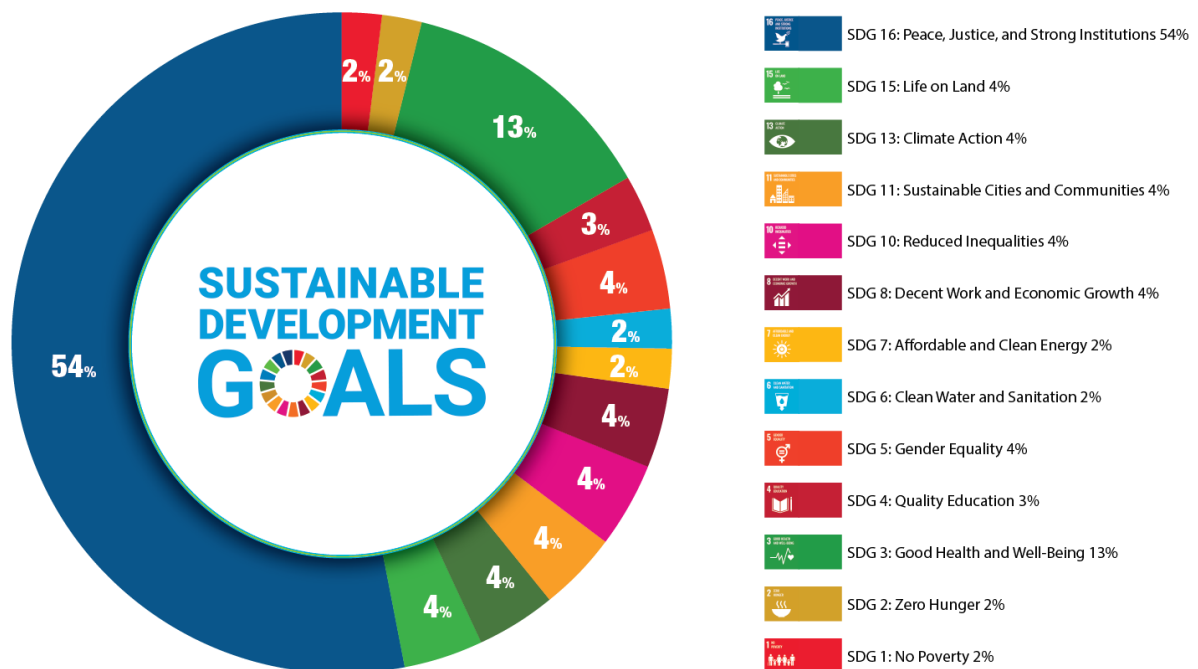# Initiatives on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Alignment 2017 - 2022

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) is the accredited national chapter of the Berlin-based Transparency International, a global civil society organization leading the fight against corruption. TIB envisions a Bangladesh free from corruption in government, politics, business, civil society, and the lives of its citizens. The mission of TIB is to catalyze a strong social movement to demand accountability, strengthen institutions, and establish an efficient and transparent system of governance, politics, and business. This report highlights TIB's initiatives aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from 2017 to 2022, focusing on three streams: Research, Advocacy, and Citizen Engagement.

Summary of Key Initiatives

TIB'S RESEARCH WORK ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions 54%

SDG 15: Life on Land 4%

SDG 13: Climate Action 4%

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities 4%

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities 4%

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth 4%

SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy 2%

SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation 2%

SDG 5: Gender Equality 4%

SDG 4: Quality Education 3%

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being 13%

SDG 2: Zero Hunger 2%

SDG 1: No Poverty 2%

1. Research Conducted:

TIB conducted **62** research studies on various governance challenges and issues related to SDGs, including health sector response during the COVID-19 pandemic, education sector irregularities, sustainable forest management, and renewable energy projects. These research initiatives provided valuable insights and data to support evidence-based advocacy and policy recommendations.

2. Advocacy Initiatives:

TIB actively engaged in policy advocacy based on their research findings. The organization called for transparency, accountability, and good governance in various sectors, including health, education, climate action, RMG, gender equality, and anti-corruption efforts. TIB's advocacy efforts aimed to influence policy decisions, hold authorities accountable, and drive positive changes to achieve SDGs. In the reporting period, TIB issued **40** policy stances on peace, justice, and strong institutions; **4** on governance in the medical sector; **5** on quality education; **3** on ensuring women's participation in state functions; **4** on clean energy advocacy; **5** on labour participation and decent work; and **4** on issues related to sustainable living.

