

৭ম পঞ্চবার্ষিক পরিকল্পনায় নগরায়ণ ভাবনা

Sustainable Urbanization in the Context of 7th 5-Year Plan

Saturday | 16 May, 2015 | 10.00 AM - 1.00 PM | Windy Town, BICC



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Sustainable Urbanization in the Context of 7th Five Year Plan

Jointly Organized by

General Economics Division of Planning Commission

Bangladesh Urban Forum Secretariat

Date: 16 May, 2015

General Economics Division (GED) of the Bangladesh Planning Commission and Bangladesh Urban Forum (BUF) Secretariat jointly organized a consultation meeting on “Sustainable Urbanization in the Context of 7th Five-Year Plan” on 16th May, 2015 at BICC, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka. The main objective of this consultation meeting was to facilitate collective dialogue on the issues and concerns expressed by urban sector stakeholders on the urban contents of the draft Five-Year plan, as well as, to suggest further strategies on urban development.

In the opening session guests expressed their aspirations what they want to see in the 7th five year plan. Professor Nazrul Islam, Ms Pauline Tamesis, Country Director, UNDP, Mr Mohammad Shafiqul Azam, Secretary, Planning Division, Ministry of Planning and Mr Mohammed Moinuddin Abdulah, Secretary, MoH&PW delivered their speeches in the

opening session. Dr Mashiur Rahman, Adviser to the Honorable Prime Minister on Economic Affairs spoke on the event as the Chief Guest.

In the technical session Professor Shamsul Alam, Member (Senior Secretary), GED of Planning Commission presented the draft version of urbanization chapter of 7th Five year Plan (2016-2020). In his presentation he acknowledged the uneven pattern of regional growth of urbanization in Bangladesh, hazards arising from rapid and poorly managed urbanization and disproportionate sufferings of urban poor from their impacts. He also added urban poor are vulnerable to a variety of health hazards, natural and man-made shocks, with limited access to public services or forms of social protection. Chaotic urban development and the accompanying unemployment, environmental degradation, lack of basic services, crime and the proliferation of slums represent major obstacles to achieving a higher quality of urban life in Bangladesh.

The draft plan was discussed by the sectoral experts Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman, Executive Chairman, PPRC; Dr. Roxana Hafiz, Professor, URP, BUET; Advocate Azmatullah Khan, Adviser, Municipal Association of Bangladesh (MAB); Ar. Iqbal Habib, Joint Secretary, BAPA and Mr Naved Chowdhury, Advisor, DFID & Chair, BUF Urban Policy & Governance Cluster.

Key recommendations of the discussions are provided below followed by the highlights of speakers and panelists comments in brief.

**Key Recommendations from Consultation Meeting on 7th Five-Year Plan and
Urbanization Strategy
16 May 2015, BICC**

1. Setting the Vision for Urbanization in Bangladesh

- The Urban chapter should at the onset be structured around a strong, clear and innovative Vision statement. This vision statement should not only be framed within the 5 year term of the 7th Five-Year Plan, but should also speak to a more long-term vision for Bangladesh's urban centres and urbanization processes. Clear objectives to achieve the goals of the Vision statement for urbanization in the 5-year term should accompany the vision statement. In order to achieve these objectives, specific initiatives with clear targets should be developed. These targets should be specific and measurable so that progress can be evaluated at specific intervals of the 7th Five-Year Plan. This will also benefit future urbanization strategy chapters of subsequent Five-Year Plans as well as other Planning Policies/documents.
- The policies, strategies and Vision of the 7th Five- Year Plan chapter on urbanization strategy should reflect the strategies and principles included in the NSDS (National Sustainability Development Strategy).
- Objectives and goals in the urbanization strategy in the 7th FYP should complement the Post-2015 Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals, particularly,

proposed SDG 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.”

- The objective of adopting the National Urban Sector Policy should be set. Processes of urbanization in Bangladesh will continue and thus it is imperative to adopt this Policy to ensure that urbanization is sustainable and planned.
- Mechanisms should be included to evaluate the objectives and targets of the urban policy in order to measure progress.

