



3rd Five-Year Strategic Plan 2022-2027

**Human Rights for All
Everywhere Equally**

National Human Rights Commission



National Human Rights Commission
3rd Five Year Strategic Plan
2022-27

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FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce this 3rd Five Year Strategic Plan of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) for the period from 2022 to 2027. Understanding the challenges we faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have set the priorities by analysing the data and information from international and national context and how our statutory powers can have most impact to promote and protect human rights for all, everywhere, equally. NHRC will devote in developing a comprehensive document, a National Action Plan on Human Rights. NHRC has formed the District Human Rights (Prevention & Protection) Committees in each 64 districts with the aim of outreach and activated the Human Rights Focal Desks at Ministries/Divisions of the government. We plan to strengthen the committees and the Human Rights Focal Desks by enhancing their capacity.

The strategic priorities set in the plan amongst others include, creating a culture of human rights and fundamental freedom in society, promoting and protecting human rights establishing practices of human rights principles, norms, and standards by all public institutions, including the law enforcement agencies, securing appropriate redress and accountability for human rights violations and respect for the rule of law, addressing the impacts of climate change from a human rights perspective, advancing sustainable development through promoting responsible business practices and enhancing efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the Commission.

With a dream to have a digital Commission, we have developed a digital complaint management system with the aim to provide redress to ensure that the rights of the people are protected. We will make the best use of the digital platform for providing better services with greater transparency. We have also introduced an online human rights course on the concepts and thematic issues for students accessible for all including persons with disabilities. We plan to roll out this course in all learning institutions for the students.

We believe in an independent, impartial and effective human rights institution that will be widely respected and will have demonstrable impact across the country. We intend to communicate our positions actively to all our stakeholders to continue to promote and protect human rights. We will focus on our resources where we can make a real, sustainable, positive difference to the lives of individuals and communities through the effective implementation of this Strategic Plan. We will retain capacity to respond effectively to any new challenges that may emerge over the period, whether they result from global issues such as climate change, or from any new challenge the world may experience.

NHRC intends to work with the wider stakeholders to plan its activities in line with the priorities set in the Strategic Plan. A thoughtful work plan and cooperation and collaboration of the stakeholders will contribute towards a successful implementation of the Strategic Plan.



Nasima Begum ndc

Chairman

National Human Rights Commission

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SUMMARY: OUR STRATEGY

2022 - 27



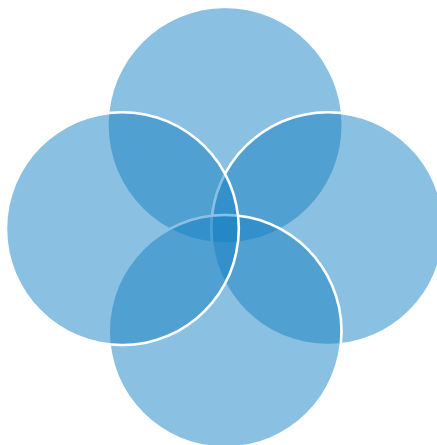
OUR VISION

A human rights culture throughout Bangladesh



OUR MISSION

To ensure the rule of law, social justice, freedom, and human dignity through promoting and protecting human rights



OUR HUMAN RIGHTS PRIORITIES

During the performance period of this strategic plan, the NHRC will pursue eight strategic objectives that it believes will be crucial in realizing increased enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by all. These strategic objectives are as follows:

SP1: Promote a culture of human rights and fundamental freedom in society.
SP2: Promote and protect the rights, advancement, and interests of women and children by creating all favourable conditions through the following gender mainstreaming approach.
SP3: Promote and uphold the rights of left-behind people and communities, particularly ethnic and religious minorities, gender diverse people and communities, persons with disabilities, elderly people , and other vulnerable people and communities, and CHT affairs.
SP4: Entrench and promote practices of human rights principles, norms, and standards by all public institutions, including the law enforcement agencies (LEAs).
SP5: Secure appropriate redress and accountability for human rights violations and respect for the rule of law.
SP6: Address the impacts of climate change from a human rights perspective.
SP7: Advance sustainable development through promoting responsible business practices and safeguarding human rights from the negative impact of business operations, workers' rights, and migrant workers issues.
SP8: Enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the Commission.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BHR	Business and Human Rights
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DHRC	District Human Rights Committees
ESCR	Economic Social Cultural Rights
GANHRI	Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions
HR	Human Rights
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
HRDs	Human Rights Defenders
ICT	Information Communication Technology
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
PESTLE	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UNGP	United Nations Guiding Principles
UPR	Universal Periodic Review

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) is an independent statutory institution established by an Act of Parliament, the National Human Rights Commission Act (NHRC Act) 2009. A structure for a National Human Rights Commission was put in place in 2007 through an Ordinance. However, the NHRC was reconstituted in 2010 by the enactment of the NHRC Act 2009 as a State institution to promote, protect, and ensure human rights. The purpose of establishing such a unique institution is to ensure human rights of the people by protecting the right to life, right to liberty, right to equality, and right to dignity of people as guaranteed in the Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and different international human rights instruments. The spirit of establishment of such an institution is to create a culture of human rights through public awareness and enlightenment on diverse human rights issues so that the inalienable fundamental human rights of people are protected and the human rights situation is improved in the country. The key functions of the NHRC is as follows:

- Undertaking human rights education and awareness programmes for people.
- Providing advice to ensure the State meets its international and domestic humanrights commitments.
- Receiving, investigating, resolving complaints of human rights violations and provide redress.
- Monitoring the human rights situation in the country and the actions of the State and make recommendation for appropriate steps.

1.2 Rationale

The 3rd Strategic Plan is developed to guide the NHRC to achieve its mandate and provide a focus for the next five years in the light of the emerging global, regional, national, and county trends. In this regard, the NHRC realized and felt the need to review key aspects of its strategy, including its corporate statements, to align them to the dynamic environment better to achieve its mandate effectively and successfully. Similarly, the core values and strategic objectives are planned to be sharpened as guiding principles and goals for the coming years. Planning is a guiding principle for the effective functioning of any successful organization. Based on the NHRC mandates and set priorities, this document endeavours

to identify the goals, targets, and expected results of the NHRC during the specified period. It will guide the organization to perform its functions and duties in a strategically organized, systematic, timely, and result-driven way. Through this document, NHRC intends to set its priorities in its activities based on the national need and demands of people in the changed context.

1.3 An Assessment of the 2nd Five Year Strategic Plan of NHRC (2016-2020)

The 2nd Five Year Strategic Plan (2016-2020) of NHRC envisioned promoting a human rights culture throughout Bangladesh along with the mission statement “to ensure the rule of law, social justice, freedom, and human dignity by promoting and protecting human rights.” Among others, the key strategy it adopted was to recognize that often much more progress can be made on the human rights front by focusing on systemic change. The 2nd Five-year Strategic Plan (2016-2020) prioritized four focal areas: (i) Institutional development of the NHRC; (ii) Human rights promotion, education, and awareness-raising; (iii) Human rights monitoring and investigation; and (iv) Human rights research, reporting and policy development.

1.3.1 Achievements

The NHRC endeavours to promote and protect human rights of the people and ensure social justice. We focused on the awareness and education on human rights, advocacy and encouraging the State to meet its international and domestic human rights commitments. We extended protection to those most at risk of human rights abuses and monitored human rights issues, reporting our findings to the government. In achieving our goals we focused on the institutional development and the capacity development of our human resources. The Commission introduced a hotline number (16108) for making complaints on human rights violations, priority given to diversity in recruiting new staff members, an increase in the number of local/regional offices, enhanced activities of thematic committees, increased coverage of the Commission's work in media, increase its updates on websites and social networking sites, promoting the rights of the disadvantaged section of society (i.e., persons with disabilities, Hijras, children, etc.), increased engagement with United Nations systems and human rights mechanisms and the civil society organizations (CSOs) etc. The present Commission (5th Commission appointed in September 2020) introduced the e-Filing to expedite its activities and interventions.

