



NOAKHALI SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY

Noakhali - 3814, Bangladesh.

SDG PROGRESS REPORT 2024

16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



PREPARED BY

Dr. Fahad Hussain

Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacy, NSTU
Additional Director, Ranking and Strategic Development Cell

Email: global@nstu.edu.bd

Website: www.nstu.edu.bd

RANKING AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT CELL (RSDC, NSTU)



NOAKHALI SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY

Noakhali - 3814, Bangladesh.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Report Published for: 2024 (Published in 2025)

Report Prepared by: Ranking and Strategic Development Cell

Institution: Noakhali Science and Technology University (NSTU)

Copyright: © Noakhali Science and Technology University

DATA CURATION & PREPARED BY

Dr. Fahad Hussain

Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacy
Additional Director, Ranking and Strategic Development Cell
Noakhali Science and Technology University
Email: fahad@nstu.edu.bd

PATRONS

Prof. Dr. Mohammad Razuanul Hoque

Pro-Vice-Chancellor
NSTU

Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ismail

Vice-Chancellor
Noakhali Science and Technology
University

Prof. Dr. Muhammad Hanif

Treasurer
NSTU

PROOFREAD AND REVIEWED BY

Dr. Md. Monirul Islam

Assistant Director
Ranking and Strategic Development Cell

Dr. Khaled Mehedi Hasan

Deputy Registrar
Ranking and Strategic Development Cell

DATA COLLECTION

Ranking and Strategic Development Cell
and Recruited Student Interns:

**Fatima Jannat Rinty, Umme Kulsum,
Tanber Ahamed Farden, Min Hajul Islam
Nahid,
and others.**

DISCLAIMER

Every effort has been made to prepare this report with utmost accuracy, sincerity, and professional integrity. Any unintentional errors or minor discrepancies that may appear are purely the result of genuine oversight, with no intent of negligence or misrepresentation. If you notice any inaccuracies, inconsistencies, or omissions, you are kindly requested to inform us at global@nstu.edu.bd, so that appropriate corrections can be made in the spirit of continuous improvement.

Comprehensive Report: SDG 16 - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

Noakhali Science and Technology University

December 2024

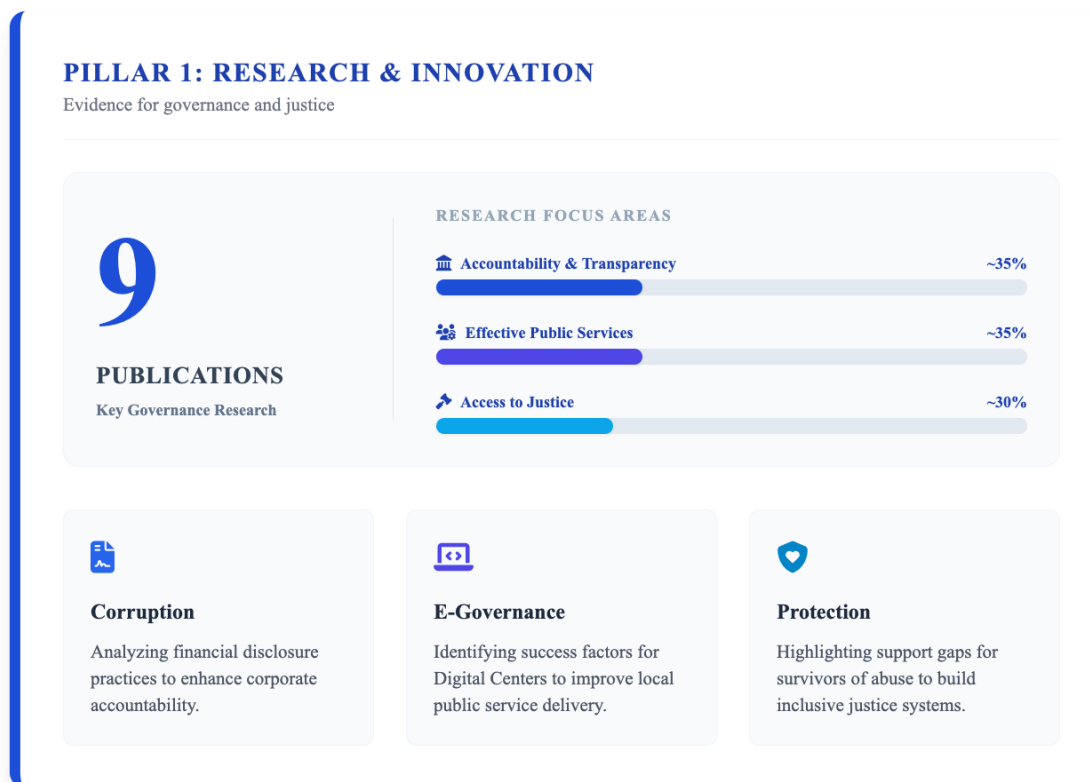
Introduction

Noakhali Science and Technology University (NSTU) is firmly committed to Sustainable Development Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

We believe that strong, transparent, and accountable institutions are the foundation upon which all other SDGs are built. Our 2024 contributions are organized around two key pillars:

- **Research and Innovation:** Investigating governance, combating corruption, analyzing e-governance success, and protecting vulnerable populations through evidence-based study.
- **Operations and Community Engagement:** Ensuring inclusive decision-making through our Regent Board, enforcing zero-tolerance anti-corruption policies, and actively collaborating with government bodies to shape national policy.