2. Rules, Regulations and Governance (Decentralization)

- Planned decentralization should ensure the spatial balance and equity among all regions of Bangladesh.
- Proper decentralization should not only be limited to issues of resources and facilities, but also the decongestion of Government power from the center to local levels of administration.
- The plan must strongly support “city government” with proper emphasis as people’s representatives in the urban local governments. Local representatives must be given proper amount of authority in order to respond to urban realities at the local level and to coordinate development activities.
- Adoption of appropriate policy to shift from a central and top-down perspective towards an approach considering the smallest relevant scale for urban services delivery;
- Policy should be developed that will find appropriate ways to include private sector contribution in the urban development process and to engage the private sector to share some of the responsibilities of urban development.

3. Municipal Finance

- National and local reform processes to provide opportunities and incentives for increasing the local resource base and efficiency in the use of these resources and of government assets, including enabling local government to access the capital markets and to leverage its funds with private sector resources.
- Strengthen national and local institutions to encourage more effective management by territorial governments of local revenues and expenditures, and of their assets.
- Non-tax revenue earned by the government from a municipality should be shared with the local government. Fund sharing agreements should be formulated. To meet the demand of the people and improve the functions of the municipalities, sufficient funds will be needed.

4. Urban Design/Planning

- Urban Planning must make cities of all sizes attractive, competitive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Urban planning should be done with considering the size, variation and potentiality of each respective urban centre, recognizing the local realities.
- Urban planning policies should give due emphasis on creating good quality public spaces in the city through proper urban planning and development control.

- Consider ecosystem and ecological dynamics as important spatial elements and integrate this perspective in planning at different scales;
- Address urban growth proactively by supporting secondary cities and developing planned city extensions at scale, connected to the city fabric and with adequate public space.
- Upgrade informal settlement and integrate them in the city through connectivity, location of services and facilities.

5. Urban Poverty

- Enact and implement urban policies that support plurality of tenure and continuum of land rights to enhance tenure security for the urban poor.
- Allocation for the urban poor by the city/municipalities should be included in policies and planning.
- The plan should recognize that housing issues are closely related to human rights and targeting the most poor and vulnerable groups are crucial if the situation is not to deteriorate.

6. Pro-Poor Urban Strategy and Building Inclusive Cities

- Urban strategies must also be inclusive for the extreme poor and poor. Strategies such as housing, transportation and infrastructure, need to be addressed.
- Access to public spaces, education and community spaces must be inclusive for all citizens. Urban planning must take into account people with disabilities, the elderly and children.
- Special emphasis should be placed on including the perspectives of women, youth, elderly persons and other marginalized communities in urban planning decisions. Gender equality perspectives should be mainstreamed into all decisions around budgeting, infrastructure investments, land-use, urban services and urban planning.

7. Land Management and Tenure Security

- Urban land management must focus on the optimum utilization of land. Land should be understood as a scarce resource in Bangladesh and thus it is imperative that all urban centres must have proper land use plans. Furthermore, land use plans must also take into account water management issues.
- Comprehensive reforms in land administration and management system should be explored and should include contribution from all stakeholders. Current uncontrolled urbanization processes in Bangladesh have their root in the country's historical complex land management system.
- Urban land use plans must work to mitigate the unsustainable consumption of land and to prevent unplanned urban sprawl.
- Facilitate land tenure security and access to land and property rights, as well as access to finance for low income households.
- Strategies should be developed and put in effect to protect open spaces, water bodies, wetlands, water catchment areas and other ecologically sensitive areas from physical development.

- Legal frameworks must be strengthened and accompanied with effective regulations to ensure compliance to protect natural ecosystem from destruction from unplanned development.

8. Urban Informal Economy Sector

- The informal sector of urban areas is a big contributor of urban economy and should receive attention and support since the urban informal sector is vital for a sustainable urban economy.

9. Climate Change and Resilient Urban Planning

- Climate Change is often considered solely as rural issue in Bangladesh, however, it is likely to accelerate the rural-urban migration, thus increasing the burden on urban centres. Stronger emphasis on Climate Change should be included in the urban strategy. Urban centres must plan for changing climate patterns and large climate events. Urban planning must incorporate strategies that promote climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies. Risk sensitive land use planning and Act related to urban and regional planning should be further developed.
- Building urban resilience and ensuring sustainable development requires a closer interface between and integration of urban governance, climate and risk-sensitive development planning, and coherence of systems, services and resources.