The predominant need and expansion of digital technology worldwide have also made the NHRC envision a digitalized institution (Strategy outlined in the 2nd Five Year Plan

2016-2020). NHRC has developed a Digital Complaint Management System accessible for all including the persons with disabilities. The digital complaint management system will help the NHRC to manage the complaints and suo-moto cases of allegations of human rights violations digitally. The system records and analyses data on human rights violations and issues. This enables NHRC to proactively monitor the human rights situation and determine its interventions timely with appropriate measures, advise the government or state institutions relating to human rights violations by providing data and evidence.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission maintained a database on the allegation of human rights violations, formed fact findings committees wherever needed, and made recommendations to the concerned authorities for appropriate actions. The NHRC has re-activated the Human Rights Focal Desks (HRFD) of the government in the ministries. It has also formed Human Rights Focal Desks (HRFD) at the Offices of the Divisional Commissioners and the Deputy Commissioner. The commission has re-appointed the panel lawyers for their advice on legal and human rights issues and represent NHRC on legal and human rights issues. With the aim of outreach to the people the NHRC has formed District Human Rights (Prevention and Protection) Committees (DHRC) in 64 districts of Bangladesh with a combination of the State institutions and non-State actors. The NHRC has prioritized in the capacity development of the HRFD, DHRC and the panel lawyers on human rights principles, norms and standards. The Commission believes that the capacity development of the DHRC will ensure better coordination among the public bodies and preclude any violation of human rights. NHRC envisages this will bring substantial improvement in addressing human rights through risk reduction, mitigation and immediate responses. Despite significant achievements a number of planned activities of NHRC could not be fully implement the 2nd Five Year Strategic Plan (2016-2020) as some activities were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

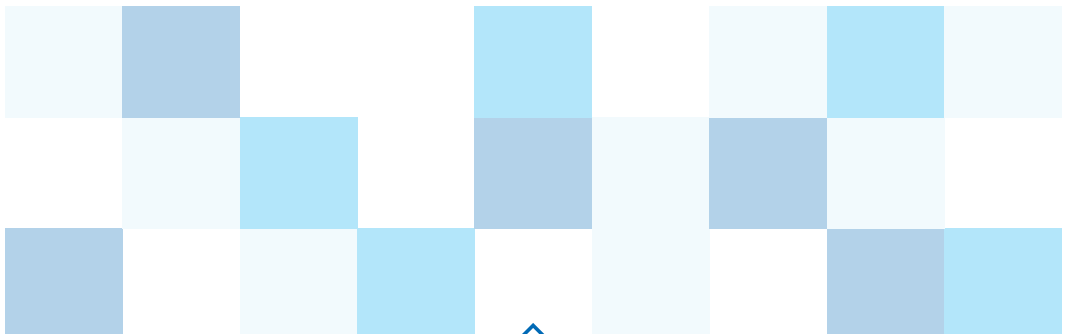
1.3.2 Challenges

The NHRC began its journey (in 2009) with the passage of the National Human Rights Commission Act 2009 more than a decade ago. Needless to say that since its establishment, the Commission has been striving to overcome significant administrative, legal and political challenges, i.e., considered not fully compliant with the United Nations Principles Relating to the Status of National Human Rights Institutions, 1993 (known as Paris Principles), limitations in the founding Act, i.e., the elaborate definition of human rights, the lack of broader mandate to inquire into an allegation of violation of human rights by the law enforcement agencies, no stipulated timeframe for the report to be submitted by the Government in relation to the allegation of violation of human rights by the disciplined

forces, selection process, and deputation of staff. More than ten years into the enactment of the existing Act, no significant step has been discernible to do away with these shortcomings. However, the Commission has submitted a proposal to the Ministry of Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs for amendment.

1.3.3 Key lessons learnt

- a. **Strategic Partnerships:** It is important to have a partnerships strategy to enable the NHRC to enhance its collaboration and complementarity with key partners towards implementing its mandate.
- b. **Managing Expectations:** It is important to prioritize human rights interventions based on the NHRC's capacity and realistic results within a given period.
- c. **Perception of Impartiality:** The NHRC maintained its neutrality in pursuing its work. Thus, there is a need for the Commission to balance diplomacy and confrontation while addressing human rights concerns.
- d. **Results Framework:** It is critical to develop and implement a concrete results framework aligning the NHRC's day-to-day activities to outputs and desired outcomes to realize the desired impact in implementing its mandate.
- e. **Operation During Extraordinary Situation:** It is imperative to develop strategy to function effectively during unprecedented catastrophic situation like the Covid 19 led pandemic.



1.3.4 Way Forward

The National Human Rights Commission identifies that the work of promoting equity and addressing discrimination is a crucial element of the promotion and protection of human rights. Bangladesh will be prosperous only as it identifies, prioritizes, and addresses the root causes of inequality, many of which are grounded in human rights lapses and violations. Therefore, moving forward, the NHRC seeks to establish an optimistic mission, priorities, and supporting strategies to promote a framework for equality, as well as to promote current human rights issues. Therefore, this Strategic Plan articulates NHRC's strategic direction for the next five years toward realizing its mandate to protect, promote, and ensure human rights and fundamental freedoms.

1.4 Strategic Plan Development Process

This strategic plan outlines the priorities of the NHRC and proposes how to fulfil its mandate of promoting, protecting, and enforcing human rights in Bangladesh. It equally defines the direction and focus of the work of the NHRC in ensuring single-mindedness and promoting transparency and accountability. This 3rd Five Year Strategic Plan of the NHRC has been developed based on document review and qualitative information collected through several participatory consultation meetings involving the Chairman and Members of the NHRC, staff members, and key stakeholders in both public institutions and civil society organizations. It commenced with reviewing the previous Strategic Plans, other key institutional and sector documents, data collection using checklists, interviews, workshops, and finally, focus group discussions. The inputs received from the various sources and processes were then reviewed, analysed, shared, and compiled into a draft strategic plan document.

1.4.1 Organisation of the Strategic Plan

Chapter One starts with a couple of short introductory subsections, including an assessment of the 2nd Five Year Strategic Plan of NHRC (2016-2020), which provides a summary of achievements and challenges faced, provides lessons learnt during the implementation of the Second Five Year Strategic Plan, and the development process of this Strategic Plan. Chapter Two presents the situational analysis, which surmises the operating environment, emphasizing key developments in the international, national, and county contexts. Chapter Three presents the strategic framework, clearly outlining the theory of change, the corporate statements, and strategic objectives leading towards the intended impact.

CHAPTER 2: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

2.1 International Context

The constantly changing trends internationally that will continue to shape the work of the NHRC include the political ideologies, legal frameworks, global politics and economy, development plan, security, and environmental factors. The international scene continues to experience significant political shifts as manifested in the realignment in the regional alliances and trade blocs as well as the changes in political leadership, which influence the human rights context, plan, and partnerships for governments and, of course, national human rights institutions.

At the international level, countries continue to negotiate conventions and treaties through the United Nations platform to address emerging human rights issues like; climate justice, business and human rights, migration, protection of human rights defenders, cyber security, digital currencies, and the fight against terrorism, among others. These international instruments will impact the regional instruments and, ultimately, the work of the NHRC.

The emphasis on private sector-led economic growth and development poses a challenge to Bangladesh's vital welfare programmes such as health services, education, and infrastructure. If the trend continues, there is a likely increased growth in inequalities and vulnerabilities, especially among children, women, persons with disabilities, elderly persons, and the sick, which will impede the realization of human rights and freedoms across the globe, including Bangladesh.

This Strategic Plan will be implemented in the backdrop of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Bangladesh's adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) postulated by the United Nations in 2015, which seeks to facilitate global development through 17 Goals and 169 Targets. The Peoples Republic of Bangladesh has adopted and committed to integrating these development aspirations into its development agenda. It is important to note that the SDGs are imbued by human rights principles and standards and, therefore, present prospects for advancing the promotion, fulfilment, and protection of human rights and freedoms for all. Security is an important precursor to the enjoyment

of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the global level. However, world security remains threatened by terrorism, cyber-attacks, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and industrial and civil unrest in different parts of the world. These threats continue to undermine the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The current global trend emphasizes the need to conserve the environment, providing the necessary link between the environment and human rights. Therefore, the right to a safe, clean and healthy environment is a pre-requisite for enjoying human rights. Focus is shifting to global best practices geared towards protecting and conserving the environment for future generations as climate change remains one of the greatest threats impeding the full enjoyment of human rights, especially economic, social, and cultural rights.

