
actionaid
POWER
TO THE
PEOPLE
COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER VI



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COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER VI (2024 - 2028)

MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR



Country Strategy Paper (CSP) is exactly that, wherein an organisation sets its target for the next five years aligned to its vision and mission. However, we have stretched ourselves even further with Country Strategy Paper VI (CSP VI). In comparison with previous CSPs, we have taken a 10-year approach. ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) has been doing remarkable things in Bangladesh for the last 40 years. We can easily bask in our past glory and let our goodwill carry us. However, AAB has made a conscious decision to grow our campaign efforts and service delivery five folds by the time we reach 50 years. Hence, we have adopted 50@50, USD 50 Million worth of annual campaign efforts and service delivery by the time we reach our 50th year, as the central theme of CSP VI. I will be the first to admit that 50@50 sounds ambitious. As a global brand, we have a solid record in accomplishing implementation of our campaigns and programs worldwide to uplift the lives of marginalized and vulnerable people based on our feminist based rights and humanitarian approach. We have never retracted from a problem no matter how grave the challenge might have been. True to our organisational fabric, AAB is ready to take on the monumental challenge head on. I say monumental because not only is it quite the task to grow our campaign efforts and service delivery five folds but to do so when Bangladesh has just gained middle income country status causing low-income country programs to diminish soon. CSP VI is an interim CSP for CSP VII five years from now. Not only have we strategised on increasing our service delivery, but we will also achieve efficiency through digitis ation and lean principles. AAB could not dare to dream of such an ambitious plan had it not been for the enthusiastic and diligent contribution of all the team members, especially the wonderful and capable Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and leader, Ms. Farah Kabir, our Country Director (CD). I am genuinely excited about CSP VI as we have renewed our commitment to not just make an impact but to do so in greater numbers. Heartfelt thanks to our CD and SLT for producing such a robust and well thought out CSP.

Best Regards!

Ibrahim Khalil Al-Zayad
Chair, Executive Board, AAIBS

FOREWORD



The Country Strategy Paper VI is a document that captures as well as puts forward the direction of the programme commitments of ActionAid Bangladesh for the next five years (2024-2028). It is a precursor to the CSP VII, in its mission to end social, climate, economic and political injustice, with the intent to end all forms of poverty including poverty of leadership. This CSP was developed based on the collection of feedback from communities and stakeholders, on findings and recommendations made in the mid-term review of ActionAid Bangladesh CSP V (2018-2023), inputs from ActionAid Bangladesh International Society Board members and members of the General Assembly, staff, and partners across board.

Guiding documents in the development of CSP VI include the Government of Bangladesh 8th Five Year Plan (2020-2025), The Bangladesh Delta Plan (BDP) 2100, Population and Housing Census 2022, Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2022, Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics 2023 and Bangladesh Country Environmental Analysis (CEA) 2023 responding to the priorities for support expressed by the communities and stakeholders while building on ActionAid Bangladesh's experience and expertise. The CSP VI is aligned with ActionAid International global strategy 2028: "Action for Global Justice" and ActionAid's theory of change.

Bangladesh has been recognised for achievements in terms of gender parity (Global Gap Report 2023, World Economic Forum), Improved maternal health indicators and a reduction in child mortality,; increase in Female labor Force Participation rate (FLRP) to 42.68% in 2022, from 36.3% five years ago (LFS 2022). Legal reforms and laws have been enacted to protect and promote women's rights, such as Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2017 and Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2000. Gender Responsive Budgets have been prepared since 2009. The gender wage gap has been declining over recent years. However, women are concentrated in low-paying jobs and vulnerable to job losses, as evidenced by declining female participation in RMG sector even when it is recognised that women were the backbone of the RMG sector. Less than 10% of women currently work in formal sector (ADB). Women have broken into many new professions. Women are subjected to workplace discrimination, remain negligible in private businesses and in the corporate world.

Expansion of financial inclusion programs led to the rise of women entrepreneurs in non-farm activities with new footprints in

e-commerce. Of the 11.21 lakh members in the 'Women's and Ee-Ccommerce Forum' around four lakhs are female entrepreneurs. Most women entrepreneurs started their businesses online during the pandemic. However, they have not received encouragement in the form of financial packages or other support.

Over 1.5 crore people are working overseas as migrant workers and contributing to the remittance earning of Bangladesh. Remittance plays a significant role in the transformation of rural economies and national reserves. While we celebrate the growth in remittance from overseas workers, major gaps remain in ensuring the rights of the migrant-workers in the destination country. Gross violations are regularly reported. ActionAid Bangladesh is working to develop the legally binding instrument which will hold countries accountable and during this CSP VI period the process and campaign will continue until the goal is achieved.

Sustainable quality growth requires robust institutions that are accountable and practice participatory governance. There have been major gaps in spite of the economic growth due to discrimination, corruption, and concentration of wealth with the 10%! It is time for the policy makers to consider strategies to address these gaps. Inclusive and decentralised governance as well as creating multiple opportunities for strengthening local government, its authority, budget to achieve localisation and resilience effectively, is a step in that direction.

The aspiration of ActionAid Bangladesh is to achieve at 50 (by 2034) a just and democratic society. A stronger presence in the sector for justice and human rights as well as a growth rate which will enable the organisation to have a portfolio of close to 5 billion BDT for meaningful contribution to democratic, inclusive, and just Bangladesh.