10. Urban Housing

- The housing sector accounts for a significant share of wealth and resources and when managed effectively, it can be an important source of economic growth, stability and resiliency, as well as a major component of the social development agenda of the country.
- Encourage innovative and more inclusive housing finance systems, including through incentives to housing finance providers who lend to low-income groups and alternative financial institutions for low-cost housing. Strengthening the provision of institutional incentives to the private housing finance sector and stimulate efficient lending without exposing the state to excessive risk.
- Promote new approaches to tenure, collateralization and guarantee mechanisms. Encourage housing microfinance and promote community finance and various incremental loans adapted to gradual building processes.
- Sustainable housing design and building principles should be promoted. These include, striving for climatic appropriateness, energy-efficiency, and lower carbon emissions and environmental friendliness of the production processes of materials.
- Alternative financing models including PPP (Public – Private Partnership) for housing should be encouraged in order to provide the poor access to housing finance.

11. Urban Transportation

- An integrated approach to land use and transport planning is essential. Such integration needs to be promoted at the highest level through national urban policies and National Urban Transport Policies that are developed as statutory instruments that provide a vision for sustainable urban development. Policies should also include

defining the roles, responsibilities and relationships amongst different sectors, agencies and stakeholders in guiding actions across regional, metropolitan and neighborhood levels.

- Urban transportation strategy should emphasize a “pedestrian-preference” policy that will create viable and safe options for personal (walking) transportation. Infrastructure for cycling should be included in the design of new roads.
- Clear objectives with measurable targets for an effective mass transportation system within urban centres and between urban centres should be formed and implemented.

12. Use of Technology and ICT for Urban Service Delivery

- To reduce urban environmental impacts, improved data disaggregated at local level to support local planning and monitoring of urban development and encourage citizen participation and accountability use of technologies should be ensured for innovative public management, participation and accountability. These will be based on the following;
 - a. adopting technology to improve outcomes;
 - b. balancing inclusiveness and responsiveness when using technology;
 - c. public openness through technology and
 - d. engaging citizens as partners in urban governance

13. Urban-Rural Dynamic and Migration

- Among the massive urban spectrum of 525 urban centres, the plan should outline key strategies to decrease the trend of migration to large cities by developing and strengthening district headquarters and selected Upazilas as viable alternatives to large cities such as Dhaka and Chittagong. Weaker regions and Second Tier cities must receive adequate attention in national urbanization policy.
- Steps in creating reasonably equal opportunities and adequate service and infrastructure delivery in rural and peri-urban areas should be introduced in order to reduce urban-rural inequality and rural-urban migration.

Highlights of the Experts and Invited Guests

1. Professor Nazrul Islam, Chairman, Centre for Urban Studies (CUS), Dhaka
Eminent urban expert Professor Nazrul Islam in his opening remarks shared about the urban sector's stake to the national GDP. He said that it is the high time to adopt a national policy for urbanization in Bangladesh as urban people living on the 7% area of the country but contribute approximately 60% to the national GDP which is higher than the agricultural sector.

Professor Islam congratulates Planning Commission to bring the urban issues in 7th FYP strongly. He reminded the audience that in the first 5 year plan in 1973, created under Bangabandhu government, placed a separate chapter on "Physical Planning, Housing and Tourism" but later in the 2nd, 3rd and 4th FYP urbanization issue didn't get importance as it should be. Sixth five year plan (2009-2014) dealt urbanization issue quite well. He expected present government would approve draft Urban Policy as it was promised in the political manifesto of the ruling party.

He thanked the Planning Commission of the Bangladesh government for taking urban issue seriously and discussing with the urban stakeholders on formulating such an important strategic document. As urbanization is an inevitable phenomenon and need to be properly addressed, he found that this consultation meeting gave opportunity to set strategies for the future urbanization of Bangladesh.

2. Pauline Tamesis, Country Director, UNDP
UNDP Country Director Ms Pauline Tamesis thinks sustainable urbanization is crucial not only for the cities of Bangladesh but also for Asia as these cities will be the big contributor of world urban population. Lot of Asian cities are progressing toward the megacities with the lack of urban facilities and amenities. She said that cities need to be attractive, competitive, safe and resilient for their sustainability.

