhancement and such others. In addition, the Action Plan focused on gender-responsive planning, use of sex-disaggregated data, and effective grievance redress mechanism.

In this year's FY 2022s Safety net budget data -Maternity Allowance Programme for the Poor(The Maternity Allowance for Poor Mothers and the Maternity Allowance for Working Women have been merged into a single program called 'Mother and Child Benefit Program and the Vulnerable Group Development (VGD) program has been renamed as 'Vulnerable Women Benefit' (VWB) program from FY 23 as suggested in Action Plan Phase 1. Based on the policy guidelines of the NSSS and according to a

series of action plan workshops, the NSSS Action Plan2 incorporates a range of activities such as maternity insurance, strengthening social allowance (financial support/assistance/benefits) for the migrant workers and their family members (particularly women), etc. to address gender issues in social security. These actions are exclusively related to the social security of women and girls, but other programmes deal with both gender with embedded principles of ensuring gender equality in the delivery system. In short, social security aiming at gender equality needs multi-dimensional initiatives and cannot be achieved by only pursuing economic gains for women.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence is an international campaign observed every year to raise visibility around the call for the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence. This year's theme was UNiTE! Activism to End Violence against Women & Girls . SSPS program provided financial support to the UNDP country office in coordinating national dialogues, theatre performance , and trainings.

Several issues emerged from the national dialogue, and included major legislative reforms, an overhaul of the justice response and essential services, improved data collection and monitoring, comprehensive sexuality education in our schools, and the strengthening and expanding of institutional partnerships to prevent impunity, well-designed social protection systems that can narrow gender gaps in poverty rates, enhance women's income security and access to personal income, and provide a lifeline for poor women, especially single mothers.

M&E system with sex-disaggregated data and indicators to measure gender equality outcomes

The successful implementation of the Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2 is largely dependent on the appropriate interpretation of the strategies into actions by each ministry/division, within their own operational areas. For this, collection of sex-disaggregated data, use of gender analysis, and gender-focused indicators for monitoring and reporting have been prioritized Action Plan 2 and to measure the impact and effectiveness of social protection interventions on women's empowerment gender, age and geographically disaggregated data will have to be ensured.

It is expected that the different ministries and divisions will implement the action plan and use gender-based result indicators into the M&E framework both for implementation and for communication. Accordingly, the use of sex-disaggregated data and gender-focused indicators will be ensured. The Cluster Coordination Committees are also to supervise the collection of disaggregated data by the cluster member ministries/divisions. The programme has allocated a sufficient budget (Financial Progress Summary)to achieve gender equality-related outputs.

4.b Disability Inclusion

SSPS program has held a series of workshops within and outside Dhaka for OPDS which has been a positive platform for non-state stakeholders' engagement and GoB progress and challenges in reforming social security in Bangladesh with Disability Inclusion. The Principal Coordinator of PMO showed eagerness to collaborate for further reforms to work in the agenda of Leaving No One Behind. SSPS programme has been working closely with Disability Alliance on SDGs Bangladesh a network of 27 national and international organizations working for promoting disability rights in Bangladesh of which Sight Savers is the Secretariat to call on the government of Bangladesh for ensuring wider disability inclusion. The workshop also partnered with the Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) and Sight Savers Bangladesh attended by international and national OPDS which will be prolonged in the long term for further collaboration to expand the government system that helps to take the reform process forward. With additional partners like CDD and Disability Alliance, it will scale up engagement, work to strengthen the capacity of organisations of person with disabilities and their engagement with governments and mobilise targeted and concrete commitments on disability inclusion and inclusive development.

There are also consultations on building a Employment Platform for PwDs with National Disability Foundation. The key specific objectives are to design and promote evidence-based policies and programme addressing 'Leaving no one behind and 'Inclusive growth in the context of Bangladesh; and to create a joint sharing platform and scale-up, where relevant, existing livelihood programme jointly contribute to enhancing social protection system to be more. inclusive and comprehensive, in Bangladesh.

SSPS UNDP program collaborated with Sightsavers' Equal World campaign for the rights of people with disabilities to be upheld worldwide. The campaign vision is of a world where people with disabilities – particularly women and girls, and people living in low- and middle-income countries – can access education, employment, health care and political processes, and participated in society without discrimination. In line with the campaign vision, partners create a powerful movement for change in Bangladesh that will deliver a positive and lasting impact on the lives of persons with disabilities.