Farah Kabir
Country Director, ActionAid Bangladesh

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ACRONYMS

AAB : ActionAid Bangladesh
AAI : ActionAid International
AAIBS : ActionAid International Bangladesh Society
BBS : Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BDP : Bangladesh Delta Plan
CANSA : Climate Action Network South Asia
CEA : Country Environmental Analysis
CRSA : Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture
CS : Child Sponsorship
CSO : Civil Society Organisation
CSP : Country Strategy Paper
DPHE : Department of Public Health Engineering
DRR : Disaster Risk Reduction
ELT : Extended Leadership Team
FDMN : Forcibly Displaced Myanmar National
FLRP : Female labor force participation rate
FYP : Five Year Plan
GBV : Gender Based Violence
GCF : Green Climate Fund
GDP : Gross Domestic Product
GNDR : Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction
HFA : Hyogo Framework for Action
HIES : Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HRBA : Human Rights Based Approach
IBP : International Budget Partnership
INGO : International Non-Government Organisation
LFS : Labor Force Survey
LGBTQ+ : Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Queer and others
LGED : Local Government Engineering Department
LRP : Local Rights Programme
M&E : Monitoring & Evaluation
MEAL : Monitoring Evaluation Accountability and Learning
NAP : National Adaptation Plan
NDA : National Designated Authority
NEET : Not in Education Employment or Training
NGO : Non-Government Organisation
ODA : Overseas Development Assistance
PVA : Participatory Vulnerability Assessment
PYD : Positive Youth Development
SDG : Sustainable Development Goal
SFDRR : Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
SLT : Senior Leadership Team
SRHR : Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights
ToC : Theory of Change
UK : United Kingdom
UN : United Nations
VAW : Violence against Women

1. INTRODUCTION





ActionAid is an International Federation working closely with people living in poverty to end poverty and injustice. Established in the United Kingdom in 1972, ActionAid is present in 70 plus countries and territories around the world and actively supports in poverty eradication and development efforts in Asia, Europe, the Americas, Africa, and Oceania (Australia).

ActionAid Bangladesh started its journey in Bangladesh as a chapter of ActionAid UK in 1983 with a response to the Bhola cyclone in the coastal areas. It has been working in the country for 40 years, supporting millions of people for graduating out of poverty, building a just and dignified life for themselves and their communities. ActionAid Bangladesh officially became an Affiliate Member of ActionAid International Federation in June 2014 and renewed its commitment to the AA Federation to uphold the vision, mission and values of ActionAid.
The global strategy 2018-2028 of ActionAid International entitled "Actions for Global Justice," was adopted in December 2016. This global strategy outlines the direction for the Federation for a period of 10 years, focusing on advancing the rights of women and girls, providing sustainable livelihood solutions that are resilient, and expanding political space for vulnerable groups to participate in decision making as well as supporting vulnerable communities before, during and after emergencies. The strategy seeks to build a just society in which women and girls have the right to determine their lives in dignity.

Based on its global strategy AAI developed a second Strategic Implementation Framework (2021-2023), articulating the renewed focus of ActionAid's commitment to modelling and fighting for a transition out of the current crisis, — one that prioritises the protection and promotion of human rights, more specifically women's rights and the environment. This transition is:

- ***Feminist*** in addressing the glaring power imbalances of gender and other forms of discrimination such as class, race, and sexual orientation.
- ***Just*** in ensuring that no one is left behind
- ***Green*** in providing a path to a sustainable balance of our current needs with those of future generations and other forms of life around us.

ActionAid Bangladesh is now in the process of adopting the third strategic Implementation Framework for 2025 – 2028.

2. BACKGROUND

Bangladesh's journey since gaining independence in 1971 is a testament to remarkable progress and resilience in the face of adversity. Emerging from extreme poverty and fragility, Bangladesh has transformed into a manufacturing-driven economy, albeit dependent on the RMG sector lacking diversification, defying initial challenges such as climate extremities and devastating disasters, inequity, and economic downturns.

International solidarity and significant aid from donors, combined with effective government policies, propelled Bangladesh forward. The country witnessed a reduction in poverty rates and significant improvements in health, education, and living standards. Notably, Bangladesh achieved lower-middle income status in 2015.

The transformation of Bangladesh's economy from agrarian to industrialised has been remarkable. With strategic industrialisation efforts, particularly in the RMG sector, Bangladesh has become one of the global manufacturing hub in the region. Despite facing pressing challenges such as climate vulnerability and sustaining economic growth, Bangladesh remains committed to its long-term development goals. Bangladesh's economic growth and potential have been recognised by global institutions. Harnessing untapped resources like the blue economy could position Bangladesh for rapid growth and sustainability.

Bangladesh's development context revolves around managing water resources effectively, fostering sustainable economic growth, enhancing climate resilience, and ensuring community well-being within the delta region. This involves addressing geographical vulnerabilities, population pressures, and water management challenges through infrastructure development, climate adaptation strategies, and international cooperation. The plan requires to promote inclusive development, balancing economic growth with environmental conservation and social equity, with active community participation at its core.

The Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2022 reveals that literacy rate of the population aged 7 years and above is 74.0% at the national level for both sexes. The rate of literacy in rural areas is 70.3% which is slightly lower than the national average and the urban literacy rate is 82.0% which is higher than the national average. The headcount rate (HCR) in 2022 using the upper poverty line is 18.7% at the national level, 20.5% in rural areas, and 14.7% in urban areas. On the other hand, the HCR using the lower poverty line is 5.6% at the national level, 6.5% in rural areas, and 3.8% in urban areas in 2022. These statistical figures provide a snapshot of Bangladesh’s current poverty status. 10.47% of the households in HIES 2022 reported migration either within the country (from one district to another) or abroad. Among them, 2.25 % households reported migration within the country and 8.33% reported migrating abroad.

Considering Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) indicators, Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistics 2023 report stated that the percentage of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18 is 8.2% and 41.6%, respectively. The percentage of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment and training is 40.67%, of which female make up 61.71%. The percentage of the population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology is 29.67%.

Environmental factors, including air pollution, unsafe water, poor sanitation, and lead exposure, have inflicted considerable economic losses upon Bangladesh, totaling 17.6% of GDP in 2019, according to the latest report from the World Bank's Bangladesh Country Environmental Analysis (CEA) 2023. Accordingly, Bangladesh lost $62 billion (about $190 per person in the US) in 2019 due to environmental factors. One of the factors is household and outdoor air pollution alone, which accounted for losses amounting to 8.32% of GDP equivalent to $32 billion (about $98 per person in the US). The report also finds that these environmental challenges contribute to over 272,000 premature deaths and 520 crore days of accumulated illness annually.

