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SANEM Thinking Aloud

Editor's Desk

The theme of the January 2024 issue of Thinking Aloud is "Development Challenges and Way Ahead". The first page article, "Bangladesh economy: What lies ahead in 2024?", reflects on the macroeconomic challenges that Bangladesh faced in 2023 and the deep fault lines in economic governance that led to the culmination of the current crisis. Analyzing the inadequacy in the policies taken to address the macroeconomic challenges and the associated structural dynamics, the article calls for revamped reform efforts and a strong commitment to the government's stated goals in crucial policy documents. The second article "COP 28: A step forward or a missed opportunity in climate action?" discusses the achievements and drawbacks of the recently concluded Conference of the parties'28 (COP 28) was held in the United Arab Emirates. Reflecting on the wide consensus on a global shift from fossil fuel energy and renewed pledge for climate finance, the article points out the lack of enforcement mechanisms of these agreements. The third article, "Progress towards nutrition and Bangladesh's evolving challenges", discusses in details the Bangladesh government's National Plan for Action of Nutrition-2. Exploring the provisions and targets of the policy, the article identifies budgetary constraints, prevalence of early marriage and disproportionate and inequitable distribution of resources at the local level as the prime challenges for the implementation of the policy. The fourth article, "Bridging Divides: Inequality in Bangladesh" explores the dimensions of the widening wealth and income inequality in Bangladesh.An inefficient fiscal policy, regional disparities in budgetary allocation, lack of an effective minimum wage policy and widening gap between public and private sector services are some of the key factors that is escalating inequality, the article argues. The fourth page of the issue covers the events in December 2023. We go into the new year with renewed hopes and aspirations for inclusive development and climate justice. Thinking Aloud remains committed to bringing out new ideas and analyses of contemporary economic challenges and sustainable solutions. With that note, we wish all our readers a very happy new year!

Inside this issue

Bangladesh economy: What lies ahead in 2024?

Selim Raihan

The Bangladesh economy experienced the worst macroeconomic instability in recent years in 2023. While until 2019, the country was cited as a successful case of macroeconomic stability, the COVID-19 pandemic inflicted a significant scar on the economy in 2020 and 2021. The economy went through a recovery process in the later part of 2021 and the early part of 2022. However, the war in Ukraine and the resultant global supply shock triggered domestic macroeconomic instability that persists.

The crisis has affected the economy through various channels. The average monthly inflation rate increased from 7.6% in January-November 2022 to 9.5% in January-November 2023. Export earnings increased by only 2.4% in January-November 2023 compared to the same period in 2022. Remittance growth through formal channels was only 1.7% in January-November 2023, compared to the same months in 2022. However, as there is a strong suspicion of large illicit money outflows from Bangladesh, it is anticipated that the informal channels of remittances, commonly known as hundi, were extensively used for such outflows, leading to low growth in remittances through formal channels. The official exchange rate depreciated by 30% between November 2022 and November 2023. The foreign exchange reserves declined from more than US$ 30 billion to less than US$ 20 billion between November 2022 and November 2023. Since the middle of 2022, the country has been facing the tightest import restriction in recent decades, through the control of letters of credit (LCs) for imports, which has affected domestic investment. The shortage of US dollars for imports through formal channels substantially increased the margin between the official exchange rate and the kerb market exchange rate.

However, it should be noted that the war in Ukraine and the resulting global shock were only catalysts, while the current macroeconomic crisis in Bangladesh has deep roots in the persistent unresolved structural issues which include poor tax revenue performance, a fragile banking sector, ineffective public expenditure management, unsuitable trade and industrial policies for economic and export diversification, low FDI, inadequate public spending on health and education, and weak institutions.

Furthermore, some wrong policies worsened the situation. One of them was fixing the interest rate at 9-6% in April 2020 which continued until the middle of 2023. This bizarre policy stance made the monetary policy instrument ineffective in controlling inflation. Another wrong policy was artificially maintaining the exchange rate of foreign currency for years. It was obvious that in the face of the dollar shortage, large adjustments to the exchange rate had to be made in a very short period, which further fuelled inflation.

The interventions in 2023 were inadequate to address the problems. The interest rate policy was too slow to adjust, which had little effect on curbing inflation. The banking sector's weakness was more evident this year. There was no significant improvement in tackling the large irregularities and massive bad loans in the banking sector. Moreover, no efficient measures were taken for revenue collection reforms. The gap between the official exchange rate and the kerb market rate remained still very high indicating that the exchange rate was not market-based.