3. Citizen Engagement Initiatives:

TIB's Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) and Youth Engagement and Support (YES) groups played a vital role in citizen engagement initiatives. They worked at the grassroots level to raise awareness, promote inclusiveness, and fight corruption. CCCs were instrumental in improving health and family planning services, while YES groups focused on promoting transparency, access to information, and anti-corruption efforts. In reporting period, more than **9.5 lakh** citizens were directly engaged in TIB's anti-corruption efforts as a result of Civic Engagement initiatives.

4. Youth Empowerment:

TIB's initiatives to mobilize youth through YES and YES Friends groups demonstrated the organization's commitment to empowering the younger generation in the fight against corruption and in promoting good governance. By training and involving thousands of youth volunteers, TIB fostered a sense of responsibility and ownership among the future leaders of Bangladesh.

5. Partnerships and Collaborations:

TIB recognized the importance of partnerships and collaborations in achieving the SDGs. The organization worked closely with various stakeholders, including government agencies, civil

society organizations, media, and international partners, to amplify their efforts and ensure a collective impact.

Through these initiatives, TIB demonstrated its dedication to promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance in Bangladesh to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. By conducting research, engaging citizens, and advocating for policy reforms, TIB has contributed significantly to building a more equitable and sustainable society in the country.

Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being
Number of Research: 6

COVID-19 and Governance Challenges
- COVID-19 Health Sector Response: Governance Challenges and Impact
- Tackling Coronavirus Pandemic: Governance Challenges in COVID-19 Vaccine Management (Completed in June 2021)
- Governance Challenges in Tackling COVID-19 Crisis: Inclusion and Transparency (Completed in April 2022)

Advocacy Initiatives:

Policy Advocacy and Engagement (COVID-19): TIB engaged in policy advocacy based on their research into COVID-19's governance challenges. Their efforts led to substantial improvements in the health sector, including streamlining vaccine procurement, establishing COVID-19 testing labs at local levels, implementing strict accountability mechanisms, and exposing the suppression of critical information.

Promoting Inclusion in COVID-19 Response: TIB conducted research highlighting governance challenges related to inclusion and transparency in the COVID-19 crisis. They advocated for policies and practices that ensure equitable access to healthcare services and information.

Citizen Engagement Initiatives:

TIB's citizen engagement initiatives have played a pivotal role in involving communities and individuals in the pursuit of good governance. In the healthcare sector, TIB's Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) have been instrumental in addressing governance challenges, particularly in private healthcare. These committees have worked diligently to engage communities in reporting irregularities or misconduct in private healthcare facilities, thus promoting transparency and ethical practices. Furthermore, TIB's initiatives have extended to community inclusion in the COVID-19 response, ensuring marginalized populations have access to essential healthcare services and information. They have also advocated for greater transparency in information dissemination during the pandemic, facilitating access to

accurate data for all citizens. Additionally, TIB's engagement with communities to raise awareness about the importance of COVID-19 vaccination has been instrumental in encouraging participation in vaccination drives and ensuring access to accurate information. Their relentless advocacy for equitable vaccine distribution, with a focus on vulnerable populations, has underscored their dedication to fostering citizen participation and accountability in critical areas.

Other Research Aligning with SDG 3:

TIB has also conducted several other health-related research projects that align with Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3) - Good Health and Well-being. These research endeavors aim to address various aspects of healthcare, contributing to the broader goal of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages. These research projects encompass a range of healthcare challenges and governance issues, demonstrating TIB's commitment to advancing healthcare and public health in Bangladesh.

These research projects include:
- "Private Health Care: Governance Challenge and Way out" (Completed in February 2018)
- "Aedes Mosquito Control in Dhaka City: Governance Challenges and Way Forward" (Completed in September 2019)
- "Governance Challenges in Medical Waste Management and Way Out" (Completed in December 2022)

TIB has actively engaged in policy advocacy and citizen engagement initiatives based on these research findings. Their advocacy efforts have led to tangible improvements in healthcare governance, policy formulation, and service delivery. Through rigorous engagement, they have promoted transparency, inclusivity, and accountability within the healthcare system.TIB's citizen engagement initiatives have played a pivotal role in involving communities and individuals in the pursuit of good governance within the healthcare sector. These initiatives have empowered communities to hold healthcare providers and authorities accountable, promoting ethical practices and ensuring equitable access to healthcare services. Through these engagements, TIB has effectively bridged the gap between research findings and grassroots actions, fostering a culture of responsible citizenship and healthcare activism.