The world has gone through major upheavals and shocks since the period of the last CSP V including the COVID 19 pandemic and its aftermath which left a long-term impact on the world population. In July 2024 the Bangladesh student revolution took place and ousted the previous government, with the interim government in place as of August 2024. In the backdrop of genocide in Myanmar, post the influx of 2017 there are now 1 million plus Rohingya Refugees in Bangladesh. The war in Ukraine and more recently the genocide in Gaza has led to escalated humanitarian suffering. It also drove up prices globally and directly challenged the results gained from many years of investment in development and peace. Climate extremities sharpening injustice is evident across the world and its impact is visible to all people and countries irrespective of their global location. In this context southern countries could act collectively to influence on how global development common vision is taking shape and propose mutual benefit solutions.

The current context of Bangladesh in 2024 is the movement against discrimination and autocracy led by students and people from across all levels of society. It has created a separate set of expectations and challenges. This strategy will be delivered in this backdrop.



3. PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK 2024 TO 2028

3.1 OVERALL GOAL

By 2028, continue to contribute for a sustainable future of Bangladesh through, community-based, socially inclusive, climate adaptive, disaster resilient development solutions built with collective local and national actions.

3.2 OBJECTIVE

To advance justice for people living in poverty and exclusion, by fostering leadership and participation of women and young people, promoting innovation, green transition, gender responsive public resource allocation and services, and policy and legislative reforms.

3.3 PROGRAMME APPROACH

By 2028, ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) aims to reach 3 million people directly through an integrated programme focusing on four thematic areas by taking a rights-based, intersectional, and climate-responsive lifecycle approach with the intent to strengthening the resilience of communities and movements that can contribute to fulfilling along with duty bearers, the rights of people living in poverty and exclusion.

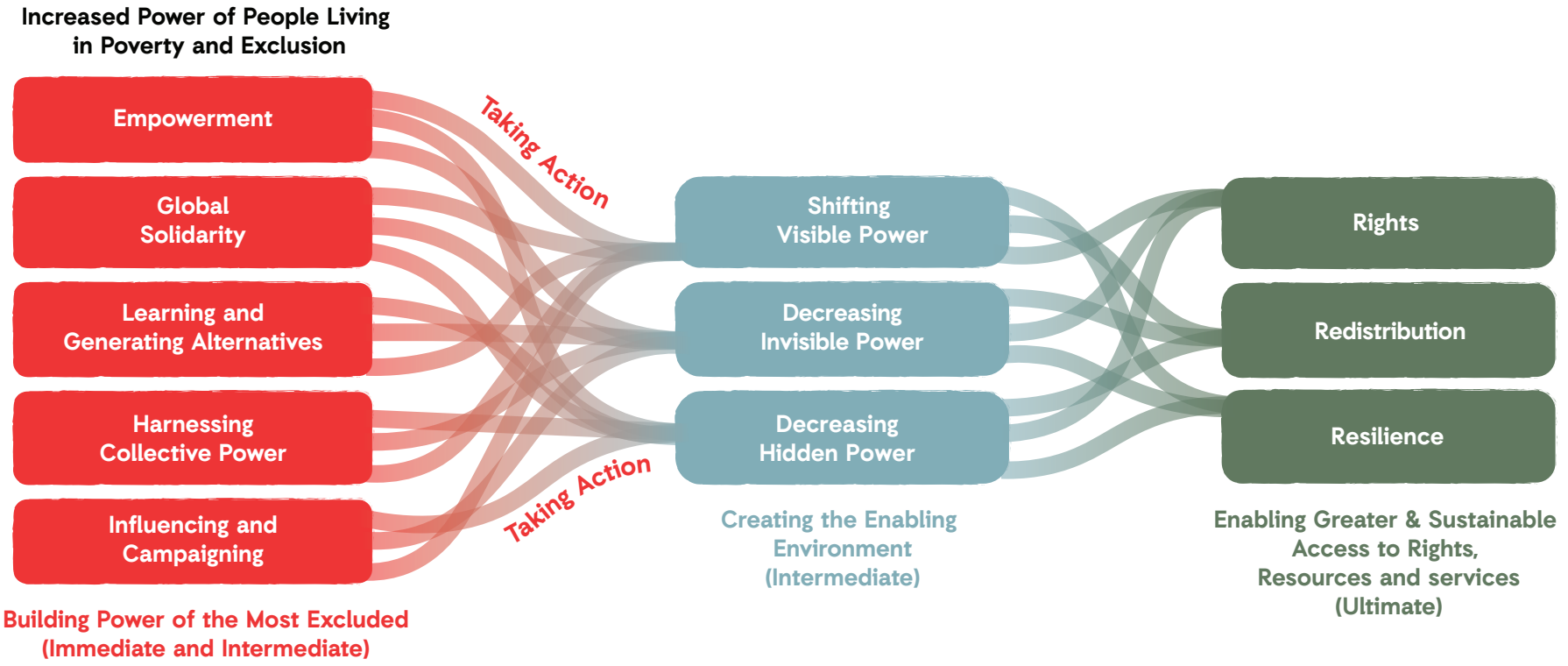
Our work with the communities will continue to be anchored by the Local Rights Programme (LRP) model, which is an initiative designed to empower communities, safeguard human rights, and promote sustainable development at local level. Child Sponsorship (CS) is the core element of ActionAid's individual fundraising mechanism that sustains the LRP, and we purposely and strategically engage with children, address issues related to child rights and protection, incorporated as an integral part of the programme framework.

We believe that influencing social



norms and behaviors, prevention, and protection from harmful practices, strengthening people's agency, and increasing access to safety nets and services are interconnected building blocks to long-term resilience.

With recognition that accountable public services is one of the ultimate solutions to long-term development, we will continue to nurture citizen-government interactions and support locally led initiatives and movements for integrated climate change adaptation, green transition, and disaster risk management where children, women, young people, minorities, and persons with specific needs are able to participate meaningfully in planning and decision-making. To equip them with the right capacity, we will develop leadership, active citizenship, soft and hard skills. We will also focus on promoting decent work both from a corporate due diligence, human rights, human capital development, rule of law and social compliance perspective in order to contribute to ensuring equitable access to diversified livelihood opportunities, access to finance and control over resources for economic justice.



Action Aid's inclusive technology for development approach is built on accessibility, affordability, localisation, cultural sensitivity, community ownership, and scalability principles. However, incubating indigenous solutions at scale and improving digital literacy will be at the heart of our socio-economic and environmental sustainability agenda.