Is there a quick solution to these problems? Will the macroeconomic pressure be eased soon? The success in controlling inflation would depend on the execution of prudent monetary policy, supporting fiscal policy, and coordinated management of domestic markets to combat anti-competitive practices. Some export and remittance growth may ease the macroeconomic stress in 2024. However, the prospect of a strong rebound in export growth remains a challenging task, given the domestic and global scenarios, and the continued excessive reliance on the RMG exports. The RMG sector is also exposed to external pressure for compliance and labour issues. Moreover, the potential of attracting more remittances through formal channels depends on the appropriate market-based exchange rate policy and the effective control of the hundi business.

Another mounting source of macroeconomic pressure is the increased obligations to repay the escalated amount of foreign loans. The country has borrowed heavily in recent years to fund several mega projects, and the annual debt servicing is on the rise. Delays in implementation and cost-overrun of these projects exert an additional burden on the economy. To ease the pressure on loan repayment, these mega projects must contribute to boosting exports and attracting large-scale FDI.

Furthermore, in the absence of an effective reform of the taxation sector, the prospect of a substantial domestic revenue mobilisation will remain bleak, public spending on critical sectors like health and education will remain small, and the government will continue to borrow hefty amounts of money from domestic and external sources for budgetary support.

An independent and powerful central bank, without any political influence, is a precondition to bringing back the discipline in the banking sector. Otherwise, the private sector will continue to face the challenges of accessing financing for diversified investment ventures.

As far as the reforms are concerned, there is a need to resolve the high mismatch between the government's stated objectives, plans and programs mentioned in the critical policy documents (like the 6th, 7th, and 8th five-year plans and Perspective Plan) and the actual policies and approaches implemented. All the critical policy documents emphasized the need to reform key economic areas such as taxation, banking, capital markets, and export diversification, and raise public spending on social sectors. However, the actual policies which are implemented remain mainly incremental measures that lack clear connections with the critical policy documents and clear guidance for the changes.

The ability and responsibility of the relevant policymakers to design and implement economic reform policies and strategies define the quality of economic leadership, and regrettably, such quality economic leadership seems to remain weak in Bangladesh during this crisis time. However, to overcome the economic crisis, no doubt, the country needs strong economic leadership, backed by strong political will.

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COP 28: A step forward or a missed opportunity in climate action?

Dipa Das and Mohammad Asaduzzaman

The 28th UN Climate Summit, Conference of the parties'28 (COP 28) was held in the United Arab Emirates from November 30 to December 13, 2023, with nearly 200 signatories. COPs, initiated at the 1992 Earth Summit, are crucial global platforms for addressing climate change. A key milestone was the Paris Agreement at COP 21 in 2015, where nations committed to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. The Paris Agreement also mandates a Global Stock Take every five years to assess progress towards these ambitious goals.

A significant turning point for COP was the Paris Agreement, which emerged during the 21st COP in 2015, where the countries pledged to attain net-zero emissions of greenhouse gases by the end of this century and limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. Also, as part of the Paris Agreement, countries are required to carry out a Global Stock Take every five years in order to monitor their progress toward the predetermined goals. To fulfil the objective of the Paris Agreement, during COP28, the UNFCCC conducted the first "Global Stock Take (GST)", assessing the state of the world's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare for the effects of climate change. Nearly every country agreed on the GST since the 1994 Framework Convention, to make a transition from fossil fuels and aimed at intensifying climate. The GST also underlines the need to cut global greenhouse gas emissions by 43% by 2030 (compared to 2019 levels) to meet the 1.5°C target.

The conference also called for a tripling of renewable energy capacity and a doubling of energy efficiency improvements by 2030. Additionally, it urged the acceleration of efforts to phase down unregulated coal power and phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, with developed countries leading the way. Another cornerstone of COP 28 was the unprecedented acknowledgement of the need to transition away from fossil fuels by forming new alliances and promises centered on fossil fuels. An additional nine countries joined the Powering Past Coal Alliance, an expansive coalition committed to phasing out "unabated" coal power, which was initially established at COP26. The agreement to triple renewable energy capacity and double energy efficiency by 2030 sets a concrete target towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting sustainable energy.