This comprehensive approach to healthcare research, advocacy, and citizen engagement reflects TIB's dedication to achieving SDG 3 targets and improving the overall health and well-being of the population.

SDG 4: Quality Education
Number Of research: 2

Research: National Curriculum & Textbook Board (NCTB): Governance Challenges of Manuscript Development and Publication Management and Way Forward (Completed November 2017)

TIB's research into the governance challenges faced by the National Curriculum & Textbook Board (NCTB) regarding manuscript development and publication management has been the cornerstone of their advocacy and citizen engagement initiatives in the realm of education. This research illuminated critical issues within the education system. In response, TIB, through its Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs), has been actively advocating for policy changes to facilitate online education. They've tirelessly pushed for online classes, e-communication between educators and students, and the adoption of e-monitoring mechanisms, particularly in select regions. Moreover, TIB's research led to the development of fact-based recommendations. These findings have driven their advocacy efforts, aimed at encouraging policymakers to make informed decisions and initiate policy reforms to enhance the quality of education.

In parallel, TIB's citizen engagement initiatives, deeply rooted in their NCTB research, have been instrumental in promoting inclusiveness and transparency within the education sector. Their efforts during International Women's Day, for instance, revolved around enhancing women's participation and leadership roles in education, directly aligning with research that highlighted the importance of gender inclusivity. Additionally, their research on overcoming challenges faced by persons with disabilities and marginalized populations has guided their advocacy for creating more inclusive educational environments. The tireless work of TIB's YES and YES Friends volunteers has also contributed significantly to strengthening anti-corruption movements and promoting transparency and accountability within the education sector, all driven by the insights gained from their research into NCTB governance.

Research: Savar Upazila Primary Education Office: Governance Challenges and Way Forward (Completed March 2019)

TIB's meticulous research into the governance challenges plaguing the Savar Upazila Primary Education Office has played a pivotal role in shaping their advocacy and citizen engagement

initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of education. This research identified critical issues within the Savar Upazila Primary Education Office, paving the way for TIB's relentless advocacy for ethical leadership and transparency within the institution. Their advocacy efforts have been firmly grounded in the research's recommendations for addressing governance challenges. The research findings serve as a foundation for TIB's ongoing advocacy to usher in effective policy reforms and governance improvements within the office.

Concurrently, TIB's citizen engagement initiatives, inspired by the research on the Savar Upazila Primary Education Office, revolve around fostering transparency and ethical practices in the realm of education. These initiatives have been instrumental in promoting inclusivity and ethical conduct within the office, nurturing an environment rooted in transparency and accountability. Through these engagements, TIB has consistently advocated for the values of good governance, ensuring that their research findings translate into tangible improvements in the education sector.

SDG 5: Gender Equality

Number of Research: 2

Reaserch: State Recognition and Rights of Birangona Freedom Fighters (Completed June 2022)

Advocacy: TIB's research on the state recognition and rights of Birangona freedom fighters has led to advocacy efforts aimed at achieving gender equality (SDG 5). In line with International Women's Day, TIB's Committees of Concerned Citizens (CCCs) actively observed the day, emphasizing the importance of women's participation and leadership in various aspects of life, including access to services, decision-making processes, health, and income-generating activities. TIB's advocacy work has also focused on combining the goals of gender equality (SDG 5) and peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16). This advocacy aims to ensure access to justice for victims of domestic violence, promote the rule of law, and secure equal rights for all, irrespective of gender.

Research: Role of Women Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) in Establishing Good Governance at the Local Level (June 2020)

Advocacy While specific advocacy initiatives following this research are not detailed, the research findings on the role of Women Upazila Nirbahi Officers (UNOs) likely inform advocacy efforts related to enhancing the participation and effectiveness of women in local governance, contributing to SDG 5.

TIB issued a policy stance on Inclusion of Women in Technology and Anti-Corruption Efforts & hosted a workshop on SDGs for Women UNOs (7 March 2017).

Citizen Engagement: Promoting Women's Participation and Leadership - CCCs organized various events in collaboration with local administration, women affairs office, and other NGOs to promote women's participation and leadership in decision-making processes.

SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation

Research: Dhaka WASA: Governance Challenges and Way forward (Completed April 2019)

TIB's research on governance challenges in addressing avoidable diseases, especially dengue, has led to citizen engagement activities aimed at addressing water-related issues and reducing waterborne diseases. This work underscores the link between clean water and public health. Also, CCCs in Barishal, Gazipur, Munshiganj, and Chandpur have been actively involved in advocating for sustainable water resource management. This aligns with SDG 6's goal of ensuring access to clean water and sanitation.

SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy

Research: Coal and LNG-based Power Projects in Bangladesh: Governance Challenges and Way Out (Completed May 2022)

Advocacy: TIB has taken a strong policy stance titled **Improving Governance Standards in Bangladesh's Adaptation Fund** in support of establishing renewable energy dependence within the shortest possible time. This stance aligns with the goals of SDG 7, which focuses on ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all. TIB emphasized that Bangladesh and India share a collective responsibility in protecting the Sundarbans, even if the decision to categorize it as critically endangered had been postponed (7 July 2017). TIB has identified governance issues in climate projects by the Water Development Board and has presented 14 recommendations for improvement (23 August 2017).

TIB organized Inter-University Debating Competition on Good Governance in Climate Financing (24-26 February 2017): Engaging the youth in discussions related to climate financing and governance aligns with SDG 7's objectives. TIB also arranged 3-day Workshop on Climate Financing Reporting for Journalists (18 March 2022): TIB organized this training program, contributing to building awareness and capacity in climate financing, which is directly related to clean energy and climate action, key components of SDG 7.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

Research: Good Governance in RMG Sector: Progress and Challenges (Completed in April 2019)

Advocacy: TIB conducted research on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the RMG sector. This research helped advocate for reforms to support workers during the crisis, aligning with the goals of SDG 8, which emphasizes promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. TIB issued policy stances titled "Reforming Labor Practices in the RMG Sector" and "Ensuring Workers' Rights and Safety in the RMG Industry." On 1 July 2018, TIB called for government intervention, citing the torture of Bangladeshi women in the Middle East as a clear example of the lack of good governance in the migrant worker sector. TIB issued a policy stance titled "Protecting Migrant Workers' Rights" to address issues related to labor migration and worker rights, directly tied to SDG 8.

Research: Employment of Expatriates in Bangladesh: Governance Challenges and Way-out (Completed February 2020)

Advocacy: Advocating for Fair Wages for Tea Workers: TIB issued a policy stance titled "Fair Wages for Tea Workers" to emphasize the importance of good governance in the sector. This policy stance aimed at addressing labor-related challenges, including fair wages and decent working conditions, which are essential components of SDG 8.

Youth-Centric Skill-Based Education: On International Youth Day (6 August 2019), TIB called for skill-based education, keeping the futures of youth in mind for achieving SDGs. TIB issued a policy stance titled "Promoting Youth-Centric Skill Development" to advocate for youth employment and equal access to decent work in alignment with SDG 8.

Research: Access of Marginalized Communities to Public Services: An Assessment of Accountability Mechanisms (Completed in October 2021)

Advocacy: Business Integrity and Ethical Sourcing in the RMG Sector: TIB issued a policy stance titled "Promoting Business Integrity in the RMG Sector" on 25 April 2023. This policy stance emphasized that business integrity and ethical sourcing are key to the sustainability of the RMG sector. Advocating for ethical business practices contributes to SDG 8 by promoting responsible business behavior and sustainable economic growth.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities

Research: Indigenous Peoples and Dalits in Bangladesh: Challenges of Inclusive Service Delivery and Fulfilment of Rights and Way forward (Completed March 2019)

Advocacy: Promoting Inclusiveness of Marginalized Communities: TIB actively engaged in advocacy initiatives to promote the inclusiveness of marginalized communities, including Indigenous Peoples and Dalits, in various aspects of society. This advocacy aligns with the objectives of SDG 10, which aims to reduce inequalities within and among countries. TIB's efforts in this regard sought to address the challenges faced by these communities in accessing services and fulfilling their rights.