Lastly, by working jointly with local, national, regional, and international advocacy networks and campaigns, we will bring to the forefront evidence, and solutions from grassroots to effectively inform policy changes.

ActionAid believes that a commitment to shift power dynamics is critical for achieving transformational change, hence empowerment is a process whereby people living in poverty and exclusion, transition from a situation where they have limited power, to a situation where their power is enhanced to address inequities and challenge power inequalities. These changes require developing constituencies of the people living in poverty and exclusion, developing their platforms and strengthening networks with similar movements to support and facilitate campaigns for addressing structural causes of poverty. Our meta theory of change focuses on three domains:

- **Developing constituency and leadership of the people living in poverty and exclusion, enabling them to identify contextual power dynamics, i.e., visible, invisible, and hidden, which sustains structural causes of poverty.**
- **Building platforms and developing networks from local to global with the like-minded movements and solidarity actors to develop collective power for challenging inequality, exclusion, and injustice.**
- **Support and facilitate campaigns, backed by evidence and alternative solutions, to realise rights, including access to public services and natural resources, through changing existing structures.**

3.4 PRIORITISATION CRITERIA

With the lessons learnt from CSP V Mid-term review and other processes, it is important to enhance the connection and integration of ActionAid Bangladesh's programme impacts across the country and linking them with those of ActionAid International and other stakeholders at the global level.

When formulating a new programme, new partner, new location, ActionAid Bangladesh will apply the following criteria for prioritisation of resources allocation:

- **The prevalence level of poverty, discrimination, and injustice**
- **Ownership of the local communities, partners to identify the root cause, analyse the solutions and leadership to act for realisation of the joint plans,**
- **Possibilities of overlapping or duplication**
- **Possibilities of replication by others, matching resources to deliver the joint plans of actions working with a consortium approach,**
- **Priorities of the proposed programmes and level of shared commonalities with that of ActionAid Bangladesh, and**
- **Elements of innovation and futuristics of programmes with ActionAid Bangladesh's expertise and relevance beyond the country and beyond 2028.**

4. PROGRAMME PRIORITY:

Our programme priorities (mainstream programmes) of CSP VI are shared below in the following diagram:









ActionAid Bangladesh programme priorities are selected for a period of five years. Each programme is represented by context, program objectives and core areas of engagement.

4.1 PRIORITY 01: WOMEN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUITY (WRGE)

CONTEXT

In Bangladesh, women battle discrimination and violence despite legal frameworks, with 51% of young women married in childhood. Prohibitive legal frameworks could not end harmful practices such as child marriage. Additionally, the prevalence of Violence Against Women (VAW) in Bangladesh is remarkably high. According to the last Violence Against Women Survey (VAW Survey) of 2015, almost two-thirds (72.6%) of married women experienced one or more forms of violence by their husband/partner at least once in their lifetime, and 54.7% experienced violence during the last 12 months.

Women make critical contributions to the economy, whether in business or agriculture, as entrepreneurs or employees, or through their unpaid care work at home. However, they remain disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination and exploitation and side lined from participation. Harmful practices and violations of human rights of women girls and transgender remains of high concern. Therefore, there will be a call for increased investment in care economy to empower women and boost inclusive growth and development.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

We will mainstream women's rights and gender-responsive programming across all interventions. The objectives under this programme include the following strategic plans and commitments for the next five years:

- **Combat patriarchy and all forms of harmful practices manifested against women and girls that perpetuate their subservient status in society**
- **Contribute towards women's socio-economic, cultural and climate justice with effective means of development enabling them to fight against all forms of deprivation and discrimination.**
- **Promote inclusion and justice including climate justice with effective means of development, capacity building and empowerment of women and girls.**

  Promote gender responsive public services with increased, quality, and inclusive access for women and girls.

CORE AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT

- **Fighting against gender-based violence and child marriage.**
- **Promoting gender-responsive public services and access.**
- **Empowering women socio-economically and addressing unpaid care work.**
- **Climate and gender justice: creating safe cities, communities, and workplaces for women.**

4.2 PRIORITY 02: RESILIENCE AND CLIMATE JUSTICE (RCJ)

CONTEXT

Bangladesh, despite contributing only 0.56% of global emissions (German Watch, 2021), is highly vulnerable to climate impacts such as rising sea levels, increasing water salinity, and intensifying extreme weather events. The current development model heavily relies on practices that increase emissions and environmental damage, exacerbating climate impacts and vulnerabilities, with 98% of the country's energy dependence on fossil fuels (BPDB 2023). However, renewable energy sources hold immense potential for sustainable development. Additionally, the agricultural sector, crucial for Bangladesh's food security and employment, is particularly vulnerable to climate change. Water pollution and scarcity further compound these challenges, posing threats to health and food production. Initiatives like the COP28 summit's establishment of a loss and damage fund for developing countries, along with significant initiatives for Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency and climate actions, are steps towards addressing these issues. In response to these challenges, Bangladesh has developed plans such as the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2023-2050, and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Harmonising and effectively implementing these plans is crucial for building a secure, climate-resilient delta and mitigating the impacts of climate change on the country's environment, economy, and population.



PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

- **Strengthen resilience in communities in rural and urban settings to take an assertive role in the climate justice movement.**
- **Promotion of sustainable use of natural resources, diversified and adaptive livelihoods and ensure institutions are responsive and accountable.**
- **Advance national and international agenda for energy transition and promotion of renewable energy.**
- **Advocate for climate justice at local, national, and international levels with a focus on loss and damage and climate financing.**

Core areas of engagement to Advocate for water justice and sustainable water management practices.

- **Shift towards just energy transition and renewable energy for a more resilient state.**
- **Promote agroecology and Climate Resilience Sustainable Agriculture (CRSA) practice to strengthen food security.**
- **Strengthen adaptive capacity, promote empowerment, and foster community-led solutions, and effort to equitable access to loss & damage and climate financing, lead the climate justice movement for just and sustainable community.**
- **Access to and persist for sustainable use of natural resources.**

4.3 PRIORITY 03: YOUTH AND JUST SOCIETY (YJS)

CONTEXT

Bangladesh has experienced the youth energy and passion in 2024 through the anti-discrimination and autocracy movement that shook the regime in power. They demonstrated a commitment for just and accountable society.