She also stressed on the creating public spaces in the city, delivering affordable housing and good quality city spaces are necessary for being sustainable. Proper urban planning and, subsequently, ensuring development control are pre-requisite of developing sustainable city. She emphasized on the 3 aspects of planning like; VISION, PLAN and PEOPLE in the formulation of urban strategies for 7th five year plan. By setting vision for 2021, involving people in the urban planning and ensuring the inclusiveness in the development process will stimulate sustainable development.

3. Mr. Md. Shafiqul Azam, Secretary, Planning Division, Ministry of Planning
Mr. Azam expressed his own experiences in involving in planning commission and preparation of 7th FYP. He feels economic plans don't get discussed enough. Urbanization has problems and advantages. Urbanization would have not happened so fast, if urban advantages in rural could be provided.

There are pull-push factor of urbanization. If employment opportunities can be created in rural areas, urban areas would not have over stressed as today. Creating reasonably equal opportunities in both rural and urban areas to reduce urban-rural inequality is very crucial.

Further he stressed on achieving the living standard in urban life with good transport facilities, housing, safety, education and other urban basic services. He showed his commitment in the implementation of projects to improve urban life.

4. Mr. Md. Mainuddin Abdullah, Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Public Works
Mr. Abdullah said that Ministry of Housing and Public works will be a major stakeholder for implementation of urbanization strategies of 7th FYP. For achieving sustainable development, it is important to continue the urban plans and pursuing the development as per the plan.

He specially focused the necessity of proper planning and implementation to tackle the fastest growth in the urban areas. At the same time it is also important to protect natural ecosystem from destruction of development works.

Mr Abdullah identified good urban services, public spaces, development control and illegal occupation of natural areas are the challenges in urban areas. Decentralization of facilities is necessary to protect big cities of growing bigger. Appropriate legal framework is needed to improve urban livability.

5. Dr. Moshir Rahman, Advisor to PM

In his speech Dr Moshir Rahman stressed mainly on the optimum utilization of land as it is a very scarce resource for Bangladesh. There will need a reform in land administration and regulation to improve land management. He felt the need of land use plan for all city and towns as the uncontrolled urbanization has a root to the country's historical complex land management system. He agreed that local government institutions seriously lack technical manpower for preparing spatial planning. By recruiting planning professionals we can ensure better use of land.

Bangladesh should be proud that the country explicitly recognizes the need for spatial equity and balanced development of the country. So he gave importance on ensuring the spatial balance and equity among the regions of Bangladesh. It is necessary to develop infrastructure and establish education and training institutions for boosting the development on the lagging regions. He emphasized on proper decentralization and utilizing local resources. Government should plan to improvise the regional potentiality not constraint the regional growth.

Government aim should be to develop all parts of the country together. Spatial dimensions of Bangladesh are important because resources are divided and certain region possesses certain advantages. Other regions may not have those advantages. For example, a port would have roads connected to it, or a region with electricity means that industries would be located there. Therefore, it is necessary to give preferential treatment to less advantaged areas. He emphasized on the proper decentralization not only of resources and facilities but also the decongestion of Government power from the center.

From the discussion of designated Guests/Panelists/Experts

Naved Chowdhury, Adviser, DFID

We might need to re-evaluate the urban policy to make it go forward. Future strategies need to be integrated to bring the urban programs forward. To reap the best benefits from private and public sectors, urban policy should be formulated with proper structured way. He sees some institutional bottlenecks in the coordination among the urban sector players. Through institutional reform we can steer the benefits of urban development.

Besides public sector, involvement of private sector in urban planning is very important. Resources need to be used prudently. Private sector can contribute in the urban development process through finance and technical support. We need to explore the ways of private sector engagement and share some responsibilities on the way to development.

Architect Iqbal Habib, Joint Secretary, BAPA

Mentioning two words “DISASTERQUAKE and “CLASSQUAKE”, Architect Iqbal Habib insist on the need of integrating economic classes in the plan. The poor classes in the city don’t have the access to the housing financing due to the lack of collateral therefore marginalized though they have the ability of repayment the loan.