Research: Inclusiveness in Development and Disability: Governance Challenges and Way Forward (Completed February 2022)

Advocacy: TIB's advocacy initiatives extended to championing disability rights and promoting inclusiveness for persons with disabilities within Bangladesh. This advocacy aligns with the goals of SDG 10, which emphasize reducing inequalities and ensuring that no one is left behind. TIB's efforts aimed to address governance challenges related to disability rights and foster a more inclusive society.

Addressing Discrimination at Airports: On 11 April 2019, TIB issued a policy stance condemning the request to reduce security checks for VIPs at airports, deeming it unconstitutional and discriminatory. This policy stance is linked to SDG 10 as it addresses issues of inequality and discrimination in access to services and privileges, advocating for equal treatment and rights for all citizens.

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Research: Governance Challenges in the Implementation of the Infrastructure Development Project under Constituency-Based Block Allocation (Completed August 2020)

Advocacy: TIB's research on governance challenges in the implementation of infrastructure development projects aligned with the objectives of SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. The advocacy initiatives sought to improve the governance of city

development, ensuring that infrastructure projects are effectively managed and contribute to sustainable urban development.

Research: Nimtoli, Churihatta and Afterwards: Governance Challenges in Ensuring Fire Safety in Old Dhaka and Way-out (Completed September 2020)

Advocacy: Advocacy for Fire Safety and Disaster Management: TIB's research on the governance challenges related to fire safety, particularly in areas like Nimtoli and Churihatta in Old Dhaka, is closely linked to SDG 11's goal of creating sustainable and safe communities. The advocacy efforts aimed to address these governance challenges, ensuring better disaster management and fire safety in urban areas.

Demanding Structural and Accountable Systems: On 2 March 2017, TIB organized a roundtable where speakers demanded the establishment of structural and accountable systems in city development works. This advocacy event emphasized the importance of good governance in urban development, aligning with the principles of SDG 11.

SDG 13: Climate Action

Research: Assessing Synergy between Climate and Development Projects: which one is more effective, efficient and transparent? (Completed July 2019)

Advocacy: TIB's research on assessing the synergy between climate and development projects served as the basis for advocacy initiatives aligned with SDG 13: Climate Action. The advocacy efforts aimed to promote climate change mitigation strategies, emphasizing the importance of effectiveness, efficiency, and transparency in such projects.

Research: Governance Challenges in Readiness of Flood 2019 and Relief works (Completed September 2019)

Advocacy: Advocacy for Climate Resilience: TIB's research on governance challenges related to flood readiness and relief efforts in 2019 contributed to advocacy for climate resilience. These advocacy initiatives focused on the importance of preparedness, effective relief works, and climate-responsive policies, aligning with the objectives of SDG 13.

SDG 15: Life on Land

Research: Forest Department: Governance Challenges and Way Forward (Completed in December 2020)

Advocacy: Advocating for Sustainable Forest Management: TIB's research on governance challenges within the Forest Department served as the foundation for advocacy initiatives aligned with SDG 15: Life on Land. These advocacy efforts were aimed at promoting sustainable forest management practices. TIB advocated for improved conservation efforts, responsible use of forest resources, and the development of policies that ensure the long-term health and vitality of terrestrial ecosystems, in line with the objectives of SDG 15.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

SDG 16, which focuses on Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, is one of the most heavily researched areas for TIB. Here's a categorically aligned list of TIB's research and advocacy efforts under SDG 16:

Research:

Transparency and Accountability in Governance:

Parliament Watch (14-18 Session, 10th Parliament) (Completed May 2018)

Parliament Watch (10th Parliament) (Completed in September 2020)

Review Report on Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions (Completed in April 2019)

Combating Corruption:

Transparency and Accountability in the Gold Sector: A Background Analysis for Formulating a Comprehensive Policy (Completed in November 2017)

Employment of expatriates in Bangladesh: Governance challenges and way-out (Completed in February 2020)

NGOs of Bangladesh Funded by Foreign Donations: Governance Challenges and Way Forward (Completed in August 2018)

Supervisory Role and Regulating Defaulted Loan: Governance Challenges of Bangladesh Bank and Way Forward (Completed in September 2020)

Problems related to refuge provided to forcibly displaced Myanmar nationals in Bangladesh: An assessment of governance challenges (Completed in November 2017)

Good Governance in Public Administration:

Subordinate Court System of Bangladesh: Governance Challenges and Way Forward (Completed in November 2017)

Good Governance in Barisal Divisional Passport Office: Challenges and Way forward (Completed in November 2017)