2.2 National Context

Human rights in Bangladesh are enshrined as fundamental rights in Part III of the Constitution of Bangladesh. Accordingly, the State has given utmost priority to ensuring the human rights and dignity of the people. Despite that the State being criticized for disregarding allegations of human rights violations, including unlawful killings and disappearances, arbitrary arrest and detention, and torture. Some claim that these have been in response to attacks by armed groups claiming to act in the name of extremism of faith and doctrines. Violence against women is a violation of basic human rights, but Bangladesh still witnesses different forms of gender-based violence. Although the Government has demonstrated its commitment to eliminating gender-based violence, it is the most pervasive form of human rights violation. Climate change is profoundly affecting human rights in Bangladesh. The country is commonly recognized as one of the most climate-vulnerable countries on earth and is set to become even more so due to climate change. Sea-level rise and tropical cyclones in coastal areas, as well as flooding and riverbank erosion in mainland areas, combined with the socio-economic situation of the country, are already resulting in the loss of homes, land, and property, which are common phenomena in Bangladesh. Bangladesh needs to address these issues so that the human rights of vulnerable and marginalized people can be protected with proper climate adaptation. The government responded fast with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to taking public health measures, the government announced a package of support programmes to support the poor and vulnerable households with cash transfer and food programmes. The government also provided stimulus packages to different businesses and industries to sustain employment and production in key economic sectors. But the COVID-19 outbreak immediately had detrimental effects on the rural economy in Bangladesh and has caused grave and disproportionate impacts on

marginalised groups. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has increased gender-based violence, as unemployment and other financial stresses have grown. Host to nearly one million Rohingyas from neighbouring Myanmar, Bangladesh kept its commitment under international law not to force returns and allowed ashore refugees stranded at sea who were pushed back by other governments.

Human Rights Situation in Bangladesh

The world has seen devastation since 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to a broad range of human rights violations worldwide. Similar to other countries, Bangladesh faces different challenges in fighting this pandemic. Despite this fact, Bangladesh has moved up two notches to 133 among 189 countries in the Human Development Index. Multidimensional poverty is mentioned as the challenge in the report. In addition, Bangladesh has held its topmost position among the countries of South Asia in ensuring gender equality, for the seventh time in a row, according to the latest The Global Gender Gap Report by the World Economic Forum (WEF). These indicate the country's improvement in the way towards achieving SDGs. However, though Bangladesh has improved in economic, social, and cultural rights, improvement in the area of civil and political rights is yet to be seen. This section presents a brief evaluation of the current human rights situation in the country.

Rohingya crisis

Bangladesh provides a significant global public good by hosting over one million Rohingyas. As a result of their stay, the relationship between the host community and Rohingyas is becoming worse day by day. Moreover, the Rohingya crisis has been more complex due to COVID-19. NHRC raises concern over this issue and urges the government to continue strong diplomatic steps and to find a durable and sustainable solution and expedite the process of solving the Rohingya crisis.

Disappearances

Different human rights organizations, the media, and families of victims often claim that the law enforcement agencies in Bangladesh have been involved in incidents of disappearance. However, the law enforcement agencies has been denying that they are not involved in any enforced disappearances. On the contrary, they contend that people go into hiding for various reasons and come back later sometimes. Upon complaints of disappearances NHRC instructed an investigation and sought report from the Ministry of Home Affairs. The responses received are not always fully satisfactory. The NHRC further

summoned the government agencies for the purposes of the investigation and inquiry of allegation of human rights violations. The NHRC continues recommending and redress actions for violation of human rights by the law enforcement agencies. The NHRC strongly views that this is a gross human rights violation that needs to be addressed more earnestly to safeguard the human rights of the people. The NHRC views that the law enforcement agencies should be responsible to find out the whereabouts of the missing, hiding or abducted people since they are responsible for maintaining public order and protecting life.

Extrajudicial killings

Over the years, various incidences of extrajudicial killings have been recorted. NHRC believes that extrajudicial killing is a gross violation of human rights. NHRC has also receiving complaints relating to extrajudicial killings and also sought reports from the government and the responses are reported not to be satisfactory. Thus, NHRC urges that a 'zero tolerance' policy regarding the criminal liability and departmental proceedings of the officials of the law enforcement agencies should be pursued to ensure human rights.

Torture and death in custody

Despite the Constitutional guarantee of safeguard from torture, cruel, inhuman, and degrading punishment and treatment, it is alleged that the people in Bangladesh commonly experience torture and death in custody where law enforcement agencies seek to obtain confessional statements from the arrestees following arrest or detention. The NHRC receives complaints relating to torture and death in custody, sought reports from the government, and remains dissatisfied with the responses. NHRC believes that it is a gross violation of human rights and is a priority for the Commission to respond to the complaints to relating to the law enforcement agencies.

NHRC sough the cooperation of the government in amending the NHRC Act 2009 that with an added provision for the stipulated timeframe for a report ensuring transparent and accountable investigation from the government on allegations of violation of human rights, including extrajudicial killings and torture and death in custody, etc. by the law enforcement agencies.

Freedom of expression

Freedom of thought and expression is guaranteed in the Constitution of Bangladesh. However, in recent years a number of incidences of torture on a number of journalists have been reported in the national and international media. The NHRC condemned on these incidences and recommended for ensuring justice with proper investigation. In addition, NHRC urges the government to ensure journalists can discharge professional

duties freely and without harassment, and the Digital Security Act 2019 is enforced to combat cybercrime and ensure cybersecurity and further ensure that it does not affect the freedom of speech and expression. Moreover, the media should play a responsible and sensible role while reporting about children, women, and vulnerable groups so that their identity and safety security is not hindered.

Violence against women

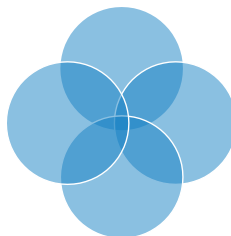
Although Bangladesh has become a role model for women's empowerment, gender-based violence and its magnitude tend to be on the rise. The violence against women, including rape, has significantly increased during health emergencies in the COVID-19 pandemic. The NHRC believes if the root cause of gender-based violence, including rape, can be brought to justice, it will be possible to find an effective way to prevent it. And so, for the first time, the NHRC has set up a National Inquiry Committee to conduct a National Inquiry into Violence against Women and Children with a focus on Rape with the objective to identify the cause, patterns, challenges, and recommendations for the stakeholders for taking action in addressing rape- one of the worst forms of human rights violation.

Child Rights

Children are the future of the nation. Though there are a number of measures taken to protect child rights, the incidents of child torture, rape, child marriage, child trafficking & commercial sexual abuse and exploitation, child labour, and murder are still a matter of concern in Bangladesh. The NHRC condemned these and called on authorities concerned to ensure exemplary punishment of the perpetrators.

Rights of Dalit, Hijras, and all other excluded minorities

Public life has been devastated due to the pandemic. The vulnerable and marginalised section of the society that lags behind has been subject to discrimination and violence. Ethnic, religious, and Hijras often face difficult living conditions. NHRC believes that the excluded groups are yet to be merged into mainstream society. Government action needs to be strengthened and increase social awareness.



CHAPTER 3: STRATEGIC FOCUS

3.1 NHRC's Strategic Plan

3.1.1 Theory of Change

An effective theory of change helps to guide the development of evidence-based strategies, informs monitoring, and provides a framework for evaluation. NHRC's theory of change is anchored on its vision. It presents how the change will happen and how interventions can shape that change. NHRC's strategic objectives are key to building the theory of change as they provide a broad direction for how the change will happen and how it directly influences the types of activities and other interventions needed to achieve results. The choice of strategies is based on:

- Core values
- Operational values
- Local context and related challenges
- Considerations for effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability

The NHRC believes that the primary purpose of a human rights organization is to shrink the spaces of powerlessness and make a difference in people's lives. Since its formation, the centrepiece of the NHRC's work remains grounded in the quest to reduce powerlessness among poor, vulnerable, and marginalised groups and to contain the powerful—both State and non-State actors. This explains the NHRC's commitment to proactively act against and address both the systemic and emerging injustices and inequalities in society. Using rights-based approaches and social justice paradigms, NHRC will continue to empower the people to define, claim and defend their rights and build the capacities of those mandated to address the emerging violations at all levels in society.

Vision

A human rights culture throughout Bangladesh.

Mission

To ensure the rule of law, social justice, freedom, and human dignity through promoting and protecting human rights.

Core Values

The NHRC follows core human rights values, including Independence, Equality, Diversity, Impartiality, Integrity, and Dignity. The NHRC follows the spirit of these values in designing its activities.

Independence- In the fulfilment of the mandate, the NHRC shall ensure a high level of independence.

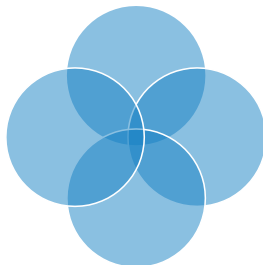
Equality- NHRC treats all people and groups fairly and equally, specific to their needs.

