High-Level Meeting on Achieving Sustainable Graduation for LDCs

Session 2
Seizing the Momentum of Graduation to Achieve the SDGs: Prospects and Challenges

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Outline

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Section I: The Need for a Graduation Strategy
Section I: The Need for a Graduation Strategy

• UNCTAD (2016) has projected that Bangladesh is likely to graduate from the group of LDCs by 2024

• CDP in 1991 had determined that countries with a population exceeding 75 million shall not be considered for inclusion in the list of LDCs. In view of this, if Bangladesh is able to sustain the graduation thresholds for the next two triennial reviews (in 2021 and 2024), and moves out of the LDC group, her graduation will be irreversible

• It is to be noted that, Bangladesh’s LDC graduation will be taking place in the backdrop of an earlier graduation, in 2015, from low income to lower middle income country (LMIC) status (as per WB atlas method)

• Bangladesh may continue to benefit from ongoing preferential treatment as an LDC for an additional three years i.e. till 2027 subject to negotiations with the EU

• Challenges will need to be addressed, and opportunities harnessed, consequent to Bangladesh’s LDC graduation. Therefore, the need of preparing a smooth graduation strategy can not be overemphasised

• Bangladesh has the next 10 years to prepare for sustainable graduation beyond the year 2027. In the meantime Bangladesh should make the most out of the LDC-specific preferences and prepare for life after LDC

• Consequently, a forward-looking smooth graduation strategy is called for to ensure sustainable graduation with momentum
Section II: Bangladesh’s Graduation Possibilities
Section II: Bangladesh’s Graduation Possibilities

Table A: Bangladesh’s graduation prospects: projections in view of 2018 CDP review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Threshold</td>
<td>Actual value</td>
<td>Predicted threshold</td>
<td>Predicted value for Bangladesh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNI per capita ($)</td>
<td>1242</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>1175-1200</td>
<td>1194-1198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAI</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>70.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVI</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ projections. *Note: Methodology and assumptions are detailed out in the paper*

- According to authors’ projection, the ongoing global economic slowdown could lead to a fall in LDC graduation threshold as per GNI per capita when the 2018 CDP review will take place.
- Bangladesh’s track record concerning growth in GNI, as per the projections presented in Table A, indicates that Bangladesh is likely to graduate in terms of this criteria, along with the other two in terms of which her graduation is almost certain.
- Even if Bangladesh marginally falls short in meeting the GNI per capita threshold criteria in 2018, it is almost certain that by the time of the 2021 CDP review Bangladesh will cross this (third) threshold as well.
- This will mean that, as distinct from majority of the other graduating and graduated LDCs, Bangladesh’s LDC graduation will be more broad-based (fulfilling all three criteria) and hence a more balanced one.
- In this connection, it is important to note that, Bangladesh’s population, GDP and export are respectively 17.2 per cent, 17.5 per cent and 12.4 per cent of all the 47 LDCs combined. Hence, her graduation and graduation pathway will likely attract a lot of attention.
Section III: Prospects and Challenges of Bangladesh’s Sustainable Graduation
As Bangladesh moves towards 2018 as a candidate-LDC for graduation, issues of sustainable graduation will likely, and justifiably so, gain increasing attention. There are several reasons for this:

- **Firstly**, Bangladesh will need to continue the momentum so that it distances itself (improves) further from the thresholds which will give it a comfort zone from any likely setback.

- **Secondly**, the experience of a number of graduated LDCs shows that, inspite of having crossed the thresholds once, vulnerabilities continue to persist and these then could lead to deferment of the final graduation.

- **Thirdly**, the interregnum years between graduation consideration and final graduation (2018-2024) provides a some space to Bangladesh to take the needed preparation for the final graduation.

- Designing a well-crafted graduation strategy thus has become critically important task for Bangladesh in moving forward.
Section III: Prospects and Challenges of Bangladesh’s Sustainable Graduation

• However, Bangladesh’s Graduation will be Taking Place at a Time of Considerable Uncertainties in the Global Arena
  ➢ A recent press release on trade data and outlook by WTO forecasted that global merchandise trade volume is expected to grow at 3.6 per cent in 2017, accompanied by real GDP growth of 2.8 per cent at market exchange rates
  ➢ The situation in the run up to 2018, and beyond, could worsen in the face of restrictive trade practices by developed countries, Brexit and their impacts on trade with Europe, the increasing presence of mega-regional trading blocs and the weakening of the WTO as the global multilateral institution governing trade rules. Moreover, monetary tightening in the developed countries, geopolitical tensions and costly natural disasters might exacerbate the situation
  ➢ While the adverse impacts of economic and financial crises of 2007–2008 was rather limited for the Bangladesh economy, similar crises are likely to have a greater impact in future as Bangladesh’s economy continues to be increasingly integrated with the global economy
  ➢ Migration crisis and slowdown of remittance inflow may also have adverse impact on Bangladesh’s growth performance
  ➢ Global slowdown could have detrimental impact on Bangladesh’s exports – Bangladesh’s export growth over first four months of FY2018 (July-October) was 7.0 per cent as against the annual target of 8.2 per cent; remittance growth was 6.9 per cent over the corresponding period
Section III: Prospects and Challenges of Bangladesh’s Sustainable Graduation