The conference saw strides in climate finance, a critical component of global climate action. Notably, the UAE announced a $30 billion fund for global climate solutions, aiming to attract $250 billion in investment by the end of the decade. Additionally, parties pledged $700 million to assist lower-income countries with climate-induced loss and damage. It also emphasized the importance of increasing climate finance, with the Green Climate Fund receiving substantial pledges, and additional commitments made to the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund.

Even with these improvements, COP 28 was inadequate in several ways. Itscredibility and goals were called into question by its location in a nation that depends heavily on fossil fuels. The summit's approach to fossil fuel reduction lacked the ambition needed to address the climate crisis adequately. Since the previous COP summits, there has been a noticeable lack of progression beyond the concept of "transition" in addressing fossil fuel reduction. The recent conference demonstrated this ongoing focus on transition rather than a complete phase-out of fossil fuels.

Also, the involvement of oil companies in the de-carbonization charter, suggests a reluctance to confront the fossil fuel industry head-on and leaves room for continued exploitation of fossil fuels under the guise of carbon capture technologies. Many have critiqued the exclusive focus on fossil fuels, arguing that attention should also be given to operational greenhouse gas emissions, which account for a significant portion of carbon emissions.

Furthermore, the de-carbonization charter signed by over 50 oil companies, though a positive development, covers only a small portion of global production. This partial coverage suggests a piecemeal approach to what requires a more comprehensive and unified global strategy. The focus on methane leakage and flaring is important, yet it doesn't fully address the broader impacts of oil and gas extraction and consumption.

The financial commitments made at the summit, particularly the 'loss and damage' fund, were commendable but insufficient. The pledged USD 700 million is a fraction of the estimated USD 400 billion needed, highlighting a substantial gap in resources necessary for effective climate disaster mitigation. Moreover, the decision to involve the World Bank sparked concerns, particularly among developing nations, over the efficient and equitable distribution of these funds. These concerns include the World Bank's propensity to prioritise loans over grants, its sluggish funding disbursement during climate emergencies, and its influence over other financial organisations.

Similar to the outcomes of COP 27 and previous COP meetings, COP 28's agreements also lacked concrete enforcement mechanisms and clear timelines, casting doubt on the practical implementation of its ambitious targets. The agreement's lack of specificity on how to manage a just and equitable transition for communities reliant on fossil fuel industries left many questions unanswered. This ambiguity poses a challenge in balancing economic interests with environmental imperatives.

In conclusion, COP 28 represents both a step forward and a missed opportunity in climate action. While the summit made strides in setting targets and securing financial commitments, its effectiveness was undermined by a lack of decisive action against fossil fuels, insufficient funds to meet actual needs, and a setting that raised questions about the commitment of fossil fuel-dependent nations to climate goals. The outcomes underscore the necessity for enhanced global efforts to address climate change in a way that is both effective and equitable At the next COP 29 in Azerbaijan, another oil and gas-centric economy, the challenges of overcoming the influence of fossil fuel interests and associated geopolitical complexities loom large. The success of future conferences will hinge on transforming the pledges of COP 28 into concrete actions and policies.

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Progress towards nutrition and Bangladesh's evolving challenges

Md. Abdul Aahad and Rafiul Ahmed

Over the last two decades, Bangladesh's demographics, health, and nutritional status have witnessed significant transformations. This progress is evidence of a coordinated endeavor - a combination of policy interventions, grassroots initiatives, and community involvement - all contributing to enhancing the nutritional environment. However, despite the notable progress, significant concerns and challenges in health and nutrition services still exist and need to be addressed in order to reach global nutrition targets.

The current nutrition status of Bangladesh provides a mixed picture of both success and drawbacks. According to the latest Bangladesh Demographic Health Survey (BDHS) 2022, the under-5 child death rate reduced to 31 per 1,000 live births in 2022 from 43 in 2017, while stunting dropped to 24% from 31%. Due to persistent efforts to reduce child undernourishment, Bangladesh has improved slightly in the Global Hunger Index score, ranking 81st among 125 countries with a score of 19.1 at a moderate level. However, Bangladesh is substantially behind in terms of meeting the targets related to mothers, infants, and young children (MIYCN). The goal of lowering anemia among women of reproductive age has not been achieved since 36.7% of women aged 15 to 49 years are currently affected. On a positive note, 62.6% of infants younger than six months are breastfed exclusively, where there has also been a modest improvement in the low birth weight rate. Although half of the childbirths are now taking place in health facilities, compared to 17% just a decade ago, maternal mortality has remained unchanged. While there has been limited progress in meeting non-communicable disease (NCD) targets, Bangladesh's obesity prevalence remains lower than regional averages.