Diversity- Diversity is considered in all the stages of the planning, policymaking, and programming processes of the Commission.

Impartiality-The fairness is the key determinant for the effectiveness of NHRC. The Commission endeavours to maintain impartiality and fairness during all stages of its activities that including planning, programming, implementation, and decision-making.

Integrity-NHRC ensures that integrity underpins all of its actions. NHRC strives to work with honesty and trustworthiness, upholding ethical principles and holding strong moral uprightness.

Dignity- NHRC is committed to the fulfilment of human rights in a broader sense, including dignity, value, and freedom of every human being. The notion of human dignity plays a central role in human rights discourse.



Operational Values

While conducting its activities, the Commission will endeavour to consider the following identified operational values.

Accessibility-The NHRC works to ensure its efforts are within the reasonable reach of the people. The targeted groups include the vulnerable, disadvantaged, and excluded section of the population, who have often been denied rights and freedoms.

Accountability- The NHRC is accountable to submit its Annual Report to the President of Bangladesh. It is equally accountable and responsible to the people through its day-to-day work of providing redress to the victims of human rights violations.

Participation and Social Inclusion-The Commission has a set policy to advocate and promote active, free, and meaningful participation in all social, political, and development processes.

Transparency- In order to respect the right to information, NHRC adopts the policy that concerned people have the right to get information without unreasonable delay.

3.2 Strategic Goal

For the NHRC to be able to forge its way in the realization of its mission, it has a broad strategic goal of creating legal and human rights awareness and empowerment of people, in particular, the vulnerable people, through human rights education, advocacy, research, and providing redress for the human rights violations.

3.2.1 Focus Areas of 3rd Five-Year Strategic Plan (2022-2027)

The 2nd Five-Year Strategic Plan (2016-2020) identified 17 pressing human rights issues, reviewed priorities areas are as mentioned below:

1. Violence by State Mechanism, particularly Enforced Disappearances, Torture including Custodial Torture, Extra-judicial Killings and Culture of Impunity;
2. Violations of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including Health Rights, Discrimination against the Marginalized and People with Disabilities;
3. Full and Prompt Implementation of, and compliance with, the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Accord Focusing on Land Rights;
4. Violence against Ethnic and Religious Minorities with Special Focus on Land Rights and other vulnerable and Marginalized people in Plainlands;

5. Women Empowerment and Discrimination against Women, Gender-based Violence;
6. Protection of Child Rights, Elimination of hazardous Child Labour and Prevention of Early and Forced Marriage;
7. Human Trafficking, Safe Migration and Discrimination and Abuse of Migrant Workers;
8. Impediments to Access to Justice, particularly for the Poor;
9. Occupational Safety, Wages and Welfare including Trade Union Rights of the Garments Workers;
10. Ensuring Right to Education;
11. Right to Food (ensuring food security, safety, nutrition, etc.);
12. Addressing Climate Change and Environmental Justice;
13. Rights of the People of Char Land and newly Acquired Territories (former Enclaves);
14. Social and Religious Cohesion and Harmony;
15. Rights of elperly Persons;
16. Rights to Freedom of Expression;
17. Establishment of a Database of Human Rights Violations and Abuses.

These human rights issues have also been considered and reflected in the formulated strategic focuses of the 3rd Strategic Plan. In addition, the 3rd Strategic Plan will focus on the Rohingya Crisis issue and Repatriation.

3.4 Our Human Rights Priorities

SP1: Promote a culture of human rights and fundamental freedom in society

The NHRC plans to develop a comprehensive tool, a National Action Plan (NAP) on Human Rights for the country. And advocate with the Government for adoption and effective implementation with the aim to promote a culture of human rights across the country. NHRC intends to align the human rights agenda with the achievements of SDGs and UPR recommendations. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, popularly known as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a paradigm shift toward a more balanced model for sustainable development. 'Leave no one behind' is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs are human rights-enabling platforms. SDGs are linked with international human rights

instruments and directly reflect elements of UPR recommendations. SDGs strongly focus on women and girls and gender issues and include children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, ethnic peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons, and migrant workers. With the aim of realizing the human rights agenda with mutually reinforcing SDGs, NHRC plans to strategize its interventions accordingly.

NHRC will make deliberate efforts to integrate human rights education in formal and informal learning institutions through curricular and extra-curricular activities to promote a culture of human rights. The NHRC has already introduced an online human rights course for students ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities. NHRC plans to roll out this course in all learning institutions for all. The NHRC will work with local community structures, NGOs, CSOs, CBOs, FBOs, legal professional associations and organizations, and HRDs to reach out to the people. The NHRC will also strengthen the capacity, structures, and systems of HRDs and rights and advocacy-based NGOs to respond better to human rights violations. In addition, emphasis shall be placed on enhancing the public participation of left-behind community representatives in decision-making at the local (rural and urban local government) and national levels.

SP2: Promote and protect the rights, advancement, and interests of women and children by creating all favourable conditions through following the gender mainstreaming approach

Raising awareness of women and men on women's rights contributes to limiting the power of gender stereotypes that prevent women from participating fully in social, professional, and public life and depriving them of their full citizenship. Therefore, the NHRC will raise awareness of both women and men on women's rights and gender mainstreaming. Similarly, the NHRC will also raise awareness of child rights.

SP3: Promote and uphold the rights of left-behind people and communities, particularly ethnic and religious minorities, gender diverse people and communities, persons with disabilities, elderly people , and other vulnerable people and communities and CHT affairs

The NHRC intends to contribute to building a human rights culture in Bangladesh where the human rights of the left behind groups, i.e., ethnic and religious minorities, Dalits, persons with disabilities, transgender, elderly people, and individuals from other vulnerable

groups, are respected, protected, and fulfilled. This means working towards a Bangladesh where the marginalized section of the society is empowered to claim their rights, and the government, public bodies, State institutions, and others are fully acquainted with the human rights standards and norms, respect, protect and fulfil human rights and are held accountable for violations of human rights and the roles of the NHRC where there is an allegation of human rights violation. The NHRC will continue advocacy for safe access justice for marginalized groups. In addition, the NHRC will institute strategic advocacy for law reforms, conduct legal analysis, and review to inform advocacy for reforms and the meaningful participation of marginalized groups.

SP4: Entrench and promote practices of human rights principles, norms, and standards by State and Public Institutions, including the law enforcement agencies (LEAs)

NHRC plans to build the capacity of the duty bearers, i.e., State and public institutions, including LEAs, as well as the District Human Rights (Promotion and Protection) Committees (DHRC), Human Rights Focal Desks, and the panel lawyers of NHRC on human rights concepts, principles, norms, and standards. It is expected that the State and public institutions as well as other bodies, will deliberately mainstream human rights-based approaches in their processes and operations. The focus shift to human rights-based development would lead to better business working environments and improved service delivery, particularly by government agencies. In addition, evidence-driven human rights programming and interventions will ensure that human rights violations are anticipated and averted before they even occur.

The NHRC will undertake the review of laws, policies, and programmes at national and local levels to ascertain their level of compliance with the international human rights standards and principles either on its own motion or upon request by duty bearers or rights holders. To give effect to existing legislation, policies, and programmes or make changes to existing ones, or propose new ones, the advocacy by NHRC is expected to contribute to the reform of discriminatory laws, policies, and harmful practices against women and children, and vulnerable groups. The sustained dialogues and consultations are expected to positively translate to increased uptake of its recommendations and advisories by the relevant duty bearers, i.e., the public institutions. Furthermore, on matters of compliance, the interventions of NHRC will lead to enhanced State compliance with national, regional, and international human rights principles and standards and fulfilment of obligations, including timely reporting; increased implementation of

recommendations of treaty bodies; withdrawal of unnecessary reservations and enhanced participation in international/regional human rights fora.

The NHRC will continue to engage in the UN treaty bodies, UPR reporting, review, and follow-up on sustainable and effective implementation. It shall also sustain engagements with other State and Non-State actors geared towards achieving compliance with national, regional, and international human rights obligations. These engagements will also provide forums for dialogues and follow-ups on the NHRC's recommendations among various duty bearers and provide platforms for capacity strengthening. The NHRC will also engage in advocacy for ratifying new treaties and implementing existing ones on human rights.