Table B: Predicted values of GNI per capita, HAI and EVI by years of CDP’s triennial reviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2024</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GNI per capita</td>
<td>1242</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>1175-1200</td>
<td>1194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAI</td>
<td>66 and above</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>66 and above</td>
<td>70.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVI</td>
<td>32 and below</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>32 and below</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ projections. Note: HAI and EVI thresholds are fixed permanently for LDC graduation

- Trend analysis indicates that Bangladesh’s performance as regards under-nourishment could remain a concern if appropriate measures are not strengthened. Even if this is factored into the equation, the overall HAI score is projected to be 75.4 and 80.2 respectively at the time of the 2021 and 2024 CDP triennial reviews. These are well above the graduation threshold score of 66.

- However, a caveat is called for here. Whilst in terms of many of the related HAI and EVI sub-indicators Bangladesh has made commendable progress, trend analysis may not necessarily generate good predictors. HAI and EVI average scores conceal vulnerabilities in terms of specific sub-indicators.
• Projections in this study were made on past values when Bangladesh did make good progress compared to the correspondingly low reference points of the past. Going forward, building on past performance could become more difficult, as hard to reach areas and communities get to be targeted. To achieve further progress in terms of social development indicators, the solutions are likely to be more capital intensive than the many low-cost solutions of the past and current.

• While Bangladesh has demonstrated significant success in disaster management, natural disasters remain an uncertain variable in any equation involving the future likely trends.

• Bangladesh continues to remain a highly challenged country in terms of climate vulnerabilities.
Mitigating the challenges of climate change should remain high on policy agenda of Bangladesh over the next period as graduation from the LDC group will likely adversely affect Bangladesh’s possibility of receiving preferential climate financing from such global sources as infrastructural development fund, climate change adaptation funds and technology related green climate fund (GCF).

On the other hand, improvements in standards of living through higher GNI per capita will hopefully better equip people in addressing natural disasters.

The parameters of GNI per capita, HAI and EVI are correlated and strengthening of Bangladesh’s capacities in the various areas, and the resultant resilience, will hopefully enable the country to prepare for graduation from a position of strength.
Section IV: Costs and Credits of Bangladesh's LDC Graduation
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Terms of ODA

• Bangladesh’s dependence on ODA has gradually declined over time – compared to early 1990s when the ratio of ODA to export of goods and services was 1:1, currently it stands at 1:16. However, in the period of 2012-2015 (in real value terms), Bangladesh’s share of ODA 7 per cent of the total ODA received by the LDCs as a group

• In recent years, a larger share in ODA has come in the form of loan. Thus, Bangladesh is already getting tuned to non-grant loans

• Concessional loans are expected to further decline as Bangladesh transit from IDA-only form of WB loan to blended loan to International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) type loan only status

• Bangladesh is now eligible for blended financing as per capita income criteria. In FY17 the blend operation threshold was up to USD 1,945. If the current GNI per capita growth rates sustain, by the time Bangladesh will finally graduate (2024), she may as well cross the threshold of blend category
Section IV: Costs and Credits of Bangladesh’s LDC Graduation

- As a graduated LDC, Bangladesh will need to adjust to the new realities where it will perhaps be given IBRD status for loan purposes. In the process, borrowing costs will significantly rise as Bangladesh will start to receive increasingly more ODA on shorter maturity terms and at higher lending rates. Consequently, Bangladesh will also have to incur higher debt service liabilities in future.
- However, the transition from IDA-only to blend to IBRD-only status and Bangladesh’s economic strength as a non-LDC, should be seen from the perspective of country’s improved creditworthiness and credit ratings.
- Raising of loans, either by public sector (issuing of sovereign bonds) or private sector (commercial loans), will be possible at relatively lower interest rate, in view of better credit standing of the country.
Terms of Market Access

- Currently, Bangladesh enjoys preferential market access, to varying degrees and extent, in markets of more than 40 countries.