Participants expressed views and opinions as to the opportunity Somotar Bangladesh campaign offers to deliver on the rights enshrined in the Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013 of Bangladesh. Unanimous agreement amongst participants is that the biggest obstacle to persons with disabilities in Bangladesh accessing their rights on equal basis with others is the non-implementation of Disability Act of 2013.

The Campaign Planning Phase Workshops provided the necessary backdrop to our understanding of the policy environment and the opportunity it presents to the campaign. The consultations included participation from OPDs, Disability Alliance on SDGs Bangladesh, Sightsavers Bangladesh and global officials, UNICEF and UNDP SSPS Programme . This has helped build national ownership of the campaign and effectively engage a range of disability stakeholders to build a coalition led campaign.

The Campaign launch will take place on 11th May 2023.

5. Lessons Learned- Major Risks and Mitigation Measures

Key Challenges:

Risk	Update on controls/ mitigation strategy
<p>Political / National Security instability/unrest</p> <p>Impact – Programme implementation may be temporarily affected.</p>	<p>The programme will develop a contingency plan to deal with such situations, with cautious observation of the political/national security situation and ensuring approval of key programme activities before major events.</p>
<p>Key Govt. officials’ transfer posting, promotion and deployment with inordinate delay</p> <p>Impact - Envisaged coordination and consolidation of programmes and reformed institutional arrangements will be delayed or non-implemented.</p>	<p>SSPS has initiated alternate modality for DEX(Direct Execution)execution of activities under approval of the NPD and established strong coordination mechanism through approved reforms by the CMC.</p> <p>SSPS program developed an induction toolkit Development of Social Protection Policy Toolkit for Government Officials Consisting of Reference and Learning Materials to Guide the Mainstreaming of NSSS Action Plan (Phase 2)to mitigate the change in leadership challenges. It is available in the Website and user friendly as suggested in 2021’s reflection meeting by DFAT</p> <p>Link: https://socialprotection.gov.bd/en/2023/01/23/social-protection-toolkit/</p>
<p>Coordination and cooperation between ministries do not function effectively.</p> <p>Impact – The goal of a ‘fully functional social protection system’ cannot be achieved unless ministries coordinate and cooperate.</p>	<p>Cross-ministerial CMC Focal Points’ meetings, and regular consultation workshops with thematic focal points including orientations, and social security knowledge sharing tours can build inter-ministerial co-operation by strengthening awareness of complementarities, contributing to team building that breaks down inter-ministerial barriers.</p>
<p>Delays from Government in implementing policy initiatives.</p>	<p>The project has established a regular process to monitor risks. This includes the project’s National Project Manager meeting monthly with UNDP’s corresponding Cluster head, regular meetings with the key officials of the Cabinet Division, and other key officials of social security implementing ministries and follow up the implementation of the NSSS Action Plans implementing by concerned ministries. Progress of works appraised through PSC meetings encourage members to review the progress of works in and ensure both Cabinet Division and GED officials’ participatory role in NSSS reforms. In addition, identifying irrelevant indicators</p>

	<p>and replacing with more appropriate indicators, and reporting to the PSC, IMED, ERD, UNDP and the Cabinet Division on regular interval. Further, the Monitoring & Evaluation plan is regular maintained, and Project Reports and Risk Logs are updated and maintained close liaison with DFAT counterparts. Following these processes have significantly contributed to a better relationship with the Government and donor and progress in key policy reform areas.</p>
<p>Data: Regularly obtaining and disseminating data for policymakers on social protection remains a challenging issue. For example, the Ministry of Social Welfare's national budget report is to a large degree compiled from manual entries from a multiple source. This makes it difficult for generating regular data and difficult in understanding and compiling disaggregated data across SSNS, e.g., age, sex, and other categories.</p>	<p>The M & E dashboard would be a timely reform that can be taken. There were suggestions during the meetings that emphasized on shortcut way of processing and disseminating data on a regular basis. Somewhere along the chain of data collection from the local level to the national level, perhaps it's possible to extract the data from that point for more timely aggregation. Any dashboard should prioritize regularity, preferably monthly, and be easily functionable on the front-end for a wide variety of GoB stakeholders to access, understand, and generate useful reports.</p>

6. Financial Summary, Effectiveness and Value for Money

Financial Progress

UNDP Bangladesh received 2nd payment on 1st August 2021 in the amount of Aus\$: 1,750,000 equivalent to US\$ 1,222,921. So, the total Budget for July 2021 - June 2023 was 3,960,396 AUD / USD 2,935,078. The expenditure up to the end of December 2022 AUD 2,628,794 / USD 1,948,219), was 66% of the total received.