This report outlines our key 2024 accomplishments in support of the targets of SDG 16.



Pillar 1: Progress through Research and Innovation

Our 2024 research portfolio, featuring 9 key publications, directly addresses the core targets of SDG 16.

Section 1.1: Enhancing Institutional Accountability and Transparency (Targets 16.5, 16.6, 16.10)

A major focus of our research is on strengthening institutional effectiveness by promoting transparency and combating corruption.

- **Analyzing Good Governance:** The research by Murad, S.M. provides a high-level analysis of the relationship between economic uncertainty and good governance from a global perspective. This work provides foundational evidence on why strong, predictable institutions are essential for stability.
- **Combating Corruption:** We are directly tackling Target 16.5 (Substantially reduce corruption and bribery). The study by Masud, M.A.K. et al. on corruption disclosure practices provides a critical analysis of transparency in both Islamic and conventional financial firms, offering a framework to enhance accountability.
- **Protecting Information Integrity:** Recognizing new threats to public trust, our research addresses Target 16.10 (Ensure public access to information). The work by Salam, M.A. et al. on deepfake applications explores a significant emerging threat to truth and information, providing the basis for policies to protect the public and institutions from sophisticated misinformation.

Section 1.2: Building Effective, Responsive, and Inclusive Institutions (Targets 16.6, 16.7)

We are actively researching how to make institutions more effective and responsive to citizen needs, a core component of Target 16.6 (Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions).

- **Analyzing E-Governance Success:** Two of our key studies evaluate the success of Bangladesh's digitization efforts. The work by Nur Ullah, M. & Biswas, B. identifies the critical success factors for e-governance in Union Digital Centers, providing a model for effective public service delivery at the local level.
- **Centering Citizen Participation:** Building on this, the study by Biswas, B. et al. on Pourasava Digital Centers is a direct investigation of Target 16.7 (Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory... decision-making). It explicitly analyzes how citizen participation moderates the satisfaction and intended use of public e-services, proving that institutional success is directly linked to inclusivity.
- **Informing Responsive Policy:** The work by Al-Masud, A. et al. on public attitudes toward microplastics provides a model for responsive policymaking. By analyzing public perceptions, it offers a pathway for institutions to design policies that are more effective and aligned with public values.

Section 1.3: Ensuring Access to Justice and Inclusive Policymaking (Targets 16.2, 16.3, 16.b)

Our research extends to the protective role of institutions, particularly in providing justice for the vulnerable and ensuring sustainable policies for all.

- **Protecting Vulnerable Populations:** Our research gives a voice to the marginalized and supports Target 16.2 (End abuse... and all forms of violence against children). The study by Siddik, M.A.B. et al. on male child sexual abuse survivors highlights a critical gap in support

systems, providing the evidence needed to build more inclusive and effective justice and mental health services.

- **Promoting Non-Discriminatory Sustainable Policies (Target 16.b):** Our work also examines the role of strong institutions in managing resources and technology for the public good. The research by Jakariya, M. et al. on sustainable solutions for water access, and by Ridzuan, A.R. et al. on the governance of technology and foreign investment, both underscore the need for strong, non-discriminatory policies to ensure that development is equitable and sustainable.

Pillar 2: Progress through University Operations and Community Engagement

NSTU embodies the principles of SDG 16 in its own governance, ensuring representation, transparency, and active engagement with the state and civil society.

Section 2.1: Inclusive Governance and Representation

We have established a governance structure that ensures participatory decision-making at the highest levels.

- **Elected Representation (The Regent Board):** Our highest governing body, the *Regent Board*, is structured to ensure diverse representation. It includes three faculty members elected directly by the Academic Council, alongside government nominees and civil society members. This structure prevents unilateral decision-making and ensures that the academic community has a direct vote in university affairs.
- **Student Representation:** NSTU officially recognizes an independent *Students' Union* and has approved a formal constitution (in Bangla) to govern its democratic operation. While currently inactive, the framework exists to provide students with a formal voice in university governance and social activities.
- **External Stakeholder Engagement:** The Regent Board formally includes representatives from government agencies, industry, and the local community. This mechanism ensures that external perspectives are integrated into our strategic planning and that local stakeholders have a meaningful mechanism for participating in university decision-making.