- Unless Bangladesh manages to renegotiate, through bilateral agreements or as part of regional trade arrangements (of BFTAs and CEPA type), she will have to face MFN tariff rates in exporting to those markets beyond 2027.

- Estimates carried out for the present study shows that (using a gravity type regression model), at the prevailing MFN rates, taking cognisance of markets and products, on average, Bangladesh’s exports will face an additional 6.7 per cent tariff once it graduates from the LDC status.

- This could result in an estimated export loss to the tune of USD 2.7 billion in the currently preference-offering countries (the reference export value taken was USD 21.3 billion for FY2015) e.g. equivalent to about 8 per cent of her global exports in that year.

- This result is found to be fairly consistent with UNCTAD estimates which indicates that Bangladesh export may fall by 5.5 to 7.5 per cent as a result of loss of preferential access.
Section IV: Costs and Credits of Bangladesh's LDC Graduation

- Analysis of tariff rates, market share and preferences carried out by the authors’ show that, at the current MFN rates, on average, Bangladesh’s export will face 8.7 per cent and 3.9 per cent tariff rise respectively in the EU and selected non-EU destinations once she graduates from the LDC group.

- The preference erosion (in major exporting countries) will thus have implications for export competitiveness, and export earnings and consequently, GDP, employment and poverty.

- Once finally graduated, Bangladesh will no more be eligible for support measures e.g. DF-QF market access negotiated in the WTO, trade-related EIF funds, Special and Differential Treatment (SDT) provisions for the LDCs in the WTO, potential support from the proposed ‘Technological Bank’.

- Bangladesh will also not be eligible for science, technology and innovation (SDI) related concessional finance for the LDCs.
Section IV: Costs and Credits of Bangladesh's LDC Graduation

- Intellectual property rights (IPR) regimes will be more stringently applied – this will be particularly relevant for Bangladesh’s promising pharmaceutical sector which has been receiving special treatment under the DDR (2001) decision on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and Public Health.

- Once graduated from preferential market access eligibility, Bangladesh will not benefit from any progress in the services waiver (under WTO-GATS Mode 4) negotiations which is geared to provide preferential access to service exports from the LDCs.

- Budget caps for LDC contribution to regular budgets of UN, ILO, UNIDO, IPU, WMO etc. as well as access to special travel funds, free tickets to UN and WTO meetings will also no longer be applicable for Bangladesh.
  
  - Beyond 2027, Bangladesh will no longer be eligible for the global aid, trade and other international support measures (ISMs) in place for the LDCs.
  
  - Bangladesh will need to calibrate its stance in the WTO based on dual identity.
Section V: Strategies for Bangladesh’s Sustainable Graduation
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Reporting Requirements as a Motivation for Designing a Graduation Strategy

• Bangladesh should take the opportunity of preparing response and comments (although this is optional) on UNCTAD’s vulnerability assessment and on UNDESA’s ex-ante impact assessment report which can get the ball rolling in preparing the envisaged graduation strategy.

• The consultative mechanism which is expected to follow between two CDP triennial reviews (2021-2024) could be a good opportunity to seek global support to help Bangladesh implement various components of the strategy.

• Reporting to CDP and ECOSOC should also be seen from the perspective to mobilising global support.

• In the next five year plan (8FYP) issues related to Bangladesh’s smooth graduation from the LDC group will demand particular attention.
Section V: Strategies for Bangladesh’s Sustainable Graduation

Structural Transformation of the Economy: A Graduation from Factor-driven to Technology and Productivity Driven Economy

- Technology upgradation, skills endowment, productivity enhancement and higher competitive strength – in all these areas Bangladesh will need to put high priority in policymaking and policy implementation
- To improve productivity scenarios across all sectors institution, incentives, fiscal and monetary policy, targeted allocation and appropriate utilization of resources, and high quality of implementation will need to be geared
- More emphasis will need to be put on drivers of structural transformation in the economy in view of attaining the goals of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agendas
Section V: Strategies for Bangladesh’s Sustainable Graduation

Strengthening Market Access

To improve export competitiveness beyond the region of LDC specific trade preferences, Bangladesh need to deploy renewed efforts towards:

- Product and market diversification (e.g. intra RMG diversification by putting emphasis on quality and value-added, fashion and design driven up-market market segments etc.)
- Taking advantage of the increasing South-South trade opportunities, particularly in the regional markets of India and China, through targeted product diversification and by attracting FDI targeted to these markets
- Time has come for Bangladesh to apply mind to selectively venture into bilateral-regional trade/investment agreements keeping in the purview the development of supply and value chains
- Need to explore how she can take the advantage of non-LDC specific preferential arrangements such as the various GSP schemes for the developing countries
Section V: Strategies for Bangladesh’s Sustainable Graduation

