



Local Consultative Group (LCG) Bangladesh
A forum for development dialogue and coordination
www.lcgbangladesh.org

Bangladesh Development Forum

15-16 February 2010

Opening statement: Co-Chair LCG (Chris Austin)

Honourable Prime Minister, Honourable Finance Minister, Honourable Ministers, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my privilege to welcome you on behalf of the Development Partners to this Bangladesh Development Forum.

Honourable Prime Minister, you have laid out your Government's vision for Bangladesh to be a Middle Income Country, with poverty further reduced.

We commend your Government's commitment to making that vision a reality. We look forward to discussing and agreeing what we . Development Partners and Government - can do together to make this vision happen.

This Forum will allow us to take stock of progress and hurdles. In part, this is a welcome return to business as usual. But we can be more ambitious than this, as befits the agenda: let us commit not only to talking, but also to delivery.

There are challenges ahead. We must be clear about how we will overcome them, and hold ourselves to account against our promises.

Development Partners come to the table fully committed to continuing long term financial and technical assistance, continuing to build and strengthen our partnership with Bangladesh.

We today formally endorse the Joint Cooperation Strategy process; highlighting the mutual commitment of Government and Donors to improve significantly aid delivery and thereby the prospects for sustained growth and poverty reduction.

The results framework will set concrete targets for all of us to deliver against.

Achieving these goals will mean real improvements for real people.

Greater innovation in adaptation and sustainable solutions to Climate Change will mean safety and survival for the women, men and children living in vulnerable coastal areas, flood plains and slums. Inclusive local government will help build more responsive and effective basic services for citizens across the country.

During my three years in Bangladesh, I have met some inspiring people: visionary leaders; academic experts; forceful advocates; and committed civil servants. Also the business men and women building small but flourishing enterprises in the middle of a Dhaka slum. A woman on a remote char island raising a cow so she can feed her children a nutritious meal. Those affected by Cyclone Sidr, rebuilding their homes and livelihoods.

We need to make these processes work for those people. We need to make our discussions here today and tomorrow lead to concrete outcomes that will make this forum mean something for every woman, child and man in Bangladesh.

So let us make this more than a %Bangladesh Development Forum+. It should be the %Bangladesh *Delivery* Forum+.

Delivery on the Joint Cooperation Strategy and our aid effectiveness commitments.

Delivery on commitments to provision of finance and implementation.

Delivery of the effective safety nets, basic services, sustainable livelihoods, and infrastructure that will help the poorest and most vulnerable people in Bangladesh lift themselves out of poverty.

Delivery of real results for the poorest women and girls in the towns, cities and countryside of Bangladesh.

Delivery of the ambitious but achievable vision the Government is setting out today: Steps towards change, to accelerate poverty reduction.