The youth demography in Bangladesh is not humongous, therefore, empowering young people means understanding the diverse context and realising their rights to face the challenges of leadership practices, employment, livelihood, intolerance, harnessing innovative technologies, addressing climate change, and pursuing accountable governance practices. In addition, the potentiality of the youth demography depends on engagement in digital rights and spaces, exploring innovations, and exercising their digital citizenship without any fear or intimidation in an era of the 4th Industrial Revolution, including AI.



PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

Our objectives around Youth and Just Society include the following areas for the next five years:

- **Support young people to practice full citizenship and freedom of expression**
- **Support young people to develop grassroots , their leadership and their platforms as drivers of change.**
- **Encourage young people to engage in innovation and harness technology.**
- **Engage young people to influence policymaking, resource allocation, and challeng stereotypes.**

CORE AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT

The core areas of engagement of young people will center on the realisation of their rights through challenging structural causes and gender based social stereotypes.

- **Develop leadership opportunities for marginalised young people, particularly young women, to claim rights and promote social cohesion.**
- **Digital literacy and access for grassroots young people to practice digital citizenship.**
- **Youth-led climate justice initiatives and green transition through mobilising and promoting innovative solutions.**
- **Sustainable livelihood opportunities for young people to promote economic opportunity and decent work.**

PRIORITY 04: HUMANITARIAN PROGRAMME (HP)

CONTEXT

Bangladesh is the 7th most vulnerable country in the world, where 100% of the population is exposed to hydrometeorological, geological or human-induced hazards and crisis/conflicts. Disasters caused by the mentioned hazards, resulting in loss of life, livelihood and food insecurity, displacement, discontinuity in education, poor access to public services, and increased discrimination against children, women, and persons with special needs. Rohingya refugees in the world's largest refugee camp in Bangladesh are also at risk of disaster and loss of protection. Local community in Cox's Bazaar is at similar risk. Bangladesh is envisioned to be a developed country by 2041, however increased inequality in the society is anticipated in the face of a major threat so rendering communities vulnerable future. Considering the above context, AAB will prioritise investing in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and response programme in this CSP period.



PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

In CSP VI, our objective refers to not only bolster ActionAid's Humanitarian Signature grounded in a feminist principle and human-rights based approach but also to position ourselves as an important humanitarian actor through:

- **Further elevate ActionAid Bangladesh's leadership role in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in collaboration with government and private sector along with expanding ActionAid Bangladesh's programme focus on innovation and unattended new areas of DRM.**
- **Strengthen the capacity of AAB, the private sector, local organisations, and CBOs on hazards and conflicts induced humanitarian crises anticipation and consequent response, maximize risk transfer mechanism and technology.**
- **Extend protection support and services to the refugee and IDP communities, and advocate at national and international level for justice and their dignified repatriation and resettlement.**

CORE AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT

- **Continued engagement in disaster risk management, and humanitarian response with a priority to Food Security, GBV, Protection, WASH, Shelter, & Health.**
- **Continue providing humanitarian support to refugees, IDP, and climate migrant.**
- **Scale up and scale out the engagement with private sector to promote their leadership in Disaster Risk Management.**
- **Explore innovative ways to facilitate Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.**

5. PARTNERS AND PARTNERSHIP

ActionAid Bangladesh identifies women and children as the central partners for all interventions for social , economic, climate/environmental justice. We partner with members of ethnic minorities, migrants and informal workers, children, people with disabilities, and youth. People living in disaster prone areas, elders, LGBTQ+ community, children, young people, unemployed, victims of violence, sexual harassment, and abuse. These groups regularly experience discrimination and suffer violation of their basic rights. Migrants and informal workers are currently not guaranteed safe working conditions and entitlement to statutory benefits.

In the programme, mobilisation, and campaigns with the youth feature greatly at ActionAid Bangladesh initiatives. The youth were leading and considered pioneering agents for all positive social change thus engaged as a significant partner of ActionAid. Furthermore, social and media organisations working in the development sector will also be partnered with, to provide capacity building services needed in any process of social change.

While the program priorities are more focused, ActionAid Bangladesh will also categorize its partnerships with the clear identification of strategic partners – organisations who can bring lasting social changes in society and community in the CSP VI period. Once strategic partners are identified in line with program priorities, ActionAid Bangladesh and these partners will develop long-term action plans with specific objectives and targets for each year to strengthen commitment and increase



the efficiency when jointly implementing activities. The following types of partners should be prioritised in the next strategic period:

- Local Communities
- CBOs (led by women, youth, and persons with special needs)/Mass Organisations
- Local/international NGOs and UN agencies in Bangladesh
- Public and Private sector champions including media entities
- Research institutes, universities, other educational institutes, and Thinktank(s)
- National, regional, and international networks and platforms

6. BOARD AND GOVERNANCE

ActionAid adopted a federal model of governance for the organisation. ActionAid defines its model of federation as a union comprised of several self-governing Affiliates and Associates which are members united by a central or international ("federal") structure and by shared values, vision, and mission.

The self-governing status and limits of the Affiliates and Associates are constitutionally entrenched and may not be altered by a unilateral decision of the federal international structure (ActionAid International) or Affiliates or Associates (ActionAid countries).

The federal model involves a form of decentralised organisation, where the Affiliates and Associates possess a degree of autonomy and, in some cases, have existed prior to the formation of the federation (AAI Founding Affiliates and existing organisations that become Associates). ActionAid Bangladesh, since attaining the Affiliate status in 2014, is an integral part of a federation spanning 71 member countries.

The organisational structure of ActionAid Bangladesh includes the General Assembly, Executive Board, and Secretariat. The General Assembly, comprising 10 to 40 members, acts as the main governance body, with at least 50% representing marginalized communities or partner organisations, and ensuring gender balance. The Executive Board, elected by the General Assembly, oversees governance and includes ActionAid International (AAI) representatives to align national decisions with ActionAid International's broader perspectives. The Secretariat is led by the Executive Director appointed by the Board in consultation with AAI.

In the previous CSP period, the Board in those 10 years commemorated a decade of the General Assembly and Board (AAIBS). They played a pivotal role in shaping key strategic decisions.