• In the context of the EU, which is Bangladesh’s major export destination, Bangladesh will need to explore opportunities of accessing the GSP+ window

• It is likely that Bangladesh will meet all the economic conditions for applying for GSP plus market access

• As regards non-economic condition (for GSP plus eligibility), among the 27 international conventions on human rights, labor rights and environmental issues Bangladesh has already ratified or acceded to all but the convention concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment

• However, simple ratification will not do; what will matter is enforcement of all the conventions to the satisfaction of the EU

• With a forward-looking perspective, Bangladesh will need to give heightened attention to issues of enforcing all the ILO conventions at the enterprise and sectoral levels
Section V: Strategies for Bangladesh’s Sustainable Graduation

Getting Ready for the Emerging Global Trade and Business Scenario

• The shift from multilateral trading discipline under the WTO towards a system dominated by mega-regional blocs of the type of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) will create additional challenges for Bangladesh in terms of market access.

• Bangladesh may face significant preference erosion in the face of increasing dominance of number of cross-regional Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) of the types of India-ASEAN FTA, India-EU FTA, Canada-EU FTA and similar trading arrangements.

• In this backdrop Bangladeshi products will have to enter markets of many of these RTA-members by paying Most Favored Nation (MFN) tariffs, in contrast RTA member countries will enjoy duty-free market access in their respective partner country markets.

• Bangladesh will be required to pursue a highly proactive trade policy, including the option of negotiating membership in various mega-trading blocs and RTAs of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) type. This will call for adequate preparations and significant enhancement of negotiating power.

• Following Brexit, a Commonwealth-wide Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) scheme is being contemplated. Bangladesh should remain engaged in this process.
Taking Advantage of Regional and sub-Regional Cooperation

- More attention to deepening cooperation at regional (Southern and South Asian) and sub-regional levels through multi-modal, seamless connectivity will be required.

- Investments in trade facilitation, establishing single window, electronic data interface facilities, harmonisation of standards and certification and designing standard operating protocols will be required if initiatives such as BCIM-EC and BBIN-MVA are to be operationalised.

- Cooperation with countries of the Bay of Bengal region will be another area which will demand particular attention in view of exploring potential opportunities of the Blue Economy.

- The opportunities emanating from Japan’s interest, in view of the BIG-B initiative ought to receive priority attention.
Section V: Strategies for Bangladesh’s Sustainable Graduation

Getting Ready for the New Aid Regime

- Bangladesh’s LDC graduation will be accompanied by two additional graduation – graduation from IDA and the Asian Development Fund. In view of that, Bangladesh also needs to get ready for the new aid environment.
- In this backdrop, Bangladesh will need to address a number of issues – rising cost of assistance, increasing external debt-burden, accessing new opportunities of finance including from AIIB, BRICS Bank, raising capital through issuing of sovereign bonds in the international market.
- Meanwhile, maximum utilisation of aid in the pipeline should be given priority, as the terms were likely to change with graduation.
- Bangladesh will need to get ready to gradually go for capital account convertibility, and in view of this, exchange rate management and ensuring good governance in the financial sector will need heightened attention. The concerned reforms should not be deferred any more.
- Fiscal-Monetary-Institutional reforms ought to be undertaken with due urgency.
Preparing for pitfalls within the global and regional environments

• In the backdrop of global rise in automation, the impact of labour displacing technologies must be taken into cognisance given its severe socioeconomic implications

• Given the limited scale and scope of the current opportunities, Bangladesh must venture newer avenues for adequate climate finance prospects.
  - The bureaucratic process behind international climate finance must be streamlined
  - Accountability and transparency in implementation of climate change related projects at the national level must be ensured

• In terms of refugee issues, cross-border and inter-state terrorism and illicit financial flows (IFF), concerted global and domestic effort is a must
  - Considering recent refugee and terrorism issues, Bangladesh must devise cogent policies as early as possible
  - Given the substantial opportunity cost of IFFs, adequate enforcement from the part of government has become an exigency
Learning from the Graduated LDCs, Lessons for Bangladesh

All the four already graduated LDCs are small and highly vulnerable economies. Whilst they did pass the graduation thresholds, their economies had continued to remain susceptible to many of the past vulnerabilities. Bangladesh should take three important lessons from their graduation process:

• Take adequate preparation to reduce vulnerabilities, towards diversification of the economy

• Explore windows of opportunity, through smart negotiations, for preferential treatment through proactive engagement with international organisations (WTO; EU, at bilateral and regional levels)