In response to the multifaceted challenges in health and nutrition, the Bangladesh government has formulated the National Plan for Action of Nutrition-2 (NPAN2). This strategic initiative aligns with the overarching goals of the National Nutrition Policy (NNP-2015), the 7th and 8th Five-Year Plan, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According to NPAN2, the implementation of NPAN2 necessitates substantial financial investment, estimated at around 12,463.41 crore Bangladeshi Taka, equivalent to approximately USD 1.6 billion. This budget is earmarked for ten years, focusing on priority activities encompassing institutional development, capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation processes.

The allocated budget for NPAN2 is divided across four strategic areas – Health, Urban Health, and WASH; Food, Agriculture, Fisheries, and Livestock; Women Empowerment, Education, Social Safety Net, and Information; and the Institutionalization of NPAN. These areas are prioritized as high, medium, or low, depending on the urgency and impact of the interventions. The plan includes both nutrition-specific interventions (like Health, Urban Health, SBCC, and WASH) and nutrition-sensitive interventions. The budgeting process combines top-down (program experience) and bottom-up (ingredient-based) approaches, ensuring a comprehensive and realistic financial plan.

The execution of NPAN2 is envisioned as a collabora-

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tive effort involving a multi-sectoral, multi-level, and multi-stakeholder approach. This extensive collaboration will see the engagement of 22 ministries alongside a wide array of stakeholders and partners from the domestic, regional, and global spheres. These activities are planned to be systematically implemented across various administrative levels, including upazilas, districts, and the national level, ensuring a broad and inclusive reach.

Despite these well-laid plans, a significant challenge has emerged in the form of budget allocation. The ministries tasked with the implementation of NPAN2 have not received dedicated funds for this purpose. Their existing budgets are often stretched across various ongoing projects, some of which are nutrition-specific while others are nutrition-sensitive. This budgetary constraint is more pronounced at the local level, where departments face limitations in their financial autonomy. For example, the Upazila Health and Family Planning Office, a crucial local health and nutrition ecosystem entity, does not receive specific allocations for nutrition-related activities.

Bangladesh's challenges to improving nutritional outcomes extend beyond budgetary allocations, revealing deeper socio-cultural and political intricacies. A significant contributing factor is the prevalence of early marriage, a widespread issue that has been reported by UNICEF. Approximately 51% of Bangladeshi girls are married before the age of 18, a practice that has profound implications for nutrition. Early and child marriage often results in maternal malnutrition, which adversely affects both the health of the mother and the development of the fetus, ultimately contributing to a cycle of undernutrition across the nation.

Furthermore, the distribution of nutrition-related resources at the local level is often entangled with political dynamics. Local representatives have been observed exerting influence over the allocation of these resources. Such practices can lead to disproportionate and inequitable distribution of resources, undermining the effectiveness of nutrition programs. For instance, local officials have influenced the Department of Public Health Engineering's (DPHE) tube well placement decisions to favor their political base rather than public health concerns.

To effectively achieve the ambitious goals set by NPAN2 and the SDGs, it is imperative that the government escalates its financing and investment in the nutrition sector. This increase in funding should not only come from government coffers but also through active collaboration with development partners, including bilateral and multilateral donors, NGOs, and the private sector. A key aspect of effective budget allocation involves mirroring local-level planning and demands in the financial planning of relevant ministries. This requires a data-driven approach, integrating inputs from the statistics department at the local level and employing robust methodologies like household profiling. Additionally, effective monitoring of child marriage and political agendas is crucial for improving nutrition in Bangladesh. Addressing these issues, alongside shifting stakeholder mindsets and challenging social norms, is key to advancing towards a healthier, more nourished Bangladesh.

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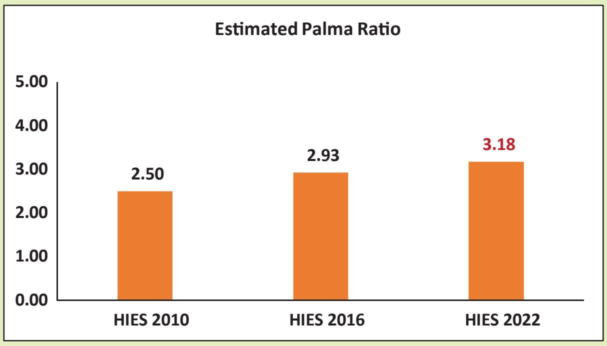
Bridging divides: Inequality in Bangladesh