During the CSP VI period, AAB/AAIBS aims to strengthen its governance structure and processes to enhance organisational effectiveness and accountability and transparency. The Board and members of the General Assembly will play a strategic role in advocacy and lobbying by adopting the strategic goals of CSP VI, its priorities and fundraising resource mobilising initiatives.

The Board aims to continuously monitor the health and governance of the organisation and its practices, governance capacity and leadership. It will champion programmatic initiatives, regulatory changes, and evolving stakeholder expectations The Board and General Assembly members will support management to remain well-positioned to effectively advance its mission of promoting social justice and empowering marginalised communities in Bangladesh.

7. ORGANISATIONAL PRIORITIES

7.1 DIVERSIFY PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION

Achieving long-term financial stability requires us to elevate our fundraising efforts. While aware of rising costs, fierce competition, stricter donor compliance, and evolving official development aid, we will prioritise re-evaluating the funding landscape for the next few years.



With a focus on innovative solutions and innovative model development, we anticipate that integrated and targeted programmes will be instrumental in securing funding and establishing a wider range of partnerships spanning individual giving, private sector, foundations, bilateral and multi-lateral institutional donors, and impact investors. Fundraising innovation will include engaging in market-specific crowdfunding platforms in Bangladesh and targeted emerging markets, social media fundraising, gamification (e.g., pledge challenges and competitions to encourage participation and donations), impact investing and use of AI-powered tools to analyse donor data, predict donor behaviour and automate fundraising processes. Granted that we are facing an unpredictable economic future, we will create contingency plans based on three scenarios: an optimistic "best-case," a challenging "worst-case," and a realistic "expected case." For each scenario, we will outline clear steps to ensure AAB's financial resilience and preparedness. We will seek to learn more about local and international funding markets and competition by increasing our engagement with regional networks such as Asian Venture Philanthropy Network (AVPN), Asia Philanthropy Circle (APC), and Arab Foundations Forum (AFF). Beyond traditional markets, we have identified three exciting growth frontiers: North America, Asia, and the Arab Region. The Resource Mobilisation team will join forces with Funding Affiliates and Regional teams to craft market entry plans and tailor donor engagement strategies for Bangladesh in these regions, as well as strengthen and build on existing relationships. The AAI Strategy: 2028 reinforces this need through Strategic Shift 3 “To prioritise resource mobilisation from diverse sources aligned to our vision, mission and values, we need innovation in our fundraising approach and technique.” Despite challenges, new partnership opportunities are emerging, and we are mindful of the alternatives and committed to prepare for that.

HOW WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- At ActionAid Bangladesh, we believe everyone plays a role in innovation and fundraising. Hence, all of us including programme staff, senior leadership team, Board members, EDs/CDs from Affiliates and regional teams will build impactful relationships with donors to further our strategic goals.
- We will foster a future-proof fundraising culture, invest in technology with the long-term in mind, pay closer attention to our donors' and partners' expectations, and amplify fundraising communications.
- We will embrace adaptability, innovation, diversification, long-term relationships, data-driven decision making, transparency, risk-informed investments, and continuous learning.
- We will evaluate existing capacity and invest in staff capacity building for local, regional, and international fundraising, supporter marketing, donor relationship management, new business development, partnership management, private sector engagement, and social innovation.
- We will prioritise tactical and strategic partnerships over incidental CSR that create shared value for key industries' business models and improve both employee and customer well-being.
- The next generation (Gen Z and Millennials) of donors crave deeper involvement and peer-driven experiences. Recognising this shift, we will tailor the Child Sponsorship model to local contexts, design and launch engaging fundraising products.
- We will be selective in our competitive bidding pursuits and offer tried and tested models to institutional donors, strategically partnering with peer like-minded local NGOs/INGOs in consortium to capitalize on collective strengths.
- Additionally, emerging philanthropists, like family foundations and private trusts, are bringing a collaborative approach to giving. By leveraging our global and local networks, we will connect with both groups through honest and transparent models that address development challenges. Together, we will co-create and co-fund solutions that work.
- Include blended finance in our fundraising strategy, assess organisational readiness, develop team capacity and build strategic partnerships with impact investors and intermediaries

7.2 INNOVATION HUB

The Innovation Hub serves as a nexus for identifying and endorsing sustainable, disruptive, enterprising, and impactful interventions and development solutions poised for scalability. It offers a platform for colleagues across the organisation to access a wealth of knowledge, ideas, and insights. More than just a physical space, the Hub is designed to foster long-term strategic development, promote brainstorming, cultivate critical thinking, and challenge conventional modes of operation to present differentiated offering that will yield better results and outcomes for the people we serve. Our aim is to engage thematic experts, practitioners, researchers, and campaigners in facilitating the creation of innovative solutions, which will undergo rigorous testing and eventual implementation.

HOW WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

- **Take a human-centred design approach as the guiding principle, integrating the needs of people by cultivating deep empathy and involving them at every stage of the process.**
- **Adopt iterative design process of continuously refining and improving fundraising products through repeated cycles of prototyping, testing and refinement to balance acquisition cost and return.**
- **Facilitate annual innovation challenge, workshops, and multi-stakeholder consultations to generate innovative ideas around development challenges.**
- **Incentivise innovation through recognition and rewards, support transformative and progressive collaboration and partnership initiatives and celebrating success to inspire others.**

7.3 POLICY RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

Research and advocacy are priority actions, central to the work of ActionAid Bangladesh. It is a vital means of achieving the long-term integrated programmatic agenda focused on rights, redistribution, and resilience. Following the rights-based approach, supporting, and amplifying the voice of people and communities in pursuing their rights is at the core of all AAB advocacy efforts. AAB understands advocacy as a strategic set of activities designed to influence decision makers, laws and regulations, structures, and practices to address the root causes of injustice.

The advocacy efforts till date have been evidence-based or evidence-backed, with in-house research, surveys, programmatic learning, as well as analysis of data from external sources, informing the advocacy objective and design. In this CSP period, AAB plans to build on this knowledge leadership by strengthening all its current and future advocacy endeavors to develop a congruent stream of evidence-based arguments that can be carried at local, national, regional, and international level. This will include increased focus on quality research and strengthening the organisation's in-house research capacity. The aim is to embed knowledge generation and management in the organisation's program implementation and culture, allowing the organisation to transition to a knowledge enabled entity.