SP5: Secure appropriate redress and accountability for human rights violations and respect for the rule of law

The Commission has introduced an 'Electronic Filing System' to expedite the activities, and a Digital Complaint Management System with a database has been developed. NHRC will continue receiving allegations of human rights violations directly through its offices, based at the Head Office in Dhaka, and all its county-based regional offices as well as online and handled with the digitalized complaints management system. The NHRC will also ensure that it deploys assistive technology to support persons with disabilities, including staff of the Commission and people. As part of human rights education, the NHRC will endeavour to set up an e-training portal that's accessible via multiple platforms and devices. The complaints of the allegation of human rights violations are being investigated and recommendations forwarded to relevant agencies of the Government for appropriate steps. The digitalised system is also expected to help NHRC to institute quality management systems provide better services to the people in realizing human rights, provide redress to human rights violations, end discrimination and exclusion, reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities including discrimination, gender-based violence, violence against women, and ensure transparency and accountability of the institution. This expects to improve data availability on human rights issues that would contribute to the human rights monitoring and reporting of NHRC at the national and international level, including to the Human Rights Council (UPR) and the UN treaty bodies.

SP6: Address the impacts of climate change from a human rights perspective

The NHRC shall enhance respecting, protecting, and fulfilling human rights to address environmental and climate change challenges and pursue sustainable development. More specifically, the Commission will promote human rights perspectives in mitigation

activities against the adverse effect of climate change to ensure a just and sustainable society. The NHRC will also strengthen advocacy for ensuring a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of current and future generations. The NHRC will continue advocacy to integrate human rights in environmental and climate change laws and policies; and press for the inclusion of civil society in environmental decision-making processes, access to information, and effective remedies for victims. In addition, the Commission will assist human rights mechanisms in addressing environmental and climate change issues; advocate on behalf of environment defenders; and conduct research and advocacy to address human rights harms caused by environmental degradation, particularly to groups in vulnerable situations. The NHRC will strengthen advocacy for access to effective remedies for climate change-induced loss and damage to those segments of the population already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenous or minority status and disability, national or social origin, birth or other status.

SP7: Advance sustainable development through promoting responsible business practices and safeguarding human rights from the negative impact of business operations, workers' rights and protection of the migrant workers and their families

The NHRC will continue advocacy to enable the State and Business to take adequate measures to protect all persons from human rights harms caused by businesses; to ensure that their own activities, including activities conducted in partnership with the private sector, respect and protect human rights; and where such harms do occur to ensure effective remedies. The NHRC will also promote an accountability culture for businesses for their activities that affects climate change and involve them in mitigation and adaptation efforts with full respect for human rights.

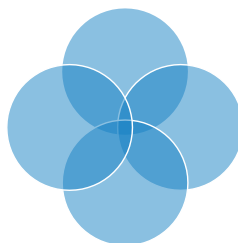
The NHRC will work strategically with the State actors, non-State actors /businesses, civil society organizations, and other key stakeholders to promote and integrate the UNGPs and integrate human rights into national legal and policy frameworks relevant to business and other economic actors and companies practice. In addition, the NHRC will advocate, support, convene and participate in governmental and multi-stakeholder processes to enable the Government of Bangladesh to develop and strengthen standards, policies, legislations and practices in this area and enter into strategic partnerships where appropriate with the Government/State institutions, businesses and other actors to implement the UNGPs. With this backdrop, NHRC plans to develop a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights to implement UNGPs in Bangladesh, engaging the strategic stakeholders.

The NHRC will also focus its interventions for the protection of the rights of the migrant-workers and their families including migration cost, irregular migration, safety, security and wages of the migrant workers.

SP8: Enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the Commission

The NHRC, Bangladesh is still accorded 'B' status by the Global Alliance on National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), a global network of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). This network examines the NHRIs and seeks to understand how much the NHRIs are in compliance with the Paris Principles. Based on the results of its assessment, the GANHRI accords the UN member States A, B, or C status. NHRC will continue its efforts to upgrade to 'A' status, i.e., fully compliant with the Paris Principles and participate in the work of the United Nations Human Rights Council and its mechanisms. In doing so, NHRC will interact closely and support the State and other CSOs towards achieving compliance. In addition, the NHRC will seek to establish and strengthen strategic partnerships with new and existing development partners towards further diversification of its funding sources. Further, the NHRC will review and strengthen its performance management system at the policy, management, and operational levels. The NHRC is developing and reviewing its internal functions, policies, manuals, and procedures. This will ensure proper and consistent policies that enhance effective service delivery and the NHRC brand as an independent statutory institution.

Further, the NHRC will also seek to review and institutionalize its research unit, and knowledge management system towards establishing a specialized resource centre for research and dissemination of human rights knowledge, integrated and enhanced learning, planning, and retention of valuable human rights information is generated daily. The commission also seeks to enhance its monitoring and evaluation system; review and institutionalize its knowledge management system; and strengthen its specialized resource centre catering to research and dissemination of human rights knowledge to sustain a learning culture across the organisation.



3.5 WAY FORWARD

The NHRC is expanding its outreach in all administrative divisions by introducing the District Human Rights (Prevention & Protection) Committees reaching out more and more, and giving a voice to the people who need it the most. This is a strategic entry point for promoting and protecting human rights at the local level, ensuring partnership with local administration as well as local people.

Poverty, pervasive inequalities, and structural discrimination are human rights violations and among the greatest global challenges of our time. Now, the COVID-19, an unprecedented crisis, has become the worst health, human and socio-economic crisis of our lifetime, spreading to all countries. It has adversely affected a wide range of basic human rights across the globe. The pandemic has emerged new, adverse trends and exaggerated human rights challenges and has human rights implications for civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. Although the NHRC has been able to make timely and much-needed interventions during the crisis, COVID-19.

NHRC perceives that it is an opportunity to build a more equal and sustainable society with forward-looking planning that centres on human rights considerations in minimizing the threat of rights violations during any future crisis or any other state of emergency. With this context, not just the COVID-19 recovery plans but also in response to any future pandemics or other global emergencies, it has to be ensured that all priorities are set and measures implemented do not erode human rights. Human rights must be upheld at all times, including during times of international emergency such as a global pandemic. As such, the NHRC plans to prioritise and strategize its future measures, not keeping in mind the COVID-19 recovery plans but also a preparedness for any future pandemics or other global emergencies.

3.6 Implementation Framework of the Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan	Key Strategies	Key Activities	5 Years Outcome	KPI	Target Partners
<p>SP: 1 Promote a culture of human rights and fundamental freedom in society</p>	<p>i. Integrate human rights principles, norms and standards into practice. Aling human rights agenda with the achievement of SDGs and UPR recommendations.</p> <p>ii.a Enhance people's awareness and education on human rights through campaigns and advocacy platforms.</p>	<p>i. Develop a National Action Plan (NAP) on Human Rights and follow up on the effective implementation.</p> <p>ii.a Promote human rights education and awareness programmes.</p> <p>ii.b Integrate human rights principles, norms and standards in formal and informal learning institutions.</p>	<p>i. National Action Plan (NAP) on Human Rights is in place and integrated into practice.</p> <p>ii. The practice of human rights is strengthened among the State agencies and institutions.</p>	<p>i. A National Action Plan (NAP) on human rights is formulated and adopted by the government.</p> <p>ii. The incidents of human rights violations reduced.</p>	<p>Community and State structures, District Human Rights Committees (DHRCs), HRDs, and formal and informal institutions to integrate human rights into learning institutions.</p>

Strategic Plan	Key Strategies	Key Activities	5 Years Outcome	KPI	Target Partners
<p>SP: 2 Promote and protect the rights, advance-ment, and interests of women and children by creating all favourable conditions through the following gender main-streaming approach</p>	<p>i.a Raising Awareness of Women and Children rights and practicing gender mainstreaming during any intervention.</p> <p>ii.b Advocacy for legislative and policy reform and practices in line with the international human rights standards for the</p>	<p>i.Awareness campaign on women and child rights and gender equality; ii.a Conduct research on the issues of women and child rights.</p> <p>ii.b Database maintained to enhance response efforts to violence against women and children.</p>	<p>i.Improved rights and accessibility of the women and children to enjoy their economic, social, and cultural rights.</p> <p>ii.Laws enacted and policies adopted to address systemic discrimination on gender equality and empowerment and child rights.</p>	<p>i.Increased capacity of women to seek redress of the alleged human rights violations. i.a. Increased participation and inclusion of women in decision making platforms at the local and central level bodies.</p> <p>ii.Laws and policies in place to address systemic discrimination on gender equality and women empowerment and child rights.</p>	<p>State structure, government offices at the national and local, Women's organizations, NGOs, CBOs, Private Sectors, Media, Academia, Youth Groups, Development Partners, UN Agencies. etc.</p>