Item	Budget		Expenditure				Budget	
	2021 - 2023	2021 - 2023	July to December 2021		January - December 2022		January - December 2023	
	AUD	USD	AUD	USD	AUD	USD	AUD	USD
1.1 : Technical Units to Support 5 LMs to Implement the Reforms Plan	407,447	301,962	82,849	61,400	196,411	145,562	128,187	95,000
1.2 : Knowledge and Policy Innovation for Advancing Social Protection Reforms	409,536	303,510	52,354	38,800	229,323	169,953	127,859	94,757
1.3: COVID-19 Policy Response	141,553	104,906	10,525	7,800	66,530	49,306	64,498	47,800
Subtotal	958,536	710,378	145,728	108,000	492,265	364,821	320,543	237,557
2.1 : Research Fund	362,819	268,888	61,664	45,700	193,208	143,188	107,947	80,000
2.2 : Stakeholder Engagement and Dissemination on Research and Evidences	220,598	163,487	21,050	15,600	132,082	97,887	67,467	50,000
2.3: Pilot on Old Age Allowance and Persons with Disabilities					0	0		
Subtotal	583,417	432,374	82,714	61,300	325,290	241,075	175,413	130,000
3.1 : Improving NSSS M&E	276,265	204,742	49,925	37,000	121,440	90,000	104,900	77,742
3.2 : Gender Mainstreaming Social Protection Reforms	124,457	92,236	14,168	10,500	67,467	50,000	42,822	31,736
3.3 : Support to CMC Coordination for Strengthening Accountability	160,563	118,994	19,700	14,600	80,960	60,000	59,902	44,394
3.4: Stakeholder Engagement on Development of NSSS 2026+	144,865	107,361	4,048	3,000	94,453	70,000	46,364	34,361
Subtotal	706,150	523,333	87,842	65,100	364,320	270,000	253,989	188,233
4.1: CSO / DPO Platform for Influencing Social Protection	116,420	86,280	13,493	10,000	60,720	45,000	42,207	31,280
Subtotal	116,420	86,280	13,493	10,000	60,720	45,000	42,207	31,280
Human Resources	902,223	668,644	111,279	82,470	499,253	370,000	291,690	216,174
Operations	191,825	142,163	31,709	23,500	102,549	76,000	57,567	42,663
Subtotal	1,094,047	810,807	142,989	105,970	601,802	446,000	349,257	258,837
Project Monitoring	168,181	124,640	26,987	20,000	89,919	66,640	51,275	38,000
Project Evaluation	40,282	29,853			0	0	40,282	29853
Subtotal	208,462	154,493	26,987	20,000	89,919	66,640	91,556	67,853
All Subtotal	3,667,032	2,717,665	499,752	370,370	1,934,316	1,433,536	1,232,965	913,760
GMS Subtotal	293,364	217,413	39,981	29,630	154,745	114,683	98,636	73,100
Total	3,960,396	2,935,078	539,733	400,000	2,089,061	1,548,219	1,331,602	986,860

Effectiveness

The SSPS Programme was highly efficient and effective to support the achievements of results with management capacities and governance arrangements that were put in place. The SSPS Programme had instituted a management arrangement that appears to be strong and at par with some of the good global practices concerning the management of complex and highly ambitious undertakings such as the SSPS. The management arrangements have met with a varying degree of capacity constraints impinging on the continued commitment and ownership at various levels of the government.

Value for Money

The SSPS represents a good example of Value for Money based on economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity, and judicious use of resources. The project has been consistently maintaining close to 100 percent delivery rate every year while maintaining strong Value for Money (VfM) by utilizing UNDP's global procurement system and entering negotiations for service providers offering competitive prices. The resources, by adhering to the principle of VfM, have economically converted the resources/inputs (funds, expertise, and time) into many results that are well demonstrated and acknowledged. Dozens of social security programme reforms have been made, as laid out by the NSSF, and now enacted, Action Plans Phase 2, for each line ministry have been developed.