To increase impact, we will build on experiences and achievements from the past and take it forward for both existing and contemporary issues that are relevant to the plans and programs of AAB. Advocacy and lobbying efforts will be focused on achieving policy and legislative reforms and influencing national and global planning and programming. AAB will also strive towards increasing its engagement, footprint, and therefore success in the local and grassroots level advocacy landscape. We will continue to build on past and ongoing advocacy as well as new and relevant advocacy agenda to achieve gender justice and inclusion including in emergency response, workers' rights and decent work, youth empowerment, and climate and environment justice for green and sustainable transition.

The national and international level engagement for justice and dignified repatriation and resettlement of refugees will also continue. In addition to the past and ongoing issues, in CSP VI period we will be advocating for water justice and sustainable water management practices, sustainable use of natural resources, universal digital rights, decent employment generation for youth through skill development including green jobs, and investing in young people for realising youth demographic dividend, ensuring digital rights through addressing digital divide, and rights of climate migrants.

7.4 MEAL AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

ActionAid Bangladesh has developed a MEAL system at organisational level in line with ALPS (Accountability Learning and Planning System) and Meta Theory of Change (MTOC) of ActionAid International. The major objective of monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) system is to support AAB mission and vision through ensure organisational accountability and generate evidence-based knowledge and learning in national and global perspective. In the upcoming five years, Action Aid Bangladesh will focus on strengthening our MEAL system, so that the team is better equipped to deal with measuring outcomes and reporting on the progress. The following expected results will be considered.

- **Improve MEAL system and approach in such a way that will develop digital transformation and cost-effective solutions web/app to collect real time data and introduce result-based monitoring system (Project-on-Track) along with capacity enhancement of MEAL team, program team as well as partners.**
- **Install knowledge and evidence-based learning system that will contribute to our federation-wide understanding of social change processes.**

7.5 MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS

We aim to leverage an effective communication strategy, custom tailored for ActionAid Bangladesh, and influence the mainstream media ecosystem as our goal is to accelerate our overall programme, campaign, and advocacy efforts during this CSP period, aiming for holistic participation and sustainable impact.

- **Engage ActionAid Bangladesh's partners and participants at all levels with our programme and advocacy interventions to ensure meaningful participation and lasting impact.**
- **Prioritise young people, women and communities and amplify their calls to action for achieving social and climate justice.**
- **Effectively reach out to relevant actors in the country and beyond to ensure responsible resource mobilisation for ActionAid Bangladesh's development and humanitarian assistance efforts.**

7.6 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

ActionAid Bangladesh will place a high priority on organisational development, aiming to ensure effective operation and maximise programme impact. At the core of this objective lies the establishment of an empowering work atmosphere that prioritises the appreciation and motivation of individuals to strive for excellence. Our focus will be on enhancing work systems, inviting innovation, and promoting continuous learning and growth.

We will prioritise embracing diversity, leadership, and creating high-performing teams, while ensuring inclusivity. This commitment will be supported by establishing a safe workplace for all members, guided by relevant internal policies and compliance with national laws, to promote safer programming.

Recognising the importance of blending experience with innovative perspectives, we will actively seek to incorporate new-generation talent into our workforce. Understanding their values, such as purpose, diversity, and work-life balance, we will offer meaningful engagement, professional development, and flexible working arrangements.

ActionAid Bangladesh will dedicate itself to leveraging technological innovations to enhance operational efficiency and amplify impact, remaining at the forefront of advancements. Collaboration with ActionAid International will lead to the adoption of cutting-edge technologies within the broader ActionAid Federation. Prioritising flexibility in adopting emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence, we will shape the technological landscape and implement a governance framework for ethical use. The technology will be used for the efficiency of our work and ensure effective and timely support for the community we work with. Conducting comprehensive assessments and investing in infrastructure upgrades, we will foster innovation while prioritising data protection.

7.7 FINANCE

The five-year fiscal management strategy of ActionAid Bangladesh is anchored on several key pillars aimed at enhancing the organisation's financial health and performance. In the previous CSP period AAB finance team has successfully implemented robust systems to enhance fiscal management, bolster accountability, refine planning processes, and ensure meticulous reporting and monitoring. A concerted effort to fortify management policies and practices, uphold professional integrity, and optimize the management information system is central to its function. AAB adheres to a Resource Management Framework to facilitate cost-effective resource utilization, maintain stringent accountability regarding resource allocation, and ensure compliance with donor requirements. AAB practices accountability upward and downward which will remain central to its culture going forward. The organisational priority will remain ingrained in CSP VI, and as we want to further diversify the financial resource base, grow with more autonomy, and enhance risk management, develop relevant skills and systems. AAB aims to strengthen the organisation's financial resilience, foster transparency, and accountability, and position AAB for achieving scale of economy to fulfil its mission.



INTERNAL AUDIT

The Internal Audit function supports the organisation in achieving its vision, mission, and strategic goals by evaluating the efficiency of risk management, internal control systems, and governance processes. This evaluation, along with subsequent suggestions for enhancement, is conducted through methodical and rigorous review processes. The internal audit function aids in:

- **Identifying and managing risks effectively.**
- **Ensuring accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of significant financial, managerial, and operational information.**
- **Promoting efficient utilisation and proper safeguarding of the organisation's resources.**
- **Fostering a culture of quality and continuous improvement within the organisation.**

Throughout the CSP period, the internal audit function aims to evolve into a trusted advisor and strategic partner within the organisation. It will offer valuable insights and recommendations

to enhance governance, risk management, and internal controls. This endeavour includes nurturing a culture characterised by transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement, all while advocating for integrity and ethical conduct across the organisation, as well as at the partners' level.