Ekramul Hasan and Takrem Ferdous Surid

We are currently experiencing multiple global crises including increased hunger, rising costs of essentials, climate-induced hazards and the lingering effects of COVID-19.However, throughout all these crises, few have emerged as winners.The richest have become richer and corporate profits have hit record highs, driving an explosion of inequality. Bangladesh is no exception.According to the World Ultra Wealth Report2019, Bangladesh was identified as the country with the fastest growth in its wealthy population globally.The number of ultra-high net worth (UHNW) individuals, with invested assets of at least $30 million, in Bangladesh increased by 17.3% in 2018compared to an 8.1% increase in the United States.

Being one of the most promising economies in the 21st century, Bangladesh is going through a concerning phase with high income and consumption inequality. Over the years, the situation of inequality has been steadily worsening, with the level of income inequality in urban areas surpassing that in rural regions.Though average monthly household income more than doubled in six years to USD 295, the latest Household Income and Expenditure (HIES 2022) data show income inequality has widened further.The Palma Ratio, which compares the total income of the richest 10% of the population with that of the poorest 40%, has risen by 8.53% since the previous HIES in 2016. This increase indicates that the income of the wealthiest 10% is now 3.18 times greater than the income of the bottom 40%, highlighting the extent of the prevailing income inequality. However, there has been a slight deceleration in the increase of this gap, as it increased by 17.2% in 2016 compared to 2010.



Source: Author's compilation based on HIES 2010, 2016 and 2022 report

The report also highlights that the Gini Coefficient, which measures the extent to which the distribution of income or consumption among individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution, rose to 0.499 in 2022, up from 0.482 in 2016 and 0.458 in 2010. While there are no globally standardized cut-off points, according to UNICEF a Gini index below 0.2 typically signifies ideal income equality. A Gini index between 0.4 and 0.5 indicates significant income disparity, a range in which Bangladesh currently falls.Consumption-related Gini Co-efficient also increased to 0.334 last year from 0.324 in 2016.

Several factors drive these inequalities. The increasing income inequality in Bangladesh is largely attributed to its fiscal policy, particularly in revenue generation and public expenditure. The country's tax-GDP ratio is significantly low, hindering adequate spending in crucial social sectors like education, health, and social protection. A heavy reliance on indirect taxes and insufficient collection of direct taxes, especially from the ultra-rich and certain economic sectors, exacerbates the problem. In Bangladesh, prioritizing the taxation of the wealthy seems to be a less focused area for the major political parties. This leads to tax evasion among affluent individuals and reliance on indirect taxes such as VAT, which disproportionately affect those with lower incomes.Furthermore, regional disparities in development and budget allocation, along with corruption in the fiscal system, contribute to the growing inequality.

The absence of a robust minimum wage policy, along with a lack of workers' agency and representation has exacerbated the persisting inequality.Inequality is further deepened by the differences in the public and private sectors, particularly in education and healthcare. High fees in private institutions, coupled with the inferior quality of public services compared to their private counterparts, contribute to widening the socioeconomic divide.

Income inequality is often rooted in the initial unequal distribution of wealth and human capital.-Studies have shown that children from affluent families begin life with significant advantages in terms of wealth and human capital. These advantages often grow over time, enhancing their opportunities. Conversely, those from less wealthy backgrounds face more restrictions onsocial mobility. Addressing this requires government policies focusing on providing the poor with essential skills and increasing their involvement in economic activities.Examples from Scandinavian countries demonstrate the effectiveness of using public finance policies for this purpose. Those countries have a robust tax policy in place that ensures the distribution of social wealth and sustains state investment in key human capital development sectors. In contrast, Bangladesh's low public spending on education and health, coupled with inadequate social protection spending, contributes to its income inequality.

To address income inequality in Bangladesh, reforming the tax system to ensure fair contributions from the wealthy is crucial. Enhancing public investment in key areas such as education and healthcare is critical to improving quality and accessibility, thereby narrowing the public-private disparity. Policymakers should prioritize fair wages for industrial workers. Most importantly, the issue of inequality needs to be placed at the top of the development agenda of the country through collaborative efforts among all stakeholders and the government.