Indicator	Evidence
a) % Of spending	UNDP Bangladesh received 2nd payment on 1st August 2021 in the amount of Aus\$: 1,750,000 equivalent to US\$ 1,222,921. So, the total Budget for July 2021 - June 2023 was 3,960,396 AUD / USD 2,935,078. The expenditure up to the end of December 2022 AUD 2,628,794 / USD 1,948,219), was 66% of the total received.
b) Committed to eliminating inefficiency and duplication and applying lessons learned to enhance VfM	The personnel structure of the project is reviewed regularly by the Project Manager who guides staff on their expected deliverables, ensuring each team member has specific duties related to the project. No duplicate roles exist. Internally, every UNDP project has a mid-year and end-year review, where among other information, Lessons Learned are recorded and analysed. These lessons learned are taken into consideration when planning the subsequent Annual Work Plan in January (i.e., 2022 end-year lessons learned to inform 2023 AWP).
c) Delivers defined services within budget (predicted budgets compare well to actual expenditure)	Same as above-mentioned indicator a.
d) Scrutinises costs to pursue the most cost-effective options and considers proportionality in planning/allocating resources	The project Annual Work Plan is developed at the beginning of the year and budgets are allocated based on the level of service delivery required under each output based on internal estimates of market rates based on previous contracts issued by UNDP. The Annual Work Plan is revised throughout the year when required. All expenses are planned for in line-by-line budgets to ensure every component of an output expenditure is in line or below-market rates. For the NSSF Action Plan phase 2, all expenditures for meetings and workshops were scrutinised minutely. Additionally, the UNDP Procurement Unit went back to the selected vendor on multiple sub-budget lines requesting an explanation and/or reduction, which was successfully obtained for international and national consultants. This type of rigorous mindset is held for all project expenditures.
e) Robust systems and procedures in place to monitor and manage VfM during implementation	All procured goods and services run through the UNDP Country Office Procurement Unit ensuring competitive, cost-effective procuring. UNDP Country Office conducts annual audits ensuring compliance and proper record/receipt keeping. The project considers VfM via economy (ensuring the right procurements), efficiency (monitoring

Indicator	Evidence
	economy against achieving results), and effectiveness (effect of all inputs toward achieving results).

7. Way Forward

The SSPS Programme will act in the coming months on and complete implementation of some outstanding issues to make a further impact:

- **Midterm Evaluation:** The objective of this assignment, in alignment with DFAT-UNDP agreed policy to conduct midterm evaluation to assess and evaluate the performance of the project delivery against its planned outputs and results and what was achieved. The successes and lessons learned of Phase – I at the purview of Theory of Change (ToC) , current baseline assessment of NSSS Action Plan Phase – II . The mid-term evaluation will review the current socioeconomic development narrative of Bangladesh and determine the course of action, if any change is required. This evaluation will examine, through a policy-lens focus, and in an independent manner, the project’s delivery of objectives in relation to the project document and its intended purpose. It should consider how activities have contributed to advancing, if at all, to the reforms and implementation of the NSSS. The project evaluation will consider effectiveness, efficiency, delivery of outputs, and any support to Government institutions (such as committees, coordination, policy, logistics). The evaluation will consider the entire working period of the project’s duration up until the present time. The assignment will be carried out using a public policy model for evaluation.

The project will take measures to revise the RTAPP and Project Document (ProDoc) to accommodate necessary changes in the project with extended timeline and costs. The Cabinet Division may request the IMED for conducting the project evaluation which is necessary for initiating such revisions.

- **National Conference on National Social Insurance Scheme NSIS in Bangladesh 2023** is in the consultation process with Govt. counterparts. The workshop would follow both participatory and virtual basis a on Govt. approval. The conference will give the opportunity of stakeholders on SSPS Programme’s next phase reform actions. Workshop modality: The workshop will be participatory dialogue basis attended by both public and private sector. National conference is a good forum for stakeholder participation, knowledge sharing, dissemination, and buy-in.
- **CODI Workshop 2023.** Core Diagnostic Instrument (CODI) 3 to be held to social protection policy with CMC focal points. Re-assessment on collected data for 2017 and 2022 completed. Second round assessment to be completed with the active participation of the concerned ministries. It creates more enthusiasm among the concerned ministries on progress at the result-based indicators, and active participation in CODI assessment matrix to see the changes from baseline. Also, better understand the progress of reform at individual ministry level.