7.8 ADMINISTRATION

The administrative policies and procedures are strategically aligned to support the organisation's efficiency through cost-effective procurement practices and a commitment to green approaches. AAB admin team will continue the 4R policy (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) within its operational modalities. The organisation prioritizes suppliers and vendors who offer eco-friendly products and services, such as reusable or recyclable materials, energy-efficient equipment, and low-impact transportation options. Additionally, efforts will be made to reduce waste generation by opting for digital invitations and event materials, utilising biodegradable products, and implementing efficient recycling and waste management systems. The administrative department will actively seek opportunities to minimise the organisation's carbon footprint by calculating yearly CO2 emission and report to its stakeholder and promote environmental stewardship, optimising both financial resources and environmental impact.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

At ActionAid Bangladesh, ensuring the safety of the staff, program participants, and assets is paramount. The primacy of life, both for ActionAid members and the communities we serve, remains the utmost priority for ActionAid Bangladesh. Hence, ActionAid Bangladesh will continue its operations in accordance with the ActionAid Global Safety and Security protocols, aligned with the national context, including comprehensive risk assessments, clear security guidelines, and increasing staff awareness through regular security briefing, orientations, trainings etc. Our measures encompass physical security, information security, emergency preparedness, collaboration with authorities, and continuous monitoring and evaluation. By integrating these measures into our operations, AAB management demonstrate their commitment to security while effectively carrying out its mission in Bangladesh.

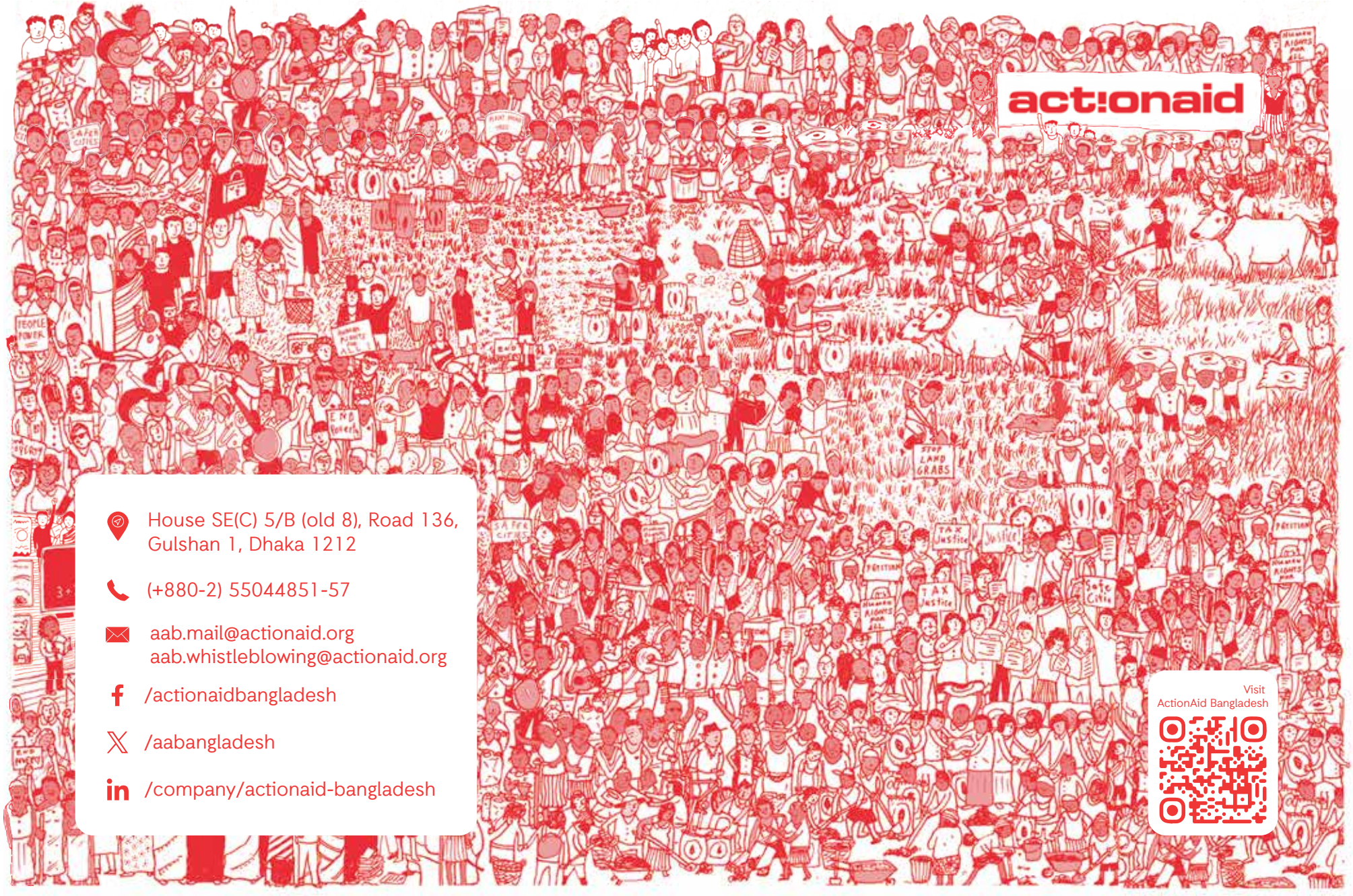
8. OVERALL EXPECTED RESULTS OF CSP-VI

The goal remains to strive for social justice whereby inequality is eradicated by applying the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) which centers on transforming unjust power relations in the communities and countries we work in using the pillars of empowerment, solidarity, and campaigning.

In a just society, the advancement of leadership and active participation of women and young people will ensure that rights holders enjoy their entitlements. This will foster innovation, promote green transition, ensure gender inclusive allocation of public resources, and necessitate policy and legislative adjustments for Bangladesh's sustainable future. Consequently, there will be noticeable transitions for transformation regarding economic empowerment, socio-political landscape with a gender and climate justice inclusive lens, especially in Agriculture, Energy, Environment, Disaster Management, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, and response initiatives for refugees and the internally displaced people.

ActionAid Bangladesh will perform as an agile innovative and relevant organisation in the CSP VI period leading up to the CSP VII as it turns 50. It has set itself the target of 50@50 to be achieved through organisational effectiveness, engagement, collective cooperation, gender balanced, leadership development within the organisation and for the sector, policies, and governance.

During this CSP period the organisation will emphasise technological transformation and digitalisation with effective investment.



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