Integrity in Public Administration: Policies and Practices (Completed in June 2019)

Governance Challenges in TCB's Family Card Programme (Completed in August 2022)

Ensuring Free Flow of Information and Freedom of Opinion:

Public Hearing as a Means of Controlling Corruption: Effectiveness, Challenges and Way Forward (Completed November 2017)

Working Paper on Liabilities of income and wealth earned through corruption: Role and risk of women and way out (Completed May 2018)

Pro-active Disclosure of Information by Government Institutions and NGOs on the Basis of Right to Information Act: An Assessment (Completed August 2021)

Accountability in Banking Sector:

Government Public Libraries in Bangladesh: Governance Problems in Services and Management and Way Forward (Completed in November 2020)

Addressing Issues Related to Foreign Trade Partners:

State Recognition and Rights of Birangona Freedom Fighters: Governance Challenges and Way-out (Completed in June 2022)

Accountability in Law Enforcement:

Governance Challenges in Land Deed Registration Service and Way Forward (Completed September 2019)

Advocacy: TIB issued 40 policy stances advocating for various aspects of peace, justice, and strong institutions, including Transparency and Accountability in Governance, Combating Corruption, Good Governance in Public Administration, Integrity in Public Administration, Ensuring Free Flow of Information and Freedom of Opinion, Accountability in Banking Sector, Ensuring Safer Roads and Stakeholder Involvement in Drafting Laws, Addressing Issues Related to Foreign Trade Partners, Accountability in Law Enforcement, Curbing Money

Laundering, Protecting Freedom of Speech and Citizens, Reforms in Digital Security Act and Media Regulation, Promoting Anti-Corruption through Awards and Competitions, Collaboration with Government Institutions for Anti-Corruption Efforts, Promoting Anti-Corruption through Debating Competitions, Advocating for Independent Election Commission, and Addressing Data Protection and Surveillance Concerns. Also TIB members demanded transparency in forming the new Election Commission on 31 January 2017. TIB arranged Dialogue on SDG 16 and Good Governance: Government, Mass Media and Citizens o on 2 May 2017.

Training, Partnerships, Events, Awards, and Workshops:

1. TIB held the Anti-Corruption Investigative Journalism Awards every year in the reporting period (2017-2022)
2. TIB also organized the Anti-Corruption Cartoon Competition every year in the reporting period (2017-2022)
3. TIB hosted a South-Asian Debating Competition for promoting anti-corruption, good governance (21 July 2017)
4. DUMCS and TIB hosted the Moot Court Competition 2017, legal professionals urged to be more knowledgeable on anti-corruption laws (9 December 2017)
5. TIB signed MoUs with ACC and the Information Commission for sustained cooperation in Anti-Corruption and Right to Information in the reporting period
6. TIB commemorated the World Press Freedom Day with UNESCO and Article-19 calling for repeal of the DSA (2 May 2023)

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Advocacy: TIB engaged in collaborative efforts with various stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and international partners, to promote transparency, accountability, and good governance in Bangladesh.

Transparency International Bangladesh's (TIB) initiatives over the period of 2017-2022 have been remarkable in addressing a wide range of governance challenges, aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). TIB's dedication to eradicating corruption, promoting transparency, and advocating for good governance has made a substantial impact in various sectors, from healthcare and education to climate action and gender equality.

Their research initiatives have not only provided valuable insights into governance challenges but have also laid the foundation for evidence-based advocacy. TIB's advocacy efforts have led to significant policy changes, ensuring that institutions become more transparent, accountable, and equitable. Moreover, TIB's commitment to citizen engagement, particularly through Committees of Concerned Citizens and Youth Engagement and Support groups, has fostered active participation and a sense of responsibility among the citizens of Bangladesh.

TIB's collaborative approach, working closely with government bodies, civil society organizations, the media, and international partners, underscores the importance of partnerships in achieving the SDGs. Their advocacy for peace, justice, and strong institutions (SDG 16) stands out, with numerous policy stances and research projects dedicated to this critical goal.

In conclusion, Transparency International Bangladesh's tireless efforts have contributed significantly to Bangladesh's progress towards the SDGs. Their unwavering commitment to a corruption-free, accountable, and transparent society exemplifies the spirit of the SDGs, and their work serves as an inspiring model for other organizations and nations striving to achieve these global goals.