Reflection meeting of 2023: The SSPS reflection meeting has been attended by government counterparts, UNDP representatives and DFAT colleagues. The Project Manager gave an insightful presentation on the works of SSPS programme.

Joint Secretary of PMO office mentioned that the principal coordinator have a strong linkages and a functional relationship with the General Economics Division where SSPS project is assisting. Since social protection is associated with all the SDGs, the PMO office has full commitment for supporting this project

Mr Khaled Hasan, joint secretary, Cabinet division mentioned that Government this year allocated around 12 billion US dollar for social protection. And in 2026, had two projection -one is very conservative amounting to be 14.5 billion US dollar in 2026 and in another projection it is 18 billion. And we hope that the world's economic situation will improve soon and maybe the government will be able to provide the funds for social protection, at least according to the conservative forecast. And SSPS program is doing a tremendous job in shaping the social protection governance, delivery system, and also planning.

Mr Faizul Islam UN Wing Chief mentioned that how government is really looking for to go beyond 2026 because this is going to help the poor, disadvantaged, and marginalised people of this country and are really indebted to DFAT for their financial and technical assistance and emphasized on the revision and extension of the SSPS project. UNDP Assistant Country Representative- Mr Anwarul Haque pointed out that the important areas should be prioritized to consider transformative change. Coordination and governance of social protection are the main challenges that keeps coming up repeatedly because it's multi ministerial, inter-ministerial coordination where there are changes happening all the time, it's not easy. Cabinet division is heading it which is a big support and working together through a collaborative process. Need to understand what kind of adaptive processes is needed so that this improves actually because at the end of that day, all the coordination reforms depends upon how people are coming together, how colleagues are coming together, committed and work together.

Mr Asif Kashem of DFAT mentioned how SSPS have done various research works and suggested to develop some research briefs that could help the policy makers to capture the lessons in brief way and also making the existing induction toolkit more user friendly for orientation of social protection focal points .

Mr Kawsar Ahmed ,GED mentioned how he is very happy to see the Social protection reform program going for it field piloting and very much looking forward to see the reform progressing. He mentioned about studies of SSPS conducted so far, and also the proposed studies will be the background documents, not only for the NSSS 2026 and beyond, but also could be a part of the Ninth Five Year Plan and SDG implementation as well.

He stated that several policy development supports have been proposed, which will undoubtedly assist the government of Bangladesh in achieving middle-income country status in 2026, as well as SDG goals in 2023 and achieving the 2041 vision. The IMF, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, JICA, and several other international donor agencies have pledged to support Bangladesh's efforts to achieve Vision 2041. And I'm confident that the Australian government and DFAT will work with us to make our father of the nation's dream a reality. Through the UNDP-assisted SSPS program, Bangladesh will be transformed into Shonar Bangla. It was unanimously agreed that the SSPS program has been very important in the government's reform of social protection, and that a review of this project is urgently needed.