Strategic Plan	Key Strategies	Key Activities	5 Years Outcome	KPI	Target Partners
SP: 3 Promote and uphold the rights of left-behind communities, particularly ethnic and religious minorities, gender diverse communi	<p>promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women.</p> <p>i. Advocacy for access to justice to address discrimination and violence on the ethnic, religious minorities and other vulnerable groups.</p> <p>ii. Strengthen redress mechanism for the</p>	<p>ii.c Advocacy with the relevant authorities for the enactment/ amendment of legislation and policy reform and practices.</p> <p>vi. Capacity development of the relevant stakeholders to promote gender equality and women empowerment.</p> <p>i. Advocacy with the relevant authorities for the enactment of the Anti-discrimination legislation in line with the international human rights standards.</p> <p>ii.a Database developed to enhance response efforts to</p>	<p>i. Legislation and policies in place to address discrimination.</p> <p>ii. Improved rights and accessibility of the left-behind and</p>	<p>i. Anti-discrimination Act in place and practiced.</p> <p>ii.a Left-behind and most vulnerable people has</p>	<p>Left behind and most vulnerable communities and various government offices at the national and local levels. In addition, the Commission will also</p>

Strategic Plan	Key Strategies	Key Activities	5 Years Outcome	KPI	Target Partners
<p>ties, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and other vulnerable communities and CHT affairs</p>	<p>violation of the rights of the left behind people.</p> <p>iii. Strengthened access to economic, social and cultural rights and entitlements by the left-behind and most vulnerable people.</p>	<p>violence against vulnerable groups; ii.b NHRC provides effective redress of the alleged human rights violations.</p> <p>iii. Increased capacity of left behind and most vulnerable groups/communities to claim their rights.</p>	<p>most vulnerable communities to enjoy their economic, social, and cultural rights.</p>	<p>access to effective redress to alleged human rights violations; ii.b Left-behind and most vulnerable people enjoyed their economic, social, and cultural rights.</p>	<p>make a relationship with informal institutions, i.e., NGOs, CBOs</p>
<p>SP: 4 Entrench and promote practices of human rights principles, norms, and standards by State and public</p>	<p>i. Engagement with key stakeholders i.e. State and Public institutions and other entities.</p>	<p>i. Capacity development of the State and Public institutions including the law enforcement agencies and Human Rights Focal Desks on human rights principles, norms and standards.</p> <p>i.a. Capacity development of the District Human Rights</p>	<p>i. State and public institutions prioritise human rights practices.</p> <p>i.a. District Human Rights Committees (DHRC) are effectively contributing to the promotion</p>	<p>i. State and Public institutions dealt in line with the international human rights standard.</p> <p>i.a District Human Rights Committees (DHRC) are effectively</p>	<p>State organizations and Public institutions and offices at the national and local levels. District Human</p>

Strategic Plan	Key Strategies	Key Activities	5 Years Outcome	KPI	Target Partners
<p>institutions, including the law enforcement agencies (LEAs)</p> <p>SP: 5 Secure appropriate redress and accountability for human</p>	<p>ii. Identification of issues of national interest aimed at pre-empting human rights violation.</p>	<p>(Promotion and Protection) Committees (DHRC) and the panel lawyers of NHRC on human rights principles, norms and standards and their roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>ii. Evidence-based research on specific issues of national interest aimed at pre-empting human rights violations.</p> <p>ii.b Monitor State compliance with international human rights standards by engaging with the UPR and treaty bodies reporting.</p>	<p>and protection of human rights.</p> <p>ii. Human rights reporting to the Human Rights Council (UPR) and UN treaty bodies strengthened.</p>	<p>operationalized;</p> <p>i.b State and Public institutions, Human Rights Focal Desks effectively contributed to the international human rights reporting.</p> <p>ii. State and other stakeholders reporting to the Human Rights Council (UPR) and UN treaty bodies.</p> <p>i. The ratio of redressal of allegation of human rights violation increased.</p>	<p>Rights Committees (DHRCs), Human Rights Focal Desks in the ministries and in the Divisional Commissioners Office and DC Commissioners Office.</p> <p>NHRC, DHRC, complainants</p>

Strategic Plan	Key Strategies	Key Activities	5 Years Outcome	KPI	Target Partners
<p>rights violations and respect for the rule of law.</p> <p>SP: 6 Address the impacts of climate change from a human rights perspective</p>	<p>ii.Promote the use of appropriate mediation and conciliation mechanisms.</p> <p>i.Advocacy for integrating human rights in environmental and climate change laws and policies.</p> <p>ii. Advocacy for access to effective remedies for climate change-induced loss and damage.</p>	<p>ii.a Promote the use of appropriate dispute resolution mechanisms.</p> <p>i.Advocacy with the relevant authorities for integrating human rights in environmental and climate change laws and policies.</p> <p>ii.Promote human rights in climate change related initiatives and actions.</p> <p>ii.b Advocacy for access to effective remedies for climate change-induced loss and damage.</p>	<p>ii. Increased use of mediation and conciliation mechanisms in resolving human rights complaints.</p> <p>i. Environmental and climate policies and plans increasingly compliant with human rights principles and standards.</p> <p>ii. The climate-vulnerable people and communities have adequate knowledge and capacity to cope with the impact of climate change.</p>	<p>ii. Rate of mediation and conciliation increased in resolving human rights complaints.</p> <p>i. Environmental and climate policies and plans are compliant with human rights principles and standards.</p> <p>ii. Ratio of climate-vulnerable people and communities have adequate knowledge and capacity to cope with the impact of climate change.</p>	<p>Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief. The Commission will also continue to work with other development partners, NGOs and CBOs</p>

Strategic Plan	Key Strategies	Key Activities	5 Years Outcome	KPI	Target Partners
<p>SP: 7 Advance sustainable development through promoting responsible business practices and safeguarding human rights from the negative impact of business operations, workers' rights and migrant workers</p>	<p>i. Advocacy to protect human rights from business harms and promote and implement the UNGPs.</p> <p>ii. Advocacy for corporate responsibility to respect human rights.</p>	<p>i. Lobby with the relevant stakeholders to protect and redress human rights from business harms.</p> <p>ii. Capacity development of the stakeholders on the UNGPs.</p> <p>iii. Provide technical support to address business-related human rights violations to the</p> <p>iv. Develop a National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human</p>	<p>i. Non-judicial mechanisms held business and other economic actors accountable for rights abuses and provide remedies to victims.</p> <p>ii. National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights is in place and integrated into practice.</p>	<p>i. Number of non-judicial mechanisms increased to hold business and other economic actors accountable for rights abuses and provide remedies to victims.</p> <p>ii. A National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights is formulated and adopted by the government.</p>	<p>Concerned government authorities and corporate bodies at the national and local levels. Regional and global partners for peer-learning process and south-south cooperation as well as UN agencies and CSOs.</p>

Strategic Plan	Key Strategies	Key Activities	5 Years Outcome	KPI	Target Partners
<p>SP: 8 Enhance efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the Commission</p>	<p>i. Organizational development in line with the international standard (Paris Principles).</p>	<p>Rights.business entities.</p> <p>i. Increase public accessibility.</p> <p>ii. Enhance human resources and introduce a performance appraisal culture.</p> <p>iii. Leveraging on digital technology for programmes and operations.</p> <p>iv. Improve visibility and branding of the National Human Rights Commission by making best use of the NHRC digital platform.</p>	<p>i. Improved access to services, information and materials relating to human rights issues.</p> <p>ii. Improved staff performance, retention, and general well-being.</p> <p>iii. Digital technology leveraged in NHRC's programmes and operations.</p> <p>iv. Enhanced public awareness and understanding of the NHRC.</p>	<p>i. Number of people accessed to human rights related services, information and materials.</p> <p>ii. % of staff performance, retention, and general well-being improved.</p> <p>iii. Number of technology used in NHRC's programmes and operations.</p> <p>iv. People's awareness and understanding of the NHRC enhanced.</p>	<p>NHRC, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs and regional and global partners, forums, NHRI associations at the regional and global level and peers.</p>

ANNEXURE: 1

PESTLE Analysis of Bangladesh

A broad Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, and Environmental (PESTLE) scan was undertaken. PESTLE is a strategic analysis tool used to identify the macro forces facing an organization to appreciate the dynamics that will either enhance or impede implementing the strategic plan.

Political

The politics of Bangladesh is based on the system of a Parliamentary representative multi-party democracy where the Prime Minister is the Head of the Government. Champions of human rights in Parliament are needed to advocate for the accountability of the perpetrators of the human rights violations and engage in the work of promotion and protection of human rights.