The issue of “city government” has to be brought in the 7th FYP. Upazilas are just sitting without power. People representatives in the urban local governments need power to work and coordinate the development activities.

Connectivity and smooth mobility are two pre-requisites of country’s prosperity. Though Bangladesh is a small country, we haven’t been able to make proper highways for national and inter regional connectivity and mobility. Therefore, transport remains a massive problem in the country. Urban transportation strategy should emphasize the “pedestrian-preference” policy and implementation of mass transportation system. Even in Singapore, people walk 7 km a day but in Dhaka we can’t walk even 4 km a day because of lack of pedestrian facilities in the city. Developing a walkable city should be priority matter of urbanization.

We need to plan every inch of our space by adopting the national urban policy. To build a resilient city, we have to construct buildings in compliance with building code and the tectonic characteristics. Physical planning must be prepared by integrating geography and geology to reduce the risk of earthquake’s disaster. Urban renewal issue should be in the FY plans.

Dr. Roxana Hafiz, Professor, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, BUET

Dr. Roxana mainly focused on the housing issues of urban areas. She urges on whatever policies and strategies we adopt in the upper level plans they must be translated in to the space. Without translating them to the ground we cannot expect the benefits of the good plans. All people need housing equally. Therefore, government should plan for providing housing for the people irrespective to the economic class or gender.

Migration to the big cities escalates the problems of the cities. We need to search the reasons of migration and address them in the source accordingly. Researchers in urban planning should always look for new appropriate techniques for solving the problems of urban areas.

Advocate Azmatullah Khan, Advisor, Municipal Association of Bangladesh

Advocate Azmatullah Khan mainly talked on governance issue of urban local governments in Bangladesh. He claimed that municipalities in Bangladesh have enhanced their service delivery to the people and simultaneously peoples' expectation also increased to the urban local governments. To meet the demand of the people and improve the functions of the municipalities, sufficient fund is a pre-requisite. Therefore, there should be provision of two types of budgetary systems in the country. One is national budget and another is local government budget.

Non-tax revenue earned by the government from a municipality should be shared with the local government. Municipalities usually provide all the services but get only few taxes from the plot owners and establishments. Therefore, national income from any area should be shared with the local government institution.

He also appreciated the performance based projects in the municipalities as they are more successful. He urges to treat municipalities as local government with power and capacity and implement the section 59 of our constitutions and section 14 and 115 of Local Government Act 2009.

Lastly, Mr. Khan said without delivering “**4F**”; function, functionaries, fund and freedom, municipalities will not perform as local governments as expected.

Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman, Chairman, PPRC

As 7th five year plan is a document of broad strategic policy directions, GED of Planning Commission will consider the peoples' interest and ground reality of the urban areas of Bangladesh. Today, urban issues are getting attention which is positive. Among the 525 urban centres we have a massive urban spectrum. For releasing the problems of big cities and, simultaneously, improving the weak regions the Second tier cities must get special attention in the planning.

Urban planning should be done considering the size, variation and potentiality of the urban centres. At the same time, we need to balance between spatial growth and urban economy. For sustainable development there must be a happy marriage between spatial planning and economic planning.

The new realization is that social indicators of the urban poor are worse than those of the rural poor. Urban poor can create an economic foothold of urban areas but the social advantages are not there. Social indicators of urban poor are needed to be seriously considered while planning. Urban areas of Bangladesh have very complex and multidimensional problems. They need to be address through political economy.¹

¹ Political economy is a study and use of economic theory and methods that influences political ideology. Political economy is the interplay between economics, law and politics, and how institutions develop in different social and economic systems, such as capitalism, socialism and communism. Political economy analyzes how public policy is created and implemented.

Comments from the Floor

1. Access to the public spaces, education and community spaces for the disabled People/ physically challenged people, old, children should be considered.
2. The issue of health and environment should be in the urbanization strategy.
3. Allocation for the urban poor by the city/municipalities should be spelled out.
4. The issue of urban waste management in slums should be outlined in the plan.
5. Root causes of rural-urban migration should be addressed to reduce the problems of overpopulated urban areas.
6. Urban governance issue in cities should be properly dealt with taking appropriate measures.
7. Utility services issues should be ensured through formulating proper action plans.
8. Informal sector of urban areas should be considered as a big contributor of urban economy.
9. Urban strategies for poor in terms of housing, transportation and infrastructure need to be addressed.