Section 2.2: Institutional Integrity and Anti-Corruption

NSTU is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity through rigorous policy enforcement.

- **Anti-Bribery & Anti-Corruption Policy:** We have adopted a comprehensive policy that explicitly prohibits bribery, facilitation payments, and nepotism. It applies to all staff, students, and third-party vendors. Key features include a zero-tolerance approach, whistleblower protection, and clear disciplinary protocols aligned with the Government Servants (Discipline and Appeal) Rules 2018.
- **Adaptive Implementation Phase:** The period from 2024 to 2026 is designated as an "adaptive phase" for this policy. During this time, we are actively monitoring its implementation, conducting awareness training, and refining reporting mechanisms before final institutional adoption in 2026.

- **Financial Transparency:** In alignment with Target 16.6, NSTU publishes its *Annual Performance Report*, which includes key financial data such as expenditure details. We adhere to government transparency regulations to ensure responsible public disclosure of financial data.



Section 2.3: Policy Engagement and Academic Freedom

We act as a bridge between academia and the state, providing expert advice and maintaining a free intellectual environment.

- **Expert Government Advisory:** NSTU provides direct expert advice to local, regional, and national government bodies. Our faculty actively participate in committees and provide evidence-based guidance on critical national issues such as climate resilience, food security, and local governance strengthening.
- **Policy-Focused Collaborations:** We undertake research specifically designed to inform government policy. A prime example is the *AQUAFOOD* project, a collaboration with the University of Copenhagen and Bangladesh Agricultural University, which contributes evidence for sustainable aquatic food system policies in Bangladesh.
- **Academic Freedom:** We uphold a formal *Policy on Academic Freedom*, ensuring that senior and junior academics alike have the right to freely choose their research areas and speak publicly about their work. Furthermore, the university serves as a neutral platform where diverse political stakeholders can come together to frankly discuss community challenges in a safe space.

Section 2.4: Developing the Next Generation of Justice Professionals

- **Graduates in Law and Enforcement:** NSTU is actively training the next generation of leaders in justice and civil enforcement. In the reporting year, **44 graduates** completed degrees in law and enforcement-related courses, contributing directly to the national talent pool required to build strong legal institutions.

Conclusion

Our 2024 research on SDG 16 provides critical insights into building, maintaining, and improving strong institutions. We have produced vital work on combating corruption, analyzed the success factors for e-governance, and highlighted critical gaps in justice for the most vulnerable. Operationally, our inclusive Regent Board, rigorous Anti-Corruption Policy, and active role in government advisory demonstrate our commitment to fostering a society built on transparency, accountability, and justice for all.

Appendix: SDG 16 Targeting 2024 Publications Referenced

1. Salam, M.A., Rayun, S.M., Islam, W., Firmansyah, E.A., Kalinaki, K. (2024). Consumer engagement: Exploring deepfake applications in consumer marketing communication.⁵ *Navigating the World of Deepfake Technology*.
2. Al-Masud, A., ISLAM, A.R.M.T., Mamun, A.A., Idris, A.M., Malafaia, G. (2024). A new approach from public behavioral attitudes and perceptions towards microplastics: Influencing factors, and policy proposals. *Ocean and Coastal Management*.
3. Murad, S.M. (2024). ECONOMIC UNCERTAINTY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE: EVIDENCE FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE. *International Journal of Development and Conflict*.
4. Biswas, B., Ullah, M.N., Rahman, M.M., Al Masud, A. (2024).⁶ Service quality, satisfaction, and intention to use Pourasava Digital Center in Bangladesh: The moderating effect of citizen participation. *Plos One*.
5. Jakariya, M., Rahman, M.M., Mahzabin, L., Islam, M.A., Bhattacharya, P. (2024). Changing water sources and extraction methods in Bangladesh: Challenges, consequences, and sustainable solutions.⁷ *Groundwater for Sustainable Development*.
6. Siddik, M.A.B., Manjur, M., Pervin, I., Khan, M.B.U., Sikder, C. (2024). Suicide attempts and depression associated factors among the male child sexual abuse survivors in Bangladesh. *Journal of Affective Disorders Reports*.
7. Masud, M.A.K., Hossain, M.S., Rahman, M., Chowdhury, M.A.F., Rahman, M.M. (2024).⁹ Corruption disclosure practices of Islamic and conventional financial firms in Bangladesh: the moderating role of Big4. *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*.
8. Nur Ullah, M., Biswas, B. (2024). E-governance success factors in Bangladesh: A cross-sectional quantitative study on union digital centers.¹⁰ *Information Development*.
9. Ridzuan, A.R., Abd Rahman, N.H., Keshminder, J.S., Voumik, L.C., Ali, M. (2024). Assessing the Impact of Technology Advancement and Foreign Direct Investment on Energy Utilization in Malaysia: An Empirical Exploration with Boundary Estimation. *Lecture Notes in Networks and Systems*.