Economic

Bangladesh has become one of the fastest growing economies in the world for over a decade, which has, unfortunately, in many cases, resulted in a reported increase of human rights violations. This necessitates increased human rights oversight and redress for the violaitons. Further, the National Human Rights Commission ought to engage with private sector entities towards improved education and awareness of business and human rights.

The government has developed and is implementing plans towards development and improved service delivery. These provide an opportunity for the NHRC to leverage to advance the progressive realisation of economic, social, and cultural rights as well as the adoption of a human rights-based approach in all developmental initiatives and utilisation of public resources at both national and county levels.

Bangladesh is part of the global village, and its economy could be subject to international trade trends, including money laundering, human trafficking, and smuggling of humans. Therefore, the Commission seeks to act for a human rights based approach in migration governance and respect human rights in international and regional trade activities.

Social

Bangladesh has diversity in terms of race, tribe, creed, religion, and culture. However, this diversity comes with many opportunities and the danger of stigma/discrimination and negative ethnicity. Therefore, the NHRC seeks to proactively act to protect the ethnic and religious minorities and other vulnerable groups while leveraging diversity opportunities. The literacy rate in Bangladesh has risen remarkably over the past decade. The NHRC has the opportunity to leverage educational literacy to promote human rights work, education, awareness, and training, and include human rights in the formal and informal learning curriculum.

Technological

Bangladesh made remarkable progress in the field of digitalization. Information & Communication Technology (ICT) and increased service provisioning have opened communication and connectivity access to a large number of the population across the country. E-governance and network governance have witnessed ministries and service-oriented organizations use online instruments to deliver services. Websites of public sector organizations have been providing easier access to public services. Digital growth has created space for individuals, organizations, government institutions, and private companies to communicate. Access to social media communication, both national and global, shifts power from gate-keepers in traditional media to citizens and users themselves. Therefore, there is a great opportunity to leverage on the various digital platforms and especially the use of social media to enhance human rights education, reporting, accountability, and advocacy.

However, with time, the number of cybercrimes in Bangladesh is increasing despite the laws regulating cybersecurity being framed by the government. Youths are at the forefront of social media adoption. A section of social media users posts offensive and obscene comments and also drag people's personal life and family life onto social media platforms. Women and children are subject to harassment and abuse in the platform. The NHRC views that Digital Security Act 2018 should only be used to combat cybercrimes, strengthen cyber security systems, ensure user protection and prevent the spread of racism; extremism; terrorist propaganda; and hatred against religious or ethnic minorities and sexual harassment through social media, print media or any other electronic media.

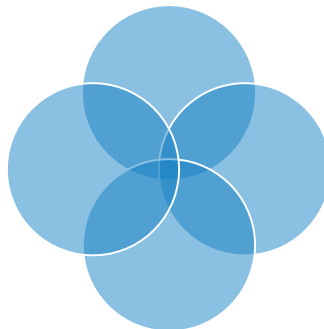
Legal

Bangladesh has a very progressive Constitution, robust laws, and policies that would fundamentally promote and protect human rights if implemented to the fullest. Achieving judicial independence is crucial for gaining public confidence in the legal system of any country. However, in recent years, judicial reforms have increased the independence manifolds in Bangladesh. In addition, there is a window of opportunity for the NHRC to recourse to the High Court Division of the Supreme Court to assert and expand human rights.

The NHRC has various quasi-judicial powers, including summoning human rights violation perpetrators. NHRC using these powers to provide redress to the complainants of the human rights violations.

Environmental

There is increased global attention toward environmental conservation, awareness, and an intimate relationship between human rights and the environment. This is because it is now beyond dispute that climate change caused by human activity negatively impacts the full enjoyment of human rights. Climate change has profound impacts on a wide variety of human rights, including the rights to life, self-determination, development, food, health, water and sanitation, and housing. Therefore, there is a need for the Commission to be part of the environmental conservation discourse by engaging the environmental actors and also enhancing its capacity to handle environmental justice. There are also opportunities for engaging in global warming action, especially in addressing human rights issues through administrative actions, policy, and legislation.



ANNEXURE: 2

NHRC's Internal and External Environment SWOT Analysis

A review of NHRC's immediate environment was conducted using a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis by the Chairman and Members of the Commission and Staff. A SWOT analysis helps an organization to identify its internal strengths and weaknesses as well as its potential opportunities and threats. The NHRC will build on its strengths, utilise opportunities and endeavour to mitigate the effects of threats and weaknesses. The following table presents a summary of these factors as well as the strategic responses to those situations.

Table : SWOT Analysis

Factors	Strategic Response
Strengths	
Independent statutory authority	- The NHRC can implement its mandate without fear or favour with full utilization of its Independent statutory status
Skilled and committed staff	- Develop, realign and utilize staff for effective, efficient & timely implementation of programs and administrative functions
Strong and strategic partnerships	- Promote partnerships for resource mobilization and collaboration in the implementation of the NHRC's mandate
Credibility and good track record	- Leverage for increased collaboration and service delivery
Adequate financial resources to fulfil all mandated functions	- NHRC can take proactive initiatives to implement its planned activities with the allocated fund.
Appointment by Deputation (or on a temporary basis)	- The NHRC can appoint Secretary, and directors from the government (public administration) on a deputation or temporary basis. At present, NHRC has been confident to promote its competent permanent employees at higher levels up to Director. This approach should be continued to address the concern raised regarding deputation from the government as well as a result in competent, dedicated permanent employees who will continue to the institutional development with the institutional memory and responsibility.
Recent initiative for the increase of local presence	- NHRC has formed District Human Rights Committees in 64 districts of the country with representation from the local administration, law enforcement agencies, educational institutions, CSOs, etc. This is considered as an innovative partnership for better coordination with the aim of mitigating human rights violations.

Factors	Strategic Response
Weaknesses	
Lack of adequate human resources compared to the functional responsibilities of the Commission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NHRC needs to increase its human resources; - NHRC needs a strong 'Research Unit' and 'Monitoring, Fact-finding and Investigation Unit' to uphold its functionality.
Lack of adequate motivation of the officers and staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NHRC needs to formulate a sound human resource policy, especially by addressing appropriate benefits and compensation packages in line with similar organizations.
Poor logistics support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase logistics supports
Poor visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop, adopt and implement a communication/branding strategy
Limited local presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion strategy – Headoffice and local level - Leverage on ICT infrastructure and platforms
Lack of monitoring and evaluation of NHRC's work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The NHRC needs to introduce a system of monitoring and evaluation
Opportunities	
Devolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mainstream human rights issues in devolution policies, laws, and administrative practices - Utilize the various devolution mechanisms to advance human rights through parliament and local government institutions
SDG and Development priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mainstream human rights in achieving the SDGs of all types of rights and utilize opportunities to influence policies to advance not only economic and social rights but also civil, political, and cultural rights and demonstrate the benefit of human rights in the attainment of Government development agenda.
Enhanced mandate by legislation and directives/executive orders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Align the National Commission's programs with the new mandates
Regional and International reporting mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuous engagement with the accountability and reporting mechanisms - Follow-up on the implementation of recommendations with various state organs - Document cases and seek redress in these mechanisms.
Referral partners, national and regional human rights networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase advocacy and opportunities to collect complaints and provide redress - Build institutional capacity while leveraging on ICT
Threats	
Increasing culture of impunity and lack of accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Utilize strategic advisory briefs and diplomatic channels to lobby and advance for the National Commissions agenda - Ensure perpetrator accountability
Insecurity of staff, information, petitioners, and HRDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and operationalize NHRC's security management policy and budget - Advocate for the implementation of Human Rights policy and action plan - Lobby for review of data protection and HRD policy

Annexure: 3

Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis is the process of identifying the organisation's stakeholders and their interests, assessing their influence, or how these impact the organisation, to formulate strategies for managing relationships with them. At the strategic level, an organisation may conduct a broader review of stakeholder relationships to inform the strategy-making and objective-setting process. Therefore, a stakeholder analysis was undertaken to gather and analyse qualitative information to determine whose interests should be taken when developing and implementing this Strategic Plan. The table below presents the stakeholder analysis.