List of Participants attended BUF Consultation Meeting on 16th May at BICC

1. A K M Musa, Concern Worldwide
2. A K M Shirajul Islam, BASA
3. A N M Emam Hasnath, MSS
4. Abu Alam Md Shahid Khan, BUF Secretariat
5. Advocate Md Ajmatullah Khan, MAB
6. Ashekur Rahman, UNDP
7. Azahar Ali, UPPR
8. Dr A Q M Mahbub, Geography and Environment, University of Dhaka
9. Dr Akter Mahmud, JU
10. Dr M Shaheedul Ameen, BUET
11. Dr Md Taibur Rahman, GED
12. Dr Mehrul Islam, CARE
13. Dr Roxana Hafiz, URP, BUET
14. Dr Sarwar Jahan, BUET
15. Dr Shamsul Alam, GED
16. Fakrul Ahsan, UNDP
17. Farzana Samiruddin, UDD
18. Fatema Akhter, NDBUS
19. Graham Gass, DFID
20. Habibur Rahman, WSUP
21. Hasina Mushrofa, UPPR
22. Hossain Zillur Rahan, PPRC
23. Iqbal Habib, BAPA
24. Jahanara Begum, UPPR
25. Jamil H. Chowdhury, ASD
26. Jana Goswami, Bangladesh Mohila Parishad
27. Jay Tyler Malette, UNDP
28. Josefa Yesmin, GED
29. Kaji Saifur Reza, UPPR
30. Kawser Ahmed, UNDP
31. Khondker Rebaka Sunyat, CUP
32. LimiaDewan, BRAC
33. M Aminul Islam, UNDP
34. Md Azaz Mohamed Chowdhury, LGED
35. Md Akhtaruzzaman, Un-habitat
36. Md Julfikar Ali, Aparajeyo Bangladesh
37. Md Maksalin, LGED
38. Md Nurullah, LGED
39. Md Shahidul Huq, SRPV
40. Md Shahjahan, GED
41. Mehedi Imam, BUF Secretariat
42. Mnzur Sadeque, LGED
43. Mostafa Quaium Khan, BUF
44. Musrat Meh Jabin, GED
45. Nabeera Rahman, UNDP
46. Nadia A. Shams, BRAC
47. Naqib Bin Mahbub, GED, PC

48. Naved Chowdhury, DFID
49. Nushrat Rahman Chowdhury, CARE
50. Palash Kanti Das, UNDP
51. Pauline Tamesis, UNDP
52. Pervez Ahmed, UNDP
53. Professor A K M Abul Kalam, URP, JU
54. Professor Dr Md Ghula Murtaza, PUDI
55. Professor Golam Rahman, BIP
56. Professor Nazrul Islam, CUS
57. Sabira Yasmin, GED
58. Salma Khan, PDAP
59. Sally Cawood, University of Manchester
60. Samira Noor Porna, BMP
61. Selina Begum, UPPR
62. Shadlee Rahman, UNDP
63. Shaila Khan, UNDP
64. Shimul Sen, GED
65. Shofiqul Alam, Unicef
66. Shormina, BASA
67. Sijitha Sekharan, UPPR
68. Syedul Hasan, Rotaract Club of Baridhara.
69. Uday Shankar Das, UDD
70. Waliza Akhter, UPPR
71. Shafiqul Azam, Secretary, Planning Division
72. Moinuddin Abdullah, Secretary, MoH&PW

Journalists

73. Wasif Gaws, GREYSNACK
74. Anwar Rosen, Janakantha
75. M R Kawser, Somoy
76. Mannan, Somoy
77. Farhan, Bdnews24.com
78. Mehedi, BonikBarta
79. Likhon, Channel24
80. Fahim Hossain, Channel 24
81. Ziaul Huq Sabuj, BanglaVision
82. Mohsin Kabin, ATN News
83. M Karim, Channel 9
84. M Saifullah, UNB
85. Arif Mahmud, Bdnews24.com
86. S M Rashidul Islam, BSS
87. Md Ashraful Islam, Prothom Alo