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SANEM-ERD Validation Workshop on expanding private investment

SANEM, in collaboration with the Economic Relations Division (ERD) and the Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP), organized a Validation Workshop on the study report titled "Expanding Private Investment in Bangladesh in the Context of LDC Graduation" on 12 December 2023 at the NEC Conference Room, Planning Commission Campus, Sher-e-Bangla Nagar. Dr. Selim Raihan, Executive Director of SANEM and Professor at the Department of Economics, University of Dhaka presented the study report at the workshop. Mr M. Tofazzel Hossain Miah, Principal Secretary to the Honourable Prime Minister, graced the event as the chief guest. Mr Lokman Hossain Miah, Executive Chairman (Senior Secretary), BIDA, and Ms Sharifa Khan, Former Senior Secretary, Economic Relations Division were present as special guests. The study was discussed by panelists Barrister Md Sameer Sattar, President of DCCI, and Ms Ferdaus Ara Begum, CEO of BUILD. Mr Farid Aziz, Additional Secretary and Project Director of SSGP, ERD delivered the welcome remarks, and the workshop was chaired by Mr Md. Shahriar Kader Siddiky, Secretary of the Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance.

Dr Selim Raihan attended GDN Board Meeting in France

Dr Selim Raihan, Professor at the Department of Economics, University of Dhaka and Executive Director of SANEM recently attended the Global Development Network (GDN) board meeting held on 2-3 December 2023 at GDN's France office in Clermont-Ferrand, France. The Global Development Network (GDN) is a public international organization founded in 1999. Its core mission is to support the research capacity of social scientists in developing and transition countries, creating a cadre of global leaders in development research. GDN aims to foster innovative ways of producing, structuring, and mobilizing development knowledge. François Bourguignon, Emeritus Professor at the Paris School of Economics, France, and Former Chief Economist at The World Bank currently serves as the chair of the GDN Board. Dr Raihan's active participation as a board member underscores SANEM's commitment to international collaborative efforts in the field of development research.

Israt Hossain participated in TARA Annual Retreat 2023

Ms Israt Hossain, Senior Research Associate at SANEM participated in the TARA Annual Retreat 2023. The retreat organized by TARA Climate Ltd., took place from 15-18 December 2023 at the Sundarbans. The primary objective of the retreat was to unite the partners of TARA and enhance mutual understanding of their respective efforts towards the just transition of Bangladesh's power and energy sector to green and clean energy. The discussions in the retreat revolved around exploring future work prospects and fostering collaboration among participants. Partners also shared insights from their research and experience of advocacy. Throughout the retreat the partners engaged in various group activities to exchange ideas on chartering the path towards sustainable and green energy for Bangladesh. Ms Israt Hossain also presented a poster on the theme of "A Sustainable Pathway for Bangladesh's Energy Transformation Towards Green and Clean Energy" prepared by Rafiul Ahmed, Research Assistant, SANEM.

Omar Raad Chowdhury attended the Advocata Institute Conference in Sri Lanka

Mr Omar Raad Chowdhury, Research Associate at SANEM attended the Advocata Institute Conference held in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The theme of the conference was 'Housing for All, The Role of Competition Policy in Construction. He was a panelist at the session "Regional Housing Crisis: The Role of Competition in Construction Markets", held on 13 December 2023 in Colombo, Sri Lanka". The session was moderated by Ms Rehana Thowfeek, Research Consultant, Advocata Institue. The session included panelists Anu Anna Jo, Senior Research Associate, Centre for Public Policy Research; Dr Joseph Wilson, Independent Consultant; Dr Malathy Knight, Project Director, Impact of Anti-Competitive Practices in the Construction Industry on Housing for the Poor in South Asia. SANEM and the Advocata Institute collaborated on the study "Impact of Anti-Competitive Practices in the Construction Industry on Housing for the Poor in Bangladesh". Insights from the study were shared at the panel discussion.

South Asian Network on Economic Modeling (SANEM) extends a warm invitation to scholars, policymakers, government officials, development practitioners, students, journalists, and interested individuals to join the 7th SANEM Annual Economists' Conference (SAEC) 2024 on "New Frontiers in Development and Emerging Dynamics," scheduled to be held from 23-25 February 2024 at BRAC Centre Inn, Mohakhali, Dhaka. This event will be both in-person and online. The three-day conference will feature engaging panel discussions on contemporary issues and host paper presentations covering various areas such as health, education, agriculture, gender, labor market, trade, environment, climate change, poverty, inequality, macroeconomy, energy, digital economy, and emerging global economic challenges. Visit our website for details on registration.

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