Stakeholders	NHRC's expectation	Stakeholder's expectation
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respect the human rights of people; - Promote and protect human rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Proactively acts in situations where human rights are violated; - Promote human rights;
Government actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhanced collaboration - Sharing information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen the scope and functions of the Commission; - Undertake joint interventions; - Capacity development;
Law enforcement agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respect the rule of law - Integrate human rights in their work - Collaborate with NHRC - Clarity on policing roles and accountability mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity development; - Referral of cases; - Joint investigations; - Advisories on human rights issues; - Redress of human rights violations;
Non-State actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create human rights awareness at various levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity building;
(NGO/CSO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Receive, resolve and refer appropriate complaints to NHRC - Share information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhanced collaboration; - Refer appropriate cases; - Respond to and redress human rights violation;
Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unbiased/accurate reporting on human rights; - Credible information sharing and reporting; - Increased investigative journalism; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity development on human rights reporting - Continuous engagement; - Respond to and redress human rights violations; - Timely response to media inquiries;
Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compliance with human rights standards and principles - Accountability - Facilitating public-private partnership to promote and protect human rights; - Corporate responsibilities to respect human rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective and efficient service delivery; - advocacy human rights policies for corporate sector;
Development Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued technical and financial support - Timely disbursement of funds - Positive results and impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timely/Quality implementation/reporting on activities; - Accountability for allocated resources;

ANNEXURE: 4

Implementation Arrangements Governance Mechanism

Governance Mechanism Members of the Commission and the thematic committees convene regularly and are responsible for setting the strategic direction of the Commission and ensuring the delivery of Strategic Plans. The Commission is also responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient use of Commission resources in delivering the Strategic Plan. The Commission is supported internally in its function by finance and audit-related activities. The Commission is intended to review performance against strategic and operational plans and receives assurances on the use of resources, financial performance, and business risk. Strategic Objectives-Collaborative The NHRC will collaborate with other stakeholders to promote and protect human rights in Bangladesh.

- a. Collaboration with Government Agencies and State Institutions NHRC will establish and maintain relationships with government functionaries at the national level (i.e., Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs), and both rural and urban local government bodies to make the strategic objectives well-advertised and effective.
- b. Collaboration with the Academic Institutions The NHRC will collaborate with law schools to establish 'Law Clinic' to promote public interest law programmes involving human rights education among faculty members and students as a part of their academic curriculum. Collaboration with Civil Society
- c. Organizations (CSOs) and citizens groups/platforms and media The NHRC will establish collaboration with the civil society organizations (CSOs) and groups/platforms and media and take initiatives to make human rights education and awareness programmes more accessible, effective, and commensurate with the needs of the target groups and wider dissemination. Areas of such cooperation and collaboration will be identified through adequate research, meetings, and exchanging views.
- d. Collaboration with International Bodies The NHRC will Continue to share and exchange ideas with internationally recognized legal aid providers and/or institutions and incorporate new ideas as appropriate into the legal aid system of Bangladesh to make it comprehensive and dynamic.

Resource Mobilization and Requirements

The NHRC, as a State institution, is primarily funded by the Government of Bangladesh. The Government financed personnel emoluments and operational costs. The development partner, i.e., UNDP, has been supporting to professionalize the work of the NHRC through designated programme activities, e.g., strengthened the capacity of the NHRC to deliver on its mandate; supporting steady progress in complaints handling; investigation, and mediation; developing extensive media contacts, and helping to produce a wide range of research studies and policy papers on key human rights issues. Both programmatic and operating costs are expected to increase substantially during the strategic period to enable the NHRC to fulfil its mandate and fully implement this strategic plan.

Risk Management

The NHRC will adopt a Risk Management Policy that will be used to guide its overall risk management approach. In addition, the National Commission will identify the key risks which could hinder the implementation of this strategic plan and proposed mitigation measures as enumerated in the following table:

Table : Risk Analysis

Risk and its importance	Mitigation Measure
High levels of public expectation of the NHRC, including the expanding mandate	- Communication strategy to manage public expectations
Inadequate funding to ensure implementation of the Strategic plan towards the fulfilment of NCHR's mandate	- Lobby for adequate allocation of funds by the State - Strategic partnerships and complementary working arrangements
Personal security threats to the Chairman, Members, and staff of NHRC may result from the sensitivity of human rights work	- Implement policies addressing Staff security, motivation, and well-being
Information security and management due to the sensitive nature of information obtained and maintained for the work	- Information security management
Lack of collaboration from key stakeholders, especially where reports are deemed adversarial/d	- Enhanced stakeholder management

The NHRC will proactively monitor these and any other emerging risks to the implementation of the Strategic Plan and put in place adequate mitigation measures to address the risks.

ANNEXURE: 5

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning System

The NHRC will realign its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) results framework with the new strategic plan 2022-2027 aspirations to enable effective M&E of its programmes and operations. NHRC will strengthen performance data collection mechanisms to ensure that indicator data on NHRC work is systematically collected, stored, and analysed. Key performance indicators (KPIs) will be developed in a participatory process to incorporate different perspectives and experiences of the staff.

The NHRC will enhance staff capacity in M&E to enable them to deliver on their duties in their respective areas of expertise. The Commission will also plan to enhance the documentation and use of lessons learnt and good practices from the M&E process for benchmarking or future replication. This will be done through periodic reports and reviews. Such M&E and Learning System will provide key information on planning and implementation and therefore assist the Chairman, Members and staff in making evidence-based decisions in their day-to-day work.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategic Plan Implementation Implementation of the strategic plan will be closely monitored to determine status and establish the need for amendments in light of a changing internal and/or external operating environment. Monitoring, follow-up, and control systems will be set up comprising of progress reports, review meetings and reports, and financial reports. In addition, the Chairman and Members of the Commission will receive and review progress reports indicating overall progress on the plan.

Implementation of the strategic plan will be closely monitored to determine status and also establish the need for amendments in light of a changing internal and/or external operating environment. Monitoring, follow up and control systems will be set up comprising of progress reports, review meetings, and financial reports. In addition, the Chairman and Members of the Commission will receive and review progress reports indicating overall progress made on a plan from the Headquarters. Monitoring Process Monitoring of the

work of the National Commission will be done at two (2) key levels:

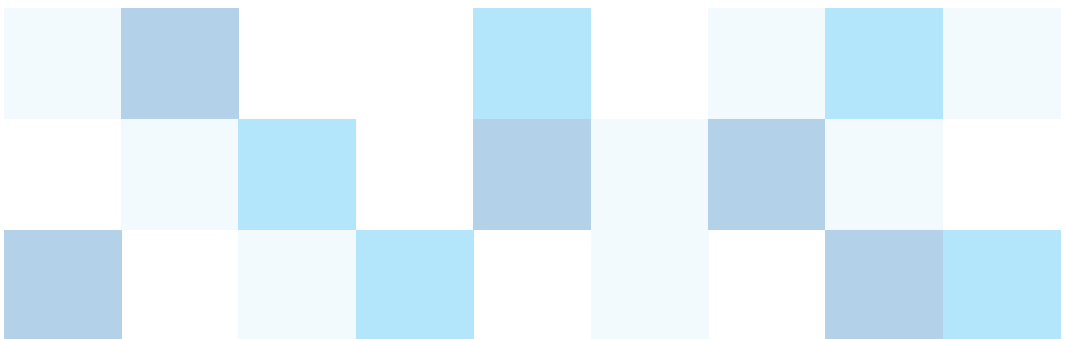
- a. Performance monitoring- This will systematically track the progress of activities against the targets, allocate resources and implement timeframes.
- b. Compliance monitoring- This will track compliance with the set policies, procedures, and Standards in implementing the NHRC's work.

Evaluation will seek to assess the extent to which its set objectives are met and the impact made according to strategic objectives. The strategic plan will be evaluated based on the 'theory of change'. Criteria for the evaluation and related projects and programmes will be based on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the Commission's interventions.

A midterm review of the Strategic Plan will be undertaken to examine achievements over the first two years against expected results. It will facilitate the review of strategies, outcomes, and indicators to inform evidence-based adjustments. An end-term evaluation will be conducted to determine the overall impact and outcomes against set goals and results. This evaluation will feed into the revision of the next strategic plan.

Roles and Responsibilities in Monitoring and Evaluation The Chairman and Members of the Commission supervise and direct the work of the Commission and therefore have key Monitoring and Evaluation roles. In addition, the Members of the Commission will also monitor programmatic work directly as Conveners of the regional offices.

The Head office will ensure that the programs and services offered to contribute to NHRC's vision, mission and, reflect the priorities and also monitor the day-to-day delivery of the programs and services of the organization to maintain or improve quality through the M&E department, Heads of Departments and Regional Offices.



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