• Negotiate access to soft loans from multilateral agencies (World Bank, ADB, regional financial entities)
Section VI: Interlinkages between LDC Graduation and SDGs
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• Bangladesh will cross a number of milestones during its implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which outlines the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), over the 2016–30 period
  ➢ The first five years of the SDGs coincide with the last five years of implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) for the least developed countries (LDCs) for the 2011–20 period, which aims to halve the number of LDCs by 2020

• While implementing various global agendas, Bangladesh has to be mindful about possible implications of pursuing one agenda for the achievement of others. Specifically, what will be the impact of the Government of Bangladesh’s pursuit of the SDGs on the process of LDC graduation? Will efforts towards SDG implementation contribute to graduation? How should the graduation be made sustainable?
Section VI: Interlinkages between LDC Graduation and SDGs

**SDGs and LDC Graduation Convergence**

- SDG attainment and LDC graduation have a lot of commonalities with respect to respective targets and goals
- Out of the 17 SDGs, 16 goals have direct and indirect similarity with the LDC graduation criteria
  - A straightforward relationship between SDG 16 and the criteria could not be established. Nonetheless, SDG 16, which calls for peace, justice and strong institutions without which no development initiative can be successful, is perceived to be the backbone for achieving all other SDGs
- This linkage will mean that Bangladesh’s pursuit of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda will complement its eligibility for LDC graduation at the 2018 triennial review committee for Development Policy of the United Nations Economic and Social Council
### Section VI: Interlinkages between LDC Graduation and SDGs

#### Number of SDG targets under each LDC graduation criterion

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<tr>
<th>SDG</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GNI per capita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 1: No poverty–End poverty in all its forms everywhere</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 2: Zero hunger–End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 3: Good health and well-being–Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages</strong></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 4: Quality education–Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 5: Gender equality–Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girl</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation–Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 7: Affordable and clean energy–Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth–Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure–Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SDG 10: Reduced inequalities–Reduce income inequality within and among countries</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>
### Section VI: Interlinkages between LDC Graduation and SDGs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GNI per capita</td>
<td>HAI</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities–Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production–Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG 13: Climate action–Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG 14: Life below water–Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG 15: Life on land–Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions–Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals–Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Khatun et al. (CPD, 2017, Forthcoming)
Section VI: Interlinkages between LDC Graduation and SDGs

Network of LDC graduation criteria and SDG targets

Source: Khatun et al. (CPD, 2017, Forthcoming)

PMR (2017): Seizing the Momentum of Graduation to Achieve the SDGs: Prospects and Challenges
LDC Graduation and SDG Attainment: A Mutually Reinforcing Journey

- The Table and the Interlinkage map clearly show the close correspondence between attaining the SDGs and moving towards LDC graduation with momentum and sustainability.

- Attaining the SDG targets under the various Goals, and the LDC graduation thresholds under the three indicators (GNI per capita, 8 sub-indices of EVI and 4 sub-indices of HAI) are mutually reinforcing.

- LDC graduation will help Bangladesh to attain the SDGs, and attaining the SDGs will help Bangladesh to ensure sustainable LDC graduation.
Section VII: Concluding Remarks
Section VII: Concluding Remarks

• Bangladesh is well-positioned for graduation from the LDC group. However, a number of important transitions inform Bangladesh’s graduation process – LDC-graduation will commence in the backdrop of her recent graduation from LIC to LMIC; in terms of market access she will transit from LDC-specific preferential treatment to MFN-based market participation; in the context of aid she will transit from highly concessional to blended finance

• Additionally, Bangladesh’s graduation journey will also be taking place at a time of a fast-changing global scenario and in the era of the SDGs where there will be need for triangulation of economic, social and environmental aspects of development. Bangladesh should pursue global and national objectives simultaneously due to the various linkages between and among SDGs and LDC graduation criteria

• If Bangladesh’s graduation is to be sustainable it has to be with momentum. Hence the need for adequate preparedness before final graduation

• The journeys of attaining the SDGs and LDC Graduation should be seen as mutually reinforcing
Section VII: Concluding Remarks

- Addressing issues of poverty, inequality, structural transformation of the economy, creating of good jobs, strengthening of supply side capacities, diversification of export product and export market, graduation from factor-driven to productivity-driven production practices, accessing the opportunities of digital economy, IT-enabled service economy and the new knowledge ecosystems, and realizing potential advantages of strengthened regional and global integration of the Bangladesh economy – all these will call for conscious policy choices and greater implementation capacities on the part of Bangladesh.

- Since once graduated there is no going back for Bangladesh (on account of the population threshold), it is particularly important that she embarks upon her graduation journey with adequate preparation and a well thought out strategy. Time to get on with this task that call for urgent attention of policymakers.
Thank You