Annex - A

Some important policy decisions /report in 2022 with web-based links

SL	Name of the Event	Date	Link of the Relevant Documents
1.	1 st PIC Meeting of SSPS Programme	23 January 2022	https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/PIC-1st-Meeting-Minutes-ssps.pdf
2.	Reflection Meeting on SSPS Programme	10 February 2022	https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Notes-for-Record-of-the-Reflection-Meeting.pdf
3.	Workshop on Mapping of Social Protection of OPDs in Bangladesh	21 March 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QHEd1eWoi9eila1N704TpKAtawEzqi5U/view?usp=share_link
4.	Focus Group Discussion for Assessing the possible scopes and framework of the national Social Protection web-based dashboard	5 April 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mkiPZo8jL7BskA15XKBm3sJekgxMm2TA/view?usp=share_link
5.	Workshop with District Level Officer on Social Protection, Manikganj	8 June 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/18xComgX7bX - duzZktQXf4MF37oWIHte/view?usp=share_link
6.	Workshop with District Level Officer on Social Protection, Narayanganj	9 June 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/170rCqKUXRGxuLDs mjEyz2Z74_lq6ECOG/view?usp=share_link
7.	Workshop with District Level Officer on Social Protection, Chandpur	10 June 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/162h_IMO2sQjZztXL256mo8z07pbOobv5/view?usp=share_link
8.	Workshop with District Level Officer on Social Protection, Luxmipur	11 June 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1joXtutEbrE1dC330jVi6zLPP8kMuRKTN/view?usp=share_link
9.	1 st Meeting of the Local Consultative Group (LCG) on Governance and Social Protection	21 June 2022	https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/LCG-Meeting-2022-06-21.pdf
10.	CMC Focal Point Meeting	26 June 2022	https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Minutes-CMC-Focal-Point-Meeting-26-June-2022.pdf
11.	Thematic Cluster Meeting of the Social Allowance Cluster	27 June 2022	https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Social-Allowance-Cluster-27-June-2022.pdf
12.	Thematic Cluster of the Social Insurance Cluster	27 June 2022	https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Social-Insurance-Cluster-27-June-2022.pdf
13.	Thematic Cluster of the Food Security & Disaster Assistance Cluster	28 June 2022	https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Food-Security-and-Disaster-Allowance-28-June-2022.pdf
14.	Thematic Cluster of the Labour/Livelihood Intervention Cluster	28 June 2022	https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Labour-and-Livelihood-Cluster-28-June-2022.pdf
15.	Thematic Cluster of the Human Development and Social Empowerment Cluster	29 June 2022	https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Human-Development-and-Social-Empowerment-29-June-2022.pdf
16.	Workshop on Single Registry MIS	18 July 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v0nqaqWq3Vkt3YVSCO27vXLXChf1shFM/view?usp=share_link
17.	Meeting of the M&E Committee on Social Protection	20 July 2022	https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/ME-Meeting-Minutes.pdf
18.	Single Registry Meeting	2 August 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qslu3h2bYCLzsq0Es3drr_c7-kRxZv_n/view?usp=share_link
19.	Workshop Core Diagnostic Instrument (CODI) for Social Protection	4 August 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o_KR-wOWx-5gn_IjPRIQwxIA5a4FBc6/view?usp=share_link
20.	Research Topic Selection Workshop	25 August 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gOrTwWpf6Dy14U UZpOO7V-3CJNPajzcz/view?usp=share_link
21.	Implementation of National Social Security Strategy (NSSS), Moulvibazar	30 Sep -1 October 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/182YUtBMFBzVXajsB6S8bFmst1vRWU5jp/view?usp=share_link

22.	2nd Meeting of the Local Consultative Group (LCG) on Governance and Social Protection	26 October 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fpt-nqaYF42aQ470Fia2UvvnlnNd1sn6/view?usp=share_link
23.	NSSS Action Plan Dissemination Workshop	10-13 October 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nxeA4YhS6QVaX93-eGOymbHiXA22T8h/view?usp=share_link
24.	Meeting on Social Protection Visit	30 October 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uCdEDtyEK2s5cVpiSMFr5lONJ7srjlk/view?usp=share_link
25.	2 nd PIC meeting of SSPS Programme	3 November 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oivF7bogdmnyF_mgPuhHwIwDGUingYW/view?usp=share_link
26.	ABND - Consensus Building Workshop, Habiganj	24-26 Nov 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/19Pnlv-1b0QoH3tUJLOrT793vVUBFyzmC/view?usp=share_link
27.	Seminar on International Day for Persons with Disabilities 2022	4 December 2022	https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Tr6b2UyXpANV7xpcupBVg9z7pnTCT6_5/view?usp=share_link
28.	Workshop with Ethnic Minorities from Chittagong Hill Tracts	17 August 2022	Non-State Actor Report is in Progress
29.	Workshop with Ethnic Minorities from North-Bengal	15 September 2022	
30.	Workshop with Ethnic Minorities from Mymensingh	20 September 2022	
31.	Workshop with Transgender Communities	17 November 2022	
32.	Workshop with Youth Communities	19 November 2022	
33.	Workshop with Coastal and Climate Vulnerable Communities	21 November 2022	
34.	Workshop with Dalit Communities	23 November 2022	

Annex - B

Gantt Chart for the SSPS Programme Implementation Plan

Activity	2021 (Jan – Dec)				2022 (Jan – Dec)				2023 (Jan – Jun)		Remarks
	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	
SSPS Programme Inception Phase (July – December 2021) for DFAT Fund											
TPP approval											The Ministry of Planning of the Government of Bangladesh has approved the SSPS Programme revised Technical Project Proposal.
SSPS Programme Workshop with stakeholders											The NSSS Action Plan preparation CMC sub-committee has discussed the SSPS Programme's initiatives and inclusion in the NSSS Action Plan. Project Implementation Committee (PIC) agreed on a Reflection Workshop with key line ministries/divisions to discuss the social protection reforms. A reflection workshop was held with DFAT, and the meeting agreed on several decisions. The Cabinet Secretary attended a three-day long National Integrity Strategy and Social Protection discussion with the social protection implementation ministries organized in September. The M&E dashboard feasibility and social insurance review study appraised to CMC M&E Committee. Discussions with district officials and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), ethnic minorities, third gender, and other vulnerable groups were held simultaneously.
Administrative approval was secured for establishing technical units ¹											Two technical units (GED and Cabinet Division) are functioning, and provision will be made to continue providing support to the key line ministries from these units. Two existing units are functioning well. Earlier it was agreed that SSPS Programme will not establish any physical unit in key ministries, but rather

Activity	2021 (Jan – Dec)				2022 (Jan – Dec)				2023 (Jan – Jun)		Remarks
	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	
											uses the existing offices and alternate arrangement due to COVID pandemic, and office closer. All key ministries were given TA support in developing the NSSS Action Plan, Phase – II(2021-2026). The expert mobilization process started for MoSW, MoLE, and Finance Division depends on the green signals from the new leadership of these ministries. Discussion continued with key officials of MoF to provide support to the SPBFU and Developing the private pension authority. Capacity need assessment is in progress will pinpoint the requirements of TA support in future for CD, GED, MoSW, FD, FID, MoLE, MoEWOE. The ICT expert leads the social protection platform supported by a number of UNVs, while one professional integrated with the SVRS and SP Section provides TA support, apart lead the non-state actor programming, i.e., GO-NGOs, PwDs, Ethnic Minorities, third gender, and others.
Concept note and revision of data collection, usage, and storage, table generation for NSSS M&E framework and M&E dashboard											National social protection M&E situation analysis for establishing the NSSS M&E dashboard has been completed. Based on study, the ToR of the M&E dashboard has been drafted, which is under the review process.
Concept notes and ToRs on Universal Old Age Allowance (OAA), Disability Allowance, National Social Insurance Scheme (NSIS), and Single Registry MISs											Concept notes for OAA and PwDs are completed, and pilot proposal development is in the process. Review study on social insurance completed, and the pilot design for unemployment insurance is under process. Discussions held with the Secretary, Statistics and Informatics Division and Member, GED, and the Cabinet Division, and Secretary, Coordination and Reform convened CMC Focal Points meeting and discussed the implementation road map of integrated MIS based on a single social register. An outline of the implementation roadmap and

Activity	2021 (Jan – Dec)				2022 (Jan – Dec)				2023 (Jan – Jun)		Remarks
	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	
NSSS Action Plan 2 nd phase draft revision and finalization with gender inclusivity for printing, launching and dissemination											CMC approves the NSSS Action Plan (Phase – II). The Cabinet Secretary along with other secretaries and development partners and the participation of high and mid-level officials of 39 ministries launched the plan, followed by five-day-long dissemination workshops in October. The social protection implementing ministries updated the reform initiative launching of the plan.
Situation and policy assessment of shock-responsive social protection and Urban Social Protection Models ²											A paper on "A Brief Analysis of Social Protection Programme Response to COVID – 19 Pandemic in Bangladesh" developed. Climate-induced Shock Responsive Disaster Resilience Mapping for Adaptive Social Protection Programming of the at-Risk Population in the North-eastern of Bangladesh – a study is under process in collaboration with the Department of Disaster Science and Climate Resilience, Dhaka University. Two papers were presented in a consultative policy dialogue titled "Blue Economy: Prospect of Institutionalization the National Progress". The presented papers were: a) Institutionalization of the Blue Economy in Bangladesh: Problems, Prospect, and Actions; and b) Blue Economy and Prospect of Social Protection in Bangladesh. UNDP-assisted Dhaka and Gazipur City Corporations implemented urban shock-responsive adaptive social protection programmes visited for shock responsive model analysis.

Activity	2021 (Jan – Dec)				2022 (Jan – Dec)				2023 (Jan – Jun)		Remarks
	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	
CMC Sub-committee: NSSS M&E Committee meeting											Two meetings were held.
NSSS thematic clusters meetings (need-based)											Thematic cluster meetings were held from 26 th to 28 th June 2022.
LCG Governance and Social Protection meeting											Discussions between DFAT and FCDO colleagues and GED counterparts held to reactivate LCG Poverty. Two LCG Governance and Social Protection meetings were held.
LCG Governance meeting											Two meetings were held.
GO-NGO Committee meeting											Meeting held with BRAC for joint field visits and review the Ultra Poor Graduation, and micro-insurance along with GoB's livelihood programmes and scoping for urban social protection programming. Number of meetings held with BRAC advocacy and UPG wings, regarding identifying the best evidence-based programming, stakeholder consultations for a joint programming on the basis of MoU signed between UNDP and BRAC. Number of bilateral meetings were held, and one meeting was held in the third quarter.
National Committee of Disability Persons Organization (DPO) meeting											Frequent transfer to the lead position unable to conduct meetings/workshops with the National Committee.
Project Board (PIC) meeting											First meeting was held on 23 January 2022; and the second meeting on 03 November 2022.
Orientation, Conference, dialogues, workshops, and other meetings											Orientations on NSSS Action Plan preparation, consultative dialogues/meetings related to social protection policy reform was held. NSSS Action Plan Phase II lunch and dissemination

Activity	2021 (Jan – Dec)				2022 (Jan – Dec)				2023 (Jan – Jun)		Remarks
	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	
Single registry MISs Action Plan / Master Plan											Action Plan identifies relevant ministries' roles and responsibilities, and MISs will be integrated with the M&E dashboard on pilot-basis. SSP5 Team will develop the action plan, while a private company will make provision of MISs and M&E dashboard integration. Localization of single registry MIS to respond the COVID pandemic shocks – Gopalganj model visited by Member, GED, Secretary SID, and agreed to replicate. The Cabinet Secretary gave responsibility to Senior Secretary, ICT Division to coordinate the single registry MIS through a stakeholder consultation. The outcome of the consultation will provide guidance developing the road map plan, and responsibility of each individual ministry. Single Registry workshop dialogue held with ICT division.
Line ministries are regularly updating reform progress data on the dashboard											the dashboard captures the line ministries reform data would be done in the first phase of dashboard development, which will start in the third quarter.
Enable NGOs/DPOs to include the priorities of marginalized and excluded groups in SP policies											
Annual review and reflection workshop											January or February of 2022 with key implementing ministries to assess the implementation and reform progress and constraints. Reflection workshop held between DFAT, and UNDP with the participation of the Cabinet Division and GED.
Supporting non-state actors and DPs to create a platform to participate in social protection decision making											Support will be provided to the SDG platform for DPs, and a national conference on the observance of World Disability Day by the SSP5 Team and DP secretariat. Two workshops held with SDG Platform for DPS on Mapping of Social Protection with Principal Coordinator SDG Affairs on March 2022. Several

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	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	3Q	4Q	1Q	2Q	
											workshops were also held with OPDs to under the supply and demand side social protection issues.
Customization of social protection communication strategy for leaving no one behind endorsed by DP platform											Consultative dialogues were held with the PwDs/DPOs. The customization process started.
Non-state actors and DPs produce a citizens' report on social protection and needs of marginalized and excluded groups											Assessment of demand and supply perspective progressing with DPOs. An outline of the non-state actor report is drafted.
Orientation on NSSS Action Plan 2nd phase											For the concerned officials of implementing and coordinating ministries provide progress as baseline and implementation of the social protection programmes including reforms. Field level orientation and consultation identifying the implementation challenges begin.
Keyline ministry decision-makers have enhanced knowledge of and capability to design and implement gender-responsive social protection policy and SSPs because of targeted capacity building											NSSS Action Plan phase – II built the knowledge base and capacity of the key programme planners, implementors, and reformists. ABCD of Bangladesh social protection is a knowledge book for the social protection practitioners. Apart, an information toolkit is under development process for government officials.